



## Continental Army soldier remains set to be re-interred on the shores of Lake George

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Lake George's Battlefield Park will soon be the resting place for the remains of more than 40 soldiers who fought for independence against the British.

**After years of preparations, recently discovered remains of more than 40 Continental Army soldiers are set to be buried on the shore of Lake George.**

The basement of the Lake George Park Commission's headquarters on the south end of the Queen of American Lakes features a suite of artifacts and exhibits showcasing the area's Revolutionary history.

And, come May, a new memorial across the street will honor some of the soldiers who died during the fight for the country's independence.

"In 2019 there was an area up on the Hill about a quarter mile west of here, where, when they were doing construction for a duplex, they started to find human bones," said John DiNuzzo.

John DiNuzzo has been the president of the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance since 2021. He says after years of analysis at the New York State Museum, the remains of 44 individuals were identified, though they weren't killed in battle.

"But they all seem to be disease generated deaths, not combat, which led to the assumption that these are smallpox victims. Here, in 1776 the Continental Army established a smallpox hospital to segregate those infected from non-infected soldiers. So, the non-infected were left at Crown Point and Ticonderoga, the infected were shipped south to Lake George," said DiNuzzo.

Dan Barusch is the director of Planning and Zoning for the town and village of Lake George. He tells WAMC it wasn't exactly an easy process to have the remains stay local – the land is owned by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, meaning the Alliance needed approval to build on public land.

"It took us about a year to deliberate and decide on both the location of where we felt these remains should be reinterred and how to reinter them, right? So there's obviously a ton of options but the project will have columbaria, above ground columbaria," said Barusch.

Once completed, six columbaria will stand overlooking the lake. Five will house the remains found in 2019 and the sixth will be left open in case more remains are found.

In total, the project will cost around \$700,000, with \$520,000 coming from the town and village's Downtown Revitalization Initiative funds.

DiNuzzo adds the memorial will add to the already long list of reasons to visit Lake George.

"I think because Lake George has been known as a resort community with the bells and whistles and things like that, and even the steamboats, it's kind of overshadowed the important history that happened here. I believe the reinterment will do just as you say, I think will bring a lot more attention here to Lake George," said DiNuzzo.

Barusch says this is an opportunity to shed some light on Lake George's otherwise overlooked revolutionary history.

"You see these things, you know unknown soldier memorials, you see memorials in Washington D.C., there's war memorials all throughout the country. But this is really a unique one because it's honoring people that perished in the war, maybe not from wartime

atrocities, but likely from disease and allowing them to stay right down the road from where we think they perished I think is a special thing," said Barusch.

The memorial is set to be unveiled May 22.