

# HANFORD:

The complex legacy left behind.

A HISTORICAL ZINE BY Mia Wilow

# HANFORD'S

# STORY



In 1900, a few decades before World War II started, Hanford and White Bluffs, WA, were two small farming towns. Most residents were farmers, aside from a store owners, and they lived a quiet life. But although Washington was far from the war, it cast a heavy impact. In December 1942, the citizens of Hanford and White Bluffs might have seen a plane flying over head. Though Washington was far from the fighting, the lives of so many Americans and the fate of the war was going to change.



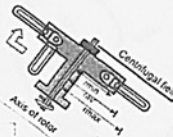
Aboard the plane was Franklin T. Matthias, a U.S. army colonel who had been ordered to find a spot for a top secret World War II project. He was looking for an area with wide, sprawling land, water nearby, and a small population that would later leave. Hanford and White Bluffs was perfect.

The government needed the project to be kept so, so secret that every single citizen would be given a small amount of money and then ordered to move. So in 1943 the entire community moved away.

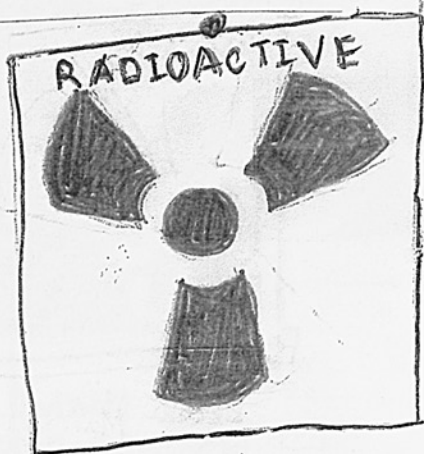
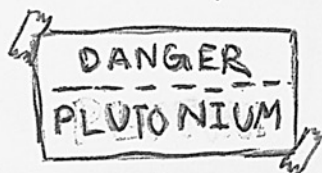


The top secret war project was to make Plutonium (see “Plutonium”). The 51,000 workers were to build facilities to produce Plutonium. They needed tons of complicated machinery to do so. But they didn’t just get plutonium. Overtime a lot of dangerous waste was made. Hanford is still creating obstacles, but eventually everything will be safely put away. (For more on cleanup, go to page 7)

# PLUTONIUM



Plutonium is a radioactive material, which means that to be around it, you must wear tons of special protection suits. Plutonium is so dangerous that breathing it in, or getting a tiny drop on your body could really harm you. But to make atomic bombs, bombs that are stronger and more effective than regular bombs, the Hanford workers needed plutonium. But it's hard work to get plutonium, because they needed factories called nuclear reactors to produce it. And after producing it, the workers at Hanford winded up with a lot of harmful waste.



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# IMPORTANT

— PEOPLE OF HANFORD —



FRANKLIN MATHIAS  
Found Hanford  
as the location  
for the project.  
from an airplane.



Christine Gregoire (Ecology)  
Robie Russell (EPA),  
Mike Laurence (USDOE),  
signers of the  
Tri-party  
agreement.

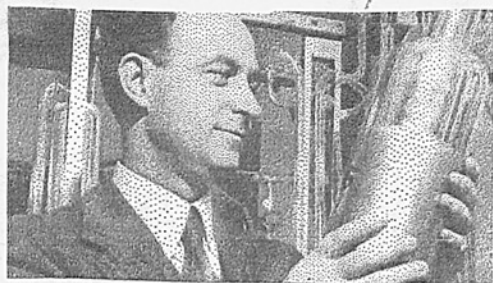


Leoma Marshall Libby, a physicist,  
was one of the  
only woman that  
played a large role  
in Hanford. She  
helped fix the B reactor

# ENRICO Fermi



Enrico Fermi was one of the most important people of the project. When Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered for an atomic weapon to be made, Fermi made a small nuclear reactor that worked! In Chicago, Fermi designed the very first nuclear reactor. So on September, 1944, he was at Hanford to watch the first ever Nuclear Reactor, the B Reactor be turned on! When the B Reactor stopped after three hours ~~on~~, by December Fermi and some other scientists had it running again. Enrico Fermi was so crucial for Hanford that he had an all time bodyguard, and was known as Mr. Farmer to be carefull!



# HANFORD Timeline

Early 1900s

Hanford and White Bluffs forming communities are formed. 




Dec. 1942

Franklin T. Matthias lands to find space for producing plutonium.

1943

The government decides to build factories at Hanford.

All residents move away. 

1945

late 1943


Workers begin building factories to make plutonium.



Later, the U.S. decides to drop the Nagasaki bomb on Nagasaki, Japan. Within a week, Japan surrenders.

Hanford plutonium goes into the Trinity test bomb.

Sept 2, 1945

The war ends. 



1986

Congress lets Hanford's mission change from plutonium production to environmental cleanup.



May 1989

Tri-party agreement to cleanup Hanford.

2052

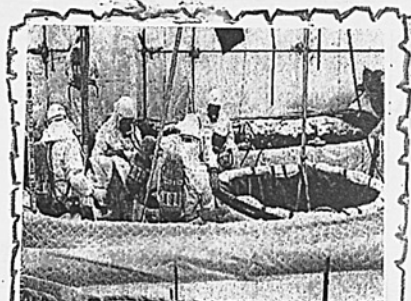
Expected cleanup finish date.



# CLEANING Up



Now that Hanford is no longer functioning as a nuclear weapon production space, we need to clean it up. Part of the plutonium process used water to cool it down. The water was poured over the radioactive material, resulting in radioactive waste. This water could not just be emptied into the water cycle again, because it would pollute the earth and poison us. This means that every single droplet of waste has to be carefully sealed up in underground containers. All of it needs to be sealed so tightly, so that if a natural disaster happened, nothing would leak. This will take many more decades, because there is so much waste. Amid all of that, workers are tearing down all old factory buildings. By 2052 though, we can expect that Hanford will be completely cleaned up.



# FUN FACTS!

- The Hanford Site is 586 miles squared,  
□ roughly half of Rhode Island!
- There were 8 cafeterias at Hanford and 50 tons of food was served each meal!
- ▲ Only 500 of the 51,000 Hanford builders actually knew what they were building!
- 30 different types of grass are found on the Hanford Site!
- ☾ My uncle Larry studied at the Fermi Institute in Chicago.





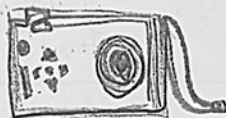
## Why I chose Hanford

I decided to research Hanford because I think it's amazing how a small farming community could have such a giant impact on the war. Think, of how a little known of place like Hanford became a top secret war project. I also think that it's mind blowing that Enrico Fermi designed the whole Plutonium process. I can't believe how someone could ever, ever, think of that! Hanford was really fun to research because I was always surprised with all the information I didn't know. Everyone should try writing something on Washington history, because there is endless amounts to learn!

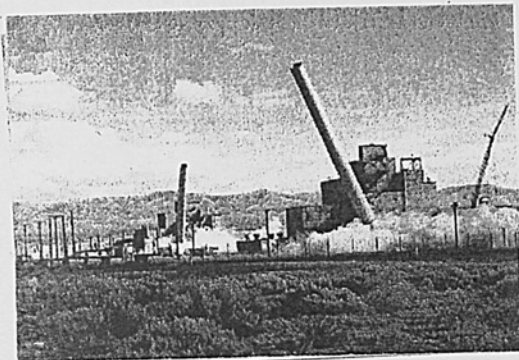


Coyote at Hanford Reach

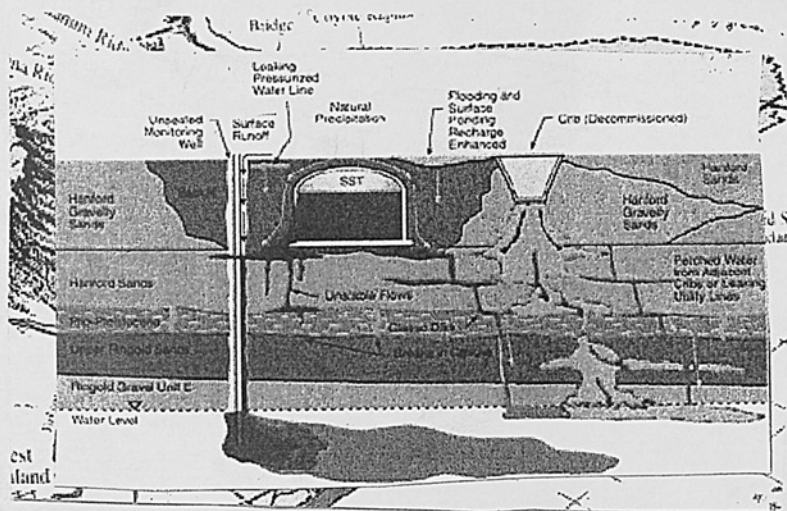
Hartford



Pictures



# HISTORY



How tanks leak



Information from:

Grant County

[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/about/hanford.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/about/hanford.htm)

[www.hanford.gov/page.cfm./Students](http://www.hanford.gov/page.cfm./Students)

**BY**

Franklin County

[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/project.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/project.htm)

Yakima County

<https://hanford-site.pnnl.gov/envreport/2a1>

Site

[www.nwpr.org/post/daughters-hanford-b-reactors-one-woman-scientist](http://www.nwpr.org/post/daughters-hanford-b-reactors-one-woman-scientist)

**MIAW**

Sunnyside

Snake River

Yakima River

Benton City

Richland

Pasco

Prosser

Kennewick

Walla Walla County

Benton County

Columbia River

Klickitat County

Hermiston

10 miles

OREGON

