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PRESS RELEASE

Historic Mark Twain Anniversary: 150 Years since The Jumping Frog

Twainiacs everywhere mark November 18, 1865 as the day that changed Mark Twain's life, and his place in American Literature, forever. It was on that day, 150 years ago this year, that Twain's "*Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog*" was published in the New York Saturday Press. Bret Harte picked up the story and re-published it in *The Californian* in December of that year, this time titled "*The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*." It was soon reprinted and commented on in periodicals and magazines around the world. The tale introduced a new chapter in American Literature, giving it a fresh new voice. It also gave an enormous boost to its thirty year old author.

A new film, "88 Days in the Mother Lode" chronicles the disparate events that coincided to lead Sam Clemens to Angels Camp, CA where he first heard the tale of the little frog told, and explains the story's significance and impact.

Ron Powers, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and author of *Mark Twain: A Life*, says of the film, "The producers have accomplished a minor miracle: they have taken on the most familiar, and analyzed, figure in American letters, and made him fresh again."

Joseph Csiscila, Editor of *The Mark Twain Circular* called the film "a beautifully paced and cinematically engaging film that offers fresh perspective on Mark Twain's early development as a writer."

The documentary by This 'n That Films features interviews with historians, and scholars as well as artistic re-enactments of some of Twain's three month stay in the Mother Lode. Vic Fischer, Writer/Editor at The Mark Twain Project at the Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley, offers viewers a rare glimpse of Notebook #4 and Twain's original notes about the frog story he took while staying in Calaveras County.

An edited-for-television version is currently airing on PBS stations around the country. Viewers should check their local listing for scheduling information. The full version of the film is available in HD from the producer's website. Special pricing is available for schools and libraries.

The film's trailer is available at: <http://www.vimeo.com/122925951>

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