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The Allis-Chalmers tractor and plow return to Naper Settlement on Sept. 5

Naperville, IL — The 1953 Allis-Chalmers WD45 tractor and plow, which was donated to the Naperville Heritage Society by the Wheatland Plowing Match Association, has been fully restored and will be returning to Naper Settlement on Tuesday, Sept. 5 at 9:30 a.m. The Naperville Police Department has agreed to coordinate with the museum for the tractor's safe trek from the south side of Naperville to the Naper Settlement campus. The museum will open its doors early to visitors on Sept. 5 at 9:30 a.m.

The tractor and plow will be on display during Naper Settlement's Grandparents Weekend on Sept. 9 and 10. Museum and event admission is \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors (62+) and \$8 for youth (4-12). Naperville residents with proof of residency, children under 4 and Naper Settlement members are free.

"Grandparents Weekend is the perfect opportunity to honor grandparents and for children to be made aware of the strength, information and guidance that can come from older people," said Director of Learning Experiences, Sheila Riley. "We are incredibly excited for the Allis-Chalmers to be a part of our antique tractor display, and the variety of other fun, intergenerational activities that will take place that weekend."

The tractor and plow have undergone extensive restoration under the careful hands of Rich Benck, a Naperville resident and businessman. "After following Rich's process for the past two years, we couldn't be more grateful for the extensive research and effort he has put into restoring the Allis-Chalmers tractor and its plow," said Naper Settlement's Chief Curator, Louise Howard. "Conserving and showcasing this significant local agricultural artifact for our visitors is essential in connecting our community's history to the nation's agrarian development."

Rich and Mary Benck founded the Naperville-based company, West Side Tractor Sales Co. in 1962, which provided construction and forestry equipment. As a trained diesel mechanic and an Air Force diesel engine instructor, Rich's hobby is transforming and rebuilding old tractors. Rich said there were times working on the 60 year old plow that had spent most of its life "rusting away" was challenging, but it was ultimately worth it.

"My family owned a 1937 Allis Chalmers, and I spent a lot of time on it as a young teenager, so restoring Naper Settlement's Allis Chalmers brought back a lot of good memories," said Rich. "I

think the Naperville Heritage Society and the museum's mission in sharing and preserving Naperville's agricultural history is important, and I'm pleased to be a part of this endeavor."

The Allis-Chalmers tractor will be on future display at the museum's Agricultural Interpretive Center, currently under planning and fundraising development. The center will feature virtual technology, hands-on programming and interactive exhibits to share stories of area farming families and teach the business and science of modern-day agriculture to Naper Settlement's 341,000 annual visitors.

About Naper Settlement and the Naperville Heritage Society

Naper Settlement is a nationally accredited, award-winning history museum, and includes the Martin Mitchell Mansion (Pine Craig) listed on the National Register of Historic places. The museum is set on 12 magnificent acres in the heart of Naperville, where history comes to play and community comes to connect. With a commitment to the past and present, and a focus on the future, the mission of the Naperville Heritage Society, administrator of Naper Settlement, in partnership with the City of Naperville, is to collect, document, preserve, support and tell the history of Naperville, Illinois. For more information, visit www.NaperSettlement.org or call (630) 420-6010.

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