

Army conducts 5th disinterment of Native Americans at Carlisle Barracks

By Olivia Van Den Heuvel, Office of Army Cemeteries Public Affairs 01 June 2022



CARLISLE, Pa. – The U.S. Army will continue its commitment to reunite Native American families with their loved ones through its fifth disinterment project at Carlisle Barracks, beginning June 11, 2022.

The Army anticipates bringing closure to two Alaskan Native families and six Native American families whose children died after being sent to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School and who were buried there more than 100 years ago. On behalf of the Army, the Office of Army Cemeteries is scheduled to begin the multi-phase disinterment project in mid-June, with archaeological and anthropological expertise from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The decedent names are: Raleigh James from the Washoe tribe; Wade Ayres from the Catawba tribe; Ellen Macy from the Umqua tribe; Lottie Soreech from the Ute tribe;

Frank Green and Paul Wheelock from the Oneida tribe; and Anatasia

“The Army’s commitment remains steadfast to these two Alaskan families and six Native American families. The return of their children provides these families the opportunity to move forward with the closure and healing process,” said Executive Director, Office of Army Cemeteries and Army National Military Cemeteries, Karen Durham-Aguilera.

In 1879, Carlisle Barracks became the site of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, operated by the Department of the Interior until 1918. The school educated more than 10,000 Native American children, with representation from approximately 50 Native American tribes from across the nation.

OAC will disinter and transfer custody to families able to establish the closest family link between the decedent and requestor, following Army Regulation 290-5.

The transfer will enable families to return the children to cemeteries of their choice. The Army will reimburse families for their travel to participate in a transfer ceremony and is also funding the cost for transport and reinterment of the deceased children.

“The Army team of dedicated professionals is honored to return these children to their families and native lands with dignity and respect,” said Project Director and Director of the Office of Army Cemeteries, Renea Yates.

The Carlisle Barracks Post Cemetery will be closed to visitors starting June 6, when set-up begins, until the completion of actions, tentatively scheduled for July 10. Out of respect for the families and tribes, and consistent with Army cemetery protocol, the entire cemetery area will be enclosed with privacy fencing. Access to the cemetery will be restricted to the OAC staff along with tribal members and their families.

Media Photo Opportunity

A cemetery photo/video opportunity is scheduled for credentialed media organizations on Friday, June 10 from 2 - 3 p.m. This is the only time photos and video will be permitted in the disinterment area. There will be no interviews during this event.

Media interested in attending should submit their coverage request to the OAC Public Affairs Office no later than 4 p.m. on June 8. Submit journalist/photographer name(s), news organization, mobile number and email address to: usarmy.pentagon.hqda-anc-osa.mbx.anc-pao@mail.mil.

Media should plan for a 10-20-minute stop at the Carlisle Barracks Visitors Center for a background check (required since July 2016). All visitors must present valid identification; a driver's license or state identification is sufficient. Alternately, you may request background check prior to arrival as outlined at: <https://www.armywarcollege.edu/visitorcenter>.

Entry to the post is at 870 Jim Thorpe Rd, Carlisle 17013. The cemetery is across from the Visitor Gate on Claremont Road.

Requests for Interviews with Families:

Requests for interviews with family members must be coordinated in advance with the Office of Army Cemeteries Public Affairs Office. Family interviews, if granted, will be conducted on an appointment-only basis.

Press Conference (to be scheduled):

In order to protect the privacy of the families, OAC will conduct a press conference at the completion of the disinterment project. At that time OAC representatives will be available to discuss archaeological and forensics findings.