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A PIECE OF PRESTON CASTLE HISTORY COMES HOME

IONE, CA: The Preston Castle Foundation is excited to announce the return of the Preston Castle's Pelton wheel to the castle grounds. As part of the restoration and preservation of the historic Preston Castle, the Preston Castle Foundation has worked to locate equipment and other items that were originally housed at the castle. With the support of city, county and state representatives, the Preston Castle Foundation was able to convince the Oakland Museum to send the Pelton wheel back to its original home rather than another museum.

The Preston Castle was originally lighted by gas lights and was converted to electricity in late 1896. The castle's electricity was generated by a water-driven Pelton wheel generator which was housed in a power building at the castle. The Pelton wheel received water via pipeline from ponds located outside of the Preston property.

In 1968, the Oakland Museum acquired Preston Castle's Pelton wheel from the State of California, where the entire piece was restored to its original colors and glory. Preston's Pelton wheel has been on display in the Early California section of the Oakland Museum since 1970. When the museum began renovating, the decision was made to send one of the two Pelton wheels in the museum's collection to another location. That's when the Preston Castle Foundation stepped in.

With the help of letters of support from Senator Dave Cox, the Major of Ione – Andrea Bonham, the Amador Historical Society, Garavaglia Architecture of San Francisco as well as a resolution and letter from the Amador County Supervisor – Richard Forster, the Preston Castle Foundation was able to make a presentation to the Oakland Museum Chief Curator to state the case for why the Pelton Wheel should be returned to the Preston Castle.

The Foundation's efforts paid off. Ownership of the Pelton wheel was transferred to the Preston Castle Foundation, and the wheel was delivered to the Castle grounds on May 13. The Pelton wheel will be on display in a scaled down model of the Castle's original power building.

The First of Many Artifacts to Return

The Preston Castle Foundation would like to thank Mr. Felizardo C. Ding for his donation of an Open Platen Press originally housed at the Preston Castle. The press was used in Preston

School's vocational program until 1973 when it was put up for a silent auction and procured by Mr. Ding who has maintained it.

Thanks to the Mike Smylie of the California Department of Forestry (CDF), a 1953 GMC American La France fire engine is returning the Preston Castle The vintage "Number 32" truck still has State of California Preston School proudly identified on her doors. Engine Number 32 had company on its return. Already resting in the Preston Castle's renovated firehouse is Engine Number 2, a 1937 American La France fire truck. This truck operated in the city of Ione when Ione was incorporated in 1953.

The Preston Castle Foundation is continually searching for historical items from the Preston Castle. Anyone wanting to share their stories or other artifacts from Preston's past, can contact the Castle Foundation via email at info@prestoncastle.com or phone at (209) 256-3623. Help us bring Preston Castle's past alive again!

About Preston Castle Foundation

The Preston Castle Foundation began work in 1997 to restore, preserve and provide utilization of this important California landmark. The Preston Castle Foundation was recently awarded a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Known today as the "Preston Castle," the Preston School of Industry opened in 1894. Vacant since 1960, the building now needs full restoration to become a self-sustaining community resource. Tours of the castle are available the first and third Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., March through October. Help save the castle by visiting www.prestoncastle.com. All contributions are tax deductible.

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