

# NY museum gets vast collection of Colonial-era artifacts

8 September 2017, by Chris Carola

More than 100,000 artifacts from one of the earliest European settlements in North America are now housed at an upstate New York museum located near where the objects were discovered more than 40 years ago.

Officials at the New York State Museum in Albany said the items include 36,000 artifacts from the 1620s Dutch settlement known as Fort Orange and more than 80,000 others from the nearby former country estate of Philip Schuyler, the father-in-law of Alexander Hamilton.

The artifacts—mostly everyday objects such as coins, ceramics, tools and gun parts—have been transferred to the [museum](#) from the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, which had stored the items at various facilities since they were found during separate excavations conducted in the early 1970s.

The collection offers "a broad-brush outline of life in 17th century New Netherland," the Dutch colony in North America, museum curator and historical archaeologist Michael Lucas told The Associated Press on Friday.

The artifacts are now stored in the downtown Albany museum that also houses the State Archives and Library, home to thousands of Colonial Dutch documents, records and books, as well as the nonprofit New Netherland Research Center. The museum already had a large collection of Dutch artifacts from Albany and Manhattan. Bringing the larger collection to the museum puts the bulk of New York's Colonial Dutch history under one roof, officials said.

"It's a place where people can come to do research on a lot of different areas of New Netherland," Lucas said.

Dutch traders established Fort Orange on the Hudson River's west bank in 1624, two years

before they bought the island of Manhattan from the Lenape Indian tribe. Remnants of the fort were found in 1971, during digs held before the construction of an interstate highway along the river. Paul Huey, an archaeologist for the parks office, led the excavations, then turned his attention the next year to a riverside area just north of the city known as Schuyler Flatts.

Settled in the 1640s by a Dutch colonial official and trader, the cleared stretch of bottom land became a place for the Dutch, and later the English, to gather for trading with local Indian tribes. During the French and Indian War (1754-63), the flats became a staging area for British and Colonial American troops mustering for campaigns to the north.

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