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NEWS RELEASE

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Public Celebration of SW Portland’s Historic Sovereign Building & Mural Restoration set for Saturday, May 20

Portland, OR – May 17, 2017 – The Oregon Historical Society will host a public celebration marking the completion of the restoration of the Sovereign Building and Mural this Saturday, May 20, from 3pm – 4pm at OHS (1200 SW Park Avenue, Portland). The celebration will include the screening of a time-lapse video documenting the restoration of the Sovereign and the mural, as well as an opportunity for guests to meet mural artists Richard Haas and Dan Cohen. Clips of the documentary can be found on the Oregon Historical Society’s [website](#). This event is free and open to the public.

The Sovereign Hotel building was sold in 2014 by the Oregon Historical Society to 1922 Sovereign LLC, but the Society retained ownership of the well-known mural of historic Oregon scenes that graced the building’s facade. The sale agreement anticipated that the repairs that needed to be made to the building would impact the mural, and required that the mural be preserved and that OHS and 1922 Sovereign LLC would share the cost of the preservation. Renovations were led by Emerick Architects and R&H Construction and subcontractor D&R Masonry.

“The mural has been a fixture on the Portland Park Blocks for decades and is a true Portland icon,” said OHS Executive Director Kerry Tymchuk. “Our visitors frequently comment on their love of the mural, and we are excited to now have the mural restored to its full glory.”

1922 Sovereign LLC, in partnership with the Oregon Historical Society and Jessica Engeman, Historic Preservation Specialist from Venerable Group, Inc., selected Dan Cohen to handle the mural restoration, which began in May 2016. Cohen is a classically trained painter, sculptor, and muralist who currently lives and works in the Pacific

Northwest, Los Angeles, and New York City. Notable local projects include the Oaks Bottom Wildlife mural at Portland Oaks Bottom Refuge, one of the largest fine-art murals in the nation. His work is known across the country, and he worked closely with the original muralist, Richard Haas, throughout the restoration process.

The 14,000 square foot mural is made of Keim silicate paint and was originally commissioned by the Oregon Historical Society in 1989. According to Richard Haas' website, "the west face of this multi-part mural, painted on four sides of a six-sided building, depicts four, thirty-foot-high participants of the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-05. The south face bears a trompe l'oil freize of the Oregon Trail and the John Jacob Astor fur trade."

About the Oregon Historical Society

For more than a century, the Oregon Historical Society has served as the state's collective memory, preserving a vast collection of artifacts, photographs, maps, manuscript materials, books, films, and oral histories. Our research library, museum, digital platforms & website (www.ohs.org), educational programming, and historical journal make Oregon's history open and accessible to all. We exist because history is powerful, and because a history as deep and rich as Oregon's cannot be contained within a single story or point of view.