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New exhibit at Naper Settlement explores Naperville's World War II story

NAPERVILLE, IL — Naper Settlement's new exhibit, "Answering the Call: Naperville at War 1941-1945", on view now through January 2022, explores life for Napervillians during World War II both home and abroad. The exhibit features selected materials from the newly-acquired Massier Family Collection; stories of Japanese internment workers who came to work in Naperville; and highlights the significant role of Kroehler Manufacturing Company to the war effort.

Visitors will learn how Naperville citizens came to see their role in helping with the war effort and how that changed over the duration of WWII. "Answering the Call" explores the fascinating stories of Naperville men and women who served in all branches of the military. The exhibit concludes with a look at life after the war, how the soldiers who came home formed bonds related to their experiences, and the ways in which Naperville was forever changed.

Among the collection materials featured in the exhibit are selected items from the Massier Family Collection. The collection includes artifacts from Naperville resident Arnold "Arnie" Massier, a Purple Heart veteran and life-long community member who late in his life became well known for sharing his experiences as a soldier and prisoner of war during WWII. Other artifacts from the Massier Family Collection include items from his brothers Adam and George, who also served in WWII. Over 2,500 items were donated to the Naperville Heritage Society collection, making it one of the museum's largest acquisitions to date.

"It is important that we share these World War II stories with the community so everyone can learn how Naperville and its citizens contributed to the war in significant ways," said Donna Sack, vice president and chief program officer at Naper Settlement. "This exhibit engages visitors with a story that is local and personal. By sharing artifacts and the stories of local men and women, visitors will gain a better understanding of how Naperville responded to the war and contributed to this nationally and internationally significant period in history. The war years helped shape the city for years to come."

The exhibit is located in the Pre-Emption House Visitor Center's Naper and Heritage Galleries with additional stories told across the museum campus. Visitors can view over-sized banners, interpretive signage, and scan QR codes with their personal cell phones to explore more stories. Beginning this month, Naper Settlement's campus experience will include a Victory Garden with raised container beds decorated by DuPage artists and honoring Gold Star families.

“Answering the Call: Naperville at War 1941-1945” is included in general admission and runs now through January 2022 at Naper Settlement. General museum admission is \$10 for adults (13+), \$8 for seniors (62+), and \$7 for youth (4-12). Naperville residents, Naper Settlement members, and children under 4 receive free admission. For more information on the exhibit and to reserve admission tickets, visit www.NaperSettlement.org.

PHOTOS -

<https://cityofnaperville.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/NSPublicRelationsExternal/EhX4ItqPCmRMnepUWTRCcUQBqkfdB6O15yXy0LnYiaHpA?e=kLlg4s>

About Naper Settlement

Naper Settlement is a nationally accredited, award-winning outdoor living history museum set on 13 magnificent acres in the heart of Naperville. Located 30 miles from Chicago, the museum is home to thirty-one historical structures that date back as early as the 1830s. Featuring exhibits, special events, educational programming and more, Naper Settlement is where history comes alive and the community comes to connect. For more information, visit www.napersettlement.org or call (630) 420-6010.

About Naperville Heritage Society

Founded in 1969, the Naperville Heritage Society is a not-for-profit organization and administrator of Naper Settlement, the City of Naperville’s museum. With a commitment to the community and a focus to the future, the mission of the Naperville Heritage Society is to collect, document, preserve, and support the history of Naperville, Illinois past and present.