



THE PAST,  
THE PRESENT,  
AND A PROMISING FUTURE

AT MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA

*An Abbreviated Overview of the Native American History and  
Historical Cultural Resources at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune*

Three decades of intensive archaeological investigations have been conducted at MCB Camp Lejeune, resulting in a complete inventory of the archaeological and historical resources present.

MCB Camp Lejeune has a rich and diverse cultural history. Its earliest inhabitants arrived in the New River basin about 10,000 years ago. Today, the lower reaches of the New River basin are home to one of the greatest fighting forces in the world.

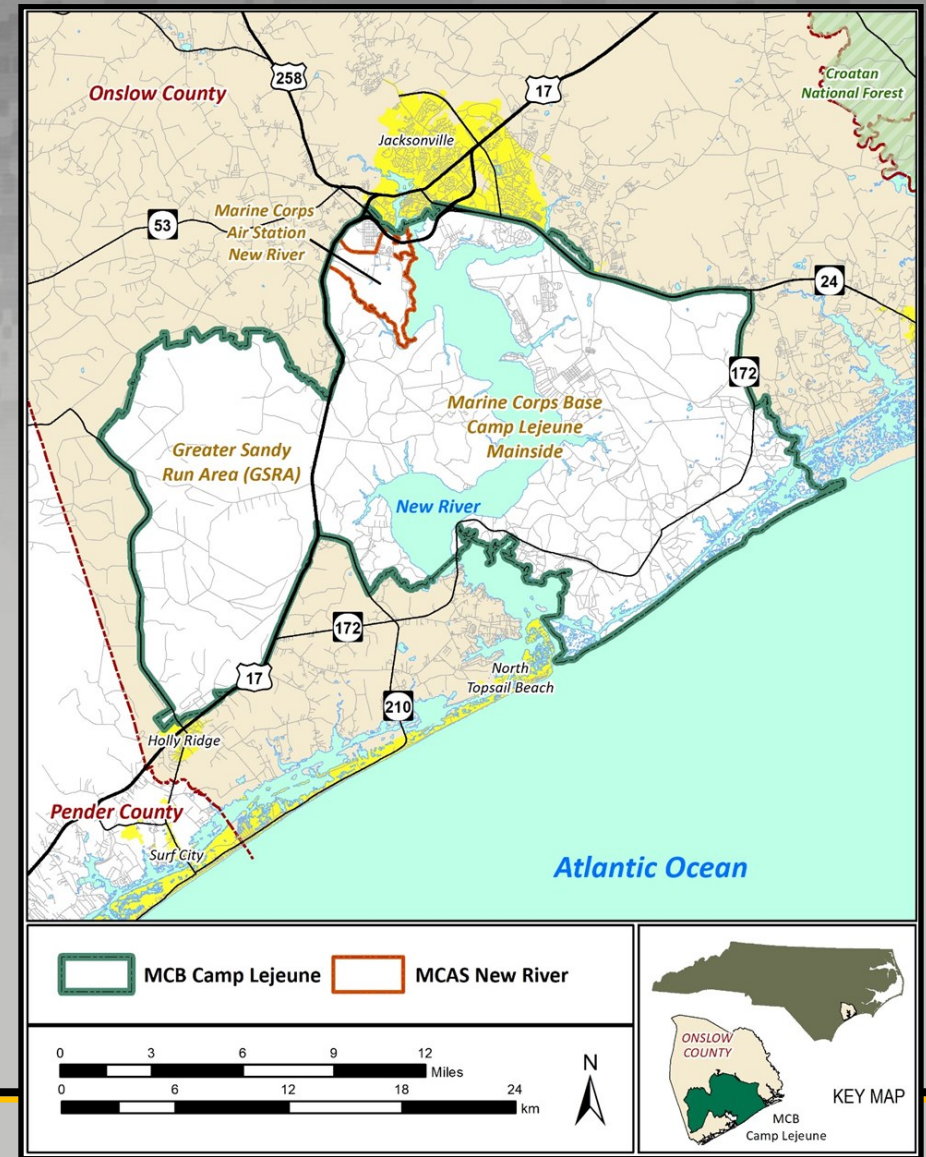
This book is an abbreviated overview of the history and development here, as reconstructed from evidence unearthed by research, excavations, analysis, and documentation by hundreds of archaeologists, historians, and researchers.

#### IN THE KNOW

- Nearly **1,250 archaeological sites** have been documented
- Because of their cultural significance, 34 sites are eligible for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places*
- More than **2,400 historic buildings** have been documented
- Multiple Historic Districts and iconic historic buildings are still present

#### OTHER FUN FACTS

- The **OLDEST** archaeology site here dates to the Early Archaic, about 10,000 years old, when the weather was getting warmer and ancient megafauna such as wholly mammoths and mastodons, were becoming extinct at the transition from the last Ice Age.
- The **LARGEST** historical component on base is the World War II era buildings, roads, and other infrastructure built to train Marines.



# THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND A PROMISING FUTURE

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MCB Camp Lejeune is located in Onslow County along the southeastern Coastal Plain of North Carolina, approximately 130 miles southeast of Raleigh. The New River runs through the center of the property. The base is split into two areas, Mainside and Greater Sandy Run, divided by US Highway 17.

## IN THE KNOW - MAINSIDE:

- 101,450 acres
- Includes the lower New River
- Mainly acquired and built in the 1940s

## GREATER SANDY RUN:

- 41,400 acres
- Includes swamplands
- Acquired in 1990s

In 1966 the **National Historic Preservation Act** established a nationwide historic preservation program wherein every federal agency was tasked with the responsibility for creating an internal program to identify, evaluate, and nominate historic properties to the **National Register of Historic Places** – the inventory of archaeological sites and historic resources that are of local, state, or national importance.

## AT MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA

**Three decades of intensive archaeological investigations** have been conducted at MCB Camp Lejeune, resulting in a complete inventory of the archaeological and historical resources present, revealing a rich and diverse cultural history.

Also, the historic buildings, structures, and landscapes across MCB Camp Lejeune have been documented to preserve its legacy. These resources – collectively called **cultural resources** – illustrate the historical development of our nation and are a reflection of prehistoric and historic processes and events.

Over time, the Navy and Marine Corps' obligations relating to historic preservation and cultural resources management have been adapted to best **Meet the Mission** to train and prepare the best combat-ready units in the military, upholding the rich tradition of the US Marine Corps motto of **Semper Fidelis - Always Faithful!**

**MCB Camp Lejeune's Cultural Resources Program** holds the responsibility of the inventory, evaluation, and management of their historic resources.

From management, to mitigation, to digitally archiving these resources, the Navy and Marine Corps are now poised to enhance the training facilities and opportunities at MCB Camp Lejeune and adapt their training mission to the ever changing national security threats.

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*Archaeology is the study of past human activity through research, excavations, and artifact analysis. Together, these help the archaeologists reconstruct a picture of the past.*

# Native Land

Archaeologists have named cultural time periods of our history to describe the cultural changes and the technological innovations of inhabitants of the native land.

Archaeologists generally agree that human migration into North America began during the late Pleistocene epoch (around 15,000-18,000 years ago) when megafauna roamed the land. Called **Paleoindians** by archaeologists, they came to North Carolina about 12,000 years ago, but no evidence for such early settlement has been found at MCB Camp Lejeune - yet. North Carolina looked and felt different than today – *it was much cooler, much drier, had fewer trees, and the sea level was much lower.*

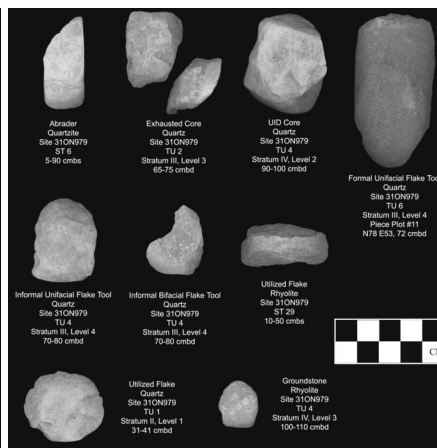
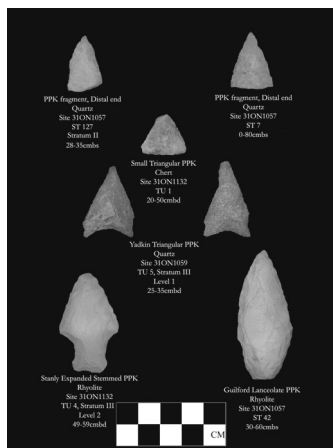
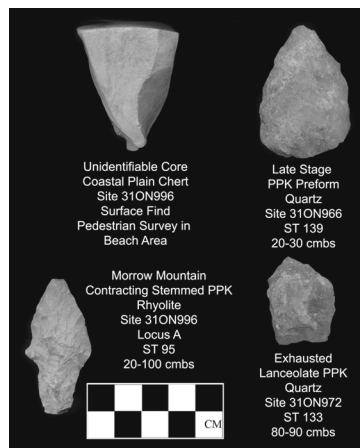
As the climate grew warmer (known as the Holocene epoch, beginning around 10,000 years ago), the environmental landscape began changing. Temperatures and sea levels rose; pine trees, swamps, and estuaries replaced the spruce forests. Megafauna were becoming extinct, and the common animals we see today, like white-tailed deer, were flourishing.

Archaeologists call this the **Archaic Period** and from the artifacts and evidence left behind we know these early peoples lived in seasonal camps so they could utilize the local resources for food, tools, and transportation, including use of dugout canoes, at MCB Camp Lejeune.

Over time, the types of tools made by these early inhabitants of North Carolina expanded to include more than just spears and lances. The **Middle Archaic** (5,000-8,000 years ago) is when the first atlatl (spear thrower) and weights appear. These help a hunter throw spears further and with more power. Grooved axes are another tool that became common. These tools were made from locally-available materials – primarily quartz, quartzite, as well as rhyolite or other metavolcanic stone from the distant Uwharrie Mountains.

The climate continued to get warmer and people began living in larger groups and in sedentary camps (that is, they didn't move the camp when the seasons changed). This is what archaeologists call the **Late Archaic** period which started about 5,000 years ago.

*This is when clay pottery first shows up in the archaeological record.*



In North Carolina the first pottery was made from clay mixed with fibers like Spanish moss, and sand.

Decoration styles on the pottery were named by archaeologists, based upon where the style was first found – like Stallings Island and **Thom's Creek**. These types have been found at MCB Camp Lejeune.

**FLAKE** - a part of the rock that gets chipped away while making a tool. Some flakes show use-wear evidence (termed a "utilized flake") from being used as expedient cutting and scraping tools.  
**BIFACIAL vs UNIFACIAL** - evidence of use or flaking/chipping on both sides of the object (bifacial) or only one side of the object (unifacial).  
**PPK** - Projectile Point/Knife, a general descriptive term for a type of tool that dates back to the Archaic Period (includes spear and atlatl dart points, arrowheads, knives, and similar type tools).

## 10,000 BC

**PALEOINDIAN**  
Evidence of earliest  
occupants in North Carolina

## 8000 BC

**EARLY ARCHAIC**  
Climate and environmental  
changes; seasonal, shifting camps

## 5000 BC

**MIDDLE ARCHAIC**  
Specialized tools and  
experienced hunter-gatherers

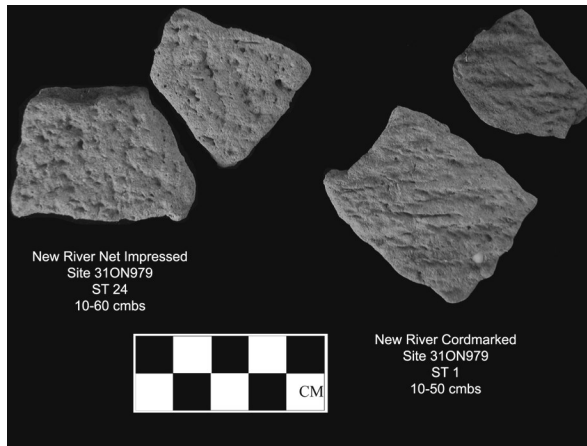
## 3000 BC

**LATE ARCHAIC**  
First pottery and sedentary  
(year-round) camps

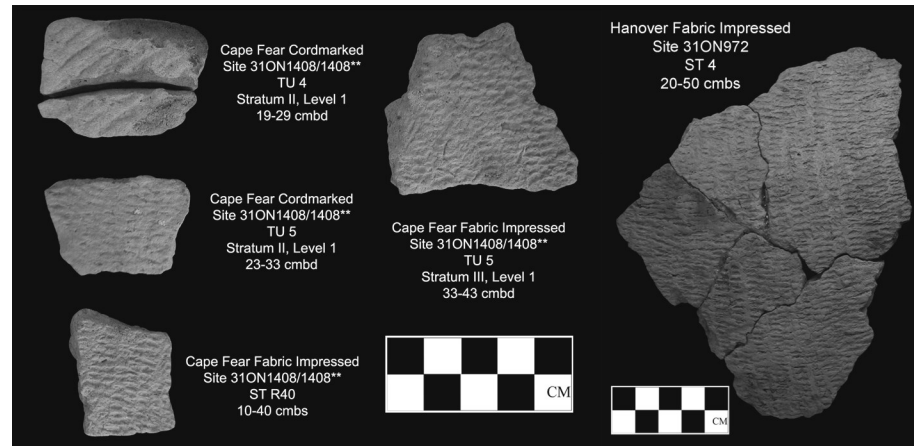
# Native Land Transitions

*North Carolina's southern shoreline was the homeland of various American Indian tribes in the early 1500s.*

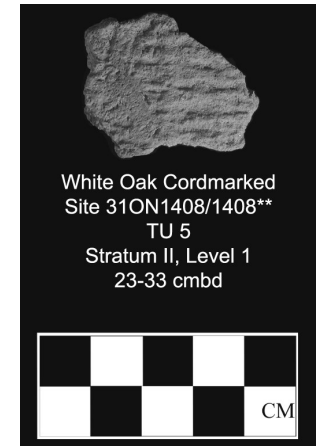
During the **Woodland** period (beginning about 3,000 years ago) the climate transitioned into similar weather, water levels, and vegetation we see today in North Carolina. Many more pottery styles, types, and decorations now appear in the archaeological record, such as **New River**, Hamp's Landing, and **Cape Fear**. In the MCB Camp Lejeune area the Early Woodland period is called the New River phase, named for the pottery style found at the New River. Over the course of the Woodland period, the region's inhabitants continued to hunt wild game, harvest fish and shellfish, and collect various wild plants, grains, seeds and fruits for subsistence.



Early Woodland pottery styles in this area include **New River**, Hamp's Landing, and Deep Creek.



Middle Woodland pottery styles (from about 1,000-2,000 years ago) are known as **Cape Fear** and **Hanover** and were decorated by impressing cords, fabric, or nets onto the surface of the wet clay.



Common Late Woodland pottery styles include **White Oak**, Colington, Townsend, and Swansboro.

The **Late Woodland** period, defined by archaeologists, is the **last period of American Indian inhabitants in North Carolina** prior to the arrival of European explorers. By now, they were living in large year-round settlements and well adapted to living in and near estuaries. Structures, such as longhouses for homes were common. American Indians in eastern North Carolina were growing and harvesting multiple varieties of maize (corn), beans, squashes and other domesticated plants at this time.

## IN THE KNOW

Commonly Used  
Archaeology Terms

**ST or STP** - Shovel Test or Shovel Test Pit; a small hole excavated with a shovel to search for archaeological deposits before excavating larger Test Units.  
**TU** - Test Unit; an archaeological excavation unit where soil is removed in small layers, usually 10cm (or about 2 1/2 inches).  
**cmbs or cmbd** - centimeters below surface or centimeters below datum (a fixed point on a TU used to measure all levels, artifacts and features from).  
**STRATUM vs LEVEL** - Stratum is a natural distinction in soil type; a Level is an archaeological layer excavated to a specific thickness (usually 10cm).

1000 BC

### EARLY WOODLAND

Adoption of bow-and-arrow; shift to horticulture and domesticated crops; larger villages

AD 500

### MIDDLE WOODLAND

Pottery decoration styles expand, includes impression

AD 1500

### LATE WOODLAND

American Indians encounter arrival of Europeans and enslaved Africans



# Resettled Land & New Growth

*Although this area was the homeland of various American Indian tribes in the early 1500s, little is known about the groups along the New River and the area that would become MCB Camp Lejeune in the mid-20th century.*

In early March 1524 something strange appeared beyond the sea islands of the Carolinas. The three-masted carrack *La Dauphine*, under the command of Florentine navigator Giovanni da Verrazzano, approached the mainland carrying perhaps the first Europeans to have ever seen the eastern seaboard of what would become the southeastern United States. This voyage was meant to discover new passage to Asia but instead tracked the coast from Newfoundland to perhaps as far south as Florida.

*La Dauphine* twice visited the **Cape Fear** vicinity, once upon initial arrival and then again on a return trip as the crew travelled northward along the coast. Traveling up the coast, da Verrazzano landed somewhere near the **Bogue Banks**, exploring coastal barrier islands here and the central coastal area north of **New River**. He encountered amicable American Indian communities around **Cape Fear**, **Cape Lookout**, and **Cape Hatteras**, writing what are likely the earliest European accounts of this area’s inhabitants.

Though their stay was brief, these explorers were the prelude to an age of European colonialism.

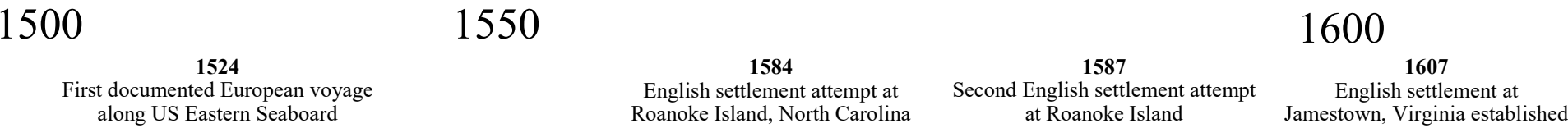
## European Settlement Attempts

In 1584, Sir Walter Raleigh, the English statesman and explorer, dispatched Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe on a reconnaissance mission for the establishment of a North American colony. They explored the Carolinian coast, ultimately recommending **Roanoke Island** as the seat of English settlement.

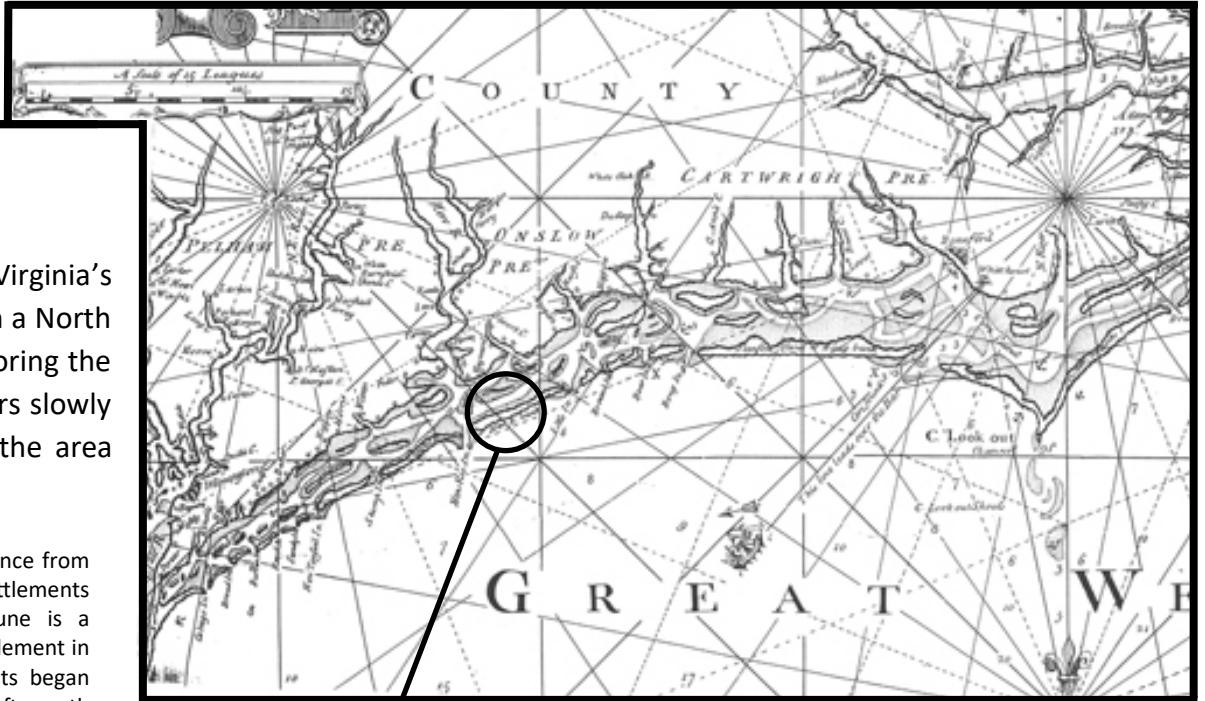
Under Raleigh’s direction, Ralph Lane attempted a settlement here along with 107 other colonists. Diminishing supplies, infighting among the colonists and reprisals for Lane’s gross mistreatment of local American Indian communities led to abandonment of the attempted settlement in 1586.

The following year, Raleigh organized a second attempt under John White’s leadership, who brought men, women, and children to Roanoke Island (in 1587). White returned to England for supplies but was unable to revisit his colony until 1590. Upon his return, White found the settlement abandoned. A single message, carved into a palisade post, was left:

CROATOAN

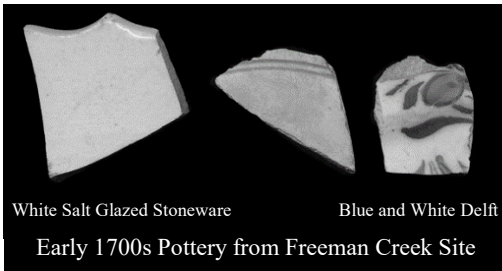


1738 Map showing Onslow County, North Carolina

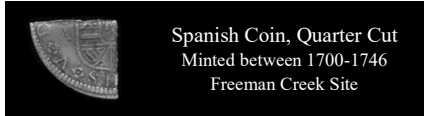


**With Sir Walter Raleigh's failed ventures,  
English settlement in North Carolina stalled.**

The 1607 establishment and eventual endurance of Virginia's Jamestown Colony, however, provided the English with a North American epicenter for expedition and expansion. Favoring the navigable waters of coastal rivers, explorers and settlers slowly entered North Carolina during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but the area around the New River remained sparsely populated.



Archaeological evidence from early European settlements around Camp Lejeune is a rare find. Initial settlement in this area by colonists began after 1720, in the aftermath of several regional American Indian wars that occurred across the Carolinas.



Archaeological evidence from contemporaneous American Indian settlements or towns here are also a rare find. During the colonial period there were no known American Indian towns in the general vicinity of Camp Lejeune.

In the early 1700s, the closest known American Indian settlements were the Coree Indian towns located some 25 miles north near present-day Swansboro, North Carolina. Cape Fear Indian settlements were found some 50 miles south, near Wilmington, and Lower Tuscarora towns were located near Snow Hill, some 50 miles north.

The **Freeman Creek site** (archaeological site number 31ON71/71\*\*) is among the earliest European settlements on base, dating around 1720-1740. Recovered artifacts include early 1700s pottery such as delftware, Westerwald, and white salt glazed stoneware. Hand-wrought nails, widely used throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century were also found. Historic map reviews and research indicate this could be the plantation of Colonel Edward Ward.

*Rescue attempts all proved fruitless, and the fate of the colonists remains undetermined.*

**Onslow County was formed in 1731** from two precincts of what was once Bath County (est. 1696). At the time of its founding, Onslow County was home to perhaps only 100 European settlers. Most of the county land was set aside by the British government as "property rights" to absentee landowners. This effectively limited the population growth in Onslow County in the early-to-mid-1700s.

1650

**1664-1667**  
English settlement attempts at  
Cape Fear, North Carolina

1700

**1711-1718**  
Tuscarora, Yamasee, and  
Cheraw Wars

FREEMAN CREEK SITE (~1720 - 1740)

**1729**  
North Carolina becomes  
a Royal Colony

**1731**  
Onslow County  
informally established

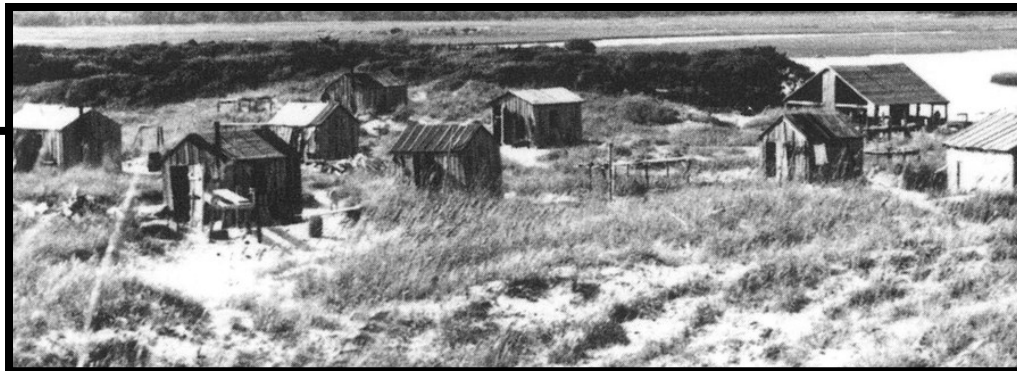
# Community Growth

The New River was used as the major transportation and commercial trade route, but it presented the early settlers with many navigational problems. The inlet was extremely shallow, had shifting channels and large oyster beds, prohibiting large ships from entering the mouth of the river. As a result of these limitations, only a few small, slow-growing settlements developed.

It was through the labor of free, indentured, and enslaved individuals, that Onslow County built its 18<sup>th</sup> century economy on the abundant commodities of its **farms, forests, and fisheries**. Corn, naval stores, fish, and, to a lesser extent, manufactured goods encouraged Onslow County's economic viability and helped stimulate its population growth over time.

As settlement continued through the early 1700s, area citizens petitioned Colonial Governor George Burrington requesting that a new precinct, or county, be created; despite the county's small population in 1731, residents' affairs necessitated local administration. Governor Burrington responded with an executive order on 23 November 1731, creating Onslow Precinct (from portions of Carteret and New Hanover Precincts), named in honor of the Right Honorable Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons in Great Britain.

The residents soon constructed a county courthouse on **Jarrett's Point on Court House Bay** (present-day Camp Lejeune). This courthouse was in operation for several years before a new location was selected for a new courthouse. Remnants of the courthouse at Jarrett's Point have not been positively identified by archaeologists.



Fishing village known as Giliken's Island, formerly located on the banks of Brown's Inlet (present-day Camp Lejeune). Fishermen would live in these small wooden huts on a seasonal basis.

The General Assembly of the colony's Colonial Government felt that their prerogatives had been violated, however, and did not officially recognize the new precinct until 21 February 1734.

## IN THE KNOW - FUN FACTS

- Onslow County's first three courthouses were located within the Camp Lejeune area.
- Courthouse Bay got its name from the first courthouse which was built at **Jarrett's Point** in 1732.
- The second courthouse was built near **Paradise Point** in 1737.
- Construction of the third courthouse at **Johnston on Town Point** began in 1741, but was never completed. In 1752 a catastrophic storm destroyed the building and reduced the village of Johnston to rubble.
- Beginning in 1755 all subsequent county courthouses were located and established at **Wantland's Ferry** (now Jacksonville).

EVERETT CREEK SITE (1730s-1800)

*By 1776 Onslow County was home for approximately 1,400 residents.*

1700

1734

Onslow County officially established

1732

Courthouse constructed  
at Jarrett's Point

1737

New Courthouse constructed  
at Paradise Point

1750

1776

American Revolution  
begins



# The Revolution

On 7 May 1775 riders thundered down the colonial roadways, crossing the New River area of Camp Lejeune on the Lower Ferry (Sneads Ferry), and informed Onslow County's citizenry that the **American Revolution had begun**.

*Onslow County landowners largely favored the separation from Great Britain and the establishment of free colonies in America.*

At the **Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge**, in present-day Pender County, on 27 February 1776 the Americans, with a sizeable contingent of Onslow County militiamen, decisively defeated the Loyalists (Tories) who had been directed by the colonial governor, Josiah Martin, to unite with a British force afloat in the Cape Fear River.

**This was the first significant American victory of the Revolution**, which, along with the subsequent British failure to capture Charleston, South Carolina, meant that Onslow County and the southern colonies were free from British occupation and plundering until 1781.

**Though American forces won political liberty, the promise of freedom was not for all to enjoy.** By the end of the Colonial period Onslow County's population was estimated at 5,000 persons, approximately one-third of whom were enslaved Africans or African Americans. Many such slaves were employed in the naval stores industry; others were skilled artisans or worked on area farms and plantations. The majority of the county's slaveholders lived on small farms, held few slaves, and pursued a combination of subsistence/commercial farming and stock raising.

- **Less than half** of the population were landowners or free.
- **Many** were indentured servants.
- **Almost half** were enslaved labor.

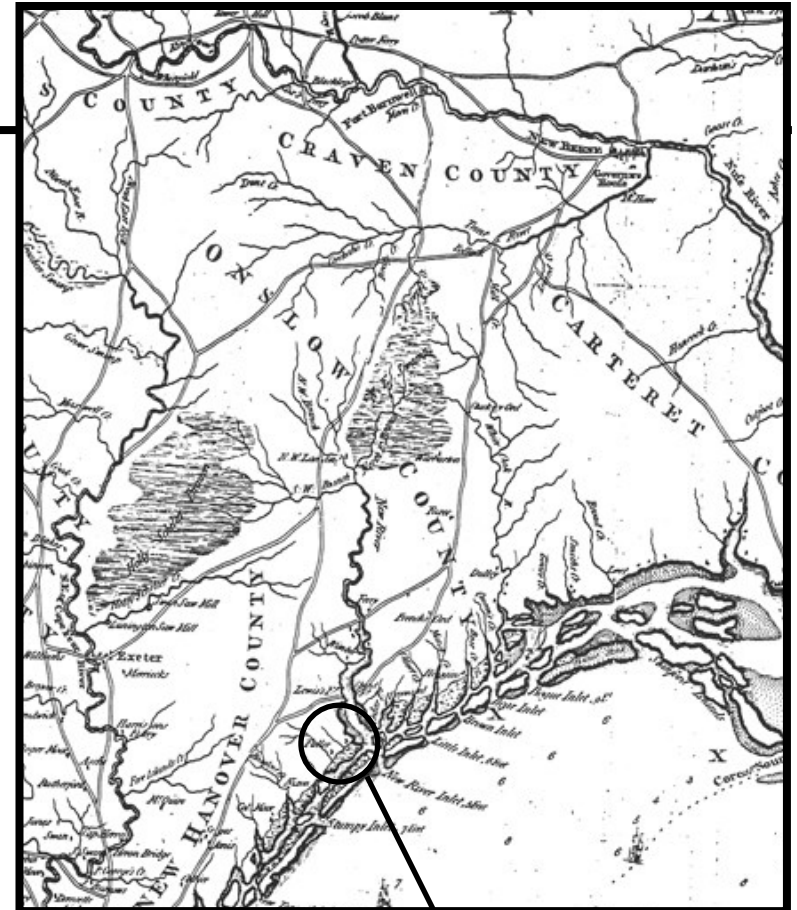
**After the Revolution**, slavery became a much more integral part of Onslow County society with the number of enslaved peoples *doubling* between the late-18<sup>th</sup> and mid-19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

EVERETT CREEK SITE (1730s-1800)

1800

1776-1779  
American War of Independence  
(Revolutionary War)

1823  
First Post Office opens  
in Onslow County



Onslow County 1794

The **Everett Creek site** (archaeological site number 31ON1599/1599\*\*) is a small farmstead and one of the earliest colonial-era sites at Camp Lejeune. Recovered artifacts include pottery made in the 1730s and a brass button manufactured between 1785-1800.

The presence of cut nails indicates the latest occupation around 1800.

# Naval Stores Industry

The production of **naval stores** was a key component of Onslow County's economy in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**North Carolina's vast pine stands** and the widespread demand for shipbuilding supplies made naval stores a staple of Onslow County's economy for generations. Naval stores was the first major industry of the colonial settlers which quickly became the greatest source of income for the wealthy planter class and the county's most profitable export.

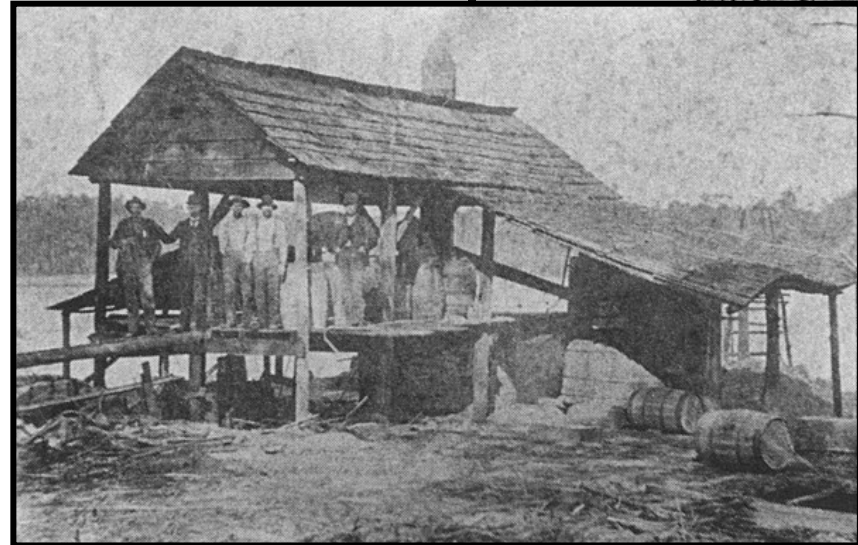
From 1720, before chartered as a British colony, until the eve of the Civil War, North Carolina was the world leader in the production of naval stores. Early in the industry's history, raw gum, along with tar and pitch produced in tar kilns, were the primary naval stores extracted from central North Carolina forests.

In **Onslow County**, naval stores were among the most important locally extracted commodities from the colonial period to the Civil War, with the county ranking fourth in production across North Carolina by the 1840s. Slave labor underpinned the naval stores industry, and as the industry expanded so did the number of enslaved laborers.

Production declined after the Civil War and largely stopped by World War I as resources were depleted and demand waned. The rising popularity of steel vessels at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, rather than wood ships, limited the market for naval stores.

## IN THE KNOW

- The term "naval stores" refers to goods made from the resin (harvested sap, crude gum) of longleaf pine trees.
- As the name suggests, these products were typically used for naval purposes like ship construction, maintenance, and waterproofing, with the pine resin used to create things like pitch, tar, rosin, and turpentine for sealing and/or lubricating various ship components.



Naval stores processing site once located in the area of Camp Lejeune (undated photo).



"Cat face" tree in a resin extraction site in North Carolina.

1700

1720s

Naval stores industry is booming across North Carolina

1750

1764-1775

Two sawmills are activated each year in Onslow County

1770s

70% of American tar was produced in North Carolina

1800

# Timber Sales

The forests that gave rise to Onslow County's naval stores industry also furnished settlers, landowners, and entrepreneurs with another valuable commodity: *the timber itself*.

Critical as a general construction and shipbuilding material, **wood from the expansive coastal forests was essential** for local settlement, transportation, and as an export material. Milling soon emerged as Onslow County's primary manufacturing industry, with sawmills ripping logs into lumber and gristmills crushing corn into flour. This need was so great that between 1764 and 1775, two new mills roared to life in the county each year. With valuable raw materials and a means to process them, Onslow County became increasingly attractive to new settlers in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.



Harvested timber leaving the Camp Lejeune area (undated photo).

## IN THE KNOW

Pine resin was extracted by first removing the bark and then cutting in a series of diagonal gashes (called streaks) into the tree trunk. During the colonial and Federal eras, the resin, oozing from the streak, would be directed into a "box" cut into the living trunk of the tree, and later, generally after the Civil War, into a square cup fixed to the tree by a piece of metal placed just below the streak. As new streaks were etched up the side of the tree, they produced a hallmark pattern known as a "cat face".

The dependence upon and institutionalization of enslaved labor intensified during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and became integral to the local economy, including the timber industry. Though naval stores and agricultural produce remained Onslow County's steadfast commodities up to the Civil War, timber and milling still filled important niches for local landowners.

The aftermath of the Civil War left Onslow County in an economically and socially depressed condition that generally persisted into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By 1880 economic activities were beginning to return to their prewar levels. Although corn continued as the county's most abundant crop, cotton was becoming the most profitable and helped supply the state's growing textile industry. Other industries emerged or expanded within the county to offset the diminishing production of naval stores: **lumbering was the most significant**, with second-growth loblolly pines being the principal target for exploitation. Livestock raising and commercial fishing increased as grist- and sawmilling began to dwindle.

In 1891, the Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad reached Jacksonville and immediately began transporting lumber to market. This in turn encouraged Jacksonville's growth, with the population nearly doubling (from 170 to 309) between 1890 and 1900.

In 1889 the Onslow Lumber Company and sawmill opened in downtown Jacksonville. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, three large sawmills were operational in town, a testament to timber's prominence in local manufacturing. Today, the Onslow Lumber Company and other historic structures related to the timber industry are part of the **Mill Avenue Historic District**, which is listed in the *National Register of Historic Places*.

LEE FOY PROPERTY SITE (1880-1941)

1850

1840

Onslow County ranked fourth in the state for its naval stores productivity

1861-1865

American Civil War

1889

Onslow Lumber Company and sawmill established in downtown Jacksonville

1900

# Unsettled Land: American Civil War

On the eve of the Civil War, the 1860 federal census recorded that of 8,856 people living in Onslow County, 3,499 were slaves. Slaves and free blacks contributed much of the hard labor required to carve the county from the wilderness and the artisans and skilled workmen who produced many of the bridges, boats, and buildings in the county.

Onslow County voted for North Carolina’s secession from the Union (631 to 89) and subsequently contributed the largest percentage of its men to the Confederate cause than any county in the region. Over 70% of the county’s voting population, more than 1,000 men, enlisted as soldiers for the Confederacy. Onslow County contributed seven companies to the Confederate Army, five infantry and two cavalry, which were assigned to the 3rd, 24th, 35th, 41st and 61st Regiments, North Carolina Troops.

Notable soldiers from the Camp Lejeune area included Colonel Edward Fonvielle and Lieutenant Colonel (Dr.) William J. Montfort (after whose family "Montford" Point would be named, although incorrectly spelled) of the 21st State Militia, Captains Solomon Gornto and Edwin H. Rhodes of the 3rd North Carolina, and Captain (Dr.) Edward W. Ward of the 41st North Carolina (3rd North Carolina Cavalry). Except for Rhodes, these men and more than 30 others identified from the Camp Lejeune area are buried in the Montford Point Cemetery.

IN THE KNOW - 1860 CENSUS DATA  
8,856 Onslow County Population  
5,357 Free, 3,499 Enslaved (40% of total population)  
1,175 Families, 313 of which owned slaves

On 20 May 1861 North Carolina officially seceded from the Union citing decades of northern infractions against the Constitution, personal liberty, and States’ rights.

Onslow County served as a battleground for the entirety of the war, with most of the intense fighting in the Camp Lejeune area centered around Bear Creek, Bear Inlet, and the lower New River. The county’s most storied Civil War engagement, the Battle of New River (23 to 25 November 1862), occurred within the boundaries of present-day Camp Lejeune.

In this battle, the irrepressible William B. Cushing, United States Volunteer Navy, drove his iron-hulled screw steamer, the USS *Ellis*, into the New River’s dangerous mouth and deceptive channels on the early morning of 23 November. His mission was to capture Jacksonville, seize any blockade runners, destroy salt works, and withdraw. Cushing completed his mission quickly, but in an attempt to escape encircling Confederate troops, he ran hard aground at the channel’s mouth off Swan’s Point, a victim of the same navigational limitations that had impeded Onslow’s progress for 150 years. Under heavy fire from two Confederate cavalry companies and one of artillery, Cushing managed to blow up the *Ellis* and escape with his crew out of harm’s way on 25 November and back out to the Atlantic.

Onslow County citizens suffered tremendously from hunger, poverty, and inflation during and after the war.

# Reemerging After War

*Unlike previous conflicts, the Civil War thoroughly devastated Onslow County economically, socially, and physically.*

- The area's aristocracy now virtually ceased to exist,
- War veterans returned to a war-torn landscape,
- Farmland value dropped by 75%, and
- With the war's conclusion, African Americans found themselves freed, but without the means for survival.

The number of people relying on government support increased in the years following the war. In the 1860s and 1870s, the county poorhouse was a major expense in the county budget. It would require several generations before this area would recover socially and economically.

By the 1880s, small subsistence farms characterized the once-lucrative larger farmsteads, such as the Lee Foy Property site. In contrast, wealthy visitors from the north capitalized on the low-priced property and established hunting and fishing camps, such as Henry Weil's lodge at French Creek.



**Henry Weil's Lodge at French Creek**

Hunting and fishing camps developed throughout Onslow County during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by wealthy visitors, including Weil, who took advantage of the low-priced farmland.

**The arrival of the railroad in 1891**, connecting Jacksonville to Wilmington and New Bern, finally initiated meaningful economic recovery in the region. New York financier Thomas A. McIntyre, who started the lumber industry in Onslow County on a major scale, brought in the railroad to facilitate the growth of the lumbering industry and the development of other industries. The railroad, a portion of which passed through Camp Lejeune's western edge, also offered new transportation opportunities and provided freight access from further regions, supporting the area's growth of waterborne commerce, opening to wider and distant markets.



**The Lee Foy Property** (archaeological site numbers 31ON1758/1758\*\*, 31ON1759/1759\*\*) was a 15-acre plot owned by Mr. Lee Foy. In 1941, prior to federal acquisition of the property, the US Navy surveyed the land and documented several structures including the primary home, a garage, and a small tenant house. These photographs are from that survey. Artifacts recovered at the sites support an occupation date range of 1880-1941.

1880

LEE FOY PROPERTY SITE (1880-1941)

1889

1890

1891

1900

Onslow Lumber Company  
established (Jacksonville)

Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina  
Railroad completed



# Ushering in the 20th Century

The 20<sup>th</sup> century ushered in changes to Onslow County's agricultural and manufacturing pursuits. Small tenant farms covered the landscape, the naval stores industry drew to a close, the lumber industry was on the rise and became, again, one of the most significant manufacturing industries for the county. Cotton ceased to be an important crop, especially in the Camp Lejeune area. It was replaced by bright leaf tobacco, used primarily for cigarettes, as the leading cash crop.

Into the 1920s a few small family-owned sawmills, such as Henderson's Mill, operated in Onslow County. The region's boat-building enterprises were also an important part of the economy. Pleasure boats, as well as working boats, were constructed in the county. Fishing, long a traditional source of income for Onslow County residents, continued to be an important component of the local economy.



Onslow County's tobacco harvests were taken by truck to the market in Kinston.

Onslow County residents continued to use the network of dirt roads that had existed since the Civil War, but some hard-surfaced roads began to appear. US ROUTE 17, which generally follows the trace of the old **Colonial Post Road**, was completed in 1924, and STATE ROUTE 24 in 1934.

The riverine setting, sprawling swamps, and estuaries made the area attractive to tourism; resorts, hunting and fishing camps continued to contribute a recreational market.

### IN THE KNOW

Portions of the Colonial Post Road passed through the Camp Lejeune area.

*With the approach of war, however, a change was coming that would redefine Onslow County's pace, profile, and place in American history.*

The county's proximity to the ocean and abundance of undeveloped land made it attractive as a potential site for military training operations. In 1940, Holly Ridge, a small crossroads community, was selected as the site of a 3,200-acre anti-aircraft training facility named Camp Davis. In short order, 1,000 buildings were constructed, and the area transformed into what its resident soldiers called a boom town.

In the summer of 1940 then Major General Thomas Holcomb, Marine Corps Commandant, ordered Major John C. McQueen to "select a pilot . . . get a plane . . . and find us a training center." Within a month, McQueen and his pilot, Captain Verne McCaul, embarked on an aerial survey that would ultimately cover the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from Norfolk, Virginia, to Corpus Christi, Texas. As they circled over the Onslow County coast, they saw 14 miles of undeveloped beach interrupted only by Brown's inlet. It was an ideal area for training, maneuvering large formations, artillery firing, and the construction of a major military facility.

1900

1907

1910

1920

1924

Onslow County's last turpentine distillery ceased operations

US Route 17, first hard-surfaced road in the region, is completed

# War Time Transitions

*"The order to evacuate came as a paralyzing shock," wrote historian and longtime resident of Onslow County, Joseph Parsons Brown, leaving residents "stunned and hopeless and without money."*

The War Department, spurred by the country’s increasing involvement in the European theater, recognized the need for a much larger installation where vast numbers of troops could be trained for combat readiness.

The 110,000 acres selected with its 14 miles of oceanfront spotted by Major McQueen was not an uninhabited, unclaimed expanse, but rather a rich tapestry of farms, forests, homes, businesses, churches, and cemeteries. Some 720 families lived here, many for multiple generations, and each had a vested stake in their property, community, and heritage. The power and needs of the War Department eclipsed residents’ concerns, however, and each family was ordered to vacate between 1 June and 1 September 1941.



**The Pearson House**, once located in the nearby town of Marines (est. 1845), is a typical example of homesteads located in the area taken for the development of the base.

For their land, which was now some of the most desirable in the country, property owners were offered an average of \$12 per acre. Many protested the seemingly low offer, but those who outright refused to sell had their lands condemned anyway. Compensation was slow to arrive, with some families waiting nearly two years before receiving any money for the property that had been their primary investment and, in many cases, source of income before 1941. To help displaced families cope with the upheaval, the Nort Carolina Defense Relocation Corporation offered temporary housing and assistance in finding them new farms in Onslow and nearby counties.

In the wake of their departure, buildings were razed, businesses vanished, and hundreds of graves—from single family plots to community burial grounds—were disinterred and reburied in Montfort Point Cemetery (white families) and Verona Cemetery (African American families).

Established in 1941 as Marine Barracks at New River and under the initial command of Lt. Col. William P. T. Hill, the installation was to be the training ground for amphibious and terrestrial operations of the 1st Maine Division; together with the 1st Marine Air Wing and four base defense battalions, this command composed the Atlantic arm of the Fleet Marine Force. Constructing the installation was a massive and transformational undertaking for Onslow County. Congress authorized \$14 million to build it, an unprecedented investment in military infrastructure anywhere in the South to that time. Three Charlotte-based firms filled the construction contracts, deploying more than 8,000 people to accomplish the feat. The Civilian Conservation Corps built roads and drained swamplands to optimize access and usability. Within two years after its establishment, the installation’s name was changed to Marine Barracks Camp Lejeune in honor of Lt. Gen. John A. Lejeune, a World War I veteran and former Commandant of the Marine Corps.

1930

1934

State Route 24  
completed

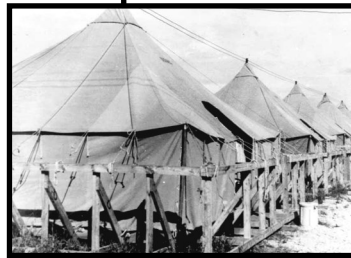
1940

LEE FOY PROPERTY SITE (1880-1941)

# Building the Base

Constructing the installation was a massive and transformational undertaking for Onslow County. Congress authorized an unprecedented \$14 million for construction, the largest investment in military infrastructure anywhere in the South to that time.

Given its sheer size and multifunctional design, the base was constructed in discrete phases. Between April 1941 and September 1942, the first phase of construction focused on completing the Division Training Area, portions of the enlisted and **officer housing, Tent Camp No. 1, and the Naval Hospital at Hadnot Point.**



**First phase of construction, April 1941– September 1942**

Focused on shelter and training facilities due to the urgency of expanding the nation's combat readiness.

Three Charlotte-based construction firms filled the contracts, deploying more than 8,000 people to accomplish the task. The magnitude and tempo of construction was immediately felt within local communities, particularly in Jacksonville, which emerged as the county's primary urban center. Mere days after construction began, the Onslow County News and Views described the scene: "Already Jacksonville is crowded. Hundreds more people are expected tomorrow and the day after."

## IN THE KNOW

- Established in 1941 as Marine Barracks at New River
- Under the initial command of Lt. Col. William P.T. Hill
- Home to 1st Maine Division and 1st Marine Air Wing, and four base defense battalions



*Established in 1941 to be the training ground for amphibious and land operations of the 1st Maine Division*

With this rapid influx, however, came new jobs and new revenue, enabling greater levels of economic prosperity and community investment. The base rapidly became the county's largest employer and encouraged the rise of new businesses elsewhere to meet the needs of a dramatically expanding population. It also brought a sense of intangible value as well, granting Onslow County and the state at large the prestige that comes with having the largest Marine base in the United States.



## Second phase of construction October 1942–March 1943

Focused on roads, piers, and other aspects of base infrastructure. The Civilian Conservation Corps was involved, also building roads and draining swamplands to optimize access and usability.

1941

April 1941  
Construction Phase 1 begins

1942

September 1942  
Construction Phase 1 ends

# War Time Training

Shortly after construction began, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 in June 1941, barring race-based discrimination in federal agencies or companies engaged in national defense. The following year, the first African American troops arrived to train at MCB Camp Lejeune, though as a segregated population in a specially designated area at **Montford Point**.

## IN THE KNOW

**PFC Howard Perry**, the first African American recruit to enlist with the Marine Corps, arrived on base 26 August 1942 with 119 additional recruits.



## Third phase of construction March 1943–October 1943

Focused on expanding Montford Point with additional housing and new training areas. A cantonment for African American Marines was added to the camp's Rifle Range, and facilities to house and train the Women's Reserves were established.

Although held to the same standards as all Marines, the training and housing facilities at Montford Point were substandard compared to those elsewhere aboard the main base, which African American trainees were forbidden to enter without a white escort.

Despite segregation and the substandard facilities provided to African Americans for training and housing, more and more African Americans came to receive their training at MCB Camp Lejeune during World War II. Starting in 1943 as many as 1,000 African Americans were enlisting each month, forcing the expansion of Montford Point to sufficiently accommodate up to 5,000 men at a time. This included the construction of more housing, an infirmary, administration building, hostess house, brig, classrooms, theater, and gymnasium.



## IN THE KNOW

In 1943 the installation's name, Marine Barracks at New River, changed to **Marine Barracks Camp Lejeune** in honor of WWI veteran and former Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lt. Gen. John A. Lejeune.

The **Women's Reserves** aboard the installation is where women were trained in nearly all facets of the military, except for combat positions. Full admission to all combat roles remained closed to women until 2016.



**October 1942**  
Construction Phase 2 begins

**1943**

**March 1943**  
Construction Phase 2 ends  
and Phase 3 begins

**October 1943**  
Construction Phase 3 ends

# Base Transitions: Post-WWII

*Though the pace of construction at MCB Camp Lejeune slowed following World War II, it by no means stopped.*

Following WWII, MCB Camp Lejeune continued as a training and support center. Many of the WWII temporary structures were replaced by permanent buildings. By 1949, MCB Camp Lejeune included 3,154 buildings, 14 post exchanges, 11 movie theaters and gymnasiums, and five service clubs among a host of other facilities.

The military began downsizing in 1949, but in 1950, MCB Camp Lejeune was reactivated as the United States prepared for entry into the **Korean War** in 1951. The former tents and Homasote huts at Tent Camp were rapidly replaced with concrete buildings and Quonset huts, and the formerly deactivated Marine Corps Auxiliary Airfield at Peterfield Point became home to the Maine Corps Air Facility New River.

## IN THE KNOW

MCB Camp Lejeune brought enormous residential growth to the Jacksonville area.

Population Growth:  
1940: 873  
1950: 3,960  
1960: 13,491

As the base population swelled, housing and family services became critical in the 1950s and 1960s. The base added 1,150 trailer homes to the Camp Knox and Camp Geiger trailer parks as well as several schools and a youth center to accommodate the needs of servicemembers’ children. Modernized training facilities were essential as well, particularly as the Vietnam War approached and unfolded. New barracks, hangars, a training building, and infrastructure were built for the activation of the Marine Helicopter Training Group-40, while a Guerilla Warfare Center was established at the southwestern tip of MCB Camp Lejeune. This latter facility was specifically designed to prepare Marines for operations in the Vietnam theater, teaching them guerilla warfare tactics as well as familiarizing them with Vietnamese society and customs.

Following the **Vietnam War**, new investments were made to improve Marines’ quality of life on base, including upgraded single and family housing units and pay increases during the 1970s. Additional facilities have been added ever since, and in 1992, the 41,400-acre **Greater Sandy Run Area** was added to the base, making it the largest Marine Corps installation at the time. Today, more than 156,000 acres in size and boasting over 7,650 structures and a population of more than 137,000, MCB Camp Lejeune is a highly evolved training camp with 89 maneuver areas, 80 live-fire ranges, 34 gun positions, 50 tactical landing zones, and three large training facilities for Military Operations in Urban Terrain.

**Three decades** of intensive archaeological investigations have been conducted at MCB Camp Lejeune, resulting in a complete inventory of the archaeological and historical resources present, revealing a rich and diverse cultural history. The historic buildings across the base have been inventoried and documented to preserve its legacy. Over time, the Navy and Marine Corps’ obligations relating to historic preservation and cultural resources have been adapted to best Meet the Mission to train and prepare the best combat-ready units in the military.

## NEW TRANSITIONS

From management, to mitigation, to digitally archiving the cultural resources at MCB Camp Lejeune, the Navy and Marine Corps are now poised to enhance the training facilities and opportunities here, and adapt their training to the ever changing national security threats.





# THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND A PROMISING FUTURE

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AT MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA

The legacy of utilization and adaptation has been central to MCB Camp Lejeune's story.

Native Inhabitants , the American Indians – how they shaped and were shaped by the environment

New Settlers and New Industries – how they utilized the available resources and reshaped the landscape

Targeted Training – the selection of this geographic area for military training based upon the environmental similarities to the war zone

The legacy of utilization and adaptation has been preserved.

As MCB Camp Lejeune proudly carries forward its military traditions into a new age, it does so with a commitment to honor the legacy of its tenant commands as well as the heritage of its deeper past. To meet the needs of this mission, the base's Cultural Resources Program is responsible for compliance with historic preservation legislation intended to ensure the thoughtful investigation and management of archaeological sites, historic buildings, and other resources.

Working alongside regulators, stakeholders, consultants, and partners, the Cultural Resources Program leads efforts to identify and evaluate sites, structures, objects, and districts for inclusion in the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP). Those resources either listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP are then managed in a way that sustains their preservation or, when this is not possible or practicable, ensures they are intensively studied and recorded to extract and analyze the data that made these resources significant in the first place. Oral history and public outreach play critical roles in fulfilling Cultural Resources Program objectives as well, enhancing the understanding and appreciation of base history and the military's role in its stewardship.

The legacy of utilization and adaptation continues.

The goals of the MCB Camp Lejeune preservation program have been completed; the historic preservation mission has been met. The Navy and Marine Corps are now poised to enhance the training facilities and opportunities and adapt their training to the ever-changing national security threats.

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## The Legacy Continues

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Three decades of intensive archaeological investigations have been conducted at MCB Camp Lejeune, resulting in a complete inventory of the archaeological and historical resources present.

This book is an abbreviated overview of the history and development at here, as reconstructed from evidence unearthed by research, excavations, analysis, and documentation by hundreds of archaeologists, historians, and researchers.

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This document was prepared as a mitigation measure in partial fulfillment of the Marine Corps' cultural resource management obligations related to the demolition of historic buildings at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune as part of the Infrastructure Reset Strategy, a Navy and Marine Corps wide initiative.