



EXHIBITS

January 23, 2009

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MEDIA KIT:
<http://www.galtmuseum.com/media.htm>

EVERETT SOOP RECOGNIZED IN NEW EXHIBIT AT THE GALT

EXHIBIT OPENS WITH MUSEUM COMMUNITY DAY ON SATURDAY JANUARY 31

Everett Soop [1943-2001] referred to himself as "the pit bull terrier of native journalism." Well-known historian Dr. Hugh Dempsey described him as "one of Canada's notable political cartoonists ...a gifted writer, artist, and illustrator." The Galt Museum & Archives is pleased to present ***Everett Soop: Journalist, Cartoonist, Activist*** – an exhibition honouring his work, organized and circulated by The Nickle Arts Museum at the University of Calgary – from January 31 through April 26, 2009.

Everett Soop was a master at seeing into the heart of political issues, social injustices and current events, and had a natural talent for wit, humour and artistry. He was a tenacious and determined critic of native issues at the local and federal levels and expressed his opinions in cartoons and essays published in the *Kainai News* – one of Canada's most successful aboriginal newspapers – between 1968 and 1992, as well as many other native and non-native publications.

"Ironically and sadly," says **Dr. Heather Devine**, co-curator of the exhibit, "many of the topics featured in Everett Soop's cartoons are as relevant today as they were when they were first sketched. The poignancy, the relevance, and of course the humour of Soop's work became the impetus for this exhibition."

"He didn't play favourites in who he directed his criticism towards—native and non-native leaders alike—he made no distinctions," says **Louis Soop**, older brother to Everett and a sessional instructor at the University of Lethbridge in Native American Studies. "He had a brilliant mind and made Native communities aware of the misfortunes of abuse, discrimination and problems like unemployment and poor housing."

At the age of 16 Everett Soop was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy – a genetic disease characterized by progressive weakness and degeneration of the skeletal muscles that control movement. As his illness progressed, he became confined to a wheelchair and an advocate for people with physical disabilities. He educated health professionals and the public at large in his role as a prominent member of Peter Lougheed's Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

"To be handicapped and to be Native means to be doubly pitted against the whole Canadian establishment," wrote Soop in April 1988 as National Access Awareness Week approached. "I began to wonder if maybe our disabled all became alcoholics, would something be done for them? It was becoming increasingly more evident to me that the only people who get any kind of notice are the alcoholics or those involved in sports. But alas, a handicapped alcoholic, I decided, would only end up in an asylum."

Everett Soop was an avid reader of history, philosophy, literature and comic books, and loved music. He attended various schools to pursue his art and journalism: Alberta College of Art, Brigham Young University in Utah, the University of Lethbridge, and Mount Royal College. Soop served as Band Councillor for 6 years, on the Senate of the University of Lethbridge, and on the Native Advisory Committee of Lethbridge Junior College. His cartoons were published in two collections: *Soop Takes a Bow* [1979] and *I See My Tribe is Still Behind Me* [1990]. He was the subject of the 1998 documentary film *Soop on Wheels*. In 1999 Everett Soop was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by his peers in the Native American Journalists Association. In 2006 he was posthumously awarded a Governor General of Canada's Meritorious Service Medal (Civil Division). Soop is the only aboriginal artist whose work is represented in the Museum of Caricatures of the National Archives of Canada.

"There is a power that one well-crafted image has in telling a story, discussing an issue, exposing human behaviour," says **Wendy Aitkens**, Curator at the Galt Museum & Archives. "Everett Soop was a master at crafting such images.

"Muscular dystrophy redirected his life from sports to art and in the long run gave us a very powerful artist and activist," confirms Aitkens. "Visitors to the exhibit will learn how he reacted to the disease through his art, how it affected his mobility and dependence on others, and how his family cared and provided for him."

An area will be set aside in the exhibit where visitors can have some fun with the medium of cartooning. It will include how-to hints and guidelines, samples of existing cartoons to be completed, and materials for creating a caricature based on photographs of people well-known to the local community, including Mayor Tarleck.

Everett Soop: Journalist, Cartoonist, Activist, was curated by Dr. Heather Devine and Geraldine Chimirri-Russell, organized and circulated by [The Nickle Arts Museum](http://www.nicklearts.com), University of Calgary and supported by the Museums Assistance Program, Department of Canadian Heritage.

Additional information on the exhibit and related programming and events – including **Museum Community Day** [free admission and events] on Saturday, January 31, the second Tuesday monthly **Café Galt** series, **Saturdays at 1:00** programs from February 7 through April 25, and **Eggstravaganza** on April 11 – is available on the Galt Museum & Archives website: www.galtmuseum.com.

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The Galt Museum is located at the west end of 5 Avenue South, off Scenic Drive, Lethbridge, Alberta
Parking lot located at the north end of the building | enter through the sliding north doors
tel 403.320-3898 | info: 320-GALT | fax: 403.329-4958 | www.galtmuseum.com
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EXHIBIT BACKGROUNDER

MEDIA CONTACT: Wendy Aitkens, Curator
tel 403.320-3907 | waitkens@galtmuseum.com

Everett Soop: Journalist, Cartoonist, Activist

Sat JAN 31 - Sun APR 26.09

Everett Soop [1943-2001] referred to himself as "the pit bull terrier of native journalism." Well-known historian Dr. Hugh Dempsey described him as "one of Canada's notable political cartoonists ...a gifted writer, artist, and illustrator."

Soop, a member of the Kainai First Nation, was a tenacious and determined critic of native issues at the local and federal levels and he expressed his opinions in cartoons and essays published in the *Kainai News* and many other native and non-native publications. He suffered from muscular dystrophy from the time he was a teenager and so it followed that he became an advocate for people with disabilities.

Everett Soop: Journalist, Cartoonist, Activist is organized and circulated by The Nickle Arts Museum, University of Calgary. Curated by Dr. Heather Devine and Geraldine Chimirri-Russell



Funded with support from the Museums Assistance Program,
Department of Canadian Heritage



Opening Reception

Fri JAN 31 | 7:00 - 9:00 pm | by invitation

IN ATTENDANCE: Curator Heather Devine, Kainai Elders Harold Healy and Louis Soop



Exhibit includes:

3 DIMENSIONAL CASES

'Desk' with original sketches, diary, cartoon, father's hat, AAA cards, etc.
 Drawers; audio tapes, alcoholism, drawing materials, Kainai newspaper, books, records, encyclopedia, Mad Magazines
 Order of Canada medal and certificate
 Hats, wheelchair, walking stick

SEATING ARRANGEMENT

Family photo albums
 Writings from Everett
 Reference materials
 Catalogue

2 DIMENSIONAL PIECES

40 framed cartoons [prints]
 5 original prints on loan from Glenbow
 Family photos
 Plaque

AUDIO-VISUAL STATIONS

Everett talking about Residential School experience
 Louis Soop receiving Order of Canada posthumously for Everett

INTERACTIVES

Cartooning station



EXHIBIT RELATED PROGRAMS

MEDIA CONTACT: Belinda Crowson,
Visitor and Program Coordinator
tel 403.320-4248 | bcrowson@galtmuseum.com

Museum Community Day

Sat JAN 31 | 10:00 am to 4:30 pm

Programs and activities throughout the day to celebrate the opening of the new exhibit *Everett Soop: Journalist, Cartoonist, Activist*.

2:00 **Bearing Witness: Luke Melchior** Everett Soop suffered from muscular dystrophy and spent much of his life in a wheelchair. This documentary highlights the life of Luke Melchior who, at 26, has lived longer than most people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a progressive wasting of the muscles. Knowing his life will be relatively short has made Luke feel an urgency about making a lasting contribution. He lives independently, with the help of three homecare workers, runs a web-based business selling outdoor gear, and chairs the board of the Disability Resource Centre in Victoria, BC, where he is a passionate advocate for the rights of the disabled. *NFB, 2003, 51 min*

Saturdays at 1:00

Weekly family program | admission rates apply | free for annual pass holders

FEB 07-APR 25 [not APR 11: Eggstravaganza]

Everett Soop was a journalist, cartoonist and activist. Without the hard-work and dedication of people, southern Alberta and Canada would be a much poorer place. Join us over the next several Saturdays to learn about some local people who helped build our community.

FEB 07 Medal of Honour Recognize a hero in your life by making a medal to honour her/his hard-work and accomplishments.

FEB 14 Dr. Mewburn Lethbridge's first doctor, he was here even before the hospital. Build your own stethoscope.

FEB 21 Superintendent R. Burton Deane, NWMP Serving as Lethbridge's top Mountie from 1888-1902, Supt. Deane helped make Lethbridge safe. Design your own Mountie Doorknob Hanger.

FEB 28 Jock Palmer One of the first pilots in southern Alberta, celebrate Jock's attempt at the first ever trans-Canada airmail flight by making a bi-plane.

MAR 07 Lee Duck was a Lethbridge businessman. Fashion your own paper lantern to celebrate Lee Duck and the other Chinese pioneers.

MAR 14 Tsuki Kanehiro Hironaka was a Japanese picture bride who married Yoichi (Harry) Hironaka, the owner of the Sugar City Café in Raymond. Make a Kokeshi doll, a simple stylized Japanese doll.

MAR 21 Marcella Sheran McFarland came to southern Alberta to keep house for her brother, Nicholas Sheran, and then married rancher Joseph McFarland. Learn about early ranchers and ranch families by making your own bandana.

MAR 28 William Henderson When Lethbridge was young, the fire department was all volunteers and men took turns being Fire Chief, including William Henderson, who would later be mayor. Celebrate early firefighters in Lethbridge by making your own firefighter's hat.

APR 04 George Mercer Dawson Explorers, like Dawson, covered much of what is now Canada searching and exploring. One thing they found was dinosaur fossils. Explore prehistoric Alberta by crafting a stuffed dinosaur.

APR 18 Everett Soop used cartooning to express concerns about how people treated each other. Make your own cartoon about what you can do to help build southern Alberta.

Café Galt

2nd Tue monthly | Exhibit opens at 6:00 pm for viewing prior to program at 7:00 pm | admission rates apply | free for annual pass holders | refreshments

FEB 10 Redskins, Tricksters and Puppy Stew Take complex issues like Native identity, politics and racism, then wrap them up with one-liners, guffaws and comedic performances. The result: *Redskins, Tricksters and Puppy Stew*, a road trip through the world of Native humour. This film hilariously overturns the conventional notion of the “stoic Indian” and shines a light on an overlooked element of First Nations culture - humour and its healing powers. Followed by a discussion on the healing nature of humour. *NFB, 2000, 54 min 30 s*

MAR 10 As a Trickster Napi, the Trickster, helps people learn through humour. Join Blanche Bruised Head for a Napi story and talk about the trickster as it applies to humour.

“Although he secretly thought his illness had turned him into ‘an Elephant Man,’ he managed to present a public image as a trickster incarnate. Nothing made him feel better than making other people laugh. Outrageousness was his way to challenge adversity.”

“Everett Soop: The pit bull of native journalism”, Sandy Greer, September, 2001
The Association of Canadian Editorial Cartoonists

APR 14 Breaking Through Stereotypes

Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy as a baby, **Geoff Meyering** has nonetheless lived his life determined to break through stereotypes and assumptions about his physical and mental capabilities and to create a life that stands as a testament to the transcendent power of courage, belief and persistence. Because of Geoff's life experience, he is an expert on these issues, and is thrilled with the opportunity to share his thoughts and dreams so that others can learn and understand some of the issues people in wheelchairs live with everyday.

Coulees & Culture Connection Easter Camp

Spring break APR 14-17 | 8:30 am to 4:30 pm | ages 6 to 9

\$100 per child | min. 10, max. 15 participants | Register at SAAG by APR 03: 403.327-8770

Celebrate the Coulees & Culture Connection and discover the cultural, historical and natural treasures in our city. Four full days of fun and exciting activities will keep you busy and show you the diversity that Lethbridge has to offer. Each day children are dropped off at a different location including the Helen Schuler Nature Centre, Southern Alberta Art Gallery and Galt Museum & Archives.

Guided Tours of *Everett Soop: Journalist, Cartoonist, Activist* or of the permanent exhibit are available for groups and classes.



EXHIBIT RELATED EVENTS

MEDIA CONTACT: Lori Harasem-Mitchell,
Special Events/Volunteer Coordinator
tel 403.320-4219 | lmitchell@galtmuseum.com

Eggstravaganza

Sat APR 11 | 10:00 to 2:00 | Viewing Gallery

\$4/3/child age 1+; adults free; *annual pass holder rate*

Come out and meet the Easter Bunny, play games, make crafts. In conjunction with the Everett Soop exhibit in our temporary exhibit gallery, learn cartooning from **Brian & Company** [ages 6+], meet Canadian wheelchair basketball paralympian **Joanne Kelly** [sponsored by SACLA], try your hand at using a wheelchair through an obstacle course, as well as other activities to learn about living with different abilities - its not as easy as you might think! This annual Galt event is fun for kids of all ages!

Check www.galtmuseum.com for updates and information on 2009 events, or call 403.320-4219.

Contact information:



Heather Devine 403.220-3894 | hdevine@ucalgary.ca

Heather Devine is Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Museum and Heritage Studies Program in the Faculty of Communication and Culture at the University of Calgary, where she is also an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of History. Her research and teaching specialties include Canadian Native History, American Indian Policy, Western Canadian ethnic history, and Museum and Heritage Studies, with a particular focus on Métis ethnohistory. She is author of *The People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1900*, winner of the Harold Adams Innis Prize for 2004-05. Between 2004 and 2007, Dr. Devine held a joint appointment as curator of Indigenous Heritage at The Nickle Arts Museum on the University of Alberta campus. It was during this period that she conceived, and later co-curated, *Everett Soop: Journalist, Cartoonist, Activist* with her colleague Geraldine Chimirri-Russell, Curator of Numismatics at The Nickle Arts Museum.



Geraldine Chimirri-Russell
403.220-7312 or 4138 | gechimir@ucalgary.ca

Geraldine Chimirri-Russell has been working at The Nickle Arts Museum, University of Calgary since 1996, first as part of her graduate research programme, and later as Curator of Numismatics [ancient coins]. The main focus of research has been on Massilot coins of France, South Arabian coins, Celtic and Sicilian coinage. Working with the museum's mandate as part of the University of Calgary she is broadening her research to include museum studies and is teaching an introductory course on museum and heritage studies.

Louis Soop 403.394-8175 | soopl@uleth.ca



Geoff Meyering 403.332-2725 | geoff@morethanthelabel.com

Lethbridge resident Geoff Meyering has broken through many stereotypes, and continues to take on new challenges: completing 2 years at Lethbridge College, traveling across Canada as an ambassador for initiatives on behalf of disabled individuals, and training for a July 2008 triathlon in Kelowna, BC. He is a participant and coach in Para-Olympic Basketball, and is committed to promoting fitness for himself and other disabled adults.

In his daily life, Geoff tackles feats that would be intimidating to many able-bodied people: traversing Whoop Up Drive in his wheelchair, and solo rides to Coaldale and back on a hand-pedaled bicycle as part of his triathlon training regimen. Geoff lives independently in his own apartment, and is building a career as a public speaker and consultant on advocacy and accessibility.

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For additional information and high resolution images please contact:
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www.galtmuseum.com