Launching through the Surf Traveling Exhibit Panel 03: Historical Highlights Continued

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Historical Highlights continued

1940s - Eighteen to twenty-four foot double-ended plank dories with a small box well were standard. They were powered by oars with a compass for navigation.16

1942 - The U.S. Coast Guard commissioned a beach patrol station at Pacific City. Fishermen were issued identification cards and were required to carry a signal on board their dories so they could be recognized by the planes and blimps that patrolled the coast.17

1947 - Jack Gilman added trolley-type poles to his 19-foot commercial dory. Soon everyone else was doing the same.18

Late 1940s - Various dory fishermen and others opened fish-buying operations. Most were short-lived.19

Early 1950s - Twelve to fourteen dories were included in the fleet, with six or seven used regularly for commercial fishing.20

Civilian Conservation Corp crews began planting Holland grass on the shifting sand dunes to stabilize them, leading to home construction on the dunes along the ocean front.21

Plywood became the standard material for dory construction.22

1950 - The Pacific City airport was dedicated, although planes had been landing on a grass airstrip there as early as the 1920s.23

1951 - The first fly-in fish fry was held, beginning an annual tradition.24

1954 - T-bil wells were added to eliminate the process of attaching and detaching the motor outside the surf.25

1956/1957 - The state outlawed use of fishing poles (rods and reels) for commercial fishing. Most dory fishermen changed to cotton hand lines.26

1957 - A gravel road was built to Cape Kiwanda forever changing access to the beach.27

Paul Hammersen and Roger Anderson made the first dory fishing trip to the tuna grounds, bringing back 73 pounds of Albacore tuna.28

1958 - The final fly-in celebration was held. The event had become a victim of its own success as the number of planes and large crowds had become too much for the community to handle.29

1959 - In conjunction with Oregon's centennial celebration, Pacific City began the Dory Decades. At their height, these celebrations and competitions drew as many as 10,000 people to Pacific City.30

Late 1950s/Early 1960s - The square stern dory appeared, revolutionizing the dory fleet by the mid-1960s. Hand-cranked gurdies with wire replaced hand lines. Most dories were engine-powered through the surf.31

1960 - Plastic squared “brooms” became the standard lures for Coho salmon.32

1966 - There were nineteen commercial fishermen in Pacific City. Guy Watts and Keith Delaney opened a fish-buying company.33

1965 - About 150 fishermen launched their dories at the Cape.34 Jim Imlach started a fish-buying company.35 Harry Kester bought the fish company from Delaney and Watts.36

1967 - The Pacific City Woods Area Chamber of Commerce asked the State Parks Superintendent to install a sign on the beach for the “purpose of avoiding accidents between bathers and dories.”37

The Coho catch at Pacific City jumped from 6,013 fish to 44,146, a 734% increase. This season “transformed salmon fishing at Pacific City.” Tourists came to watch the “dory spectacle” and for charter fishing trips. “The mixture of fishing and tourism was again fueling the local economy as it had before 1912.”38

Jack and Marlene Hergov held the Kiwanda Fish Company.39

1968 - The first Pacific City Dorymen’s Association was founded with James C. Cosn serving as president, Ted Howe as vice-president, Jim Imlach as secretary, and W.O. Van Meter as treasurer.40

The fleet increased to around 600 dories.41

Late 1960s/1970s - Fiberglass dories and fiberglassing of wooden dories appeared.42

Early 1970s - Portland General Electric explored the idea of building a nuclear plant near Cape Kiwanda.43

Hydraulics replaced hand-crank gurdies. They were powered by a “pump mounted on top of the engine and coupled with the horizontal flywheel.”44

1971 - Fishermen began adding “chunkies” (chopped up frozen herring) to their hooks.45 The dory fleet landed 111,564 Coho.46

1971 - The South Tillamook County Library opened.47

1971/1972 - Working with the Office of Economic Opportunity and Oregon State University’s Department of Fish and Wildlife, Pacific City Dorymen, including Ted Howe and Victor Ferrington, traveled to Samas to teach the Samos how to build Pacific City Dories.48

1973 - After much negotiation, by purchase and a gift from B. A. McPhillips, the state of Oregon acquired 185 acres of the McPhillips property, including Cape Kiwanda.49

1974 - The fleet, comprised of about 150 dories, landed 99,753 Coho.50

1975 - Dorymen landed approximately 170,000 Coho, making Cape Kiwanda the second most productive port on the Oregon coast.51

1976 - The fleet landed 169,810 Coho. There were between 350-400 dories.52

Julio and Juan Gegas opened the Dorymen Fish Company. Congress passed the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976, known as the 200 mile limit. It set up an exclusive fishery zone extending 200 miles out to sea, which excluded foreign fishing fleets.53

1977/1978 - Coho landing plummeted to 45,646 and 50,840 respectively. Costs for fuel and other new equipment (especially electronic devices) substantially increased the cost of dory fishing.54


1980 - Congress passed the Salmon and Steelhead Conservation and Enhancement Act of 1980.56

1980s - Increasing regulations and restriction of Coho salmon seasons took a toll on the dory fishing fleet throughout the decade.57

1984 - Commercial fishing for Coho salmon was closed for the year.58

Late 1980s - Salmon fishing seemed to bounce back some, but not to the 1967 and 1976 levels.59

1990s - Coho salmon seasons were even more severely restricted than in the 1980s.60