

## “Spoof” poster from 1954 found at 105-K East

A poster older than most Hanford workers was found last month in a cupboard in the 105-KE lunchroom. The poster, dated 1954, was drawn when the K Reactors and basins were being constructed. It is a spoof, hand-drawn by site workers at the time, made to mimic an official Hanford engineering drawing.

It was found by nuclear chemical operator (NCO) Lee Wood, when he volunteered to clean out the lunchroom cabinets. Reaching onto a top shelf, he touched the fragile old poster and carefully opened it. Wood states that he “knew right away it wasn’t a real engineering drawing, but it also was very special. It contains many hand-drawn cartoon characters who were saying some pretty silly and off-the-wall things about life at Hanford. It’s intriguing, and I started reading the whole thing.”

Wood brought the poster to KE shift manager Manny Guzman, who first exclaimed, “Wow!” and then brought it to KE sludge-retrieval manager Rob Gentry. “I was just fascinated that it was so old, and so funny,” says Gentry. The KE organization decided that the poster needed special historic preservation. The original is now at the Site Reproduction Shop, where specialists are exploring various preservation methods. Meanwhile, several copies have been made.

“One thing that makes the poster so interesting,” says Guzman, “is the fact that it’s

bordered with lots of names of real people, and some of their descendants still work at Hanford.” Another captivating aspect, says Wood, is the “similarity between what these workers were expressing and some of the things we experience today. At Hanford, some of the jokes haven’t changed!”

For example, one man is shown telling his

wife that if their son’s grades don’t improve, the son will grow up to be a Hanford field inspector. In another, the Planning Department is labeled the “Planning and Scheming Department.” Many of the drawing and sayings poke fun at the rural atmosphere of eastern Washington, and one portrays a Richland Police car as the “Welcome Wagon.”

The “signature” on the drawing purports to be the Blaw-Knox Company, which actually was building-PUREX (plutonium-uranium extraction) in 1954, as part of a special high-priority defense-production expansion ordered by President Dwight Eisenhower. The same project, known in secret then as “Program X,” built the KE and KW Reactors.

One part of the drawing’s references and specifications section states: “In order to alleviate undue anxiety and piddling interference with time and materials, the following generalities relative to dimensional tolerance shall govern: Pound to Shape – Bend to Fit – Paint to Cover.” Jokingly, Guzman says that “those specifications aren’t too different from what we work to today!”

The drawing did not sit in the 105-KE cupboard for all of the intervening years. Employees believe it was brought to the site from a retiree’s home as part of a celebration for a long-time worker about three years ago.

**Michele Gerber, Communications**



NCO Lee Wood (left), KE shift manager Manny Guzman (center), and KE sludge-retrieval manager Rob Gentry (right) examining the poster in the KE lunchroom where it was found.

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