



2019 Secretary of Defense

# Environmental Awards

Cultural Resources Management – Individual/Team

Dr. Christopher McDaid

## Introduction

In 2010, the Base Realignment and Closure Act joined Fort Eustis with Langley Air Force Base forming Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE), with the Air Force designated as lead agency. JBLE is the amalgamation of two installations, located adjacent to Hampton and Newport News, Virginia. JBLE's core mission provides mission-ready expeditionary Airmen and Soldiers to combatant commanders in support of joint and combined operations worldwide. The 633<sup>rd</sup> Air Base Wing (ABW) on JBLE provides installation support to the 9,000 military and civilian personnel from Headquarters Air Combat Command, and three operational wings. On JBLE-Eustis, Dr. Christopher McDaid is the premier Cultural Resources Expert and resident Archaeologist for the 733<sup>rd</sup> Mission Support Group.

Dr. McDaid began his Department of Defense (DoD) career in 2002 as an Archaeologist and Cultural Resources Manager for the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Installation Management Agency/Command Northeast Regional Office. Since 2009, he has served in this same capacity at JBLE. Dr. McDaid earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree from England's University of Leicester in 2013.

## Background

Dr. McDaid's knowledge, skills, and abilities have contributed to the exceptional management practices protecting and preserving thousands of years' worth of diverse and significant cultural aspects. These efforts allow soldiers and airmen to train with no impact to JBLE's cultural resources. Dr. McDaid assists in defining project

requirements, documenting cultural and historical baselines for project sites, analyzing the effects of proposed activities on JBLE, and developing appropriate mitigation measures per the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). He performs archaeological site studies to define and minimize conflicts between the Installation's training mission and cultural resources assets. He works mutually with proponents and regulatory agencies to define protocols, criteria, and specifications concerning the implementation of national and local policies and strives to maximize the availability of training lands. Dr. McDaid's technical expertise and commitment to cultural heritage stewardship are respected by local, regulatory, and community partners, making the JBLE Cultural Resources Program recognized as one of the best across the armed services.



#### **Dr. Christopher McDaid**

Dr. McDaid, lead Archaeologist for JBLE-Eustis, currently manages 236 cultural resources sites across the Installation. Evaluating and preserving the cultural heritage of Mulberry Island often requires work in remote areas along the marshes and shorelines of the James and Warwick Rivers.

Dr. McDaid's endeavors are focused on JBLE-Eustis, located on Mulberry Island in the Hampton Roads area of southeastern Virginia. Mulberry Island's strategic location and abundant natural resources first attracted Native American tribes over 10,000 years ago. Its diverse cultural evolution spans from pre-Columbian native peoples to the arrival of

English settlers in 1618. The American Civil War underscored its tactical significance when General John B. Magruder, Confederate States of America, used Mulberry Island as the anchor in a great chain of fortifications in the defense of the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia. Many of the massive manmade fortifications still stand.

The United States (US) military also recognized the strategic location of Mulberry Island by establishing Camp Eustis in 1918 and making it the Coastal Artillery Training Center. Over the next 100 years, the Installation experienced significant changes in mission and purpose, each leaving its own footprint. The base was deactivated after World War I, and the government established a Work Progress Administration (WPA) workers camp and prison for bootleggers during the Great Depression. Camp Eustis reactivated during World War II as home to the Coastal Artillery; the US Army Transportation Corps and Transportation School; and Fort Abraham, a German Prisoner of War camp until the end of the war. From 1946 to 2010, Fort Eustis remained the US Army center of excellence for transportation, and today still hosts Headquarters TRADOC.

## **Summary of Accomplishments**

### **Overall Cultural Resources Management**

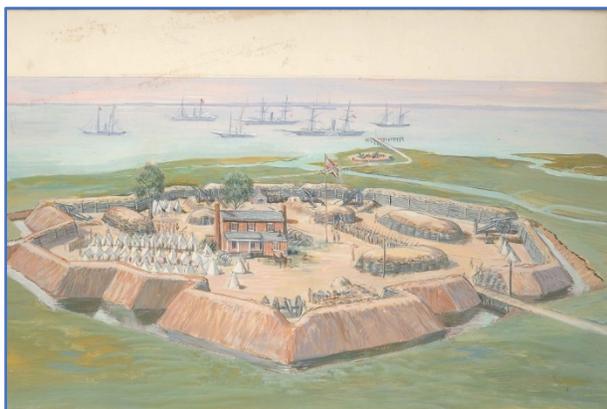
Dr. McDaid synchronized Cultural Resources Management with over 60 NEPA proposed actions and de-conflicted approximately 1,050 individual construction projects and 48 demolition projects during the accomplishment period. This ensured continuation or completion of units' missions while continuing protection of the Installation's 236 cultural resources.

The US Navy's proposal to increase MV-22 aircraft flight operations at JBLE had the potential to impact significant cultural resources sites because of sound vibrations emanating from their low flying aircraft. Through the

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NEPA process, Dr. McDaid ensured mitigation of these potential impacts on the historically significant Matthew Jones House, located in the proximity of the Installation's airfield.

Dr. McDaid recently helped support regional economic security while promoting JBLE cultural heritage during review of the Dominion Virginia Power transmission line project. The utility company plans to meet regional growing power needs by constructing a new power transmission line across the James River, located near JBLE-Eustis historic Fort Crafford. This pristine earthwork was an anchor in the unified defensive system developed by Confederate General Magruder prior to the 1862 Peninsula Campaign of the American Civil War.



#### **Artist's Rendition of Fort Crafford**

Artist Sidney King's painting depicts how Fort Crafford appeared in 1862. Fort Crafford and the Mulberry Island Point Battery defended against Union forces attacking up the Virginia Peninsula toward the Confederate capital of Richmond.

To mitigate the visual impact of the transmission line on the site while providing public access, Dr. McDaid proposed an innovative approach. Working with the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, he secured a \$275,000 grant to design web-based, three-dimensional virtual models. These models depict both the current site and a computer-generated recreation of Fort Crafford as it would have appeared in 1862. This novel approach was fiscally astute and proved instrumental in both mitigating transmission line

impacts and increasing public access to this historically significant site.

Dr. McDaid's expertise was recognized by the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program (LRMP) Selection Panel to serve as a reviewer. After serving on this panel, he applied this valuable experience later in 2017 at JBLE-Eustis when he submitted a grant proposal for the DoD National Public Lands Day program. He subsequently received \$5,000 from the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) to preserve and restore two historic 1930s WPA cemeteries and make improvements to the Fort Eustis Nature Trail, which highlights Installation archaeological resources. Funds provided supplies to conduct manual, non-chemical methods of general vegetation removal, improve site access, stabilize soil, and preserve WPA cemeteries. Dr. McDaid also leveraged installation resources, supplemented with NEEF funds, to create and install interpretive signage along the Fort Eustis Nature Trail to inform hikers of nearby Native American and colonial archaeology. Twenty-nine base organizations, mission partner units, DoD civilians, and local residents utilize the JBLE-Eustis Nature Trail every week.

#### **Historic Buildings and Structures**

JBLE-Eustis includes two historic buildings. The Matthew Jones House (circa 1727) is a registered Virginia Historic Landmark and is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This T-shaped colonial dwelling illustrates the transition from medieval to Georgian style; it is the oldest surviving building of this type in Virginia and the oldest building owned by the DoD in the US.

The second historic building is the Landship. The Landship is a cargo handling training mock-up built in 1957 to resemble a cargo ship. Dr. McDaid secured eligibility for its listing on the NRHP in July 2016. JBLE-Eustis actively uses this structure for military training at the port

facility. During 2017 and 2018, Dr. McDaid ensured improvements to the Landship's cargo cranes and safety features were carried out in a manner that led to no adverse effect to this historic property.



### **The Landship**

The Landship is one of two historical buildings on JBLE-Eustis. Equipped with a large crane and hoist frame, this facility trains personnel how to handle and load cargo in a realistic setting so they become prepared for real-world scenarios and deployments.

Dr. McDaid was the impetus behind the creation of a web-based virtual tour providing unlimited access for public viewing of the Installation's Civil War fortifications. The Virginia Land Conservation Foundation selected Dr. McDaid's competitive grant application in December 2017, and he began field work in July 2018. This virtual tour will display 3-D virtual models of seven exceptionally-well preserved American Civil War earthworks on JBLE-Eustis in their current condition and as they appeared during the 1862 Peninsula Campaign.

He also accomplished 86 architectural surveys of buildings circa 1974 and earlier during the accomplishment period. Proactively surveying these pre-1974 buildings surpasses the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requirement to survey buildings only when threatened by demolition or modification.

### **Archaeological Resources**



### **Archaeological Excavations**

Dr. McDaid and contractors perform dig tests at JBLE-Eustis to look for artifacts and clues indicating the historic significance of the location. Carefully sifting the dirt allows the team to more easily spot artifacts and changes in soil patterns. Their efforts provide information on the history of people who lived in the area.

In addition to its two historic buildings, JBLE-Eustis includes 234 archaeological sites. Of these sites, two are listed on the NRHP, one is listed on Virginia's Landmarks Register, 22 have been determined eligible for the NRHP, 19 have been determined not eligible, and the remaining 190 have not had a determination made. The Installation was subject to a large-scale archaeological survey in the late 1980s which encompassed approximately 6,000 of the Installation's 8,000 acres. Since that time, supplementary small-scale surveys have been completed. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, 56 acres were surveyed for archaeological resources and no new archaeological sites were identified. As part of the NEPA process, significant archaeological and historical sites are considered during Installation planning. Dr. McDaid coordinated with the Air Force Civil

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Engineer Center to secure funding for 11 archaeological site evaluations of Native American and historical period sites, which included American Civil War sites, during the accomplishment period. Performing site evaluations after initial survey work helps archaeologists to determine historic significance and allows Installation leadership to make better-informed decisions on current and future land uses.

Periodic storm events and sea level rise are primary concerns for preservation of archaeological sites along JBLE shorelines. In 2016, Dr. McDaid conducted field reconnaissance activities based on data from sea level rise and cultural resources site erosion studies to verify current conditions at 41 impacted sites. Dr. McDaid then secured a wetland permit for temporary soil stabilization of the JBLE-Eustis shoreline using biodegradable coir logs along the banks where sites were in imminent danger of disturbance from erosion. He co-authored a paper, presented to the Society of American Archaeology, on his results and JBLE-Eustis erosion control efforts.

### **Native American Program**

Dr. McDaid created a rapport with six newly Federally recognized Native American Tribes and he continues consultation with ten tribes to comply with DoD and Air Force requirements for archaeological investigations on JBLE-Eustis. He partnered with the Pamunkey & Delaware Tribes, Delaware Nation, and Catawba Nation for investigations and protection efforts of at-risk burial sites located on JBLE-Eustis shoreline. Temporary shoreline stabilization efforts were made between spring and summer 2017 for under \$8,000 using coir logs to counter site erosion. These collaborative efforts further demonstrate Dr. McDaid's commitment to strong Native American relationships. In FY18, Dr. McDaid continued finalizing the Installation Tribal Relations Plan with the Installation Tribal Liaison Officer to

meet Air Force consultation requirements. He initiated consultation on nine different actions.

### **Curation**

Dr. McDaid manages over 43,000 individual artifacts comprising the JBLE-Eustis archaeological collection in accordance with Federal standards. Curation enables future access and research by students and historians. He routinely utilizes the collection and makes it available to the local community. Dr. McDaid has allowed graduate and undergraduate students from nearby universities access to the collection for research. He created two permanent displays on the installation based on the archaeological collection; one is in the Matthew Jones House and the other is in the JBLE-Eustis' 733d Mission Support Group Headquarters.

Dr. McDaid also reached out to two local churches during the accomplishment period, including the Colossian Baptist Church, originally founded on the property purchased by the government in 1918, to better assess the significance of the cultural resources entrusted to JBLE-Eustis. He created a display of artifacts from the JBLE-Eustis archaeological collection to provide interactive historic presentations at two events focusing on the history of African-Americans on Mulberry Island. One of these events was the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Colossian Baptist Church's founding, and the other was a multi-family reunion of church members whose ancestors lived on Mulberry Island. By incorporating artifacts from the JBLE-Eustis artifact collection into his presentations, Dr. McDaid enabled attendees to literally touch their personal histories and enhanced the provenance of several artifacts by directly connecting them with the descendants of their previous owners.

### **Cultural Resources Awareness and Education**

JBLE charges Dr. McDaid with helping the Installation and community to understand and

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preserve its history. He is continuously developing cultural heritage and awareness training for implementation in both the classroom and the field. Through collaboration with local colleges and historical societies, McDaid provided instruction, which extend his impact well into the future. Specifically, he obtained student interns for cultural resources records management and data recovery and offered access to JBLE-Eustis archaeological sites and the historic artifact collection for teaching and research. He also hosted 50 tours of the Matthew Jones House during the accomplishment period, which now serves as an architectural-study museum for history majors from nearby Christopher Newport University and the College of William & Mary.



#### **Matthew Jones House Tour**

Dr. McDaid describes architectural features of the Matthew Jones House during an Archaeology open house at JBLE-Eustis. Built in 1700, the House is the oldest building owned by the DoD in the United States.

As a highlight of the TRADOC Historian's Conference at JBLE and professional development opportunities for tenant units on base, Dr. McDaid served as subject matter expert and personal tour guide for eight "Staff Rides". These were formal military battlefield tours the Military Services use to enlighten and teach senior military staff and installation leadership on the key role Mulberry Island played in the 1862 American Civil War Peninsula Campaign. He has also educated and entertained thousands of general public guests to

JBLE with his knowledge and enthusiasm on tours of select archaeological sites.

Dr. McDaid collaborated with the Warwick Historical and Middle Atlantic Archaeological Societies to plan and host open-house tours for 125 members to showcase American Civil War earthworks and various cultural resources sites. He compiled an American Civil War Mulberry Island Earthworks touring package of images, excerpts, maps, and photographs for the Major Command Historian to share among other cultural resources managers and subject matter experts. Additionally, Dr. McDaid conducted quarterly guest lectures with Sons of Confederate Veterans, community groups, and professional organizations with interest in the American Civil War era.



#### **JBLE-Eustis Rededication Ceremony**

Dr. McDaid was the keynote speaker at the Seay Plaza rededication ceremony. The ceremony paid tribute to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Vietnam War and included a time capsule burial. Dr. McDaid acquired time capsule items and ensured adherence to archival protection procedures.

In 2018, Fort Eustis celebrated its 100th Anniversary and Dr. McDaid was the keynote speaker for the Seay Plaza rededication ceremony providing historical context of past Fort Eustis citizens. The ceremony honored Sgt. William W. Seay, a distinguished Vietnam Army veteran who received the Medal of Honor (posthumously) and the Purple Heart for his actions. The 733<sup>rd</sup> Mission Support Group Commander by-name-selected Dr. McDaid to acquire contemporary artifacts for the JBLE-

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Eustis time capsule dedicated during the ceremony and to create a temporary display for all JBLE Installation personnel to view prior to the ceremony.

The 733<sup>rd</sup> Mission Support Group recognized his value by naming Dr. McDaid the 2017 Employee of the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter for his invaluable contributions during JBLE-Eustis 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events and his overall management of the Cultural Resources Program.

### **Community Relations**

Dr. McDaid regularly enhances public understanding of history as it pertains to JBLE. He partnered with two local Boy Scouts of America troops to complete site improvement work during the accomplishment period. Community efforts improved visitation and interpretive opportunities at JBLE sites including Fort Crafford and the Works on Brick House Creek.

Dr. McDaid also conveyed community support by assisting a contemporary author to finish the book *Bound in a Brilliant Tide, The History of Mulberry Island, Virginia*. He provided the overarching meta-narrative covering 10,000 years of human experience on what is now JBLE and assisted with editorial reviews. Dr. McDaid provided access to the JBLE-Eustis historic artifact collection and completed professional photography of the collection for inclusion in the book.

### **Mission Enhancement**

Dr. McDaid provided recurring training to 55 Army and Air Force environmental coordinators on avoiding operation and training impacts on 236 cultural resources. He manages a stellar Cultural Resources Program which thrives on efficiencies in recordkeeping, continual in-house communications, timely site assessments, and superior relationships with regulatory agencies. As a result, active duty and reserve units conducted eight quarters of training

simultaneously with ongoing cultural resources field activities resulting in zero conflicts and uninterrupted mission operations.

Dr. McDaid also helped to preserve the integrity of the Landship historic building while enabling JBLE-Eustis to sustain its port cargo training mission. The SHPO requires consultation whenever the Installation proposes alterations or modifications to the structure. All actions have been executed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Buildings and Structures. Advancements in technology and equipment typically drive these modifications because the military must provide state-of-the-art, realistic training to soldiers and airmen. Dr. McDaid lead efforts to complete SHPO coordination requirements for the Landship's recent upgrade during the accomplishment period.

### **Cultural Resources Compliance**

Dr. McDaid was instrumental in creating several local policies to ensure protection and compliance of JBLE-Eustis cultural resources. He created the Cemetery Management Policy for the 633 ABW Commander which brought the Wing into compliance with Air Force policy requirements and ensured proper maintenance of Installation cemeteries. In addition, Dr. McDaid updated the JBLE-Eustis Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) during the FY18 annual review to reflect cemetery preservation. He also ensures requirements are clearly identified to higher echelons to sustain the Cultural Resources Program. Lauded by his peers at JBLE-Langley, Dr. McDaid routinely leads and provides support on regulatory requirements and instrumental in revisions to the JBLE-Langley ICRMP.

JBLE continues to evolve and remains a critical part of our national defense. Dr. McDaid plays a significant and lasting support role in managing important DOD cultural resources.