

Timeline

Naperville Heritage Society History Stories

From its founding in 1831, through turbulent political times, a Civil War and two World Wars, Naperville has retained its small town charm and continues to be a beacon for those looking for a Midwestern way of life, close to the amenities of a major metropolitan city like Chicago.



The flowing DuPage River is a continuum that runs through the timeline of Naperville. A water and energy source to the earliest settlers, today, the sparkling river is the centerpiece of Naperville's Riverwalk, which remains an attraction to residents and visitors alike.

Ranked as a top community in the United States to raise children, retire and start a home-based business, the city boasts nationally acclaimed schools, the best public library system in the country, an exceptionally low crime rate, and a lower unemployment rate than the state's average. In 2005 and 2006, the city was once again named as one of best places to live in the United States by Money Magazine.

Timeline of Naperville

1830: Stephen Scott and his family and the Bailey Hobsons settle along the banks of the DuPage River

1831: Joseph Naper, his family, and other families from Ashtabula, Ohio, arrive and establish Naper's Settlement

1833: First post office established

1839: DuPage established as a county, separate from Cook County. Naperville becomes the county seat

1850: Plank Road established from Naperville to Chicago

1857: Naperville organized as a village

1868: Wheaton residents steal the county records

History Stories are developed by the Naperville Heritage Society Research Library and Archives staff at Naper Settlement. As a bountiful resource for learning about a variety of topics related to Naperville, they provide unique insights into the past. For more information, please call the Curatorial Department at 630.305.3535.

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1870: North Western College (now North Central College) dedicated

1874: Naperville purchases its first firefighting equipment, a hand pumper

1886: Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad approved to run through town

1889: New City Hall completed

1890: Naperville incorporated as a City

1898: Nichols Library dedicated

1915: Naperville Lounge Company reincorporated as Kroehler Manufacturing Company

1927: New SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Church dedicated

1931: Centennial Celebration in Naperville includes founding of permanent memorial,
Centennial Beach

1939: City opens its first museum in the former home of Caroline Martin Mitchell

1950: Harold Moser builds his first housing development 1958: East-West Tollway completed
to Naperville

1969: Naperville Heritage Society founded

1972: Naperville North High School opens

1981: Riverwalk established in honor of Naperville 150th anniversary

1992: New Municipal Center opens on Eagle Street

2006: City celebrates its 175th Anniversary with the themes: Heritage, Unity and Vision

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