

Introduction:

Defense Supply Center Richmond (DSCR), located along the I-95 corridor in southern Chesterfield County, Virginia, has been a consistent, dependable supplier of quality goods and services to those defending freedom around the world since it was activated in 1942. Designated as the lead center for aviation within the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the center serves within the Department of Defense (DOD) supply chain as the primary source of supply for the nearly 850,000 repair parts and operating supply items. While these items and parts have an extremely wide range of applications, our core mission is to supply products with a direct application to aviation. These items include a mix of military-unique items supporting over 1,300 major weapons systems and other items readily available in the commercial market.

With over 600 acres and approximately 120 warehousing, utility and administrative buildings totaling over 6.7 million square feet, DSCR is host for a number of other DOD, Federal and state organizations. The largest of these tenants are the 350-acre Defense Distribution Depot Richmond, Virginia; the Defense Distribution Mapping Activity; the Virginia Army National Guard vehicle maintenance activity; and the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office.

The center and its tenant activities employ nearly 3,000 civilians, Service members, and contractor personnel, whose mission is to provide critical material support across the DOD and other Federal agencies, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.



Background

Situated on one of the longest held parcels of land in the United States, DSCR has a long and varied history. Along Kingsland Creek, Native Americans established base camps for fishing, hunting, and economic activity. A variety of native artifacts have been uncovered near the creek. DSCR is the latest in a series of owners to lay claim to a portion of the property our neighbors call Bellwood. First provided to Thomas Sheffield in 1619 as a royal land grant, the property was sparsely occupied until it was abandoned in 1622 when more than a quarter of Virginia's inhabitants were expunged in well-coordinated Indian raids along the James River. The devastated region did not recover until England granted permission to resettle the area in 1634.

By 1801, the property held a building that is believed to be DSCR's Bellwood mansion of today, which is registered on the National Historical Register of Places. Records from 1810 show the owner held 50 slaves. Graves of African Americans have been uncovered at DSCR; however, no conclusive determination could be made from the remains and artifacts as to whether they were slaves or free men and women.

The most famous owner of the property was Major August Drewry who, with help of local farmers, constructed breastworks between Kingsland Creek and the James River. Fort Darling, known in Confederate circles as Drewry's Bluff, was located less than a mile from what would become DSCR and was a formidable fortification—gaining fame by repelling the ironclad *Monitor* in 1862.

The Bellwood mansion later became the headquarters of General P.G.T. Beauregard while he and Confederate President Jefferson Davis laid plans to repel Union troops intent on destroying the Richmond Petersburg Railroad. Once again, as in the mayhem 240 years earlier, many died during the battles adjacent to the Bellwood manor. Worn out from years of traditional agricultural activities, Bellwood was purchased by its namesake, James Bellwood, in 1887. The Canadian farmer and his sons transformed the property into a model of agricultural success.

The farm's reputation spread during the 1914 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. Then President Theodore Roosevelt remarked, "This is a great thing you are doing for Virginia—your display is simply splendid."

Based on the long and continuous use of the DSCR property, as well as the depot's association with significant historical events between 1941 and 1953, individual properties and landscape features are eligible for inclusion as a National Register historic district.

A Preliminary Cultural Resources Management Plan was completed in 1999 and is DSCR's implementing plan for its cultural resources program. While never finalized, the document identifies and evaluates resources based on the limited information available in 1999 and makes recommendations for additional work. Detailed management and architectural treatment strategies comprise the heart of the plan. Concluding the report are 10 detailed operating procedures that lace the program together, providing unity over time.

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) continues to vocalize their desire for DSCR to more fully evaluate its architectural resources before preparing a new integrated cultural resources management plan. The Bellwood Manor, nominated to the National Register in 1977, has historically been the premier resource at DSCR. The building is two stories, originally constructed as a plantation house. Since purchased by the government, the mansion has undergone several extensive modifications to convert it to a full service restaurant and banquet facility called the Bellwood Club.



Due to its size and conspicuous location at the main gate, DSCR's headquarters building, Building 34, is clearly the proposed historic district's most historically significant element from World War II. The brick building is U-shaped, constructed on a concrete foundation. Situated at the primary entrance to the Installation, the building has served as a local landmark for more than 60 years, representing the long military and economic relationship between DSCR and the surrounding community.



Quarters
Another historic property is the home of the DSCR Commander. It is a two-story wood-frame single family dwelling cobbled together in 1913 when James Bellwood joined two farmhouses for a new home for his recently married son. The house was subsequently moved in 1941 to make room for the construction of Building 33.

In recent years Native American artifacts and African American archeological resources have been discovered at DSCR. The African American human remains were re-interred near the site where they were discovered, with gravestones in a fenced burial ground and granite memorial to commemorate their lives.



Program Summary

DSCR's recent efforts continue to focus upon the delineation of both architectural and archeological resources. At the request of the VDHR, the list of contributing structures and landscapes has been expanded to include additional resources. Remains of both pre-historic and historic sites exist at DSCR, and they may have the potential to represent important events in regional history; be associated with important persons; or contain important prehistory information.

Seven previously unrecorded archeological resources were uncovered during a Phase I archeological investigation. Facilities engineers have been advised of the location of the prehistoric and historic sites to ensure they will not be destroyed without further testing and study. In the event that excavation in these locations can not be avoided, DSCR will perform Phase II evaluations to determine eligibility for listing on the National Register.

Since the development of the management plan, DSCR has fostered a strong working relationship with VDHR by first working conservation-preservation issues into construction, renovation, and demolition projects before presenting them to historic preservation officers. DSCR has embraced the partnering concept and freely requests advice from others to preserve historic resources. As the military continues its transformation into a more mobile strike force, the facility may continue to pare warehouse space. Justifying the expense of maintaining buildings and warehouses without a clear mission link will



continue to be a challenge. Despite the fact that some buildings must be demolished, the cultural resources program focuses on the importance of preserving and documenting our history.

At the request of the Native American special emphasis committee, DSCR erected a monument to commemorate the site where scattered archeological resources were discovered. The monument now stands as a constant reminder of the ancient ones that once dwelled on our property many years ago.

Accomplishments

An Installation with such an interesting and distinguished history deserves a vital program aimed at protecting resources for coming generations of Americans. Working with VDHR, DSCR is midway in the process of implementing the cultural resources management plan. DSCR also continues its commitment to communicate information about its cultural resources to the community.

To catalogue the archeological resources at DSCR a Phase I inventory was completed in 2004. The accompanying report concludes that the property has undergone significant changes during the last 50 years, but some sites retain their integrity despite the heavy usage the property has seen since the mid-twentieth century. DSCR protects archeological sites by evaluating all excavation activities in areas designated as high probability sites. Key geographical information system (GIS) data gathered by investigators has been passed to the DSCR Facilities Engineers to integrate into their comprehensive project review process. Having accurate survey information on cultural resources helps point out potential adverse effects, quickly and easily. This process improvement in turn provides the environmental office the opportunity to consult with important stakeholders early on in a project's timeline—A key to avoiding conflicts and project delays.

At the request of the VDHR, a revised architectural evaluation was completed in 2004. Based on the long and continuous use of the DSCR property, as well as the depot's association with significant historical events that took place between 1941 and 1953, 63 individual properties or landscape features from the pre-World War II and Korean War-era are recommended as eligible for inclusion in the National Register as contributing elements to a proposed National Register historic district. The proposed name of the district, which now encompasses the entire facility, is Bellwood - Richmond Quartermaster Depot Historic District. DSCR will consult with the VDHR one final time before finalizing the inventory.

During the period prior to this award, DSCR developed a Memorandum of Agreement to document the existing historic features of Building 31 before a portion of the structure is revamped into an auditorium. In addition to collaborating with the VDHR on the agreement, DSCR consulted with the state on several other projects to ensure that historic resources were being appropriately managed. The most notable project involved a large maintenance project inside the historic Bellwood Manor. By avoiding historic portions of the building, DSCR can reduce fire hazards and improve the general safety of the building, thereby, improving the likelihood the building will be there for future generations to enjoy.

Each year DSCR's Special Emphasis Committee provides employees the opportunity to view Native American artifacts representing the Woodland Indian way of life 200 years ago during the festive Multicultural Day. The artifacts help to vividly demonstrate what prehistoric life was like at Bellwood. Through its school partnership program, DSCR shares its cultural resources information about its history with neighboring school children.

During the last 4 years, DSCR has clearly made progress in the development of a consultation process with VDHR. This close relationship has enabled DSCR to balance the requirements of its evolving mission with the need to preserve cultural resources for future generations