

**DRAFT**

**Press Release**

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Mary Fugere, 757-728-5327, [mary@hamptoncvb.com](mailto:mary@hamptoncvb.com),

Erin McMahan Black, 757-726-5437, [ebblack@hampton.gov](mailto:ebblack@hampton.gov)

**Interpretive markers reveal Hampton past, commemorate anniversary**  
*--Four centuries of historical happenings interpreted at 65 sites--*

(Hampton, VA, November 5, 2009) Illuminating Hampton's important role in American history is a key objective for 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemoration planners as the city gears up for its quadricentennial in 2010. To succeed in revealing a history that began before the arrival of the Virginia Company in 1607, the Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau (CVB) is producing a series of markers that will be placed throughout the city. While the Hampton CVB's primary audience is potential visitors, leaders are confident the markers will be as educational and enjoyable to regional residents.

"It is amazing what transpired on ground that now serves, for instance, as a golf course, a community center, and a corporate center" said Hampton CVB director Sallie Grant-DiVenuti. "These markers will help bring to light the lives of everyday citizens and heroes of their time who lived, worked and died by the Chesapeake Bay. It is through their contributions and passions that Hampton continues to thrive."

Sixty-five markers placed in Phoebus, NASA Langley, Buckroe, Hampton University, Aberdeen Gardens, Fox Hill, Downtown Hampton, and other sites throughout the city will result from collaborative effort. Volunteers participating in a 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Legacy Committee will contribute to the research required for each of the markers. Paul Clancy, freelance writer and author of *Historic Hampton Roads: Where History Began*, will conduct further research and draft approximately 200 words of copy for each marker. Two to three historic images needed for each marker will be provided by the community, the Hampton History Museum, and other resources as needed.

The markers will be produced in partnership with Civil War Trails, the non-profit corporation that has interpreted Civil War sites throughout Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland, North Carolina and West Virginia. The state and partner- funded organization has produced markers to interpret other Hampton heritage sites, including eight at Fort Wool, seven in Olde Wythe and thirteen Hampton Civil War sites. Each of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary markers will be fabricated in a design consistent with the Civil War Trails program. When installation is complete, all marker locations will be highlighted in a brochure available at the Hampton Visitor Center and for download from the Hampton CVB's web site, [visithampton.com](http://visithampton.com).

Total cost of the program is \$180,000 to be funded by the Hampton CVB. Recognizing the importance of Hampton's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary and anticipating the need, the CVB has earmarked funds for four years to be used for projects such as this one.

The Hampton 400 committee consists of Hampton citizens and representatives of businesses, churches, neighborhoods, Hampton University and the City of Hampton. For further information on Hampton 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary programming, visit [Hampton400.com](http://Hampton400.com) or call 757/727-8311.

*Partially bordered by the Hampton Roads harbor and Chesapeake Bay, Hampton is located in the center of the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. Hampton is the site of America's first continuous English-speaking settlement and is home to such visitor attractions as the Virginia Air & Space Center and Riverside IMAX® Theater, Hampton History Museum, harbor tours and cruises, Hampton University Museum (the oldest African American Museum in the US), Aberdeen Gardens, Fort Monroe (Freedom's Fortress), award-winning Hampton Coliseum, The American Theatre, among others. Hampton was twice-named All-America City, the nation's oldest and most prominent community recognition award.*

###