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HEARTHSTONE HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE VALLEY ANNOUNCE PLANS TO HONOR VETERANS AND RAISE MONEY FOR CHARITY THROUGH REVITALIZATION OF SOLDIER'S SQUARE.

In anticipation of this year's Memorial Day commemorations, two non-profit organizations in Appleton, Sculpture Valley, Inc. and Hearthstone Historic House Museum, have partnered in a project to revitalize "Soldier's Square" in downtown Appleton while raising money for worthy causes. The revitalization plan features the use of historic paving bricks that once lined the electric trolley system which ran through downtown Appleton. For a donation of \$40, the public can honor any U.S. veteran by having a historic brick engraved with the veteran's name, branch of service, and conflict (if applicable). The engraved bricks will be incorporated into the hardscape being planned for the redesigned square which is located in the heart of downtown Appleton. The organizations describe the project as a testament to the sacrifices that all veterans, regardless of military branch or conflict, have made to protect the country. The project is called "*Every Soldier's Square*." Monies raised will benefit the John H. Bradley VA Clinic in Appleton, and help fulfill the missions of Hearthstone and Sculpture Valley to restore and preserve the rich heritage of our public memorials and institutions.

"The community's generosity in supporting this project contributes to support our Veterans, patient activities and services throughout the VA North East WI Ambulatory Clinics, specifically those in the John H. Bradley VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic" says Daniel Rogers, Voluntary Services Specialist at North East WI Ambulatory Clinics. Rogers continues, "Community efforts on behalf of our Veterans are greatly appreciated and are never taken for granted. We are extremely thankful to be included in the project to revitalize Soldier's Square."

"This project is a natural extension of the work that Sculpture Valley has been engaged in since the very beginning. Since 2011, we've been working toward full restorations of Appleton's war memorials, an effort that was put in full motion when the City established restoration funding in 2015 for that very purpose," says the organization's Executive Director Alex Schultz, "and we started with 'The Spirit of the American Doughboy' statue on the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day in 2018." The full bronze replacement of the World War I memorial, not typical for most restorations, was funded by the City's Monument Restoration Fund with additional support from Sculpture Valley and the Pritzker Military Museum's 100 Cities 100 Memorials fund."

"The Soldier's Monument, what we know as the Civil War monument, is slated for a full restoration when the YMCA parking Ramp is demolished," continues Schultz, "and we intend to temporarily remove it from the Square to be fully restored by a monument conservator." Laura Kubick formerly of Christen Cheronis conservation, who visited from the Twin Cities to assess the condition of these monuments back in 2017, is expected to lead the restoration effort. "At the same time, we intend to restore the Spanish-American War Memorial on the east end of the Square where it once stood facing Gabriel Furniture - that is until it was relocated to make way for parking."

Now an alderman for District 9, Schultz will be introducing a Resolution to Common Council to commit to the Revitalization of Soldier's Square and affirm the City's intent to preserve the plaza with the intended goal of restoring its original civic configuration. The square once hosted many parades and

civic pride events with a pedestrian boulevard down the center and the Spanish-American War Memorial and Civil War Memorial anchoring both ends. Schultz wants to introduce a new memorial for as yet unrecognized veterans of the most recent conflicts in the center of the revitalized plaza.

“The original monument in Soldier’s Square was dedicated to one veteran. This project extends that to all veterans and so we are calling it *Every Soldier’s Square*. I want to emphasize that all branches of our military are eligible for bricks, not just soldiers. Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marine veterans will be honored there as well,” continues Schultz. “As a veteran of Desert Storm, I am keenly aware of the current lack of recognition in the public sphere for those who have given all over the past several decades and that is why we started this fundraising project, to build support for a new recent conflicts memorial to be placed in the center of the Square.”

Hearthstone Historic House Museum’s involvement in the project stems from two connections. First, the “Soldier’s Memorial” statue located in Soldier’s Square, created by Italian sculpture Gaetano Trentanove, was commissioned by the second owner of Hearthstone, Albert W. Priest. In 1911, Priest dedicated the 15 foot statue, which sits on a 13 foot granite pedestal, to his brother who died during the Civil War.

The second connection is the historic paving bricks that will be used for the project. Dating from 1890 to 1930, most were manufactured by the Purington Brick Co. of East Galesburg, IL, which was once the nation’s largest producer of pavers. The bricks were used along the Appleton trolley line which was the first commercially successful electric trolley line in the country. When the trolley system could no longer compete against buses, many of the bricks were simply paved over. The bricks were “rediscovered” during the 1960s. That’s when Hearthstone’s connection to the bricks began.

The pavers formerly constituted the driveway around the museum. “When College Avenue was resurfaced in the 1960s, many of the bricks were excavated, hauled away, and dumped in the Fox River. But thousands found their way to the bluff behind Hearthstone,” explains George Schroeder, the museum’s Executive Director. Harold and Ruth Mares, who owned and lived in the house at the time, had their four sons carry up the bluff and clean approximately 25,000 bricks and install them as the driveway around the house.” Schroeder adds, “Last year, we needed to remove many of the bricks to accommodate installation of our new parking lot as the first stage of the final phase of our capital improvements. Instead of having a salvage company cart them off to Madison or Milwaukee, where they would lose all of their historical significance and become just another commodity, our volunteers removed over 13,000 of the nine pound bricks one-by-one and by hand. They pried out of the ground and palletized 53 tons of bricks! Our volunteers were simply amazing.”

“Hearthstone is proud to help honor our veterans by being one of the drivers of this project. The project coincides with our capital campaign to fund our exterior restorations and is the perfect way to repurpose our bricks,” says Schroeder. “It is only appropriate that we are returning these bricks to a public space just a few feet from where they were originally located along the trolley line. This project is Hearthstone’s mission - to preserve and interpret history - in action,” adds Schroeder.

The palletized bricks have been stored by Boldt Construction. “There are simply not a lot of places where you can store 13,000 bricks. We can’t thank Boldt enough for their generosity,” says Schroeder. Alex Schultz adds, “Without Boldt’s support, this project would have come apart under the weight - and I mean that literally and figuratively - of dealing with these pavers. Boldt has absolutely been there for us.”

The goal is to have a minimum of 2500 bricks engraved for the project. The public will be able to donate \$40 for each brick through the project's Kickstarter campaign starting on Memorial Day (May 27). No donations will be processed and no engraving will take place until the minimum is met and all stakeholders in the Soldier's Square project agree to a final design. Bricks that are not engraved will be used in the redesigned hardscape as well.

About Sculpture Valley

Sculpture Valley, Inc. is a non-profit arts advocacy organization whose mission is to cultivate, promote, place and preserve public art in outdoor spaces throughout the Fox Cities, through the support and partnership of community members, volunteers, and businesses dedicated to enriching the life experience for all who reside here and visit. Additional information about Sculpture Valley is available at its website, www.sculpturevalley.com.

About Hearthstone Historic House Museum

Hearthstone Historic House Museum is nationally renowned historic site of international significance as the first residence anywhere in the world to be incandescently lit by a hydroelectric central power station using Edison technology. The house still contains the original Edison electroliers and other original light fixtures, original light switches, and some of the world's only examples of original Edison wiring in situ. Beyond its technological significance, Hearthstone is a truly exceptional example of Queen Anne style residential architecture and is filled with examples of Victorian interior design and visual arts.

Hearthstone Historic House Museum is operated by Friends of Hearthstone, Inc., a 501 (c) 3 public charity. Additional information about Hearthstone is available at its website, www.hearthstonemuseum.org.

About John H. Bradley VA Clinic

John H. Bradley VA Clinic serves more than 11,000 Veterans in the Fox Valley area with more than 152 staff members as part of the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. The Appleton clinic opened in 1994 and was expanded in 2008. The original building houses Primary Care and support/specialty services with the expanded operations providing Mental Health programs as well as Iraq and Afghanistan Veteran case management services. The facility is named for John Henry Bradley who grew up in Appleton. Bradley was a Pharmacist's Mate, 2/c, attached to the 5th Marine Division on Iwo Jima in 1945. A winner of the Navy Cross and a Purple Heart among other decorations, he participated in the assault on Mt. Suribachi and the famous flag raisings there.