



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The Robert Henri
Museum and
Art Gallery

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ROBERT HENRI MUSEUM OPENS FOR SEASON

The Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery is pleased to announce that it has begun its regular summer season hours. This is being done with an abundance of caution and social distancing will be practiced. The museum encourages the use of masks for the safety of our volunteers and staff. We will not be accommodating large tour groups at least for the time being.

The museum will be featuring its major new exhibit entitled *Through My Own Language: Robert Henri and His Portraits, Paintings and Sketches*. The newly installed exhibit, includes eleven of Henri's paintings and portraits and many of the sketches that it owns including recent acquisitions and those loaned by its patrons. The show includes interpretive components on Henri's life and his students, and feature the most current knowledge about the artist. Major funding for the project has been provided by the Katherine Wilson Foundation, the Ervin and Grace Burkholder Foundation, the Kosman Foundation, the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation and the Union Pacific Foundation.

The organization is also pleased to announce that the museum will be featured in *Nebraska Life* magazine in the July-August issue. The museum has not been featured in this statewide publication for many years so this is an important accomplishment. Copies will be available in late June. The magazine is a must read for Nebraskans, former Nebraskans, and wannabe Nebraskans and will provide us great exposure to future visitors and highlight all the progress we have been making for the last thirty years. We have not had this kind of exposure since *True West*, a national magazine, featured an article on the shooting of Alf Pearson by John Cozad and the life of Robert Henri in their October 2013 issue.

We will have copies of this issue of the *Nebraska Life* magazine on sale in our gift shop. In addition, we will be hosting a *Nebraska Life* Robert Henri Issue magazine release party on Thursday, July 16 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Reserve your spot by calling (308) 784-4154 or emailing rhenni@cozadtel.net. There will be no admission charge and will be limited to 100 attendees and whatever rules may be in place to deal with the pandemic. The evening's programs will include tours of the Henri home, museum and gallery, light refreshments, commemorative *Robert Henri Issue* sales and gift shop specials.

We are pleased to announce that our neighbor and friends at 242 House have been chosen as Cozad's *Nebraska Passport* stop for 2020. The program includes seventy stops that are chosen around the state and visitors, both in state and out of state, are encouraged to visit them all. There are ten categories of stops including restaurants and museums. In 2019 more than nine hundred people went to all of the stops. The museum and the 242 House have been partnering since the restaurant opened and people who are eating there often come over to the museum afterwards for a tour and the museum encourages our visitors to eat and have drinks there. It has worked out well for both of us and in fact some of our meetings have been held there.

The 242 House has a special meaning for Marlene Geiger, the museum's president, because when she was married she made her final preparations for the wedding in the house as it was owned by relatives. In the photograph she is coming down the stairs with her husband Otto.

The museum will be hosting its first artist of the month for the 2020 season beginning on July 1. Artist Mike Miller, who lives at Johnson Lake in Dawson County, began his artistic career working in watercolor and then to work with oil paints. Today he is an accomplished photographer. Samples of his work will be on display and the museum's short term gallery space. A reception for the artist will take place at the museum on July 23, 2020 from 5:00-7:00 pm and visitors will be able to discuss the artist's pieces.

Throughout the summer the museum will also be sponsoring an exhibit of the artwork of Betty McKeone. She was a well-known area artist who was among the earliest supporters of the museum and remained so until passing in 2019. Her paintings are much sought after, and many will be on display and for sale, the proceeds of which will go to the museum.

Betty grew up in Grand Island, Nebraska, graduated from high school there and received a BA degree in Art Education from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. During her career she taught Elementary Art Enrichment programs, Adult Art Education Classes and painting workshops.

Having studied under many famous artists, she was the recipient of numerous art awards including the Award of Excellence from the Association of Nebraska Art Clubs and in 1996 was appointed Artist of the Year. Her painting *All Gone* was used for a cover for the *Nebraska Life* magazine and others are in homes and businesses all across the country. She has exhibited her works in several galleries.

The Robert Henri Museum is located in the childhood home of Robert Henri (Robert Henry Cozad), one of America's most well-known art teachers and artists. His father, John J. Cozad constructed the hotel in 1879 to serve early settlers and travelers who arrived in Cozad as well as a family residence. Arriving in 1872, the senior Cozad lived in the town until 1882 when he shot and killed a rancher, Alf Pearson, in an altercation and immediately left the area. The rest of the family moved from Cozad in 1884 and all assumed new identities. Robert Henri was nineteen years old when he left and moved East, ultimately residing in New York City. The building is now listed on the United States Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places.

The Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery is a national treasure that is the result of the work of many volunteers, board members and professional staff who have toiled for more than thirty years. The effort to preserve Robert Henri's legacy in Cozad started with a small group of people who saw the opportunity to bring recognition to the town that was once

home to the acclaimed artist and native son, Robert Henri. This group, led by Shirley Paulsen, bought and restored the former Cozad Hotel, now known as the Hendee Hotel.

With local support and generous donations from Cozad and Henri family members from across the United States, the Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery's collection continues to grow. The first Henri painting donated to the museum in 1988 was *Mariana of Austria, Queen of Spain*. Since then numerous donations and loans of Henri works have been made. In 2014, a climate-controlled and secure art gallery was built to house the collection. Today the Art Gallery houses the largest display of Robert Henri works in the world, including eleven paintings and forty-three sketches. In addition, there are works by several of his students including Marjory Ryerson, John Sloan and Ernest Fiene.

The museum and art gallery are located at 218 East 8th Street in Cozad and will be open from June 1 to September 30 on Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information about our future programs which will be forthcoming call 308-784-4154 or visit the museum's web page at www.roberthenrimuseum.org.

Captions

Contributed photograph

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