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PRESS RELEASE

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Sherlock Holmes Live-Action Radio Drama Returns to Gillette Castle This Summer Thanks to Grant from Connecticut Humanities

East Haddam, CT – The Town of East Haddam’s Economic Development Commission will be using a Public Presentation Grant of \$2,600 from Connecticut Humanities to support free outdoor performances of a Sherlock Holmes live-action radio drama at Gillette Castle State Park for six weekends in July and August 2013. This is the fifth summer of live theater at the park presented by the East Haddam Stage Company (EHSCO) and sponsored in partnership with the local business community.

Gillette Castle, overlooking the Connecticut River, and its surrounding 184 acres, located at 67 River Road in East Haddam, was the last home of William Gillette, a famous Victorian actor, director, and playwright who created the detective Sherlock Holmes character for stage. On Saturday and Sunday afternoons, twice daily from July 6th to August 11th, Gillette Castle State Park visitors are invited to become the 'studio audience' for a free live-action radio drama "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Speckled Band." Four actors will portray all the characters and sound effects, using the actual 1930 script that William Gillette used for the first-ever Sherlock Holmes radio broadcast. The 30-minute shows, presented at 1:00pm and 3:00pm, will "bring to life" the genius that was William Gillette. The outdoor performance area is located just steps from the Castle. The public is invited to sit on the bleachers or bring blankets or chairs. (If rain, the performance is cancelled.)

Audience guests will witness the "secrets" behind the creation of sounds for radio, such as horse drawn carriages, wind blowing, and whips cracking – all on cue! The businesses and supporting sponsors are even promoted with authentic radio commercials of the era. Visitors return to the Castle to experience the live theater each year. "Are you doing the shows again this summer? We don't want to miss it. We loved it last year," recently inquired a couple from Northwestern Connecticut. Others happen upon the performances and are pleasantly surprised. "It was a perfect afternoon. We brought a picnic, toured the Castle, and even got to see a show," noted a family from the Hartford area, "I am so glad we walked over to see what was going on with the stage and the costumes." Visitors from across the country commented, "I wish we had this in California!" "This unique offering of free live theater at a Connecticut State Park is as unique as the stone castle and William Gillette himself," said Deb Mathiasen, East Haddam Tourism Representative, "Guests are drawn to Gillette Castle for the history and the natural beauty. This summer, they can enhance their experience by attending the Sherlock Holmes live-action radio drama, an arts event not to be missed!"

For further information, please visit www.EHSCO.org or call 860-873-3521.

The East Haddam Economic Development Commission promotes compatible and sustainable economic development by encouraging business growth and expansion consistent with East Haddam’s historic character, quality of life, and natural environment. Tourism and visitor activities focus on "History, Arts and Natural Beauty" throughout the town. "The Commission wanted to support the live theater presentations at the Castle, an attraction that draws 300,000 national and international visitors to town annually. With the grant from Connecticut Humanities and through our partnership with the East Haddam Stage Company, additional attractions and local businesses can be promoted. Knowing more about what East Haddam has to offer is a win for visitors, and a win for the town," said the East Haddam Tourism Representative, Deb Mathiasen. Further information may be found on the East Haddam Municipal Website, www.easthaddam.org

Connecticut Humanities (CTH) is a non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities that funds, creates and collaborates on hundreds of cultural programs across Connecticut each year. Connecticut Humanities brings together people of all ages and backgrounds to express, share and explore ideas in thoughtful and productive ways. From local discussion groups to major exhibitions on important historical events, CTH programs engage, enlighten and educate. Learn more by visiting www.cthumanities.org

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