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For Immediate Release:

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## **CHISHOLM TRAIL HERITAGE MUSEUM WILL EXHIBIT RODEO PHOTOGRAPHS**

The rodeo – that most uniquely American spectacle – began in the late 1800s as an entertaining way of displaying the skill and daring of cowboys. *This Contest is for Real Hands: Rodeo Photographs of the 1930s*, beginning February 2<sup>nd</sup> at Cuero State Bank, captures the drama and color of an old-time western rodeo, complete with bucking broncos, wild steers, trick riders, calf ropers, and parades down Main Street.

The thirty black-and-white photographs in this exhibition, modern restrikes from vintage negatives, were taken in the 1930s by Otho Hartley (1895-1964). Many of his rodeo photographs were made inside the arena itself, a situation that often put the photographer in grave danger. Somehow, amid the contorting broncos and half-crazed steers, he managed to keep the action within the viewfinder and in focus. The results are some of the best images of this tradition, one that Hartley captured in all its varied and unique aspects.

The public is invited to attend the opening of the exhibit in the lobby of Cuero State Bank at 2:00 p.m., Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. The exhibit has been expanded to include photographs, artifacts and biographical material on Katherine M. Doell, a Cuero resident who competed in bare bronc and bull riding rodeo events of the 1950s. Katy performed in rodeos throughout the southern part of the United States and as far north as Indiana and North Carolina. Together with Lucyle Cowey, a friend and fellow rodeo participant who taught Katy trick riding, they performed as guests of the Cuban government and provided entertainment as trick riders at an “expo” in the 1950s. She later returned to Cuba for a rodeo and Wild West Show with “fifteen cowboys and cowgirls, our horses, one Brahma bull, and one jack ass.”

***This Contest is for Real Hands: Rodeo Photographs of the 1930s*** is being brought to Cuero by the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum. The exhibition is organized by the Powell County Museum and Arts Foundation in Deer Lodge, Montana and toured by ExhibitsUSA, Kansas City, Missouri. The purpose of ExhibitsUSA is to create access to an array of arts and humanities exhibition, nurture the development and understanding of diverse art forms and cultures, and encourage the expanding depth and breadth of cultural life in local communities.

The Hands-on Experiential Learning Project (HELP) is a four-year project specifically designed to assist small and midsize museums in Texas with professional development. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum was selected in the spring of 2002 as one of 18 museums to participate in the program and will host a traveling exhibit each of the four years. HELP, a program of ExhibitsUSA in partnership with the Texas Association of Museums, is made possible through the combined vision and generosity of Houston Endowment, Inc., The Meadows Foundation, the Don and Sybil Harrington Foundation, the Texas Commission on the Arts, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency that fosters innovation, leadership and a lifetime of learning.