



ORANGE COUNTY REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Erica Baker, 407-836-8559

Erica.Baker2@ocfl.net

NEW EXHIBITION CELEBRATES ORLANDO'S POTTERY STUDIO AT HALF-CENTURY

***Sculpted, Thrown, and Fired* Opens at the History Center February 24, 2018**

ORLANDO, Fla. – FEBRUARY 2, 2017 – Ceramics are everywhere: your coffee cup, your bathroom tile, even inside your electronics. But there's nothing common about the works produced in the City of Orlando's Pottery Studio. Since 1968, hundreds of ceramics experts, camp kids, and budding artists have shaped and fired functional and decorative objects right in the heart of the city.

Titled *Sculpted, Thrown, and Fired: Celebrating 50 Years at the Pottery Studio*, a new History Center exhibition presents a wide variety of works created at the studio over a half-century. The exhibition also tells the story of the studio's history and beginnings in the 1960s, when Ann Robinson moved to Orlando from Valdosta, Ga., with her husband, Danny, and approached the City of Orlando's Recreation Division about starting a pottery program.

Orlando officials agreed and let Ann set up in the 1938 WPA-built Davis Armory, which the city had recently acquired from the National Guard and made the home of the city's Downtown Recreation Complex. Ann agreed to work as a volunteer, charging just ten dollars for ten weeks of classes. She worked on a volunteer basis for many years before officially becoming a city employee.

Ann had studied at the famous Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina and decided to try techniques she learned there at the new Orlando studio, including raku firing—a Japanese technique that involved placing hot pieces of pottery directly from the kiln into a bin of sawdust. Working behind the Recreation Complex in those early days, students set up kilns and practiced the smoky technique, alerting neighbors and the fire department in advance that everything was fine.

Now, the Pottery Studio has a 50-year record of helping people of all ages explore, invent, learn, and create pottery in a safe and relaxing environment. *Sculpted, Thrown, and Fired*, which opens February 24 and is on display through May 6, explores pottery as one of humanity's oldest inventions as well as the history of Central Florida ceramic arts and the shining stars our area calls its own.

Events complementing the exhibition include a Family & Youth Discovery Day on Saturday, March 3, free with admission, and Pottery Date Night programs on March 15 and April 19 that continue a Pottery Studio tradition. For details, visit thehistorycenter.org. For more on the Pottery Studio, visit cityoforlando.net/recreation/pottery-studio/

The Orange County Regional History Center, housed in a historic courthouse at 65 E. Central Blvd. in downtown Orlando, features four floors of permanent and limited-run exhibitions. The museum is a Smithsonian Institution affiliate and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Orange County Regional History Center is funded in part by Orange County Government through the Family Services Department under Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs and the Board of County Commissioners. The Historical Society of Central Florida Inc. is supported by United Arts of Central Florida and sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

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