

NEWS RELEASE

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Salisbury House & Gardens Awarded \$125,000 Legacy Grant from Prairie Meadows Racetrack & Casino

December 7, 2010 – Des Moines, IA - The Salisbury House Foundation is pleased to announce a \$125,000 Legacy Grant awarded by Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino as part of funding necessary to make possible a \$1 million critical repair and restoration project to the nationally significant historic house museum and cultural center in the heart of Des Moines.

The Prairie Meadows grant will assist in providing matching support for current funding secured through a State of Iowa Historic Preservation Grant (HSPG) of \$100,000 and a Federal Save America's Treasures (SAT) grant of \$400,000, both requiring 100% match from other sources.

SHF Board President Mike Simonson says of the Prairie Meadows grant, "We're grateful that the Prairie Meadows Advisory Board recognizes how important Salisbury House & Gardens is to the community – and to the Midwest in general."

Badly deteriorated interior limestone walls in the Great Hall will see restoration work begin early in 2011 while additional matching funds are secured to complete critical repairs to stabilize the foundation and address waterproofing issues that have compromised masonry walls.

Extensive rains during 2010 infiltrated the foundation and caused unforeseen damage including that to the Indian Room, a significant historic room at Salisbury House, forcing it to be closed to the public until repairs can be made. Historic terraces and retaining walls, a key element to the visitor's experience, are in dire need of repair and rebuilding as well.

SHF Director of Development Marcia Martin credits stakeholders and supporters with encouraging community leaders to support such important work at Salisbury House. Martin says, "Many supporters are helping in the effort to encourage other community leaders to provide the remaining matching funding. We're encouraged at the outstanding response we're receiving and hope to have the remaining funds committed by early 2011."

Salisbury House & Gardens, a forty-two room estate built and furnished in the 1920s by cosmetics entrepreneur Carl Weeks and his wife Edith, serves thousands of guests annually for educational tours, cultural and historic programs, and private and corporate events. The grand home houses an authentic and irreplaceable collection of art and artifacts and rare books and documents collected from throughout the world and brought back to Iowa by the Weeks family.

Mark Heppner, SHF Executive Director, says, "Plans are to make the repair and restoration project part of the visitors' experience as we invite SHF members and guests to visit at critical points throughout the project to see progress and learn what it takes to manage a national treasure."

Salisbury House & Gardens is open to the public for tours March through December Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10:00 – 5:00. The house was completed in 1928 by Carl and Edith Weeks and modeled after the King's House in Salisbury, England. Visitors can get more information at www.salisburyhouse.org.