

**Frick's Inability to Compromise:**

**The Homestead Strike of 1892**

Amelia D'Addieco, Sophia Wilson, and Robyn Strazisar

Junior Division

Group Exhibit

Student Produced words: 483

Process Paper words: 499

When choosing a topic, we went through several stages of researching. We were intrigued after learning about the Homestead Strike in history class and watching the documentary *The Men Who Built America*. It was also a local topic, which made us want to learn even more about it.

The researching process got us involved and interested in our topic. To broaden our research options, we took a trip to the Hillman Library of the University of Pittsburgh, and used their online resources to find letters between Andrew Carnegie and Henry Frick. Upon going to the library, we looked for specific books, but were also open to new ideas. We then began the search for primary resources and found many fascinating ones. Reading the letters between Frick and Carnegie while gave us a better understanding of their thoughts. We met Jerry Fitzgibbon, a board member at the Battle of Homestead Foundation. We interviewed him through email, and got many valuable insights. We gathered a plethora of information during the research portion, but were met with some conflicts that we had to handle head-on. Since we had many resources, different totals were given for death counts and the height of barricades. Despite some struggles, researching was a fascinating part of our project, and was the foundation of our knowledge regarding the subject.

Choosing a way to convey our research was crucial to making our project a success. Initially we thought a performance would suit us, but with further research we concluded that our best option was an exhibit. Most of the information we gathered was visual and needed to be shown through graphs and photos. We also needed to show the masses of people affected and intertwined with the events. Looking back, we made the correct decision, and now people viewing can get the most out of our topic. We chose a black and yellow color scheme to represent Pittsburgh. We originally used foam board, which smudged easily. This accident led to a new idea; the smudging gave the board more of a “sooty effect” and enhanced the visual, so we added smudging to the wooden board on purpose. This related perfectly to our topic because the smudges represent soot from the steel produced in Carnegie’s factories. After placing at the state competition, we read the notes from our judges, and took their suggestions into consideration. One constant recommendation was the idea to rebuild using wood. So, with help from our school

shop teacher, we moved the plan into action. We felt the upgrade to wood was helpful in enhancing our project.

The Homestead Strike relates to this year's theme; conflict and compromise in history. We took an unusual approach. The mill workers would not accept a pay cut, and looked for ways to resolve the issues. They were met with a hostile Henry Clay Frick, Andrew Carnegie's second-in-command. Frick's inability to compromise with the conflict showed that not all historic endeavours work out as hoped, and sometimes conflicts turn deadly.