



Novato man loans rare items to Museum of American Finance

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Ken Winans displays a stock ticker machine designed by Thomas Edison in 1870. (IJ photo/Frankie Frost)

Visitors to the new Museum of American Finance on Wall Street in New York will have the opportunity to view rare items from the collection of Novato money manager Ken Winans, a history and space exploration buff.

Winans loaned the financial history museum select antique documents from his collection and will allow it to keep them as long as they are on display. He chose not to donate the items because museums such as the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., are notorious for accepting collections and placing them in storage, he said.

Winans, president of Winans International

Investment Management & Research, said he is excited to be a part of the museum.

"It's going to be a huge draw," said Winans, adding that many schools have already booked tours.

The museum is the brainchild of Wall Street broker John Herzog, who wanted to educate the public about capital markets. It initially opened in a modest basement space in the U.S. Customs House at 26 Broadway in 1988.

In 2002, San Francisco-based Wells Fargo Bank, preparing to celebrate its 150th anniversary, donated \$1,000 for each year it had been in business. More recently, the Goldman Sachs Group also has taken a prominent role, helping it to relocate to its new address at 48 Wall St., where it opened to the public on Friday.

"They put out the call to various people they knew were collectors and I sent them an inventory list," Winans said. "A large percentage of items came from people like me."

The most interesting piece Winans contributed to the exhibit is a gold nugget about an inch long and half-inch wide that was found in the S.S. Central America, which sank in 1857.

"It's from the gold rush in the Sierra Nevada," Winans said.

He also offered several bonds, including the first convertible bond from a railroad company from 1872. Also on display is a 1940 San Francisco-St. Louis railroad security certificate.

A more recent addition to his collection is a 2001 copy of a canceled Enron certificate signed by its CEO, the late Kenneth Lay, before the company's fraud scandal broke.

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Winans, 45, has been in the investment business since 1981 and has been a money manager for 14 years. He manages \$112 million in client assets.

He has one of the largest private collections of space artifacts, some of which are displayed at the Chabot Space & Science Center and at the USS Hornet Museum in the East Bay.

Lee Kjelleren, president and chief executive of the museum, said the move to Wall Street will enable the museum to expand its reach, giving visitors a greater awareness of the finance industry.

"As the only public and independent museum of finance, we are proud to be a guardian of America's collective financial memory, while also serving as an interpreter of current financial issues," Kjelleren said.

"We look forward to taking our place among the major destinations on Wall Street."

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