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Date correction of Cheryl Henson talk noted below. It will be May 2 NOT May 3 as in the press release dated March 3.

Historical Society Mounts Exhibition on the Henson Family Years in Greenwich

Cos Cob, CT, March 10, 2017--On April 5, 2017, the Greenwich Historical Society will answer the question, "Who are the people in your neighborhood?" with a resounding: "The Hensons!" With the opening of *Jim and Jane Henson: Creative Work, Creative Play* at the Storehouse Gallery, the Historical Society sets out to explore the Hensons' Greenwich years, during which the pair's boundless creative energy set the backdrop for both work and family life as they laid the foundations for what would result in a global entertainment phenomenon.

Jim (1936-1990) and Jane (1934-2013) Henson, best known as creators of *The Muppets*, made Greenwich, CT, their home from 1964 until 1971. The family grew to include five children, six cats, a couple of dogs, various other animals (real) and more than a few monsters (imaginary). Life at their historic home on Round Hill Road was infused with imagination and artistic expression, reflecting the Hensons' playful and inventive approach to parenting and their work as artists and performers.

Believing that art should be central to education, Jim and Jane were enthusiastic local participants in the founding of The Mead School in 1969, where art became a core part of the curriculum. More broadly, their intense interest in television's educational possibilities led to their involvement in the iconic *Sesame Street* series, which premiered the same year. Drawing on their *Muppet* work and observations of their children at home, they made essential contributions to the show reflecting a deep understanding of the power of the medium as a tool for early childhood education.

The Hensons' imagination and creativity, which they instilled in their five

children, continue to inspire and educate new generations around the world. Through paintings, objects, puppets, photographs and film, *Jim and Jane Henson: Creative Work, Creative Play* celebrates the delightful overlap of the Hensons' family life with their contributions as artists, performers, and parents. Pieces on display will include a 1963 Kermit the Frog puppet; a 1971 Robin puppet that appeared in *The Frog Prince*; original drawings, which became the basis for classic, *Sesame Street*-style, rapid-fire counting; a dollhouse built by Jim based on the design of their Round Hill Road home and numerous behind-the-scenes photos. Also on display will be vintage clips from *Sesame Street* and from early video experiments and collaborations, along with Jane's paintings and sculptures and materials and projects documenting her involvement at The Mead School.

The show is curated by Karen Falk, Archives Director of The Jim Henson Company, and Karen Frederick, Curator of Collections at the Greenwich Historical Society, with contributing curator Cheryl Henson and the support of the Henson Family, The Mead School, The Jim Henson Company, The Jim Henson Legacy, Sesame Workshop and The Muppets Studio/Disney. The exhibition and related public programs are funded in part by Connecticut Humanities and The Jane Henson Foundation.

A number of exhibition-related programs will be held, including a Story Barn (an evening of storytelling based on *The Moth* format) with the theme "Imagine That!" (April 28); an evening with **Cheryl Henson (May 2)**; a screening of Jim Henson's commercials and experiments led by Craig Shemin, former Henson staff writer and president of the Jim Henson Legacy (June 1); a history puppet slam and especially for kids, family programs involving puppetry on CT Open House Day (June 10) and at the Historical Society's Fall Festival and Scarecrow competition (October 8). To learn more, visit www.greenwichhistory.org.

Jim and Jane Henson: Creative Work, Creative Play

April 5 through October 8, 2017

Greenwich Historical Society, Storehouse Gallery

39 Strickland Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807

203-869-6899

www.greenwichhistory.org

Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 4:00 pm

Adults: \$10; students and seniors: \$8. Admission is always free to members and to children age 18 and under.

Admission is free to all the first Wednesday of each month.

Group tours may be arranged.

Docent-led Curator's Eye Tours are available on Wednesdays and Sundays at 12:15.



Jim and Jane Henson with their children in front of their home on Round Hill Road in Greenwich, 1970. Left to right: Jane, Lisa, Cheryl, Kermit the Frog, Jim, John and Brian. Heather would arrive that December. Photo by Juliet Newman.

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