

TOWN OF VERNON

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Vernon Historical Society Produces Video Featuring Letters Home from Rockville Residents Serving in World War II

Rockville High School Drama Club Members Read Letters Describing War Service

(VERNON, Connecticut) – The Vernon Historical Society has produced a new video that highlights the lives of Rockville residents who served with the Army, Navy and Marine Corps during World War II.

“Boosting Our Morale: Soldiers’ Letters to The Rockville Journal During World War II” is the latest production from the historical society. The video, which is posted to YouTube, features the photos of the service members and their letters, read by members of Rockville High School’s Drama Club.

It can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eal7DP2ZYGo&t=1s>

The release of the video is keyed to next month’s 80th anniversary of the December 7th, 1941 Japanese attack on the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor and the United States’ entry into World War II.

“These letters, which are in the collection of the Vernon Historical Society, provide a vivid glimpse of what it was like for the young people from Rockville who went off to war,” said Jean Luddy, Director of the Vernon Historical Society’s Museum and the producer of the video. “One talks about training in California and going to Hollywood on leave and rubbing elbows with movie stars. Others describe flying on bombing missions over Germany, the Philippines and Japan. And others describe the horrors they found when they liberated concentration camps.”

And the participation by Rockville High School’s Drama Club members make the words and stories richer, Luddy said.

“We hear these stories through the voices of young people – the people who 80 years ago would have been preparing to go into the service and head off to war,” Luddy said. “The students do a magnificent job bringing these letters and stories to life.”

“Once again, the Vernon Historical Society has taken a momentous time in our town’s and nation’s history, and created a fascinating record that tells today’s generation an important story about sacrifice, commitment and service,” Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. “It takes a lot of work to produce this kind of video and Vernon is lucky to have a Historical Society that works so hard to tell our community’s story.”

Town Administrator Michael Purcaro said he was struck by the sacrifices of those who served.

“All of these service members left their hometown to serve our country,” Purcaro said. “And we learn in the video that some of these individuals whose stories are so engaging made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in combat. It’s a stark reminder of the commitment the members of our armed forces make right up to today, and why we should always be grateful for their service.”

The Rockville High School Drama Club members who help to tell the story are: Garvin Antonelli, Jack Cote, Josh Grisales, William Johns, Libby Johnson, Dylan Keegan, Sean Kelly, Ron Lociero, Samara Mercado, Colin Sullivan, Ross Sutherland and Natalie Tolman.

For more information about the Vernon Historical Society, please visit: <https://vernonhistoricalsoc.org/>

About the Town of Vernon

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of approximately 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in “New England's Knowledge Corridor” with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Designated a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870- 3670 or visit www.vernon-ct.gov.

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