

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Iconic Pearl Harbor visitor center re-opens

AldrichPears Associates is delighted to have worked with the U.S. National Park Service to re-design their Pearl Harbor flagship visitor center, making this historic event relevant to new generations

Vancouver, BC (December 1, 2010) — AldrichPears Associates, an award-winning firm that specializes in planning and designing visitor experiences for museums, has completed the design of a new \$3.9 million exhibition for the US National Park Service's flagship visitor center in Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii, set to open December 7, 2010.

The World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Visitor Center interprets the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, which killed more than 2,000 Americans. This attack compelled the United States to enter World War II.

"We are really pleased to have the opportunity with the National Park Service to present such an internationally significant story", said Phil Aldrich, principal in charge of the project. "The attack on Pearl Harbor has enormous historic significance, and we think we have conveyed the meaning of this iconic event in a way that will help to stimulate thinking about the causes of war, the sacrifices that were made and the need for vigilance."

The interpretive design challenge was to develop a new concept for 8,000-square foot interior exhibit space, 1600-square foot exterior interpretive space, and wayfinding for an 11-acre site. The World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument is the most popular visitor attraction in the state of Hawaii with an annual visitation of approximately 1.5 million, more than double the carrying capacity of the original 1980 visitor center. The previous facility suffered from crowding, structural deterioration and insufficient curatorial and educational space, all of which contributed to a need for its replacement. New exhibitions are designed to exceed cutting-edge standards in sustainability and physical accessibility, as well as meeting new standards for displaying precious artifacts in cases located in non-climate controlled spaces.

Continuing a Legacy

Central to the exhibit design and storyline are first-hand accounts of survivors, which taken together reveal a deeper and more personal story of the spirit and valor shown at Pearl Harbor. Set within a larger, balanced narrative of America's involvement in WWII, these survivor accounts shed new light on an important chapter of US history.

Providing a Balanced Perspective

The attack on Pearl Harbor has attained mythical status in American history. The goal of the visitor center is to bring history alive by making the events of the "Day of Infamy" real, balanced and accessible, while communicating the underlying causes of these events. To achieve this, AldrichPears worked with nationally acclaimed historians, park staff and researchers. To tell these stories, real images, AV footage and artifacts, and first-person histories from eyewitnesses are used throughout the site.

The design process involved numerous stakeholders ranging from Native Hawaiians to Japanese Americans, historians, veterans and representatives from the military. Visitor evaluations were

conducted on site, images were selected during trips to the National Archives and artifacts were carefully selected from the Park's collection.

Leading the Way: Sustainable and Accessible Design

The World War II Valor in the Pacific visitor centre is the largest visitor centre in the National Park Service and is a flagship for sustainable and accessible design. To meet the high accessibility standards, the design team worked with leading experts in the field, proto-typing and testing our designs with visually and physically impaired persons.

Environmental standards were equally high. The indoor-outdoor buildings requiring no air-conditioning systems, which posed enormous challenges to the conservation and preservation of artifacts. Unique artifact cases were designed to meet these unique challenges.

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