



Army Conducts Eighth Year of Disinterment and Return of Native American Children at Carlisle Barracks

CARLISLE, Pa. – The U.S. Army will continue its commitment to reunite Native American families with their loved ones through its eighth year of disinterment operations at Carlisle Barracks, beginning Sept. 5, 2025.

The Army is actively working to help bring healing and closure to 19 Native American families across two tribes 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 (OAC) is scheduled to begin the multi-phase disinterment program in September, with forensic archaeological and anthropological expertise from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The decedents who will be disinterred are: Wallace Perryman from the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma; Belle Cahoe, Wash E. He, Tabitha Carroll, Jane Lumpfoot, Leah Road Traveler, Percy Whitebear, George Harrison, Charles Whiteshield, Matavito Horse, Nannie Little Robe, Dora Morning, Louise Thunder, Giles Hands, Ruben Tanpeds, Henry Morning, William Sammers, Abe Lincoln and Elsie Davis from the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes.

“The Army is honored to conduct the Carlisle Barracks Disinterment Program once again,” said Executive Director of Army National Military Cemeteries and the Office of Army Cemeteries Karen Durham-Aguilera. “We are deeply grateful to the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma and the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes for their brave commitment to bring their loved ones home.”

In 1879, Carlisle Barracks became the site of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, which was operated by the Department of the Interior until 1918. The school enrolled nearly 8,000 Native American children, with representation from over 100 Native American tribes from across the nation.

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

The transfer of custody will enable families and tribes to return these children to an interment location of their choice. The Army will reimburse families for their travel to participate in the disinterment process, a subsequent transfer ceremony and the cost of transport and reinterment of their children.

--more--

“The Office of Army Cemeteries team truly appreciates each of these tribes for the kindness, courage and devotion they’ve shown throughout their journey to bring their children home,” said Director of the Office of Army Cemeteries Renea Yates. “We recognize that this is no small undertaking, and we hope that our skilled team can assist in bringing a sense of peace and closure that these families deserve.”

The Carlisle Barracks Post Cemetery will be closed to visitors starting Aug. 15, when site set-up begins, until the completion of the scheduled disinterments, tentatively scheduled for Oct. 13. 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 will be scheduled for credentialed media organizations during the first week of September. This is the only time that photos and video will be permitted in the cemetery. There will be limited opportunities for interviews by request only. More information will become available in late August.

Please submit questions to: olivia.r.vandenheuvel.civ@army.mil.

Requests for Interviews with Families:

Family interviews are not permitted at the cemetery or on Carlisle Barracks grounds. OAC is not permitted to release family names or contact information to media personnel without a signed media consent form from the family. Reporters must coordinate directly with the family if given permission to conduct an interview.

Press Conference:

To protect the families’ privacy, OAC will not discuss findings while the program is ongoing. However, OAC Public Affairs will conduct a press conference at the conclusion of the disinterment program. At that time, OAC representatives will be available to discuss forensic archaeological and physical anthropological findings.