

HAROLD GUY MERRIAM

1883 – 1980

As much as anyone, H. G. Merriam revealed the many facets of culture in the Treasure State.

Founder and first president of the Montana Institute of the Arts, H. G. was honored for his contributions to literature and creative writing and for pioneering “in the discovery of the cultural potentialities of his region.”

After studying at Oxford in England as a member of the first group of Rhodes Scholars, Merriam received his doctorate from Columbia University. Before going to the University of Montana in 1919 as chairman of its English Department, he taught at Whitman, Beloit and Reed colleges.

His great interest in creative writing – a study he introduced into the curriculum – led him to organize UM’s humanities program and summer writing workshops. Merriam encouraged his students by editing and publishing their works in a new magazine, *Frontier*, which later expanded into the *Frontier-Midland* and earned national and international recognition.

From his retirement in 1954 until his death in 1980 at 96 Merriam, according to one artist, “continued to think creatively and express it in his literary manner and by encouraging others to take action.”

