

Into the Hall of Great Westerners

Enid native Holden to be recognized by National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

Enid News & Eagle

Enid native Harold T. Holden will be inducted into the Hall of Great Westerners at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum's annual Western Heritage Awards next month.

The awards, to be given April 21-22, celebrate the legacy of those whose works in literature, music, film and television reflect the significant stories of the western genre, according to a news release from the museum. There are more than 200 men and women honored within the Hall of Great Westerners.

After graduating from Enid High School, Holden attended Oklahoma State University and graduated from Texas Academy of Art in Houston. He served with the Navy during Vietnam aboard the U.S.S. Rainier, and eventually became a professional fine artist. He began his career in the commercial art field, ultimately taking the position of art director at Horseman Magazine.

Holden's paintings can be seen nationwide, but one of the most notable is his 5-foot, 8-inch oil painting of Western Oklahoma hanging in the state Capitol.

Several of his works are displayed

For more information about Western Heritage Awards and a full list of award winners and inductees, visit national-cowboymuseum.org or call (405) 478-2250.



Harold Holden works on "The Homesteaders" sculpture at his studio in Kremlin in this May 2007 file photo. (Billy Hefton / Enid News & Eagle)

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Harold Holden works on "The Homesteaders" sculpture at his studio in Kremlin in this May 2007 file photo. (Billy Hefton / Enid News & Eagle)

HAROLD HOLDEN

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in Enid.

- "Boomer," which depicts a man on horseback at full gallop in the Cherokee Strip Land Run of 1893, is seen outside Central National Bank Center.

- "The Ranger" is on display outside Northwestern Oklahoma State University-Enid. Identical statues are on display at NWOSU campuses in Alva and Woodward.

- "The Homesteaders" graces the entrance of Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center.

- "Pioneers" depicts a cowboy sitting by a fire during the land run, a World War II fighter pilot fashioned after Col. Leon Vance and an astronaut representing Eileen Collins, a space shuttle astronaut who trained at Vance Air Force Base. It is on display on the Garfield County Court House lawn.

Additional works from Holden are in Will Rogers World Airport, the University of Central Oklahoma, U.S. Postal Service and other institutions. His sculptures are displayed at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds, Oklahoma History Center, Gallagher-Iba Arena in Stillwater and National Cowboy Museum.

A statue of U.S. Deputy Marshal Bass

Reeves is on display at Pendergraft Park in Fort Smith, Ark., near Fort Smith National Historic Site.

Holden's bronze sculpture of a cowboy on horseback, "Wrangler," is awarded to each honoree during the Western Heritage Awards.

"It's an honor to recognize such a remarkable Oklahoman and pioneer of the West at the Western Heritage Awards," said Gary Moore, chief financial officer, interim president and CEO. "Harold's tremendous contributions to our Western heritage will leave a legacy for generations to come."

The Western Heritage Awards cocktail reception is set for 5:30 p.m. April 21. The Western Heritage Awards panel discussion will be at 11 a.m. April 22, with a cocktail hour at 5 p.m. and a black-tie dinner and awards ceremony at 6 p.m.

The events are open to the public, by reservation, with ticket discounts available to museum members. General admission, black-tie dinner pricing is \$185, or \$155 for museum members.

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