



2019 Secretary of Defense Environmental Award Cultural Resources Management – Team Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler

Introduction

Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler (MCB Butler), located on the island of Okinawa, Japan, is a dynamic collection of widely dispersed installations and training areas, creating a



The island of Okinawa, Japan is a key training location for the Marine Corps. *Photo by Maurice Dudley*

unique cultural resources management challenge. Supporting more than 32,000 active duty military and civilians, MCB Butler is the base support and provides training areas for III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF).

III MEF is a Marine-Air-Ground Task Force deployable to conduct operations across the spectrum from humanitarian assistance to potential contentious operations. MCB Butler provides unique training opportunities in various environmental habitats; including the only U.S. Marine Corps (Marine Corps) Jungle Warfare Training

Center (JWTC) and the only U.S.-controlled live fire ranges in Japan. MCB Butler encompasses more than 40,000 acres and is home to over 3,000 species of flora and fauna, of which approximately 260 are rare, threatened, or endangered. More than 500 archeological sites, some dating over 6,000 years old, have been identified including: prehistoric shell mounds, ancestral tombs, buried village sites, and sacred springs and shrines that remain culturally significant to Okinawan people. The various types of training and facilities supported by MCB Butler necessitate a Cultural Resources Management Program, skilled in supporting military readiness, balancing environmental sustainability, and fostering collaborative environmental stewardship between the U.S. and Japanese governments.

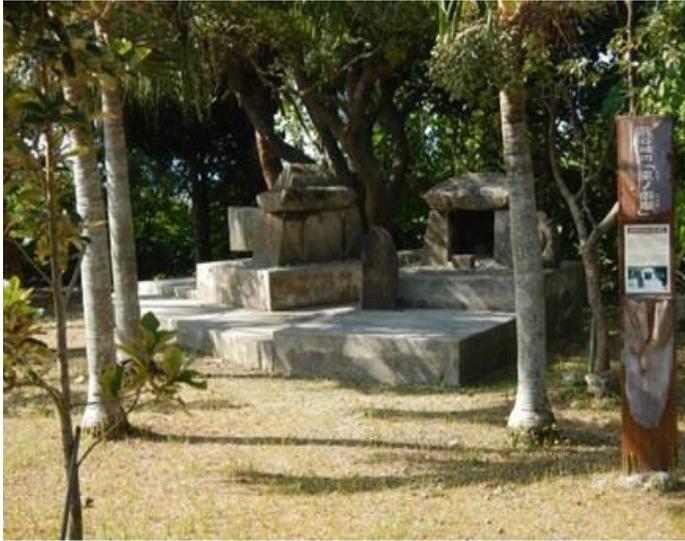
Background

Because of MCB Butler's broad military mission, the Cultural Resources Management Program focuses on conservation, protection, and preservation through the implementation of several major components and guidance documents. These components and documents include MCB Butler's Integrated Natural Resources and Cultural Resources Management Plan, the National Historical Preservation Act (section 402), the Japan Environmental Governing Standards (JEGS), and various Marine Corps, Marine Corps Installation Pacific (MCIPAC), and MCB Butler orders. In addition, the program works to facilitate access for the people of Okinawa to culturally significant shrines and sacred sites aboard the base to support their continuing traditions.



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MCB Camp Butler's Cultural Resources Program Team includes Mr. Masayuki Yonaha and Mr. Nicholas Chamberlain, who not only support Marine Corps installations in Okinawa, but also other U.S. installations in both Japan and Korea.



Chatan Gusuku, located on Camp Foster, is one of the many culturally significant sites aboard MCB Butler.

Mr. Masayuki Yonaha, an archaeologist at MCB Butler since 2003, has more than 20 years of archeological experience in Okinawa and oversees the Cultural Resources Management Program. As the Cultural Resources Program Manager, Mr. Yonaha serves as the primary point of contact for twelve local Boards of Education and coordinates with these offices on various projects to ensure proper protection of critical cultural assets within the training areas and the camp/station boundaries. The local Boards of Education are similar to the State Historic Preservation Offices in the U.S. As well as reviewing installation construction and repair projects that have the potential to impact cultural resources,

Mr. Yonaha is also responsible for securing funds for cultural asset surveys and testing, and has initiated an extensive and unprecedented cultural resources study of both the Central Training Area and JWTC. These studies have included archival research, field verification, and reconnaissance of remote areas that until now have received little attention from archaeologists. With his expansive understanding of Okinawan cultural resources and his tireless dedication to the field of archaeology, Mr. Yonaha's contributions reach beyond the boundaries of MCB Butler, significantly enhancing Okinawa's entire body of archaeological knowledge.

Mr. Nicholas Chamberlain, an archaeologist with 10 years of government service, became a part of the MCB Butler Cultural Resource Management Program in 2014. Mr. Chamberlain has provided technical expertise in various aspects of the cultural resources program, including cultural asset survey, site testing, and report editing and production. Responsible for the oversight of the MCB Butler geographic information system (GIS) and cultural survey layers, Mr. Chamberlain ensures data is kept up to date, and is currently overseeing a project to translate Japanese language reports into English. As the MCB Butler Environmental Affairs Branch primary point of contact for all dig permit requests aboard the facility, Mr. Chamberlain coordinates with U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps units to ensure that all are in compliance with cultural and natural resource protection requirements.



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Mr. Yonaha and Mr. Chamberlain maintain positive collaborative relationships with both national and local Japanese government officials and frequently provide advice and assistance on host nation cultural resource issues outside of the installation. These cooperative and constructive partnerships serve to enhance relations between the U.S. and Japan.

Cultural Resources Summary of Accomplishments



The location of this isolated pool, known as “Toshingumui” in historical records, was verified during the Sannumata Watershed survey.



A sacred prayer site located aboard MCAS Futenma is one of many known cultural sites aboard Marine Corps Installations in Okinawa.

Through tireless dedication to the conservation, protection, and preservation of cultural resources, the MCB Butler Cultural Resources Management Program is essential in furthering Marine Corps readiness throughout MCIPAC. The following accomplishments are a small sampling of its vital and ongoing efforts.

Archaeological Surveys in the Jungle Warfare Training Center

During FY17 and FY18, the Cultural Resources Program continued extensive surveys to inventory the cultural resources under its stewardship and maximize efficiency in the management of those resources.

In February 2017, the survey at JWTC was expanded to include an additional 2,300 acres in the Sannumata Watershed. This survey resulted in the discovery of 44 sites of cultural significance, including a large camphor processing area and a charcoal kiln complex, as well as dwellings and fields associated with historic agriculture. The survey also verified the locations of traditional named places such as Toshingumui, an isolated pool identified in historic records. This survey, combined with a previous survey of the Haramata Watershed, have added significantly to the body of knowledge regarding past activities in northern Okinawa, and laid the groundwork for future surveys at JWTC.



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Archaeologists conducting excavation at Ie Shima Training Facility.

Archaeological Data Recovery Survey at Ie Shima Training Facility

During October 2016, the Cultural Resources Management Program concluded its archaeological data excavation in support of the Landing Helicopter Deck (LHD) renovation project at Ie Shima Training Facility. The excavation exposed evidence of early human agriculture that may be up to one thousand years old. While modern activities had heavily disturbed much of the surrounding area, archaeologists uncovered a shallow sinkhole that contained well-preserved evidence of tool marks, post-holes, and hearths used for cooking. The

discovery provided a rare window into the past activities of people living along the west coast of the island of Ie Shima, and added important information to the body of academic knowledge about Okinawan history as a whole.

Subsequent to these discoveries, Mr. Yonaha and Mr. Chamberlain coordinated with the Ie Shima Municipal Board of Education, reaching an agreement that allowed the installation to proceed with the planned construction activities while preserving precious information about this island's unique past.

Collaborative Partnerships

The MCB Butler Cultural Resources Management Program has forged numerous collaborative partnerships with various local and government agencies. Because the boundaries of MCB Butler cross into several local municipalities, our Cultural Resources Management Program coordinates with twelve individual Boards of Education, which oversee municipal cultural resources and assets. Throughout FY17 and FY18, the Cultural Resources Management Program conducted five separate Board of Education consultations on four different projects where significant cultural resources exist. During one coordination effort, MCB Butler's Cultural Resources Management Program worked closely with the Ie Shima Board of Education during a cultural asset survey at the Ie Shima Training Facility.



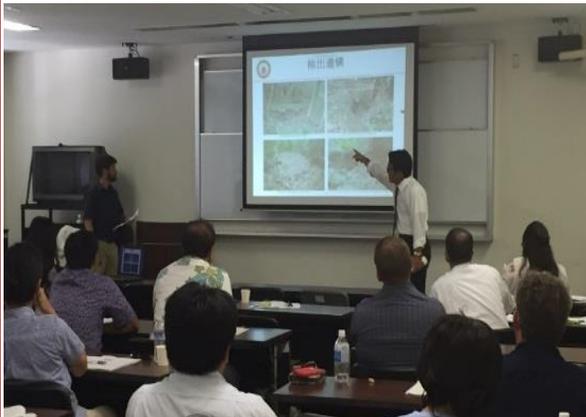
Members of OPG gathered at Chibuga Spring on Camp Foster to learn about how MCB Butler is preserving critical Okinawan cultural assets.



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Mr. Yonaha and Mr. Chamberlain also collaborated on local government archaeological projects taking place at MCAS Futenma. Our Cultural Resources Management Program coordinated and supported survey teams from the Okinawa Prefectural Archaeological Center and Ginowan City Board of Education in performing archaeological investigations, to include the investigation of historic human remains, which were suspected of being vandalized near the US Naval Hospital on Camp Foster, in September 2018. The Cultural Resources Management Program provides support on coordination with installation authorities, English-Japanese translation, and obtaining relevant permissions required for their investigative activities. These cooperative actions successfully resulted in acquiring data of buried cultural resources (archaeological sites) and geological information in a financially feasible manner. Close coordination with the local Boards of Education ensures that Host Nation concerns are addressed early in the project planning process.

The annual Environmental Forum brings together resource managers, scientists, and engineers from the Okinawa Prefectural Government, Department of Environmental Affairs and the MCB Camp Butler Environmental Affairs Branch. This forum consists of two parts – departmental presentations on environmental projects and site visits to areas throughout Okinawa, including on the Installation.



In November 2017, the MCB Camp Butler Cultural Resources Management Program hosted the site visit portion of the Environmental Forum, providing Okinawa Prefectural Government an opportunity to see first-hand how MCB Camp Butler is sustaining and advancing environmental protection. On this occasion, Mr. Yonaha and Mr. Chamberlain escorted Okinawa Prefectural Government members to noteworthy sites located on Camp Foster, including Chunnaga Spring, Chibuga Spring, Chatan Castle Ruins, and the Chourouyama Site. Chunnaga Spring is a nationally designated cultural property, and is recognized by the Government of Japan as a culturally important site based on the integrity and architectural value of its stonemasonry. Chibuga Spring is recognized as a local folklore cultural property by Chatan Town. Dating back to the 16th century, Chibuga Spring was a significant cultural center for Tamayose Old Village. For centuries, Chibuga Spring supplied surrounding villages with fresh drinking water and irrigation for farming, and was an important part of sacred ceremonies.

The 2016 Environmental Forum featured a presentation by Mr. Yonaha and Mr. Chamberlain highlighting their development of a Cultural Resources GIS database and its benefits to cultural resources management in Okinawa.



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In 2004, MCB Butler, supported by funds from the Department of Defense Legacy Program, joined the Tamayose Residential Community Group and the Chatan Town Board of Education in a project to restore the spring to its original state. Through this maintained collaborative relationship, the spring still appears much as it did 200 years ago, and remains a place of deep cultural significance for local citizens. Chatan Castle dates to the period of Okinawan history known as the Gusuku Period, which occurred between the 12th and 15th centuries and was a time of major political transformation in Okinawa. Archaeologists have unearthed imported trade wares both within the castle and on the slopes below, and have also discovered tombs in the cliff face on the north side of the castle, said to belong to some of the castle lords. Chourouyama is a site set aside by the U.S. Army in 1957 for the purpose of relocating local prayer sites that had been damaged or destroyed during World War II. Chourouyama currently contains prayer sites from the old villages of Dendou, Tamayose, and Chatan. The Cultural Resources program began consulting with local residents in FY17, and USMC funds were committed in FY18 to upgrade access to the Chourouyama Prayer Site and provide interpretive signs for the public. Restoration work of the Chourouyama Prayer Site officially commenced in September 2018.

Mr. Yonaha and Mr. Chamberlain continue to further the relationship between MCB Butler and the Okinawa Prefectural Government through their continued dedication to maintain the currency of the Cultural Resources Management database. The database incorporates available archeological GIS data into the current enterprise geodatabase, compliant with Spatial Data Standards for Facilities, Infrastructure, and Environment (SDSFIE) 3.0 schema. GIS allows archeologists to protect sites by providing a visual representation of culturally important areas, as well as providing quick access to information associated with those areas. Locations proposed for Marine Corps construction and training projects can be cross-referenced with archeological GIS data in order to ensure that Marine Corps activities do not inadvertently affect significant cultural sites. Survey areas, survey points, archeological sites, and archeological features were compiled and updated to include spatial and attribute data from all Marine Corps funded projects since 1993. As a result, all available data for MCB Butler cultural resources is now accessible through ArcGIS. This database is a significant tool that contributes to regional planning and effective management of cultural resources aboard MCB Butler. Overall, the cultural resources GIS database has allowed managers at all levels to integrate cultural resources concerns into their decision making process.



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Conclusion

MCB Butler provides unique training environments that are vital to mission readiness. Our Cultural Resources Management Program plays a pivotal role by balancing environmental protection and sustainability with mission requirements. Mr. Yonaha and Mr. Chamberlain have incorporated numerous management strategies to protect and preserve the sensitive cultural resources hidden throughout MCB Butler and MCAS Futenma. Allowing for proactive management and information sharing, their actions aid in maintaining the vitality of the training areas that support Marine Corps. The development of a comprehensive GIS database provides an additional step in cultural resources protection and furthers our commitment to protection of the land and resources entrusted to the Marine Corps. Through community awareness and collaborative partnerships with local governments and agencies, MCB Butler's Cultural Resources Management Program has been a cornerstone in improving relations between the people of Okinawa and the Marine Corps, and supporting the U.S. – Japan alliance.