



Savannah River
Nuclear Solutions, LLC
A Fluor Daniel Partnership

Old Aiken Post Office transformed into SRNS Aiken headquarters

SRNS preserves Aiken history for today's use and tomorrow's vision

The "Old Post Office" has been a graceful landmark in downtown Aiken, S.C., for nearly a century. Now, the historic building has a new lease on life, through the preservation efforts of Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC.

Located on the southwest corner of Park Avenue and Laurens Street, the Old Post Office was built in 1912. An extraordinary example of Jeffersonian classicism, the building remains as one of the iconic architectural achievements of downtown Aiken.

To help preserve the community's past, SRNS— which includes Fluor, Northrop Grumman and Honeywell—leased the building and began renovations in 2008. Josh Stewart of Stewart Builders, Inc. and local architect Mike Holland worked with SRNS on the 5,000-square-foot interior that took nine months to complete. Improvements included state-of-the-art wireless connection, offices, and two conference rooms. SRNS hosted a "grand opening" ribbon cutting reception in December 2009 for about 150 community leaders and elected officials.

Having a facility downtown gives SRNS a greater presence in the Aiken community, provides SRNS officials a central location to meet with clients, and offers citizens the opportunity to learn more about the Savannah River Site.

SRNS is the management and operations contractor for SRS, a Department of Energy-owned facility near Aiken.



Photos courtesy of Todd Lista

Historic Aiken Foundation recognizes preservation effort



The Historic Aiken Foundation presented SRNS and Aikenite Todd Lista with the Stewardship Award for their efforts in updating and preserving the Old Aiken Post Office on the corner of Laurens Street and Park Avenue. Built in 1912, the building is considered an architectural masterpiece that anchors downtown Aiken. The Stewardship Award is given in recognition of outstanding upkeep of a key historic property in Aiken. The Old Aiken Post Office now serves as SRNS' community office.

On hand for the presentation of the Stewardship Award were (from left) Ross Culligan, President of the Historic Aiken Foundation; Clif Webb, Vice President, SRNS Public Affairs; Aiken Mayor Fred Cavanaugh; and Todd Lista.

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Building's history ranged from senator's office to photography studio

In 1905, Aiken native and U.S. Congressman Theodore Gaillard Croft, along with several prominent winter colony residents of Aiken, introduced legislation and received \$50,000 to build a post office.

The architect was James Knox Taylor. The construction effort was led by Ambrose B. Stannard on June 30, 1910 and scheduled to be completed on August 1, 1911. The U.S. Treasury Department paid \$45,618 for the project. The building was finished in the latter part of 1912; but, the U.S. Treasury Department reserved the right to accept a proposal by Ambrose Stannard to replace the galvanized water pipes with lead lined water pipes any time before the roof cornice was completed for the sum of \$300. This building had all the modern conveniences for its time.

The facility served as a U.S. Post Office from 1912-1971. According to WWI and WWII records, the property served as a site for the longest running weather station in the United States.

The former Aiken Post Office served the town for decades, but in time, new postal facilities were built, and the building subsequently saw a variety of uses.

In the 1950s, U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond had the basement renovated for his Aiken Office. While the Senate was on recess, he would bring his entire staff to work in the Aiken Office. His office moved out in 1980, but the Senator later returned in 2000 until his retirement.

Neal Farfor purchased the building in 1980 and rented the facility to Aiken Technical College for three months, and the Aiken Area Council of Aging. Attorney James Green later purchased the building for his law practice and his wife's medical practice. After several years, S.C. Senator Greg Ryberg and Zipper Robbins purchased the building with plans of relocating their offices there. In 1995, Todd Lista purchased the building for his photography studio and rented the postmaster's office to Nancy Moore Thurmond. The basement's tenants have included Strom Thurmond Jr. and S.C. House Representative Tom Young.



SRNS renovation efforts paid careful attention to preserving interior details while including modern office spaces, conference rooms and state-of-the-art technology. (Photo courtesy of Todd Lista)

Original building features included spiral staircase and secret passageways

In its original construction, the building boasted the following details and features.

- New York-style revolving door
- Steam heat
- Modern plumbing
- Large palladium windows
- 19-foot ceilings, plastered walls with inlaid dental work molding
- Terrazzo floors with marble inlaid patterns
- Rotunda on the main floor with a concave domed 23-foot high ceiling
- Rotunda in the basement
- Beautiful wood work
- Iconic columns
- High metal dome with a decorative balustrade along the roof line
- Two vaults
- Spiral staircase
- Secret passageways and rooms in the walls

Questions? Contact Savannah River Nuclear Solutions at 803.643.4575.