

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 7, 2011

**SONOMA COUNTY MUSEUM RECEIVES \$300,000 CHALLENGE GRANT
FROM NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES**

**Major Matching Grant Awarded to Endow Collections, Develop Long-term Collections
Storage**

SANTA ROSA, CA -- The Sonoma County Museum (SCM) received a five-year, three-hundred-thousand dollar Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in support of its *Collections Initiative*. Only one other NEH Challenge Grant was given in California in 2010.

The NEH matching grant was awarded to *SCM's Collection Initiative*, a project directed by Executive Director, Diane Evans and History Curator, Eric Stanley. Evans says the grant requires the Museum to raise \$900,000 over the next five years in matching funds. The grant and matching dollars will total \$1.2 million, which will be designated toward endowment for the support of staffing to care for and manage the Museum's extensive collections, as well as funds to ensure safe long-term collections storage.

According to the terms of the SCM grant, the Museum must raise \$60,000 by July 31, 2011 to meet the first stage of the Challenge Grant. This funding will be restricted in support of the *Collections Initiative* as part of the five-year challenge and cannot support other Museum programs or campaigns.

The Museum's *Collections Initiative* is a long-range program created to address what Evans identifies as a priority for the sustainability and management of SCM's collections. SCM's collection of over 20,000 objects documents Sonoma County's rich history and culture. The SCM collection is incredibly diverse including archival photographs and prints, costumes and textiles, industrial tools and machinery, wood sculpture and furniture, and other objects, documents, and graphics connected to Sonoma County's diverse communities, commerce, technologies, and lifestyles. Highlights of the collection include the Song Wong Bourbeau Collection, which represents the rich history and culture of Santa Rosa's Chinatown, and the Tom Golden Collection of works by Christo and Jeanne Claude. The *Collections Initiative* endowment will support a staff position to manage the collections, as well as support much-needed environmental conditioning ensuring long-term safe storage for the art and artifacts.

According to the NEH grant announcement, challenge grants strengthen the humanities by encouraging non-federal sources of support and helping institutions secure long-term improvements in and support for their humanities programs and resources.

About Sonoma County Museum:

Founded in 1985, the Sonoma County Museum is the region's only art and history museum with a collection of over 20,000 objects. Through the preservation of collections and the presentation of exhibitions and programs, the Museum attracts more than 20,000 people annually.

Hours:

Tuesday – Sunday, 11am -5pm, Closed Major Holidays

Admission:

\$5 general, \$2 for students & seniors, Free to museum members and children under 12

Location:

425 7th Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Website:

www.sonomacountymuseum.org



The National Endowment for the Humanities: Because democracy demands wisdom.