



## SIGN POSTS

*Volume 2, Issue 1, Spring 2020*

*The Official Online Newsletter of the Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery*



### TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Our museum building has been the focus of much attention this winter as we have been working on a number of projects. At the end of *Holiday at the Henri* program someone noticed water on the floor in a storage area and as it turned out the water heater had come to the end of its useful life. It had been installed when the museum was being restored in the 1980s. That led to a series of other projects including updating some plumbing and electrical work in the museum. We are grateful to

board member Larry Karre who helped us with logistical and technical questions during the course of the complicated project. Also, special thanks goes to Chuck Birgen, another board member, who was often onsite when contractors needed access to the building as our director is now working on a part-time basis.

The board also decided that it was time to paint the trim of the exterior of the building something that has not been done in a number of years. Our director conducted an analysis

for an appropriate color using paint bullets and proposed three options. Paint bullets, like the one shown here, are created so that the various layers of paint will be revealed from the time of the building's construction.

The board unanimously voted for the third option which was to use a light grey, a color that was found to have been used after the stucco was applied to the brick exterior around 1910 or 1912. Seth Denny was awarded the contract after a competitive bidding process and his company will begin to paint in the coming weeks. If you are interested in seeing a copy of the paint analysis report that was compiled by the director you can go to this link <https://www.roberthenrimuseum.org/history-of-the-museum> and find the report on our web page.

These projects have been and are being paid for with Dawson County Improvement Funds that are generated by taxes paid when travelers stay in one of the county's many hotels. The museum has completed many projects over the years that protect our museum and maintain it for the future with this funding. We are grateful to the Dawson County Commissioners for their long time support.

*Photograph: Courtesy Peter Osborne*



## **NEW HANGING SYSTEM INSTALLED IN MUSEUM GALLERIES**

Recently two long-time members of our museum passed away, Earl Pharris and Betty McKeone. Both had

been instrumental in the success of our museum and both had been involved in our organization's affairs for many years. Earl had been the president of the board of directors and Betty had been involved from the very beginning of the restoration of our museum building. She had twice been the Artist of the Month. We will have a special section on both of them in our next newsletter.

As is always the case here at the Henri the installation of the system was a collaborative effort as Larry Paulsen volunteered workers from his company, Paulsen, Inc. to install the system. In addition, Larry Karre, who was involved in the installation of the original hanging system in the Art Gallery building was on hand, with his stilts, to help install the

system and provide advice. We are grateful to Larry Paulsen, Larry Karre, Ross Collins, Matt Yocom, Marlene Geiger and Chuck Birgen for helping us get this new system up as well as all the donors who made the project possible. And finally to Betty and Earl whose service we will honor.

Until the virus cancelled all of our plans, the museum had scheduled an official dedication of the new system on May 2. At this point however that program is on hold but when the museum opens again it will be put on our calendar of events.

*Photographs: Courtesy Peter Osborne*



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## A NEW WAY TO PROMOTE THE HENRI LEGACY

Like all of you we have been monitoring the latest government notifications regarding being open to the public. We continue to follow the disease prevention guidance from the CDC, which has recommended that until April 30 organizers cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of ten people or more





throughout the United States. The Robert Henri Museum has decided, for the time being, to close its doors to any groups over ten, until April 30 at which time we will reevaluate the situation.

In the wake of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we believe the most responsible thing we can do is practice social distancing in an effort to protect the well-being of our volunteers, staff, and the broader community. Given what is happening around the country at the present time we anticipate few if any visitors. We have not had a visitor since early March when the crisis began. However, we will continue to be accessible by email as well as phone. Also, we also appreciate your financial support because at some point we will be open and promoting the legacy of Robert Henri again.

Like so many museums across the country that are closed we are trying to keep in touch with our members, visitors, supporters and benefactors in a variety of new ways using new forums. We have begun to create a series of YouTube videos that will be posted regularly on both our Facebook page and web page. We will tell our visitors what the status of activities are at the museum and provide short videos about items that are in our collection including paintings, sketches and the archive. The entire collection of videos is available by going to Museum and Gallery page on our website and then to the section *Telling the Henri Story in a New Way*.

A special thanks to Marlene Geiger and Chuck Birgen, our camera man, producer and sound technician who have helped to produce the two current videos. It is our hope to create these productions weekly and like so much that is going on today in our country, we think that they will probably become a regular feature of our operations in the future. Here are the links to the most recent videos:

**Welcome by Marlene Geiger**

**Our Henri Sketches - Part 1 - By Peter Osborne**

*Photograph: Courtesy Peter Osborne*



## **OUR WINDOW TO THE WORLD**

The launch of our new web page was most successful and the page is becoming an important media outlet with which we interact with the world. Since its launch in January we have been adding more features including our

YouTube videos that we have been producing as a response to the virus epidemic sweeping the country. We find that anywhere between ten and twenty people visit the page each day with spikes coming when something special is posted on Facebook. During the summer, once things get back to normal, we anticipate that visitation will increase. We still have to work on our gift shop page as we want to add more of our items that we sell here in Cozad. One of the most important features is that we continue to integrate our museums operations onto our web page making it the place for visitors and members alike to find a wealth of information about Robert Henri, his family, our museum and gallery and the programs we offer.

A web page is often described as a work in progress and that is certainly the case with ours. As we find more information about Henri in our archive and digitize it we will upload it. In case you have not visited our newly redesigned site the address is [www.roberthenrimuseum.org](http://www.roberthenrimuseum.org).

*Photograph: Courtesy Robert Henri Museum*

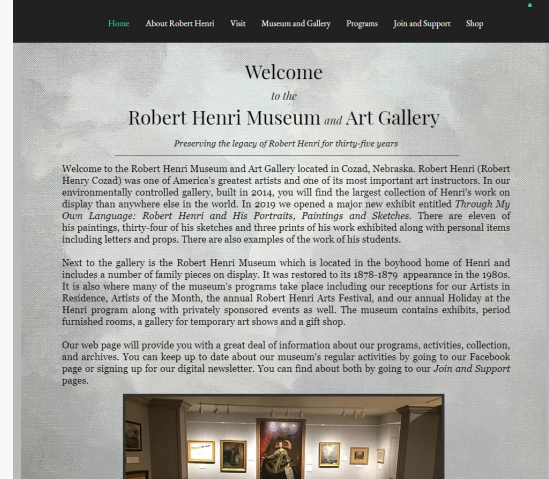


## COLLECTION NEWS

We continue with reorganizing our archive and making it more usable for staff and researchers alike. Recently, in doing the research for the color to be used on the trim of the

museum building we searched our files for photographs of the building to see if they might offer any clues and this picture did.

The picture is of the building, believed to have been taken before 1910, shows that the building had not been stuccoed yet as it is today. Curiously the first floor, beneath the porch roof, appears to have been partially stuccoed along with some kind of wood paneling installed on the lower half. This matches the historical record because it is said that people sat in captain's chairs on the porch. Some must have rubbed against the building repeatedly which would have damaged the soft brick. This photograph also



confirms that the building's windows and doors were painted a maroon or ochre at one point and that can be seen as those features are darker. This was confirmed in our paint analysis.

We continue to search for additional materials about the former Hendee Hotel to give us more insights into the history of the building, the changes that have been made and provide us with data with which we can make informed decisions about future projects. It also helps us create a more accurate interpretation for visitors when they come.

In our next newsletter, a man died of Typhoid Fever in one of the rooms on the second floor. Perhaps there is more to say about that story as well.

*Photograph: Courtesy of the Robert Henri Museum*

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Museum Hours From October 1, 2019 - May 1, 2020

**CLOSED**

April 24, 2020 - Opening of new exhibit at the Bone Creek Agrarian Art Museum by Artist Karl Kuerner, an admirer of the work of Robert Henri. Several of our Henri sketches will be featured in the show.

**CANCELLED (EXHIBIT WILL RUN BUT RECEPTION WAS CANCELLED)**

May 1, 2020 - Reopening of the Museum and Art Gallery for regular hours

**WAITING ON CDC RULINGS**

May 2, 2020 - Dedication of the new hanging systems in our gallery rooms in the museum to Betty McKeone and Earl Pharris whose memorial gifts made the project possible

**WAITING ON CDC RULINGS**

June 20, 2020 - Robert Henri Arts Festival

**WAITING ON CDC RULINGS**

Museum Hours From May 1, 2020 - October 1, 2020

Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

**WAITING ON CDC RULINGS**

To get even more information on the museum's programs go to our web page and the calendar of events at [www.roberthenrimuseum.org/calendar](http://www.roberthenrimuseum.org/calendar)

## WHAT WOULD ROBERT HENRI SAY?

“Realize that a drawing is not a copy. It is a construction in very

different materials. A drawing is an invention.”

*Robert Henri*

*(Photograph: Courtesy Library of Congress)*



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Our newsletter's name, *Sign Posts*, comes from a phrase at the beginning of Robert Henri's *Art Spirit*. He wrote:

*There are moments in our lives, there are moments in a day, when we seem to see beyond the usual. Such are the moments of our greatest happiness. Such are the moments of our greatest wisdom. If one could but recall his vision by some sort of sign. It was in this hope that the arts were invented. Sign-posts on the way to what may be. Sign-posts toward greater knowledge.*



Visiting the

Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery

Open: May 1 – September 30

Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Admission

\$5 for Adults

\$2 for Children (5-18)

We accept all major credit cards

Closed on the major holidays

Phone: (308) 784-4154

Email: [rhenri@cozadtel.net](mailto:rhenri@cozadtel.net)

Web page: [www.roberthenrimuseum.org](http://www.roberthenrimuseum.org)