

Couse-Sharp Historic Site

A CROSSROADS OF CULTURES

146A

COUSE-SHARP
HISTORIC SITE
TAOS, NEW MEXICO



Beyond beauty

THE LURE OF TAOS

In 1893, painter Joseph Henry Sharp visited Taos for the first time. He shared tales of his enchantment with the people and the landscape with fellow artists Ernest Blumenschein and Bert Phillips. After those two visited the Taos valley in 1898, they encouraged friends to join them.

On July 15, 1915, those three and three more painters formed the **Taos Society of Artists** (TSA), with the shared vision of creating an authentically American art among their diverse neighbors. Eanger Irving Couse was the first president. Portraying the thriving **Native American and Hispano cultures** and the dramatic landscape of the Taos valley, the group grew to 12 full members.

With its success and reach, the early Taos art colony forever changed people's perceptions of the American Southwest and its residents. They continue to influence the world of American art, nationally and internationally, a century later.



THE LUNDER RESEARCH CENTER, the only research center for the study of the TSA, early Taos art, and their cultural context, is part of the campus, in a building that incorporates the remnants of Sharp's home. It includes archives, a library, object collections, and our primary exhibition gallery. Researchers can access materials by appointment.



Learn more at
[LunderResearchCenter.omeka.net](https://lunderresearchcenter.omeka.net)

OUR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Through its archives, collections, and programming, the Couse-Sharp Historic Site preserves and interprets Taos' crossroads of cultures, promoting and facilitating research, education, and new perspectives on the Taos Society of Artists, early artists of Taos, and regional and Indigenous communities in relation to the greater story of the multicultural American West.

OPPOSITE: E. I. Couse (seated) on the porch of his home with models Jerry Mirabal (left) and Ben Lujan. ABOVE: TSA members (from left to right) E.L. Blumenschein, Bert Phillips, J. H. Sharp, and E. I. Couse critique a Couse painting in the garden in 1915.

BRINGING THE LEGACY TO LIFE

Experience the authentic story of Taos

The 2+ acre campus in the heart of the historic district features the former homes, studios, and gardens of E. I. Couse and J. H. Sharp, two of the founders of the Taos Society of Artists. The well-preserved—and charming—complex of 19th and early 20th century buildings with original furnishings, ephemera, and art collections orients visitors to the remarkable confluence of creativity Taos represents.

The site highlights the people of Taos Pueblo and other **Indigenous contributions**, which include modeling for paintings and producing art collected by Couse and Sharp. The TSA were inspired by the local artwork, architecture, and relationships with their neighbors of Native and Spanish colonial heritage.

The site has something for everyone, including the **Virginia Walker Couse garden** designed by E. I. Couse's wife, believed to be the first decorative garden in the area. In the **Couse Home**, with sections built at various times between 1839 and 1930, see how these painters worked and lived.



In the **Couse Studio**, the artist's tools, furniture, cameras, and darkroom remain largely as he left them in 1936. Stand at his easel holding an unfinished painting near the model's stage and surrounded by Native art. Explore **Couse's collections** of local Hispano religious art, Pueblo pottery, Native beadwork and artifacts, and significant representation of his own work.

The **Kibbey Couse workshop** brims with period tools. The Couses's son was a gifted mechanical engineer and inventor, and the shop and **laboratory** are presented largely as he left them in 1936. Outside, Rosie the **Mobile Machine Shop** is one of the last remaining examples of Kibbey's most prominent invention, used widely during WWII.

The 1830s **Luna Chapel** was originally a Hispano family chapel that Sharp converted into a studio in 1909, and today is a venue for exhibitions. **Sharp's 1915 Studio**, restored to its former glory, showcases a rotating exhibition that spans his career and includes his paintings, archival materials, and Native American art he collected.



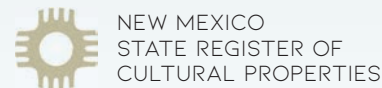
Photo by Gina Azzari



Photo by Francis Smith



Photo by Francis Smith



VISIT COUSE-SHARP HISTORIC SITE

Because of the immersive nature of the site, in which little is labeled or under glass, all **tours are docent-led** and take 1.5–2 hours. Tour starts are generally Monday–Saturday 10–3. Admission is free; donations gratefully accepted. Volunteer docents are scheduled for each group, so as much notice as possible is appreciated; request at couse-sharp.org/tour or call 575-751-0369.

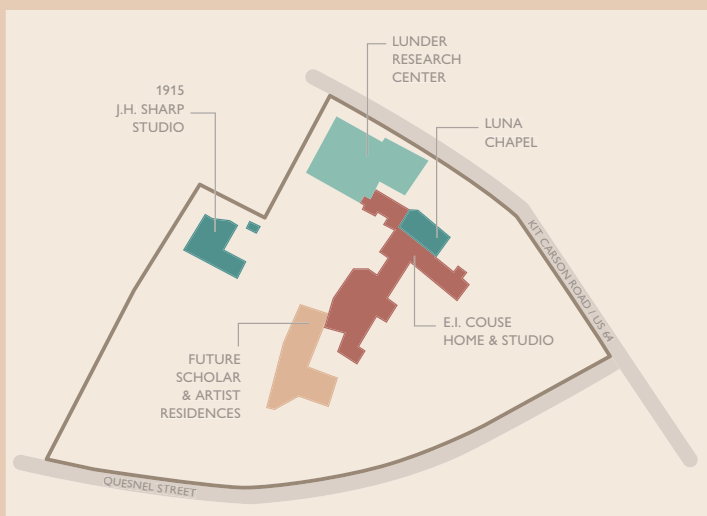
OPEN HOUSES with docents in each room are held some Saturdays (see couse-sharp.org for schedule and notice of events such as artist demonstrations).

THE DEAN PORTER GALLERY in The Lunder Research Center hosts exhibitions and is generally open Tuesday–Saturday 1–5 p.m., no appointment needed; check website for details.

PHOTOGRAPHY for personal use is encouraged.

ACCESSIBILITY: The gallery in the LRC is ADA accessible. The historic buildings and grounds contain steps and uneven walkways that present barriers for wheelchair users and challenges for others with mobility impairment. If you have concerns about the degree of difficulty, please call to discuss.

DONATIONS are our major source of income! For more information, visit couse-sharp.org/donate



Couse-Sharp Historic Site
146 Kit Carson Road
575.751.0369
admin@couse-sharp.org



couse-sharp.org
TAOS, NEW MEXICO