

# 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 1995

## CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP: HANFORD'S LASTING LEGACY

B Reactor Museum Association (BRMA) has scheduled a workshop with the Richland City Council regarding Hanford's 50th anniversary and lasting legacy. The workshop will be held on Monday, January 23, 1995, 7:30 pm, in the council chamber of city hall. Topics to be discussed include the Hanford Legacy Project, a "sister city" relationship between Richland and Nagasaki, and a Richland Peace Park. The workshop will initiate a cooperative agreement between BRMA and World Citizens for Peace (WCP) of the Tri-Cities to work together on these important aspects of Hanford's past and future.

The Hanford Legacy Project is a proposed historical museum/interpretive center and science and technology museum in Richland. The project has been promoted by BRMA for several years, and the City of Richland agreed in 1992 to sponsor it. BRMA will request that the city council proceed with the design phase for the facility. We will also propose another "Day's Pay" campaign to provide major funding for the project.

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### OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This has been a very interesting two years! When I took office in January of 1993, the B Reactor Museum Association was struggling to be heard, as efforts to raise support and money for projects such as an Interpretative Center (now called the Hanford Lasting Legacy Project) in temporary housing and an informational kiosk or monument at the Vernita Rest Area were moving discouragingly slowly. Making the B Reactor facility into a museum was a goal that seemed more like an impossible dream!

To trace the metamorphoses of the BRMA projects - inter-related themes and variations - over these two years would take more space than is available here. But current prospects are indeed encouraging, not only for the Lasting Legacy Project but even more for the ultimate goal of seeing a Museum emerge at the B Reactor facility!

We may never know how much would have happened without BRMA's quiet but persistent presence, talking to people such as Assistant Secretary of Energy Thomas Grumbly, RL Manager John Wagoner, Richland City officials and many people active in various positions throughout the Hanford site. However, whether because of BRMA action or not, the first phase of a Feasibility Study for a B Reactor Museum has been completed by a PNL/Parsons contract. The Report from this Study is excellent and has been well received by contractors, DOE and BRMA alike. There is talk of proceeding with the option for opening not only the area currently being toured, but also several other rooms in the facility and opening the road from the Vernita Rest Area. All that is lacking is money!

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### INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In doing the research for the play I was asked to write about the B Reactor, I was fascinated by the history of this incredible war effort. In this age when issues become clouded by "political correctness," where "situational ethics" pervade our culture, it is somehow comforting to realize that the people who worked on our early nuclear effort had a clear sense of mission. They pursued that mission with a singleness of purpose uncluttered by any considerations save one - the absolute need to make sure our enemies did not develop this technology before we did.

Now, fifty years later, our society needs positive role models. I propose that, in the face of those who would rewrite our history and cast us in the role of aggressors, the people who brought this project to success and thus shortened the war and saved countless lives (on both sides), are role models in the finest tradition of human civilization.

This period of time - this standard of behavior - must never be permitted to slip away from us.

As Dr. Berting points out in her message to us, we are at a pivotal time in the development of our vision for the B Reactor. The release of the report which discusses (and supports) the viability of B Reactor as a public edifice is a signal for the beginning of a great deal of work. Many people need to be convinced that this salient period in our nation's history must be preserved. Funds need to be provided, plans drawn up, resources allocated, in order to make it happen.

There is work for everyone in this Association, and more.

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## OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*continued from page 1*

BRMA is also one of the civic groups working together toward the Lasting Legacy Project (see adjoining article on the City Council workshop on the subject) as well as being closely associated with the Hanford Museums of Science and History. These are also very positive developments.

I regret leaving the Tri-Cities just as the BRMA goal appears to be within reach. However, I leave BRMA in good hands, with Gerry Woodcock at the helm and all the other movers and shakers still in full sway - in particular, our liaison with the City officials, Lyle Wilhelmi, and our liaison with a variety of people who can get action, Don Sandberg. Carry on!

*- Dr. Fran Berting, Retiring President*

## INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*continued from page 1*

In the next few months, we will be working to formulate and publish a written set of goals and the strategies necessary for their accomplishment. Your input is earnestly solicited in this effort. In order to be effective, we must also exhibit a collective singleness of purpose and dedication to mission.

No matter what your personal interest, and no matter how little or how much time you can devote to this noble cause, your participation and support will be one of the most important determiners of our success. This is not the time to rest on our laurels, and the B Reactor Museum Association is not a spectator sport.

We have an exciting time ahead of us. As in all life, it will be what we make of it. Let's make it "the best of times." My warmest regards to you all.

*- Gerald Woodcock, President*



## LASTING LEGACY WORKSHOP *continued from page 1*

The Hanford Legacy Spirit is a proposal to form a "sister city" relationship between Richland and Nagasaki on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing in August 1995. This is a proposal of World Citizens for Peace that has been adopted by BRMA. The idea is to extend the reconciliation and friendship that has occurred between the United States and Japan to the two cities, which are already linked by their unique history. Such a relationship would be history-making in itself and would project a positive, forward-looking image of Richland and Hanford instead of the negative, backward-looking image so often portrayed by the media.

The Richland Peace Park concept envisions the construction of a peace fountain in John Dam Plaza across from the Federal Building. The fountain would unite both the Legacy Project and the Legacy Spirit into a concrete symbol of peace and life.

The presentation to the city council will be made by Jim Stoffel(s), who is a co-founder and officer in both BRMA and WCP. All members are urged to attend the BRMA meeting on January 9 to preview and critique the presentation and to attend the workshop on January 23 to support the joint BRMA/WCP proposals.



## EBR-1 MUSEUM

The EBR-1 Museum at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, Idaho Falls, was reopened to the public on May 28, 1994, after having been closed for two years. EBR-1 (Experimental Breeder Reactor No. 1) was the first nuclear reactor in the world that generated usable electric power.

This important historical facility was built in the 1950's, decommissioned in 1964, and first opened to the public in 1975. It was closed in 1991 for modifications to improve public safety. For example, barriers were installed to prevent visitors from climbing on the turbine-generator that produced the electricity. Only visual access to such equipment is now possible. Protective features have also been added to some other fascinating artifacts located there--the Aircraft Nuclear Propulsion reactors.

We commend the DOE-Idaho Office for its foresight and public interest not only in improving the visitor safety features, but also for continuing to fund the operation and maintenance of the EBR-1 Museum so that this important

historical facility is open to the public. The DOE support provides tour guides for tourist visits and for student field trips from regional schools.

For the technical minded, EBR-1 was a NaK-cooled (sodium/potassium) fast reactor. It was a successful breeder, that is, it produced more fissionable material than it consumed.

The EBR-1 Museum is open during June, July, and August. It is on the shortest highway route between the Tri-Cities and Yellowstone Park. Stop by and enjoy!

*- Miles Patrick*

## MEETINGS

Board meeting: January 5, 1995  
Regular meeting: January 9, 1995

Meetings are held at 5:00 pm at the Richland Public Library. Regular meetings are on the second Monday of the month. Board meetings are on the preceding Thursday.

## HANFORD ON DISPLAY AT THE SMITHSONIAN

Historic components from Hanford are now on display in our nation's capital. They are part of the Smithsonian Institution's "100 Years of American Technology" exhibit. This new, permanent exhibit is in the National Museum of American History. The components from Hanford are in the section of the exhibit that tells the story of science during World War II. The section starts with activities at the University of Chicago and proceeds through the Manhattan Project to the questions that arose after the atomic bomb was used to end the war with Japan.

The components from Hanford's D Reactor include parts of the operator's console and other control room instrumentation used to monitor and control the reactor. The Smithsonian wanted components from the B Reactor control room. However, because B Reactor is a National Historic Site, components of the same vintage from D Reactor were substituted. The B Reactor Museum Association (BRMA) concurred with this decision because BRMA continues to work for the preservation of B Reactor as a public access historical museum.

The D Reactor components are considered a key to the Smithsonian's display on the Manhattan Project. Paul Forman, curator of modern physics at the Smithsonian, said of this display, "This is the reactor in miniature. Since the reactor *in toto* is beyond our even contemplating collecting, it is an essential surrogate." Peter Daniel, curator in charge of the period spanning the 1940's to 1970's, indicated that Hanford's role has long been overshadowed by other parts of the atomic bomb program. Hanford was the largest single installation of the Manhattan Project.

The idea for a Hanford exhibit began in 1986 when Stanley Goldberg of the Smithsonian contacted Jay Haney, then at the Hanford Science Center. Jay kept the ball rolling for a number of years to get these important pieces of Hanford's history preserved and on display.

It was not an easy task to restore the various panels and other parts to their original condition. During 22 years of operation, the control room underwent extensive alterations. Restoration was accomplished by working from early photographs and schematic drawings, and by scrounging through Hanford's other reactor buildings for original parts. Approximately 2,000 hours of work were required to restore the components and get them ready for shipment. It took far less elapsed time to build D Reactor itself than to make the necessary arrangements and restore the selected components.

- Roger Rohrbacher

## 50 YEARS AGO ...

February 4-11, 1945 - Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin meet at Yalta

March 1945 - Tokyo is firebombed, resulting in 100,000 casualties

## OFFICERS ELECTED

Officers for 1995 were elected by a unanimous ballot at the regular membership meeting on November 14, 1994. Gerry Woodcock was elected to lead BRMA as president. Gerry, a 20-year Hanford veteran, is a Principal Engineer with Westinghouse Hanford Company. He is a past chairman of the Eastern Washington Section of the American Nuclear Society and is the current Public Information Committee chairman. He also serves on the Public Information Committee of the national ANS.

Incumbents were elected to continue in the other officer positions: Jim Stoffel(s), vice-president; Del Ballard, secretary; and Roger Rohrbacher, treasurer. We extend a warm welcome to President Woodcock and wish him and the entire Executive Board a year as successful as it promises to be busy and exciting.



## HANFORD MUSEUMS REOPEN

The Hanford Museums of Science and History, formerly the Hanford Science Center, held a grand reopening on October 28 and 29. The newly remodeled facility features a replica of an early guard station at the entrance and mockups of the Hanford underground waste storage tanks. A planned second phase of the remodeling will see the completion of new exhibits throughout the Museums.

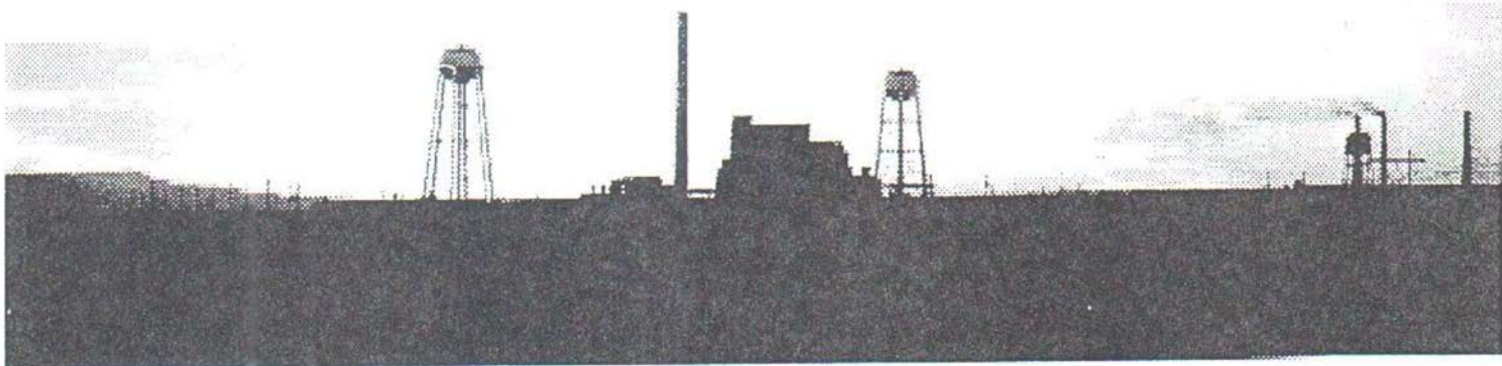
The Hanford Museums offered the community at large a variety of activities to enjoy during the two-day celebration of the reopening. Visitors were enlightened as to the relationship between science and the arts through magic demonstrations, ballet and musical performances, and a theatrical presentation on Madame Curie.

Jim Acord, nuclear artist, recounted his experiences with the nuclear community as he described his unique art work. Several of his original pieces were on display. Due to Jim's generosity and the help of BRMA members Don Sandberg and Del Ballard, visitors to the Museums were able to see the black granite monument that Jim has fashioned in commemoration of B Reactor. Mounted on the monument are the bronze plaques awarded by several national societies in recognition of the historic engineering achievements that B Reactor represents.

The reopening of the Museums coincided with the 50th anniversary of the restart of B Reactor. Onsite tours of B Reactor were coordinated by Lyle Wilhelmi of the B Reactor Museum Association. With other BRMA members graciously donating their time as guides, 150 persons were able to tour the historic facility that changed the world.

- Gwen Leth





## Purpose and Goals

The B Reactor Museum Association is a voluntary association of groups and individuals committed to the historic preservation of the Hanford B Reactor, the first large-scale nuclear reactor ever built. The goals of the Association include:

- Educating the public as to the historical and technological significance of the B Reactor.
- Obtaining better public access to B Reactor, including road access from Highway 240.
- Restoring the reactor building and contents to reflect, as near as possible, its appearance during actual operation.
- Adding exhibits that reflect the history of the Hanford Engineering Works.
- Promoting other tourist attractions and amenities in the general vicinity of the B Reactor, in order to increase visitors to the area.
- Promoting a 50 year anniversary commemoration of Hanford's B Reactor and its historical and technological significance.

# B Reactor Museum Association

## Renewal and New Member Application

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

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ (MSIN: \_\_\_\_\_)

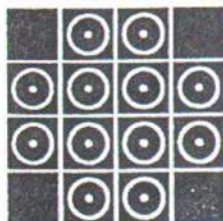
Phone, (H) : (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Official Group

(W) : (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Type:       New membership       Renewal membership  
 Category:       Individual (\$20)       Group (\$25 + \$10 for every 100 members over 100)

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

[Please make checks payable to BRMA]



Mail this application with payment to:  
B Reactor Museum Association  
P.O. Box 1531  
Richland, WA 99352

B Reactor Museum  
Association  
P.O. Box 1531  
Richland, Washington  
99352  
Supporting the  
50th Anniversary  
Commemoration of the  
Manhattan Project

## **B REACTOR NAMED CIVIL ENGINEERING LANDMARK**

The American Society of Civil Engineers has named the B Reactor at Hanford as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. A special public ceremony was held at the John Dam Plaza in Richland on March 26 to commemorate this honor from ASCE. Some 150 members of the public and the ASCE attended the event, which was followed by a tour of the reactor.

To earn the ASCE historic landmark designation, structures at least 50 years old must demonstrate unique construction and engineering achievements that contributed to our nation's heritage and to the advancement of engineering. This latest award places B Reactor on the same list of historic civil engineering feats as the Brooklyn Bridge and Hoover Dam.

B Reactor was the world's first full-scale production reactor. Construction began in June 1943 as one of the initial projects of the top-secret Manhattan Project. Civil engineers were responsible for construction management, design of structural features, shielding, water cooling systems, and other aspects of B Reactor. Following start-up 15 months later, the plant produced the plutonium for history's first test of an atomic bomb at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945, and for the Nagasaki bomb used on August 9, 1945. The reactor operated from 1944 until it was permanently shut down in

February 1968.

In 1993, B Reactor was honored as a Nuclear Historic Landmark by the American Nuclear Society; and, in 1992, it was added to the National Register of Historic Places. In 1976, B Reactor received a National Historic award from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

The recent ASCE Landmark award was presented to John Wagoner, Manager of DOE's Richland Operations Office, by ASCE President-elect, Stafford Thornton, of Charlton Heights, West Virginia. Other speakers at the ceremony included Lane Bray, Washington State Representative, Major Michael Baehre, US Army Corps of Engineers, and Rich Hovey, Del Ballard, and John Axford of ASCE.

The bronze plaque awarded by ASCE has been added to a black granite monument commemorating B Reactor's major national honors. Richland sculptor Jim Acord created the monument last year as part of Hanford's 50th Anniversary. Following receipt of the award, Mr. Wagoner stated that he is dedicated to the preservation of B Reactor for historic purposes.

- Del Ballard

## **50 YEARS AGO ...**

February 2, 1945 - Los Alamos receives its first  
plutonium from Hanford