Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition Coming To Hobbs, NM
Exhibition Opens July 28 at Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame

(Hobbs, NM) An elegant perfume bottle. A perfectly preserved pair of men’s socks. The personal belongings of those who boarded the RMS Titanic in 1912 and many who perished when the luxurious ship sank after striking an iceberg in the North Atlantic Ocean are among the artifacts that will be on display at the Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame.

“Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition” is to run from July 28 to November 6 at the museum on the campus of New Mexico Junior College. Museum officials expect it to attract record crowds.

“There’s so much fascination and interest in it at all age levels,” said Darrell Beauchamp, the museum’s executive director. “We’re so happy to have it coming to Lea County. It’s a difficult show to get; we started the planning for this almost three years ago.”

The exhibition at the Western Heritage Museum will showcase personal belongings and pieces belonging to the ill-fated Titanic.

Nine traveling and permanent versions of the exhibit, which is owned by Atlanta-based Premier Exhibitions Inc., have been viewed by more than 25 million people worldwide in the last 20 years.

Alexandra Klingelhofer, vice president of collections for Premier Exhibitions, states: “We are thrilled to partner with the exceptional Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame, and offer a glimpse at the elegance – and ultimate tragedy – of the famous ship, Titanic.”

Almost as compelling as the Titanic's tragic story is the 1985 discovery of the sunken ship and recovery of the artifacts. Visitors to the exhibition will see pieces of the ship, the china from which its first-class passengers ate, and clothing, shoes, and other items that belonged to the 2,223
passengers and crew members on board. Just 706 people survived.

“Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition is an extremely powerful experience that leaves a lasting impact on each visitor,” Ms. Klingelhofer said. “We look forward to southeast New Mexico and west Texas embracing this remarkable story as well as exploring the science behind the wreck and the recovery of Titanic’s stunning artifacts.”

Beauchamp said the 3,500-square-foot exhibit will take visitors through a series of re-enactment galleries, beginning with the ship’s construction and its launch. They will see first-class and third-class quarters and learn about life on board the luxury liner. They will relive the events leading up to the ship’s demise, and they’ll have the chance to feel the frigid chill of an iceberg. Visitors also will learn about the science behind the efforts to recover artifacts some 2½ miles underwater.

Upon arrival at the exhibit, each visitor will receive a replica boarding pass of an actual passenger, complete with name, age, and reason for being aboard the Titanic. At the end of the exhibit, visitors will take their boarding pass to a memorial wall where they will learn whether that passenger survived or perished.

A number of special events also are planned during the exhibit’s run, including guest speakers, donor and sponsor parties, and classroom tours.

The exhibit, which is sponsored locally by the J. F Maddox Foundation, New Mexico Junior College, and the City of Hobbs Lodger’s Tax, has been featured at museums around the world. “We are one of the smallest venues to ever host this exhibition,” Beauchamp said, “and we’re very pleased to offer such an outstanding exhibition to our visitors.”

Beauchamp said attendance is expected to top the museum’s most popular temporary exhibit to date — “Bigger than T-Rex,” which was viewed by almost 15,000 people during its run in 2014.

Beauchamp also noted that because of the support received by the J. F Maddox Foundation, the City of Hobbs, and NMJC, admission to “Titanic” will be free, once admission to the museum is paid for. Beauchamp encourages everyone to acquire a museum membership for themselves and their families because museum members will get in free to the museum which will then allow them free access to the Titanic Exhibition.
“Being a member of the Museum will allow a person to visit the exhibition an unlimited number of times without having to pay for each visit,” Beauchamp added, “this is a once in a lifetime opportunity, and we look forward to offer it as our fall exhibition.”

For more information, contact the museum at 575-492-2678 or visit their website at www.nmjc.edu/museum.