



THE DOUGLASTON AND LITTLE NECK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NICOLE SCHORR, TRUSTEE ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH
(516) 640-0816 PRESS@DLNHS.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REMARKABLE DISCOVERY LEADS TO THE RETURN OF MATINECOCK INDIAN REMAINS STOLEN OVER 80 YEARS AGO

DOUGLASTON, NEW YORK, Nov. 10, 2018- The Matinecock Nation will hold a special burial ceremony at Zion Episcopal Church on Northern Blvd. in Douglaston marking the long-awaited homecoming of Matinecock remains repatriated from The Museum of Arts and Sciences (MOAS) in Florida.

Chief Harry Wallace of the Unkechaug Nation of Long Island, on behalf of the Matinecock Nation, successfully presented an argument to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) review committee by the Florida Department of State showing direct affiliation between these remains and the remains of the Long Island Tribe.

This repatriation marks the first of hopefully many more in a very long and arduous process with individual cultural institutions that may still be housing remains taken from the widely publicized mass excavation of the Waters Family Burial Ground (Little Neck Cemetery aka Indian Cemetery, Little Neck) during the widening of Northern Blvd. in 1931.

The Douglaston and Little Neck Historical Society are gathering the local community in a show of support to the local Matinecock Nation. Cress Florists in Little Neck generously donated the burial flowers, and Shaffer Funeral Home offered the beautifully engraved burial container. The continued presence, culture, and customs of the Matinecock Nation are an intrinsic part of the community and the homecoming and reinternment of these remains are reflective of the past injustice done not only to the local Native Long Island tribes, but to those Indigenous Peoples worldwide. The burial homecoming, albeit bittersweet, symbolizes the healing and hope of future repatriations.

Donna *Gentle Spirit* Barron, member of the Matinecock Nation adds, "It is our hope that with this repatriation, we can begin opening conversations with institutions like the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian in New York. Alongside with the City of New York, it is their archeologists that were present and oversaw the excavation in 1931. It is our hope that they will assist us in the return of more sacred family remains that may also, like this museum in Florida, be stored away in their archives. Today marks an occasion where we feel hopeful and supported by our Little Neck and Douglaston Community."

Coinciding with Native American Heritage Month, members of the Unkechaug and Matinecock Nations will preside over the burial ceremony which will take place Saturday, November 10th at 4:00pm at Zion Episcopal Church Cemetery, 24301 Northern Blvd, Douglaston NY 11362. Please contact press@dlnhs.org for more information.

The Douglaston and Little Neck Historical Society, *Preserving and protecting the historical significance of the towns of Douglaston and Little Neck* PO Box 630142 Little Neck NY 11362 dlnhs.org