

**Monday, August 7, 2017**

**PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release**

**From: The Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum, 204 S. Main**

**RE: MUSEUM EVENT & Exhibit: The Art of Wichita Flag Designer – Cecil McAlister  
Exhibit Closing Party & Special Program “a final Friday event!”**

**Admission is free Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup> 2017 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

**At: The Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum - 204 S. Main**

**The program, examining the life and art of Cecil McAlister, is a one hour illustrated lecture presented by Museum Associate Lynn Behnke beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the DeVore Auditorium on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Museum.**

**The exhibit is one in an ongoing series of visual arts exhibits based in local history and has been made possible through a generous grant by the Lois Kay Walls Foundation. The McAlister Exhibit opened in March of last year will close this month.**

Wichita flag designer, artist Cecil McAlister was born in Wichita in 1890. Following the footsteps of his father, a sign painter and decorator, Cecil found employment as a young man at the Western Sign Works Company. In 1918, McAlister left Wichita briefly to study at the Modern Art Studios of Chicago. By 1920 McAlister was back in Wichita and opened the Modern Studio. After ten years of operation the Great Depression forced the closure of the studio and McAlister moved his studio to his farm on South Broadway. McAlister continued his fine art work, but he was forced to return to sign painting and commercial art to support his family.

His award-winning Wichita flag design brought him national recognition. Sponsored in 1937 by the American Legion and the Rotary Club, McAlister won \$40 for his entry featuring a white sun circle, a blue sun, and red and white stripes, symbolizing the Indian word “Wichita,” which means “scattered lodges.” In a statement to the *Wichita Eagle* on June 15, 1937, McAlister said, “These stripes running in and out of red and white are symbols of rays of light or ways to come and go, open and free to all.” McAlister’s later work was greatly influenced by his background in large scale graphics, and he became well-known for his interior murals adorning the walls of Wichita homes. He died in Wichita on January 6, 1969.

**Submitted by Eric Cale, Museum Director, contact: <mailto:ecale@wichitahistory.org>**

**Venue: Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum, 204 S. Main, Wichita, KS 67202**

**Contact: 316-265-9314, [WichitaHistory.org](http://WichitaHistory.org)**

**Museum Hours: Tuesday – Friday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm; Saturday & Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 pm.**

**Regular Admission Charge: Adults \$ 5.00, Children 12 years and under \$ 2.00; under 6 free**

Supported Museum is supported in part by the City of Wichita and Sedgwick County Board of Commissioners

*OUR VISION: To provide a world class Museum experience, advancing the understanding and exploration of the rich historical and cultural heritage of Wichita and Sedgwick County Kansas.*