

From: [Sandy C. Gholston](#)
To: [Archive](#)
Subject: History Panel to Discuss 125 Years of Ferris State University
Date: 09/01/2009 01:09 PM

This is a press release regarding a history panel discussion about the 125-year history of Ferris State University. The press release has the particulars with regard to dates and times as well as a brief description of the panelists who will participate.

For Immediate Release
Sept. 1, 2009

Leah Nixon
Ferris State University
Assistant Director of News Services
leahnixon@ferris.edu, (231) 591-5604

History Panel to Discuss 125 Years of Ferris State University

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University boasts a second-to-none history that dates back to 1884 when founders Woodbridge N. Ferris and Helen Gillespie Ferris opened what was known then as the Big Rapids Industrial School.

History buffs are invited to visit Ferris' Rankin Student Center Dome Room at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 3 to discuss and learn more about a University now in its 125th year. For anyone interested in a discussion about the University's history, in an event moderated by Associate Dean of the College of Education and Human Services Paul Blake, join Richard Santer, Robert Leach, Ray Dickinson, Lawrence Martin and Melinda McMartin Isler on Founders' Day. This distinguished panel will explore a number of topics, including the founders, who picked the crimson and gold colors, why our sports teams are named the Bulldogs and more.

"We are fortunate to have a strong connection to so many former faculty and staff who are willing to share their Ferris experience," said Associate Director for Advancement Services and Technology Mary Kay MacIver, who serves as co-chair of the History Task Force. "This is a rare opportunity to hear about our rich history from those who lived it."

The members of Ferris' History Panel are listed below.

- Richard Santer served the University from 1969 to 1996 in the geography department. In addition to his teaching duties, Santer has provided leadership and organization with respect to the Ferris Centennial Observance in 1983-84.
- Robert Leach has served in a number of different capacities during his time at Ferris. Perhaps most notably, Leach was the head coach of the undefeated 1968 Bulldog football team. Leach currently serves as vice president of the Ferris Emeriti Association. He and his wife, Mary Louise, also host the annual Sarasota Alumni and Emeriti Luncheon with Ray and Mary Jane Helsing in January.
- Larry Martin is the University archivist emeritus. Martin has served Ferris for more than 40 years. He retired from the archives in 2002.

- Ray Dickinson recently retired after 38 years of service at Ferris. Dickinson's most notable accomplishments include the establishment of the patent library at Ferris. He currently is working on a comprehensive directory of all employees who have ever served at Ferris.
- Melinda McMartin Isler is the current University Archivist. She has been with the University since 2002.



Sandy Gholston
Marketing Specialist
University Advancement & Marketing
Ferris State University
420 Oak Street, Prudden 101
Big Rapids, MI 49307
(231) 591-2021