



Rocky Flats Cold War Museum

Weapons to Wildlife

Feb./March 2008 Vol. 2 # 2

Newsletter for Friends of the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum



Museum receives artists' banner & large posters

Do you have any Cold War or Rocky Flats-related artifacts that you would like to donate to the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum?

Recent donations include a large banner from Artists Against Nuclear War (left) and a set of colorful posters on a major study on the potential off-site effects from toxic emissions from Rocky Flats. Cartoonists from the Denver Post and Rocky Mountain News have also promised to donate cartoons that mention Rocky Flats.

Mark K. Oeser of Arvada, organizer of "Artists Against Nuclear War" with 30 to 40 artist, writers, poets and friends, participated in numerous demonstrations at the Rocky Flats Plant from about 1978 till it closed. He donated the banner his group used. Oeser spent 23 years as a naval propulsion engineer in the U.S. Navy before becoming an artist, sculptor and mixed media specialist. He used to invite contributing artists to exhibit their work in his gallery the first week in August using the theme "Artists Against Nuclear War." Artists from Japan, the United Kingdom, Australia, Puerto Rico, France, Denmark and other places submitted art for the exhibit. He says some names and countries are on the back of the banner (see photo on the right). He said AANW participated in marches sponsored by a group known as "SHUT DOWN." He said, "We would start the march at the courthouse in Boulder and march to the west gate (of Rocky Flats) every Sunday.

Margaret Ruttenbur, former manager of a Rocky Flats Workers Study at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, recently donated a number of large posters that the department used to tell the story of the Health Advisory Panel's research project called the Historical Public Exposures Studies on Rocky Flats. The display summarized the project which investigated toxic emissions offsite from Rocky Flats fires and leaks and estimated the potential exposure to nearby communities. It was funded after the June 1989 FBI Raid of Rocky Flats and completed in 1999.



Inside...

- *Feisty former Rocky Flats transportation head tells stories*
- *Thanks to donors*

Quote...

"At any given time, the United States has on alert more than 2,300 warheads, delivering a combined explosive power of about 550 megatons (550 million tons of TNT)—the equivalent, to use a popular measure, of 44,000 Hiroshimas." --Brian Hall in *New York Times Magazine*, March 15, 1998



Museum Meetings/Events

Tues., April 8, 7:30 a.m., Executive Committee, Panera Bread, Highway 36 and Church Ranch Exit (southwest corner).

Wed., April 9, 5 p.m. Rocky Flats Cold War Museum board meeting at 11025 Dover St., Ste.1000, Westminster (northeast of 108th Ave. and Wadsworth Blvd.) meets 2nd Wednesday of each month; Location info: Bob Darr, (303) 377-9672

Thurs., April 24, 3 p.m., Education Committee in a Conference Room at Broomfield Municipal Center, 1 Des Combes Place, Broomfield.

Wed., May 14, 5 p.m. Rocky Flats Cold War Museum board meeting at 11025 Dover St., Ste.1000, Westminster (northeast of 108th Ave. and Wadsworth Blvd.

Please contact 303-388-6978 for more information.

Special thanks to these donors to the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum

The following people made recent donations to the museum as a result of a fund-raising letter sent in late November, 2007.

Susan Becker, G. David Brown, Bob DeGrazio, Thelma Downing, Marion Galant, Charles Jerke, Don McNulty, Robert A. Nelson, Robert F. Parnell, Natalia Poppeliers, Robert Rector, Jim Starr, Angela Stewart, Ltg (Ret) Tommy G. Stewart, Lucille and Luanne Tyrrell, Henry and Reiko Urano, Edward Vejvoda and Jean Woodis.

BOARD MEMBER BIO: Ann J. Lockhart, Writer/Editor

Ann Lockhart, writer/editor, who is serving her second term as president of the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum, retired from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment in 2002. As public relations director of the state agency in the 1980s, she handled news media relations and publications. She also participated in annual Rocky Flats emergency response exercises. In the 1990s, she did community relations for the department's Rocky Flats Historical Public Exposures Studies team, communicating about the potential off-site health impacts from the former nuclear weapons plant's toxic emissions. She edited a newsletter, technical topic papers and fact sheets, talked to concerned citizens and sponsored a speaker's bureau with presentations to more than 50 civic groups in the northwest metro area.



An Iowa native, Ann earned a B.A. in English from the University of Iowa. She then taught high school English/journalism in Texas for two years before moving to Denver and working for the Sentinel suburban newspapers for five years. She interviewed the Rocky Flats Plant manager in the 1970s and also toured the plant. She went on to edit the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center newspaper. She later earned a Master of Special Studies in Applied Communication from the University of Denver. In the late 1980s, she became the first president of the National Public Health Information Coalition, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She started Eagle Eye Editing to do part-time writing and editing on environmental and health topics.

A founding museum board member, she started the newsletter in 2007 and has also helped develop the web site, logo, brochure, posters and news releases. She chairs the Oral History and Financial and Fund-Raising Committees and is helping the Education Committee plan exhibits and educational activities. The long-time Toastmaster is active in the National Federation of Press Women. She belongs to an investment club and tutors refugees in English in her spare time. She loves reading, movies, bicycling, travel and public health history. She believes Rocky Flats history is a fascinating saga of interesting facts, stories and conflicts which should not be buried or lost.



Weapons to Wildlife

The *Weapons to Wildlife* newsletter is usually issued every two months by the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum board. In July 2001, the board incorporated as a 501(c) 3 organization to develop the museum to “document the historical, social, environmental and scientific aspects of Rocky Flats.” We want to tell all sides of the Rocky Flats story.

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Web site: www.rockyflatsmuseum.org

Rocky Flats Oral Histories: www.bplcarnegie.org/oralhistory/ Click on special collections and click on Rocky Flats.

Email: editor@rockyflatscoldwarmuseum.org to be removed from or added to this newsletter distribution list.

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News Briefs:

April Reunion: The Rocky Flats Truth Force will celebrate its 30th anniversary April 11-13 at St. John's Episcopal Church, 1419 Pine, Boulder. The public is invited to all events, beginning at 7 p.m., Friday, April 11, when Truth Force member Daniel Ellsberg, who released the Pentagon Papers in 1971, will speak on what the Rocky Flats resistance meant for the global disarmament movement (\$10 at the door). Members of the Rocky Flats Oral History Committee will present a panel at 2 p.m., Sat., April 12th. For information, see <http://truthforce.net/>.

Meeting in Washington D.C.: Kim Grant, past museum board president, went to Washington D.C. with David Abelson, executive director of the Rocky Flats Stewardship Council, in late February. They visited U.S. Department of Energy Legacy Management officials and with U.S. Sen. Wayne Allard's staff to discuss the federal appropriation of \$492,000 for the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum and how it would be used. Grant met with staff from the National Endowment for the Humanities which provides museum exhibit grants. He also attended the Manhattan Project Symposium at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Studies moderated by Cindy Kelly, executive director of the Atomic Heritage Foundation. The foundation has a traveling exhibit on the Manhattan Project which other museums can borrow if they cover shipping and insurance costs.

Natural Resource Damages: Rocky Flats Stewardship Council members have been meeting with representatives from parks and open space staff from local city and county governments adjacent to Rocky Flats to discuss possible projects to restore natural resource damages. Federal funds totaling \$4.5 million remain after three of four mineral rights properties at Rocky Flats were purchased. One owner refused to sell, so the remaining funds are available for restoration projects. At its meeting on April 7, the council will review projects proposed by Arvada, Boulder, Broomfield, Westminster, Boulder County, Jefferson County, Jefferson County Nature Association and the Trust for Public Land.

Oral history excerpt

Feisty Flats transportation manager made folks toe the line

This interview of Dolores (Dee) Krieg was recorded on November 23, 2004, for the Maria Rogers Oral History Program and the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum. The interviewer is Hannah Nordhaus, and the transcriber is Sandy Adler. To read/listen to the full transcript, click on www.bplcarnegie.org/oralhistory, then Special Collections, then Rocky Flats.

Abstract: Dee Krieg, former head of the Transportation Department at Rocky Flats, talks about the challenges and satisfactions of that job. She also discusses a wide range of other topics about the plant, including the Cold War, those who protested against the plant, the FBI raid, and the cleanup of the site.

Delores (Dee) Krieg was born in Wisconsin in 1931 and grew up in Mosinee, a town of about 1,400 close to Wausau...



(How did you end up...moving to Rocky Flats?)

I went to Mosinee High School, and I went to the University of Wisconsin. My aunt Helen was executive secretary to Hans Hague, who was president of Employers Mutual of Wisconsin...when I got out of school, Mr. Hague said, "I understand you won't work for me." And I said, "No, I won't."...He said, "Go to Denver." I said, "What's in Denver?" He said, "Well, Dow Chemical Company is building a big new plant out there for the government. I don't know very much about it, but go out there and get a job."

So a friend of mine and I drove out here...and they said, "Oh, Mr. Bean wants to see you." Bean was head of personnel. "Oh, we have a job for you, but it's going to take about four months until you get your security clearance." I said, "What do you mean, you have a job for me?"

"Well, the president of Dow called me and said that when you came, we should give you a job." I said, "Oh, I suppose he's a friend of Hans Hague's." Mr. Bean said, "Well, I've heard that name before." I said, "Well, if I can't get the job on my own, then I don't want it." So I filled out all the forms for a security clearance...and got back and went up to Employers to see my aunt. Mr. Hague said, "I understand you won't work for me, and you won't even accept any gratuities." I said, "That's right. If I can't have it on my own, I don't want it." [laughs] ...I went to work for a fellow in Mosinee who had an insurance agency. Then when they called me and said my clearance came through...I came back out here. Which was in 1952. (She was 21.)

(I'm wondering if you could tell me...what the process of getting your Q-clearance was like at that point.)

...We had to fill out a lot of questionnaires...We had to list several people for references... Coming from a small town, when the FBI came to check on the clearances, my dad said the phone rang off the hook. "What has your daughter done? Why are they here asking all these questions?" [laughs]

(So you came back to Rocky Flats. What was the job that they offered you?)

In the purchasing department...at that...time, at the plant, no women were in any of the buildings. Women worked in accounting and in purchasing. ...and the medical, where the nurses were.

...I started out doing clerical work and then I got several promotions...Then one day...there was a pink slip on my desk. So I went to the purchasing manager, who was Jerry Bieler, and I said, "What did I do that you're going fire me?" And he said, "You're going to go to work in traffic." I said, "I don't know anything about it." He said, "You can learn." So I went to night school at Emily Griffith...Opportunity School.

(What did you need to learn to do transportation?)

Oh, freight rates...how to contact carriers, how to set up contracts, all these kinds of things that are pertinent to moving stuff from one part of the country to the other....I said, "How come me?" And he (the plant manager) said, "Because we figured you were smart enough to learn how to do this

(...tell me, coming into this new job, what your day was like?)

...a lot of it was top secret...But I did bills of lading and things to move the product that could go by commercial carrier. The ones that had to go by DOE courier was a completely different set of circumstances... had special computers in my department that weren't tied into the rest of the plant, because frankly, it was nobody's business what we shipped, when we shipped it, and where we shipped it.

(...Why was it so sensitive?)

Because we're moving national security information and people didn't have the right to know about it. It isn't like it is now. Back then if somebody asked you where you worked, you said "At Rocky Flats." And they said, "What do you do out there?" You had to say, "I can't discuss that with you."

(That must have been a conversation killer.)

Yes, it was. But also, it was nobody's business.

....you couldn't talk to anybody....We lived in the little guest house over by the Coburn Hotel. We'd go over there at night for a drink...And one night...a couple of fellows came and sat down and asked a bunch of questions. "Where do you work, what do you do?"...We pretty much brushed them off. The next day I got invited to the director's security office. Here are these two men. Bill introduced me to them and this one said, "Nobody's going to learn a damn thing from you out there, are they?" [laughs]...They went around and tested people a lot....they were from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

...I was promoted to traffic manager in 1972, and then I ran it from then on..., we probably had 20, 24 people....I did an awful lot of traveling for the company....Going to Washington or to Albuquerque or wherever else I needed to go with problems....some of it was scheduled, some of it was last-minute. I'd be at the plant and the plant manager would come in and he said, "You have to go to Washington tonight. Go home and pack your bag and get to the airport"...

(I wonder if you could describe to me...your first impression of the plant, the buildings?)

...I knew what they did in the buildings, but as I say, women were not allowed in any of the buildings. I was the first woman to go into building 44, the first one to go into 71...

(Why were you going into the buildings? To arrange shipping?)

I wouldn't ship anything that I didn't see. And that created quite a stink...I screamed long enough and loud enough, so I got into the buildings to see what they were doing...when you're shipping radioactive material, you're taking a hell of a lot of...what shall I say on your shoulders. And I'm going to see what's in there and how it's packaged before I put my name on that bill to send it in interstate commerce...

(tell me...about your memories....of the '57 or '69 fires.)

...The first one ('57) I don't really remember too much about. I wasn't involved in that one. Except later...on May 11 (1969), that was a Sunday morning, and I was out there and had couriers in... somehow or other I didn't get logged off the plant site. When I got home, about 9:30 at night, one of the plant managers, the phone was ringing. "Goddamn it, Krieg, where have you been?" I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Are you all right?" I said, "Of course I'm all right." I said, "What's the matter?" He said, "Well, we had a hell of a fire out here, and nobody knew if you left." I said, "Bill, did you look for my car?" "No, hell, we didn't think about that." [laughs]

(In terms of the aftermath of the fire, was there anything you had to do in your job to help with that?)

Absolutely. We had to bring in all of the equipment that we needed....the rubber gloves...Getting the manufacturers to come up with them....sometimes they'd come up with two dozen pair, and I'd have to call Chicago, the airlines, to make sure it got from one airline to United and knew it was on that airplane so I could send our guards out to the airport to pick up the product...It was a lot of extra work....

(In terms of the social atmosphere, was there an objection to women?)

Sure, in some places there were.... If they got smart with me, I gave it back to them. And I didn't take long where they weren't picking on me.... "they" meaning the union guys - would call and tell me that they saw a problem, or that there was something going on that they thought I ought to come down and look at, and so I would...

(Pat Buffer sent me an article...upon your 40th anniversary of working at the plant. I think it was Gene Idekar who called you "the conscience for the plant.")

Mm-hmm.... it meant that...everybody follow the rules. I didn't care who they were. If stuff wasn't done right, it didn't leave the plant site. And I didn't care...I stopped several things. We had some engineers who were very bad about trying to get things off the plant. ...they just didn't want to package them right. They didn't think about the ramifications.

(Do you think you were more of a stickler for the rules than other people at the plant?)

I know I was. Because as I used to tell the engineers, you're going to do it right, or it isn't going out, because I'm not going to jail for any of you bastards. And I said that many, many times, here and in Washington, in Albuquerque, wherever...Everything that went off of the plant site was my responsibility. And I had to certify that it was properly packaged, marked, and labeled...And if anything happened when it was in transit, they didn't go to the plant manager, they didn't go to the engineer, they came to me.

(Who would have sent you to jail? Was the Department of Transportation looking over your shoulder?)

Oh, yeah...Two of the fellas who belonged to our transportation club worked for...one of the Air Force bases. And they were ordered by a string of generals in the military to ship something that wasn't legal. And they finally...shipped it....the guys both spent five or six years in jail for making illegal shipments. It was a very serious matter.

(Were there ever any incidents in your career where something went out wrong or there was some fear that something wasn't being shipped properly or came in improperly?)

...we had a shipment that came in once on a truck from Los Alamos that was a bomb waiting to go off. The guard stopped it at the gate. Of course, they did it any time it was radioactive. So we went out there, and I made them take the truck out in the boonies and called some people from DOE Albuquerque to come out. They checked it out, and we were lucky the thing didn't explode....It shouldn't have been sent at all.

(That's a biggy. Did they sent the wrong thing...?)

... I think...they were supposed to send a bottle of this gas up here, and ...they just went and grabbed one and didn't look at the markings...it came in here, and it really wasn't tied down according to the DOT rules. And if it had tipped over and been hit just right, why, everything could have come out of the tank. And I don't know what happened to the guys who shipped it from down there, because I had to go down there and explain everything to the plant manager...I said, "What happened to the guy who shipped it?" ...the plant manager said, "We don't talk about him any more." [laughs]

(...I can remember someone told me a funny story about cows being shipped in? Does that ring a bell?)

No cows were shipped in. We had the buffer zone, and some cows were stationed in the buffer zone. One got its leg caught in the rail on the buffer zone and broke its leg. Well, I had to get out there and take care of that, and of course we had to destroy the cow and we had to pay the farmer for the cost of the cow...Because it was on the railroad track. ...



...on a Saturday morning...we had a train coming in. There were people on the railroad tracks. Well, we found this one fellow who handcuffed himself to the track to keep the train away. And of course I got the people out there with blowtorches to break the wire on the handcuffs. And we found out he was a DOE employee. He didn't last very long, either...he was fired that afternoon and ushered off the plant site. He worried me, because I had several nasty phone calls that I know had to come from him. I had to be pretty careful about where I was and who I was with...until they finally told me that he had moved away.

...that was during a time when we and everybody else hired people we shouldn't have hired. They were trying to...rehabilitate some of these people, and I guess he was one of the ones that had a splash in his background...

(So what did you think about the protests and the protesters?)

...they used to be a real pain, because they were always after my shipments, either rail shipments or whatever. And getting involved with them all the time was a mess...when we had a strike out there, I got a call at home...about 4:30 in the morning, I guess. And this voice said, "Dee, do you know who the hell this is?" I said, "If you talk a minute more, I'll probably recognize your voice." He said, "Don't say my name when you do."...he proceeded to tell me that they were going to build a fire on the railroad tracks so that the trains couldn't come in. So I got the Highway Patrol and the guards and everybody down there. Well, they caught them, stopped them before they got the fire built.....

(So you must have been one of the people who was most affected by the protesters.)

Oh, yeah...this was the strike, too, we couldn't get anybody in there. And the management team had to be there, so the plant manager called and said, "How are you going to get us into the plant tomorrow?" I said, "Just be at Jeffco, and I'll take care of it." So I hired a couple helicopters and flew all the plant managers into the plant. I got some calls that night from some of the union people. "God damn it, what else do you have up your sleeve, Krieg?" I said, "Well, try me!" [laughs]

(Did you feel that they [the protesters] shouldn't be there? Did you feel that they had a right to be there?)

I didn't care whether they were there or not...we had ministers, we had nuns. I signed the arrest warrant for the nuns, and that didn't help too much, since I'm a Catholic. But I said I didn't give a damn, they didn't have any business out there. And then the one nun's grandfather...lived in Colorado Springs....he wrote a very nice letter to the *Denver Post* saying that while he didn't want his granddaughter to go to jail, if that's what it took to wake her up, he didn't have any problem with it. [laughs]

(...How did you feel about the nuclear freeze movement...about having worked in a nuclear weapons plant?)

...it would be nice if the whole world believed in the nuclear freeze. Right now, with Iran, you don't know what they're going to do...the other side that has all the nuclear weapons. On the other side of the world...

I think having been at the Nevada Test Site and seeing some of the destruction caused by nuclear explosions, the whole world needs to get rid of them. I don't know how you do that...when it was over with, you just sat there and stared ahead. It was hard to voice anything, hard to tell people how you were feeling for what you saw. It was just unbelievable...

(The public has the sense that Rocky Flats was a dangerous place to work... Did you ever feel this was so, and how did you feel about the way that the issues were discussed in the media?)

... I never believed too much what was printed by the media. I had a truck that went off the road up on... Loveland Pass. And we sent people up...in a snowstorm, and we righted the truck...of waste, and brought it back to the plant site. Well, we had God and everybody there when we went to open the truck.

And Fred Gillies from the *Denver Post* made some comment. I had been up all night, and I was tired, and I tied into him like you wouldn't believe. All the DOE people and the Rockwell people were there, and nobody said a word. Fred looked at me and he said, "I shouldn't have said that." I said, "You're damn right you shouldn't have said it. You and I worked together for a long time, and any damn time you've called and asked for information I've given it to you or I've said I don't know, I'll find out and get back to you. But after what you just said today, I don't know if I'll ever speak to you again." [laughs] I turned and walked away. I said to Earl Williams, "Well, it's going to be interesting when the *Post* comes out with the story tomorrow." And Mr. Gillies quoted how nice I was to work with and all. [laughs]

(Did you ever talk to him again?)

Oh, sure. [laughs]

(...Did you think Rocky Flats was a safe place to work?)

Mm-hmm...I knew there could be problems. There can any time you're in a manufacturing plant, and when you're working with uranium and plutonium, the risks are greater. But with the safeties...Anything can go wrong if you don't treat it properly, whether it's a hazardous material or whether it's something else.

(Were you or any of your colleagues at work ever exposed to radioactive contamination?)

Mm-hmm...I was in one of the back areas and they had a spill. So I lost the clothes I was in...the guys had a lot of fun with me, telling me that they couldn't get it out of my hair, they were going to have to shave my head and all that. [laughs] But they washed my hair and it came out....A couple other times I had some on my hands, but it wasn't anything serious.

(Do you think management handled exposures and safety incidents well?)

I think so.

Anything can go wrong if you don't treat it properly, whether it's a hazardous material or whether it's something else.

(When the announcement was made that production was stopping, what were your thoughts?)

I was happy and I was sad. I knew...that they would close down the plant, but I was also glad that we weren't going to be building any more nuclear weapons.

...But with all these Third World countries who are coming up with nuclear weapons, we've got to stay on our toes and know what's going on...

(What were the best things about working there?)

Oh, Lord, I don't know. [pause] I guess working with the people and the sense of purpose that we had... [laughs] There's good and bad, you know. [laughs] But I don't have any regrets for working out there.

(...did Rocky Flats offer you opportunity you might not have found in a different working environment?)

Probably...I did an awful lot of traveling for them, and most of the time...I could do some sightseeing...in 1981 I was shipped to Berlin to attend a packaging conference...Berlin was still closed to everything...We got on the subway one night and there were a bunch of people from Oak Ridge and ...we missed our stop...and then we were in East Berlin. When we realized what we'd done, we made a lot of noise and got off at the next stop...when I got home and I was briefed by the FBI, they knew that on this date, Al Anselmo and I didn't attend any meetings, that we took the bus tour around Berlin and all the places we had been...He said, "When you were standing on the platform at the Platz and that fellow loaned you his binoculars, what did you think?" I said, "When I looked over and looked down the barrel of a couple of Russian rifles, it scared me a lot." And he said, "Well, did you get a good look at that man?" I said, "No, I didn't, really." He said, "Well, he was with you every minute that you were in West Berlin." Then he proceeded to tell me about being on the train. He said, "If you hadn't gotten off at the next stop, he would have forced you off the train." I said, "What about the rest of the people?" He said, "We didn't care about them. You're the one who had the knowledge. You're the one we couldn't let get kidnapped," or whatever they do to people. I thought that was pretty interesting.

(Wow! Very Cold War!)

Yeah, it was.

(...So this guy was an FBI operative?)

Mm-hmm.

To read the entire interview of Delores (Dee) Krieg, see www.bplcarnegie.org/oralhistory/.
