ARLINGTON, VA; July 1, 2014 -- PBS and WNET today announced a new special, DICK CAVETT’S WATERGATE, an intensely personal, intimate and entertaining look back at Watergate on the 40th anniversary of the historic resignation of President Richard Milhous Nixon, the only president to resign the office.

The documentary, featuring interviews from “The Dick Cavett Show” library — many not seen since the 70s — and new interviews with Carl Bernstein (Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist), John Dean (former White House counsel), Timothy Naftali (Watergate historian) and Bob Woodward (Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist), premieres Friday, August 8, 2014, 9:00-10:00 p.m. ET (check local listings) on PBS — exactly 40 years to the hour since President Nixon appeared on television to announce his resignation, which would officially take effect the next day, August 9, 1974. See a preview on YouTube.

“PBS is uniquely positioned to take a complex aspect of our nation’s history like Watergate and tell the story in an accessible way,” said Beth Hoppe, PBS Chief Programming Executive and General Manager, General Audience Programming. “We are proud to present our viewers this enthralling real-life political drama through the unique perspective of Dick Cavett.”

“As the Watergate scandal unfolded on TV and in the newspapers, it had all the ingredients of high drama — gripping and all-consuming,” said Stephen Segaller, WNET Vice President, Programming. “Watergate changed American politics forever, and we are still living with its consequences.”
With the exception of the nightly network news shows, no one on television devoted more airtime to Watergate than talk show host Cavett. From 1972 to 1974, America watched the Watergate scandal unfold on “The Dick Cavett Show” as Cavett interviewed nearly every major Watergate figure — on both sides of the crisis — including John Ehrlichman, Alexander Haig, G. Gordon Liddy, Jeb Magruder and members of the Senate Watergate Committee: Senators Howard Baker, Daniel Inouye, Herman Talmadge, Lowell Weicker, and others.

Unfolding through interviews with people who were directly involved, DICK CAVETT’S WATERGATE documents the critical Watergate milestones with new insight and perspective. New interviews with Cavett offer insights into the key Watergate personalities and provide historical context for the featured clips. On a more intimate note, Cavett reveals his reaction on discovering he was mentioned in the White House tapes — not once, but 26 times.

The program features archival news footage and highlights from the Congressional hearings (appointment viewing in its day) to recount the behind-the-scenes battle between the White House and “The Dick Cavett Show.” In addition, viewers will see rare photos and memorabilia from Cavett’s personal collection and hear never-before-broadcast audio from the White House tapes.

DICK CAVETT’S WATERGATE begins with the first critical Watergate milestone: the arrest of five men for breaking and entering into the Democratic National Committee (DNC) headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington, DC, on June 17, 1972.

Cavett reflects on the moment he first heard about the break-in and became “a Watergate junkie.” He recalls the first mention of the scandal on his show — a mere two days after the burglary — when his guest was Senator Edward Kennedy.

New interviews with Bernstein, Dean, Naftali and Woodward explain why Watergate had no effect on Nixon’s re-election on November 7, 1972, one of the largest landslides in American political history. A discussion with Dean about the showdown over the White House tapes sheds new light on the July 13, 1973, disclosure by Alexander Butterfield, former presidential appointments secretary, regarding conversations and telephone calls taped at the White house.

The final milestone the program explores is the pardon by President Gerald R. Ford on September 8, 1974. In an interview from 1979 with President Ford, Cavett pressed the president for his opinion of Nixon’s guilt or innocence. President Ford’s response, 35 years later, still surprises.

DICK CAVETT’S WATERGATE is a production of Crew Neck Productions and Daphne Productions in association with THIRTEEN Productions LLC for WNET. Director/Writer/Producer is John Scheinfeld. Executive Producer for Daphne Productions is Robert Bader. Executive in Charge for WNET is Stephen Segaller. Executive Producer for WNET is Steve Burns. Coordinating Producer for WNET is Stephanie Carter.

This special presentation is among the full-length episodes that will be available for viewing after broadcast on SECRETS OF THE DEAD Online (pbs.org/secrets). Along with the extensive online video catalog, the series website provides resources for educators, with lesson plans for middle school and high school teachers.
As one of PBS’ ongoing limited primetime series, SECRETS OF THE DEAD is a perennial favorite among viewers, routinely ranking among the 10 most-watched series on public television. Currently in its 13th season, it continues its unique brand of archaeological sleuthing, employing advances in investigative techniques, forensic science and historical scholarship. The series has received 10 CINE Golden Eagle Awards and six Emmy nominations, among numerous other awards.

About WNET
As New York’s flagship public media provider and the parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21 and operator of NJTV, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as Nature, Great Performances, American Masters, PBS NewsHour Weekend, Charlie Rose and a range of documentaries, children’s programs, and local news and cultural offerings available on air and online. Pioneers in educational programming, WNET has created such groundbreaking series as Get the Math, Oh Noah! and Cyberchase and provides tools for educators that bring compelling content to life in the classroom and at home. WNET highlights the tri-state’s unique culture and diverse communities through NYC-ARTS, Reel 13, NJTV News with Mike Schneider and MetroFocus, the multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. WNET is also a leader in connecting with viewers on emerging platforms, including the THIRTEEN Explore iPad App where users can stream PBS content for free.

About PBS
PBS, with its over 350 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and online content. Each month, PBS reaches nearly 109 million people through television and over 28 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’ broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. PBS’ premier children’s TV programming and its website, pbskids.org, are parents’ and teachers’ most trusted partners in inspiring and nurturing curiosity and love of learning in children. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the Internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook or through our apps for mobile devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following PBS PressRoom on Twitter.

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