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NEWS RELEASE

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ARMY HONORS REVOLUTIONARY WAR HEROINE – April 25, 2018

WEST POINT, N.Y. – Revolutionary War heroine, Margaret “Captain Molly” Corbin, who was the first woman awarded a pension by the U.S. government for her military service, will be honored at a special ceremony at the West Point Cemetery at 11 a.m. May 1. The ceremony will include a celebration of her legacy and a rededication of the Margaret Corbin Monument in honor of her valor. The rededication comes following a recent forensic study by the U.S. Army that determined the remains previously believed to be Corbin’s were biologically consistent with a tall, middle-aged man alive between the colonial period and 19th century. Therefore, the remains are not of Corbin, but rather an unknown male. The Daughters of the American Revolution, who spearheaded the 1926 efforts to have Corbin honored on the grounds of West Point will host the rededication ceremony in collaboration with Army National Military Cemeteries. The ceremony will celebrate the history of Corbin, who was one of the first women to serve in battle in defense of our nation as she took over her husband’s cannon when he was mortally wounded during the Battle of Fort Washington in what is now Fort Tyron Park in Manhattan. She was severely wounded during the battle and taken prisoner before being paroled and eventually assigned to the West Point Corps of Invalids.

Corbin died around the year 1800 and was almost lost to history until 125 years later when a research team led by the DAR sought to confirm her historical significance, locate her unmarked grave, and reinter her at West Point with full military honors and a monument commemorating her contributions to the nation.

After an unexpected disturbance at the gravesite during a West Point Cemetery crypt installation project in the fall of 2016, a thorough forensic study was conducted by the U.S. Army and concluded that the remains were of an unidentified man. Significant advances in technology and the field of forensic anthropology have occurred since the time of the original exhumation in 1926. This likely explains how the remains were misidentified by surgeons who did not have experience in the then-yet-to-be established science of identifying skeletal remains.

There is some historical indication that Corbin’s remains may still be located in a different unmarked grave in Highland Falls, New York, but further research is needed in order to confirm. DAR is assembling a task force to research and explore ways to continue to search for Corbin’s remains.

Speakers at the rededication ceremony will include retired Col. Diane Ryan, former academy professor, acting deputy head and director, Eisenhower Leader Development Program in the Department of Behavioral Sciences & Leadership, U.S. Military Academy; the Executive Director of Army National Military Cemeteries Karen Durham-Aguilera; and the President General of the Daughters of the American Revolution Ann Turner Dillon.

To learn more about the history of Margaret Corbin and the ongoing efforts to uncover additional information about her as well as search for her remains, visit www.dar.org/MargaretCorbin.

About West Point

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point is a four-year, co-educational, federal, liberal arts college located 50 miles north of New York City. It was founded in 1802 as America's first college of engineering and continues today as the world's premier leader-development institution, consistently ranked among top colleges in the country. Its mission remains constant—to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the U. S. Army. For more information, go to www.westpoint.edu.