

<b>Press Release</b>	<b>Contact: Pat Krider, Executive Director, National First Ladies' Library 330-452-0876 ext. 309 pkrider@firstladies.org</b>
<b>8/28/09 For Immediate Release</b>	

**HISTORIC HOME OF PRESIDENT WILLIAM MCKINLEY TO BE  
DEDICATED IN CANTON, OHIO  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2009**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Canton, Ohio, August 28, 2009:

**Who** National First Ladies' Library, Governor Ted Strickland, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown

**What** Dedication of Saxton McKinley House as William McKinley Historic Home-ribbon cutting ceremony Governor Strickland presiding

**When** 1 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 3

**Where** Saxton McKinley House, 331 Market Avenue South, downtown Canton

The Saxton McKinley House at 331 Market Avenue South in Canton, Ohio has been there for most of this northern Ohio city's evolution. Its significance as the primary residence of President William McKinley, however, has only recently been acknowledged.

On the front porch of this Victorian building at 1 p.m. on Sept. 3, 2009 Ohio's Governor Ted Strickland and U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown help celebrate the dedication of the Saxton McKinley House as the William McKinley Historic Home. A reception will follow the dedication.

Restored and then opened to the public, the house was dedicated by former First Lady Rosalynn Carter in 1998 as the site of the National First Ladies' Library. The family home of First Lady Ida Saxton McKinley serves as symbol of the influence of First Ladies on the nation - and on the Presidents.

Research for a biography of Mrs. McKinley through original newspaper stories and first-hand recollections of life in the house left by McKinley contemporaries, revealed that William McKinley lived there longer than any other residence. In fact, on the front porch where the Governor and Senator speak on the Sept. 3, 2009, President McKinley once

turned to a crowd of residents gathered around the property and declared, “There is no place like home. And this is my home.”

McKinley lived there intermittently from 1873 to 1901, a 28-year period which covered his tenure as a U.S. Congressman and then Ohio’s Governor, as well as his presidency (1897 to 1901). There is no other original home of William McKinley standing.

During his life, in what was once known as “Major McKinley’s House,” significant events took place. In August of 1880, during a reunion of Ohio Union Army veterans, Congressman McKinley, who earned the rank of Major during the Civil War, hosted as his personal overnight guests the incumbent President Rutherford Hayes and future President James Garfield. This makes the Saxton-McKinley House *the only private home where three Presidents all slept under the same roof on the same night.*

McKinley rose to national prominence with his authoring of a tariff bill that carried his name. Throughout the summer and early fall of 1890, he drafted the policy in his study on the top floor of the house.

The McKinleys lived in a large room adjoining his study, a space that had been used as a ballroom before his residency. It is now a museum room focused on the lives and legacies of all First Ladies, with a permanent exhibit on Ida McKinley. A second floor bedroom and sitting room suite simulates the McKinley rooms that once adjoined the study. The McKinleys also celebrated their wedding reception there in 1871 – before his residency. It is also where their three and a half year old daughter Katie died in 1875.

The Saxton-McKinley House serves as a metaphor of the often covert and unheralded importance of many First Ladies in helping to launch the rise of their husbands to the presidency - from the national Whig Party contacts of Mary Todd Lincoln’s prominent Kentucky family which aided her husband’s political inculcation to Martha Washington’s wealth which permitted her husband the opportunity to accept both military and political assignments to Michelle Obama’s Chicago community ties and strong family base which helped serve as a foundation from which her husband began his public service career. For McKinley, his wife Ida Saxton not only provided a home and office but the prominence of her family in Canton as owners of the newspaper, banks, and real estate holdings gave the future President access to immediate professional, business and financial resources.

First Lady Michelle Obama, along with former First Ladies Laura Bush, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Barbara Bush, Nancy Reagan, Rosalynn Carter and Betty Ford serve as the honorary chairs of the NFLL.

The National First Ladies' Library is comprised of the Saxton-McKinley House and the Education and Research Center. For directions and tour information, please consult the website, [www.firstladies.org](http://www.firstladies.org).

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