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**For Immediate Release**

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**For Information:**

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## **New Artwork at Tri-Cities Airport Speaks to Region’s History**

Pasco, WA – The newest round of local artwork has been installed at the Tri-Cities Airport. The airport’s selections for 2021 were curated by the Airport Art Committee, and all celebrate the history of the Tri-Cities region.

The Pacific Northwest Aviation Museum, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and the Franklin County Historical Society and Museum were selected to educate travelers on the people, buildings, and historical events that shaped the current Tri-Cities community.

“From artwork to archival imagery, this year’s art displays at the airport are sure to capture your attention,” said Buck Taft, Director of Tri-Cities Airport. “These insights into our region’s history help our passengers learn more about our community, and the three organizations do an excellent job of telling new angles of the Tri-Cities story.”

Each organization has a separate wall in the terminal to showcase their pieces, and the displays will be up through the year.

Pacific Northwest Aviation Museum: The museum has displayed several panels and photographs of aviation history in the Pasco region.



Franklin County Historical Society and Museum: The Franklin County Historical Society and Museum display celebrates the Connell, Mesa, Eltopia, Kahlotus, Basin City, and Pioneer Snake River landings. Maps, stories, and archival imagery tell the story of the establishment of these pioneer communities.



**Edwin Fulwider (c. 1940)**

*"Upon the outskirts, he met a farmer boy who, in reply to a question, said that the town was Connell. Kurt found another early riser in the person of a blacksmith who evidently was a Yankee and proud of it. ...The highway followed the railroad to Kahlotus, and there crossed a big trunk-line railroad, to turn south toward the river."*

—Zane Grey's *The Desert of Wheat* (1916)

In 1953 a talented writer-artist pair of longtime friends, author Rafe Gibbs and painter Edwin Fulwider, visited Franklin County to compose an article for *The Ford Times*. The popular company magazine promoted automobile excursions around the country and the two men had been commissioned to write about area rural communities, and the tiny hamlet of Mesa in particular. Gibbs (1912-1998), a native of Yakima, served as publications director at the University of Idaho and often traveled around the area while driving to and from Moscow. Fulwider (1913-2003), a native of Bloomington, Indiana, had taught at the Cornish Art School in Seattle and worked alongside some of America's leading regionalists including Thomas Hart Benton.

Gibbs and Fulwider shared a love of history and railroads and collaborated on several projects including the feature on small-town Franklin County life. The massive Columbia Basin Irrigation Project was national news in the early 1950s. Gibbs had witnessed the region's transformation from dryland subsistence farming to widespread agricultural development with the arrival of water on the arid prairies. Fulwider's series of masterful paintings and Gibbs's story represent a colorful portrayal of Columbia Basin life on the cusp of unprecedented change.

American Institute of Architects: The Central Washington chapter of the American Institute of Architects' "A Celebration of Architecture in Central Washington and Oregon" features the memorable architecture in the Tri-Cities region. All of the buildings and homes showcased were created by local architects.



**About the Airport**

Tri-Cities Airport (PSC) is the largest airport in the Southeastern Washington and Northeastern Oregon region and the third largest air carrier airport in the state of Washington. With connections to several major hubs, the airport is served by Delta, Alaska, United, and Allegiant airlines. For more information about the airport, visit [flytricity.com](http://flytricity.com) or follow us on [Facebook](#).