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HENRY MORRISON
FLAGLER MUSEUM
— PALM BEACH, FLORIDA —

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 23, 2015

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

**FLAGLER MUSEUM'S
CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AND SPECIAL HOLIDAY LECTURE**

Palm Beach, FL - The Flagler Museum will be hosting its annual Special Holiday Lecture and Christmas Tree Lighting on December 6, 2015. The Holiday Lecture: *Visions of Santa Claus: Iconic Christmas Illustrations by Thomas Nast* lecture begins at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are free for Museum Members at the Sustaining level and above, \$10 for Individual, Family, and Life Members, and \$28 for non-members and includes museum admission. The Tree Lighting Festivities begin at 3:00 p.m., and is included with Museum admission.

Visions of Santa Claus: Iconic Christmas Illustrations by Thomas Nast
by Ryan Hyman, F.M. Kirby Curator of Collections, Macculloch Hall Historical Museum

Thomas Nast produced more than 30 Christmas illustrations for *Harper's Weekly* during the 19th century. Among his many illustrations, the portrait of a jolly, white bearded Santa Claus dressed in a red suit, was perhaps Nast's most significant contribution to the American Christmas tradition. Join Ryan Hyman, the F.M. Kirby Curator of Collections at Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, to learn more about the iconic Christmas illustrations of Thomas Nast and their significant place in America's Christmas traditions.

The Holiday Lecture is sponsored by BMO Private Bank, the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council, and the State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs.



Christmas Tree Lighting Festivities: 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Free with Museum admission

The 16-foot tall Grand Hall Christmas Tree, with its historically accurate trimmings, is the center of Whitehall's holiday celebrations. The Tree Lighting festivities include holiday music played on Whitehall's original 1,249-pipe Odell organ and the 1902 Steinway art-case grand piano. This annual performance is the only opportunity visitors have to hear both of Whitehall's majestic instruments. Special choir performances, refreshments, and a visit from Santa Claus complete the afternoon's activities. The event culminates with Henry Flagler's



youngest descendants lighting the Grand Hall Christmas Tree. Each visitor will receive a box of Animal Crackers, a treat invented in the Gilded Age. The iconic circus box with a string was originally designed as a Christmas Tree ornament.

The Christmas Tree Lighting is sponsored by the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council, and the State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs.

For more information, or to purchase tickets please call the Flagler Museum at (561) 655-2833 or visit www.FlaglerMuseum.us.

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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 One 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 \$18 for adults, \$10 for youth ages 13-17, \$3 for children ages 6-12, and children under six are free. For more information visit www.flaglermuseum.us or call (561) 655-2833.

To schedule a media visit please contact publicaffairsdirector@flaglermuseum.us.

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