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NO CLOWNING AROUND: THE BARNUM MUSEUM GETS A FACE PAINT

Hampton Hotels' Save-A-Landmark Program Launches Renovation of The Barnum Museum

Beverly Hills, CA, September 25 – Today in honor of the iconic American showman Phineas Taylor (P.T.) Barnum, Hampton® Hotels' Save-A-Landmark® program (www.hamptonlandmarks.com) kicked off a major initiative to restore The Barnum Museum in Bridgeport, Conn. The event drew support from the local community, as well as First Lady Laura Bush.

More than 30 volunteers from local Hampton Hotels worked an estimated 150 hours to restore and refresh the museum from top hat to toe. Volunteers took great care to help paint the interior and exterior structure of the building, preserved intricate stain glass windows and restored an original tin ceiling and wooden doors. This technical support from Hampton will increase public awareness of the significance of historic preservation, while preserving the character and ensuring the vitality of the national historic treasure.

“P.T. Barnum was committed to the cultural development of Bridgeport, which naturally aligns with Hampton’s goal to preserve historical landmarks across the globe,” says Judy Christa-Cathey, vice president of brand marketing for Hampton Hotels. “The Barnum Museum is an important part of New England’s cultural heartbeat and we are thrilled to enable future generations to learn of P.T. Barnum’s legacy from this nationally significant site.”

Anita McBride, assistant to the President of the United States and chief of staff to First Lady Laura Bush, was at this morning’s event to present and read a letter from Mrs. Bush. Mrs. Bush is the Honorary Chair of Preserve America, which maintains America’s historical and cultural sites. Hampton Hotels, a recipient of the Preserve America Presidential Award, contributed \$40,000 to the preservation of The Barnum Museum. Additional local and state dignitaries that attended the landmark event to show their support for The Barnum Museum’s renovation included Bill Finch, mayor of the City of Bridgeport; Rob Russo, state senator; Rina Bakalar, district director to Congressman Shays and Helen Higgins, executive director of CT Trust for Historic Preservation.

The Barnum Museum opened in 1893 and is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Bridgeport’s industrial social history and the life and times of P.T. Barnum. A one-term mayor of

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Bridgeport and four-term member of the Connecticut General Assembly, Barnum was born July 5, 1810 in Bethel, Conn. and died April 7, 1891 in Bridgeport, Conn.

With three floors of fascinating exhibits that illustrate the extraordinary business and personal accomplishments of P.T. Barnum, the museum is an outstanding educational resource for students of all ages. The original museum building, owned by the city of Bridgeport, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is handicap accessible.

In 2008, Hampton Hotels Save-A-Landmark program has been devoted to honoring “Landmark Legends,” such as P.T. Barnum, who each have instilled positive change in America and will remind the world of the greater legacy each of these legends have left behind. The Barnum Museum is the fifth Save-A-Landmark project of 2008, and the 40th in the program’s nine-year history. Save-A-Landmark has successfully refurbished a landmark in 30 states, with the program’s ultimate goal being to “save” a landmark in each of the 50 states by the end of 2010.

Hampton’s Save-A-Landmark program is continuing its ninth year preserving historical, fun and cultural landmarks, from the Carousel Gardens in New Orleans, La. to the historical National Monument to the Forefathers in Plymouth, Mass. During this time, the program has helped research landmarks in need, promoted landmark sites and their importance, facilitated thousands of volunteer hours, donated several tons of supplies and worked with matching grants — all at an investment of more than \$2.5 million. Uniting its hotels together in the communities they serve, Hampton employee-volunteers work hand-in-hand on the landmarks while Hampton provides the financial support to refurbish selected sites.

About Hampton Hotels

Hampton, which includes Hampton Inn, Hampton by Hilton and Hampton Inn & Suites hotels, is a mid-priced leader in the lodging segment. Hampton is part of Hilton Hotels Corporation, a leading global hospitality company, with more than 3,000 hotels and 500,000 rooms in 74 countries and territories, with more than 135,000 team members worldwide. The company owns, manages or franchises some of the best known and highly regarded hotel brands including Hilton®, Conrad® Hotels & Resorts, Doubletree®, Embassy Suites Hotels®, Hampton Inn®, Hampton Inn & Suites®, Hilton Garden Inn®, Hilton Grand Vacations™, Homewood Suites by Hilton® and The Waldorf=Astoria Collection™.

Hilton Hotels Corporation is an Official Sponsor of the U.S. Olympic Team, which will extend through the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver, the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London, the 2010/2012 U.S. Paralympic Team and the 2011 U.S. Pan American Team.

The Hilton Family of Hotels adheres to founder Conrad Hilton’s philosophy that, “It has been, and continues to be, our responsibility to fill the earth with the light and warmth of hospitality.” The company put a name to its unique brand of service that has made it the best known and most highly regarded hotel company: **be hospitable®**. The philosophy is shared by all brands in the Hilton Family of Hotels, and is the inspiration for its overarching message of kindness and generosity.

For more information about Hampton Hotels, please visit www.hampton.com/pressandmedia.

About The Barnum Museum

Phineas Taylor Barnum, one-term mayor of Bridgeport and four-term member of the Connecticut General Assembly, was born July 5, 1810 in Bethel and died April 7, 1891 in Bridgeport. The original museum building,

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owned by the City of Bridgeport, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is totally handicapped accessible.

Regular Museum Hours: Tuesday - Saturday - 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Sunday – Noon to 4:30 p.m. Closed Mondays and Holidays (New Years Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas).

For more information about The Barnum Museum, please call 203-331-1104 or visit barnum-museum.org

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