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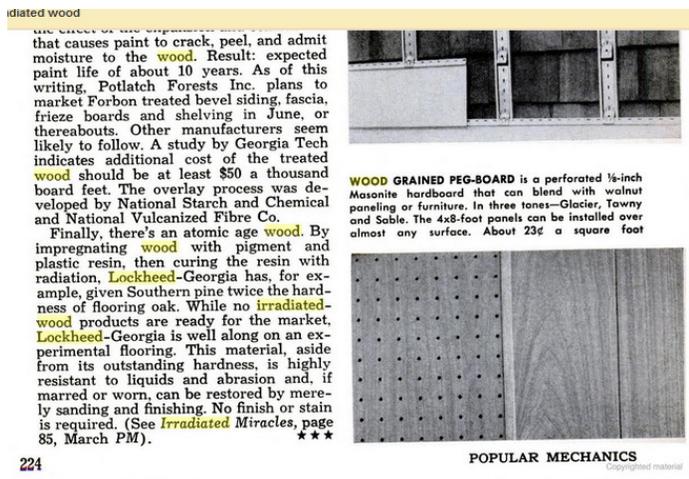
History

06/16/2019

In 1956, 10,000 acres of land were purchased from the Tuckers in a small town in North Georgia named Dawsonville. “Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, along with the Air Force and the Atomic Energy Commission, began construction of the GNAL- also known as Air Force Plant # 67.” (Zuckerman) Two years later in 1958 the facility became operational. “On December 14, 1958 it went critical. This was the most extensive nuclear testing facility during the first part of 1959,” (Steven Z, Buyout Footage). This was shortly after the cold war Cuban missile crisis. The Vietnam war was starting, and the US was not yet starting to actively draft individuals to go to war from 1969-1973. This Air force plant was not decommissioned until 1971. During the time that it was operational many things occurred here. Lockheed Martin was initially attempting to find out if a nuclear-powered aircraft was feasible. The property was expansive, remote, used rail car systems to transport people and objects from one side to the other or building to building. “There were two reactors; the Radiation Effects Reactor at 10 MW max power and the Critical Experiment Reactor at 80 watts. The Critical Experiment Reactor was used to test the reactor cores to be used in the RER.” (posted by anonymous, *Nuclear Street* comments) The reactor sat in a pool of water and was lifted out of the water when it was ready to be used. The facility had tunnels underground that were shielded from the radiation to protect the personnel that worked there. If someone was deemed to have been exposed too much, they would be told to take a few days off and “cool off”. This facility is very little known about and still considered classified.

The property is currently owned by the Atlanta airport and is operated by the Georgia Forestry Commission. The property was originally purchased to build an additional airport to service the Atlanta area, but the property was found to be unsuited for the purpose. The property was sprawling with many buildings, a cooling tower (for radiated water), an open seepage pit for water that was deemed safe, water pumps that piped water in from the Etowah River, administration buildings, fire department and more (Steven Z, Buyout Footage). “Dawson Forest is a tract of 25,000 acres owned (and still owned) by the city of Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson Airport that was sold by Lockheed. That's bizarre in itself. It is divided into 2 tracts - a 10,000 & 15,000 acres. It is run by the Georgia Wildlife Mgt and is dedicated to wildlife and re-forestation.” (post by anonymous abovetopsecret.com)

This Facility used robotics in practice to prepare for when the facility went active. This was because this would be the only way to change the radioactive parts safely inside the nuclear reactor when the facility was “live”. The original purpose of this facility was to attempt to see if a nuclear reactor would be a feasible way to power an aircraft. Unfortunately, after many attempts this original thesis was a flop. The nuclear reactor was too heavy for aircraft and there was no safe way to protect the pilot from radiation. On the upside they discovered Lockheed irradiated wood. This was never mass produced as nuclear products were not easily made for



fabrication.

However, the effect of

radiation on the forest was probably the most beneficial part of this testing facility.

Because of the classified status of this facility information is very little known. Some former employees of the Dawsonville Lockheed-Martin facility make comments on forum posts as anonymous. They have described the facility in detail. The main building was mostly underground. When the reactor was live, they would all be in this building underground while the reactor was an open-air facility. They would be tested for radiation daily and if they were found to have too high of levels of radiation, they would be given a few extra days off. The property itself is still tested by the Georgia Environmental Division every three months to check for radiation levels. “Although some hot spots of Colbalt 60 and Europium 152 remain, officials conclude that there is little to no risk to the public.” (Zuckerman) Many of the residents do not know that this area was radioactive or that it is still being monitored.

The locals have reported to riding ATV’s and bicycles on the trails in the early 2000’s and when they approached a certain area they were met by the FBI and the Military Police. This is due in part to certain areas of Dawson Forest Park being monitored every 3 months for radiation testing. They claim that the testing levels are normal and safe for humans to be around the area.

However, common knowledge with animals tells us that if an animal will not go into a location then it may not be safe. Some you tube videos show dogs that will not go near some of the testing facility buildings. These dogs also will not go inside the building that leads underground. These were concreted off and had dirt shoved into the entrances with bulldozers. Over time explorers and weather have opened access to the underground tunnel building. The underground building is flooded with water as the pumps at the pumphouses have been removed and they are below sea level. Urban explorers go down the stair well with an inflatable raft and float through the first level below ground and see that desks, lockers, and electrical boxes were all abandoned in place.

The areas directly near the storage building are double fenced off for safety reasons. Some determined individuals have found their way inside and show that the concrete around the building is eroding and that the rebar is showing through. Some of the plant life still does not grow and some of the trees still appear to be damaged from the radiation but are still standing. This section of the forest is eerily quiet and void of animal life. Some of the local legends talk of red skies at the time of the peak of the facilities testing that the radiation killed everything within a one-mile radius of the open-air nuclear reactor. “the most detrimental effects from the reactor emanated into the forest environment during the middle two weeks of June 1959. At this time, scientific study dictated a release of neutron and gamma rays for the express purpose of documenting both immediate damage to pine and deciduous trees and to study the long-term effects on tree growth, tree resiliency, and leaf cycles.” (Petty, abovetopsecret.com)



(grimmlifecollective)

Legends also talk of a massive two headed buck and albino rattlesnakes. “Tall tales of deer with three eyes or two sets of antlers are common. Also, some claim seeing an “albino” black bear and other albino animals.” (Zuckerman) Many of the locals have stories of strange animals that they have seen or that so and so up the street have seen. “Stories of accidents, sickness, and animal mutations persist. Hunters claim extra sets of antlers or absence of antlers on full-grown bucks, atrophied legs, and albino pelts. At one point, the tale of a Cyclops deer circulated. Such stories remain by and large unsubstantiated, though science does point to the fact that genetic mutations can be hereditary.” (Petty, abovetopsecret.com) The local river (the Chattahoochee) is a swim at your own risk and is directly next to Dawson Forest. This is also the same river that the pumphouses retrieved the water from for the pool that the reactor sat inside when it was not in use.

Blockhouse 34.351169,-84.144011

Rebar hole 34.366323, -84.167891

Pumphouse 34.355899,-84.140347

Tunnel 34.365258, -84.169409

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