

THE

# MODERATOR

B REACTOR MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

December—February

<http://www.b-reactor.org>

Winter 2006-7

## From the Control Room

by Hank Kosmata

A number of events have taken place in the last several months that continue to move us towards our goal of preserving the B Reactor. The DOE has initiated their own study led by their chief historian with the support and backing of the DOE undersecretary to consider the merits of preserving B. The National Park Service has issued a first draft of the Manhattan Project Sites Special Resource Study and recently held a meeting in Richland to hear comments and take suggestions from a number of parties including representatives from BRMA. The application for acceptance as a National Historic Landmark is progressing in a favorable manner. A more detailed report of these issues and the schedule of the NPS project are included elsewhere in the *Moderator*.

Cindy Kelly of the Atomic Heritage Foundation continues to work with us and others towards providing models and exhibits for B. Towards that goal she met with us and others in Richland recently to firm up details with prospective contractors. As a result she has now initiated a contract with Meier Enterprises for a graphic 3-D model of the reactor which will show the visitor how the reactor was constructed, what the key components are and how they function together to make it work. This computer model will be useful not only at the reactor but also at other venues and for various presentations regarding the project.

Cindy also is in the final stages of contract development with Lockheed for a physical scale model of the reactor which will feature a cut-away corner which will allow the visitor to look “inside” the reactor to get a better understanding of its construction and its key components.

And finally, Cindy also is developing a contract with Pacific Studios of Seattle to develop exhibits and

audiovisual informational material. All of these activities are supported primarily from a grant from the Murdock Trust and will lead towards the goal of a visitor-friendly site where the interested party can fully understand the significant history of the B Reactor.

We remain confident and invite your comments and support.

## Final Nomination Of B Reactor As A National Historic Landmark Delayed Until Spring Of 2007

by Bob Potter

The Seattle Office of the National Park Service has delayed the submittal of B Reactor’s nomination as a National Historic Landmark until the spring 2007. The application will be submitted to the nomination subcommittee of the National Park System Advisory Board for National Historic Landmark Designation in April and to the full Board later in the summer 2007.

Supplemental information for the application has been provided by Dr. John Findlay, a history professor at the University of Washington and Dr. Michele Gerber, Hanford historian, on the historical significance of the Manhattan Project and the specific contribution of B Reactor to the success of the Manhattan Project and the winning of the Cold War.

The submittal of the nomination for the Summer 2007 meeting of the NPS Advisory Board and the subsequent nomination of B Reactor as a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of Interior will provide further support for a recommendation for the preservation and public access to B Reactor in the Final Report of the NPS Manhattan Project National Historic Park Study due for publication and submittal to Congress in 2009.

# Interviews For Department Of Energy B Reactor Preservation Options Study Conducted In Richland

by Sally Ann Potter

Dr. Skip Gosling, DOE's Chief Historian and Preservation Officer was in Richland in January to interview local DOE and Fish & Wildlife Service officials, regulators, community leaders, and other stakeholders, including representatives from BRMA and the Hanford Reach National Monument Heritage and Visitor Center. The interviews were conducted to get input for the study Skip is conducting for Deputy Secretary of Energy Clay Sell. The purpose of the study is to develop a DOE position on possible options for preserving Manhattan Project facilities, with specific emphasis on B Reactor; and how DOE can support national heritage tourism by making the Manhattan Project facilities publicly accessible as museums or historic exhibits. The intent of the position paper is to improve DOE's ability to plan and to effectively cooperate and respond to the National Park Service Manhattan Project National Historic Park Special Resources Study that is currently underway (See accompanying article); and to support future Congressional preservation actions. The internal report on this Preservations Options Study for B Reactor is scheduled to be submitted to Deputy Secretary Sell by the end of June 2007.

## In Memoriam—Joe Hedges

BRMA remembers fondly our long-time membership chair—Joe Hedges.

Joe was born in March 1925 in Wenatchee and passed away last month. He graduated from Wenatchee High School in 1943, the University of Minnesota in 1946 with a degree in mechanical engineering, and the College of Puget Sound with an MS in geology. There he also met his wife, Virginia (Ginger). They were married in 1949 and were together for 58 wonderful year.

In 1950 Joe accepted a position as an engineer with General Electric, and he and Ginger moved to the Tri-Cities. They thought they wouldn't stay long, but in 1951 they moved to the house in Richland that would be home for the next 55 years. Joe worked in several senior engineering and managerial capacities, and retired from WPPSS in 1987

Joe is survived by Ginger, by son Bill and his wife Deborah, son Tom and his wife Anne Marie, son Pete and his wife Jane, his sister Kay, and six grandchildren.

## 2007 OFFICERS ELECTED

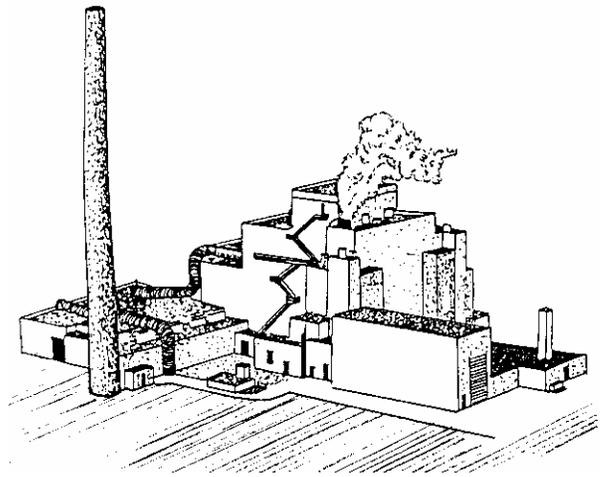
New BRMA officers for 2007 were elected at the December 2006 regular meeting.

Hank Kosmata, our reluctant acting President for 2006, gave in and was officially elected President for 2007.

Norm Miller and Steve Buckingham stepped in as Vice President and Secretary, respectively.

Del Ballard was re-elected as Treasurer.

All 2006 Committee Chairs were re-elected for 2007 (see Staff Box below for the complete list) except for the Public Relations Chair, which is still open. (Ed. Note: anyone who is interested in filling that position should contact Hank immediately!).



## 2007 BRMA Leadership

### Officers:

President: Hank Kosmata  
Vice President: Norm Miller  
Secretary: Steve Buckingham  
Treasurer: Del Ballard

### Chairs:

History & Artifacts: Burt Pierard  
Membership: Mel Finkbeiner  
Tour Coordinator: Maynard Plahuta  
Government Relations: Bob Bowersock  
Property & Facilities: Del Ballard  
Public Relations: (Open)  
Moderator Editor: Richard Romanelli

# National Park Service “Manhattan Project National Historic Park Study” – An Update

by Bob Potter

The National Park Service (NPS) Manhattan Project National Historic Park Study that began in March 2006 to evaluate options for preserving and interpreting Manhattan Project facilities in Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Los Alamos, New Mexico; Dayton, Ohio; and Hanford, Washington is in progress. The study is evaluating the potential for selected facilities at these sites to be included into the National Park System, or to identify other preservation and management options. The total Study is being managed by the NPS Denver office, with the NPS Seattle office conducting the evaluation of the Hanford B Reactor and T Plant.

The NPS Seattle office has completed the preliminary evaluation of the Hanford facilities against the significance, suitability and feasibility criteria for New National Parklands. On February 6th and 7th, the NPS Seattle office conducted a two-day workshop in Richland with the Hanford Site Study Team. The purpose of the workshop was to review the results of their evaluation to date, and to develop a set of alternative management options for the preservation and public use of these Hanford facilities, and to properly commemorate how the Hanford site contributed to the Manhattan Project and the conclusion of World War II. Members of the Hanford Site Study team who participated in the workshop includes representatives from the Department of Energy (DOE) and their contractor, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Senator Murray and Representative Hastings offices, BRMA, the Hanford Reach National Monument Heritage and Visitor Center Board of Directors, Hanford Communities, the Washington State Historical Society, and the Nez Perce Tribe.

The NPS reported that in their preliminary evaluation both B Reactor and T Plant met the criteria for significance and suitability, but only B Reactor met the feasibility criterion. T Plant was not judged to be feasible for inclusion in a New National Parkland because DOE expects to continue to use T Plant for temporary storage of contaminated materials and nuclear decontamination activities for many years into the future. NPS requested the Hanford Study Team to review and comment on the Hanford portion of the draft document on the evaluation to significance, suitability and feasibility.

Since T Plant did not meet the feasibility criterion, management options were considered only for B Reactor during the workshop. There were five management options identified at the workshop. In all of the options, it was concluded that DOE would continue to be

responsible for the contaminated reactor core. In the four preservation options, DOE would be responsible for maintaining the reactor in a “public-ready” condition and to continue to provide annual support for on-going surveillance and maintenance of the facility for public access. DOE will subcontract the operation of the facility as a museum/exhibit to a public and/or public-private entity.

The options identified in the workshop included the following:

1. No Action. This is the current River Corridor Contract Decommissioning Plan, with DOE releasing B Reactor to the contractor in 2009 to complete cocooning by 2012.
2. Local Public-Private Responsibility (The REACH Interpretive Center) for the operations and management of B Reactor as a museum/exhibit. This will include only limited NPS involvement through the National Preservation Program.
3. State of Washington Management Responsibility, with possible subcontracting for the operation of B Reactor as a museum/exhibit. This also will include only limited NPS National Preservation Program involvement.
4. National Historic Site Affiliated Area of the NPS with local public-private responsibility (The REACH Interpretive Center) for the operations and management of B Reactor as a museum/exhibit. This would include the opportunity for NPS funding for some annual support for exhibits and programs.
5. A Multiple-Site Manhattan Project National Historic Park with B Reactor as the cornerstone of the Hanford Site Component operated by a public-private subcontractor (The REACH Interpretive Center). This would include possible NPS staff at The REACH to augment staffing for B Reactor tours and interpretation.

A series of pros and cons were developed for each of these options to assist the NPS Seattle office in evaluating the alternatives.

The NPS Seattle office is preparing a written summary of the results of the workshop for review and comment by the Hanford Study Team. The NPS

# RENEWAL NEW RESTORE

It's 2007 dear Friends! / That needs to be more specific! 1." To make new or as if new again; restore. 2. To take up again; resume. 3. To repeat so as to reaffirm: *renew a promise*. 4. To arrange for the extension of: *renew a contract*..

***That's "Webstereez" for we are an ASSOCIATION (AND Friends);  
But without your "renewal" we will not be able to ASSOCIATE!***

The B REACTOR MUSEUM ASSOCIATION membership is the same as the Calendar Year.

## **DUES ARE DUE – NOW FOR 2007 !!!!**

---

### **2007 Renewal and New Member Application**

I want to help preserve the history of the B Reactor. Below is my application with payment for annual membership or renewal in the B Reactor Museum Association.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (w): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ MSIN address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(current Hanford employees)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual (\$20) or  Senior (age 65+) or Student (\$10) and  New or  Renewal  
 Group (\$25 up to 100 members; please add \$10 for each additional 100 members)

For Group Membership, Official Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional tax deductible contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Tax ID # 94-3142387)

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please make check out to BRMA)

Thank you; please mail this application with payment to:

**B Reactor Museum Association  
PO Box 1531  
Richland, WA 99352**

---

### ***Park Study" – An Update***

*(Continued from page 3)*

Seattle office will then prepare a written draft of the description of each B Reactor alternative, an evaluation of the options, and a recommended option. The options analysis will be done in consultation with the Native American Tribes and the State Historical Preservation Office. The Hanford portion of the Study will then be integrated by the NPS Denver office into the total Study results and recommendation.

In the summer of 2007, the draft evaluation and recommended alternative will be reviewed with the Director of the NPS Western Region and the DOE Richland Operations Office Manager. In the Fall of

2007, a Study Newsletter will be published that will include a description of the B Reactor alternatives, the evaluation, and recommended option; and public comment will be invited on the B Reactor option through a series of public meetings to be held in Richland.

In the spring of 2008, a final draft of the Study Report will be issued, with public meetings held for comment in the late spring and early summer 2008. Following the final revision to the Study Report, as a result of public comments, the final Study Report will be printed, along with a Record of Decision; the Secretary of the Interior will present the Study results to Congress; and the report will be released to the public in the spring of 2009.

# Progress Being Made In Developing New Exhibits For B Reactor

by Bob Potter

Work continues on the development of new B Reactor exhibits funded by a grant from the Murdock Charitable Trust. The grant was obtained by the Atomic Heritage Foundation (AHF) proposal team that included BRMA. Members of the proposal team developed the following consensus priority list for new B Reactor exhibits:

1. Audio/Visual (AV) Production of Historical Overview, Atomic Science Timeline, and Computer-generated Briefing of B Reactor Construction and Reactor Operations (a Virtual Model).
2. A Physical Model (4ftx4ftx4ft) of the B Reactor Block
3. Audio/Visual/computer-generated Briefing of Refueling (Charge/Discharge) Operations and Fuel Storage Basin Operations
4. Cooling Water Valve Pit/Systems Operation Display Panel
5. Accumulator Room/Safety Systems Display Panel
6. Ventilation System/Exhaust Fan Room Display Panel
7. Control Room Audio/Visual Production for a "virtual theater experience"

In November, Cindy Kelly, AHF president, filmed and recorded interviews at B Reactor that can be used, along with previously recorded interviews and oral histories, for the production of the new exhibits. In January, representatives from BRMA met with Cindy in Richland to discuss the details of the overall scope for the new B Reactor exhibits. Negotiations are underway between AHF and Pacific Studio of Seattle for the design, fabrication, and installation of the Murdock Trust exhibits at B Reactor.

Also during Cindy's January trip to Richland, we met with Meier Enterprises, Inc. of Kennewick, to finalize the scope for the production of a four-module computer-generated model of B Reactor to be integrated into the new Murdock exhibits. The modules include: 1) reactor construction, 2) reactor operations and control, 3) fuel manufacturing, fuel loading and discharge from the reactor, and fuel storage basin operations, and 4) the moving of fuel to T Plant and the chemical separation process, waste generation and storage. A contract has been signed by AHF with Meier to begin the production of the

first module for completion by the end of March.

We also held a meeting at the new Lockheed-Martin Information Services (LMIS) model shop in north Richland to discuss the details of the physical model of the B Reactor block. Contracts for the physical model with LMIS and with Pacific Studio for overall design, fabrication and installation of the new Murdock Trust B Reactor exhibits are expected to be signed in mid-March during Cindy Kelly's next trip to Richland. We expect the installation of the new Murdock Trust exhibits to be completed by the end of 2007 or early 2008.

## B Reactor Tours

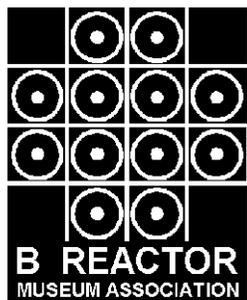
by Maynard Plahuta , Tour Coordinator

Calendar year 2006 was very busy for our B Reactor Tour Guides. They conducted tours for approximately 2,050 people. The majority of these were associated with the DOE Public Tours in June and July (three days each), and the four day tour in October. The registration for each of these tours filled almost immediately. The last was filled within 12 minutes.

In addition to the above, DOE and its contractors toured approximately 125 people (dignitaries and special groups). Thus, nearly 2,175 people from throughout the U.S. toured B Reactor during calendar year 2006. FANTASTIC!

At this point we have not yet received word as to when and how many public tours will be conducted in 2007. Hopefully, we will be able to increase the number of tours this year. However, the continuing resolution funding issue combined with the B Reactor roof repairs and other scheduled maintenance work may cause some challenges. But we will do our best to work through these challenges.

All BRMA members are invited to become a tour guide. BRMA will provide the necessary training. Those interested, or having questions, may call Maynard Plahuta at 946-1162 or send an e-mail to [Maynard.Plahuta@att.net](mailto:Maynard.Plahuta@att.net).



PO Box 1531  
Richland, WA 99352

<http://www.b-reactor.org>  
[info@b-reactor.org](mailto:info@b-reactor.org)