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B. Carroll Reece Museum Showcases Appalachian Heritage

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn.— A component of East Tennessee State University’s (ETSU) Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, the B. Carroll Reece Museum works to preserve the rich Appalachian heritage of the Johnson City region through a combination of folk art, contemporary fine arts, crafts and historical collections, as well as a variety of community outreach and public service programs. The B. Carroll Reece Museum also includes a rich history of its own, dating back to 1922 when it was dedicated as the first ETSU campus library.

“The B. Carroll Reece Museum works to preserve the history and heritage of Johnson City and Washington County, as well as the surrounding region through the historical collections, displays and exhibits,” said Brenda Whitson, executive director of the Johnson City Convention and Visitors Bureau. “The Reece Museum is a vital part of the cultural preservation of our communities.”

Originally built in 1922, the Reece Museum served as the first campus library for ETSU. In 1965, it was formally dedicated as the B. Carroll Reece Memorial Museum as a tribute to the memory of Tennessee’s First District Congressman B. Carroll Reece.

“The Reece does preserve the history and heritage of the region, but we also work to demonstrate that Appalachia is a living and evolving culture. Just like any other culture in the world, Appalachia continues to practice traditions, traditional ways evolve and new technologies emerge. Our culture does not only exist in the past, but it is still alive and well today,” said Theresa Burchett-Anderson, executive director of the Reece Museum.

The Reece Museum has four display galleries comprised of changing exhibits, such as the Cherokee Baskets of the 20th Century, Blue Ridge Quilters, Tennessee Holocaust Survivors and Liberators and Sweetness on the State Line. The Reece Museum collection consists of 20,000 objects, including an anvil used by early settler William Bean, a log cabin from the Jonesborough area, a buggy from the Bob and Alf Taylor family and a Washington Hand Press from the Pressman’s Home in Rogersville.

“We want to demonstrate the impact the region has had on the nation and the world. For example, we had the exhibition, *Through the Lens of Ed Westcott*, which showed photographs of Oak Ridge’s secret city in the 1930s and 1940s. This exhibit was an art exhibit, but also demonstrated the importance of the region and its people during the WWII era,” said Burchett-Anderson. “*Sweetness on the State Line* showcased candy makers in Bristol, but those candy makers manufacture cough drops and medicinal products for Dimetapp, a national leading brand of medicine.”

The B. Carroll Reece Museum, accredited by the American Association of Museums, serves to collect, preserve and interpret art and artifacts important to Appalachia, and to provide programs of community outreach and public service that contribute to the cultural enrichment of the Appalachian region and its visitors. Located on the campus of East Tennessee State University, the Reece Museum also hosts a variety of yearly events and exhibits. For more information, please visit www.etsu.edu/reece/default.asp, or call (423) 439-4392.

Johnson City is located in Northeast Tennessee and is the fourth largest metropolitan city in the state. Set in a region known as America's First Frontier, Johnson City is “Where the Pioneer Spirit Began”—a historically significant and culturally rich community surrounded by an abundance of unspoiled natural beauty. Johnson City has a history, which dates back more than 200 years, and its culture embraces individual creativity and encourages innovation through

expression. The area is world-renowned for its modern and traditional Appalachian and bluegrass music, art and cuisine, and outdoor recreation for the whole family throughout all four seasons. For more information on Johnson City, please visit www.visitjohnsoncitytn.com or call (423) 461-8000 or (800) 852-3392.

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