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Biltmore Estate grows, adds 120 jobs

New site on estate opens in spring

By Tony Kiss • February 25, 2010

ASHEVILLE — Biltmore Estate will create up to 120 jobs with its new Antler Hill Village visitation site, which opens this spring with an ice-cream shop, a tavern and a new exhibit hall.

The estate is expecting strong visitation as it celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Biltmore Winery and its Festival of Flowers event.

A job fair is planned for next week while work continues on the village, a 15-acre multivenue visitor site for estate guests that will open in late March, with a grand opening in May, estate spokeswoman LeeAnn Donnelly said.

The \$18.6 million expansion is located between the estate winery and River Bend farm. It's the first Biltmore expansion since 2004 and the opening of River Bend Barn. "It's a significant expansion," Donnelly said. The site will give Biltmore guests another visitation option, after they've toured the house, gardens, winery and other spots, she said.

Among the venues at Antler Hill Village are:

- The Legacy building, an expo hall that will include letters, archival pieces and historical exhibits relating to Edith Vanderbilt, wife of estate founder George Vanderbilt. The Legacy will house a small theater screening a film on the Vanderbilts and their descendants, the Cecil family.
- Cedric's Tavern, an informal dining spot serving such English-style entrees as fish and chips and shepherd's pie. The tavern also will have its own brown ale and pale ale, made under contract by Asheville's Highland Brewing Co. Cedric's is named for a St. Bernard owned by George Vanderbilt.
- A 1913 Stevens-Duryea car owned by George Vanderbilt. The car, now undergoing a conservation project, is a rare model and believed to be one of only 10 in the world still surviving.

- The Creamery, an ice-cream spot serving, among other treats, the Winky Bar Sundae, inspired by the originally Winky Bar confection made years ago by Biltmore Dairies. The chocolate-covered cherry ice cream treat still holds fond memories for longtime locals.
- The existing Outdoor Adventure Center, with Segway transportation device rentals, Land Rover trips, bike rides, horseback riding and carriage rides.
- Antler Hill Farm, with exhibits on old-time farming including blacksmithing.
- A new entrance at the Biltmore Winery. Guests will now enter through Antler Hill Village and a tunnel once used by the estate dairy.

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