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Boontown Discussion Draws Crowd for Dahlgren Museum Speaker Series

By Jeron Hayes

The stage was set for a nostalgic trip. Photos of Boontown showed on the screen. The dulcet tones of Glenn Miller played in the background. Comfortable couches filled the stage. Slowly the crowd of over 100 attendees filed in to the University of Mary Washington Dahlgren Campus auditorium with one mission - to hear and share stories from the past.

The event, held June 11, was the first in a series by of events by the Dahlgren Heritage Museum honoring the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. The topic, "Boontown - The War Years Grow the Base," told the story of life on the base as World War II ended. Boontown refers to an housing area on base, now the site of Aegis Training and Readiness Center and other commands, that served as quarters for base employees during the 50s.

The museum assembled a panel of participants that went all the way back to 1916, two years before the base opened. Ed Jones, president of the Dahlgren Heritage Foundation and an 18-year resident of Dahlgren, moderated the panel that included Ann Swope, a former Chief of Staff for Naval Surface Warfare Dahlgren Division; Elizabeth Lee,



Photo courtesy of Mele Richardson

A panel of former Dahlgren employees and residents talk about life on the base during World War II during a panel discussion at the University of Mary Washington Dahlgren Campus on June 11, the first of series of history-themed events organized by the Dahlgren Heritage Museum.

president of the Dahlgren Historical Society; Ira and Gladys West, retired base employees; and Walter Mason, who at age 98 was two years old when Dahlgren fired its first shot. Mason was accompanied by his son Bernie on the stage.

Jones opened the evening with a reminder that the base would turn 100 in just three more years. The first shot, fired in October 1918, was fired by a gun "that remains on base today, which is pretty remarkable," said Jones. One by one he introduced panel members and asked them to share their memories.

Lee shared photos of King George County from the World War II era. She

was born and raised on a farm in the area and talked about the vast expanse of farm land throughout the county.

"I was the girl running barefoot through the freshly plowed dirt," Lee said. "The area was very rural with lots of agriculture, not like it is now." She added that fishermen rounded out the economy for the area. She described how a handful of stores served the area, including what is now known as the dilapidated "Monster Mansion" on Rt. 3 near where the current King George Post Office is located.

Lee included in her presentation a photo of the Naval Ordnance Research Calculator, the first computer

on base. "When the war happened, the base geared up for it. The base definitely grew," said Lee.

Ira and Gladys West came to Dahlgren to pursue new careers. Residents of King George County since the 50's, the Wests both got calls to come to Dahlgren for job interviews.

"I looked on a map," said Ira West, a mathematician, "and there was no Dahlgren." Finally finding the location, he took a Greyhound bus from Richmond to Fredericksburg after being told there would be another bus at Fredericksburg to take him to Dahlgren. When he arrived, there was no continuing bus. "I was able to get a cab," said West. "We

drove through fields to get here, and I ended up being very late for my interview. I wondered what in the world I'd done." West wasn't comfortable with how things went and headed home thinking he wouldn't receive an offer. But a few weeks later, he was asked to return and work for the base. "When I came for my first day of work, I got here a day early," West told an amused crowd. As an employee, he lived in a dorm "for a reasonable price. It was a good place to be," said West.

His wife Gladys began her career as a school teacher in Sussex. After leaving teaching and returning to college, she received a call to come for an interview at Dahlgren but, not finding it on the map and then getting directions to the base, "I turned it down. It was too far from home," said West, who grew up in Dinwiddie County. But the base persisted, so West gave in and came for an interview. Once hired as a computer programmer, she also moved into the employee dorm, on the side that housed females. She and Ira met, married and then settled in King George County. This was a "highlight" that Ira failed to mention while telling his story.

See **Boontown**, Page 7

NSWCDD HSI Senior Military Deputy Retires

Capt. Brian Durant, left, Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) commanding officer, presents the Meritorious Service Medal certificate to Cmdr. Shawn Cowan, NSWCDD senior military deputy for human systems engineering during Cowan's retirement ceremony June 5 at the Aegis Training and Readiness Center auditorium. The naval flight officer served aboard USS Enterprise (CVN 65), USS

Nimitz (CVN 69), USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74), USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) throughout his 22-year Naval career. Cowan - who reported to the NSWCDD Human Systems Integration (HSI) Branch in April 2012 - crafted and led teams comprising military, government, and contractor human systems engineers to provide HSI support for seven acquisition projects. "As the HSI lead on Navy,

DoD, and other federal agency acquisition projects, he ensured his team provided unrivaled HSI expertise in human factors engineering, manpower, personnel, training, safety, personnel survivability, habitability, and occupational health hazards," said Durant. "His in-depth expertise with Navy surface and aviation warfare and maintenance practices provided keen insight to numerous acquisition programs."



U.S. Navy photo by Ryan DeShazo/Released

Congratulations Class of 2015



Susanne Adams
Christendom College
Bachelor of
Arts, English Literature
Daughter of
Robert Adams



Cara Brooke Albrittain
La Plata High School
Plans to attend
Wofford College
Daughter of
Tom Albrittain



Feline Agwumezie
Tuskegee University
Masters, Electrical
Engineering
Employed by
NSWCDD, G33



Donald Alex Barnes IV
Culinary Institute
of Virginia
Son of Donald Barnes
and
Destiney Barnes



Michelle Bezeredi
Germanna
Community College
Associates,
Criminal Justice
Daughter of
Kathi Bezeredi



Jermon Booker
King George High School
Plans to attend
Full Sail University
Son of Kim Booker



Hannah Bowers
Sweet Briar College
Bachelor of Science,
Engineering
Daughter of
Chris Bowers



Emilee Marie Brancheau
King George High School
Plans to attend Old
Dominion University
Daughter of
Jeff Brancheau



Jay Allen Branem
Rappahannock
High School
Plans to attend Woodrow
Wilson College
Son of Patience King



Hikenna Branson
Monroe Bay Christian
Academy; Plans to enlist
in the US Air Force
Daughter of
Howard Branson



Nicole Brem
King George High School
Plans to attend Randolph
Macon College
Daughter of
Sharon Brem



Eboni Monet Brown
James Monroe High
School; Plans to attend Ger-
manna Community College;
Daughter of Anthony and
Linda Brown



Eric M. Brown
American
Military University
Bachelor of Arts,
General Studies
Employed by 614th Air
Operations Center



Linda Brown
Naval Post
Graduate School
Masters, Cost
Estimation and Analysis
Employed by
NSWCDD W11



Kali Y. Campbell
La Plata High School
Plans to attend College
of Southern Maryland
Daughter of
Lynne Campbell



Meagan Campbell
La Plata High School
Plans to attend
Lynchburg College
Daughter of
Lynne Campbell



Shannon Carpenter
Regent University
School of Law
Juris Doctor
Daughter of
Mark Carpenter



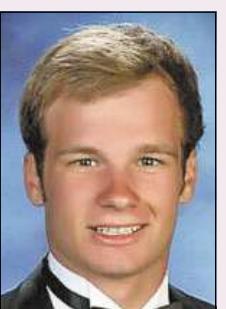
Sarah Castro
University of Maryland
Bachelor of Science,
Civil Engineering
Daughter of
Matthew Castro



Symone A. Chase
Virginia Commonwealth
University; Bachelor
of Science, Criminal
Justice, Homeland
Security & Emergency
Management
Daughter of
Roger Chase



**Nadia Schreese
Cobey**
Calvert County High
School; Plans to
attend College of
Southern Maryland
Daughter of Denise
Cobey-Warren



Justin Courtney
Stafford High School
Plans to attend
Culinary Institute
of America
Son of
Stacia Courtney



Chase Cowan
King George
High School
Plans to attend Embry
Riddle Aeronautical
University
Son of Shawn Cowan



Erica M. Cox
University of
Oklahoma
Masters, Human
Relations
Daughter of
Christine Joseph



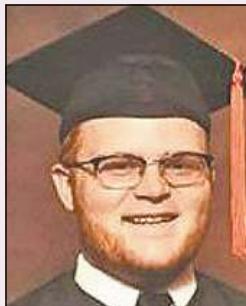
Aaron Cropp
King George
High School
Son of Trisha Cropp



Michael Drescher
Virginia Tech
Masters, Computer
Engineering
Son of Linda Drescher



Congratulations Class of 2015



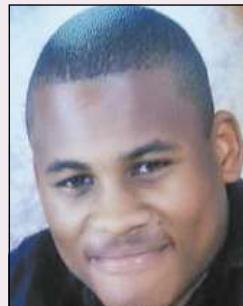
Bryan Mark Elam
Virginia Tech
Bachelor of Science,
Mechanical Engineering
Son of Kenneth Elam



Emily Feldman
Towson University
Masters of Education
Daughter of Jim Feldman



Laura Filkoski
Masters in Education,
Special Education
University
of Mary Washington
Daughter of
Butch Filkoski



Benjamin Forest
Kecoughtan High School
Plans to attend
Lynchburg College
Son of Vivian Forest



**Katelyn Michelle
Fortune-Mehl**
Ohio State University
Bachelor of
Science, Nursing;
Daughter of Mark Fortune
and Stepdaughter
of Mike Mehl



Jared Gamble
US Army Boot Camp
Son of Elana
and Kenneth Gamble



Collin Irvin Garnett
Massaponax High School
Plans to attend
Germanna
Community College
Son of Donna Garnett



Curtis Earl Garnett
Virginia Tech
Bachelor of Science,
Wildlife Sciences
and Forestry
Son of Donna Garnett



Alexis Gordon
Washington & Lee
High School
Plans to attend James
Madison University
Daughter of
Dontina Gordon



Kenley Green
King George High School
Plans to attend James
Madison University
Daughter of
Debbie Shelkey-Lawson



Charlotte Gregg Horne
Randolph Macon College
Bachelor of Arts Degree,
Political Science and
Communication Studies
Daughter of
Andrew Horne



Keyawna C. Griffith
University of Maryland
Bachelor of Arts,
Criminology and
Criminal Justice
Daughter of Lisa Griffith



Daniel Grigg
King George High
School
Plans to attend
Virginia Tech
Son of Betty and
Randy Grigg



Sarah Grigg Rolph
University of Florida
Master of Fine
Arts, Poetry
Daughter of Betty and
Randy Grigg



Tyler Grigg
University of Virginia
Bachelor of Science,
Mechanical Engineering;
Employed by
NSWCDD G81;
Son of Betty and
Randy Grigg



Haley Hancock
College of Southern
Maryland; Associates,
General Studies/Arts
& Sciences
Daughter of
Sheila Hancock



Dondre' Harris
Essex High School
Plans to attend
Fairmont State
University
Son of Jodi Harris



Elijah Frezell Harvey
King George
High School
Son of
Veronica S.
Harvey



Alexandra L. Hastings
Virginia Military
Institute; Bachelor of
Arts, Modern Languages
and Cultures; Com-
missioned into the U.S.
Army as 2nd Lieutenant
Daughter of Robert C.
Hastings, Jr.



Emily Palmer Heller
Eugene Lang College
of Liberal Arts at The
New School; Bachelor
of Arts, Social Inquiry
Daughter of
Frederick Heller



Christopher Hogue
University of Maryland
Baltimore County
Bachelor of Science,
Visual Arts
Son of Gary A. Hogue



**Daron
Keyonna Holmes**
James Monroe
High School
Daughter of
De'Atra Holmes



**Jessica
Charlotte Hoover**
College of William and
Mary; Bachelor of Arts,
Music and Theatre
Daughter of
Steven Hoover



Ehnde' Laurny Howard
Courtland High School
Plans to attend
Germanna Community
College
Daughter of
Tabitha Howard



Jordan Howells
Henry E. Lackey High
School
Plans to attend
College of Southern
Maryland
Son of Katie Howells



Brendnan Jacko
La Plata High School
Plans to attend
McDaniel College
Daughter of
Julie Jacko



Congratulations Class of 2015



Charmaine B. Jackson
George Mason University
Bachelor of Science,
Public Administration
Daughter of
Cheyenne D. Jackson



Zachary David Johnson
King George High School
Plans to attend
Shenandoah University
Son of Kimberly Johnson



Joanna Jourdan
University of Mary
Washington
Bachelor of Arts, Historic
Preservation and History
Employed
by NSWCD 1033



Alya C. Kassem
La Plata High School
Plans to attend College
of Southern Maryland
Daughter of
Christine Carpenter



Jennifer Kau
University of Notre Dame
Bachelor of Arts
Daughter of Brian and
Deanna Kau



Nathan Kendrick
King George High School
Plans to attend
Virginia Tech
Son of Paula
and Gary Kendrick



Menyon Keys
University of Maryland
Masters, Business
Management
Daughter of
Kim Pinkney



Alexander Lateulere
Henry E. Lackey High
School; Plans to attend
University of Maryland
Baltimore County
Son of
Michael Lateulere



Eileen Renae Lawson
University of Mary
Washington
Bachelor of Arts,
Sociology
Daughter of Debbie
Shelkey-Lawson



Christian Leigh
North Stafford
High School
Plans to attend
Brigham
Young University
Son of Matthew Leigh



**Shearl
Christine LeVere**
Bridgewater College
Bachelor of Science,
Information Systems
Management
Daughter of Carolyn
Dudley



Ashlyn Liverman
La Plata High School
Plans to attend Col-
lege of Southern
Maryland Daughter
of Tony and Christina
Liverman



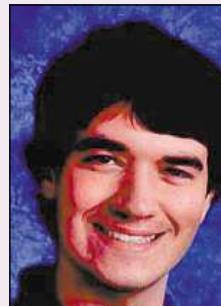
Carolyn E. Louie
Courtland High School
Plans to attend
University of Virginia
Daughter of
Check Louie



Jennifer M. Louie
James Madison
University
Bachelor of Science,
Health Sciences
Daughter of
Check Louie



Timothy W. Louie
James Madison
University
Bachelor
of Science, Geology
Son of Check Louie



Nathaniel Lydick
King George High
School; Associates
Degree, Rappahannock
Community College
Plans to attend Univer-
sity of Oklahoma
Son of Ed Lydick



Stephanie Maddox
University of Baltimore
School of Law
Juris Doctorate
Degree
Daughter of
Penny Maddox



Meahsha T. Makle
Morgan State
University, Bachelor of
Science, Transporta-
tion Systems
Daughter of
Christine Makle



Jeffrey P. McAtee
Riverbend High School
Plans to attend
University of Mary
Washington
Son of
William V. McAtee



Laura McKinnon
Liberty University
Masters of Business
Administration
Daughter of
Ed McKinnon



Shyrisce Mitchell
Siena College
Bachelor
of Science, Biology
Daughter
of Sharon Cooper



Joel T. Morrissett
Virginia Tech
Bachelor of Science,
Mechanical
Engineering
Son of Jill Morrissett,
JWAC and
Jim Morrissett



Jenny Mott
College of Southern
Maryland
Associates, Nursing
Daughter of
Christine Mott



Chad Harrison Myers
Bachelor of Arts,
Political Science and
International Studies
Towson University
Son of Bonnie
and Ron Myers



Melissa Nelson
La Plata High School
Plans to attend Penn
State University
Daughter
of Jean
and David Nelson



Caitie B. O'Donnell
North Point High School;
Plans to attend;
Clemson University
Daughter of Amy
and Chris O'Donnell



Nicole Pangilinan
Ohio State University
Bachelor of Science,
Chemical Engineering
Daughter
of Gerry Pangilinan



Congratulations Class of 2015



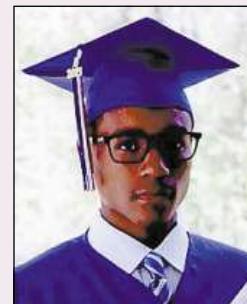
Charles "Chuck" Pasold
King George High School
Plans to attend
Christopher Newport
University
Son of Terry
and Emily Pasold



Brooke Payne
Colonial Beach High
School; Plans to attend
Christopher Newport
University
Daughter of
Shelly Payne



Breonna R. Posey
Henry E. Lackey
High School
Plans to attend College
of Southern Maryland
Daughter of
Shelly Posey



Wade M. Reynolds
Caroline High School
Plans to attend
St. Augustine's University
Son of
Lucy Reynolds



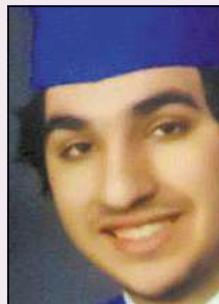
Anna Rinko
King George High School
Plans to attend University
of Mary Washington
Daughter of
John Rinko



Raymond
Matthew Rison
George Washington
University; Masters of Sci-
ence, Information Systems
and Technology
Grandson of
William M. Rison, Sr.



Paige Marie Robertson
Courtland High School
Plans to attend
Longwood University
Daughter of
Merritt Hepinstall



Nicholas E. Roman
Henry E. Lackey High
School, Plans to
attend College of
Southern Maryland
Son of Nancy Roman



Blake P. Shaw
Longwood University
Bachelor of Arts,
Political Science
Son of Melissa Shaw



Steven Ray Sinkler
US Army Basic and
Advanced Training
Son of Lynn Sinkler



Karah M. Sizemore
Stafford High School
Plans to attend
Campbell University
Daughter of Karen and
Michael Sizemore



Trevor Samuel Smith
Stafford High School
Plans to attend
Virginia Military
Institute
Son of
Charles S. Smith



Anthony Sposato
Massaponax
High School
Plans to attend Virginia
Military Institute
Son of Joe Sposato



Cody Ryan St. Clair
St. Mary's Ryken High
School; Plans to attend
Stony Brook University
Honors College
Son of
Waunita St. Clair



Kirsten Staples
King George High
School
Plans to attend Old
Dominion University
Daughter of Candi
Staples



Mary Elizabeth Stiles
University of Maryland
Bachelor of
Science, Dietetics
Daughter
of Stephen N. Stiles



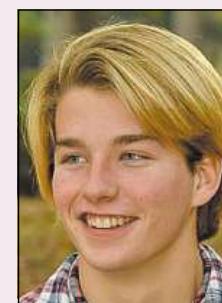
Nicole Straughan
Virginia Tech
Bachelor of Science,
Biology
Daughter of
Debby Straughan



Katelyn Sutkowski
James Madison
University
Bachelor of Science,
Nursing
Daughter of Janice and
Kaz Sutkowski



Kelly Jean Taylor
John Paul the Great
High School
Plans to attend George
Mason University
Goddaughter of
Mary Zickafoose



Jacob D. Tritt
King George
High School
Plans to attend Virginia
Commonwealth
University
Son of Ben Tritt



Justin D. Walton
Henry E. Lackey
High School
Plans to attend
Towson University
Son of Jason Walton



Clinton A. "Trey"
Watson, III
Washington & Lee
High School
Plans to attend
Germanna
Community College
Son of Bonnie and
Clinton Watson, Jr.



Bruce Bernard Webb II
Riverbend High School
Plans to attend
University of Virginia
Son of Bruce
and Hattie Webb



Jennifer Mae
Willoughby
Washington and Lee
High School
Plans to attend
Rappahannock
Community College
Daughter of
Cory Willoughby



Charlotte Taft Wilson
Palm Beach Atlantic
University, Lloyd L.
Gregory School
of Pharmacy
Doctor of Pharmacy
Daughter of
Robert L. Taft



Julie Wilt
Longwood University
Bachelors, Business
Administration
Daughter of
Susan Wilt



Justin Wood
King George High
School
Plans to attend Old
Dominion University
Son of
Betty Saunders Wood



NSWCDD Human Resources Specialist Wins Annual NAVSEA Warfare Center Human Resources Award

By John Joyce
NSWCDD Corporate Communications

A human resources specialist was honored for achievements impacting Navy personal and enhancing technical missions, the Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) announced June 10.

NSWCDD Workforce Information Lead Donna Ryland received the 2015 Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) Warfare Center (WFC) Human Resources Division award - called the "The Philip Heiler Award for Human Resources Excellence" - during the WFC Workforce Council meeting in Panama City last month.

"The Phil Heiler award is sig-

nificant because it recognizes HR professionals, like Donna, who through their technical excellence and dedication have made an extraordinary contribution to the Warfare Center Enterprise," said Julie Schneider, NSWCDD Human Resources Policy, Planning and Analysis Branch Head. "The award is particularly meaningful to the Dahlgren HR team because it was named in memory of our former HR Director, who was one of the founding members of the Workforce Council."

The award - granted to one Warfare Center HR employee or group annually - recognizes outstanding accomplishments that results in: developing or improving a human resources product or process; furthering the state-of-the-art within the human re-

sources discipline; or making significant contributions that enhance the missions of the supported technical organization.

"It is quite an honor to receive this award - especially since it was named in honor of a former NSWCDD Human Resources Director I worked with for many years," said Ryland. "Serving the Warfare Center Enterprise, I have worked with Human Resource members across all of the Warfare Centers and the Office of Civilian Human Resources. That experience has helped me gain insight to standard HR systems and best practices to better serve our Warfare Center community."

Ryland was recognized for her unwavering commitment to providing Dahlgren Division and the Warfare Center community

at large with the highest quality workforce information products, services and technical solutions which support the entire talent management life cycle.

"Her career-long commitment to customer service excellence consistently sets a high standard for others in the HR community to emulate and is truly representative of the customer service values for which Mr. Heiler so strongly advocated," the award citation states.

"I have been very fortunate to have worked alongside knowledgeable and skilled Human Resources professionals within the Dahlgren Division," said Ryland. "Many took me under their wing, sharing their knowledge and talents, and teaching me the value of contributing to the larger team. Through their guidance, I learned

the value of putting customer service first and delivering the highest quality products and services possible regardless of the challenges."

The NSWCDD Human Resources Department mission is to recruit the best and brightest employees to Dahlgren, and to develop and support them throughout their career life cycles.

NSWCDD, a NAVSEA warfare center division, is a premier research and development center that serves as a specialty site for weapon system integration. The command's unique ability to rapidly introduce new technology into complex warfighting systems is based on its long-standing competencies in science and technology, research and development, and test and evaluation.

THE SOUTH POTOMAC

JUNE 19, 2015

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Boomtown:

Continued from page 1

"You can reach Ira at the local motel for the next few days," joked Jones about the forgotten story.

Ann Swope followed her husband from South Carolina to Dahlgren. She came on the condition that it was a short-term plan. At the beginning of her career, Swope also worked a few days a week at the now-closed Navy base in White Oak, Md. "I kept trying to convince him to move up to Silver Spring," Swope told the crowd. She wasn't fond of Dahlgren at first. Each year, he'd ask for an extension, until finally the couple settled in Colonial Beach and worked exclusively at Dahlgren. "After five years I was all in," said Swope. "It's a great place to work and a great place to raise a family."

Swope spoke of the sense of community and togetherness of those that worked and lived in the area. She said the biggest change she saw during her tenure on base was the change to base access after 9/11. "Before, Dahlgren was a gathering place. We attended many parties and wedding receptions on base. The public could come on and use facilities." Security restrictions have since closed the

base's gates and limited access to facilities to only those that have base access.

The star of the evening was Walter Mason. Mason, who will turn 99 in September, grew up just outside the base and was a base employee for many years. It is not his career, however, for which he is notorious. Jones asked him if he remembered the day the Harry Nice Bridge was dedicated in 1940. Mason said yes, he remembered it well. Jones asked him to elaborate.

Mason advised he had just started working at the base. It was a Friday afternoon and his car had broken down and needed a part. He and his flight instructor decided to take a Piper Cub and fly to Fredericksburg to pick up the part. As they ascended from the runway at Dahlgren and surveyed the area below, they noticed the large crowd gathered on the Maryland side of the bridge for the dedication ceremony. Mason's instructor suddenly had an idea.

"Do you want to see more of it?" the instructor asked Mason, referring to the bridge. "Sure," said Mason.

"So he got up just high enough and swooped down under the bridge. He went back up and made a dogleg turn and said ok, you have the controls, it's your turn." Mason executed the move

perfectly, flying under the bridge from the opposite side. Satisfied with their maneuvers, the two made their way to Fredericksburg.

Over the laughter of the audience, Jones asked Mason if he thought about what he'd done. "I did," said Mason. "I hid for most of the weekend." When Mason returned to work on Monday, "a high ranking Dahlgren official came over to me with the newspaper. He said, 'do you know anything about this?' [I] hesitated and said, 'Well no, I don't.'" In the end, Mason said he was told not to worry about it.

"We probably shouldn't

have done it, but we did," said Mason.

Mason shared other stories about growing up near the base. There were few roads to Fredericksburg, and a trip there meant crossing streams and waterways. "When women went to town, they'd take a box of homing pigeons with them," said Mason. "If they became stuck in a stream a mile from home, they'd send home one pigeon. If they were two miles out, they'd send two pigeons. They needed someone to know where they were to come and help them." He described a slow and easy

pace at Dahlgren until World War II began.

When the panel finished, the audience asked questions and shared stories. One attendee reminded the crowd that the base had a blimp station in the 1940s. A blimp was kept on site in case German submarines came up the Potomac River trying to reach Washington.

Another resident shared that base police used to stand patrols on the Nice Bridge for the same reason. She said her parents, when they arrived home from work, would fill containers with water and ride their bikes to the bridge to provide the watchstanders with a drink.

Jones, who helped found Dahlgren Museum, said his time on base "were the best years of my life. I have so many wonderful memories of my time at Dahlgren." He thanked the University of Mary Washington Dahlgren Campus for being such great hosts for the event and reminded attendees the museum would return to the college on August 11 for the next speaker series event.

Dahlgren Museum is located at 3540 James Madison Parkway in King George. To learn more about the museum, to become a museum member or to make a donation, visit www.dahlgrenmuseum.org.

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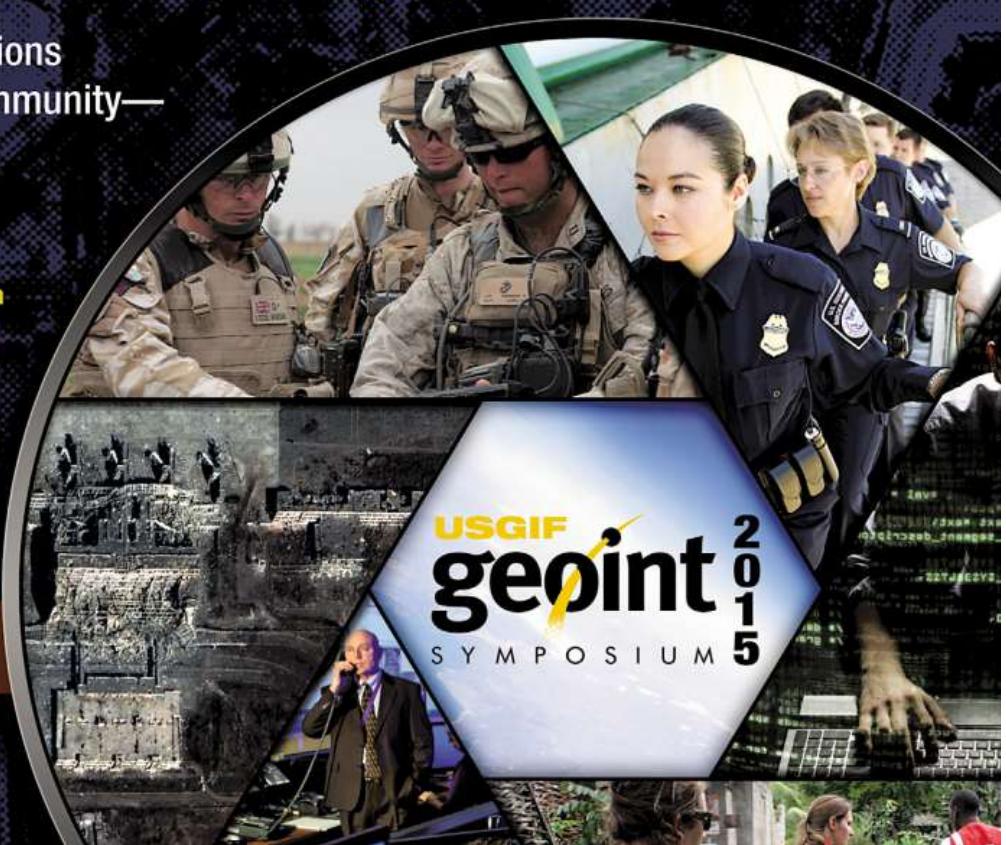
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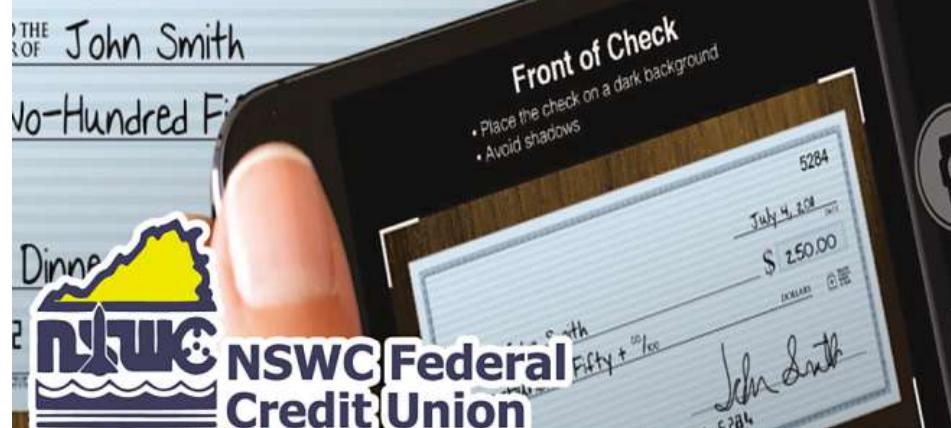
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