

# Happy Holidays

## "The Secret" Concludes On Page 4

# 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. 33, Issue 1

Winter 2025

### From The Control Room

by BRMA President Dave Marsh

Hello fellow BRMA members and friends, this report concludes my first year as the President of BRMA and I am so grateful for our Board Members and the increases we have seen in supporting BRMA through renewed memberships and new members as well. I have learned so much and been stretched in ways I did not know that I could stretch as my initial year as President has progressed.

I am excited about the special guest speakers we have had this past year and the continued interest in the topics we have selected to share with our membership and the public and look forward to continued presentations surrounding Hanford and the nuclear world. Through these Public Meetings held at the Richland Library our membership has increased due to new attendees joining our Association. Thanks to all for your presentations and continued support of BRMA and the Manhattan Project National Historical Park. Please take a look at our Treasurer's report and the report from Rick Bond our Products and Sales representative and from Bob Carosino our Membership chairperson showing the support and new members received this past year. We are lining up a great slate of presenters for 2025, and our plans for the first quarter are as follows:

- |                                  |                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2025  | Becky Burghart will present an update on the National Park Service roll at Hanford.                       |
| February 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2025 | Robert Franklin will present "Black History at Hanford & the Tri-Cities" to celebrate Black History Month |
| March 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2025    | Terri Andre and Megan Simpson will present "Hanford Women of the Cold War"                                |

All of these presentations will be at the Richland Library in the Doris Roberts Gallery. Please plan to attend these presentations and thanks for your continued support of our organization.

Over the past year I have had the privilege of attending the "Tri-Cities National Park Committee" made up of representatives from the Department of Energy, the National Park Service, Visit Tri-Cities, TRIDEC, Benton and Franklin County elected officials, quad City mayors, and appointed representatives from many local businesses with the intent to muster support and community guidance for the management of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park at Hanford. BRMA took on the project to establish "Way Finding" signs installed by the highway department directing tourists to the park Visitor's Center. This project has not been completed yet, but thanks to Adam Fyall of the Benton County Commissioners Office this project should be completed in 2025. BRMA continues to look for ways to support the Park and the B Reactor and with the help of purchases of souvenirs and memorabilia we can provide monetary support directly to projects at the Park.

Two other highlights of 2024 were the number of visitors on B Reactor and Pre-Manhattan Tours this past season and the celebration of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the startup of B Reactor. Please see additional articles on these two topics in

(continued on Page 8)

#### BRMA Moderator Staff

Editor.....Burt Pierard..... BPierard98@aol.com  
President.....Dave Marsh.....pkeeper55@hotmail.com  
Treasurer.....Liza Eschbach....ejeschbach@gmail.com

#### Reporters:

Bob Carosino (Membership).....bobbcar@msn.com  
Rick Bond (Products&Sales)....rockobondo@charter.net  
Becky Burghart (MPHA).....Becky\_Burghart@nps.gov  
Connie Estep (Dupus).....esteplectricco@gmail.com  
C. Mark Smith.....cmsmith@earthlink.net

The B Reactor Museum Assn. meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7 PM, in a Conference Room at the Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Dr., Richland. Membership Meetings this quarter will be Jan. 13, Feb. 10, and Mar. 10.

# Membership Report

By Bob Carosino, Membership Chair

# Dupus Boomer — by Dick Donnell

Contributed by Connie Estep

Our end of 2024 paid count is 105 Individual Members & 3 Group Members (Xenophile, Bibliopole & Armorer Chronopolis; Atomic Heritage Foundation, and The REACH). These numbers include 28 LIFE members.

New members this quarter were Jeff Keyzer, Susan Coleman, Patrick Jaynes (new \$250 LIFE member), Richard Bilskis, Arlen Herrington, Mike Schmitz, Jeffry King, Roger Landon, Robert Quirk, Adrienne Jacobsen, David Reeploeg, and Patrick Morgan. THANK YOU for your membership!

Members and friends contributed gift amounts in addition to dues. This quarter, additional donations were received from new member Jeffry King, and from renewing members Dennis McLain, Elaine and Charles Davis, John Swanson, Maynard Plahuta, and Cindy Kelly.

To send in your Renewal, the Form is below to: Hard Copy- Clip and Send In; E-Copy-Print, Clip and Send In.



## 2025 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 are 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**

## From The NPS— Ranger Updates

by **Becky Burghart, MPHA Hanford Site Manager**

The one constant in life is change. At lot change is happening in the park right now. The NPS currently has four of our nine permanent position vacant. Wendy Berhman, the park superintendent, will retire on December 28 after a long and celebrated career with the NPS. Charles Beall, Superintendent of Klondike Goldrush NHP in Seattle, will be the park acting superintendent for four months starting on January 12. Our regional office is moving forward to backfill the superintendent’s position.

Approval to fill Kalina’s position as a GS-7/9 park ranger position subject to furlough was received yesterday. At the earliest this position will be filled in mid-to late June if hiring freezes are not implemented with the new administration starting in January. If any of the positions that are currently vacant are affected by a hiring freeze, then these positions could be vacant for a significant amount of time. The other park vacancies are the Los Alamos Site Manager and Los Alamos park ranger. We currently have two staff in acting positions at Los Alamos to keep things afloat in the short-term.

With the staffing limitations at Hanford, I will be significantly scaling down the number of community and education programs we attend and the number of ranger programs we offer in 2025. I am not currently doing any program planning for 2025 given the

uncertainties around hiring. Once I have a better understanding of if/when the park ranger position will enter on duty, I will start program planning for 2025.

One bright spot for hiring is Tiffany Zadi started in mid-October as the park’s first full-time visual information specialist. Tiffany manages park’s website, app, social media platforms. She will be leading the implementation of the park’s digital asset management program and serving as the park-wide public information officer. We are very excited to have Tiffany working with the park and continuing to build the park’s digital platforms. We reached nearly 1,000,000 people last year between the website and app (this does not include social media contacts). To put that into perspective, 85,000 people visited the park (this is data for all three units combined). Our digital platforms have a huge reach!

Latino Outreach Intern Drew Gamboa finished up his internship in December. We are collaborating with the REACH Museum and Hanford History Project on the Migration to Community: Latino/as at Hanford and the Tri-Cities Exhibit that will be on display at the REACH from February 4 through March 22.

I am looking forward to working with BRMA again in 2025! Until next time, Becky

<b>QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT</b>				
<i>With Calendar Year Summary</i>				
<b>Liza Eschbach, BRMA Treasurer</b>				
	10/01/2024 10/31/2024	11/01/2024 11/30/2024	12/01/2024 12/31/2024	
<b>Category</b>				
<b>INFLOW</b>				
2024 Donations	\$ 40.00	\$ 115.00	\$ 130.00	
2024 Dues	\$ 60.00	\$ 415.00	\$ 50.00	
Souvenir Sales	\$4,819.11	\$4,483.53	\$4,682.17	
<b>Month Total Inflow</b>	<b>\$4,919.11</b>	<b>\$5,013.53</b>	<b>\$4,862.17</b>	<b>Quarter Total</b> \$14,794.81 <i>Year 2024</i> \$41,134.88
<i>Calendar Year 2024</i>				
<b>OUTFLOW</b>				
BRMA Business Expenses	\$ 187.73	\$ 38.79	\$ 474.25	
Souvenir Supplies	\$ 0	\$ 796.22	\$ 237.64	
<b>Month Total Outflow</b>	<b>\$ 187.73</b>	<b>\$ 835.01</b>	<b>\$ 711.89</b>	<b>Quarter Total</b> \$1,734.63 <i>Year 2024</i> \$23,833.19
<i>Calendar Year 2024</i>				
<b>NET</b>				<b>Quarter Net</b>
<b>Month Net</b>	\$4,731.38	\$4,178.52	\$4,150.28	\$13,060.18 <i>Year 2024 Net</i> \$17,301.69
<i>Calendar Year 2024</i>				

### The Secret - Part 3

*Something was going on in a remote corner of Washington State.  
Federal investigators were determined to discover what it was.*

By C. Mark Smith, BRMA Reporter

***Editors Note: The concluding article, “The Secret - Part 3” is published in this issue, and Parts 1 & 2 in the Summer & Fall 2024 Moderators, respectively. (b-reactor.org/newsletters/2024 to read Parts 1 & 2.)***

**Senator Truman kept his promise to Secretary of War Stimson** not to investigate Hanford, at least for a while. But U.S. District Court Judge Lewis Schellenbach’s letter and the constant flow of complaints from members of Congress, such as Washington’s newly elected junior senator Warren Magnuson, regarding the contested real estate transactions and the cost and assumed inefficiencies in DuPont’s massive construction program, finally drove Truman to action. Committee investigators felt sure that there had to be widespread waste and inefficiency involved in a project of that size. Moreover, some members of the staff felt handicapped by Truman’s hands-off agreement with the War Department.

An earlier effort to investigate Oak Ridge had been rebuffed. Jean O’Leary, General Groves’ personal secretary, received a telephone call from a security officer who reported that Truman Committee investigators were at the gate and demanding to enter the plant. In Groves’ absence, she made an executive decision. “There could only be one as far as I was concerned. My instructions had always been that the bomb was of the utmost secrecy. I was to tell no one about it. As far as I was concerned, President Roosevelt would not learn it from me. So, I said to the security officer, “Make up any excuse you want, but don’t let them in.”<sup>18</sup>

On December 3, 1943, Harold Robinson, a former FBI agent and Truman’s first staff investigator, sent Truman a memo complaining of chronic complaints about the project, “. . . in my humble opinion, this is another ‘Canol,’ [the controversial artice oil and gas pipeline] wherein the guise of secrecy is being resorted to by the War Department to cover what well may be another example when the lid is taken off.”<sup>19</sup>

Truman decided to quietly send his longtime confidant and personal assistant, Fred Canfil, out to Washington State to find out what was going on. Nominally a member of the committee staff, Canfil arrived at the Hanford gate unannounced on the anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Tuesday, December 7, 1943. Security officers at the gate reviewed his official senate credentials and immediately called Matthias’ office. He ordered them to detain Canfil and not to let him on the premises until he got back to them. Matthias then called Groves who—equally surprised and agitated about this congressional interference—which he thought Stimson had nipped in the bud—called Matthias and told him to deny him entry.

His mission thwarted, Canfil drove to Walla

Walla, where he wired Truman “THAT NO SENATOR, OR ANYONE CONNECTED WITH THE SENATE WAS TO BE GIVEN ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT.”<sup>20</sup> It was Canfil who would later give Truman the sign that sat on his presidential desk: “The Buck Stops Here.”<sup>21</sup>

Several months later in early 1944, a serving member of Congress, Compton I. White, who was not affiliated in any way with the Truman Committee, decided to show up unannounced at the project’s Yakima gate on a Sunday morning, demanding to be admitted. A Democrat, White had represented northern Idaho in Congress since 1933. A former railroad conductor and telegraph operator, White had become a successful miner, lumberman, and rancher and was accustomed to getting his way. He wanted to see the land that had been condemned for himself.

Not surprisingly, White was also detained and questioned for four hours “under bright lights in a windowless room,” where he became increasingly agitated. Finally, he was driven to Matthias’s home on the Columbia River in Richland where Matthias tried to talk with him for some time. “He left,” Matthias later wrote, “feeling somewhat satisfied, I thought, but not entirely pacified.” Groves directed Matthias to send the congressman a letter of explanation, but not an apology.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps because of the increasing congressional interest in the Manhattan Project, particularly in the House of Representatives where all budget measures begin, Secretary Stimson, Army Chief of Staff Marshall and Vannevar Bush, director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD), grudgingly provided a secret background briefing to key House leaders on February 18, 1944, in the hope that it would help safeguard secrecy and improve the chances for financial support in Congress.<sup>23</sup>

Truman learned of the briefing and saw it as an opportunity to open a formal investigation. He crafted a carefully-worded proposal for the War Department’s consideration that would allow for a limited investigation of the Hanford site. It was quickly rejected citing a directive to the Army from President Roosevelt, mandating “extreme secrecy” be exercised, “particularly with respect to its purpose, the raw material used to develop the final product, and the manufacturing processes used.” Only those “for which knowledge was a

(continued on Page 5)

## “The Secret”

(continued from Page 4)

vital necessity should be informed,” and then, “in minimum detail only.”<sup>24</sup>

On March 10, Truman tried again, this time directing his inquiry directly to Stimson. He outlined the history of his prior requests and said that the committee had received many complaints, including from five members of the Senate who were not members of the committee. Truman made it clear that he was not trying to obtain information about the Manhattan Project, but only about the living conditions of the workers, which were generating many of the complaints.

He offered to send only those Army officers who had been assigned to the committee, rather than the committee’s civilian investigators. Truman felt that his request—while unlikely to sway Groves or Stimson—would at least be well-received by his fellow senators. Stimson responded on March 14 as expected: “I am declining to take into my confidence any further persons, whether Army officers or civilians. I am merely carrying out the express directions of the President of the United States.”<sup>25</sup>

Stimson’s answer seemed to satisfy Truman, if not his Senate colleagues. Secretary Stimson had a different view of Truman’s request. In a diary entry dated that same night, he wrote: “He [Truman] threatened me with some dire consequences. I told him I had to do just what I did. Truman is a nuisance and petty, untrustworthy man. He talks smoothly but he acts meanly.”<sup>26</sup>

**Meanwhile, the Hanford landowners’ legal cases** were working their way through the Yakima federal courtroom of Judge Lewis B. Schwellenbach, Truman’s former Senate colleague. In preparation for the upcoming trials, Matthias met with Schwellenbach and Justice Department officials on August 27, 1944. Following the meeting, the Hanford land acquisition office requested an increase in land values for several of the tracts still in litigation.

Condemnation trials began in October. Judge Schwellenbach allowed juries to visit Hanford and look at the tracts in question. The juries almost always agreed with the landowner and awarded payments greatly in excess of the government’s appraisals.

Groves and Matthias opposed the higher payments, but they were much more concerned about how much time the whole process was taking. It was interfering with DuPont’s construction schedule. Even after the War and Justice Department’s agreement to settle some cases out of court and provide more judges to hear the cases still in litigation, the results were disappointing.

Norman Littell, the head of the Justice Department’s land division, believed that the Army was responsible for the low land appraisals and complained in a letter to Under Secretary of War Robert Patterson. Groves vigorously defended the Army’s appraisal process and brought the disagreement with Littell to the attention of Attorney General Francis Biddle.

In October, Littell took matters into his own hand. He appeared unannounced in Judge Schwellenbach’s Yakima courtroom, requesting that no more condemnation trials be held until each of the pending cases had been reappraised. His appearance came as a complete surprise to Schwellenbach and Hanford officials. Not surprisingly, his comments received wide coverage in local newspapers which published many editorials and letters. The Associated Press picked up the story and gave it national exposure.

Groves was unaware of Littell’s action until October 16. He immediately appealed to Attorney General Biddle saying that Littell’s action was, “obviously incompatible with essential military security, the need for which has been carefully explained to him” and that he had generated a large amount of, “undesirable publicity concerning a project which the President has personally directed should be blanketed with the upmost security.”<sup>27</sup>

Groves initiated a security investigation of the incident, sending his top security officer, Lt. Col. John Landsdale, to Hanford. This resulted in renewed efforts to curb local publicity about the project. On November 21, he sent another three-man team to Hanford to obtain “firsthand knowledge of the conditions which influenced the problems of acquisition at the (Hanford) site.”<sup>28</sup>

Groves’ letter helped reignite the longstanding feud between Littell and Biddle over the management of the Land Division, which resulted in Biddle’s call for Littell to resign on October 18. He refused, and it took personal action by President Roosevelt eight days later to fire him. Roosevelt’s action prevented Littell from testifying before the Truman Committee and undoubtedly exposing the Hanford project to even more publicity.

The land acquisition problem at Hanford remained unresolved until the Hanford Site was transferred from the Army to the newly created Atomic Energy Commission in December 1946.

**Ground was broken for the first Hanford reactor** (designated 100-B) on August 27, 1943. B Reactor was completed on September 13, 1944, barely a year later. The first plutonium separation plant was finished in December 1944, and the first batch of plutonium was shipped to Los Alamos, New Mexico, on February 2, 1945. Plutonium from Hanford was used in the Trinity test of a plutonium bomb on July 16 and in the warhead of the atomic bomb released over Nagasaki, Japan, on August 9, 1945.

In recent years, there has been a great deal of conjecture among historians and others about just how much Truman knew about the Hanford project. President Franklin Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945. In his 1955 memoirs, Truman claimed that he “was not to learn anything whatever as to what that secret was” until Secretary Stimson approached him following a cabinet meeting held just after his swearing in and asked to speak to him about “a most urgent matter. . . about an immense

## “The Secret”

(continued from Page 5)

project that was underway—a project looking to the development of a new explosive of almost unbelievable destructive power.”<sup>29</sup> However, Truman’s July 15, 1943, letter to Judge Lewis Schwellenbach suggests that the vice president understood the broad objectives of the Manhattan Project, if not the specific details.

President Truman would learn those details the next day, April 13, from James F. (Jimmy) Byrnes. A former congressman, senator, Justice of the Supreme Court, and Director of the Office of War Mobilization, Byrnes had served Roosevelt as his unofficial “assistant President.” Byrnes had retired only four days before Roosevelt’s death. Now he was summoned back to brief the new president on what Roosevelt had confided to him.

Why had Truman been excluded from knowledge of the Manhattan Project after he became vice president

on January 20, 1945, remains a mystery. Byrnes’ explanation was that Roosevelt had left for the Yalta conference forty-eight hours after his inauguration and had been gone for six weeks. “When he returned, he was sick, and I know his illness which prevented him from doing anything more than was absolutely necessary was responsible for his not having advised Truman of the Manhattan Project.”<sup>30</sup>

Whatever the scenario, the whole world learned the secret of Hanford and a lot more on August 6, 1945, when President Truman announced the bombing of Hiroshima and Secretary Stimson issued a detailed press release.

As the Pasco Herald’s mega-headline read:  
“IT’S ATOMIC BOMBS”

### End Notes Citations - Part 3

<sup>18</sup>Leo Giovannitti and Fred Freed, *The Decision to Drop the Bomb*, (New York, Coward-McCann, Inc.1965). 27-28.

<sup>19</sup>Frank McNaughton and Walter Hehmeyer, *This Man Truman*, (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1945). 113.

<sup>20</sup>Donald H. Riddle, *The Truman Committee: A Study in Congressional Responsibility*, (New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers University Press, 1964). 103.

<sup>21</sup>“The Buck Stops Here” Desk sign, Harry S Truman Library and Museum. Accessed October 30, 2023.

(<https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/education/trivia/buck-stops-here-sign>)

<sup>22</sup>Williams. 84-85.

<sup>23</sup>D. M. Giangreco. *Truman and the Bomb: The Untold Story*. (Lincoln, NB. Potomac Publishing Co., 2023). 26.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Giangreco. 29.

<sup>26</sup>Giangreco. 30

<sup>27</sup>Jones, 340.

<sup>28</sup>Jones, 341.

<sup>29</sup>Giovannitti and Freed. 26; Giangreco. 32.

<sup>30</sup>Giovannitti and Freed. 28.

## C. Mark Smith, RIP

by Burt Pierard, BRMA Reporter



August 19, 1936—November 8, 2024

Sadly, BRMA lost its Communications Chairman, C. Mark Smith, author of “The Secret” currently publishing in “The Moderator”, in November. He was 88 years old and happily married for nearly 59 years and had two sons.

Mark was born in Tacoma, WA and graduated with degrees in History and Political Science from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma in 1961. He then embarked on a 40-year career in economic development until retirement in 2005 that included eight years as a senior official in the Nixon, Ford and Carter Administrations. From 2000 to 2005, he served as the manager of business and economic development for the City of Richland. The next 19 years he dedicated to his interest in history, biography and politics, researching and writing books. This naturally attracted him to The Manhattan Project and BRMA. He did a number of shorter writings that were less than book length.

## BRMA Election Results For 2025

By Burt Pierard, BRMA Reporter

At the December 9, 2024 Membership Meeting, Officers and Committee Chairs were elected according to our By-Laws. President Dave Marsh presented a slate of nominees who had volunteered to continue (with two exceptions). Maynard Plahuta decided to retire and sought out David Reeploeg to run instead and there was the sudden passing of Board Member Mark Smith in November, leaving a vacancy. There were no further nominees from the floor. The uncontested nominees were then approved by a unanimous vote.

### Officers are:

President,,,,,,,,,,,,,,/,,,,,,,,,,,,,,Dave Marsh;  
Vice President.....Robert Franklin;  
Secretary.....Charles Davis;  
Treasurer.....Liza Eschbach.

### Committee Chairs are:

Membership.....Bob Carosina;  
Products and Sales.....Rick Bond;  
History and Archives.....Burt Pierard;  
Interpretive Projects.....Ben Johnson;  
Govt. and Commun. Relations.....David Reeploeg;  
Communications.....Vacant.  
(See article on this Page to handle vacancy)

## Tours Report

by Dave Marsh, BRMA Reporter

Wow, what a tour season! Thanks to Julie O’Neill, the final numbers for the 2024 tour season have been tabulated. The total number of visitors for 2024 is 15,277. This is a new record of attendance. The previous record was in 2009, with a total of 14,537.

The tour season for B Reactor was not planned to be conducted due to the proposed project to replace the roof on B Reactor. However, since the project was delayed, the tour season officially began on March 29<sup>th</sup> and was scheduled through the remainder of the tour season on a month to month basis. Since the roof project was planned, but delayed with no firm schedule to be completed, two tours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday were added to accommodate as many visitors as possible. The roof project did not get started during the 2024 tour season and as a result the tour attendance exceeded the previous attendance record set in 2009 when official tours first began.

The following is a summary of the tour and attendance numbers through October 31, 2024. Thanks to Julie and Anne, additional information on our visitors was captured and is shown below.

The tours brought visitors from 52 countries, all 50 states and 247 Washington State cities and 37 Washington State Counties.

Tour Season: March 29, 2024 – October 31, 2024

<b>B Reactor Tours</b>	<b>14,461</b>
<b>Pre-Manhattan Tours</b>	<b>816</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>15,277</b>

## Meet Bethany Close - Our Newest Board Member by Dave Marsh, BRMA Reporter

BRMA is very pleased to welcome our newest Board Member Ms. Bethany Close. Bethany joined BRMA as the Communications Chairperson at the beginning of this January and we are delighted to involve her in the work BRMA has planned for 2025 and future years. She is currently a Marketing Manager for a private sector construction company, a young mother and wife, and has served as a member of the Tri-Cities Economic Development Organization (TRIDEC) and as a staff member for Visit Tri-Cities. Bethany has only been in the Tri-Cities for the past 8 years or so, but has a very strong interest in the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, B Reactor and the efforts BRMA has taken to support the National Park and the Park tours. Her communications skills will be a great addition to the board, and she has extensive experience with social media and will take over the role of spreading word associated with BRMA activities and events and documenting information and accomplishments

## **80th Anniversary Of The Startup by Dave Marsh, BRMA President**

As many of you are aware, 2024 was the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the startup of B Reactor. In May, I received an email from a visitor to the BRMA website with an inquiry regarding what plans had been made for a celebration in September. At that time there had been little discussion concerning how to celebrate this significant event. As a result of the inquiry and the recognition that a celebration of any type would take considerable planning to arrange, BRMA took significant steps to get the ball rolling.

The first decisions to be made were what type and how big a celebration was appropriate. Secondly, since the reactor may not be available for a celebration due to the roofing project, we had to consider where the celebration might take place. As time went on it was clear that the reactor most likely would be available for a celebration of some sort, so planning progressed with that in mind. BRMA began conversations with the DOE Program Manager for the National Park, and also with the National Park Service Superintendent to discuss what was appropriate and who should be involved in the planning process.

Due to those inquiries, Lucas Engineering (namely Patrick Jaynes), Becky Burghart from NPS and Colleen French from DOE got involved in planning a celebration for September or October. It was decided that October would present a better time frame due to volume of scheduled tours to the reactor and October 16<sup>th</sup> was selected for the event. A draft agenda was created with requests for the primary supporting agencies to provide an overview of their roles and responsibilities and commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary. BRMA asked Del Ballard, one of the founding members of BRMA, to provide a presentation on Preserving B Reactor and BRMA history associated with establishment of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MAPR). Del's presentation will be uploaded to the BRMA Website in order to make it available to those that were not able to attend the celebration. Additionally, Rob Roxburgh from the Central Plateau Cleanup Company gave the opening welcome to the guests. That was followed by a performance by the Mid Columbia Master Singers (MCM) of "Roll On Columbia" Following Del's presentation, Heather Dale from the Department of Energy presented "From the Manhattan Project to Clean Up". Becky Burghart then presented "Sites, Stories & Legacy of the Manhattan Project". Ted Miller of the MCM recited "Recital in B Reactor" a poem by Kathleen Flenniken. Dr. Michael Mayes Director of the Hanford History Project provided a brief history of the role of the History Project and management of the artifacts, stories and documentation surrounding the Manhattan Project. Vanis Daniels of the African American Community Cultural & Educational Society provided a brief history of African American worker contributions to the Manhattan Project. MCM presented "Ashes from Nuclear Dreams" which was very well received. Each speaker was given about 10 minutes for their presentation. Patrick Jaynes then provided closing remarks from Lucas Engineering. Guests were then allowed to roam throughout the reactor and investigate the displays and reactor building.

The celebration was limited to 100 attendees since it

was conducted during regular tour hours. Even so, those in attendance were very pleased with the presentations and the time to visit the reactor. A special thanks goes to each organization that works to maintain the reactor building and the tour program and help to arrange this celebration, and supports the MAPR.

Buses were provided for registered guests and a special invitation was extended to former Representative Doc Hastings to attend due to his role in drafting the legislation that ultimately resulted in the establishment of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

The tour lasted until 3:15 PM when guests were loaded onto buses and returned to the Visitor's Center. Guests were very appreciative of the tour and the chance to participate in the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. Many of the organizations that were involved in the tour program and MAPR history set up informational tables within the reactor building to share information about each organization.

A special thanks also goes to the B Reactor Staff and NPS staff who work diligently to maintain the building and the tour pathway so that our visitors have this fantastic experience. BRMA is grateful for each one of you (Patrick, Ruben, Nathan, Keith, and John as well as Anne, Julie and Becky).

### **From The Control Room (continued from Page 1)**

this publication.

2024 brought with it significant changes in the management of the Hanford portion of the National Park. In September, the DOE MAPR Program Manager Colleen French announced that after 12 years in that role was going to take a new position within the Department of Energy. We already miss Colleen and wish her the very best in this new role. She has stated that she will keep her fingers in the pie so to speak regarding the park and B Reactor. BRMA wishes to welcome the new DOE players to the table. There are two new faces associated with DOE management of the MAPR, those being Andy Wiborg and Heather Dale. These two individuals are not new to DOE, but are relatively new to the MAPR program. The other major changes were within the National Park System. It was reported in previous Moderators that Kalina Hildebrandt left the MAPR program and took a new job in the Blue Ridge Parkway National Park. Additionally, the MAPR Superintendent, Wendy Berhman is retiring at the end of 2024. We will also miss Wendy as she has been very involved over the past couple of years. BRMA looks forward to connecting with the new folks at DOE and Wendy's replacement at the NPS.

I look forward to my second year as President and what the future brings for BRMA and the Park.

Until next time, Dave



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

Because the B Reactor tours are supposed to be closed for the next two to three years due to planned upgrades to the facility, the tours were very well attended all the way to the end of the season (end of October) as people wanted to go before it shut down. The well attended tours translated to very strong sales in the gift shop. Sales in October were about \$4,000, a very strong showing compared to past years.

Gift shop sales for all of 2024 were very strong this year. Total sales for the year were almost \$33,000 (about \$3,000 more than last year's sales which is an increase of about 10%) and our profit was almost 60% of total sales. Considering that our shop is not in the MAPR Visitor's Center but is located about two blocks away at Xenophile Books (2240 Robertson Drive), many of our guests did make the extra effort to drive or walk over to the shop. We also did about \$1,450 in sales to The Octopus' Garden (located in Uptown Richland at 1327 George Washington Way), about \$1,600 in sales to The Reach museum (located at 1942 Columbia Park Trail, Richland), and about \$300 in sales to Visit Tri-Cities (7130 W Grandridge Blvd Suite B, Kennewick). Total sales for the year were about \$36,000. I always like to point out that 100% of the profits from our gift shop go toward supporting our local unit (Hanford B Reactor) of MAPR. The gift shop proceeds are used to fund interpretative projects at the reactor and many other reactor related projects.

As the BRMA Products and Sales committee chair I have a lot to be thankful for this holiday season. First and foremost I am very thankful to Steve Woolfolk and Brian Sheldon who own and operate Xenophile books and who house and manage our gift shop, take the money, keep

track of sales, pay our taxes, and do a great job of promoting our products all for a very very small fee. They are generally there every day from 10 am until 4:30 pm Monday through Saturday. We can't thank them enough as we would not be able to have a gift shop without them. Next I am thankful to Gus Sako and The Octopus' Garden staff for all their support. They never hesitate to purchase and promote our products and they are always super friendly and professional to work with. Next I am thankful for The Reach museum and Visit Tri-Cities for purchasing and promoting our gift shop items. They also do a great job promoting our national park. Please keep these businesses in mind and support them whenever and however you can throughout the year and tell your friends about them.

I am also thankful to Bill Turner and Jan Jones for their continued support – Bill makes the clocks for us almost at cost and we make a healthy profit on them, and Jan is my right-hand person for ideas and she also does a fabulous job with our jewelry items and with keeping the little shop looking neat and clean. Last but certainly not least I am thankful to all the docents, the Visitor's Center staff, and the DOE and NPS staff for all their support and for directing our visitors to the gift shop. It's a little bit of an effort to make our visitors aware of the shop since it is not in the visitor's center and to get them to make the effort to travel over to the shop so without their encouragement we would not have anywhere near as many potential customers and sales.

A great 2024 is in the books.

Let's hope for strong gift shop sales in 2025!



### The Octopus' Garden

"We have fun stuff!"

Books, incense, toys, Gnomes, socks, candles, buttons,  
bobble-heads, lunch boxes, t-shirts, games, cards  
funky home décor, keychains, rubber chickens,  
posters, and oh, so much more.

**1327 George Washington Way  
Uptown Richland  
509-946-0077**

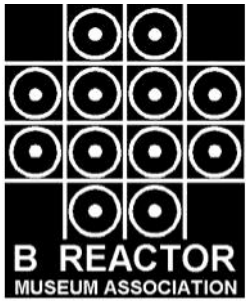
### Xenophile Bibliopole & Armorer Chronopolis

So Much More Than A Used Book Store

Collectible Science Fiction, Movie Posters, Movie  
Memorabilia, Retro Futuristic Toys, Games and Action  
Figures. We also boast a Mini Museum dedicated to  
Hanford and the Manhattan Project.

**2240 Robertson Dr, Rich.  
(Horn Rapids Indust. Pk)  
509-375-7505**





PO Box 1531  
Richland, WA 99352

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