

MUSEUM MISSION STATEMENT – MAY 1998
HUGH McKEAN STATEMENT – JULY 1994

Statement

The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art was founded by Jeannette Genius McKean and developed by her and her husband, Hugh F. McKean, to enrich the life of their community by fostering knowledge and appreciation of American Art through the preservation, presentation, and scholarly study of the Museum's collections in a spirit of adventure and experiment.

Enriching the Life of the Community

Museums, like the people who create them, come in different kinds and sizes. Some beat the drums for one way of art (New York's Museum of Modern Art, for example). Others feature what the collector wanted to own regardless of school or period (Sarasota's Ringling and the Gardener in Boston). Some, including the Metropolitan and The Louvre, are created to serve as national treasure houses and set few limitations on themselves.

The Morse has a mission of its own. Its purpose is to enrich the life of this community. All exhibitions are organized from the Museum's own collection which is focused on American art. They are planned to illustrate important developments in the arts of this country, and they recognize art pottery, art glass, paintings, prints, sculpture, photography, leaded windows, jewelry, enamels, and the printed page as equally valid art forms.

The Museum's activities include films, demonstrations, discussions, concerts, lectures, and symposiums. (The Pavilion in the new Park Avenue complex makes an exciting extension of this program possible.)

The Morse Mobile Museum, a van converted into an air-conditioned, well-lighted gallery, visits Central Florida schools, clubs, and retirement homes. It has reached over 40,000 young people and thousands of adults during the past two years. (Current exhibits include "The Drummer" by Thomas Hart Benton, a Rookwood vase with a portrait of "Chief Rain in the Face" by Sturgis Laurence, a Tiffany window, a Norman Rockwell drawing, "Night of the Fox" by Darrel Austin, a James McNeill Whistler etching, and a landscape by Lois Tracy.)

MUSEUM MISSION STATEMENT – MAY 1998

HUGH McKEAN STATEMENT – JULY 1994

page 2

How successful is the Museum's program? It does lead to a better understanding of our own culture and how American cities, buildings, paintings, and other art forms reflect the thinking of their time. It underscores the power of this country's creative drive. But, it serves in other ways not easily put in words. Pressure in our society with its dream of "progress" without end is costly in terms of human happiness. Many tire of a split-second rush and push-button culture.

Visitors are frequently refreshed by the Museum's quiet atmosphere charged with beauty and respect for values that have served us all so well.

The Museum is here because the founder wanted to do something special for the community that was her home for half a century, and it is fair to say she has enriched its life considerably.

— Hugh F. McKean

Morsels

Vol. XI, No. 1

July/August/September 1994

Approved by the Board of Trustees

4 May, 1998