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## Junipero Serra Exhibit at Huntington Museum Includes 250 Rare Objects

**Santa Monica, CA (August, 2013)**—The William H. Hannon Foundation is proud to announce a \$25,000 grant to support The Huntington’s August 17, 2013-January 6, 2014 exhibition “*Junipero Serra and the Legacies of the California Missions*,” slated to coincide with the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Serra. Located in San Marino, The Huntington’s exhibition will examine Serra’s early life and career in Mallorca, Spain; his mission work in Mexico and California; the diversity and complexity of California Indian cultures; and the experiences of the missionaries and Indians who lived in the missions.

The exhibition also delves into the preservation and reconstruction of the missions as physical structures; the persistence of Indian culture from before the mission period to the present; the missions’ enduring place in California culture today; and a wide variety of perspectives—some of them irreconcilable—on Serra and the meaning of his life.

Among the items on display will be Serra’s baptismal record from the Spanish island of Mallorca; his Bible and lecture notes from Mallorca; and the diary he composed as he traveled from Baja California to San Diego in 1769. Notable and unique items documenting Indian culture in California include a textile fragment, thousands of years old, woven by California Indians from seaweed and fiber, as well as beads, tools, baskets, and written documents from the colonial period.

The late William H. Hannon, founder of the Foundation that bears his name, had a fascination with early California history and real estate, which led to a lifelong admiration of Serra. He often said, “Father Serra was the first developer of California. If you buy real estate, buy within a twenty mile radius of a Mission. California’s twenty-one Missions are all near fertile soil and water.”

To promote the spirit of Serra, the William H. Hannon Foundation commissioned an artist to design a life size bronze statue of Serra. From this single mold, the Foundation had almost one hundred additional statues cast and placed at the California Missions and at various Catholic schools and universities.

The William H. Hannon Foundation continues its founder’s interest in Serra through an annual essay contest at over forty Catholic elementary schools. Fourth grade students visit the Missions, conduct research and write essays about the life of Fray Serra. Two outstanding essays are selected from each school, and the winning students are each awarded William H. Hannon Scholarships toward their fifth grade tuition. In addition, each school receives a grant for tuition aid or computers.

“My late uncle greatly admired Junipero Serra and we are able to continue to honor his thoughtful promotion of the important works of Serra through what will be an incredible exhibition at The Huntington. I am just sorry my uncle won’t be there. I know he would have loved to have seen the items that were actually used by Serra,” said Kathleen Hannon Aikenhead, President of the William H. Hannon Foundation.