

**TOLEDO CIVIC  
HALL OF FAME  
1998-2004**

A Toledo's Attic  
Slide Presentation

## Overview

Mayor Carty Finkbeiner began the Toledo Civic Hall of Fame in 1998. The Mayor appointed a nine-member commission to select four to eight people who had died at least two years prior and made major sustainable contributions to northwest Ohio outside of their profession. Out of 162 initial nominees, eight were chosen and formally recognized on January 21, 1998 at the 105th annual meeting of the Toledo Area Chamber of Commerce. The mayor praised the inductees "for our survival in difficult times and for our prosperity in good times."

Since then, the Civic Hall of Fame Commission has sought nominations from the public and chosen four to eight inductees every year.

Each is honored with a plaque in the [Local History and Genealogy Department of the Main Lucas County Public Library](#) in downtown Toledo.



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# 1998 Inductees

- ▣ Florence Scott Libbey (1863-1938)
- ▣ Ella Nora Phillips Stewart (1891-1987)

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## Florence Scott Libbey (1863–1938), volunteer

The daughter of a successful Toledo real estate dealer, Florence was 27 years old and an avid art collector when she married Edward Drummond Libbey in 1890. Their only child was born in 1895 and died when she was nine months old. Florence and Edward donated enormous financial and leadership resources to the Toledo Museum of Art (TMA), including the Scott homestead and other Monroe Street property where the museum opened in 1912. The Libbeyes resisted offers to name the museum after them. Florence outlived her husband by thirteen years. After Edward's death, she served as trustee and vice president of the TMA. During the Great Depression, she financed construction of the music wings of the Museum, including the Peristyle, thus employing some 3,000

persons. She died at her summer home in Pasadena, California, at 75 years old. Her estate was left to various interests, most notably the Toledo Museum of Art and a perpetual endowment to the Scott High School Library.



## Ella Nora Phillips Stewart (1891–1987), volunteer

Ella Stewart was the first female African-American pharmacist and a civil rights activist at local, national and international levels. Born in West Virginia to a sharecropper, she entered Stover College in Harper's Ferry at the age of twelve. She married a classmate, Charles Meyers, and moved to Pittsburgh. After their only child died of whooping cough, she became bookkeeper at a local pharmacy. Ignoring advice from friends, she pursued her new interest by applying to the University of Pittsburgh pharmacy program, where she was accepted after a year. She graduated with high marks, passed her state exam in 1916, and became the first practicing black women pharmacist in the country. She worked around Pittsburgh, Youngstown and Detroit for the next six years. During this

time she divorced, and married another pharmacist, William "Doc" Stewart. They moved to Toledo to open its first black-owned and operated drugstore in July of 1922. Together, they ran Stewart's Pharmacy, at Indiana and City Park Avenues, until it closed in 1945.



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## Ella Nora Phillips Stewart (1891–1987), volunteer

The living quarters above the store housed notable black visitors to Toledo who were refused rooms at local hotels, including Marian Anderson and W.E.B. Du Bois. Dispensing medicines and advice led Stewart to a wider role in community organizations. Locally, these included the Enterprise Charity Club, the Red Cross, the League of Women Voters, the Toledo Board of Community Relations, and the YWCA. She was elected in 1944 as President of the Ohio Association of Colored Women and in 1948 as President of the National Association of Colored Women. Her involvement at the international level included membership on the executive board of UNESCO. Despite her talents and accomplishments, she faced discrimination throughout her life. In

1957, her invitation to be honored as a "Distinguished Virginian" was rescinded by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce after it realized she was African-American. In response, a ceremonial dinner was held in her honor in Toledo on May 17. In 1961, Stewart Elementary School was named after her. Stewart moved to Pelham Manor in Toledo in 1980 and died at age 96 seven years later.

The Ella P. Stewart Collection, containing papers and scrapbooks, is located in the Canaday Center at the University of Toledo Libraries. Stewart School, in Toledo, houses a museum of her documents and artifacts.

# 1999 Inductees

- ▣ Mildred Bayer (1908-1990)
- ▣ Josina Lott (1898-1973)
- ▣ Samuel M. Jones (1846-1904)

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## Mildred Bayer (1908–1990), volunteer

Mildred (Mason) Bayer was born in Weston, Ohio and received her nursing degree from St. Vincent School of Nursing in Toledo in 1932. She married Dr. Charles A. Bayer and adopted three children. In 1960, she began two medical clinics for migrant workers in Lucas County, and was instrumental in the founding of Mobile Meals of Toledo in 1967. She served as its first coordinator and later chaired the Mobile Meals Steering Committee and Task Force. She also started the Friendly Visitor Program for the aged. Following her husband's death in 1968, she spent sixteen months in Nigeria, doing medical work in a mission run by the Grey Nuns of Toledo. Upon returning to Toledo she raised a half million dollars to purchase medical supplies for the mission. She also served as president of the Little Flower

Alter and Rosary Society, the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, St. Anthony Orphanage League, and the Toledo Education Association for Aged and Chronically Ill.





## Josina Lott (1898–1973), volunteer

Josina (Jones) Lott was born in Alanson, Michigan and got her teaching degree from Ypsilanti State Normal College. She taught in various Michigan and Ohio elementary schools before coming to Toledo in 1938. She was disturbed to find the public schools turning away children with retardation and severe learning disabilities. When her son, Jack, was seven months old, she started a day school in her basement with four students. A year later, she was asked by more parents to teach their children and she expanded into Rosewood Presbyterian Church. After requesting help from the Board of Education and Chamber of Commerce, Lott Day School formed in 1945 and moved to a building at Kelsey and Heffner Streets. Lott asked the school auxiliary for money to open a sheltered workshop to employ students

who had matured but were unable to find work. This was one of the first programs in the nation for vocational training of the developmentally disabled.



## Josina Lott (1898–1973), volunteer

A tax levy approved by voters in 1957 funded a merger of the Lott School with a countywide system of schools for children with cognitive disabilities. Lott remained as principal. In 1965 the Lucas County Sheltered Workshop for Retarded Persons opened. Lott Industries continues to employ over 900 persons. Lott retired at age 70 when she reached compulsory retirement age. She was also active in local, state and national organizations for the developmentally disabled. Her untiring work earned her the Toledo Times Woman of the Year Award in 1949 and the informal title "Toledo's Miracle Worker".

## Samuel M. Jones (1846–1904), pioneer

Born in Wales, young Samuel immigrated to America when he was three years old. His formal education was limited and he went to work at an early age. Working in the oil fields of Pennsylvania, he developed an interest in drilling technology. In 1894, he moved to Toledo and began a successful business making oil well appliances. He was distressed by the misfortune of his employees who had nothing but their labor to sell, and resolved that they would share his profits. A tin sign with the Golden Rule was erected in his shop, accompanying an eight-hour day, a week's vacation and a Christmas bonus. He encouraged his employees to unionize and marched with them in Labor Day parades. Still disturbed at class divisions, he built a playground for his workers' children and arranged for

band concerts. His actions resulted in notoriety.



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## Samuel M. Jones (1846–1904), pioneer

In 1898, when Toledo Republicans sought a neutral mayoral candidate to unite factions in their party, they asked Jones to run. After he was elected, Jones surprised even his own party by insisting on a bipartisan administration and refusing to replace competent officials already in office. He created a parks system and replaced police billy clubs with white gloves. In 1899, knowing that political bosses would not re-nominate him, he demanded a direct political primary and a convention. After convention delegates were paid to nominate his opponent, Jones ran as an independent. On Election Day, Jones won by 16,773 votes to the Republican challenger's 4,266 and the Democrats' 3,125. The "Golden Rule Mayor" served into his fourth term, and was constantly

embroiled in fights with the newspapers, clergy and the traction company (over trolley fares). He died from pneumonia while throngs of well-wishers kept vigil outside his house.

# 2000 Inductees

- ▣ Eleanor Kahle (1916-1995)
- ▣ Elizabeth (Liz) Pierson (1931-1998)
- ▣ Sylvanus Pierre Jermain (1859-1935)

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## Eleanor Kahle (1916–1995), volunteer

Eleanor (Konieczka) Kahle came of age during the Depression and remained an admirer of Franklin D. Roosevelt's liberalism for her entire life. She graduated from Sylvania's Burnham High School and from Davis Business College. She also took classes from Lourdes College, the University of Toledo, and Mary Manse College. She raised six sons with her husband, "Skip" Kahle, who died in 1967. From 1971 to 1979, she was a pastoral associate for the Toledo Catholic Diocese, for which she won multiple service awards. At age 63 she helped form the West Toledo Senior Center on Hillcrest Avenue, and remained executive director from 1979 to 1993.



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## Eleanor Kahle (1916–1995), volunteer

Through her appointment to a commission to unite area churchwomen, she met City Councilman Peter Ujvagi and Marcy Kaptur. She was serving as a special assistant to Ms. Kaptur on senior citizen issues in 1983, when Mr. Ujvagi asked her to run for City Council. She repeatedly declined to run until 1987, when she was elected. In her three terms on City Council, she was a tireless advocate for the elderly and poor. She also served as vice-mayor for two years. She was active in Toledo's Sister Cities program, traveling to Szeged, Hungary, three times. She died after a brief illness and was often remembered by the sign in her Council office pronouncing "It is not enough to add new years to life. One must add new life to years".

## Elizabeth (Liz) Pierson (1931–1998), volunteer

Born in Pittsburgh, Liz and her husband, Nathaniel, came to Toledo in 1969 for her husband's construction job. She worked as an adult education leader until she slipped on some icy steps and broke her knee. Forced into early retirement, Pierson became more aware of the neighborhood surrounding her Palmwood Avenue house, including the alleged crack house down the street. She became a leader in Block Watch programs, putting in 60 to 80 hours per week and serving as president of the Block Watch Advisory Board. At her death, Toledo's Block Watch program was one of the country's largest, with more than 100,000 members and 100 groups in Toledo. Mayor Carty Finkbeiner credited the program with Toledo's 30-month decline in crime. She was personally

thanked for her work by Attorney-General Janet Reno in 1997 in Washington D.C., during a three-day trip sponsored by The Blade. She was also awarded numerous awards. She is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery along with several other Toledo Civic Hall of Fame awardees.





## Sylvanus Pierre Jermain (1859–1935), pioneer

"The Father of Public Golf in Toledo" was born in Adrian, Michigan and moved to Toledo with his family in 1871. His mother, a widow raising six children, became head librarian of the Toledo Public Library, and was active in civic affairs. Jermain's interest in public parks sprang from his struggle with asthma and his enthusiasm for the parks he saw while visiting New York City and Chicago. He watched impatiently in the 1880's as Toledo voters repeatedly voted against city park funding. He began installing at his own expense, benches and a bike path in a little stretch along Summit Street known as Riverside Park. Simultaneously, he began printing pamphlets and speaking publicly about the need to fund parks.



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## Sylvanus Pierre Jermain (1859–1935), pioneer

As a successful businessman (he was treasurer of the Woolson Spice Company, and one of the founders of the Manufacturers' Association), he had the business community's ear. By 1891 he had the necessary 3,000 signatures to hold a bond issue for parks on the November ballot. The passage of this issue and the newly formed Board of Park Commissioners provided the funding and leadership resulting in Walbridge and Ottawa Parks. An avid golfer, Jermain lobbied for public courses, and in 1898 the first public golf course was established at Ottawa Park. Jermain Park was named in his honor in 1915.

# 2001 Inductees

- ▣ Emory Leverette (1915-1996)
- ▣ Cordelia Martin (1915-1999)
- ▣ Edward Ford (1843-1920)
- ▣ Frank Leroy Skeldon (1884-1948)

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## Emory Leverette (1915–1996) , volunteer

Leverette graduated from Alabama State College in Montgomery and received his master's degree from the University of Michigan. At age 29, he became the Toledo Public Schools' first African American administrator, serving as assistant principal at Gunckel Elementary School. At that time, African-American teachers were only allowed at that school. Toledo's peaceful, voluntary school desegregation process is due largely to Leverette. Leverette became principal of Gunckel in 1955, and administrative assistant to the district superintendent in 1967. During the 1970's, the district launched a voluntary desegregation plan, avoiding any court-ordered desegregation. Leverette Junior High was named in his honor in 1980.



## Cordelia Martin (1915–1999) , volunteer

Cordelia Martin raised twelve children with her husband, Walter, but considered all the neighborhood children her own. As a volunteer with the Model Cities Neighborhood Residents Association, she was disturbed by the lack of available health care for the disadvantaged. After years of effort, the Cordelia Martin Health Care Center opened in 1971 on Nebraska Avenue. In 1997, the Center served about 20,000 elderly, low-income, and non-insured people. Martin received a degree from the University of Toledo and worked for eighteen years as a social worker for Planned Parenthood. She was active in the NAACP and the Frederick Douglas Community Center.



## Edward Ford (1843–1920) , pioneer

Ford was born in Greenville, Indiana. His father, John Baptiste, owned the first company to manufacture plate glass in the United States, using machinery imported from England. Edward followed him into the business, working for him in Pennsylvania and establishing plate glass companies in Columbus, Ohio, and Indiana before moving to Toledo in 1898. The wide, empty plain along the Maumee River just east of Toledo beckoned and he opened the Ford Plate Glass Company on 173 acres there in 1898. It was the largest factory in the country under one roof. The town of Rossford sprang up alongside it (its name coming from Ford and wife Carrie's maiden name). The company merged later to become Libbey-Owens-Ford and is now part of Pilkington. Ford died at age 77 at his home on

Collingwood Avenue and is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.



## Frank Leroy Skeldon (1884–1948) , pioneer

Born in North Toledo, Frank followed his father's footsteps and became a tugboat fireman in his teens. At seventeen, he attempted boxing, was promptly knocked out, and found employment as an office boy at the Toledo News-Bee. He began his reporting career shortly after, and joined The Blade in 1902. He scooped the Titanic story by using his marine skills to meet the tug loaded with survivors offshore, a full hour ahead of other reporters. Throughout his 47 years as a newspaperman, he always enjoyed reporting best, eschewing administrative duties whenever possible. In 1905 he was assigned to write a story about animals that had escaped from the Toledo Zoo. As a South Side resident, he had followed the new zoo's progress. He joined the zoological society, became secretary of

the society and later director of the zoo in 1926. He remained director until his death in 1948.



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## Frank Leroy Skeldon (1884–1948) , pioneer

Skeldon had abundant plans for expanding the zoo, and in the 1930's, when New Deal programs sought employment projects in Toledo, Skeldon was waiting. The zoo amphitheater, reptile house, aviary, aquarium and tunnel under Anthony Wayne Trail were built at this time, putting 1,300 laborers to work. Skeldon was also skilled at coaxing labor unions to help supply needed materials for zoo projects. Many zoo buildings were made out of reclaimed materials. Carvings were sculpted out of blocks from old Erie Canal locks. Despite Skeldon's modesty, he was awarded numerous honors and accolades by the press. After his death from cancer at age 64, he was widely praised.



# 2002 Inductees

- ▣ Harold Anderson (1894-1968)
- ▣ Phyllis (Fox) Driggs (1938-1992)
- ▣ Dr. Morton Goldberg (1901-1999)

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## Harold Anderson (1894–1968)

Anderson was born in Saint Louis, but moved to Toledo in 1908 and graduated from Toledo Central High School. He attended the University of Wisconsin for three years before enlisting as a pilot in World War I. Following the war, he worked for the National Milling Company and succeeded his father as general manager in 1927. In 1936 he formed the Anderson Elevator Company with his wife, father, and others, on their family farm in Maumee. The Toledo area's prime shipping location supported the company's expansion, which included the elevators, a warehouse market, a manufacturing division, a feed division, and Anderson Cob Mills, Inc. Anderson's belief that people of means should invest in their community was evidenced by his numerous civic activities. He was on the

board of St. Vincent's Hospital, the Greater Toledo Community Chest, and the Council of Social Agencies. He was a particularly strong supporter of the YMCA, having served as president and participating in numerous fund-raising campaigns.



## Phyllis (Fox) Driggs (1938–1992), volunteer

Driggs was born in Adrian, Michigan and graduated from Adrian College. She taught speech in Toledo high schools and raised four children with her husband, Howard. She worked as coordinator of membership services for the Toledo Museum of Art from 1986 to 1992. Her tireless volunteer spirit aided several area civic organizations. She was 1984 United Way Metropolitan Division chairperson, and served as president of the Junior League of Toledo. She was on the board of WGTE-TV and chaired its auction. She also served on the boards of Adrian College, the Crosby Gardens, and Riverside Hospital. Her husband recalled that "She loved Toledo and she wanted to make it a better place for everybody".



## Dr. Morton Goldberg (1901–1999)

Dr. Goldberg was Rabbi for 36 years of Temple B'nai Israel, Toledo's Conservative Synagogue. He was born in Poland and came to Pittsburgh as a boy with his parents. Educated at Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, Brown University, and Webster University in Delaware, he first served in Fall River, MA, where he met his wife, Doris. Their 68-year marriage enriched their respective careers as rabbi and writer. Rabbi Goldberg believed that to serve his own congregation, he needed to serve his wider community. Upon coming to Temple B' nai Israel in 1937, he soon became active in community affairs. He was one of the "Three Musketeers", including 1998 inductee Ella Stewart, and Director of Catholic Charities Msgr. Michael Doyle, who met with business

leaders in the mid-1930's to discourage discrimination.



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## Dr. Morton Goldberg (1901–1999)

Rabbi Goldberg is largely credited with founding the Board of Community Relations in 1946, which continues to investigate and mediate civil rights issues today. He was also a charter member of the Toledo Labor-Management Citizens Committee, and only dined at unionized restaurants. Rabbi Goldberg also served as president of the Toledo Board of Education, and on numerous other boards.

# 2003 Inductees

- ▣ [Peter Navarre \(1785-1874\)](#)
- ▣ [George W. Pearson \(1870-1955\)](#)
- ▣ [McClinton Nunn \(1906-1968\)](#)

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## Peter Navarre (1785–1874), volunteer

Born in Detroit, French-speaking Navarre was one of the earliest settlers of the Maumee Valley. In 1807 he built a cabin with his five brothers on the east side of the Maumee River near Lake Erie. A French settlement soon sprang up around it. Navarre traded extensively with the Pottawatomie and learned the dialects of several Native American tribes. When the War of 1812 broke out, pitting the young United States against Britain, Navarre became a scout for American General William Hull. He survived the 1813 River Raisin Massacre, where hundreds of Americans were killed or captured by the British. He then joined General William Harrison (later President Harrison) stationed at Fort Meigs. His legendary trek to Put-in-Bay with news for Commodore Perry of the British

advance is credited with winning the Battle of Put-in-Bay. By the time he died at age 89, he was legendary for his bravery and skill. A portrait of Navarre by the Toledo painter, William Machen, hangs in the local history room of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library. His log cabin was relocated to the Toledo Botanical Gardens, where it remains today.



## George W. Pearson (1870–1955) , volunteer

Born in Covington, Ohio, Pearson worked as a Blade correspondent as a high school senior in Van Wert, Ohio. He attended Ohio Wesleyan University. After pursuing teaching and railroad jobs, he returned to the newspaper work he loved. He came to Toledo in 1893 and was soon working for The Blade. Seven years later, he was "banished" to covering East Toledo as retribution for his loyalty to Mayor Sam Jones. Two years later, he moved from his West Side home to St. Louis Street, and remained a committed "East Sider" for life. From 1897 to 1947, Pearson wrote an almost daily column for the East Side, covering all manner of issues from sports to society. He also championed East Side causes. He demanded that Front Street be paved and Main Street widened. He lobbied for Waite High School and the

High Level Bridge. He helped numerous civic groups, including the Boy Scouts and the YMCA. His chief concern was parklands and he urged civic leaders and businessmen to preserve remnants of the Great Black Swamp. Pearson Metropark was named in his honor when it was founded in 1934. Pearson is remembered fondly for his dedication as a "one-man chamber of commerce".





## McClinton Nunn (1906–1968)

Nunn was born in Colt, Arkansas, and attended Temple, Fisk, and Wayne State Universities. He worked as an educational administrator and served in the army in 1943 and 1944. Following the war, he worked for various public housing agencies until coming to Toledo in 1950 as executive director of the Toledo Metropolitan Housing Authority. He was the first African American in the nation to lead a major public housing authority. Nunn oversaw the desegregation of Toledo's public housing, and established the first housing project specifically designed for the elderly. He also built the first homes for large families on scattered sites, helping remove the stigma of public housing. He was nationally recognized for his expertise and was the recipient of numerous awards.



# 2004 Inductees

- ▣ [Robert Pew \(1862-1925\)](#)
- ▣ [Sara Kaufman \(1868-1941\)](#)
- ▣ [Edwin Dodd \(1919-2001\)](#)

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## Robert Pew (1862–1925) , pioneer

Robert Pew grew up in Pennsylvania where his uncle, Joseph Pew, started his oil business in the 1870's. In 1886, Joseph sent Robert to Ohio to investigate that state's oil potential. Acting on Robert's enthusiastic report, Joseph acquired two oil drilling leases in Findlay Township . Robert oversaw the operation, which shipped crude oil in wooden barrels on mule wagons from Findlay to Toledo for refining. The business grew and in 1890, Joseph Pew and his partner, Edward Emerson, incorporated the Sun Oil Company. Robert remained in charge of Ohio operations. He was vice president of Sun and director of Toledo operations when he died in Perrysburg at age 63. Robert was also a director of the Toledo Trust Co., president of United Malleable Iron Company, and vice president of

Toledo Traveler's Life Insurance Company.



## Sara Kaufman (1868–1941) , volunteer

An Ohio native, Sara grew up in Bryon, where she attended public school. She later moved with her family to Toledo, where she worked at Lamson's department store downtown. In 1905 she began volunteering at a settlement house run by the Toledo Council of Jewish Women. She was hired by the Lucas County Probate Court as a juvenile court probation officer in 1909. She held this position for 31 years, practicing her belief that "there are no bad children; only misunderstood children". She helped organize the Banner Boys Club for Jewish boys in 1907. She was a founding member of the local Travelers' Aid Society and on the board of the Florence Crittenton Home for unwed mothers. She was also vice president of the Toledo Girl Scouts and an early vocal supporter of

the NAACP.



## Edwin Dodd (1919–2001)

Dodd was born in West Virginia, the oldest of three children, and grew up in Morgantown; Ithaca, New York; and Columbus, Ohio . He attended Ohio State University and Harvard University 's Business School . During World War II, he served as an information and education officer for General MacArthur's staff. In 1946 he became a sales trainee for Owens-Illinois, but was soon transferred to the public relations department. He became public relations director four years later. By 1954, he was a production manager for the Libbey Glass division. In 1968 he became president and chief operating officer. He became chief executive officer in 1972 and chairman and CEO in 1976. He retired in 1984. Dodd played a major role in efforts to revitalize downtown Toledo during the

1970's. When Owens-Illinois outgrew its headquarters in 1981, it built a new 32-story headquarters downtown.



## Edwin Dodd (1919–2001)

Dodd was named to national posts by four U.S. Presidents. In 1983, he served on the President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness under President Reagan. President Carter appointed him to the President's National Commission on Air Quality. He served on President Ford's Executive Finance Committee in 1976, and was appointed by President Nixon to the National Industrial Pollution Control Council. Locally, Dodd was active in many civic causes. He served as president of the Toledo Museum of Art, the Toledo Board of Education, and the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority. He was a founding member of the Northwest Ohio Chapter of the Public Relations Committee of America in 1951.