



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Independence National
Historical Park

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Independence National Historical Park

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For Immediate Release

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Conservation and Cleaning Set for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Washington Square Monument to be protected and preserved through cleaning process

Conservators working with the National Park Service will clean the Memorial in Washington Square. On **Wednesday, December 23, from 10 am – 12 noon**, conservators will steam clean the monument to remove organic material from the memorial's wall and surrounding marble. In damp weather conditions, this material could promote mold growth.

The statue of George Washington in Washington Square stands before a reminder that, "Freedom is a light for which many men have died in darkness." Washington Square is one of the original squares in the 1682 plan for the City of Philadelphia as designed for William Penn. It became a Potter's Field or Strangers' Burial Ground in 1706 and also served as a burial ground for the town's free and enslaved Africans. During the Revolutionary War it doubled as a military cemetery; more than 2,000 soldiers – both patriots and prisoners of war – were buried there and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the American Revolution was established in 1953.

Independence National Historical Park is proud to serve as steward for this historically significant square and the memorial. A photograph of the memorial can be found at <http://home.nps.gov/inde/parknews/presskit.htm>. Media interested in watching the process are invited to contact the Public Affairs Office at 215- 597- 0060.

A unit of the National Park Service, Independence National Historical Park was created by an Act of Congress on June 28, 1948. Accredited by the American Association of Museums, Independence NHP covers almost 54 acres in Philadelphia's Old City, and includes Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Congress Hall, Franklin Court, and other historic buildings associated with the founding of the United States. The park is open from 9:00 am daily with the exception of Christmas day. A visit to Independence National Historical Park should start at the Independence Visitor Center, located at 6th and Market Streets. Here, visitors can pick up a park brochure, park map, and the free, timed tickets required for Independence Hall. For more information visit the park's website, <http://www.nps.gov/inde> or follow us at twitter.com/independencenhp.

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