

News from the Savannah River Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Veterans Seeking Post-Military Careers Tour SRS Curation Facility

AIKEN, S.C. (March 16, 2015) – The transition from years of service in the U.S. armed forces to a normal work life in America can be difficult, particularly for soldiers returning from active duty involving overseas conflicts.

To assist them with this transition, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program (SRARP) and SRNS subcontractor New South Associates (NSA) recently invited a group of military veterans to visit the Savannah River Site (SRS) Curation Facility, owned by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

The visit was part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Veterans Curation Program (VCP), which provides veterans with tangible work skills and experience through the rehabilitation and preservation of federally-owned archaeological collections.

The VCP employs veterans for up to five months. Work products developed in archaeological curation readily translate to entry level skill sets for the fields of forensics, administrative duties, and museum and records management.

According to Caroline Bradford, NSA Laboratory Manager for Archives, the goal of the program



Melissa Jolley, Curator (right), SRS Curation Facility, provides a tour to one of several groups of military veterans scheduled to learn about how to maintain and operate a curation project.

is to help the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with their backlog of unprocessed historical records and artifacts, while vocationally helping the veterans of recent conflicts.

“It’s a mutually beneficial program,” said Bradford. “And, we’re here today to learn how SRS Curation Facility personnel conduct their archaeology duties. Our employees visiting SRS today are essentially doing the same type of work in the Veterans Curation Program as they are doing here, only in an institutional setting. All of this helps our veterans to see where they fit within the field of archaeologists and collection managers. The SRS Curation Facility is a great local resource.”

DOE, working closely with site operations and management contractor SRNS, NSA and SRARP, is fulfilling a commitment to preserve decades of culture, accomplishments and history associated with life at the Savannah River Plant, now known as SRS, through the creation and continued growth of the curation facility.

This former warehouse preserves and protects historic artifacts. Though not a museum, the curation facility is home for artifacts from SRARP and the Cold War Preservation Program.

Items currently stored in the facility range from approximately 1950 to 1989, the “era of significance,” and they relate to the key themes of the collection: historical figures, historic events, the history of technology on and off site, and the social history of the men and women who worked at the Savannah River Plant.

Because the themes are broad, the artifacts themselves are also diverse. They range from small campaign buttons worn by engineers at SRP who transferred from the Manhattan Project to large control room panels used to operate a test reactor. The collection also includes a number of mockup reactor fuel rods formerly used for training and a collection of gages used by SRP employees to perform quality assurance checks on tritium storage containers.

Will Dangerfield, VCP Laboratory Analysis Technician, stated that he believes this is a great opportunity for veterans to obtain valuable instruction involving the processing of artifacts from experts.

Dangerfield, who has a degree in history, believes his time with VCP will help him earn a master’s degree and pursue a career in the field of history.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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