

LOCAL VOLUNTEERS WORK TO RESTORE HISTORIC ICON

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Less than a year after an arsonist destroyed a log hut at Valley Forge National Historical Park, local volunteers are hard at work rebuilding it.

Park employees and Lockheed Martin's Network of Volunteer Associates (NOVA) have been spending nearly every Saturday since April 1st reconstructing the 14-foot-by-16-foot hut, originally built between 1948 and 1950. It's located where General Peter Muhlenberg's brigade of soldiers anchored the outer line of defense during the winter encampment of 1777-78, and is one of the first historic sites seen by visitors taking the Joseph Plumb Martin trail.

"The clusters of replica huts are iconic images of Valley Forge," said superintendent Michael Caldwell. "They're what visitors most associate with the park and we're tremendously grateful to Lockheed Martin and NOVA for the relationship we've enjoyed with them for years and, in particular, for their efforts on this project."

"Lockheed Martin is honored to partner with Valley Forge National Historical Park on this hut reconstruction," said John Mengucci, vice president and general manager, DoD Systems, for Lockheed Martin Integrated Systems & Solutions. "The park is a historic center that tells an important story from our country's past and we're proud to do our part to help maintain it for the next generation of visitors."

Park employees overseeing the rebuilding are attempting to make the finished product as close as possible to the 18th century huts it replicates, but with a few concessions to modern-day construction improvements. The huts will be built much the same way as in the old days – crafting notched logs with axes, saws and drawing knives. But today's standards call for the bark to be removed and the wood treated to reduce insect infestation and rotting. The original huts were also built as temporary shelters, using mud between the logs to keep the elements out. Today, cement filler will add life to the structures.

The Valley Forge Interpretive Association donated funds to the project, which park officials estimate will cost \$20,000 and be completed by mid-May.