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MISSION TREASURES: HISTORICAL COLLECTION REVEALED EXHIBIT NOW PERMANENT

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. Sept. 6, 2011 – Did you see the Lincoln Document?

How about Father Serra's Vestment?

Anybody tell you about actress Mary Pickford's secret wedding at the Mission, captured in vivid color on canvas by a remarkable artist?

If you missed some of these incredible pieces of history on display at Mission San Juan Capistrano as part of the "Mission Treasures: Historical Collection Revealed" exhibit, not to worry. Because of popular demand, the exhibit's scheduled end date has been cancelled and it will now be a permanent exhibit. For those who haven't seen the breathtaking exhibit, as well as those who already have and would like to see it again, the exhibit's doors are open.

The exhibit features rare paintings, precious religious and historic artifacts, and documents related to the Mission's history dating back to the 1700s.

A small sample of what's on display:

LINCOLN DOCUMENT: Abraham Lincoln never got to visit California and just 27 days before he was felled by an assassin's bullet, Lincoln made California history with the stroke of a pen. In surely what was one of the final documents signed by nation's 16th President, Lincoln put his name to the Lincoln Document on March 18, 1865, which upheld the 1855 U.S. Land Commission's decision concerning all mission lands statewide and supported Bishop Alemany's 1851 petition to have all mission lands illegally confiscated and sold by the Mexican government returned to the Catholic Church.

TABERNACLE: This 19th century Spanish Colonial tabernacle with its intricate carvings and vibrant paint was purposefully designed to stand out from the other furnishings within Mission San Juan Capistrano's Serra Chapel and to inspire reverence and devotion for the contents housed inside.

ORIGINAL RECORDS: Every California mission has record books which date to the day of their founding, featuring the sacramental records of their parish community at the time. For Mission San Juan Capistrano, these books include the elegant writing on the first page of each of these records from the first Father President of the California Missions, Father Junipero Serra. On loan from the Diocese of Orange Archives, these three record books include the original baptism records, original marriage records and original burial records of Mission San Juan Capistrano.

FATHER ST. JOHN O'SULLVAN PORTRAIT: Mission San Juan Capistrano's Preservation Era began with the arrival of a young pastor named Father St. John O'Sullivan, who became known as the Mission's Great Restorer after he started a pivotal chapter in the Mission's evolution as a California landmark. Father O'Sullivan recruited local artists from the local artists' colony in Laguna Beach to help spread the word about the Mission's needs and goals. One such artist was the Hungarian-born Joseph Kleitsch, who visited the Mission often and, like many artists, exchanged artwork for room and board at the Mission. One of Kleitsch's pieces of work is a portrait of Father O'Sullivan.

FATHER JUNIPERO SERRA'S VESTMENT: This Vestment is reportedly one that was once worn by Father Serra, the foundation of the California mission system and is displayed as part of the Treasures collection. A vestment is a collection of religious or liturgical clothing priests wear when celebrating mass.

Fabricated in the 1700s, the chasuble, stole and maniple displayed in the exhibit were reportedly worn by Father Serra, the first President of the California Missions. Father Serra led the founding of the California Missions in 1769, and Mission San Juan Capistrano is one of the first nine missions that he founded. He celebrated mass in the building now known as the "Serra Chapel" in 1778 and 1784. Father Serra died in 1784 and is now being considered for sainthood.

The exhibit is open daily, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

About Mission San Juan Capistrano:

Known as the "Jewel of the Missions," Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that boasts of quality permanent exhibits featuring original artifacts as well as traveling and temporary exhibits on a wide variety of topics.

The site itself serves as a living outdoor museum with original buildings constructed by Native Americans in the 18th century including the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres' quarters of the South Wing.

The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain, and is Orange County's only mission. Every year, over 50,000 students visit the Mission and engage in an inspirational learning experience via the Mission Matters programming, as part of their State required California history studies.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and is supported by the Mission Preservation Foundation, which is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term preservation and viability of Orange County's only Mission. The Mission receives no funding from either the Church or the State of California and charges admission funds as a means of providing public access.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Open Daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Good Friday afternoon. Admission is \$9 adults; \$8 seniors (60 years or over); \$5 children (ages 4 to 11); and children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Free audio guide with senior and adult admission. For more information, call (949) 234-1300 or visit www.missionsjc.com.