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PRESS RELEASE

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REFLECTIONS ON THE

RIVER



The Library Celebrates

TALL STACKS

August 15, 2003

Cincinnati in 1848: A Retrospective Look at the Public Library's Historic Daguerreotype Panorama at Main Library Sunday, October 12, 2 p.m.

In the mid-nineteenth century Cincinnati was the sixth largest city in America, as well as its largest inland port. Traffic on the river was at an all time high, with over 3,000 steamboats arriving in Cincinnati annually. It was during this time in 1848 that Cincinnati photographers Charles Fontayne and William S. Porter captured this bustling river city in an eight-plate daguerreotype panorama, which is now part of the collections of the Public Library. This historic view, the earliest known photograph of Cincinnati's waterfront, will be the focus of a slide program presented by M'Lissa and Rick Kesterman at the Main Library, 800 Vine Street, on Sunday, October 12 at 2:00 p.m. as they present **Cincinnati in 1848: A Retrospective Look at the Public Library's Historic Daguerreotype Panorama.**

The panorama, one of the finest examples of daguerreotype, was first exhibited in Philadelphia in October 1848 at the Franklin Institute's Exhibition of American Manufacturers, where it was awarded a first premium. Later that year it was also displayed at the Maryland Institute in Baltimore, receiving yet another prize. During the years following it traveled to London in 1851 for the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations at the Crystal Palace, then for a number of years its location remained a mystery, until it appeared in 1887 at James Landy's Photographic Gallery at Fourth & Plum Streets. In 1913 it was on display at the Main Library for many years until the Library purchased it from William S. Porter's son in 1948. Although it is now in storage, a mural reproduction can be seen in the Atrium of the Main Library on the first floor.

“The program will show what’s in the eight photographs that make up the panorama, provide background information on the photographers, as well as show what’s happened to it over the years,” said Ms. Kesterman. “In addition we will survey Cincinnati’s riverfront, taking a detailed look at the buildings, businesses, and steamboats found in this panoramic view of the city’s past. What makes the photographs so significant is the fact that it shows Cincinnati at its earliest development, when it was a major river port.”

M'Lissa Kesterman is the assistant manager of the Library's Rare Books & Special Collections Department. She is currently a member of the Board of Governors of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen and secretary of the Middle Ohio River Chapter of Sons & Daughters. Rick Kesterman is an art teacher at Concordia Lutheran School and president of the Middle Ohio River Chapter of Sons & Daughters.

✓ **Information about the Main Library and 41 branch libraries is available on the Internet site: www.CincinnatiLibrary.org.**

✓ **Interpreter available upon request for the hearing impaired. Please call 369-6944 (TDD 369-6946) at least one week before program.**