

SRS HERITAGE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

September, 2018

Department of Energy Funds New Exhibit



On August 29th, the Office of Legacy Management of the US Department of Energy announced a grant to fund a major new exhibit in the Dibble wing of the SRS Museum and additional exhibits for the Ellenton Heritage Trail. New South Associates will design the exhibits with assistance from local organizations, including the Heritage Foundation, the Archaeological Research Program, the SRS Cold War Curation Facility and the Aiken County Historical Museum. This grant is the first substantial DOE financial contribution to the SRS Museum and will provide a state-of-the-art exhibit to enhance the visitor experience.

The new permanent exhibit in the south end of the Dibble wing will tell the story of the coming of the Savannah River Site to the Central Savannah River Area. Interactive exhibits will highlight the sacrifices and patriotism of the people who were impacted by the sudden transition and the transformative changes that occurred from 1950 through 1955. A central map table will feature a large touch screen showing the communities formerly located within the Site boundaries.

Historic photographs and interviews will tell the stories of the transition at four interactive interpretive stations.

- The Announcement
- Taking Leave
- Where do We Go Now?
- Opportunity and Loss

Each station will include a large professionally-designed interpretation panel, a wall-mounted sound dome and an iPad that will enable visitors to select relevant images and quotations from interviews or historic broadcasts. Presentations will be designed to recreate the atmosphere of the 1950's in telling the stories.

The budget for the Dibble exhibit is estimated at \$85,000 and completion is scheduled for August 2019.

The permanent exhibit in the SRS Museum will be complemented by new interpretive signage erected at the Ellenton townsite. Approximately twelve signs will be designed to enhance visitor experience at the Ellenton Heritage Trail. The cost of these signs is estimated at \$15,000 and they are scheduled to be in place by August 2019.

Details of the new exhibits will be forthcoming as designs mature.



Save the Date...Atoms in the Alley...October 20

The SRS Heritage Foundation will host the second annual “**Atoms in the Alley**” street party on October 20 to close the events of Nuclear Science week. Plans for the 2018 party include and expand features of the very enjoyable event last year.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Ecology Gallery in the SRS Museum will precede the block party. The Gallery will display new exhibits by the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory and the US Forest Service.

The block party, from 5:00 to 7:00pm, will feature live music, educational exhibits appealing to children of all ages and vendors. Stay tuned for more information on what promises to be a fun-filled evening for all the family.



2017 Atoms in the Alley

Come join the fun!

Don't forget - October 20th

Aiken Radar Station by Lawrence Stewart

The following article is based on an interview with Lawrence Stewart, who was stationed at the Aiken Radar Station from 1972 until 1975. The Station played a significant role in the protection of the Savannah River Plant and the southeastern US during the perilous days of the Cold War. This brief article is one of the very few descriptions of the Station.

When I graduated from high school I had a student deferment while attending the United Electronic Institute. Immediately before graduation, I enlisted in the US Air Force. After boot camp at Gunter Air Force Base (AFB) in Alabama, I was transferred to Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi where I was trained to be a AC&W Radar Repairman. I was assigned to The Aiken Radar Station in May, 1972.

The Aiken Radar Station was built in 1955 and was in service until 1975. The Station had two major types of radar equipment:

Aircraft or missile altitude, range and direction (azimuth) was measured by a FPS-26, heightfinder radar. The FPS-26 antenna was shielded by an inflatable dome supported by two fans. Technicians could access the antenna deck through an air lock in the inflated radome. This equipment could detect intruders up to 100,000 feet, well above the altitude ceiling of aircraft available at that time, with a search radius of 250 miles.

Target location was measured by FPS-7 long range search radars under rigid domes. One of the two transmitters was active and the other on standby.

The Station was manned 24/7 by the 861st Radar Squadron of the Aerospace Defense Command. Data was transmitted to Gunter AFB.

In addition to the radars, the fenced compound also included a motor pool, ground radio, Civil Engineer facilities, an in-ground swimming pool, recreation room, commissary Base Exchange, and, last but not least, an NCO Club.



The Station closed March 31, in 1975 and I was discharged April 2nd.



Aiken Radar Station



Unit Badge

Coordinates	 33°38'46"N 081°40'36"W
	 33°38'46"N 081°40'36"W
Type	Air Force Station
Code	ADC ID: SM-159, NORAD ID: Z-159

Site information

Controlled by	 United States Air Force
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Site history

Built	1955
In use	1955-1975

Garrison information

Garrison	861st Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron
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USCA Robotics Class Visits Museum

Ten Junior and Senior students from the USCA 400-level robotics class recently participated in a special tour of the Museum. The unique 5-week course was taught by SRS retirees Clyde Ward and Frank Heckendorn. The course attracted students from colleges ranging between New York and Texas. The special tour began with a walk through the Museum and a general discussion of Museum exhibits to provide an overview of Site history. This overview was followed by a detailed discussion of the three historic robots on loan from the SRS Cold War collection. Design features and operations of the historic robots were reviewed for the students. Clyde Ward also provided commentary on a video that described contests with the “Jabberwock” battle-bot in 2001 and 2002. The students enjoyed the opportunity to see practical examples of what they had been studying in class.



Clyde Ward describes television clips showing contests of the “Jabberwock” battle-bot during 2001-2002



Frank Heckendorn explains features of historical robots on loan from the SRS Cold War Collection



Art Osborne reviews the history of the Savannah River Site

ATOMS IN THE ALLEY

DON'T FORGET OCTOBER 20TH

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2017

We are please to recognize our sponsors
who have made substantial contributions to
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City of Aiken

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New South Associates

*A special thank you to the
individual members for their continued
support of the Foundation*

Museum Seeks Volunteers

The SRS Museum has opportunities for several additional docents to assist visitors interested in learning about the Site. Volunteers work in pairs from noon to 4:00pm on one Friday or Saturday each month. Docents report enjoying meeting interesting people, learning about activities at SRS, and contributing to the Museum and their community.

SRS experience is desirable but not required. On-the job training will be provided and a Docent Manual is available to explain the Museum and specific exhibits. If you would like to join the Museum team and contribute a few hours of your time to this worthwhile effort, please contact Walt Joseph at qualityprt@aol.com or Carl Fields at ccf149@bellsouth.net



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We will be posting news and tidbits during these exciting times of Foundation progress. The SRS Heritage Facebook page is open for business. Please join us at <http://www.facebook.com/srs.heritage>. And don't forget the news and archives at the website, <http://www.srsheritagemuseum.org/> or check out the srsmuseum@aikencountysc.gov

The U. S. Forest Service is today, and has always been, a vital partner in the development, construction and operation of the Savannah River Site. Starting in 1951, a few months after the announcement of the Site, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) engaged the USFS. The first deliverable that was requested by the AEC was a complete characterization and study of the best ways that the forests could be used, protected and managed. The forests covered about 67% of the 310 sq. mile site. After reviewing the initial recommendations from the USFS the AEC authorized a forest management program to control erosion, prevent weed growth, provide protective screening and provide a monetary return to the government through the sale of timber and pulpwood. They were also asked to train Site personnel in forest fire fighting and establish a forest fire prevention program.

The first contract was to set out 10 million pine seedlings on 30,000 acres. The first seedlings were planted along the site's perimeter to provide screening. A forest management program was soon launched for 60,000 more acres with an additional 26.5 million trees. These were completed by 1955 and 10 million more were added each year through 1960. By 1973 the assessed value of the sites timber resources had grown from an initial \$19 million to over \$30 million. Today's value of these resources is in excess of \$500 million. In addition to the financial payback the programs also created a giant green space in western South Carolina. The industrial space of the site is about 12%. This space is hardly visible when viewed from above and the incredible contrast of the site's greenery with the surrounding developed land.



Savannah River Project Forester John Hatcher amid long leaf pines planted in 1953 surveying "pine plantation." Courtesy of SRS Archives.

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USFS employee explains the mechanics of tree-cutting and loading as part of a public out-reach program, 1978. Timber and heavy water were the site's only income-producing products. Courtesy of SRS Archives.

Revenues collected from the sale of pulpwood harvested on the site are turned over to the U.S. Treasury. Courtesy of SRS Archives



1973 was a landmark year for the USFS at SRS. An ecosystem management plan was developed and implemented. This plan integrated the site's natural resource objectives and allowed the start of numerous soil restoration and erosion control projects. The 1970s also saw an increasing involvement of the USFS into more site activities and name change to the Savannah River Forest Station (SRFS).

The SRFS of today has assumed a far greater role than originally envisioned. Today work and responsibilities include: secondary road and boundary maintenance; endangered species recovery and management; and program/engineering support for site environmental management. The Savannah River Site today is an outstanding example and model for the coexistence of industrial necessities and solid environmental stewardship.



The red-cockaded woodpecker population at SRS has grown from 4 in 1985 to 120 today due to the efforts of the Savannah River Forest Station. Source: Savannah River Forest Station

2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	September	October	November	December
2			Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open	
3			Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open	
5		Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open		
6		Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open		
7	Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open			
8	Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open			
16			Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open	
17			Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open	
19		Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open		
20		Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open Atoms in the Alley Event 5-7:00 pm		
21	Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open			Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open
22	Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open			Noon to 4:00 pm Museum Open