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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Owen Family of New Harmony Recognized in Lecture at the Smithsonian Castle *Lecture held in Washington, D.C. featured the Owen brothers' role in the establishment of the "Castle"*

NEW HARMONY, IN (March 11, 2009) – The University of Southern Indiana/ New Harmony Foundation co-sponsored an evening of programs Tuesday, March 10 in recognition of the Owen brothers' role in the establishment and architectural style of the Smithsonian Institution in 1846. The evening started with a lecture and panel discussion, followed by a reception that took place in the original building, the "castle" of the Smithsonian, in Washington, D.C.

The lecture was entitled "How the Devil It Got There: The Politics of Form and Function in the Smithsonian Castle." It examined the influence of Robert Dale Owen, who was a founding Smithsonian Regent, and his brother David Dale Owen on their involvement in the creation of the Smithsonian as an institution, and their role in the design of its first home, the "Castle." The lecture was given by Brown University Visiting Scholar, Dr. John F. Sears, followed by a panel discussion, moderated by Historic New Harmony director Connie Weinzapfel. Joining those on the panel were Sharon Parks, Associate Director, Smithsonian Institution Architectural History and Historic Preservation; Cynthia R. Field, Smithsonian Institution Architectural Historian Emeritus; and Richard E. Stamm, Keeper of the Castle Collection.

A reception immediately followed in the Castle Great Hall and honored Patricia Q. Stonesifer, a native of Indiana, who was recently elected Chair of the Smithsonian Board of Regents, Jane Blaffer Owen and family. The Owen family traveled from all over the country to attend this event, and were joined by USI trustees and donors. Indiana Senator Richard Lugar recognized the contributions of Jane Blaffer Owen and her late husband's family.

Sponsors included the Smithsonian Institution, the Indiana Society of Washington, the University of Southern Indiana/New Harmony Foundation, the Indiana University Foundation, and the Robert Lee Blaffer Foundation.

University of Southern Indiana/New Harmony Foundation:

The mission of the USI/New Harmony Foundation is to attract, acquire and manage donors' charitable gifts to support and sustain the mission of Historic New Harmony.

Smithsonian Institution:

Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park and nine research facilities. There are 6,000 Smithsonian employees, including approximately 500 scientists, and more than 6,500 volunteers. Approximately 25 million people from around the world visited the Smithsonian in 2008 with more than 175 million visits to the Smithsonian Web sites. The total number of objects, works of art and specimens at the Smithsonian is estimated at 137 million.