



news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stark County's History Showcased In Western Reserve Public Media Special

KENT, Ohio – July 1, 2009 — As Stark County celebrates its bicentennial in 2009, Western Reserve Public Media takes a look at its past, present and future in **Stark Contrast: A History of Stark County**. The new 60-minute documentary, which premieres on Monday, July 13, at 10 p.m. on Western Reserve PBS, traces the county's story from its geological roots to the people and enterprises that thrive there today. Encore performances of the program will air on Tuesday, July 14, at 2 a.m. and Saturday, July 18, at 5 p.m.

Ted Henry, retired WEWS-TV news anchor and Canton native, is narrator for **Stark Contrast: A History of Stark County**. Funding for the production has been provided by The Hoover Foundation, Stark Community Foundation, Stark Industrial, Schauer Insurance, The Albert W. and Edith V. Flowers Charitable Foundation and Diebold Inc.

To tell the region's story, **Stark Contrast: A History of Stark County** looks at the land itself, Stark County's early settlers and communities, industrial development and educational and cultural institutions. It also follows two groups of residents, representing the county's older and younger generations. All of their stories are interspersed with expert interviews, narration and video footage to bring the history of Stark County to life.

The program explores the early development of Canton, the county's largest city, and other cities and towns, including Alliance, Louisville, Minerva, Massillon, Brewster, East Canton, Waynesburg and East Sparta. It also talks of the early 19th century industrial boom, heralded by the building of canals and then railroads. Manufacturers including the Timken Co., the Hoover Company, Dueber-Hampden Watch Co. and Republic Steel Corp. all established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, set up shop and would eventually employ thousands of people.

Through the wealth generated in the industrial boom, philanthropy allowed the arts and education to thrive. The production looks at the county's five colleges and universities and cultural organizations including the Canton Museum of Art, Massillon

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Museum, McKinley Presidential Library & Museum, National First Ladies' Library, Canton Ballet, the Canton Symphony Orchestra and more. **Stark Contrast: A History of Stark County** also focuses on a few of the area's wonderful diversions, past and present — the age-old McKinley-Massillon football rivalry, Meyers Lake, Taggart's Ice Cream Parlor and the Moonlight Ballroom, among many others.

In tandem with the documentary, Western Reserve Educational Services is producing standards-based classroom materials directed at middle school students. They include a teacher guide and professional development workshops to train educators on the integration of the project's materials into the classroom. For more information, call Jeff Good at 1-800-554-4549.

Residents Featured in Stark Contrast: A History of Stark County

An integral feature of Western Reserve Public Media's **Stark Contrast: A History of Stark County** is the inclusion of insights from community members representing both older and younger generations. Offering comment are the following residents:

Older Generations

- John "Jack" Farrell — relative of the owner of Dueber-Hampden Watch Co. and retired manager at Massillon Containers
- Robert Fasnacht — retired lithographer who owned Canton Graphic Arts
- Lou Gibbs — son of the owner of Gibbs Manufacturing, former toy manufacturer
- Bob Nichol — retired milkman and former professional baseball player
- Bill Raymont — retired official photographer for the Timken Co.
- Dr. Robert Rhodes — retired oral surgeon at Mercy Medical Center
- Phil Stern — retired part owner of the former Stern & Mann department store

Younger Generations

- Mike and Barbara Abbott — Mike is president of Abbott Electric
- LaShonda Card — commercial technician, Time Warner Cable
- Joseph French — executive director, Childhood Education Alliance
- Jen and Ben Grisez — residents of Jackson Township
- Michael Lemon — executive director, Family Life Center
- Holly Monte — employee at Stark State College of Technology
- Rory Pacconi — native of Jackson Township

About Western Reserve Public Media

Western Reserve Public Media (formerly PBS 45 & 49) is owned and operated by Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a private, nonprofit corporation and consortium of Kent State University, The University of Akron and Youngstown State University. A trusted community resource, Western Reserve Public Media uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire.

Western Reserve PBS, a service of the organization, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of northeast Ohio. It is available to 1.8 million households and 4.4 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average week, over 500,000 households tune in. The organization also operates two standard definition channels, Fusion (WNEO.2/WEAO.2) and MHz Worldview (WNEO.3/WEAO.3).

Through funding from eTech Ohio, Western Reserve Public Media provides K-12 educational technology training and instructional television programming to 21,500 educators and 256,700 students in eight Ohio counties. For more information about the organization, visit www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org or call 1-800-554-4549.

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