



## From The Control Room

by Maynard Plahuta

First, I personally thank all BRMA members and all general public people who actively participated in the January 21<sup>st</sup> National Park Service (NPS) public meetings in Richland to comment on the NPS Draft Special Recourses Study/Environmental Assessment report. I understand the comments iterated at Richland set the stage for almost identical comments at the other sites. It appears all are singing the same tune---a multiple park site with locations at Hanford, Oak Ridge, and Los Alamos. See Bob and Sally Ann Potter's article elsewhere in this issue of *The Moderator*.

As Bob and Sally Ann report, it is anticipated the final NPS report will be issued this fall. However, there is some conjecture that Congress may pass legislation based on the draft report only. This is known to have happened on other National Park designations—parks established by Congress prior to issuance of an NPS final report. Further, such legislation may be compatible with the input received from the three major public meeting sites. I suggest no one should become overly confident or optimistic.

The major B Reactor tour season is upon us. We are happy to have a significantly greater number of tours this year, as reported elsewhere in this issue by Bob Horgos. I'm pleased there is an increased number of two-hour B Reactor tours. I also appreciate the dedication of our tour guides lead by tour coordinator Bob Horgos. Thanks, guys!

The BRMA review and consultations with DOE of videos produced by the Atomic Heritage Foundation (AHF) which began last November (interrupted a bit because of the NPS meeting) are essentially complete. With a final DOE review followed by interaction between BRMA, DOE, and AHF we are hopeful for final DOE and AHF approval shortly. BRMA is appreciative of DOE funding this endeavor.

Likewise, BRMA has completed its review of the Blue Book entitled "B Reactor: First In The World" for

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## B Reactor Receives Strong Community and Political Support To Be Included in Manhattan Project National Historical Park

by Bob and Sally Ann Potter

Public Relations Committee Co-Chairs

The long awaited "Draft Special Resources Study/Environmental Assessment" report on the "Manhattan Project Special Resources Study" was published by the National Park Service and released for public review and comment in November 2009. The purpose of the study was to comply with Public Law 108-340, passed by Congress in 2004, which directed the Secretary of the Interior to "conduct a study on the preservation and interpretation of historic sites of the Manhattan Project", including facilities at Hanford, Oak Ridge, Los Alamos and Dayton, Ohio, for potential inclusion in the National Park System.

While the draft document reported on earlier released evaluations of the significance, suitability, and feasibility of facilities at the four locations, the main interest in the draft report was the evaluation of five possible alternatives for the management, preservation and historical interpretation of the Manhattan Project facilities. To the dismay of most readers, the one alternative recommending a unit of the National Park System included only facilities at Los Alamos as representative of the Manhattan Project, but did not include facilities at Hanford, Oak Ridge, and Dayton!

Public meetings were held in Richland, Oak Ridge, Los Alamos and Dayton to receive public comments on the draft report. Two meetings were held at the Richland Red Lion on Thursday, January 21, 2010, at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm. About 85 people attended the afternoon session and 45 in the evening. Most all of the individuals who spoke at the meetings strongly recommended that Hanford and Oak Ridge needed to be included, along with Los Alamos, in a multi-site Manhattan Project National Historical Park. The consensus of the attendees was that the full story of the Manhattan Project, the birth of the nuclear age, and the impact on world history can not be completely and comprehensively told without

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## From The Control Room (cont'd)

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accuracy, clarification, and needed updates. Thanks to Del Ballard, Norm Miller, Bill McCullough, and Burt Pierard for their review expertise. Del did a tremendous job of getting all review comments incorporated into a copy for DOE and AHF review and acceptance.

Finally, I call your attention to the reprint of an article in the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) publication in this issue of *The Moderator*. Thanks to Richard Romanelli for notifying me of this article and suggesting we publish it in our newsletter. The NPCA is not a part of the National Park Service, but rather, an independent association. I contacted NPCA to request its approval to reprint and they immediately responded favorably. One of the quotes in the article attributed to me is not mine. It is the "book end" quote. That fine quote, as you who attended the NPS evening meeting will recall, is from Frank Roddy. I mention to the writer when he interviewed me it was a quote at the meeting which I thought very appropriate. Frank, I apologize for the mix up. This again simply demonstrates that one can not be sure what will be printed when one is interviewed.

## 2010 Charitable Contributors

By Burt Pierard

A new feature of the Moderator is to give Public Acknowledgement of the generous cash contributions to BRMA. The following list covers the period from Oct. 1, 2009, through April 1, 2010. Successive issues will cover the preceding three-month period.

Patrick Berrigan	Robert Meichle
Carl Connell	Wanda Munn
William L. Galligan	Lloyd Piper
Bob Horgos	Richard Vivian
Keith Klein	Everett Weakley
Bill McCullough	John Wimett

John Wimett's contribution was dedicated to Dr. Thomas F. Wimett of Los Alamos.

### Elections report (continuing)

By Burt Pierard

Flash! Bob and Sally Ann Potter have agreed to continue as their Award-Winning Dynamic Duo Public Relations Directors. Welcome back aboard!!!

## Membership Report

By Burt Pierard, Membership Chair

2010 BRMA membership dues are now due.

Everyone who paid 2010 dues prior to this issue of the Moderator should have received their Membership cards. Give me a call, (509) 943-3400,

if you have a question on whether you have paid. Anyhow, our 2010 paid Membership is 78 (94 last year) and we are awaiting the usual Spring Rush after *The Moderator* comes out. To send in your Renewal, Clip or Print the form below.

### 2010 Renewal and New Member Application

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

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

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(current Hanford employees)

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you; please mail this application with payment to:

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

## **B Reactor Receives Strong Support (cont'd)**

*(Continued from page 1)*

including B Reactor at Hanford and facilities at Oak Ridge. A number of the public comments questioned the validity of many of the reasons and concerns cited in the report to justify including Los Alamos in a national historical park and to dismiss Hanford and Oak Ridge from a multi-site National Park System unit. It was pointed out that many of the concerns expressed in the report could be jointly addressed and resolved through discussions and agreements between the Departments of Energy and Interior.

Strong community support to include B Reactor and Oak Ridge in the National Park System unit was provided in a letter signed by the cities of Richland, West Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco; Benton and Franklin Counties; the Ports of Benton, Kennewick and Pasco; Tri-City Developmental Council; Tri-Cities Visitor & Convention Bureau; the Pasco, Tri-Cities Regional and West Richland Chambers of Commerce; Hanford Communities; Young Professionals of Tri-Cities; and BRMA. President Maynard Plahuta presented a statement from BRMA and also submitted a formal letter of support (see P. 4) for the inclusion of Hanford and Oak Ridge. A similar letter of support for the multi-site historical park was read and submitted by the Energy Communities Alliance, representing communities across the country near DOE sites.

The two public meetings were also held in Oak Ridge on January 26 with 140 members of the public in attendance who delivered a similar message - the National Park Service is the nation's historian and teller of our nation's history and the entire story of the Manhattan Project can not be told without including Oak Ridge and Hanford, along with Los Alamos. A letter of support for including the three sites in a Manhattan Project National Historical Park was also submitted by the City of Oak Ridge and east Tennessee organizations.

In addition to receiving outspoken community support to include B Reactor in a Manhattan Project National Historical Park, B Reactor has also received strong bi-partisan political support. Congressman Doc Hastings, Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, and Governor Chris Gregoire have all written individual letters directly to Jon Jarvis, Director of the National Park Service, strongly urging the Park Service to include B Reactor in any plans for a Manhattan Project National Park System unit. Similar bi-partisan political support for a multi-site Manhattan Project National Historical Park unit to include Hanford and Oak Ridge has been provided by the Tennessee Congressional delegation.

In his letter, Congressman Hastings specifically

questioned a number of the vague assertions and conclusions made in the draft report, including: 1) difficulty in managing a multi-site park unit, 2) concerns about ownership, site boundaries, and visitor access constraints, 3) safety, liability, and facility maintenance concerns, and 4) the conclusion that a multi-unit Manhattan Project park unit would be more expensive than most other National Park Service units. In addressing the management difficulties of a multi-site park unit, Congressman Hastings restated what BRMA's Terry Andre said in the Richland public meeting, "if the federal government could coordinate a massive endeavor like the Manhattan Project in the 1940's, then we should certainly be capable of coordinating efforts to tell the story across three sites in this day and age of email, teleconferencing and the internet.

As for the other issues, Representative Hastings pointed out that DOE is the sole owner of the facilities and will continue to be responsible for maintenance and safety under the law and would continue to bear the cost associated with ownership, maintenance and preservation of the Hanford, Oak Ridge, and Los Alamos facilities. He encouraged that before the final report is developed and issued, the Park Service work closely with the Department of Energy to adequately address and resolve these issues. He also requested a more complete and open assessment of the costs associated with a three-site Manhattan Project National Park Service unit than what is currently in the draft report.

The public comment period for the draft report ended on March 1 and the Park Service Project team is currently analyzing the public comments and preparing the final report. The final report will be submitted through the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of Interior, Kenneth Salazar, who will submit the final report to Congress later this year. Unlike environmental regulatory study documents, the report will not identify "a preferred alternative" for a national park service unit, but will be identifying the "most effective and efficient management option alternative" for protecting significant resources and providing for public enjoyment.

While the public will have no additional input into the final report, the NPS Study report will provide recommendations only, and that the final decision on establishing a Manhattan Project National Historical Park will be made by Congress, who directed that the NPS Study be conducted. Therefore, we should certainly be encouraged that with the high level of public input and the strong bi-partisan support that has been expressed by the Congressional delegations from both Washington and Tennessee that any Manhattan Project National Historical Park System unit will be a multi-site unit that will include Hanford's B Reactor, Oak Ridge and Los Alamos.



# 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

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January 22, 2010

Ms. Carla McConnell, Project Manager

**Manhattan Project Sites Special Resources Study**

U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service, Denver Service Center  
12795 W. Alameda Parkway  
PO Box 25287  
Denver Co. 80225-0286

Dear Ms. McConnell

**RE: Manhattan Project Sites Special Resources Study**

The B-Reactor Museum Association thanks you for holding the January 21, 2010, public meeting in our community and giving citizens the opportunity to provide public comment. The purpose of this letter is to provide a written recap of my comments made at the meeting so they may become part of the formal record.

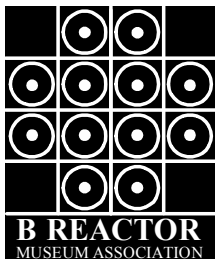
We are grateful that the National Park Service (NPS) study determined the resources related to the Manhattan Project are suitable for inclusion in a National Historic Park. We are in agreement with the National Park Service (NPS) that a comprehensive story of the nationally significant Manhattan Project is not told anywhere. We believe this gap needs to be filled in the National Park system.

We are pleased that Alternative E of the NPS study was selected as the preferred alternative and that a Manhattan National Historic Park is feasible. However we are extremely disappointed that Alternative E does not include Department of Energy (DOE) owned facilities at Hanford and Oak Ridge. These facilities are critical for a comprehensive understanding and portrayal of the Manhattan Project, and therefore essential to be included in Alternative E. The physical integrity of these facilities would greatly enhance a Manhattan National Historical Park and are essential elements of a comprehensive story of the nationally significant Manhattan Project.

It is important for all to recognize the significance to visitors of being able to physically tour these DOE owned facilities. A tour of these facilities helps to establish a greater appreciation of how they fostered and ushered in the Atomic Age, and to understand the key role they played in the Manhattan Project. Without being able to visit and physically tour these facilities would be somewhat comparable to not being able to see the physical features of the caverns at the Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

We are inordinately disappointed the study team dismissed the entire study area as a national historic park. The study notes this was largely because the criterion for feasibility was not met. We believe this decision and the reasons given for it are very weak and perhaps based on faulty or questionable assumptions or assertions. For example:

- The concern over cost and NPS liability appears weak and unfounded: DOE is uniquely qualified by experience to maintain the physical integrity of the DOE-owned facilities, and



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Dedicated to the preservation  
of Hanford's historic B Reactor

## BRMA Letter To NPS (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)

to ensure public health and safety, thus mitigating the NPS concern of cost and liability. DOE is responsible as required under the Atomic Energy Act and other laws to maintain safe facilities and to ensure public health for all workers and visitors. In any situation DOE can not escape its responsibility for cleanup, safety, national security, historic preservation, and upkeep. To conclude that NPS could somehow assume liability and realize unforeseen costs appears to be inconceivable and without credible basis.

- The concern that visitors would be significantly limited due to safety and national security issues also appears overstated. Public tours at Hanford and Oak Ridge are already available and have been for some time. The issues related to this concern are largely administrative in nature and have already, are being, or can be resolved to ensure convenient public access.
- The concerns related to size, boundary configuration, distance between sites, and land ownership related to DOE owned facilities at Hanford and Oak Ridge appear again to be based on faulty assumptions or exaggerated concerns. As I noted earlier, tours are already conducted at B-Reactor and X-10 at Oak Ridge. For the most part the perceived issues of boundary configurations, distance between sites, and land ownership do not currently exist, and would not if these sites are included in the park. At Hanford for example, plans are to relocate security boundaries whereby B-Reactor will be outside the restricted area, thus mitigating boundary and security concerns. NPS discussions with DOE at Oak Ridge could perhaps have similar results. Another expressed concern was the cost of administrative management between and among distant sites. These are easily handled at low cost with today's communication technologies.

Therefore, the B-Reactor Museum Association recommends Alternative E be modified as follows:

1. Include the DOE owned facilities at all three Manhattan Project Sites (Hanford, Oak Ridge and Los Alamos) in the **Manhattan Project National Historic Park**--- ONE PARK/MULTIPLE SITES. DOE will continue to be responsible for maintenance, safety, and security at all DOE owned facilities and sites. (These responsibilities cannot be delegated to another party.) Include the B-Reactor at Hanford. Include the X-10 Graphite Reactor, and the Y-12 Beta-3 Racetracks at Oak Ridge.
2. These three locations will become a full NPS service unit, with DOE and local communities as junior or supporting partners.

3. The NPS park superintendent would be in charge of overall interpretation, design and location of exhibits in facilities and location of exhibits and kiosks, educational materials, and assignment of NPS personnel. DOE and local communities will assist in these activities as needed and at NPS request. Local community museums will support the site with local guides or with materials as requested or needed.
4. DOE would continue to own all facilities and sites that have ongoing safety issues.

The B-Reactor Museum Association encourages NPS to view our recommended modification to Alternative E as an exciting adventure in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Park management crossing boundaries of time and space as well as an innovative administration opportunity. We believe the three DOE sites will greatly facilitate our existing National Parks with an exciting and very different element not found elsewhere in the park system. The local community, DOE, NPS and the entire nation will definitely gain from the NPS expertise in preserving a national treasure like B-Reactor when it is included in the Manhattan National Historic Park.

We encourage NPS staff to ensure top echelon NPS and Department of the Interior officials are fully informed and knowledgeable of the significance of having all three sites part of a Manhattan National Historic Park. The best way to do this is to request these officials tour the facilities at Hanford and Oak Ridge. This will enable them to gain a full appreciation of why it is necessary to collectively include these facilities in the park. Our community would be happy to accommodate a tour of the B-Reactor and would welcome any officials who may wish to visit.

Thank you again for hosting the public meeting in our community. We appreciate your effort to provide our citizens the opportunity to offer comments on your study.

Sincerely,



Maynard Plahuta, President  
B-Reactor Museum Association

CC: Senator Patty Murray  
Senator Maria Cantwell  
Congressman Doc Hastings

# THE BIG ONE

The Manhattan Project was the biggest covert operation imaginable, and it changed the outcome of the world's biggest war. Now the Park Service is hoping to tell the story.

By Mark Arsenault

*Editor's note: The following article appeared in the Spring 2010 issue of "National Parks", the magazine of the National Parks Conservation Association, and is reprinted with permission of the NPCA. For further information about the NPCA, go to [www.npca.org](http://www.npca.org).*

In 1942, the United States began an unprecedented research and manufacturing program at the very edge of theoretical science, in a furious effort to create a weapon capable of ending World War II. At its peak, the Manhattan Project was as big as the auto industry, employing 130,000 people at remote sites across the country. Hidden from the public, the project's scientists, engineers, and machinists built massive industrial plants to refine uranium and create plutonium – a new element – as part of a successful effort to create the first atomic bomb.

The story has been told in films, books, museums, and historic sites for years. Now the National Park Service is wrapping up a study with the U.S. Department of Energy that could lead to the establishment of a Manhattan Project National Historical Park. This new park would preserve critical 1940s-era facilities and tell a more complete story of a decisive event of the 20th century.

"There are many lessons from the Manhattan Project that are relevant today," says U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman (ID-NM), who introduced legislation to begin the park study, authorized in 2004. "We work to preserve our significant historical sites because they are part of our national heritage and because they tell important parts of our national story."

"Few people understand how special it was," says Cynthia Kelly, founder and president of the nonprofit Atomic Heritage Foundation, which supports creating a new park. "This effort changed the history of the United States and the history of the world." Atomic weapons ended the war without an invasion of Japan, which, she says, would have caused incalculable loss of life and may have brought the Soviet Union into the Pacific theater, redrawing the world map for the rest of the century, as it did in Germany.

The Manhattan Project introduced the atomic age and made America a super-power. It also changed the way the United States valued scientific research and discovery. Before World War II, the United States was in the backwaters of science, especially physics,

but J. Robert Oppenheimer – the physicist who led the effort to create the atom bomb – had studied in Europe. The program he oversaw left a vast and often controversial legacy. The Manhattan Project launched a nuclear arms race and the decades-long Cold War, but the research that followed also yielded nuclear energy and new tools in the field of nuclear medicine, such as PET scans and radiation therapy for cancer. Behind this effort were communities of people who were essentially sequestered for years to contribute to the broader manufacturing efforts. The creation of these secret cities displaced former residents and brought about cultural clashes that are still remembered decades later.

As for the location and scope of a possible Manhattan Project Park, details are still fuzzy. Los Alamos, New Mexico, is the most famous location due to the scientific advances made there and its location 270 miles north of the Trinity atomic test site in Alamogordo, New Mexico. But critical parts of the program were based in other states, including major industrial complexes in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Hanford, Washington, where limited public tours are already being offered. Oak Ridge was an enormous atomic research and manufacturing site that refined uranium for the "Little Boy" bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. The X-10 Graphite Reactor at Oak Ridge, built in 1943, produced plutonium samples for the scientists at Los Alamos, and is now a national historic landmark. Hanford is the site of the Manhattan Project's "B-reactor," the first industrial-scale nuclear reactor in history, which was designated a national historic landmark in 2008. The B-reactor produced plutonium for the first atomic bomb test explosion at the Trinity site, and for the "Fat Man" atom bomb dropped on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. The war ended within days of the Fat Man explosion.

The Department of Energy owns key parcels in all three locations, but the agency recognizes that tourists aren't likely to pull off the highway for a Department of Energy sign. Enter the Park Service.

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# THE BIG ONE—cont'd

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In a draft report of its study released in December, the Park Service proposed several alternatives for preservation short of a national historical park, and one option for a new park that would tell the story of the Manhattan Project from Los Alamos, New Mexico, where Oppenheimer and other top scientists did most of their work. The agency had considered a multi-site park that would include other locations around the country but decided that option was too costly and unmanageable.

The Department of Energy, however, favors the multi-site approach that would include Los Alamos, Oak Ridge, and Hanford – a proposal that has the backing of leaders in those local communities, as well.

"Both Oak Ridge and Hanford have first-of-a-kind or one-of-a-kind facilities and devices that used some of the century's most innovative and revolutionary technologies, and remain in essentially the same condition as they did during the Manhattan Project," noted F.G. Gosling, federal preservation officer and chief historian for the Department of Energy, in comments included in the study report. These "crown jewels of the Manhattan Project... should be recognized as such and accordingly be brought under the protection of the [national parks] arrowhead."

The Park Service is far better equipped to tell such a vast national story, says Maynard Plahuta, president of the B-Reactor Museum Association in Richland, Washington. A multi-site Manhattan Project National Historical Park would be the bookend, he says, to the USS Arizona Memorial, a park unit at Pearl Harbor. The sinking of the Arizona in 1941, "started the war, and the Manhattan Project ended it," he says. "We should tell the whole story."

Under the Department of Energy's three-site park proposal, the Park Service would be responsible for exhibits and interpretation, and the Department of Energy would handle maintenance, safety, and security at the locations it owns. Given these divisions of duties, the Park Service's costs would likely be significantly less than those of many traditional large parks, according to Gosling.

Earlier this year, the Park Service collected public comments on its draft report at a series of hearings in the communities near the potential park sites. Local officials around Hanford, Oak Ridge, and Los Ala-

mos took the opportunity to lobby for a multi-site park in their communities. The agency will review the public comments and aim to come up with a final recommendation as early as this fall. In the end, Congress will decide how to tell the story of the Manhattan Project, by passing legislation that will outline the scope and management of any new historical park.

Plahuta urges Congress to embrace a multi-site park that tells the full story of the Manhattan Project. "This was such a great advance in science and technology," he says. "It's like Niagara Falls – I could describe it, but you've really got to experience it for yourself to understand."

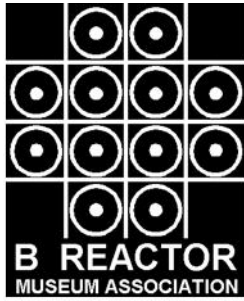
# # #

Mark Arsenault is a freelance journalist and the author of four mystery novels. He lives in Massachusetts.



## Dupus Boomer Comes To *The Moderator* By Burt Pierard

BRMA member Connie Estep, CREHST Museum Curator (and Dupus Aficionado), has generously offered to supply some of her favorite Dupus Boomer cartoons for each issue of *The Moderator*. Look for them in this and every future issue of *The Moderator*.



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## **B Reactor Tours**

**By Bob Horgos, BRMA Tour Coordinator**

The 2010 B Reactor tour season for the general public kicks off on April 6 with the first of 125 tours scheduled for the year. The 2010 tour season is expected to accommodate about 7,000 visitors, approximately twice the number that toured B Reactor in 2009. The tour season runs from April until the end of September. All tours originate at the Manhattan Project B Reactor Office complex located at Route 240 and Logston Blvd.

Sixty of the tours will be Public Tours that consist of a tour of the Hanford Site, including the town sites of Hanford and White Bluffs, a 75 minute guided walk-through the B Reactor plus a tour of the massive Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF), the Cold Test Facility, and a drive-through the Vitrification Waste Treatment Facility construction site, which is approximately 50 percent complete. Prior reservation for seats on these tours is mandatory.

Remainder of the tours are for B Reactor only. These tours offer the general public the opportunity to walk

through Hanford's historic B Reactor for a 2-hour guided and narrated tour of the world's first full-scale nuclear reactor. Transportation for these tours is by chartered bus that transports visitors via Highway 240 to the Vernita Bridge and then travels east on Old Route 6, along the Columbia River, to the B Reactor site. Reservations for seats on the B Reactor Tours are recommended and desirable although walk-ons are acceptable when vacant seats become available prior to the scheduled time of departure.

Additional VIP Tours of B Reactor for government officials, Native American tribal leaders, special private tours and news media tours will be scheduled as required. All B Reactor tours are sponsored by the Richland Office of the Department of Energy, and are organized and directed by Hanford contractor Mission Support Alliance (MSA), who has contracted the scheduling and coordination of all B Reactor tours to Indian Eyes, LLC. Details for the dates and departure times plus other information relative to the tours can be found on the Richland Department of Energy Web page at: [www.hanford.gov](http://www.hanford.gov)