



N.S. SAVANNAH HISTORY – WORLD'S FIRST NUCLEAR MERCHANT SHIP

CONSTRUCTION OF THE *N.S. SAVANNAH (NSS)* BEGAN WITH A CEREMONY ON MARITIME DAY IN 1958. MAMIE EISENHOWER CHRISTENED THE SHIP IN 1959 AND BY EARLY 1962 THE SHIP WAS AT SEA. THE SHIP'S MAIDEN VOYAGE TO SAVANNAH, GEORGIA TOOK PLACE IN AUGUST 1962.

The NSS entered service as an experimental ship and spent three years sailing to ports in the U.S. and overseas carrying passengers, cargo and goodwill. Thousands of people visited the ship in each port, bringing the vision of Atoms for Peace to the world. When the experiment was finished, the NSS operated as a cargo ship for another five years. By 1970, the NSS achieved its objectives and the project ended. Savannah sailed 454,675 miles on 163 pounds of uranium; if it had been oil-fired, Savannah would have burned nearly 29 million gallons of fuel.

Like all commercial nuclear power plants, the NSS is licensed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). After the ship's fuel was removed in 1971, the reactor was made inoperable and the NRC converted MARAD's license to only allow possession of the reactor. The license was modified to allow the NSS to operate as a museum in South Carolina from 1982 to 1994. In 1994, when the ship was put into drydock for maintenance, the museum decided not to keep the ship.

MARAD placed the NSS into a reserve fleet in Virginia, while carrying out an allowed period of storage before decommissioning the nuclear power plant. After another round of shipyard maintenance, MARAD moved the NSS to Baltimore in 2008. It is here that MARAD will safely conduct the decommissioning process and determine Savannah's future.





N.S. SAVANNAH (NSS) MILESTONES



1953

President Eisenhower proposes *Atoms for Peace*, encouraging world leaders to develop peaceful uses for nuclear power



1955

President Eisenhower proposes the U.S. build the world's first atomic powered merchant vessel as part of the *Atoms for Peace* program



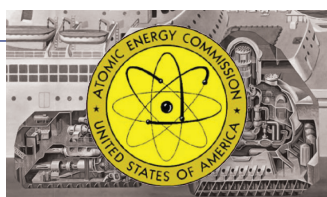
1959

NSS christened by First Lady Mamie Eisenhower



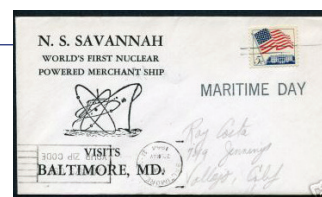
1961

Reactor is fueled and tested



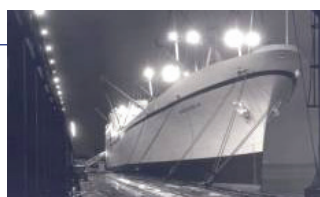
1965

Received commercial operating license



1964

First visit to Baltimore



1962 - 65

NSS operated in experimental service



1962

Completes maiden voyage from Norfolk, VA to Savannah, GA



1970 - 1971

Service ended, ship de-fueled and reactor shutdown



1972 - 1980

Berthed in protective storage



1982

Opens as a museum at Patriots Point, SC



1983

Nominated to the National Registry of Historic Places



2008

Moved to Baltimore



2006

Pre-decommissioning repairs in Virginia shipyard



1994

Drydocked in Baltimore then move to Virginia reserve fleet



1986 - 1991

Named an International Mechanical Engineering Landmark, a Nuclear Historic Landmark and a National Historic Landmark



2009

50th Anniversary of the ship's christening



2012

50th anniversary of the maiden voyage

Decommissioning and future status determination