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Cleveland Foundation to receive more than \$12 million from Crawford estate

Money earmarked for auto aviation collection of Western Reserve Historical Society

CLEVELAND (May 24, 2011) – The Cleveland Foundation will receive more than \$12 million from the estate of Kathleen S. “Kay” Crawford to support the Crawford Auto Aviation Collection of the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS).

Crawford’s estate recently created the Frederick C. and Kathleen S. Crawford Fund of the Cleveland Foundation. The foundation expects to receive \$12 million later this month, with additional money – between \$2 million and \$4 million – coming later as assets from the estate are sold. Through prudent investing, that fund will grow, providing a generous sum to WRHS in perpetuity. The timing and amount of the first installment from the Crawford Fund to the Historical Society will be determined in late June.

Per Kay Crawford’s wishes, WRHS will use the funds to maintain, preserve, and restore the items in the auto aviation collection, including about 140 cars, 10 airplanes, and numerous motorcycles, bicycles, and other transportation-related collectibles. Money from the Crawford Fund also is earmarked to preserve public access to the collection and to maintain its name in honor of Kay’s late husband, Frederick Crawford.

Frederick Crawford was a Cleveland industrialist recognized worldwide for his leadership in the automotive and aviation industries. As president of Thompson Products, he created the Thompson Auto Album in 1937, one of the first car museums in the United States. Through mergers, the company eventually became TRW. In 1963, TRW donated its auto collection to the Western Reserve Historical Society, where it was renamed in Crawford’s honor.

Frederick Crawford served on the Western Reserve Historical Society board for many years, including tenure as president. He died in 1994 at the age of 103. Kay Crawford died in 2010 at the age of 94. She too was a longtime supporter of WRHS and most recently had given a \$1 million endowment gift to support the Crawford Collection.

“We are honored that Mrs. Crawford’s estate chose to establish this fund at the Cleveland Foundation,” said Robert Eckardt, executive vice president of the Cleveland Foundation. “By giving through the

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Page 2: Crawford Fund

foundation, Mrs. Crawford will enable her generous gift to grow for years to come, benefitting the museum she and her husband loved.”

“We are extraordinarily grateful to the Crawfords for this generous gift,” said Gainor Davis, president and CEO of Western Reserve Historical Society. “Fred and Kay Crawford were two of our greatest supporters. This gift will be a critical part of our strategy to maintain the Historical Society as Northeast Ohio’s steward of the region’s rich historical past.”

The Historical Society faced controversy with the October 2009 sale of 21 cars from the Crawford Collection determined to be non-mission-related, or duplicates within the collection. Proceeds from the sale were used to help retire \$5.4 million in long-standing debt, largely resulting from a failed attempt to build a new lakefront transportation museum that would have housed much of the Crawford Collection. About \$200,000 of the debt remains.

“Like many other institutions, Western Reserve Historical Society faced painful decisions during the recent economic downturn,” Davis said. “But as we move toward our 150th anniversary, we are poised for a rebirth. Individual donations and museum admissions to both the History Center in University Circle and Hale Farm & Village in Cuyahoga Valley were up in 2010. Fiscal year 2009-2010 ended with a \$60,000 operating surplus, and we are on track to generate a modest operating surplus for the second year in a row.”

Endowed funds, such as the one started by Mrs. Crawford’s estate, are commonly used by donors to support specific causes. In 2008, the Cleveland Foundation received \$39 million from the estate of Pepper Pike couple Dr. Donald J. and Ruth Weber Goodman to support research and education at institutions including Case Western Reserve University’s schools of medicine and dental medicine and University Hospitals Ireland Cancer Center, now known as University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center.

Established in 1914, the Cleveland Foundation is the world’s first community foundation and the nation’s second largest today, with assets of \$1.87 billion and 2010 grants of nearly \$85 million. The foundation improves the lives of Greater Clevelanders by building community endowment, addressing needs through grantmaking, and providing leadership on vital issues. The foundation proactively directs two-thirds of its flexible grant dollars to the community’s greatest needs: economic transformation, public-school improvement, youth development, neighborhoods, and arts advancement. For more information on the Cleveland Foundation, please visit www.ClevelandFoundation.org.

Western Reserve Historical Society was founded in 1867 to help preserve the early history of Cleveland and the Western Reserve. Over the years, WRHS collections have grown to be among the largest of any regional history museum and library in the country. The Library/Archives hold millions of items including books, photographs, manuscripts and documents making it a premiere research institute for scholars, the general public and genealogists. Highlights of the collections include Civil War materials, various ethnic and community collections including those of the African-American, Irish, Italian and Jewish histories of the region, and extensive business, industrial, entrepreneurial and political records. The museum includes two early 20th-century homes and houses one of the largest historic costume and textile collections in the United States, the country’s largest collection of items related to the Shaker communities, 3,500 decorative arts artifacts owned by early residents of the Western Reserve, and approximately 800 paintings reflecting the history of the region. The Crawford Auto Aviation Collection contains more than 140 cars, 10 airplanes, and numerous motorcycles, bicycles and other transportation-related items. The Historical Society also owns and operates Hale Farm and Village, a 19th-century outdoor living history museum in the Cuyahoga Valley with 32 historic structures, early American arts and craft demonstrations, heritage livestock and working gardens. For more information on Western Reserve Historical Society, please visit www.wrhs.org.

