

THE MODERATOR

B R E A C T O R M U S E U M A S S O C I A T I O N

January—March

Vol. 24, Issue 4

Winter 2019

From the Control Room

by BRMA President Robert Franklin

I'd like to begin my first Presidential duty by wishing all our BRMA members a Happy New Year! Those that are able to attend our meetings likely know or recognize me, but for those of you that haven't you may be wondering just who I am and what my background is. Since the summer of 2015 I've worked as an archivist and oral historian at the Hanford History Project (HHP) at WSU Tri-Cities, where I work with our new Communications Director, Jillian Gardner-Andrews, to care for the Department of Energy's Hanford Collection. This collection documents the Hanford site from 1943-1990 and consists of over 2,000 unique objects and many feet of archival material. Much of this collection is on display at the B Reactor – a natural showcase for Hanford History if there is one. In addition, we conduct oral histories to capture the human story of Hanford and I, along with several other historians, just released the first of our "Hanford Histories" book series on the Pre-1943 history of the Hanford Site called *Nowhere to Remember: Hanford, White Bluffs, and Richland to 1943*. Future volumes of the oral history series will focus on Race and Diversity at Hanford, Construction of the 100, 200, and 300 areas, and Health Physics. Lastly, the Hanford History Project collects Hanford History from the public for use in current or future interpretive projects and scholarly research. To summarize I've been deeply involved with Hanford History in the few short years I've been here. I have bachelors and master's degrees in History as well and am currently working on a PhD in History at WSU. In early 2017 I stepped in for Gary Fetterolf as Communications Chair in a temporary capacity and when Gary resigned from the Board, I took over that role. I'm honored and excited to be serving as president of this august association (formed when I was still in grade school!), and I'll do my best to grow and support our mission statement, goals, and efforts of our past presidents and officers.

Let's run through some of the highlights of the past year to remember our accomplishments and set the stage for the new year. The beginning of the year saw BRMA update our Bylaws to shift from preserving the B Reactor to supporting the Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MAPR). The MAPR site manager,

Rebecca (Becky) Burghart, began her first full year here and is diligently working to increase public awareness of MAPR and begin interpretive planning. While the tour season got off to a late start this year, word of mouth from the visitor's center staff reflects good numbers for the season. While I don't have those figures for this article, I'll work on getting them for the spring update. BRMA patterned with the Atomic Heritage Foundation to update the "A Guide to the Manhattan Project in Washington State." John Fox and I guided Mr. Mitsugi Moroguchi, a visitor from Nagasaki, though the B Reactor as part of the Hanford-Nagasaki Bridge Project. I personally was moved by learning from both John and Mitsugi as they reflected on how the ending of WWII shaped their lives and their loved ones. John, Ben Johnson (incoming VP) and Steve Buckingham worked with DOE/MSA to film oral history at the T Plant, hopefully for future interpretive projects. In 2018 BRMA worked with several authors and prospective filmmakers on telling the history of Hanford and these efforts are ongoing through at least the next year. Perhaps most exciting was the expansion of items in the BRMA gift shop and the hard work by Rick Bond (Chair, products and sales), and Del Ballard (Treasurer) in designing new items and all of the back-end inventory and sales work. Expanded sales are wonderful, but most important is that this translates into expanded advertising and recognition for both MAPR and BRMA as people wear their MAPR/BRMA pins, hats, shirts, etc. I'm sure there are other things I missed – It's a challenge to write a succinct year-end review for 2018! Looking back, I'd say it was a resounding success and BRMA is managing its transition (into exactly what is TBD) started by our departing president John Fox. I'd like to extend a deep appreciation to John for his leadership and effort for BRMA. Thank you John!

Moving on to 2019 – what will the future bring for the BRMA? The board is certainly undergoing a change. New officers include me as President, Ben Johnson as VP, Jillian Gardner-Andrews as Communications Chair, and Charles Davis as Secretary. Jillian is my coworker at HHP and is skilled in social media and just an excellent and organized person. Charles is replacing Gene Weisskopf, who is stepping down after many years as BRMA Secretary.

Continued on page 4

The B Reactor Museum Assn. meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in a Conference Room at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Dr., Richland. The next meeting is Monday, Jan. 14, 2019

2019 BRMA Election Results

Officers:

President	Robert Franklin
Vice President	Ben Johnson
Secretary	Charles Davis
Treasurer	Del Ballard

Committee Chairs:

Communications	Jillian Gardner-Andrews
Gov./Comm. Relations	Maynard Plahuta
History/Archives	Burt Pierard
Interpretive Projects	Gary Busselman
Membership	Burt Pierard
Products/Sales	Rick Bond

Charitable Contributions

This is a Public Acknowledgement of the generous cash contributions to BRMA. The following list covers the period, October through December, 2018.

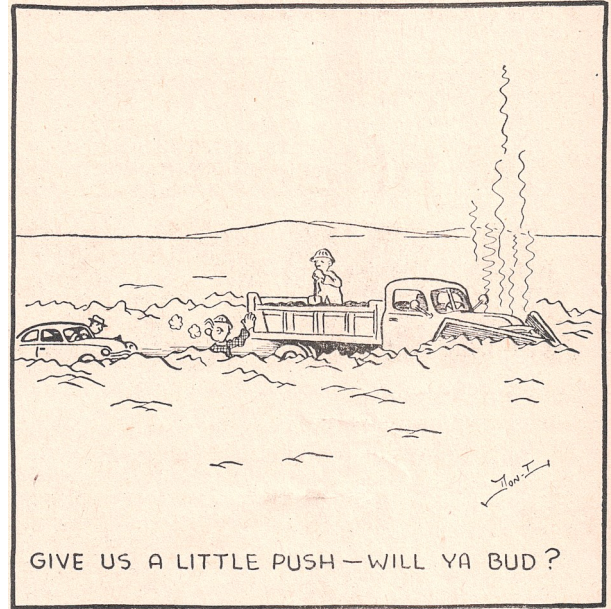
Ted Anderson ~ Bruce Carlisle
 Charles Davis ~ John Fox
 William L. Galligan ~ Cindy Kelly
 Maynard Plahuta

Membership Report

By Burt Pierard, Membership Committee

.2019 BRMA MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOW DUE. 33 people (including 9 Life Members) & 2 Groups (Atomic Heritage Foundation & The REACH)

Dupus Boomer — by Dick Donnell Contributed by Connie Estep



(Connie dips into the Winter of '49 archives again. Originally published in the Feb. 10, 1949 Villager.)

New Members

Ted Anderson (LIFE) ~ Bruce Carlisle
 Tana Inglima (LIFE) ~ Bob Stevens (LIFE)
 Randy Trank

took advantage of the Early Renewal Period for 2019. To send in your Renewal, the Form is below to Clip or Print and send in.

2019 Renewal and New Member Application

Name: _____ Date: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: (h): (____) _____ (cell): (____) _____
 E-mail: _____ (Please print legibly)

- Renewal New
- Individual (\$20) or Senior (age 60+ - \$10) or Student (\$10) or Life Member (one time — \$250)
(Individual Members Only)
- Society/Group (\$25) Name of Voting Representative: _____

Additional tax deductible contribution: \$ _____

Note: both Dues and Cash Contributions are Tax Deductable. (Tax ID # 94-3142387)

No goods or services were provided in exchange for your contribution

If your total enclosed contribution is \$50 or less, print a copy of this application for your records. Over \$50 will be separately receipted.

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**

Transition Years For BRMA

By Past President John Fox

The recent years since I joined BRMA, serving first as our representative on the local community committee supporting the Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MAPR), called for creativity and adaptability to meet the challenges of dealing with two Federal Agencies with different responsibilities, procedures and cultures. Though the park was officially created in November 2015, its development and operation is evolving more slowly than we had hoped for. It's interesting to note that BRMA's original By-Laws included the possibility of BRMA operating a museum in the 105-B building. I think that outcome would have overwhelmed a volunteer group like BRMA, and I'm relieved it was discarded.

Soon after I was elected BRMA President two years ago, our Board assessed the emerging environment supporting the park and considered future roles for BRMA. These ranged from declaring "Mission Accomplished" (B Reactor saved) and disbanding, to taking responsibility (as asked) to form a local Friends of the Park group. The latter requires both a formal contract with NPS, an active community fund raising program, and other activities. We chose a middle course of dedication to support MAPR but maintain independence to focus on telling the Hanford technical and scientific story beyond the Manhattan Project era scope of MAPR. New By-Laws expressing this mission were approved in 2017.

BRMA retains credibility in this role, even though few current members worked in the production areas during the cold war era. When important visitors such as Mr. Moriguchi, the Nagasaki bombing survivor, and Richard Groves, grandson of Leslie Groves, visited in 2018, BRMA was asked to provide guides for their tours. Members have been interviewed and quoted in newspapers, magazines, and appeared on Seattle and national TV. We should expect more such visibility in the future and need to be ready for greater direct and diverse response to press and public inquiries.

At Los Alamos, a Friends of the Park organization was formed last July, and formation of a similar group will begin

in 2019. Visit Tri-Cities already works with the two other sites on a common marketing website and program. Locally, DOE's general Hanford services contractor (MSA) now maintains MAPR facilities on the site and also administers sub-contracts for visitor tour operations and preservation of Hanford artifacts and records. It's expected that all MAPR-related functions will be removed from the MSA contract into a separate competition in 2019. In addition to the present subcontractors (Indian Eyes and WSU-Tri-Cities), other entities may enter this competition. Who will win what? In any outcome, BRMA will be an entity collaborating not only with DOE and NPS but with several diverse local organizations in supporting MAPR.

It's important that BRMA's role and functions be well focused and synergistic with the others, though maintaining freedom from contract obligations or restrictions unless necessary in some cases. We should strive to enhance the visitor experience and stimulate interest in the nuclear technology based on preserving our technical credibility. BRMA's functions will increasingly depend on use of the Hanford History Project resources. To properly understand its place in history, the Hanford story doesn't end in 1946 like the Manhattan Project and isn't limited to B Reactor. It's a major challenge for us to concentrate on conveying the importance of technical achievements here based on the limited knowledge at the time, and to deal objectively with consequences and legacies of Hanford operations. To present this in attention-getting ways to contemporary visitors is not easy. As I said before, BRMA's role will increasingly call for creativity and adaptability, but interesting and rewarding opportunities lie ahead for those wanting to tackle them.

From the Control Room—continued

As John mentions in his article in this issue, BRMA has taken a middle ground in the face of either declaring victory (and disbanding) or becoming a Friends of the Park organization. I pledge to keep that momentum and mission forward, guided by the esteemed council and experience of my fellow board members. B Reactor represents a larger history than is covered at the MAPR, in fact the significance of the Hanford site is still being made today and will for decades to come. Our own reactor ran almost into the Nixon administration and thus covers over two decades of Cold War History. I see BRMA and HHP as entities that can help tell a large and impactful history of the Hanford Site.

One way to do that is through publications – I myself am committed to writing the history of BRMA and Ben Johnson and I are working on an article detailing the contributions of DuPont in the Manhattan Project. Other

avenues will likely present themselves or are on the horizon for 2019, including the second Legacies of the Manhattan Project conference to take place in September of next year. Another way to expand the story and public awareness is to expand the gift shop products, which Rick Bond is currently working hard on. I myself am most excited about our new postcard offerings, including our first Pre-Manhattan Project Tour gift item – a postcard of the four buildings seen on the tour. It's a great start!

As John also mentions in his article, change is coming to Hanford and MAPR with the awarding of a new park management contract and contracts to manage the Hanford Collection. It's important to be focused on our support of the park but flexible enough to adapt to changing situations and players. BRMA has done an excellent job of this in the past. It will be an exciting year for BRMA, of that I have no doubt.

From Our Gift Shop (December 2018)

By Rick Bond, BRMA Products and Sales

The Manhattan Project National Historical Park 2018 tour season ended in mid-November 2018 and, if all goes as planned, B Reactor tours will start again in April 2019. The park visitor's center, located at 2000 Logston Boulevard in Richland, is still open in the "off season" so don't hesitate to stop by to say hello. The park gift shop, Whimzee, located just a few doors down from the visitor's center is also still open so please stop by to say hello to Debbie and pick up a few park/B Reactor related items. I also want to take this opportunity to thank Debbie Burnet who has done a wonderful job of running the gift shop for the B Reactor Museum Association.

We had a great year of sales in 2018. I attribute the large increase in sales to a few factors. First, I want to credit the visitor's center staff at Logston as well as our tour docents for doing a wonderful job of making our tour guests more aware of the location of our gift shop. As I said above, the gift shop is not located in the park visitor's center but is located a few doors down in the same building. Without the staff and docents speaking up, many people are not aware that we have a gift shop. A big thank you to all of them! The second reason for the increased sales is the increase in the number of items that we now have for sale. New MAPR – B Reactor items added this past year include a patch, collector's coin, ladies and men's T-shirts, caps, mugs, buttons, and books. We also replenished our stock on several of our existing items. Thanks to all for their support of the gift shop. A third reason for increase sales is that the tours were run, and the gift shop was open, over the entire summer holiday weekends - Memorial Day and Labor Day, and on the Sunday after July 4th. Sales were very good on these days. Again, thank you very much to Debbie for staffing the shop on those days.

We will be stocking more new items in the gift shop in the spring. We are in the process of ordering products that are generally sold at all National Parks: the National Park Passport Book, The Collector's Edition and the Jr. Ranger Passport Book, the MAPR EURO Decal, and stampable stickers. We will also be selling the lapel pin and patch that are common to all three MAPR sites (Oak Ridge, TN; Los Alamos, NM; and Hanford, WA). It is interesting to note that the lapel pin and patch for all three sites both use our Hanford B Reactor as the main image. We will also be selling a B Reactor lapel pin specific for the Hanford portion of the park. Last but not least, we are designing some new post cards with pictures of the B Reactor, the front face, the control room, the back basin, etc. We will also have a post card or two geared toward the Pre-Manhattan tours with pictures of the Bruggemann Warehouse, Allard Pump House, First Bank of White Bluffs, and historic Hanford High School. Some of these pictures will also be used for book marks and stickers, and we are planning on an additional refrigerator magnet. A big thank you to Becky Burghart (MAPR National Park Service - Hanford Site) and her husband Brian for taking the pictures for us. We may even go so far as to stock a Christmas item in the gift shop. We are considering a snow globe with the B Reactor as the center.

I want to give a special thanks to Del Ballard for his tireless work to update our system to track gift shop items, costs, and sales. Thanks also to Gene Weisskopf for his input and help with new products and to Gene and Burt Pierard for their help with making buttons. Last, I would like to thank Richard Romanelli for helping with selling our MAPR products at The Reach museum.

Reflections on Disconnecting from the BRMA Board

Gene Weisskopf

Some of you may have noticed that my name was not among the nominees for our election at the December 10 membership meeting. For the rest of you, Hey, pay attention! After serving as Secretary for the past seven years, as of January 1, I'm no longer taking minutes at our meetings as Secretary, and no longer sending out the monthly meeting announcement e-mails. But I'm still a member of the BRMA and, in fact, will be for the rest of my life. Yikes! Yes, the Lifetime membership I paid for a year ago means that no matter how angry I might get at the group, or how angry the group might get at me, we're locked in a lifetime relationship. I can't quit and you can't throw me out! (Or so my imagination tells me.)

And that's fine with me. I joined the BRMA in 1995 and have always supported our mission in a variety of ways. Let's see, I've been newsletter editor, president, assistant Treasurer, assistant to the membership chair, created the first BRMA Web site, helped write the B Reactor HAER document and, well, in 23 years a lot has happened. (I should've suspected the possibilities once I got to know Del Ballard over so many years.) When I joined the group, the BRMA's mission was very straightforward—"The BRMA is working to ensure that B Reactor is preserved and, someday, opened to the public as a museum."

So clear and concise. I think that's one of the reasons the BRMA has been so long-lived. I was reminded of that mission while scrolling through my notes and found a few jottings for a talk I gave to perhaps a dozen people at the library in Mattawa. Yes, all the way over in Mattawa. I had been in the BRMA for five years, which at the time seemed like a very long time. Hah, little did I know. But offering to speak about B Reactor was one way I could contribute to our group. It's always a good exercise to explain why B Reactor was such a milestone in our history, and always enjoyable to see people start to understand more about it.

Ah, but the obverse side of that is the vastly larger group of people who have NEVER asked me one question about the BRMA or B Reactor or Hanford. That's how hard it can be to explain or teach about something you love (he said with a sigh)—it's important that the other person wants to listen. Nuclear weapons? Oh, that's so 1980s! Atomic power? The nuclear fuel cycle? The cost of our nuclear weapons program?

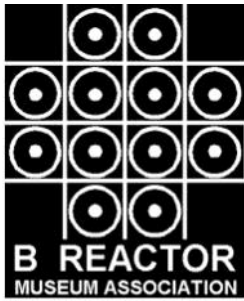
That's why I can find myself about to grab a person by their lapels and shake them until they pay attention. Or maybe simply raise my voice. I suppose that's one of the reasons it took so many (many) years to see B Reactor preserved and, indeed, open to the public. In a busy, ever accelerating world, how much time can people devote to such things? Well, in my own case, lots of time.

Although I can say I've been through a lot of ups and downs while in the BRMA, I'll emphasize that belonging to this group has given me some of the most interesting and most important chapters of my life (at least so far). Which is the reason I joined the group in the first place, because of the history that led to B Reactor and the history that followed it. Realize that I was born about six years after B Reactor started up for the first time, so the Atomic Age had already begun. Which means I was born after the introduction of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. The world I grew up in could be extinguished in a single day, at first, and then in a single hour after missiles were perfected.

Yes, I'm a big fan of humans not possessing nuclear weapons. I strongly believe that no one is smart enough or responsible enough to know how and when to use them. In fact, the notion that there is a time when a nuclear weapon could be used effectively is pure mythology, a fantasy that made us feel safe while, in fact, threatening us into extinction. But that's yet another reason why the B Reactor story is so compelling—we not only discovered how to tame a nuclear chain reaction, we also built a weapon from it that should never have been let out of the genie's bottle.

For me, the ultimate explanation for this view is to imagine a world leader who is a political novice, the opposite of a statesman, has never served in the military, and who basically has not a clue what it takes to run a world-power of a country. And yet that leader is in charge of thousands of nuclear warheads that can, theoretically, be fired when the mood strikes him. In that light, all the grand strategies of nuclear deterrence and mutual assured destruction just evaporate, and we're left living not under a nuclear umbrella, but a dark threatening nuclear cloud. I've been living with this realization since pretty much the day I was born so, yes, for me, the mushroom cloud is indeed one of the most recognizable icons of the 20th century. You might see why stepping down from the BRMA board is also somewhat liberating. Now when I want to express my views, there's no assuming that I'm somehow speaking for the group. I'm still a small reflection of that group, but just one voice out of many.

I thank you for letting me ramble on a bit (if you're still reading), and I thank you for this fascinating journey of 23 years in the BRMA. I hope to be around for another 23 but mostly sitting out there in the audience at our meetings, not up front taking notes. Ah, which brings me to the last and most important point, offering my many thanks to Charles Davis for stepping up to take over the job of Secretary. I wish him good luck, an enjoyable job, and plenty of patience!



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Financial Highlights for CY-2018

Del Ballard, Treasurer

2018 was another year of successful financial operations for the BRMA organization. A quick review of the past ten years shows that for 2008 through 2015 our major revenue source was through our tour guide service, for the B Reactor tours. In recent years our largest revenue source has shifted to our gift shop and the sale of souvenirs. For CY 2018, BRMA has realized a net profit of some \$3,600 from that source, while at the same time increasing our gift shop inventory, especially in regard to the selection of items.

During CY-2018 BRMA received a total cash inflow

of \$17,833, while experiencing total outflows of \$7,812, resulting in a total positive cash flow of \$10,021.

Major income streams included: Souvenir sales, \$10,060; Life member dues, \$2,250; and Richland city grant, \$3000. Our major outflow item was the purchase of inventory for souvenirs totaling \$6,673.

Other miscellaneous items, including annual dues and donations, make up the totals for inflow and outflow as shown above.