

Early 2022 Dues Renewal Open

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

October-December

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Fall 2021

From The Control Room

by BRMA President Robert Franklin

Another season passed, another few months dealing with COVID and no tours. I'll do my best not to sound like a broken record. I wonder what people in the B Reactor would do if they had to face this situation we've been in since March of 2020. A reactor already enforces some social distancing, and some operations could certainly be monitored from home. Then again, many workers already wore something similar to PPE, so maybe things wouldn't be that different at all! One easy similarity I see is in comparing each monumental effort – one to build the world's first full-scale production reactor, and the other to marshal our biotech industry to create an efficient vaccine in a rapid time. Both also take the dedication of extremely hard-working people. Hmm, maybe they are more similar than I thought at first glance.

I'd first like to talk about meetings. The BRMA Board decided to cancel the September in-person meeting due to rising COVID numbers. Things aren't too much better on that front but I think we need to meet somehow. It's been too long! To that effort the BRMA will have a hybrid meeting for October. We will broadcast the meeting on Zoom from the Richland Public Library. Meeting time, location, and Zoom link to come to your email shortly. You can feel free to come in person (with mask and social distancing please) or join from home. Thanks to Burt Pierard for the suggestion and the willingness to be the Zoom host. I'll probably be joining from home but I look forward to "seeing" all of you soon.

I hope you enjoy this issue. Rick has prepared

another great Gift Shop update on page 7. Many thanks to Rick for constantly keeping the gift shop effort going. The resumption of tours is a mixed blessing for the BRMA as we will need to figure out how to run a gift shop after the retirement of Debbie Burnett. If you might be interested in helping please read Rick's article and feel free to contact him. We also have a great update from NPS Ranger Becky Burghart on this page. The NPS continues to up their digital engagement game and promote the park during these difficult times.

Stay strong friends!

From The NPS— Ranger Updates

by Becky Burghart, MPHA Hanford Site Manager

Happy fall! Fall is one of my favorite seasons with the perfect weather days and bountiful harvests. In my last write up for the Moderator, I optimistically thought that we may be at a turning point with COVID. In the optimistic respite from COVID that we experienced in early summer before the Delta variant arrived in force, we offered a well-received series of Junior Ranger Park Pops and Parks for area families in various City of Richland parks. We also provided a Photography and Parks program for the Boys and Girls Club's Kennewick Clubhouse middle school students. On August 9, we hosted a Lights for Peace event that commemorated the 76th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. We pulled advertisement at

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The B Reactor Museum Assn. meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 PM, in a Conference Room at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Dr., Richland.

Our next meeting will be combination Zoom & In-person Oct. 11

FROM THE NPS

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the last minute for this event due to the high rates of COVID in our local area. We did not want to host a super spreader event. Even with minimal promotion, about 20 members of the public participated in the event. Using footage from the event, we created a Lights for Peace 2021 video to widely share this event in a COVID-safe manner. You may watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5HM-bRKtFU> (or just search YouTube for Manhattan Project National Historical Park and you will find the video).

On October 9, we are hosting Ride with a Ranger in partnership with Bike Tri-Cities, the REACH Museum, and Wheelhouse Bike Shop. This family-friendly bike ride will start at Columbia Point Marina Park and end at the REACH. We will provide several interpretive stops along the route to share Manhattan Project history as well as offer a ranger program at the REACH about Hanford's role in the Manhattan Project. For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.biketricities.org/event-4428748>. Even if you don't plan to attend, please share the word about Ride with a Ranger!

It has been a busy summer with staffing changes. Emily Welch, Hanford Education Technician, accepted a new position at African Burial Grounds in New York City. Her last day was August 28. Meghan Murphy, Hanford Visual Information Specialist, arrived in mid-July. Meghan jumped right

into social media and website development. Meghan worked for the park as a contractor developing the artwork for the new Hanford Junior Ranger book. She brought Atom U. Fission to life! We are excited to have Meghan on the MAPR team. Quinn Feller, Los Alamos Visual Information Specialist, worked her last day on August 13. She is now attending graduate school in Estonia. We certainly miss Quinn's presence on our team. We are looking forward to welcoming Brittany Burnett to the MAPR team in late October to backfill behind Quinn. Currently, all three park units have vacant education technician positions. I hope to backfill the Hanford ed tech position by late December. Needless to say, it has been a crazy summer with so many vacant positions.

A major focus for the park in fiscal year 22 will be the expansion of the Learn About the Park section on the park's website (www.nps.gov/mapr). We aim to wrap up a major upgrade to the Plan Your Visit website section by the end of October. Another major project for the park in fiscal year 22 is the development of a digital image database. We have a lot of great photos, and the database will help us organize and expand our digital resources. We'll continue to maintain our robust social media presence in the upcoming year. When COVID subsides, we are looking forward to participating in community and educational outreach programs once again.

**B REACTOR MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
3rd Quarter 2021 Income/Expenses - Q3 2021
By Dave Marsh, BRMA Treasurer**

7/1/2021 through 9/15/2021

Category	7/1- 7/31	8/1- 8/31	9/1- 9/15	OVERALL TOTAL
INCOME				
2021 Dues	20.00	0.00	0.00	\$ 20.00
Donations	30.00	0.00	0.00	\$ 30.00
Souvenir Sales	641.50	0.00	480.00	\$ 1121.50
TOTAL INCOME				\$ 1171.50
EXPENSES				
Book Purchase				81.10
Richland Book Printing				570.42
Royalties Richland Book Sales				100.00
TOTAL EXPENSES				\$ 751.52

Personal touches at the B Reactor

By Robert Franklin, BRMA President

We all find different elements of the reactor that interest us. As a historian my trade and interest is in stories, and when I can I seek out the personal stories of large and important events. It's what I connect with. It's why I chose to take over the Hanford Oral History Project in 2016, to seek out and capture personal recollections and views of Hanford (many of which can be viewed at www.hanfordhistory.com). The B Reactor is a highly technical and scientific place and while I certainly understand and respect that part of its history, I am most attracted to the personal touches in the reactor, the evidence of the people that worked there, the realization that nuclear science is like any other discipline – it is about people.

In the spring of 2019 I was lucky enough to participate in an off-public tour of the Reactor to survey the reactor of historical artifacts to add to the Department of Energy's Hanford Collection. These areas include the spaces above and below the reactor and Radiological Buffer Areas, but no contaminated areas. Why not the latter? Well, anything that would be put in the Hanford Collection needs to be able to be publicly released someday, so contaminated objects are a no-go. I saw many interesting things in the various areas – tools specifically modified for use at Hanford (usually with extensions added to be able to operating the tool from a greater distance), the channels were the Ball 3X system is flushed out, and the large mechanisms that operated the vertical safety rods. But there are two items that still stick out to me to this day that I wanted to share with you.

The first is an object that existed all over Hanford in the first two decades of operation – a hand painted sign. A special art that computers have largely replaced. Whenever I see one I think of all the skill and time needed to create something so mundane. I love to examine them and see the guide lines and brush strokes.

Sign painters at Hanford had special flourishes as well – some used “x” marks to dot “i’s” while others used more traditional dots. I also love how no two signs that say the same thing are ever exactly the same. I imagine the artist carefully applying the brush strokes to signs warning workers about which door to use, where to put their masks, what the speed limit was, and many others. I've included a picture of my favorite sign, one that demonstrates the human nature of the artifact all two well. (See Picture 1) One element is the “x’s” over the I’s. But another, more amusing element, is that “promptly” is missing that important “m”! Instead of throwing it away and starting from scratch the decision was clearly made to annotate the sign. Sure, the sign is now incorrect but I'd argue that it catches the eye even more. And isn't that the point of a sign?

The second object is one of many hidden in the B Reactor – graffiti! (See Picture 2) Up above the pile, in the room with the mechanisms that raise and lower the vertical safety rods, is “JUDY 1954” written into the concrete. Not many women at this time worked at B. So who is Judy? A wife, or sister, or girlfriend? Did whoever wrote “JUDY 1954” mean it as a joke? A memento? So many unanswered questions! Another reminder that the human story intersects with the B Reactor in some interesting ways. For all of its technical achievement, power, and danger, it is also a place where people worked, joked, laughed, and occasionally made a few mistakes (luckily for all of us the latter appears limited to the sign-painting department).



Picture 1



Picture 2

The North Richland Construction Camp (Officially “North Richland”) By Burt Pierard, BRMA Historian

The North Richland Construction Camp (North Richland) was the 4th of 5 camps associated with the Hanford Engineering Works (HEW) from 1943 to 1962. Curiously, North Richland was a common link for all 5 camps. In 1947, General Electric (HEW General Contractor after DuPont left in 1946) moved in 20 barracks from Camp 1 (Hanford Camp), absorbed and rehabilitated Camp 2 (3000 Area Camp), and utilized Camp 3 (Columbia Camp) to house the earliest arriving construction workers for both North Richland and the Phase II construction of the HEW plant. In 1950, a large portion of the southern part of the camp was transferred to the U.S. Army for the establishment of Camp 5 (the Army Camp Hanford).

In the summer of 1947, when the Phase II construction of the HEW plant was authorized, General Electric, as prime contractor, was charged with building a construction camp for a maximum of 15,000 construction workers.

Construction would consist of moving in as many existing buildings as possible for housing and other uses; building a new trailer camp, an elementary school, various retail establishments and recreational facilities. All other facilities for a small town of 15,000 would be new construction.

In 1948, coincident construction projects initiated in Richland Village were the Ranch House development for additional Operations workers and the establishment of the Uptown Shopping District for increased retail space.

Columbia Camp

After the Federal Prisons Industries vacated the Camp on October 10, 1947, GE took over the Camp to house the earliest arriving construction workers awaiting completion of their barracks and temporary overflows in the project hiring. The average occupancy of any one person in Columbia Camp was two to three weeks. The peak capability of the camp (250 men) was reached in January, 1948.

Effects of the 1948 Flood

In late May and early June, 1948, flooding of the Columbia and Yakima Rivers caused many evacuees. North Richland provided barracks and trailer space for housing 1,993 evacuees and was prepared to accommodate 600 trailers and 300 barracks occupants more.

Barracks Housing

On July 23, 1947, the rehabilitation of the 3000 Area Camp was started. This could probably be considered the start of the North Richland project. Each wing of these standard army type barracks was a large room which required partitioning. By the end of

August, 1948, there were 129 men occupying these barracks, and by October, 1100 men were housed in them.

20 barracks were moved from Hanford Camp at the rate of one per hour. For the move, each wing of the four-wing units was cut in half, trucked to North Richland and placed on prepared concrete foundations. The capacity of a typical four wing unit was



148 occupants.

During November-December, 1947, 46 two-story barracks from the Pasco Naval Air Base were moved in at the rate of one per day. These barracks were brought to the east bank of the Columbia River by truck, and ferried across the river, still on the truck, on a tug powered barge (because the Pasco-Kennewick bridge did not provide clearance for truck and load), then trucked to location and set on prepared foundations. After partitioning was completed, each accommodated 45 persons.

In February, 1948, 200 “Bremerton” duplex pre-fabricated houses were moved across the state from housing projects near the Puget Sound Navy Yard.

On April 5, 1948, the first women’s barracks opened and filled so fast that a week later another was opened. Two more women’s barracks were moved in but were not needed.

(continued page 6)

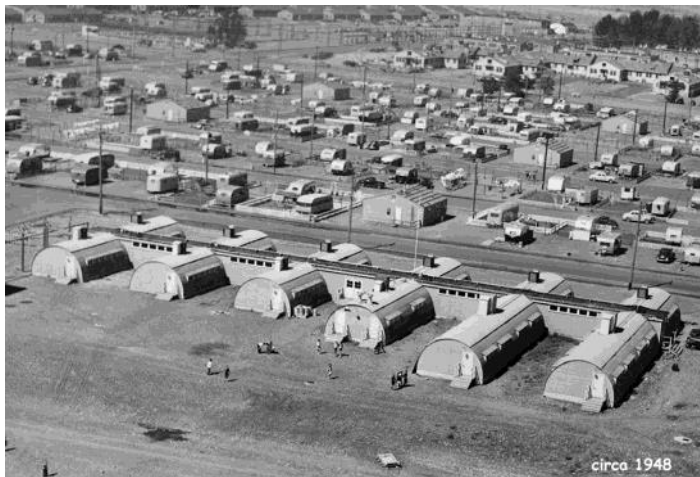
NORTH RICHLAND (continued from Page 5)

In June 1948, the construction of 4 four-wing Hanford type barracks was completed. (These were the only barracks actually built there.) They were completed just in time for the peak Camp population months of June to November in 1948. During this peak, there were about 13,000 persons housed in the Camp of which about 8,000 were barracks tenants.

Other Major Buildings Moved In

A complete hospital was moved, in sections, on barges from the Pasco Naval Air Base and reassembled on site. North Richland Hospital opened on May 17, 1948.

John Ball School was fabricated from Quonset Huts and some new framing to tie them together. John Ball School, a K-8 school, was for grade school age students while the high school age students from North Richland attended Columbia High School in Richland. John Ball School opened on February 16, 1948 with 136 students. Peak enrollment was 921 in January, 1949. (See Picture 2)



Picture 2. John Ball School

Trailer Camp

Starting February 9, 1948, about 6500 people started moving into a 2200 unit trailer court, reportedly the largest trailer court in the country at that time (by the *Tri-City Herald*). The layout of the Trailer Camp was similar to the old Hanford Trailer Camp with bathhouses for every 22 trailer lots. A standard 40-by-40 foot trailer space rented for \$4.20 a week, deducted from the employee's wages. In late July, 1948, one amenity not afforded to the Hanford trailer lots, was the erection of wooden canopies to help protect the trailer residents from the 100-degree-plus weather. Other benefits included government supplied top soil, grass seed, and fertilizer to plant lawns on their lots. (See Picture 3)

Other Notable Camp Facilities

Two cafeterias were provided. The largest, Cafeteria Two, was longer than a football field, more than 400 feet, and had a three-meal, one day capacity of 10,000 people. 3,000 could be served in two hours.

Two taverns were provided. The largest, Tavern One, measured 112 by 192 feet. It was believed to have the longest bar in the world, horseshoe shaped, totaling 243 feet in length. 100 tipplers could be seated at the bar and 550 customers at 134 tables.

Other major buildings provided were the Theater and Rec Hall.

After The Peak

The decline in population brought on different problems. In order to close wings of barracks, the tenants were consolidated in other barracks. The problem was what to do with the unused barracks and facilities.

During 1950, by mutual agreement between AEC, GE, and the U.S. Army, certain barracks, trailer spaces, and other properties were turned over to the Army for development of the Army Camp Hanford.

During 1950 and 1951, several large scale civic events in Richland presented a housing problem for the attendees. Fortunately, there were always barracks rooms ready for occupancy at North Richland that could be made available for those out of town guests. All such incidents were billed and paid for at regular rates.

On March 31, 1952, the responsibility of the General Electric Company for the operation and management of North Richland came to an end. A ceremony on April 1, 1952 marked the transfer of responsibility to the Atomic Energy Commission.



Picture 3. North Richland Trailer Camp. Note canopies and lawns.

From Our Gift Shop By Rick Bond, BRMA Products and Sales

The MAPR/BRMA gift shop has not been open for over a year and a half now as a result of MAPR being closed due to COVID. However, this has not meant that we had a complete lack of sales. Thanks to Burt Pierard we have been making a few sales through our outlet at The Octopus' Garden (OG). Burt had noticed a question in the "Alumni Sandstorm", the Richland High School alumni newsletter. They asked how they could purchase the BRMA published book "History of Richland - 1943-1968" since our gift shop is closed. *(Ed. Note: Deb Burnet, Gift Shop Operator, had set up a mail order system for the book from its original publishing in 2015.)* Burt realized that The Octopus' Garden was our only, active outlet (in store, no mail order) during the Tours shutdown. Burt contacted Gus Sato, owner of the OG, and said if he (Gus) would accept phone orders for the book, he (Burt) would handle and pay the shipping charges. Burt then advertised the availability in the "Alumni Sandstorm." As a result, we have sold over 40 books through our OG outlet in the last few months to people all over the country. In addition, OG has reordered other BRMA gift shop items that they carry and we have helped improve OG's sales by calling attention to the shop. Hey, it's not much but every little bit helps, especially in these very difficult times for our little gift shop.

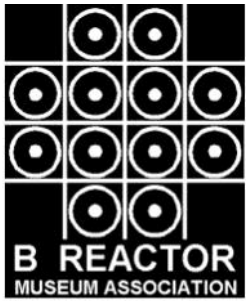
BRMA wants to give a big shout out to Gus Sako, a Richland native and the owner of The Octopus' Garden, for his tremendous support of The Manhattan Project National Historical Park, of BRMA, and of our gift shop. The Octopus' Garden is a small card and gift shop located in Uptown Richland (1327 George Washington Way) that has been in business since 1976. I first approached Gus over two years ago with the idea of selling BRMA products in his shop and he was ready and willing to support MAPR and BRMA. In Gus' words, "as a longtime purveyor of items celebrating Richland's unique nuclear heritage it seems appropriate that The Octopus' Garden is now a

source for B Reactor Souvenirs. Selling a confusing and yet compelling assortment of products, The Octopus' Garden has a long history of offering T shirts and other items related to Hanford. Adding products supporting the BRMA is a natural fit. While selling greeting cards from small publishers and fun gift items to locals has long been OG's main stock in trade, they have noticed an uptick in tourism over the last several years. Gus still chuckles when he thinks about tourists coming to Richland, but he acknowledges it is a trend which will certainly grow in the future with the B Reactor being no small part of it."

Gus purchased several of our items for resale in OG and has continued his support throughout COVID. With the MAPR/B Reactor tours on hiatus due to COVID, there had been no easy access to merchandise supporting BRMA. Building on a relationship which had begun prior to COVID, OG has been working to make items from the BRMA gift shop available to the general public. Other MAPR/BRMA gift shop items that OG carries are: T Shirts, caps, magnets, and the several Hanford related books. BRMA encourages everyone to support The Octopus' Garden in any way you can as Gus has been so generous in his support for MAPR, BRMA, and our gift shop.

BRMA is still actively working to find a long-term solution to our dilemma of who and how we will operate our small gift shop once the tours start up again now that Deb Burnett has retired. Since our revenue from the gift shop is fairly small, because the tours only run about half the year (when running), and because the vast majority of visitors are only in the visitor's center for a short period of time before and after the tours, it is not possible to pay a person (or persons) to manage the gift shop on a full-time basis. Thus, we are in a real bind and are trying to brainstorm ideas for how we can keep the gift shop open into the future. If you have any ideas or are willing to help pursue this endeavor, please contact Rick Bond at (509) 375-1151.





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