

Manhattan Project National Historical Park Celebration
Oak Ridge High School Auditorium
Oak Ridge, Tennessee
November 12, 2015

Remarks by Roane County Executive Ron Woody:

First, I would like to say “thank you.” Thank you to the committee, schools and the city of Oak Ridge for organizing this event- this time of celebration. “Thank you.”

Second, thank you goes out to the people on this stage, and the others that came before us that had a vision and a plan and worked diligently to establish “The Manhattan Project National Historical Park.” “Thank you.”

We are excited that you have joined us today to celebrate the planning, creation, and operating of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park. It was a significant, defining point in our nation’s history when our forefathers conceived, planned and built what is known today as the Manhattan Project.

Today is another significant time when we celebrate the creation of this historical park.

The significance of the creation of this park has many meanings:

1. We have a national park designation in Roane and Anderson counties and the City of Oak Ridge which establishes us as a tourism destination which should benefit our local economies.
2. We have or will have the additional resources of the National Park Service who will be able to help us better tell the stories we have been sharing for years.
3. The third and most significant is a time to say thank you to our parents, and our grandparents and our great-grandparents who worked on the Manhattan Project or played a vital supporting role. Thank you for your service to our nation.

Every time we gather we peel off another layer of the Manhattan Project story. From Ray Smith sharing the prophet of Oak Ridge, John Hendrix’s story to Keith McDaniels’ Secret City- The Oak Ridge Story. In each instance, a little more history is shared and you can not hear these stories without shedding a tear over what happened, what would happen and what is to be.

My challenge to all of us today is to remember and learn from our past. Take this foundation which we will continue to use to learn and to build our future.

Thank you to the Manhattan Project veterans, our families, my and your aunts, uncles and grandparents- because of you we celebrate today.