Rocky Flats Then and Now: 25 Years After the Raid

An arts and humanities event marking the 25th anniversary of the FBI’s historic raid on the nuclear weapons factory

Len Ackland, Event Coordinator

June 6, 7 & 8, 2014
Friday, June 6

7:00 p.m.
Welcome and Overview
Philip C. Sneed,
Executive Director, Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities

Rocky Flats Then and Now - An Introduction
Len Ackland, Author, Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West

Citizen Forum
Personal Memories of the June 6, 1989 Raid
Chair: Dr. Kennette Benedict,
Executive Director and Publisher, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists
Charles Church McKay,
Representative for the Church/McKay family - 4th generation neighboring landowner and rancher
LeRoy Moore,
Ph.D., Former academic, writer and Rocky Flats activist
Jack Weaver,
Former Rocky Flats Deputy Assistant General Manager of Plutonium Operations

Information Center
An information center representing various perspectives will be open Saturday, June 7 and Sunday, June 8. Opening and closing hours will correspond with the panel discussions.

Exhibition
Please visit the Arvada History Museum located on the first floor to see a special exhibition made possible by the Rocky Flats Institute and Museum. Rocky Flats in History, Art, and Memory features historical artifacts and photographs from the Rocky Flats Institute and Museum, as well as art from more than a dozen painters, sculptors, poets and photographers. The exhibition is free and open to the public through August 22.

Saturday, June 7

10:00 a.m. - Noon
The Raid in Retrospect — Keynote Panel
Moderator: Patty Limerick,
Director, Center of the American West, University of Colorado Boulder
Jon Lipsky,
Former FBI agent and leader of the Raid team
Roy Romer,
Former Governor, Colorado (1987 - 1999)
David Skaggs,
Former Congressman, Colorado (1987 - 1999)

Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Lunch break and discussions in the Information Center

1:00-2:30 p.m.
Secrecy and Its Fallout - Panel Discussion
Participating Moderator: Dorothy Day Ciarlo, Ph.D., Retired clinical psychologist and oral historian.
Judy Danielson,
Rocky Flats peace activist
Ken Freiberg,
former Rocky Flats worker
Jon Lipsky,
Former FBI agent and leader of the Raid team
Nat Muollo,
Former Environmental Protection Agency Inspector at Rocky Flats

2:30-3:30 p.m.
Break and discussions in the Information Center

3:30-5:30 p.m.
Imagining the Real: Art and Rocky Flats - Performance and Conversation
Moderator: Bryan Taylor,
Professor, Department of Communication, University of Colorado Boulder
Robert Del Tredici,
Photographer of nuclear sites
Barbara Donachy,
Ceramic artist and peace activist
John Craig Freeman,
New media professor and augmented reality artist
Carole Gallagher,
Author, American Ground Zero: The Secret Nuclear War
Kristen Iversen,
Author, Full Body Burden: Growing Up in the Nuclear Shadow of Rocky Flats
Patrick Malone,
Poet and peace activist
Tom Mayer,
Author, Rocky Flats: A Nuclear Musical
Eric Wright,
Song writer and peace activist
Anne Waldman,
Poet; Co-Founder, Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics

7:00 p.m.
Film Screening: Dark Circle
Introduction: Conny Bogaard,
Rocky Flats Institute and Museum
An audience discussion will take place after the screening

Sunday, June 8

1:00-2:30 p.m.
What Do We Know about Rocky Flats Workers’ Health Issues, 25 Years Later? - Panel Discussion
Participating moderator:
Laura Frank, Vice President, News, Rocky Mtn. PBS and Executive Director, I-News
Terrie Barrie,
Founding Member, Alliance of Nuclear Worker Advocacy Groups
Lee Newman, MD,
Coordinator, medical surveillance program of former Rocky Flats workers

2:30-3:30
Break and discussions in the Information Center

3:30-5:00 p.m.
What Do We Know Today about Contamination from Rocky Flats? - Panel Discussion
Moderator, Len Ackland,
Author, Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West
David Abelson,
Executive Director, Rocky Flats Stewardship Council
Nels Schonbeck,
Chemistry Professor, University of Colorado Denver and Regis University
Carl Spreng,
Rocky Flats Legacy Management Agreement Coordinator for the Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Closing Reception/cash bar and appetizers
Catering provided by The Gourmet Kitchen
David Abelson has worked on Rocky Flats issues since 1995. An attorney with twenty years’ experience on complex public policy issues, Mr. Abelson represented Representative David E. Skaggs from 1995-1998, then served as the Executive Director of the Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments from 1999-2006. He has served as the Executive Director of the Rocky Flats Stewardship Council since 2006.

Len Ackland is a journalist and Associate Professor Emeritus of Journalism, UC Boulder. Previously he worked as a reporter at the Chicago Tribune and the Des Moines Register, among other publications, and was editor of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists when it won the 1987 National Magazine Award for coverage of the Chernobyl accident. He wrote Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West (UNM Press, 2nd ed., 2002). He is coordinator of Rocky Flats Then and Now: 25 Years After the Raid.

Terri Barrie began her advocacy when her husband, a former Rocky Flats worker, became ill in 1995. Through the years, she was able to meet other advocates from across the country and helped form the grassroots Alliance of Nuclear Workers Advocacy Groups (ANWAG). Ms. Barrie was the co-petitioner for the expanded Special Exposure Cohort and is Secretary of the newly-created Citizen Volunteer Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) Interim Advisory Board, to the U. S. Department of Labor.

Kennette Benedict has been the Executive Director and Publisher for the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists since 2005. She came to the Bulletin from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, where she directed the international peace and security program from 1992 to 2005. She also established and directed the foundation’s initiative in the former Soviet Union from 1992 to 2002. Before joining the foundation in 1987, she taught at Rutgers University (1980-1981) and at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1981-1985). Benedict received her A.B. from Oberlin College and a Ph.D. in political science from Stanford University.

Conny Bogaard is the Executive Director at the Rocky Flats Institute and Museum and teaches at the college level in the Denver metro area. Previously Ms. Bogaard served as curator for the Hôtel de Paris Museum in Georgetown and the Golden Pioneer Museum.

Larry Borowsky has been involved in museum exhibit development since 1995. He has won awards from the American Alliance of Museums, American Association for State and Local History, National Association for Interpretation, and History Colorado. Mr. Borowsky is the former editor of Colorado History, a semiannual journal.

Dr. Dorothy Ciarlo, a retired psychologist and volunteer with the Oral History program of the Boulder Public Library, initiated doing oral histories with Rocky Flats workers in the late 1990s before the closure of Rocky Flats. Working with a committee of the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum, she and others expanded the oral history collection to include others involved with Rocky Flats, including peace and environmental activists, state and federal regulators, politicians, and involved community members. The more than 160 oral histories are archived at the Carnegie Library’s Maria Rogers Oral History Program in Boulder.

Judy Danielson is a mother, grandmother, physical therapist and concerned citizen. She was on the Denver staff of the American Friends Service Committee during the 1970s and was one of the organizers of the Rocky Flats Action Group (RFAG). RFAG held rallies and led public education campaigns in an effort to close the plant and convert the jobs to peacetime industry.

Robert Del Tredici has photographed (as an independent and for the U. S. Department of Energy) the twelve key facilities of the U. S. Nuclear Weapons Complex. He was principal photographer and designer for three U. S. Department of Energy (USDOE) reports on the attempted cleanup of the H-bomb factory system. In the process, he documented Rocky Flats on three separate occasions.
Barbara Donachy has both a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Master of Public Health degree. She was U.S. Director of Potters for Peace for eight years, where she was engaged in the research, training, and evaluation of a locally-produced home-use ceramic water filter. Between 1982 and 1993, she designed and coordinated the production and exhibition at seventeen locations of Amber Waves of Grain, a 32,000-piece clay replica of the U.S. nuclear arsenal and Twilight’s Last Gleaming, an equally large depiction of volumes of plutonium and nuclear waste.

Laura Frank is Vice President of News for Rocky Mountain PBS; Executive Director of I-News; and has covered Rocky Flats health issues as a Rocky Mountain News Reporter.

Ken Freiberg worked at Rocky Flats from 1953-1991, after which he was a Senior Consultant for Rocky Flats and the Department of Energy (DOE) from 1991-2014. He held various positions while at Rocky Flats, including Health Physics Manager, Manager for Plant Services, and Manager of Engineering and Construction for Rocky Flats New Projects and Facilities.

John Craig Freeman is a public artist with over twenty-five years of experience using emergent technologies to produce large-scale public works at sites where the forces of globalization are impacting the lives of individuals in local communities. His work seeks to expand the notion of public by exploring how digital networked technology is transforming our sense of place. In November 1990, Freeman created Operation Greenrun II, consisting of eleven 10' x 40' billboards near the front gate of the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant.

Carole Gallagher has been the recipient of numerous awards, including a grant in 1988 from the MacArthur Foundation’s Program on International Peace and Security. Ms. Gallagher’s photographs and journalism concerning the nuclear weapons complex have been published in The New York Times, Newsweek and The Times (London), among others. The International Center of Photography in New York and the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago exhibited her photographs from American Ground Zero: The Secret Nuclear War.

Kristen Iversen is the author of Full Body Burden: Growing Up in the Nuclear Shadow of Rocky Flats. She grew up near the nuclear weapons plant and later worked there herself. Winner of the 2013 Colorado Book Award and the Reading the West Book Award in Nonfiction, Full Body Burden was chosen one of the Best Books of 2012 by Kirkus Reviews and the American Library Association, Best Book about Justice by The Atlantic, and was a finalist for the Barnes & Noble Discover Award and the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence. Iversen’s work has appeared in The New York Times, The Nation, Reader’s Digest, and many publications. She holds a Ph.D from the University of Denver, and currently teaches in the Ph.D program in creative writing at the University of Cincinnati.

Patty Limerick is the Faculty Director and Chair of the Board of the Center of the American West at the University of Colorado Boulder, where she is also a Professor of History. Limerick has dedicated her career to bridging the gap between academics and the general public and to demonstrating the benefits of applying historical perspective to contemporary dilemmas and conflicts.
Jon Lipsky, M.A.S., was the FBI principal lead agent coordinating the 1989 – 1992 investigation of environmental crimes at the former Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant. Mr. Lipsky is the principal consultant with EcoEd, which published a non-profit non-fiction book about the FBI raid, Ambushed Grand Jury: How The Justice Department Covered Up Government Nuclear Crimes and How We Caught Them Red Handed. Mr. Lipsky helped to create a Citizen Education Initiative, archiving materials and developing a course of studies concerning Rocky Flats crimes, social impact and its enduring legacy. Mr. Lipsky is currently the owner and qualified manager of Mission Accomplished Investigations, a California private investigative agency.

Patrick Malone lived in the tipi on the railroad tracks leading in to Rocky Flats for most of the nine months of the occupation. He was one of the last two people arrested at the occupation. Mr. Malone was arrested at Rocky Flats ten times and spent over six months in jail. He currently still has the tipi.

Tom Mayer is a sociologist who works in the fields of political economy, social class analysis, and mathematical sociology. He taught at CU Boulder for 40 years and retired in 2010. Mr. Mayer is a longtime activist for peace, social justice, and environmental sanity. He is currently active in the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center. Tom wrote the book and lyrics for Rocky Flats: A Nuclear Musical, which played in Boulder and Denver in the fall of 1980.

Charlie McKay of Church Ranch owned the southern portion of what had been Rocky Flats and the buffer zone. The Church/McKay family has been connected to this land for over 100 years, and involved in agriculture, clay and gravel mining, land development and water rights.

Nathaniel Miullo (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) moved with his family to Colorado in the early seventies and he has lived here since. He has worked in EPA’s Regional Office in Denver for over 30 years on complex environmental problems that include policy, economic, social, and political challenges in almost every program EPA administers. Nat’s experience includes helping set national policy on clean up of “mega” Superfund sites like the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Rocky Flats. He recently served as an Energy and Revitalization Advisor to the EPA’s Regional Administrator; and currently supports communities in disaster recovery as EPA’s Resiliency Adviser.

LeRoy Moore, Ph.D., is one of the founders of the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center. He has been engaged as a writer and activist with environmental, public health and disarmament issues related to Rocky Flats and the nuclear weapons enterprise since 1978. He taught courses on nonviolent social change at the University of Colorado from 1980 until 1996. His writings include Rocky Flats: The Bait and Switch Cleanup, published in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, January/February 2005.

Dr. Lee Newman is a pulmonary and occupational medicine physician and professor who has provided medical care for thousands of Rocky Flats workers. He was instrumental in identifying work-related health conditions at Rocky Flats including chronic beryllium disease and plutonium-induced lung fibrosis while working at National Jewish Health from 1985-2005. Dr. Newman’s research has led to the widespread use of a blood test for detection of chronic beryllium disease. He has contributed to the development of national policy related to the health of energy workers. For nearly 30 years, Dr. Newman has been conducting medical screening programs and health research studies to benefit Rocky Flats workers and other Department of Energy (DOE) site workers. He co-directs the Department of Energy-funded National Supplemental Screening Program, which has provided more than 2,000 exams for former Rocky Flats workers, as well as more than 11,000 workers from other DOE sites across the country.
Governor Roy Romer was the 39th Governor of the State of Colorado for twelve years from 1987 - 1999. He was involved in the oversight and monitoring of Rocky Flats on a weekly basis. He went on to serve as the Superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District from 2001 – 2006.

Niels Schonbeck is a biochemist by training. His interest in environmental radioactivity was sparked by meeting Dr. Edward Martell in 1985 at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. Since then he has worked on Rocky Flats issues, primarily as a member of several committees, including the Rocky Flats Environmental Monitoring Council (1988–1993) and the Health Advisory Panel of the Historical Public Exposures Studies (1990–2003).

Congressman David Skaggs represented Colorado’s 2nd Congressional District (1987-99) during the period of the FBI raid and the shutdown of Rocky Flats. As a State Representative (1981-87) he introduced legislation to enable workers compensation for disease caused by radiation and other toxic agents at the plant. After leaving Congress, Congressman Skaggs started an organization to promote political reform and civic education and, after returning to Colorado, headed the Department of Higher Education for Governor Ritter.

Philip C. Sneed has been the Executive Director of the Arvada Center since February of 2013, after having served as Producing Artistic Director of the Colorado Shakespeare Festival for six years. His interest in Rocky Flats began during his undergraduate years at the University of Colorado Boulder; in the late 1970s, when he commuted from his family’s home in Golden and drove every day past the tipi blocking the railroad tracks into the plant. Although Sneed did not join that protest, he did participate in the Encirclement of the plant in 1983. After living throughout most of the 1970s and 1980s in Arvada and Golden, Sneed’s father died of lymphoma in 1987.

Carl Spreng worked as an exploration geologist after receiving BS and MS degrees in Geology from Brigham Young University. Since 1992, he has worked for the Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division of the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment as a project manager overseeing environmental restoration at the Department of Energy’s Rocky Flats Site. Currently he also serves as co-leader of the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council’s (ITRC) Remediation Management of Complex Sites team.


Anne Waldman has been a prolific and active poet, performer, editor and teacher for many years. She is a founder of the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics and Artistic Director of its celebrated Summer Writing Program. She is engaged with creating radical hybrid forms for the long poem, both serial and narrative, and engaged in “documentary poetics,” which fuels her ethos as a cultural activist. She is also the author of the magnum opus The Lovis Trilogy: Colors in the Mechanism of Concealment (Coffee House Press, 2011), a feminist “cultural intervention” taking on war and patriarchy, which won the PEN Center 2012 Award for Poetry.

Jack Weaver went to work at Rocky Flats in 1961. He was a laborer, Assistant Chemical Operator, Chemical Operator, Foreman, Shift Supervisor, Building/Production Manager, and Assistant General Manager of Plutonium of Plutonium Operations. He retired in 1996 but stayed on as an oversite contractor until 2002.

Eric Wright is a peace and social justice organizer, currently retired and living in Denver. He is an occasional songwriter and singer of songs for peace rallies and events of all kinds.
Steering Committee

Len Ackland:  
Journalist, Assoc. Professor Emeritus,  
CU Boulder

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Executive Director, Rocky Flats Institute and Museum

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Collin Parson:  
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Philip Sneed:  
Executive Director, Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities

Rocky Flats in History, Art, and Memory - special acknowledgments

Kristin Bueb
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