

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2018

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Unsung Heroes – a new Exhibition Opening March 3 at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Anna Heistad. Minnie Vautrin. Thomas Jones. Three ordinary people who did extraordinary things in service of their fellow man, each of whom history has largely forgotten. These “unsung heroes” will be profiled in a new exhibition set to open at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield on Saturday, March 3.

Anna Heistad was a nurse and settlement worker in early 19th century Chicago who rose before dawn during the Spanish flu pandemic to work with the ill. Minnie Vautrin was a missionary worker in China who sheltered thousands of women and children during the Nanking Massacre of 1937-1938. Thomas Jones was a Navy medic who tended to his comrades’ wounds in the heat of battle and continued serving veterans after his return. All three saved countless lives, and none of them did it for any kind of reward or glory.

The Unsung Heroes exhibition will document their fascinating stories of sacrifice and heroism through photographs and personal objects, many which have never been displayed publicly.

“These are amazing stories of incredible heroism, and we wanted to highlight the individuals whose selflessness and courage can be an inspiration to us all,” said Erika Holst, the Illinois State Museum’s curator of decorative arts.

The exhibition will be in the Illinois State Museum’s East Gallery (second floor) from March 3 through June 10.

The Illinois State Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and on Sunday from 12 noon until 4:30 p.m. The Museum is located at 502 S. Spring Street in Springfield.

Additional information:

The Illinois State Museum is seeking photo submissions of other Illinois “unsung heroes” who will be recognized in a Facebook gallery. The submission period for photos continues until March 3.

Photo submission requirements are as follows:

- High-quality photo of an Illinois "unsung hero." This could be a serviceman or woman, firefighter, community advocate, volunteer - anyone who you consider a hero for their service
- Hero's name
- Hero's Illinois hometown
- Submitter's name
- Hero's story in a few paragraphs (what makes this person a hero?)

Collection dates: through March 2, 2018

Send photos to erika.holst@illinois.gov

Please do not send any original photos. **WE CANNOT RETURN HARD COPIES SUBMITTED FOR THIS PROJECT.** By submitting a photo, you are giving the Illinois State Museum permission to display and share your photo online and with the media. If in doubt, please check with the "hero" you are submitting to make sure they will be comfortable with the recognition.