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Cowboy Hall celebration to be Saturday

A day of celebration will be held Saturday when the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center dedicates a life-size casting of Frederic Remington's monumental statue called "Coming Through the Rye."

The Cowboy Hall of Fame also will become a U.S. post office for a first-day issue of a commemorative postage stamp honoring the great Western artist.

"Coming Through the Rye," which Remington copyrighted in 1902, shows four jubilant cowboys on running horses with guns and quirts raised.

Remington cast only 15 of the 28-inch high bronzes, two of which are in the Cowboy Hall's collection.

In 1904, a life-size plaster model of the sculpture was exhibited at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis.

It was Remington's dream to see the life-size statue cast in bronze, but that dream took almost 80 years to come true.

Mrs. D.D. Payne, Pampa, Texas, an honorary life director of the Cowboy Hall's board of directors, chose to act as project sponsor.

Mrs. Payne also has been a supporter of the Hall's major sculpture pieces, the Payne-Kirkpatrick Memorial Building which houses the "End of the Trail" statue by James Earle Fraser and the "Buffalo Bill" stat-

ue. Her partners in both projects were John Kirkpatrick of Oklahoma City and Jasper Ackerman of Colorado Springs.

Asked if she wanted a "partner" in her latest project, Mrs. Payne replied, "At the age of 91, I guess, I will choose God as my partner."

She plans to attend the unveiling of "Coming Through the Rye."

Casting the statue, from 28 inches to 18 feet, took more than two years. It was done at the Vianello Foundry in San Francisco. Sculptor Franco Vianello will be given the Hall's Trustees Gold Medal by Ed Rutherford, current board of directors president.

Thanks to the efforts of H.A. "Dave" True Jr., past president of the Hall board of directors, the U.S. Postal Service is issuing an 18-cent stamp honoring Remington.

The stamp features the statue "Coming Through the Rye" in tones of brown on a white background with light green lettering. Paul Calle was the designer.

The dedication ceremonies, a public event, will begin at 11 a.m. Principal speaker will be M.A. Wright, former chairman of the board of governors of the U.S. Postal Service.

A special honored guest will be Iron Eyes Cody, who has appeared in more than 200 Western films. Cody will give the invocation.

A spokesman said in honor of the special celebration, no admission fee will be charged.

The first-day-of-issue stamp may be bought and mailed at the Cowboy Hall Post Office from 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. Another souvenir is a "Coming Through the Rye" brass belt buckle, produced in a limited edition of 1,000.