



NAPERVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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*Developers and
Administrators of
Naper Settlement
A History Museum*

MEMO

To: Naper Settlement Museum Board
From: Macarena Tamayo Calabrese, President and CEO
Date: 02/25/2026

Re: Naperville Heritage Society at Naper Settlement Annual Report

Attached please find the 2024 Annual Report for Naperville Heritage Society at Naper Settlement.

Macarena Tamayo Calabrese

President and CEO

Cc: NHS Board of Directors
Harriet M. Pistorio, Chief Operating Officer

LOOKING BACK IS LOOKING FORWARD

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



NAPER
SETTLEMENT



Photo (bottom): Connor Steinkamp Photography

MUSEUM ADMINISTRATION



BIRCK FAMILY INNOVATION GATEWAY & LOOKING BACK IS LOOKING FORWARD

On May 19, 2024, Naper Settlement and the Naperville Heritage Society celebrated the opening of The Birck Family Innovation Gateway. The ribbon-cutting ceremony honored more than the completion of the building's brick and mortar, but the next step in the museum's transformation and commitment to sharing our whole history. The Birck Family Innovation Gateway is not only a new, fully accessible entrance to the museum experience, the space challenges visitors to think about how we live national and even global history, locally.

The moment you walk through the door, you'll be greeted with the award-winning film, *Looking Back is Looking Forward*. Narrated by Emmy-Award winner Bill Kurtis, visitors are surrounded by towering imagery featuring some of the many people and experiences that shaped America and Naperville today. Stories of transformation, tragedy, triumph, and resilience fill the space with astounding historic photography, animations, and soundbites. This award-winning film was recognized for its superior achievement from the Illinois Association of Museums; received the Platinum Award from Ava Digital Awards; a Silver Telly in not-for-profit production and Gold Telly for history production from the Telly Awards.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: NAPER SETTLEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN & UPCOMING MASTER PLAN

In 2024, the Naperville Heritage Society began the next chapter of the museum's transformation with a new, mission-driven strategic plan. Working with strategic consultant Davidoff, the museum engaged both internal and external stakeholders to gain a better understanding of Naper Settlement's current and desired role in the local museum and education communities. Davidoff and members of Naper Settlement's strategic planning committee conducted interviews with a total of 47 representatives from eleven internal and external stakeholder groups including staff, Naperville Heritage Society board, Naper Settlement Museum board, donors, sponsors, school systems, Naperville city government, Illinois state elected representatives, government affairs consultants, community members, and volunteers. An online survey was also distributed to local community leaders and 12 Naperville subdivisions. Through this process, the museum solidified a new vision and created a series of strategic goals and action items for the next five years.



RAISING FUNDS: GRANTS

2024 was an important year in securing the future of Naper Settlement. Over \$2 million was raised (see pg. 10) through the support of local and national granting agencies. Through the support of US Senator Dick Durbin, the Naperville Heritage Society received \$800,000 in Congressional Directed Spending for *The Whole History Project: Using Digital Media to Generate Community Conversation*. This initiative is designed to preserve and digitize vast archives, artifacts, and records, showcasing the rich diversity and history of Naperville and the State of Illinois. Naper Settlement also received significant funding from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to support its 2024 special events.



2024 BY THE NUMBERS



18%
INCREASE IN
TOTAL ATTENDANCE
FROM 2023



9
ACTIVE
GRANTS



5
TOTAL
AWARDS



Photo: Kelsey Combe Photography



NAPER SETTLEMENT FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIPS

In 2024, over 21,000 students from 273 schools visited Naper Settlement for an immersive learning experience that brought history to life! Exploring themes of westward expansion, community growth, technology, and more, each field trip challenged students' critical thinking and analysis skills and met many Illinois State Standards and Common Core State Standards. Through hands-on explorations, students learned how they can utilize our local and national history to be forward-thinking, problem solvers ready to meet tomorrow's challenges.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Naper Settlement's education department also hosted several teacher professional development opportunities including a workshop led by Tribal representatives from the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation of Kansas. The workshop presented Indigenous context in Illinois history and informed teachers about topics of Indian Removal, the Indian Citizenship Act, and new Illinois legislation centered around Native American history. Over a hundred teachers and museum professionals attended the workshop in April 2024.

CAMP NAPER SUMMER DAY CAMPS

Naper Settlement's popular Camp Naper returned with over five-hundred campers participating in themed day camps focused on history, art, STEM, and more. In 2024, seven camps were added to meet rising demand, and all camps reached capacity. From Naturally Naper to Coding Camp, each themed day camp focused on unique activities that engaged students' imaginations while helping build their critical thinking skills. In conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the Naperville Fire Department, many campers had the unique opportunity to learn from the Naperville Fire Department while exploring one of the city's fire trucks with a team of firefighters.



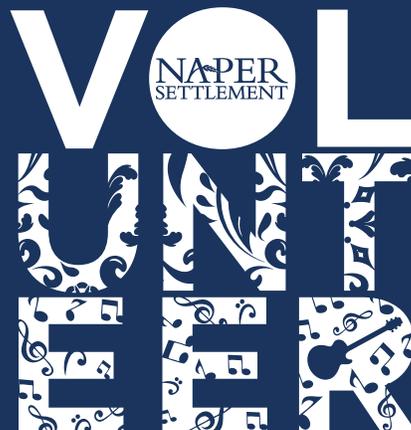


EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR ALL

From early childhood education to adult enrichment, Naper Settlement welcomed over 2,300 visitors for educational programs including lectures, crafting classes, special history programs, and a new 4-H Day. Partnering with 4-H and the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at University of Illinois, Naper Settlement hosted a variety of activities and classes that explored agriculture and history in the new IDNR STEM Lab inside the Mary and Richard Benck Family Agriculture Center. 4-H groups from across the state also showcased their creativity and knowledge with crafting stations on the village green. Based on feedback from this event, Naper Settlement started its first Cloverbuds Club for children ages 5-7 to explore the world of nature and science with a variety of hands-on activities each month.

VOLUNTEER

Naper Settlement volunteers help play an essential role in inspiring and engaging thousands of visitors from all over the world! Whether assisting customers during our special events, interacting with students on school field trips, or crafting gorgeous floral arrangements for Weed Ladies sales, our volunteers are truly one-of-a-kind individuals who play an integral role in inspiring and captivating countless visitors from our local Naperville community and beyond. In 2024, over 4,000 hours were donated to Naper Settlement.



2024

BY THE NUMBERS



22,598
FIELD TRIP
PARTICIPANTS



272
TOTAL
SCHOOLS
SERVED



75
PUBLIC SHOOH
DISTRICTS



511
TOTAL CAMPERS
7% INCREASE
FROM 2023



59%
INCREASE IN
EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAM
PARTICIPATION
FROM 2023



4,040
TOTAL VOLUNTEER
HOURS DONATED
BY EDUCATION AND
EVENT VOLUNTEERS



EXHIBITS



THRESHER EXPERIENCE

The first of its kind for Naper Settlement and the wider museum community, the Thresher Experience utilizes projection mapping, artificial intelligence, and many community voices to bring Naperville's farming history to life. Located inside the museum's Herman and Anna Hageman Memorial Thresher Hall, the new exhibit utilizes innovative technologies to animate the workings of the 1912 Wood Brothers Threshing Machine through projection mapping on the surface. The Thresher Experience provides a visually striking way to learn about threshers and their role in the mechanical revolution of agriculture. Using holographic and AI technology, visitors are also introduced to four animated characters who represent Naperville's agricultural history from different time periods and perspectives. Visitors can ask the characters almost any question about Naperville's past and their farming connections.



THRESHER EXPERIENCE DONORS

Thank you to our donors for their generous contributions that made this experience possible.

Dr. Larry Hageman

Eileen Jackson

Yeater Family



The Thresher Experience won a Best Practices award from the Association of Midwest Museums (AMM).





A STRONG BACK AND A STRONG MIND: 150 YEARS OF THE NAPERVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

In honor of the 150th anniversary of the Naperville Fire Department, the Naperville Heritage Society produced a site-wide exhibition that explored the unique ways the Naperville Fire Department serves the community while recognizing the courage, physical strength, and extensive knowledge firefighters must have to perform the job. Firefighter equipment, firefighter uniforms, fire prevention materials, and many other artifacts were on display in the Pre-Emption House Galleries, along with site-wide children's trivia experience and a special exhibit highlighting Naperville's civil defense during the Cold War in the museum's Murray House. The exhibit was well received by community members and tourists alike, extending its original run-time, and was even featured in a special segment about the department on Fox 32.



NAPER SETTLEMENT PARTNERS WITH THE NAPERVILLE ART LEAGUE FOR PRIDE, HONOR, TRADITION EXHIBIT

In honor of the 150th anniversary of the Naperville Fire Department, Naper Settlement and the Naperville Art League partnered on a new exhibit featuring over 35 works of art by league members that reflected the themes of heroism, sacrifice, family, and strength. Pride, Honor, Tradition exhibit features 20 local artists' paintings, drawings, photographs.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY LEADERSHIP IN HISTORY AWARD FOR UNVARNISHED

The Naperville Heritage Society was recognized with an Award of Excellence by the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) for the Unvarnished: Housing Discrimination in the Northern and Western United States online exhibit (UnvarnishedHistory.org). The AASLH Leadership in History Awards is the nation's most prestigious competition for recognition of achievement in state and local history.

UNVARNISHED
HOUSING DISCRIMINATION IN THE
NORTHERN AND WESTERN UNITED STATES



2024 BY THE NUMBERS



9,904

NAPER SETTLEMENT
FARMERS MARKET
ATTENDEES



33,053

NAPERVILLE HERITAGE
SOCIETY EVENT
ATTENDEES



2,116

SPECIAL EVENT
VOLUNTEER HOURS
DONATED



59

TOTAL
SPONSORS—10 MORE
THAN 2023

DCEO GRANT

The Naperville Heritage Society was awarded a \$311,229 tourism grant to support the 2024 special event season with a goal of increasing the museum's audience and promoting over-night visitation to the Naperville area. The museum utilized these funds to bring nationally recognized artists to the museum campus and strengthen partnerships with community organizations through experiential event experiences. New in 2024, Naper Settlement honored Dia De Los Muertos at both All Hallows Eve and Howlin' at the Moon with a new immersive, artistic collaboration celebrating the holiday and its customs. Visitors experienced a breathtaking altar and life-size alebrijes, folkloric dance, made an art-print using a tortilla press created by local artist Salvador Jimenez Flores, and the opportunity to paint sugar skulls and learn about local community organizations including the Alliance of Latinos Motivating Action in the Suburbs (ALMAS) and DuPage Hispanic Alliance.



NAPER NIGHTS

Naper Nights brought 18,868 to Naper Settlement for six nights of live music celebrating the history of rock in 2024. The event featured tributes to some of the greatest musicians in pop, rock, disco, country and more from the 1960s to today, as well as performances by nationally recognized artists A.J. Croce and Samantha Fish.



OKTOBERFEST

Oktoberfest hit record-breaking weekend attendance for the second year in a row with 5,947 attendees over the two-day celebration. Visitors enjoyed German and contemporary rock music, food, and a variety of activities including a stein holding contest and live pumpkin carving demonstrations.



ALL HALLOWS EVE: DRESS FOR THE DEAD

Monsters, and mythical entertainment were summoned on the grounds of Naper Settlement during All Hallows Eve. The event featured a spine-chilling lineup of new experiences including the Screams From the Unknown Outdoor Haunt, an 800-square-foot outdoor haunted experience. The Día De Muertos Experience brought in artists and performers for an an immersive, artistic collaboration that paid tribute to the holiday.



HOWLIN' AT THE MOON

Howlin' at the Moon, Naper Settlement's 21+ Halloween music festival, brought an exciting line-up of talented artists to the museum's campus for live music, Halloween activities, and more. On October 25, Pigeons Playing Ping Pong, a four-piece musical powerhouse known for their head-turning high-energy psychedelic funk shows, played a special Halloween-themed show. Bluegrass singer-songwriter, mandolinist, and two-time GRAMMY®-nominated artist Sierra Hull performed on October 26. Hull is a 6x recipient of IBMA's Mandolin Player of the Year, the first woman to ever receive this distinction.



NAPER SETTLEMENT FARMERS MARKET

In its inaugural year, nearly 10,000 people visited the Naper Settlement Farmers Market for a unique blend of shopping, educational classes, museum programs, and live music. Each Tuesday from 3-7 PM, the Naper Settlement Farmers Market provided a beautiful backdrop for the community to gather, learn, and grow together while supporting and connecting with local farmers, businesses, and artisans. Visitors also participated in a variety of food-based classes led by Naper Settlement staff and local community organizations.

GRANTS & FINANCIALS

2024 GRANTS

National Endowment for the Humanities

Digital Projects for the Public (IG) \$30,000

Congressional Directed Spending (Senator Dick Durbin) via NHPRC

The Whole History Project: Using Digital Media to Generate
Community Conversation \$800,000

Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

IL Capital Bill -Inventing Agriculture Exhibit \$500,000
IL Capital Bill - Inventing Agriculture Exhibit \$25,000
Tourism Attractions Grants Program Inventing Agriculture Exhibit \$249,000
Tourism Private Sector Grant Program (Attractions and Festivals) \$311,229
Tourism Attractions Grants Program - Chapel HVAC \$200,000

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Rebuild Illinois (Innovation Gateway Welcome Zone) \$749,700
Build Illinois (Ag Center Lab) \$749,700

DuPage Community Foundation

Permaculture Garden \$21,000

City of Naperville - SECA

Naper Nights \$16,180
Oktoberfest \$8,480

Private Foundations

Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley - Inventing Agriculture Exhibit \$20,000

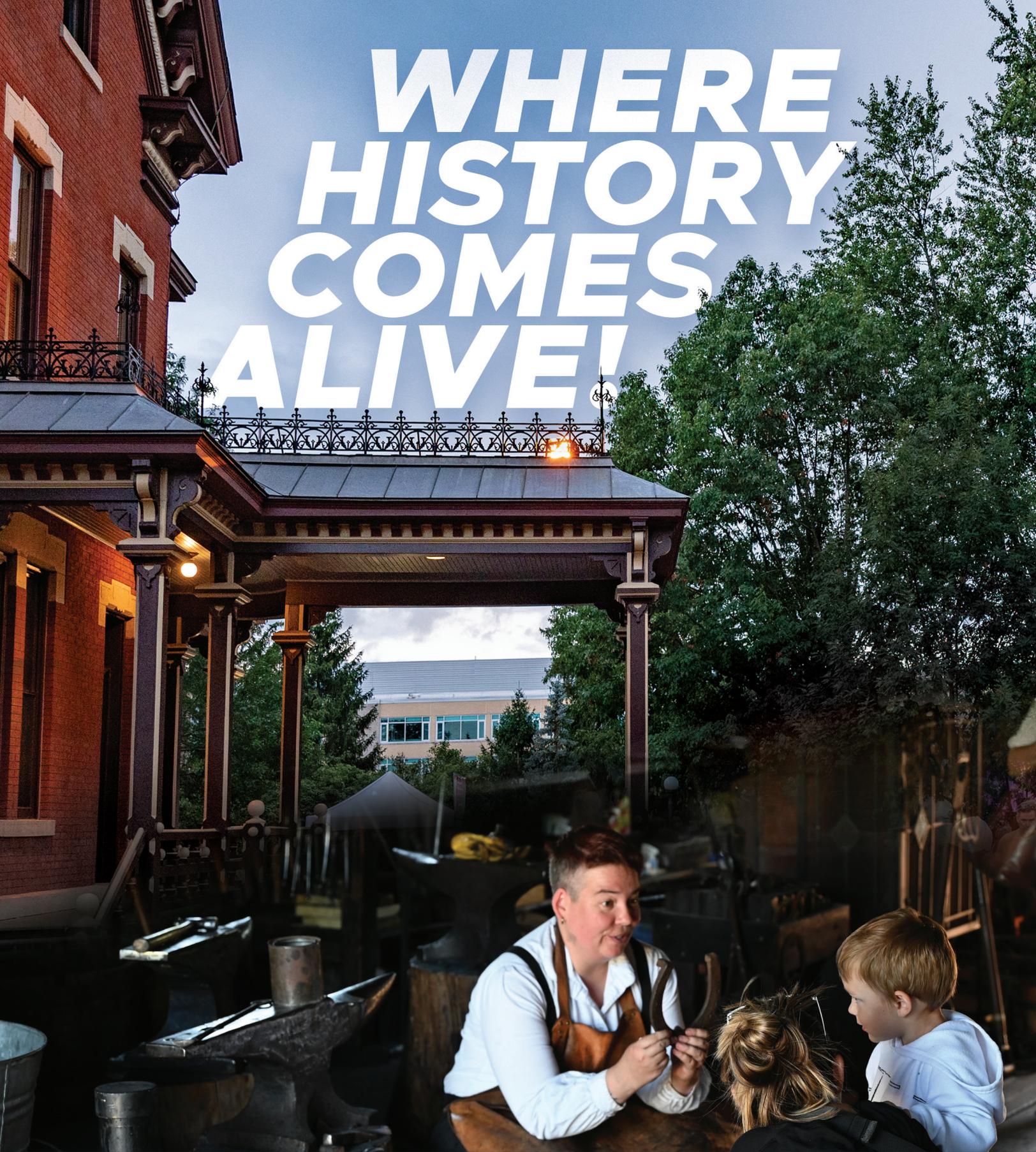
NAPERVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

STATEMENTS OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS

December 31, 2024 and 2023

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 988,570	\$ 970,915
Investments held for operations	197,677	345,384
Due from City of Naperville	1,144	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total current assets	1,187,391	1,316,299
	<hr/>	<hr/>
LONG-TERM ASSETS		
Cash held for long-term purposes	1,013,175	1,029,690
Investments	2,666,323	2,667,896
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total long-term assets	3,679,498	3,697,586
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 4,866,889</u>	<u>\$ 5,013,885</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Due to City of Naperville	\$ -	\$ 4,498
Sales tax payable	147	898
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Total current liabilities	147	5,396
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NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions		
Board-designated	926,988	987,287
Undesignated	1,187,243	1,289,167
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Total net assets without donor restrictions	2,114,231	2,276,454
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With donor restrictions	2,752,511	2,732,035
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Total net assets	4,866,742	5,008,489
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TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 4,866,889</u>	<u>\$ 5,013,885</u>

WHERE HISTORY COMES ALIVE!



NAPER
SETTLEMENT



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NaperSettlement.org