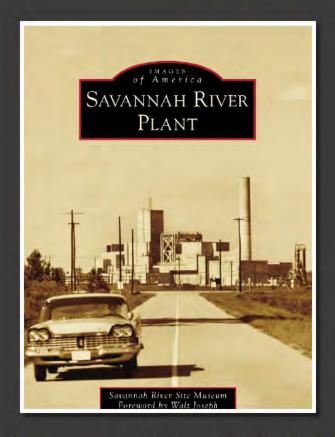


CAPTURING HISTORY:

THE LEGACY OF SAVANNAH RIVER'S EARLY PHOTOGRAPHERS (1950-1955)

> CAB Presentation New South Associates March 15, 2023

2022 BANNER YEAR





We recognized that the Site's Historic Photograph Collection was the bedrock for both the exhibit and the new book.

But how much did we know about the rationale for creating the collection and who were the photographers?

What stories did they bring to their photography?

WHAT WE KNOW



Speed Graphic Camera by Graphex

We estimate that roughly 30,000 views were taken during this five-year period.

Photographers were not typically identified on negative sleeves.

Content showed history both big and small.

Large format photography (4 x 5 negatives, black and white)

Cold War Curation is working with Records and Site Photo Services to digitize the collection.

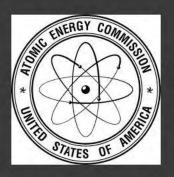
Approximately 90,000 scans completed to date.



SHOUT OUT! New shelving and negative organization and storage in DOE Curation Facility, 315-M.

WHY?







AEC Plant Manager Curtis Nelson, center, Bob Mason, Du Pont Construction Manager (right), and Du Pont Plant Manager Don A. Miller

Establishing a photographic record of progress and change was a DuPont company value learned from their experience prior to and at Hanford during World War II.

Dupont and all their subcontractors were required to produce a printed "history" of their work.

They understood the value of photography in building community onsite and off site.

AND

They had a collaborative working relationship with early AEC leadership which wholeheartedly supported them in these pursuits.

Key Dates - Savannah River Project

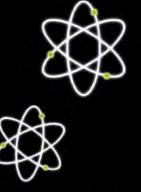
Announcement on November 28, 1950. The national media arrive, and the first wave of site photography occurs.

DuPont immediately begins documenting the history of the Plant through photography and film. Two photographers from Oak Ridge are deployed to the Savannah River Project to document change within the plant boundaries

They later return to photograph the communities that surround the plant: Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell, North Augusta, Augusta, and Blackville.

Search begins for permanent staff professional photographers. George Schaefer, Joe Lista, Cary Salter, Bud Harvey, William Bodie and others are hired.

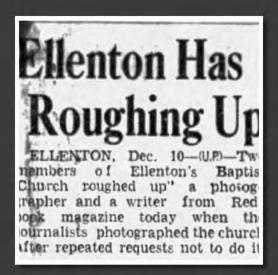
The Newspaper of the Savannah River Plant, is launched on Leap Day February 29, 1952





1952







FIRST WAVE – THE MEDIA

Immediately after the announcement of the H-Bomb's location, they couldn't get to Ellenton fast enough.... Louise Cassels ,

The Unexpected Exodus

Kenneth Rogers, Atlanta Constitution, 1923-1972



Well known and Georgia based, Kenneth Rogers covered events across the state and region for the *Atlanta Constitution*. His collections are housed at the Atlanta History Center and Georgia State University.



"Ellenton before being leveled for the nuclear refinery plant site, H Bomb Story SC December 31, 1950."

Kenneth Rogers, Atlanta Journal-Constitution



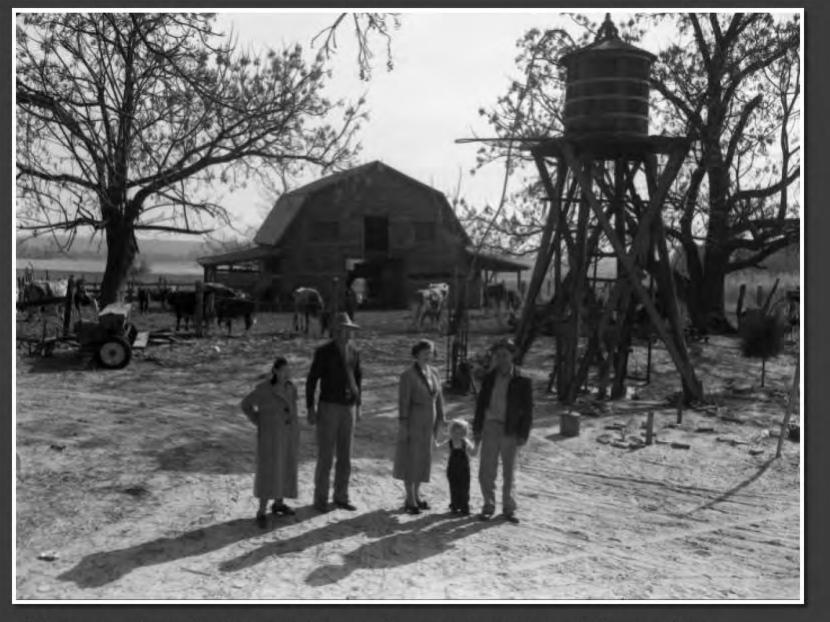
"This quaint old house at Ellenton SC is one of hundreds that will be torn down to clear the site for the government's \$260,000,000 hydrogen energy plant near Augusts, February 25, 1951," Kenneth Rogers, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*



"Residents before being relocated for the construction of the nuclear refinery plant, 1950. H Bomb December 31, 1950"

Kenneth Rogers

Atlanta Journal-Constitution



"Farmers lose their land due to the construction of the nuclear refinery plant, February 25, 1951",

Kenneth Rogers, Atlanta Journal-Constitution



St. Luke's Church, Meyers Mill vicinity

"Churches and cemeteries are relocated outside the nuclear hazardous zone, H-Bomb February 25, 1951," Photographer Kenneth Rogers, Atlanta Journal-Constitution



"B.J. Davis stands beside a sign that expresses the sentiments of people living in Ellenton, SC.",, "H Bomb February 25, 1951," Kenneth Rogers, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

National Newspapers used Freelance Photographers - AP and Acme

Henton Has

Dec. 10-(U.P)-Two Baptist Church roughed up" photog-Redmagazine today when the journalists photographed the church after repeated requests not to do it.

The two men, who were reportedly asked to leave the church premises when they were found photographing the front of the church as the congregation began filing out, were identified as magazine photographer Ike Vern and writer Booton Hendron.

Meanwhile, Ellenton Police Chief J. E. Steed said he had heard "only rumors" of any disturbance in front of the church.

The Greenville News





furnes in the Japanese Exhancy and culous in London. Timy were critically in a tigh state of environment, and they clint-

ERP CONCILIATION To Head Top Research Body

Fine Request Due Now

STIKKER IS NAMED Truman Asks Utility Leader

Time Magazii

National Geo

Redbook Mag

Articles conta

free lance pho

Stern who sol

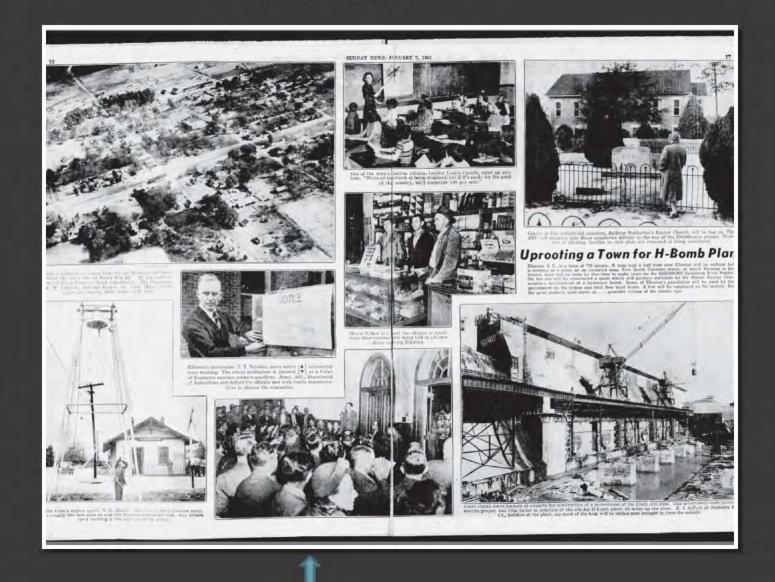
Acme Telepho

PUBLIC MEETING IN ELLENTON, DECEMBER 6, 1950



Photographer Attributed to Acme Telephotos by the $Daily\ News$

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS SPREAD JANUARY 7, 1951 Photographs Attributed to Acme

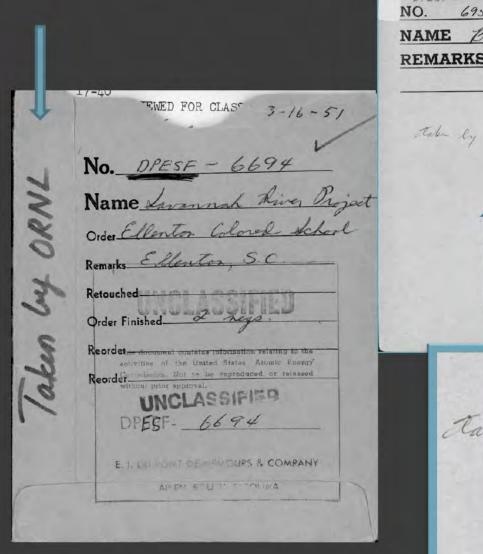






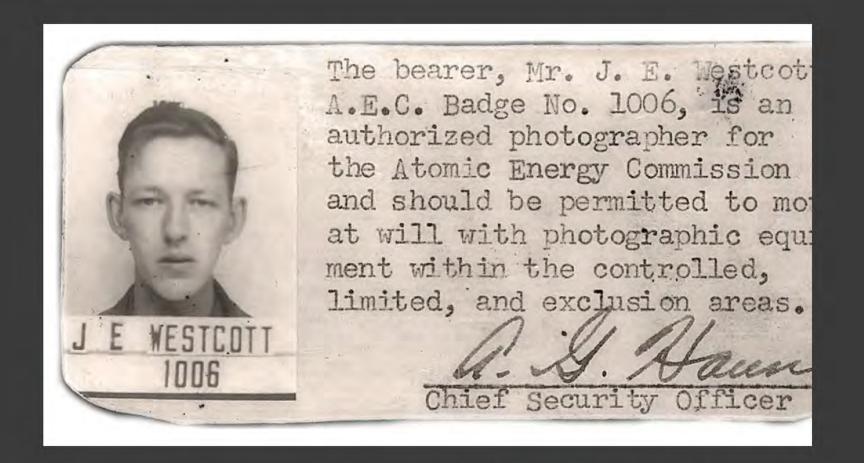
FIRST PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHERS – WHO WERE THEY?

Negative Envelopes Provide the Clues



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	2 negs.	
taken by o	DRNL	
	Westcott, James E.	E519
	Tarver, Jack P+	E492



The first photographers were from Oak Ridge National Laboratory-Ed Westcott and Jack Tarver both of whom had clearances, know how from WWII work with AEC and the Corps , and were fellow southerners.

"You are given a badge and told you can go anywhere on site but cannot tell anyone what you see, hear or photograph...."_

JAMES EDWARD "Ed" WESTCOTT (1922-1997)



At age 13, got a snapshot of FDR on a visit to Nashville.

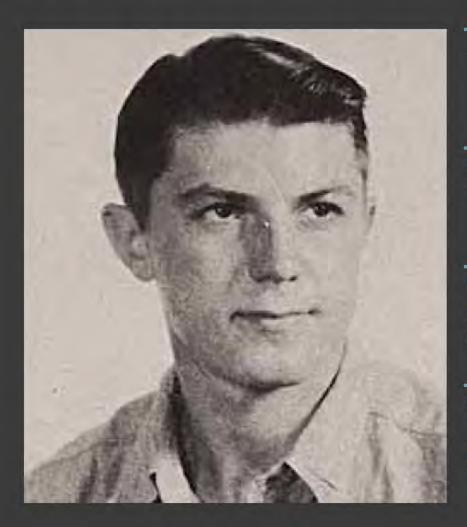
Began his career at Oak Ridge at age of 20 as a photographer.

Considered the "Photographer of the Manhattan Project"

Known for his depictions of everyday life in a hidden city.

Westcott was a resident of Oak Ridge and remained its official photographer until his death at age 97.

JACK PHILLIP TARVER (1925-2018)



Aerial photographer for Navy during WWII

He and his future wife worked at an art studio in Clinton, TN in 1950

Likely began his civilian career at Oak Ridge at about the age of 24, we are unsure when he left. Several Oak Ridge building photos at National Archives are attributed to him.

He was employed by Arnold Engineering Development Complex (AEDC) at Arnold Airforce Base for over 30 years as a public affairs photographer.

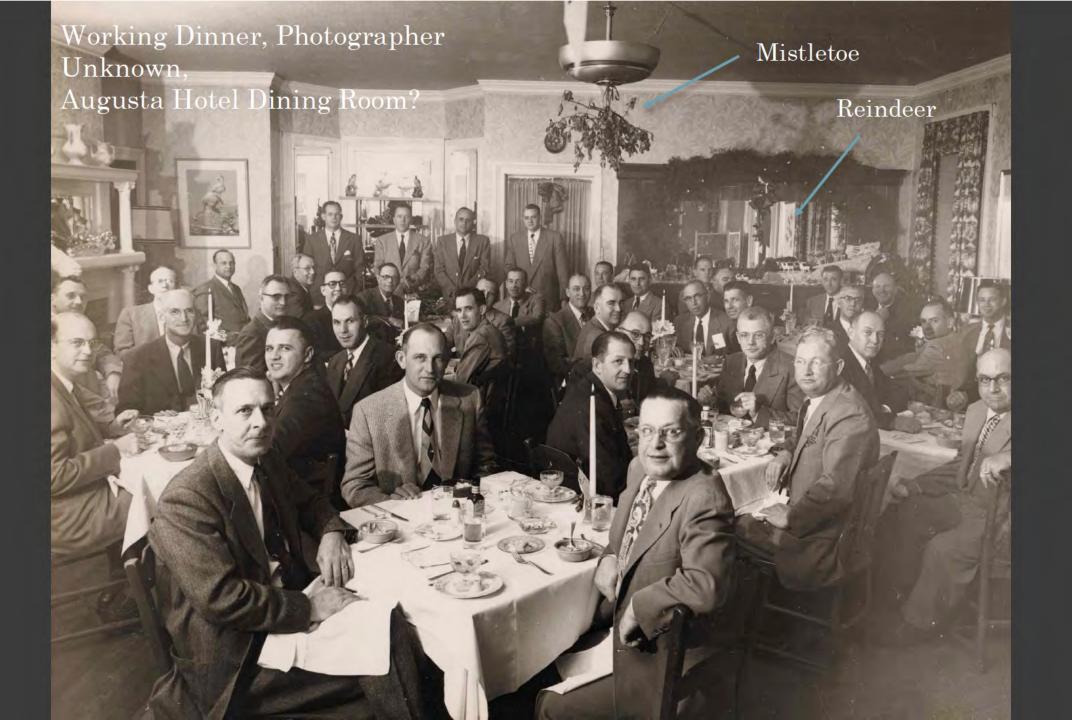
1950-1951 DOCUMENTATION



Photographers Westcott, age 28, and Tarver, age 25, were tasked with recording the communities and landscape <u>within</u> the boundary area in March 1951.

Their work produced iconic photographs capturing Ellenton, Dunbarton, and Meyers Mill and other places before they were displaced. One or both may have been there earlier in December of 1950.

Their contribution was episodic ending in June of 1951 when they returned to record the communities on the perimeter of the site: Aiken, Augusta, Allendale, Barnwell, Blackville, Williston, and North Augusta.

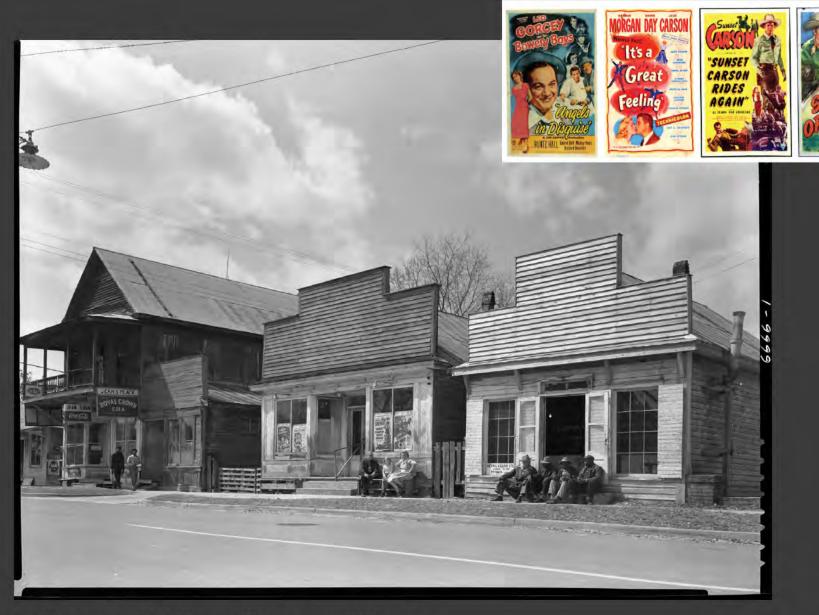




Ellenton Main Street



Ellenton –Photograph taken on the day of the announcement according to resident and author Louise Cassels.



Jean's Place and O'Berry Theatre, Ellenton



Right to left, homes of Mrs. C.J. Ashley, Mrs. Elmo Ashley, and the Cassels.

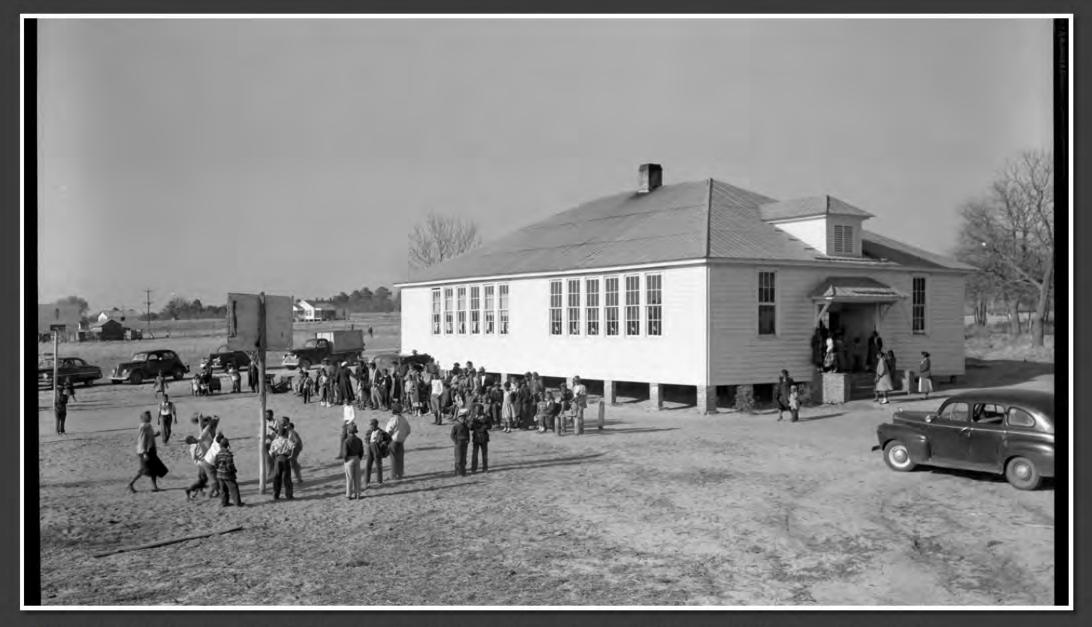


Ellenton School for White Children, school improvements completed in 1950.

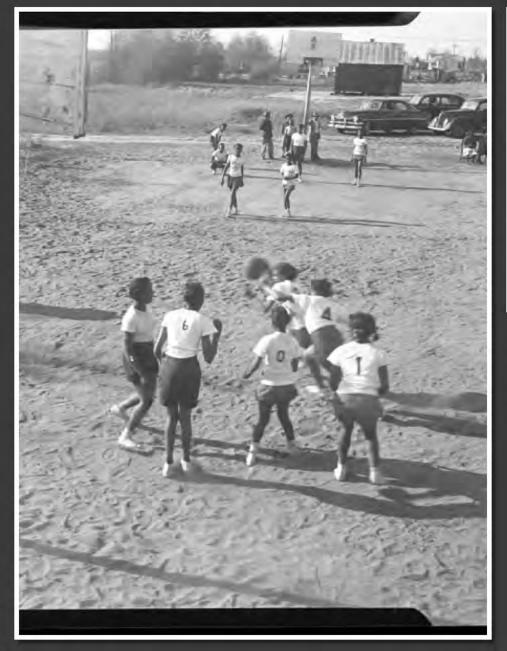




Dance at Ellenton School in Gymnasium, note trees used as decorations.



Brinkley School, served Ellenton's African American children during segregation.





Girl's basketball game at Brinkley School. Note parents standing on sidelines and dirt court.



Mike Cassels
Portrait and Cassel's
Long Store





Interior of Cassel's where construction workers bought and ate lunch.





Dunbarton Depot and main thoroughfare



Dunbarton – Dick's Garage on left



Dunbarton





Meyers Mill



C. O. Meyers and J. W Hodges, Meyers Mill PO Office



Church - Meyers Mill Baptist Church



Meyers Mill

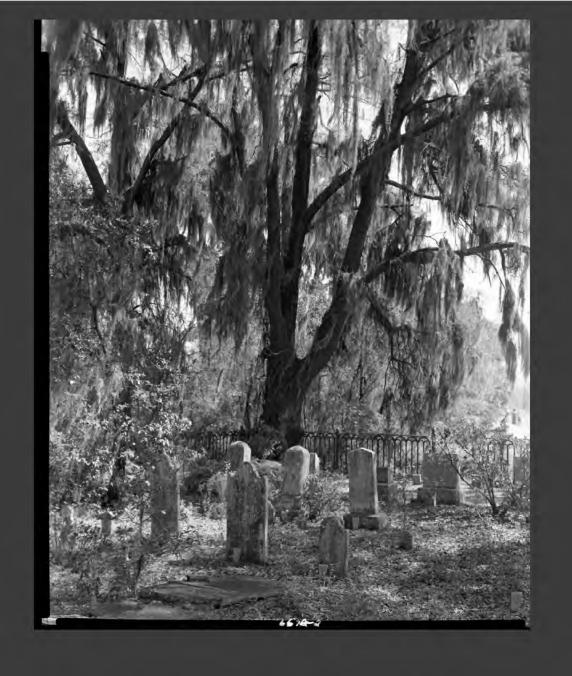




Farmhouse, Ellenton



Ellenton Area Newer Housing



Dunbar Cemetery



Farmhouse, Andy Dunbar, Ellenton SC



Trailer Camp, Ellenton SC 3-18-51



AIKEN





US.1 Intersection with Laurens, Hotel Aiken on Right, Owens Seed Company on left

ALLENDALE



BARNWELL



BARNWELL (2)



BLACKVILLE



NORTH AUGUSTA



WILLISTON



Carolina Terrace Apartments

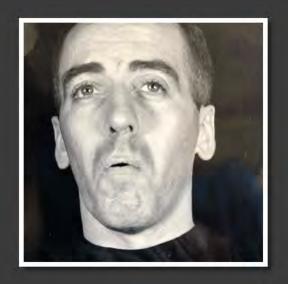


Lynhurst Housing Development

Panic Pond







PROGRESS PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Left to Right, Joe Lista, Gary (Cary) Salter, George Schaeffer Not Shown, Henry Fulghum, John H. Gesser Jr. William Bodie, Bud Harvey, M. Kinard



PROGRESS PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

- Responsible for all progress photography during the Savannah River Project
- Photography submitted monthly and quarterly to AEC
- Operated a fully equipped dark room
- ALSO provided photographs for plant newspaper, reports, and the construction histories
- Created 12 "motion pictures"
- Had their own vehicles set up for photography

GEORGE SCHAEFFER



- · Native of Lebam, Washington
- Volunteered for US Army during WWII and served as a Medical Administration Officer doing photography
- After war he worked at Oliver Hospital (Forest Wicker Hotel) in Augusta as a civilian medical photographer
- Married and settled on Blue Bird Lane, Augusta
- He was hired by DuPont and served as a photographic supervisor in 1951 at the age of 26
- Opened his own studio in 1956

JOE LISTA



- Long Branch, NJ native
- Interest in photography began in eighth grade
- Entered WWII and went overseas
- Worked as military photography at Ft. Gordon on his return
- Applied for photographer position at SRP in 1951 at Bell Auditorium, age 27
- Established his studio in Aiken in 1954

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP CHRISTMAS GATHERING – Late 1950s



Seated: Unidentified













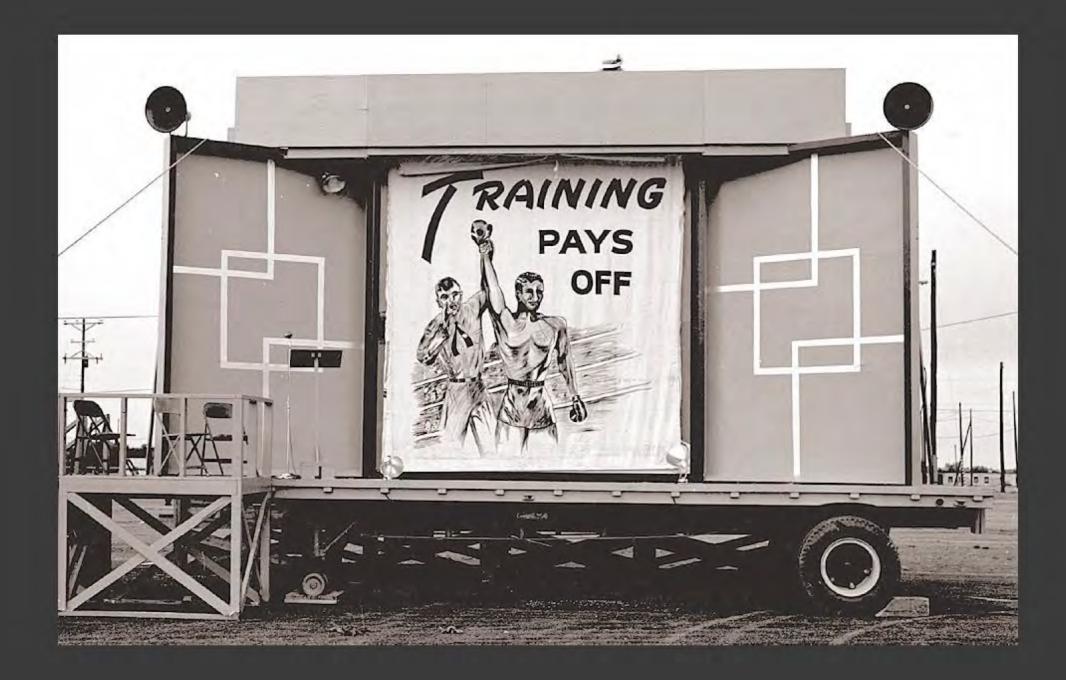








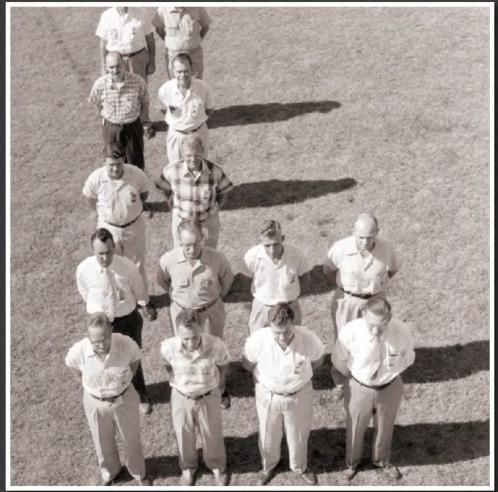








Milton Wahl, First Lab Director (left sitting), Charlie Wende, Assistant Lab Director (right), and J. W. Morrison, Director of Separation (standing)



Area photographs such as these were common. The Progress Photography trucks made this shot a lot easier.



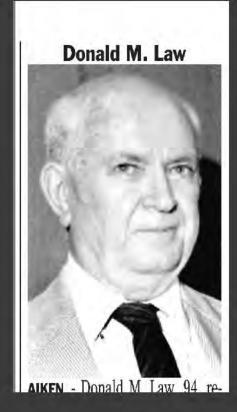
Launched on Leap Day February 29, 1952.

Flat out the Rosetta Stone for all SRP research providing names, titles, and event descriptions as it sought to build community.

Paper Policy:

Photographs will be used liberally and will be supplied by the professionally trained photographers in History, Reports and Records....

Eight-page tabloid on project news, general information and entertainment. Special emphasis on safety and security. No derogatory or embarrassing remarks. It will avoid politics and controversial issues.



Orangeburg's *Times and Democrat* when he heard about the Savannah River Project.

Don Law was working as managing editor of

He asked for a job and got one - managing the new paper for the construction force.

The paper had a circulation of 38,000 which was the largest in the state at that time.

His influence and the paper he managed over the next decades would help shape the photographic collection.

He also instituted a policy of giving the photographers credit for their work the first year. This policy unfortunately ended in 1953.

The Newspaper

OF THE SAVANNAH RIVER PROJECT

U. S. Atomic Energy Commission

Editor-Don Law

Photos by Reports and Records, Office Engineering
Published semi-monthly by and for SRP employees
Under supervision of Service Department, Savannah River Project;
E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company

ESTABLISHED FEBRUARY, 1952

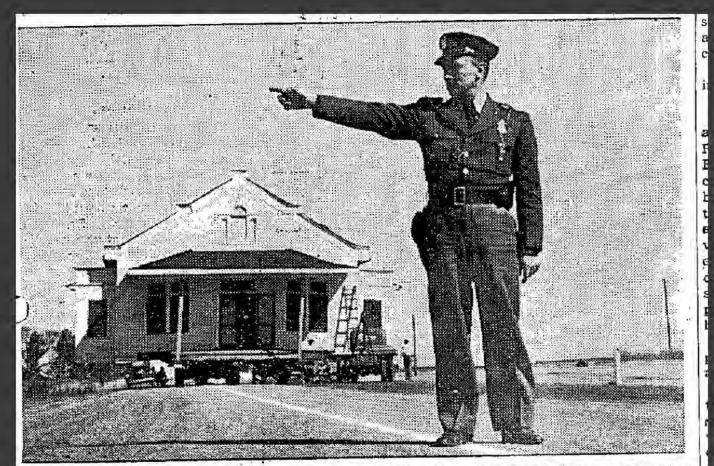


HARD HATS, symbol of safety at Savannah iver, are lined row upon row as thousands of orkers gather at one of the mass safety meetings

held m areas throughout the project. This picture was taken during a recent mass meeting in 400-F. (Photo by Salter)



LAST DAY FOR ELLENTON as it was evacuated to make way for Savannah River Project brought a rush to the village post office. Feb. 29, the deadline day, as SRP workers and others sought to mail letters bearing a special stamp drawn up for the occasion. In this picture, pretty Margaret and Mary Brinkley, daughters of Postmaster Basil T. Brinkley, accept some mail from Bill Main of Kolinski Concrete. Postmaster Brinkley, who had operated the Ellenton post office since 1933, was moving to a position at the Augusta post office. (Photo by Schaesser)



WHAT HAPPENS when a church has a flat tire is shown in the picture above. Patrolman C. T. Allen is directing traffic around the Meyers Mill Baptist Church, which is being moved from the Savannah River Project into Barnwell. A

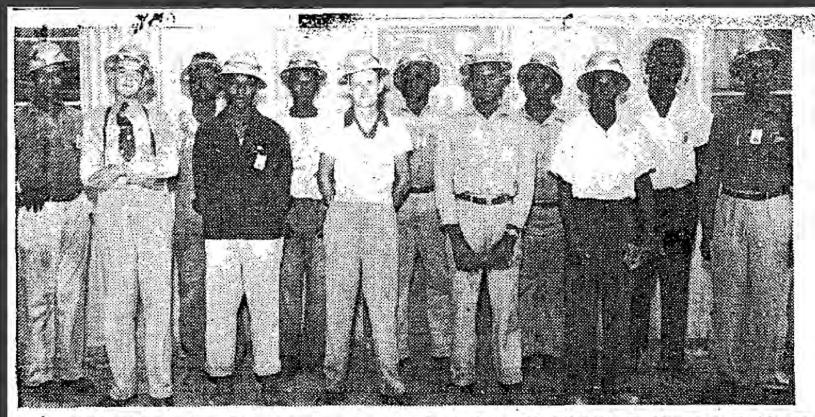
flat tire delayed the house-moving equipment as the church slowly made its way to town. The church was destined to become a mission operated by the Barnwell Baptist Church. (Photo by Schaeffer)

What Happens When a Church has a Flat Tire?



SITTING IN THE LATE SUMMER SUN, Jonas Floyd, one of the hundreds of displaced persons who were required to leave their farms to make room for building the Savannah River Plant, relaxes on a stump outside Morgan's Grocery and reads his newspaper. Floyd, patriarch of one of the several new communities to which the evacuated colored people have moved their homes, "keeps store" and watches the young children of the neighborhood while the younger men are at their jobs. (Photo by Lista)

James Floyd "keeps store" in new community...



INJURY-FREE Labor Department crew in 300-700 Areas has never had a major injury and is on its sixth month without a minor injury. Members of this safe-working crew are, from lest,

L. Jackson, M. Simkins, J. Simmons, E. Shider. W. Judson, Foreman Frank Metts, R. Odom, J. McBride, W. Hickson, P. Simmons, B. Langard and S. Mitchell. (Photo by Salter)

Safety was a major newspaper theme.

Trailer Parks—Home Town To Thousands

What's trailer living like?

To find out, SRP News and Ylews asked Photographer Cary Safter to visit the Robbins Trailer Parks in Alicen and Augusta and to photograph the trailer necuparts as they went about their daily routines. The answer to the question about trailer living, as indicated in the pictures, is: "Just about like life in your own borne lown.

 At Aiken trailer park, school bus arrives bringing some of the hundreds of school children home.

2. Refreshment time: Mrs. Charles J. Alexander, right, whose husband is a rigger in 160-P, entertains Mrs. Walter E. Aeppli, wife of 460-D electrician, and daughter Linda, 2, in her well-tended yard in Augusta. The Alexanders are from Charloite, N. C.; the Aepplis from Presidends, Fla.

3. Outsloor tea party is served by Mrs. A. R. Dixon, Aiken. The Dixons, from Louisville, Ky, nnce owned Dieir own trailer and naw was a home in Louisville. "We thought we outgrew the trailer when our first child was horn; new we have ihree and are hack in a trailer," Mrs. Dixon says. Around table are, from left, Jerry, 3; Doris Kay Setter, a visitor; Randy, 18





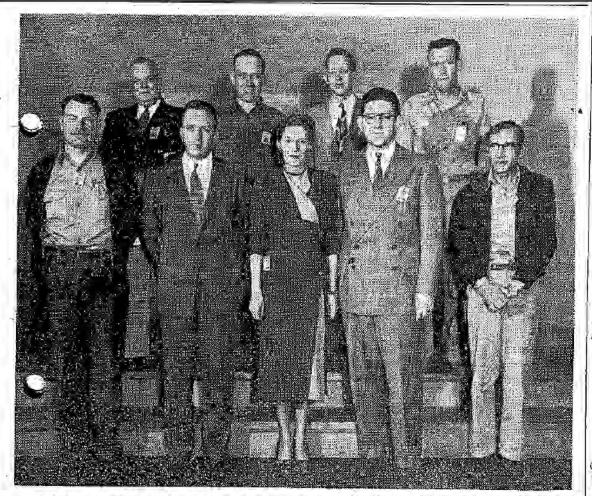






What's trailer living like?

Cary Salter, photographer, reports: "just about like life in your own hometown."



ANOTHER GROUP of idea men—and also a woman—is shown after receiving suggestion awards from Field Project Manager R. K. Mason. They were handed checks ranging from \$145 to \$200 for each suggestion, receiving a total of \$1,585. Left to right here are, front row, M. S.

Benson, Mr. Mason, M. W. Alyward, L. J. Brettler and D. R. Collins; back row, J. H. Foster, who received one check for \$200 and another for \$120, R. J. Bannon, R. W. Lewis 3rd and Y. H. Cantrell. (Photo by Lista).

Photograph celebrating a group of idea men and a woman (M.W. Alyward)....

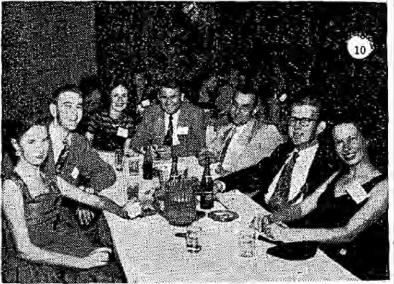


A GOOD TIME WAS HAD at the dance given Sept. 27 in the Georgian Room of the Richmond Hotel by the Savannah River Chapter of the South Carolina Society of Engineers, Besides dancing, the engineers and their ladies enjoyed an amusing floor show. The unique dance floor maneuver above is being executed by Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Sage, whom the camera caught off guard. At left are Mr. and Mrs. Tom Mangold and at right are Bill Mooney and Mrs. Roy H. Bass. Around the table in the upper photo at right are, from left, J. E. Tyson, chapter vice-president; Mrs. Tyson; Roy Ellison: Mrs. Vic Shumsky; Mr. Shumsky; Jack P. Holt; Mrs. Holt; Mrs. Ellison; Mrs. Stan Browne and Mr. Browne, chapter president.

In the lower photo are Mr. and Mrs. Joe Graham, Mr. and Mrs.

In the lower photo are Mr. and Mrs. Joe Graham, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Tisdale, Andy Martin and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Johnson. (Photos by Salter)





A good time was had by all...Georgian Room, Richmond Hotel



community chest checks were presented to four Savannah River area county chairmen Nov. 20 by the managers of SRP's three major components. A final total of \$50,908.66 donated by project employes was divided among Aiken, Altendale and Barnwell counties in South Carolina and Richmond County, Ga. With each contribution the employe designated to which county it should be given. Strom Thurmond, far left, president of the Aiken County Chest, is receiving a check for \$23,731.17 from Curtis A. Nelson, manager,

Savannah River Operations Office, Atomic Energy Commission. Mrs. W. O. Schumpert, Barnwell County manager, is presented a check for \$8,890.62 by Don Miller, plant manager, Du Pont Operations. R. K. Mason, second from right, Du Pont field project manager, Construction, is shown presenting checks to Owen Perry, right, division chief for the Richmond County Chest, and B. C. Pendarvis, Allendale County chairman. Allendale received \$4,027.81 and Richmond County \$14,259.06. (Photo by Lista)



LADY CAGERS, meeting to outline plans for a basketball team, get some pointers from an All-American, Frank White, recreation supervisor. The basketball enthusiasts, who plan to begin play after Christmas, are, left, front

row, Lois Powell, Beotta Beyer and Myrtle Sandifer; second row, Reda Cone, Peggy Shillinglaw and Louise Quintella; back row, Ann Bentley, Joyce Swint, Mildred Blount, Helen Moore and Jerry Epley. (Photo by Schaeffer)



FATHER'S DAY for three proud poppas who work at Savannah River came recently when these little bundles of joy came a-calling. Actually the three youngsters came to "take daddy home," and they waited outside until the whistle blew. Shown with their mothers, SRP's youthful visitors are, left to right, Cathy Lose, daugh-

ter of R. C. Lose, engineer, 100-P; Kathy Schmidt, daughter of Harry Schmidt Auditing; and, the man in the crowd, Hugh Beaton, son of Hugh R. Beaton, Estimating and Scheduling. Mrs. Lose is a former Savanah River employee herself, having worked in the Multigraph Section. (Photo by Lista)



TRAILER PARK CONTEST WINNERS pictured with Phillip D. Brown, left, manager of the Azalea Trailer Park in Augusta, are James H. Edwards, Miller-Dunn electrician who won as first prize an electric iron; Mrs. Perry J. Pruitt, who accepted an electric fam on behalf of her husband, a night shift reinforcing steel worker who won third place; and Frank E. Kleiner, a combustion engineers employee who received a toaster as second prize. Mr. Edwards' entry, "Azalea Trailer Park," was selected as the name for the park in the contest conducted by the John A. Robbins Co., which recently opened the new trailer park. Meanwhile, plans were announced for a similar contest for the new trailer park at Barnwell. (Photo by Lista).

Results of Trailer Park Naming Contest!

Winner- Azalea Trailer Park

First prize an electric iron, second, an electric fan, and third, a toaster.



JUST LIKE GRAY LINE TOURISTS on a rubber-neck wagon, a load of TC office personnel sets iff on a sight seeing tour which will take them over the Savannah River Project. Patrolman John Jennings uses a mike, upper left, to give a running commentary of the tour. Seated by him is rances Lane of History-Reports and Records, who assisted in planning the tour. Patrolman Tom Bass, upper right, makes a badge pass as the passengers prepare to board the bus.

Pencil Pushers Given Chance To See SRP On Patrol Tours

More Phones Promised For Aiken Residents

Telephones may soon be available for Aiken residents who want them.

TO office personnel who sell tions and approved procedures

Why is the Collection Important?



It bears witness to the Site's significant role in the Cold War.

Photographs provide an extraordinary visual history of cultural change and transformation of a rural landscape into an atomic workplace.

The size, breadth, and scope of the content show that all involved thought they were part of a historic undertaking.

Shows depictions of BIG HISTORY as well as everyday work life behind the fence.

The photographs show the building of a new community.

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS



The intersection of free lance and other early photographers was tied to the project as an event and while Westcott and Tarver made a tremendous contribution it was episodic, ending mid year in 1951.

It would be the process photography staff that carried the ball through the end of the Savannah River Project fully recording the establishment of the plant.

Two photographers struck out on their own after the Savannah River Project was completed: Augusta's George Schaeffer and Aiken's Joe Lista.

Each launched photographic studios in their home communities that became community landmarks where they continued to document history but on a more personal scale.

Simply said, they put down roots!

George Schaeffer - Augusta





I'm a little vague about when he left the bomb plant and started his own studio since I was so young. I remember there was a lot of drama around the event. He had an offer to move back to California and work for his brother, which none of us wanted to do.

He took a big risk starting his own studio, but was able to make a living with taking baby pictures at the local hospital, school pictures at the local schools, graduation pictures at the Medical School, wedding pictures as well as portraits and community photos. I remember him and Mom having a fight about his going out late one night to take a picture of someone at a bar with Liberace.

Mara Schaeffer

Joe Lista - Aiken



Joe married Margaret Ann Smith in 1953. Both Joe and his wife Margaret worked at SRP initially.

Margaret would leave to teach school and Joe left DuPont refusing a transfer possibly after the Savannah River Project was completed.

The Listas settled into Aiken and Joe Lista established his studio in 1954 where the "Whats Cookin" is now.



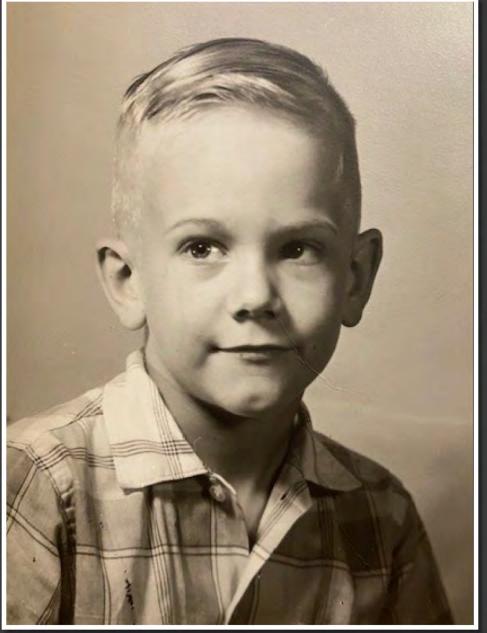


Joe Lista was an award-winning community photographer from 1954 until his death. His photographic work was honored in an exhibit and his photographs of children's milestones, family and community events, weddings and portraits are part of Aiken's history and are in the scrapbooks of many homes.













SPECIAL THANKS TO TODD LISTA, MARA SCHAEFFER, AND GENE BODIE

ALSO

MELISSA HANSON AND ANDY ALBENESIUS

https://srsgov.sharepoint.com/sites/ColdWarHistoricPreservationPre