



**CHAIRMAN'S AWARD
FOR ACHIEVEMENT
IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

**U.S. Department of Energy
Oak Ridge Office of
Environmental Management
East Tennessee Preservation Alliance
Dover Development Corporation**

**Alexander Inn-Guest House Rehabilitation
Oak Ridge, Tennessee**

Good evening, and thank you to the ACHP Alumni Foundation and the Atomic Heritage Foundation for hosting us tonight.

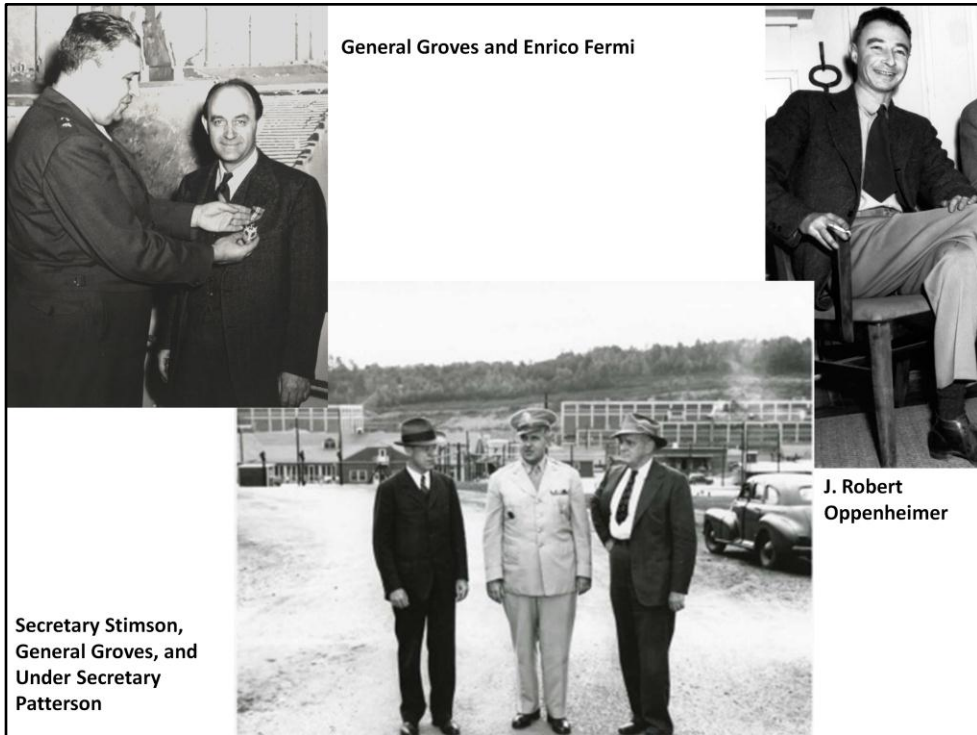
We want to welcome the recipients of the Chairman's Award, some of whom traveled from Tennessee to be here. We are honoring the partnership between the U.S. Department of Energy, the East Tennessee Preservation Alliance, and Dover Development Corporation for their work on the Alexander Inn-Guest House Rehabilitation Project in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.



Seventy-three years ago, in the summer of 1943, the headquarters of the Army Corps of Engineers' Manhattan Engineer District packed up and moved from New York City to Oak Ridge, Tennessee.



Hundreds of families in the eastern part of Tennessee were uprooted to make room for the “Secret City” that would house 75 thousand people, as well as the plants producing the atomic bomb.



When dignitaries such as General Leslie Groves, Secretary of War Henry Stimson, and physicists J. Robert Oppenheimer and Enrico Fermi visited the uranium enrichment facilities at Oak Ridge's "K-25" site, . . .



. . . they stayed at what was then dubbed “The Guest House.”

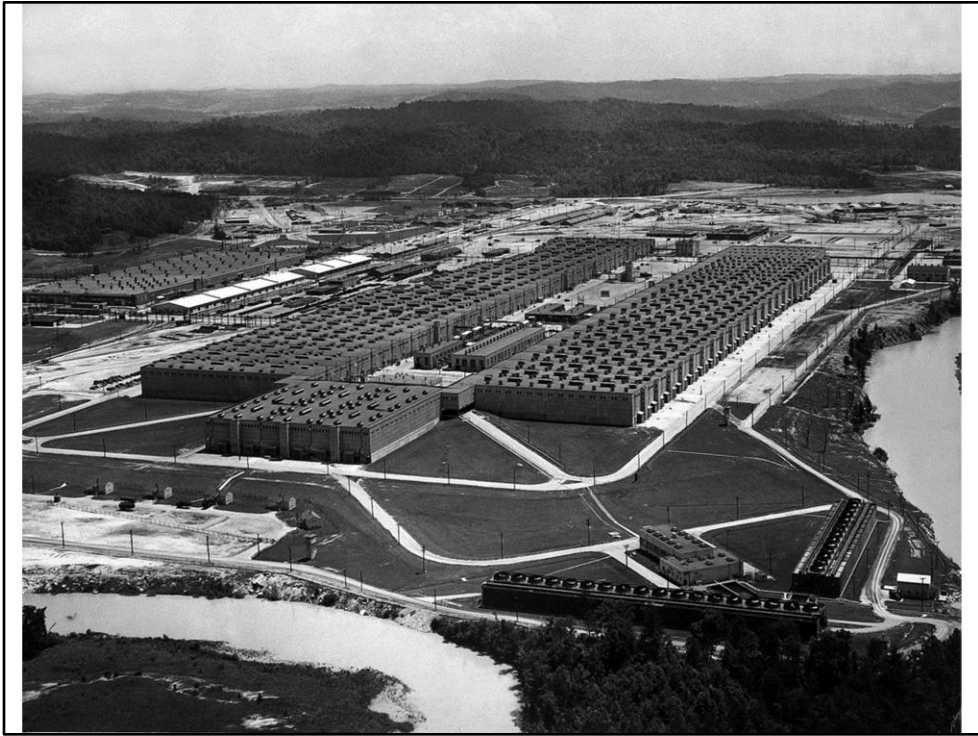


After the end of World War II, 44 rooms were added to the Guest House to accommodate the expanding Oak Ridge community, . . .



August 1949

. . . and in 1950, the name was changed to the Alexander Inn. In 1958, the inn was sold to a private owner, who converted it into a hotel. It became a social center for the community until its closure in the mid-1990s.



In the late 1980s, DOE shut down uranium enrichment operations at K-25 and began a long-term project of cleanup and demolition of facilities in the contaminated site.



In 1991, the Alexander Inn was added to the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Oak Ridge Historic District.



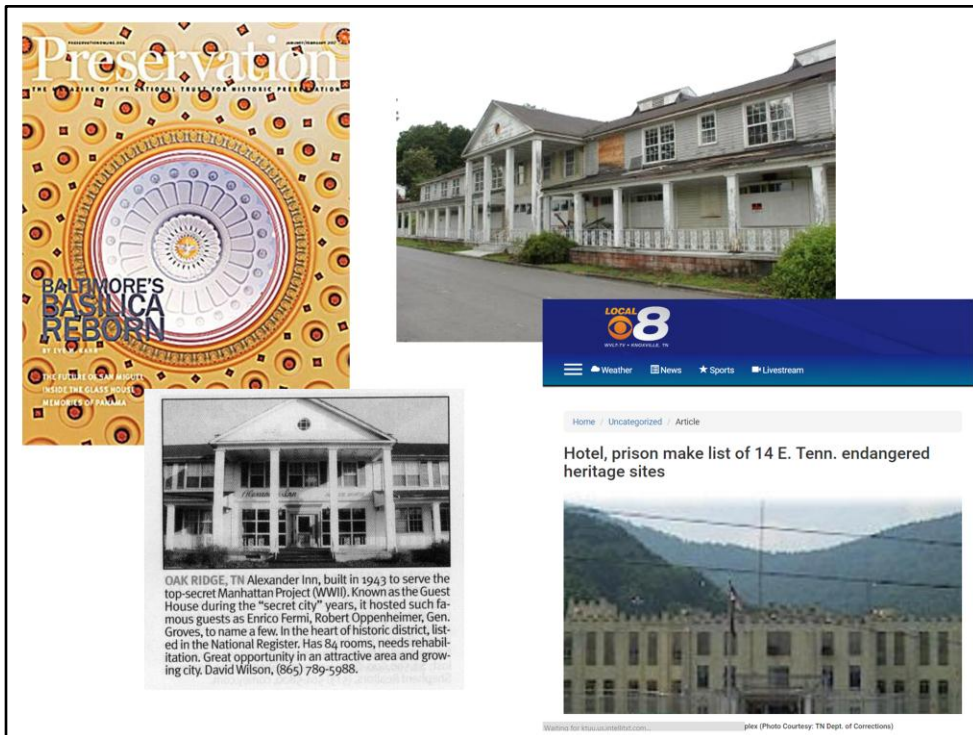
But despite this recognition, the condition of the site became destabilized over the next couple of decades.



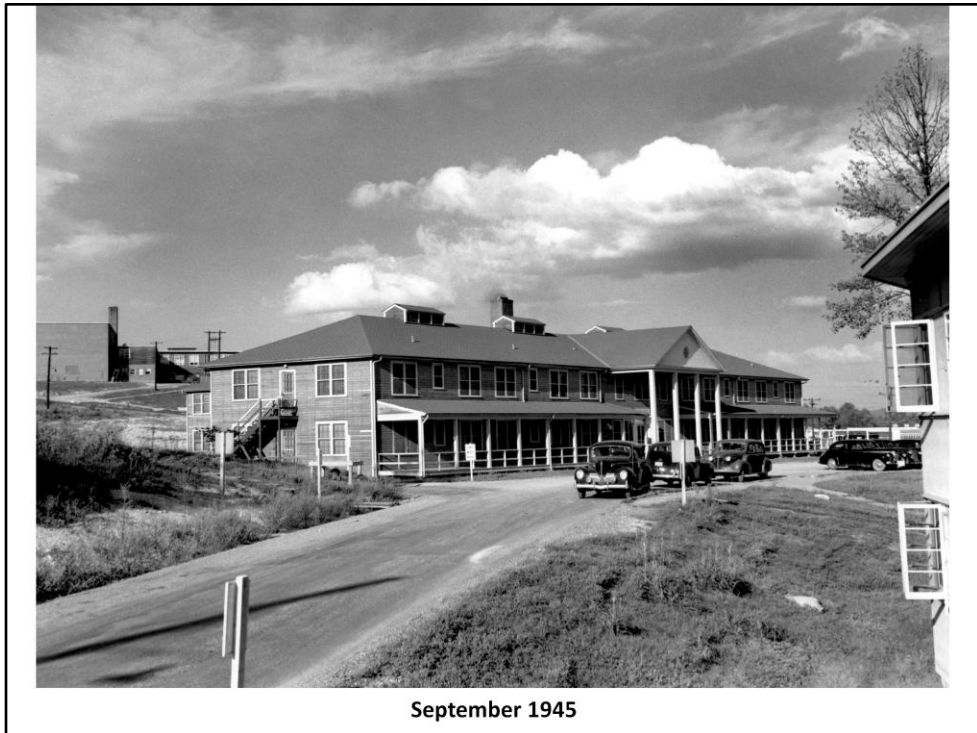
With water accumulating in the basement and the roof leaking, the structure began falling apart.



According to local news coverage, its only residents were “groundhogs and other critters.” Eventually the City of Oak Ridge began code enforcement efforts against the property.



During all of this time, local preservationists actively worked to raise awareness of the conditions at this historic site. Tours were given, funds were raised, and even a “For Sale” advertisement was placed in *Preservation* magazine. The East Tennessee Preservation Alliance named the Alexander Inn to its “East Tennessee Endangered Heritage” list for the first time in 2010, all with the hope of saving the inn for a new purpose.



In November 2011, DOE convened stakeholders to discuss the demolition of K-25, a National Register-eligible site. To mitigate for the destruction of K-25, DOE signed a Memorandum of Agreement in August 2012 that included a provision allocating a 500 thousand dollar grant to East Tennessee Preservation Alliance for the purchase and partial stabilization of the Alexander Inn. This grant would be used to save the structure and to help tell the story of the Manhattan Project.

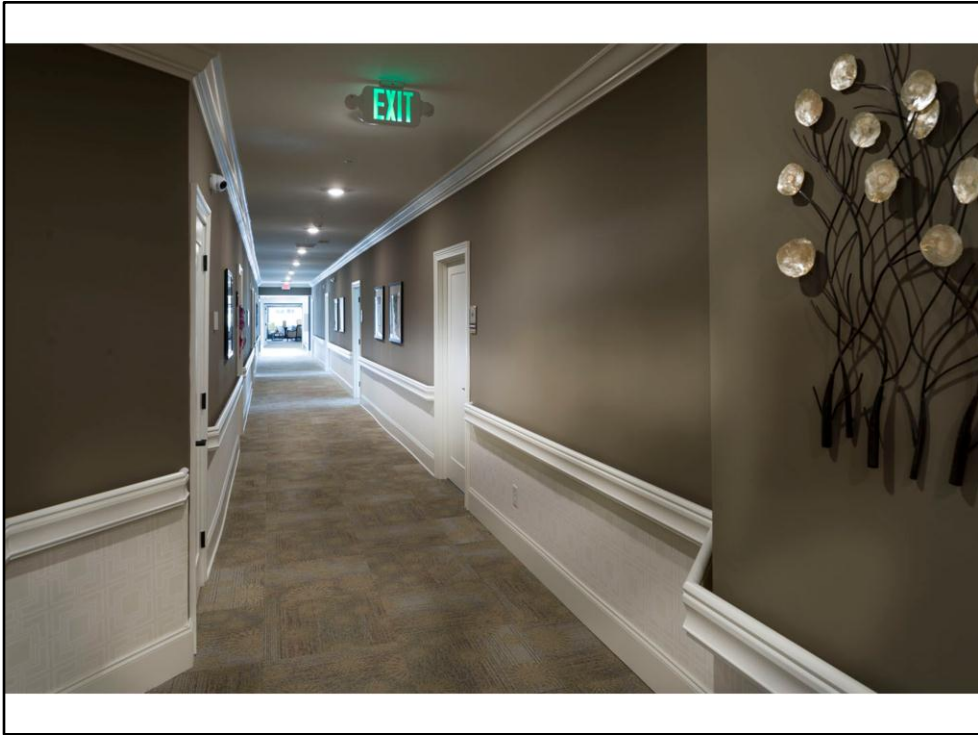


The agreement also required that the inn be restored according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

As part of the MOA, East Tennessee Preservation Alliance was granted a preservation easement to protect the Alexander Inn in perpetuity. After the Alliance took ownership of the property, it designed a rehabilitation plan that called for converting the inn into a modern assisted living center.



The preservation group sold the facility to Knoxville-based Dover Development, which carried out the conversion plan over the next two years. The firm's principal, Rick Dover, studied the original plans for the Guest House as he planned the renovation project. I might add, though, that Rick fell through the floor of the inn the first time he toured it! He knew he had to do something!



Using original materials where possible, Dover Development was able to restore the floors and structure of the inn, re-mill its poplar paneling, . . .



. . . and install a soda fountain bar where the old lunch counter was located. This attention to detail shows how much historic preservation mattered to Dover and all the partners to shine a light on this historic gem.



The entire inn was restored, except the original ballroom, which was replaced with a new ballroom, kitchen, and dining room.



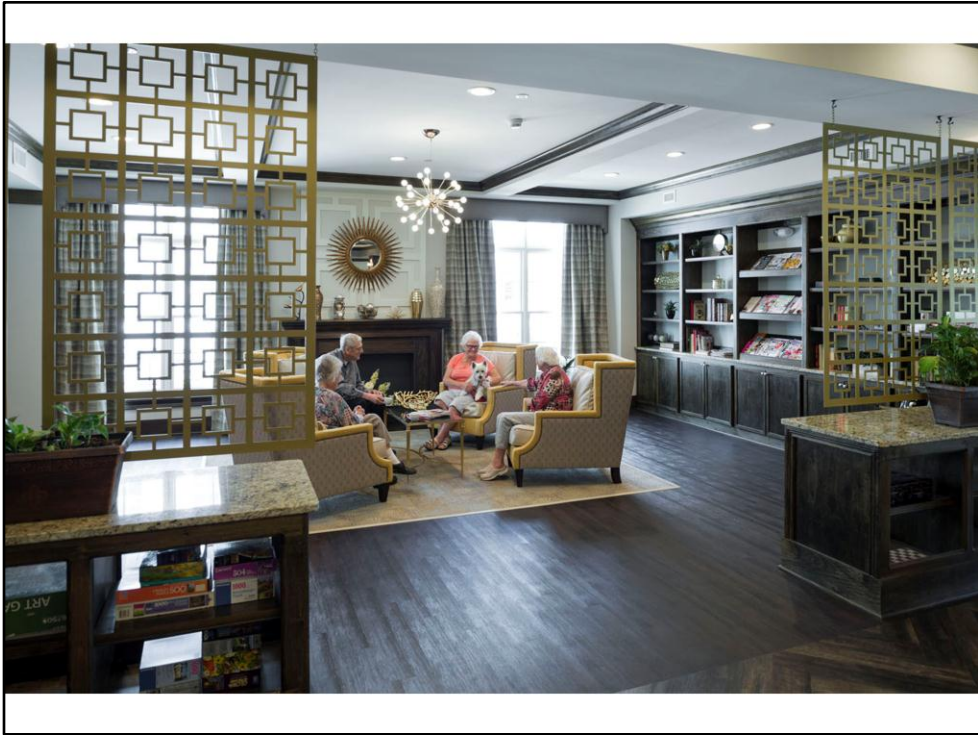
Dover also received a 90 percent, 10-year payment-in-lieu-of-taxes agreement, which it used to build a new road, move a storm sewer under the inn, and remove asbestos.



In March 2014, the inn was removed from the East Tennessee Endangered Heritage List, and in November 2015, proud community members cut the ribbon on the . . .



. . . Alexander Inn Guest House assisted living center. Before opening, 60 percent of the units had been reserved, showing the community need for such accommodations.



We always talk about how historic preservation contributes to economic development, and this project is an excellent example of that.



The local economic impact has been substantial, with the property tax value of the center soaring from 400 thousand dollars to 9 million dollars.



The legacy of the atomic program is also chronicled in the main lobby of the assisted living center, which houses a museum curated by the Oak Ridge Heritage and Preservation Association. The museum is included in heritage tourism tours sponsored by the newly designated Manhattan Project National Historical Park—part of which is located in Oak Ridge.



The Alexander Inn project fulfills a number of the objectives we honor through the Chairman's Award, including education and understanding of historic preservation, significant contributions to heritage tourism, rehabilitation of historic resources, and economic development.



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Before I turn to Chairman Donaldson who will bestow the certificates, I would like to thank you all again for helping us honor this impressive project this evening. I hope you have a chance to visit Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and experience this unique facet of the Manhattan Project.