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HISTORY'S LOST INVENTIONS ARE PUT TO THE TEST

THE RE-INVENTORS

NEW SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™ SERIES PREMIERING TONIGHT,
OCTOBER 6 AT 9PM ET/PT

**Hosts Matt Hunter & Jeremy MacPherson Experiment With Cool Inventions
Including Ned Kelly's Bulletproof Vest, An Ancient Chinese Earthquake Detector
And Much More**

New York, October 6, 2010 – Throughout history, inventors from around the world have tried to build “the next big thing,” hoping for fame and fortune. But for every brilliant innovation, there are many that never make it off the drawing board. Until now.

THE RE-INVENTORS, a new series premiering tonight, Wednesday, October 6 at 9 p.m. ET/PT on Smithsonian Channel, unearths original patent designs from history's lost inventions, builds and tests them, then approves or denies the patents on them. From bulletproof jacket worn by the Australian outlaw Ned Kelly to an earthquake detector designed in China in the Second Century, some designs may crash and burn, while others prove brilliant when put to the test by series hosts Matt Hunter and Jeremy MacPherson.

Matt Hunter is a skilled carpenter while Jeremy MacPherson is a special effects artist who has worked on films that include “The Incredible Hulk” and “Resident Evil: Apocalypse.”

Each of the 14 half-hour episodes of THE RE-INVENTORS features a different invention. Matt and Jeremy first must track down blueprints so they can attempt to build the invention as they were originally intended. To keep the designs close to the original blueprints, Matt and Jeremy try to incorporate the technology or the materials of the day, using centuries-old techniques or tool to add to the authenticity.

When certain components have been left out of the original plans, Matt and Jeremy must improvise, using their own imaginations and historical knowledge to replicate the intent of the original inventor. The testing stage, which at times results in big explosions, puts them at some risk. Whether it's measuring the burn rate of raw meat in a solar powered crematorium or gauging the accuracy of a four-armed catapult, some inventions succeed, some fail. And a lot of things get blown to pieces in the process.

THE RE-INVENTORS premiere dates and episode descriptions:

THE RE-INVENTORS: Fire Fighting – Premieres Wednesday, October 6 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT: Throughout history, inventors have been looking for safe and effective ways to fight fires. In this episode, Matt and Jeremy bring to life designs by two inventors, driven by some of history's most devastating disasters. Going beyond water, a common fire extinguisher, the guys test out a chemical pail and an exploding firebomb. Will Matt and Jeremy be able to fight off a raging inferno, or is this one job better left to the professionals?

THE RE-INVENTORS: Double Barreled Cannon – Premieres Wednesday, October 6 at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT: Gunfire, danger, and the possibility of an explosion are some of Matt and Jeremy's favorite things. They build a Civil War-era double-barreled cannon, and let's just hope that they have better luck than the first people that tested it – who didn't live long enough to see the results!

THE RE-INVENTORS: Life At Sea – Premieres Wednesday, October 13 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT: Your ship is rapidly sinking, a storm is raging, it's freezing outside, and sharks are circling. That small open-top lifeboat does not look so appealing. What would you do? How about escaping via the Davis Life Pod? Patented in 1913, on the heels of the Titanic disaster, it was designed to deal with all the problems listed above. But does it? Matt and Jeremy build one of these 400 pound sardine cans and see if Davis' idea floats. Will Matt and Jeremy be saved or perish in a watery grave, nicely preserved in a coffin-like container?

THE RE-INVENTORS: Syrian Torpedo – Premieres Wednesday, October 13 at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT: What looks like a giant egg, is full of gunpowder and is driven by rockets? It's "The egg which moves itself and burns"! Designed towards the end of the Crusades, over 500 years before the modern torpedo, this revolutionary, self-propelled weapon was the brainchild of Hassan al-Rammah. If utilized, it could've sent the Crusaders fleet and their mission to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea. Join Matt and Jeremy as they construct their own Syrian missile, using period materials from the 13th Century, and take aim at approaching invaders.

THE RE-INVENTORS: Bourne Submarine – Premieres Wednesday, October 20 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT: Around 1580, William Bourne of England published a book entitled "Inventions or Devises," in which he outlined his idea for a ship that "may go under the water unto the bottom, and so to come up again at your pleasure." The design featured oars, a snorkel, and a revolutionary concept...a submergible sea vessel. If successful, this would be the world's first working design for a submarine. But how will Bourne's blueprint fare in the blue sea? Matt and Jeremy are eager to find out, but they may literally have to hold their breath for the results.

THE RE-INVENTORS: Hydraulic Saw – Premieres Wednesday, October 20 at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT: Designed by Francesco di Giorgio in the 15th Century during the Renaissance, this saw is meant to harness the power of swift flowing streams and rivers and use this power to cut wood. But does it work and will it prove more efficient than the two-man pitsaw of its day? Matt and Jeremy build their most ambitious prototype to date, and then hold their own competition. It's machine vs. man to see if this ancient invention still has teeth. Will this machine, designed centuries before the first sawmill, make the cut, or will they turn it into sawdust?

THE RE-INVENTORS: Wind Wagon – Premieres Wednesday, October 27 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT: What do you get when you cross a windmill with a wagon? A machine designed in the 14th century that no one has tried to build until now. Sketched out in 1335, Guido de Vigevano intended for his machine to harness the power of the wind as a means of propulsion, and send

the troops of Philip VI of France and his Crusade hurtling across the Holy Lands. Matt and Jeremy set out to construct a machine that, if it works, could potentially be the world's first mechanized troop transport and could have changed the course of history.

THE RE-INVENTORS: Ned Kelly – Premieres Wednesday, October 27 at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT:

In 1880, 80 years before the first Iron Man comic book was published, Australian outlaw Ned Kelly donned a suit of metal to fend off the attack of over 100 law authorities. This legendary standoff between the bushranger and the law brought the world its first bulletproof uniform. But did it work? Matt and Jeremy rebuild this armour suit from period materials to see if it, in fact, offered any protection against weapons of Kelly's day. They also put it up against modern ballistics. Will it stand up to the test or was Ned Kelly's invention full of holes?

THE RE-INVENTORS: Earthquake Detector – Premieres Wednesday, November 3 at 9:00 p.m.

ET/PT: Designed in the 2nd Century A.D. by Zhang Heng, a Chinese astronomer, mathematician, inventor and philosopher, the "Didong Yi" was intended to provide information to the Imperial Court that an earthquake had occurred so relief aid could be dispatched. Matt and Jeremy set out to re-create and test this amazing device to see if it actually worked. Reconstructing the ornamental detector was the easy part. Creating the homemade earthquake using trucks, concrete slabs and explosives was the real challenge!

THE RE-INVENTORS: Battering Ram – Premieres Wednesday, November 3 at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT:

It wasn't long after humans began building walled cities that they looked for ways to smash through them. Battering rams were the weapons of choice at the time, and with a half a million pounds of impact force behind them, it's no wonder why they were used by invading forces for centuries. Matt and Jeremy get medieval and recreate their own full-scale battering ram. Using period materials and methods, they investigate the amount of manpower necessary to create these amazing machines and examine the science behind them.

THE RE-INVENTORS: War Kite – Premieres Wednesday, November 10 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT:

For centuries, the high ground and the ability to attack from above held military advantages. Now, Matt and Jeremy have found an invention that would allow a commander to launch an attack from the sky and rain down explosive fire-arrows on a helpless enemy. They combine 13th Century Chinese fire arrow technology with a 17th Century Japanese kite design to see if they can command the battlefield with this amazing device. Will this experiment come crashing to the ground or send our host's spirits soaring?

THE RE-INVENTORS: Pedestrian Protector – Premieres Wednesday, November 10 at 9:30

p.m. ET/PT: So, if a cowcatcher works on a train, why not create a spring-powered one for a car? Such was the inspiration for "The Automatic Device for the Protection of Pedestrian and the Vehicle Itself," patented by Heinrich Karl of New Jersey in 1932. Consisting of a series of spring-loaded levers, grates and an auto-deploying blanket to wrap up the pedestrian upon impact, Karl's invention was never put to a test. Matt and Jeremy rebuild his invention and, with the help of their stunt dummy Einstein, see if there really is a safe way to get hit by a car.

THE RE-INVENTORS: Aerosan – Premieres Wednesday, November 17 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT:

A snow tank made to cross Siberia's frozen tundra on skis, powered by a jet engine? It looks like something out of "The Empire Strikes Back," but this Soviet war vehicle was developed during World War II, designed to traverse a land impossible to access by plane, train, or car. Matt and Jeremy reconstruct the NKL 26 Aerosan and see how it handles the snowy plains of

Canada. They also race it against a dog sled team, a pack that seems eager to leave this 70-year-old invention in a cloud of snow-dust.

THE RE-INVENTORS: Ice Boat – Premieres Wednesday, November 17 at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT:

Combining razor sharp blades and extreme speeds, J. L. Finch of Patchogue, New York set out to see if he could improve on iceboat designs of the day in the early 1940s. Instead of having a sail, the vehicle was the sail, using a fixed, fabric-covered airfoil and placing the rider inside the ride to protect him from bone numbing wind chill. Matt and Jeremy take this invention for a test glide. Sure, this design may keep its driver warm, but can it bring the heat in a race against its modern competition, the iceboat?

THE RE-INVENTORS is produced by Partners in Motion with the participation of SaskFilm, Canadian Television Fund, History Television and Historia. Ron Goetz serves as Executive Producer.

ABOUT SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS

Smithsonian Networks (SNI/SI Networks L.L.C.) is a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, formed to create channels featuring programs largely inspired by the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum complex. Smithsonian Channel features award-winning original documentaries, series, and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage. Smithsonian Channel brings the American experience home in high definition and Dolby Digital 5.1 and is available to customers of DirecTV, Comcast, Time Warner Cable, Charter Communications, Cablevision, Verizon, AT&T, and more. Learn more at www.smithsonianchannel.com.

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