

# SRS Heritage Foundation

## NEWSLETTER

June 2011

## Celebration!

### 60 Years of Environmental Science at SRS

**E**nvironmental studies that began within months of the announcement of the Savannah River Project were extraordinary at the time and led the world in establishing the discipline of environmental science. The Foundation is sponsoring a Celebration of 60 Years of Environmental Science at SRS to highlight the early pioneering work at SRS and the continuing studies that have made SRS the nation's first National Environmental Research Park and the most-thoroughly studied site in the nation.

The location of the giant Savannah River Project was announced on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1950 (see the article on page 3). Construction at the site began February 1, 1951. A few months later, the DuPont Company began a series of pioneering environmental studies:

In the summer of 1951 Dr Ruth Patrick and limnologists from the Philadelphia Academy of Science began their long-term study of the Savannah River.

At about the same time, Professor Eugene Odum and his team from the University of Georgia began baseline terrestrial studies.

In June, Dr Bill Reinig joined the Savannah River Laboratory and began measuring natural radioactivity at the site and in the 5,000 square mile area surrounding the site.

These preoperational studies were unprecedented at the time and predated establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency by 20 years.

The Celebration of 60 Years of Environmental Science at SRS will be held on the USCA campus on Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup>. The celebration is intended for students, teachers and the general public. Activities will last from 9:00 to 3:00 with talks at the Etherredge Center by nationally-known scientists that will highlight the history, status and future plans for environmental science at the Savannah River Site. A lunch break will provide time to eat and visit exhibits in the Etherredge Center and the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center illustrating environmental programs and displaying live animals and birds. Participants in the Celebration will include:

- The Savannah River Ecology Laboratory of the University of Georgia
- The Savannah River National Laboratory of the US Department of Energy
- The US Forest Service of the US Department of Agriculture
- The Savannah River Archaeological Research Program
- The Ruth Patrick Science Education Center of USCA
- The Friends of Hitchcock Woods.

**The public is invited to attend the Celebration and admission will be free.  
Save the date of August 20<sup>th</sup> for an interesting and enjoyable day.**



**Dr. Ruth Patrick**



**Dr. Eugene Odum**

# Celebration! 60 Years of Environmental Science At the Savannah River Site

**COME AND SEE HOW THE 'GEM' GOT STARTED & HOW IT'S DOING TODAY!**

THE 'GEM' OF THE CSRA TAKEN FROM SPACE, 1997



**HISTORY...EXHIBITS...SCIENCE...PRESENTATIONS...LIVE ANIMALS & BIRDS**



**WHEN: AUGUST 20, 2011**  
**WHERE: USCA ETHEREDGE CENTER**  
**TIME: 9:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.**  
**NO CHARGE**  
**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL**  
**SRS HERITAGE FOUNDATION AT 803-226-0116 OR 648-5634**

**Featuring:**



# SRS at Sixty

By Art Osborne

In 1950, the US was struggling with the decision to expand the atomic defense program to include a thermonuclear hydrogen bomb. The Cold War was raging and the Berlin Blockade was fresh in the national memory. The special presidential committee charged with recommending the course of action on the nuclear program met on January 31, 1950 and recommended that the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) should proceed with the development of all forms of atomic weapons including the hydrogen bomb. It was also clear that the country needed much larger production capabilities to support the atomic program. Significant quantities of Plutonium and Tritium would be needed to defend the country and keep the USSR in check.

DuPont had relinquished the Manhattan Project contract for Hanford and was no longer directly involved with the AEC. However, DuPont was keeping abreast of AEC developments through the efforts of R. Monte Evans, Assistant General Manager of the DuPont Explosives Department. Since leaving the Hanford contract DuPont had studied several key processes including heavy water production and chemical separation of atomic isotopes. In June of 1950 the decision had been reached and approved by President Harry S. Truman; Dupont would be asked to undertake the contract to locate, design, construct and operate the "Atomic Plant". Dupont President, Crawford Greenwalt accepted and the work was underway.

The public announcement for the Savannah River Project was made on November 28, 1950 at 12 noon. The site was picked after an extensive selection process. Advantages the site had in addition to the nearby and almost completed Clark's Hill Dam and power generation project were noted as:

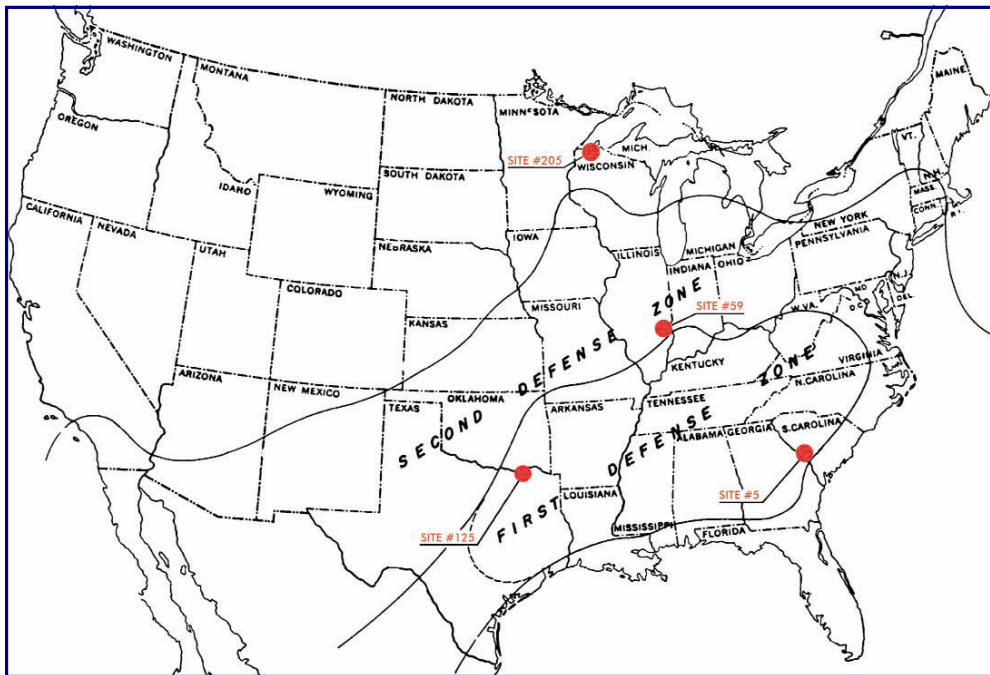
- Isolated from large population centers
- Savannah River flow was adequate and the water was chemically excellent
- Land to be acquired was marginal agricultural land
- Soil was characterized as sandy and well drained
- Construction costs were expected to be lower than elsewhere
- The risk of attack by the Soviet bomber fleet was relatively low

Many competing locations were identified and the finalists included: Wisconsin on the shores of lake Superior, the Texas and Oklahoma border as well as one located along the Southern Illinois and Indiana border.

The announcement was welcomed with joy and great anticipation in the CSRA. There was also an uneasiness and foreboding in the small communities that would be displaced by the giant project.



Public meeting at Ellenton Auditorium, December 6, 1950, called for by the U.S. Corps of Engineers real estate officers responsible for land acquisition. Representatives from each family were asked to attend. Reportedly, over 500 individuals attended the question and answer session.



The above illustration was used in Plant 124-Site Survey Report showing final four candidate sites and their military defense zones.

Information, illustration and photo taken from "Savannah River Site at Fifty"

## Interior Department Studying Cold War Resources

SRS may be receiving national attention for its role in winning the Cold War. The Cold War Advisory Committee of the US Department of Interior held its first meeting May 23rd to study preservation of Cold War properties. The Committee was established in response to 2009 legislation authorizing the Secretary of Interior to identify sites and resources in the US that are significant to the Cold War. The Advisory Committee will advise the National Park Service as it develops a National Historic Landmark Theme Study for the Cold War.

The Advisory Committee prepared a preliminary list of two dozen facilities at Hanford, Oak Ridge, Los Alamos, Pantex, Idaho and SRS as candidates for National Historic Register consideration. The SRS candidate facilities are:

- C Reactor
- K Reactor
- L Reactor
- F Canyon
- H Canyon
- Laboratory Building 773-A
- Canyon Mockup Building 717-F

An earlier study of Manhattan Project properties appears to be nearing fruition. The Secretary of Interior, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Energy, is expected to soon transmit recommendations to Congress to establish a Manhattan Project National Historical Park. The recommendation is expected to include units at Los Alamos, Oak Ridge and Hanford.

Watch for further developments.

Excerpted from May Updates provided by the Atomic Heritage Foundation.





**THANKS TO OUR  
SRS HERITAGE  
FOUNDATION  
SPONSORS  
2011**

We are particularly pleased that several organizations have such faith in our future that they have made substantial financial contributions to our programs.

Among these supporters are:

**Corporate Sponsor**

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

**Corporate Member**

Savannah River Remediation, LLC

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Security Federal Bank

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

**JOIN THE  
SRS HERITAGE  
FOUNDATION  
TODAY!!  
WE NEED  
YOUR SUPPORT!**

**Ortaldo, Patterson, Sullivan and Wilson  
Join Board of Directors**

Four new members recently joined the Heritage Foundation Board of Directors.

Joe Ortaldo has a BS and MS in Chemical Engineering and 42 years of experience in chemical and nuclear industries. He spent 24 years at SRS before retiring in 2004. He has been a member of the SRS Citizens Advisory Board and the Health Effects Subcommittee of the Centers for Disease Control.

Karen Patterson worked at SREL for 15 years. Since leaving SREL she has worked as an environmental consultant on projects supporting WSRC, SRNL and DOE. She served on the Citizens Advisory Board for 10 years and is a member of the CNTA Board of Directors and the SC Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council.

Kent Sullivan graduated from Auburn University and was a cooperative education student at SRS prior to full-time employment in 1973. He retired in 2005 and is now a Senior Associate with Longenecker & Associates. He has served as a City Councilman in North Augusta and currently is Membership Chairman of the SRS Retirees Association and Vice Chairman of the SRP Federal Credit Union.

Bruce Wilson retired as Deputy Manager of the SRS Office of National Security Administration after 35 years of federal service at SRS with the Atomic Energy Commission, Energy Research & Development Administration, the Department of Energy and NNSA.

We are delighted to welcome these talented and experienced new members to the Foundation Board.

**Are You A Member Yet!**

If you did not receive, or have misplaced your membership application, do not despair...Another application is included in this Newsletter. HOWEVER, this may be your last chance; we plan to pare down the mailing list in the near future. Please rejoin (or join) promptly to assure that you continue to receive the Newsletter and news updates regarding historic preservation at SRS. **We need and want you to be part of our plans for the future.**

## William J. Mottel 1929—2011



Bill Mottel passed away May 14th after a long illness. Bill was a native of Michigan and a graduate of Michigan State University with a degree in Chemical engineering. He joined the DuPont Company at the Savannah River Laboratory in 1953 after service in the Army nuclear weapons program. He transferred to the Savannah River Plant in 1964 and was Plant Manager from 1976 to 1979. He retired as the Safety Director of DuPont after 38 years of service. He authored the book, "Industrial Safety is Good Business". Bill was active in civic affairs in North Augusta and Hilton Head. He was an early supporter of the SRS Heritage Foundation and served as our first Chairman of the Board from 2008 to 2009.

We will remember Bill as a friend, a lifelong participant in civic activities, an exceptional manager at the Savannah River Plant and the first Chairman of the Board of the SRS Heritage Foundation.

## Preserving & Interpreting Savannah River Site History

**SRS HERITAGE FOUNDATION  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

*I would like to become a member of the SRS Heritage Foundation at the following level. (Please Check One)*

Benefactor \$120.00

Patron \$ 80.00

Sustaining \$ 35.00

Student \$ 15.00

Small Business \$ 25.00

Corporate Member \$1,000.00

Corporate Sponsor \$5,000.00

*I would like to order to help with Publications, Membership, Fundraising, or Publicity information.*

**This membership is valid through December 2011.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email to: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax # \_\_\_\_\_

No check, credit card or the SRS Heritage Foundation, Inc. is included. Contributions to the Foundation are tax exempt. Please DONOR-100019

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**Go to the website to get a full-size application...join now!**

**Members who have not signed up for 2011.. will be dropped from the membership list very soon!**



Presents



Lake Barrett

### “FUKUSHIMA: WHAT HAPPENED AND THE FUTURE” WITH GUEST SPEAKER LAKE BARRETT

A description of the Fukushima events, current situation and cleanup challenges, including parallels and lessons learned from Three Mile Island.

Lake Barrett is a part time independent consultant in the energy field. He has worked in the nuclear energy and nuclear materials management areas for over 4 decades, most recently as the former head of the US Department of Energy's Office of Civilian Nuclear Waste Management which is responsible for implementing the United States' programs for spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste, as mandated by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

**Make your reservations soon by calling the CNTA office at 803-649-3456 or emailing your reservation to: [cnta@bellsouth.net](mailto:cnta@bellsouth.net).**

**Date: June 16, 2011**

**Where: Houndslake Country Club**

**Time: 7:30 a.m.**

**Cost: \$20.00/person (pay at the door or make arrangements to be invoiced—all unmet reservations will be invoiced)**

**Tables can be reserved (8) per table for \$160.**

**[Deadline to reserve is June 14th at close of business](#)**