Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery

401 North First Street, P.O. Box 348

Lindsborg, Kansas 67456-0348

**Gallery Talk: Sandzén and the Swedish National Romantic Movement**

## For Immediate Release

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\*\*attached photo: Birger Sandzén painting in Sweden, circa 1893.

The Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery in Lindsborg is pleased to announce a free gallery talk on Thursday, October 16, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. at the Gallery. It will focus on Birger Sandzén and the Swedish National Romantic Movement, which greatly affected the artist's development in Sweden and coincides with a special exhibition on display through January of 2015. The Gallery's curator, Cori North, will focus on the Romantic Movement, while director Ron Michael will discuss Sandzen's early life, education and artwork.

In the early 1880s, a handful of young, Swedish artists settled in Paris, France, to take up the challenge issued by French poet and art critic Charles Baudelaire (1821-67) for painters to record their unique time and place in history, capturing modern life in all its gritty realities. Among them were Richard Bergh (1858-1919), Anders Zorn (1860-1920), and Bruno Liljefors (1860-1939). All three had studied at the conservative Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm and had been dissatisfied with the teaching. Ultimately, these artists had great impact on Birger Sandzén's career.

Over the ensuing decade, the Swedish expatriates rejected the cosmopolitan culture of Paris and aimed at a loftier goal of creating a distinctly Swedish art back in their homeland, rooted in the nations agrarian past but promoting decidedly-modern democratic principles of reform. The artists believed that the underlying values communicated by each individual's heartfelt expression were common to every Swede – the love of nature and the Swedish environment, and belief in social equality achieved through the safeguarding of individual freedoms.

Sven Birger Sandzén was born on February 5, 1871, in the rural parish of Blidsberg, Sweden, where his father served as pastor for the Lutheran church. When he was six, the family relocated to the town of Järpås, south of the larger Lidköping in the province of Västergötland. At age eight, he was given his first watercolor set and began drawing lessons a year later. After attending school in Skara, Sweden, he enrolled in Anders Zorn's new painting class in Stockholm in 1891 and began absorbing the techniques and philosophies of Zorn and the other instructors, Richard Bergh and Per Hasselberg (1850-1941). At the urging of these instructors, Sandzén studied in Paris during the early part of 1894, and later in the year departed for America and a teaching position at Bethany College.

The Sandzén Gallery is located at 401 N. First Street in Lindsborg. Regular Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. There is no admission charge, but donations are welcome.