

50TH ANNIVERSARY
HENRY MORRISON
FLAGLER MUSEUM
— PALM BEACH, FLORIDA —

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2009

Contact: David Carson, Public Affairs Director
(561) 655-2833 ext. 13 / publicaffairsdirector@flaglermuseum.us

THE FLAGLER MUSEUM PRESENTS
A SPIRIT OF SIMPLICITY: AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS
FROM THE TWO RED ROSES FOUNDATION

PALM BEACH, FL — The Flagler Museum's forthcoming exhibition, *A Spirit of Simplicity: American Arts and Crafts from the Two Red Roses Foundation*, will feature nearly 150 objects illustrating the range of American Arts and Crafts style, including furniture, wood block prints, stained glass, decorative tiles, pottery, and metalwork. *A Spirit of Simplicity* will be on view from October 6, 2009, through January 3, 2010. The exhibition is free with Flagler Museum admission.

The most significant producers of Arts and Crafts furniture and metalware will be represented, including works by Gustav Stickley and his Craftsman Workshops, Elbert Hubbard and the Roycrofters, and the Byrdcliffe Arts and Crafts Colony. There will be beautifully colored woodblock prints by Arthur Wesley Dow and his followers. Also on display will be ceramic vases and decorative tiles by the Grueby Faience Co., Newcomb Pottery, Rookwood Pottery, and Van Briggles Pottery. A special feature of the exhibition will be re-creations of Arts and Crafts rooms containing works by Gustav Stickley and the Craftsman Workshops and by Charles Rohlfs.

The Arts and Crafts style began as a reformist movement in Great Britain in the 1880s, and gained popularity in Europe and America during the next decade. The movement was a reaction against negative changes brought to modern society by the industrial revolution. Practitioners were especially antagonistic toward poor-quality, mass-produced goods, and the unhealthy working conditions in many factories. The antidote to a modern, mechanized society seemed to be a return to handcrafted objects of good design.

American Arts and Crafts practitioners created not only beautiful objects but also sought to promote a healthy and morally uplifting lifestyle. In many cases utopian communities of craftsmen sprang up, such as the Roycrofters, adopting the medieval guild as their model. Craftsmen creating such goods took pride in their work, avoiding what they saw as unfulfilling lives as drones in mechanized factories.

Whether unique and hand crafted or production items made by hand or machine, American Arts and Crafts objects have simple, straightforward and honest designs. Because of the variety of objects in any price range, Arts and Crafts style was widely available and extremely popular. The well-designed and well-made objects included in this exhibition exemplify the goals of the Arts and Crafts movement in America.

All works included in the exhibition will be on loan from the Two Red Roses Foundation, a private, non-profit educational institution in Palm Harbor, Florida, that promotes understanding of the American Arts and Crafts movement through the collection, conservation, exhibition, and interpretation of the decorative and fine arts. The Foundation was endowed by generous gifts from Florida businessman Rudy Ciccarello, who has assembled one of the largest personal collections of Arts & Crafts in America. *A Spirit of Simplicity: American Arts and Crafts from the Two Red Roses Foundation* is co-curated by Martin Eidelberg, Professor Emeritus at Rutgers University, and Tracy Kamerer, Chief Curator at the Flagler Museum.

When it was completed in 1902, Whitehall, Henry Flagler's Gilded Age estate in Palm Beach, was hailed by the *New York Herald* as "more wonderful than any palace in Europe, grander and more magnificent than any other private dwelling in the world." Today, Whitehall is a National Historic Landmark and is open to the public as the Flagler Museum, featuring guided tours, changing exhibits, and special programs. The Museum is located at Cocoanut Row and Whitehall Way, Palm Beach. The Museum is open from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and noon until 5:00 p.m., Sunday. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$8 for youth ages 13-18, \$3 for children ages 6-12, and children under six are free. For more information, please call the Flagler Museum at 561-655-2833 or visit www.flaglERMuseum.us.

High resolution images are available upon request.

###