



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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American Poster Art: 100 Years of War and Politics

SPRINGFIELD MA – “I Want You for the US Army” may be the single most memorable poster made in United States history. This picture of Uncle Sam in his red, white, and blue top hat with his finger pointing directly at the viewer, calls forth strong emotions. Helen Casey, owner of Posters, Inc., will explain how posters sway the masses in an engaging program on Saturday, March 16th at 1:30pm. The event is free to the public. The snow date will be Saturday, March 23 at 1:30pm.

Famous American posters illustrate the history of warfare and politics since World War I. Cartoonish pictures and works of amazing art were serious statements as recruitment tools for the American Military and as mechanisms to encourage patriotism and participation in bond drives, victory gardens, and other home front war efforts.

Casey will display some of the more well-known designs and speak about the purpose of each; the style and artists; and the dramatic or humorous themes. “Especially interesting are original posters made by the WPA (Works Progress Administration) Federal Arts Project from 1935 – 1943. They are real gems. We appreciate the fact that posters are a communication tool – representing hobbies, passions, and life experiences,” said Casey.

Casey’s company has been producing posters for decades. “Initially, we produced college posters. Later on, during the time of a major presidential election in 1967-68, our company began an unofficial line of political posters,” said Casey. “These were a bit different from the norm, with caricatures depicting the candidates,” she continued.

Government-issued historic military posters became the company’s largest line. Posters, Inc. has run over 75 types of posters off their presses, representing nearly 100 years of wars and politics. Memorable artwork include: Flag at Iwo Jima, Loose Lips Sink Ships, Buy War Bonds, Join the U.S. Marine Corps, and She’s a WOW.

Today, Posters, Inc., of Holyoke, Massachusetts, is recognized as one of the largest publishers of historic posters in the nation. Their distribution is wide, including Springfield Armory NHS, the National World War I and II museums, Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Presidential Library, and the Smithsonian Museums.

The Springfield Armory National Historic Site is the location of the nation’s first armory (1794 – 1968) and was established by George Washington. The site includes the world’s largest historic American military firearms collection. Open daily 9am – 5pm. The website is www.nps.gov/spar.

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