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“LITTLE HOUSE” RECEIVES BIG MAKEOVER COURTESY OF HAMPTON HOTELS

Legendary American Author Laura Ingalls Wilder and the Wilder Memorial Society Honored by Hampton Hotels' Save-A-Landmark® Program Restoration Effort

Memphis, Tenn., June 12 – Renowned author Laura Ingalls Wilder, best known for her “Little House” series of novels, penned five of her narratives about her childhood home in De Smet, S.D. Wilder’s home, which has been under the care and preservation of the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society (<http://discoverlaura.org/>) since her death in 1957, will receive a much-needed makeover with the help of Hampton® Hotels’ Save-A-Landmark® program.

The restoration effort is the second Save-A-Landmark project of 2008 and the 37th in the program’s nine-year history. Dozens of volunteers from local Hampton Hotels will carefully clean, prime, paint and repair historical buildings from Laura Ingalls Wilder’s life, including the following:

- **Ingalls’ home**, built by Laura’s Pa in 1887 was the final home that the Ingalls family lived in on the property
- **Surveyors’ house**, was the original home that the Ingalls family lived in upon arriving in De Smet in 1879. Laura writes about this landmark in her book, “By the Shores of Silver Lake” The home was a landmark to all those who traveled West in 1880
- **First School of De Smet**, which is the original building where Laura and her sister Carrie attended school from 1880 to 1885. In April 2007, the school became the newest addition to the Society’s headquarters, after serving as a private residence for many years
- **Laura Ingalls Wilder Gift Shop**, which serves as an important piece of the Society’s headquarters.

In addition, volunteers will revamp the landscape with grasses and flowers native to the South Dakota prairie, as well as repave the sidewalk and steps leading up to the Surveyors’ house, the First School of De Smet and the Gift Shop, making all buildings handicap accessible. Hampton Hotels will contribute more than 85 volunteer hours towards ensuring the ongoing care of the national landmarks.

The Hampton Hotels Save-A-Landmark 2008 campaign – aptly named “Landmark Legends,” is devoted to restoring sites that pay homage to prominent Americans. This year’s program kicked-off in Memphis, honoring the 40th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s untimely passing, with the

refurbishment of the National Civil Rights Museum. Several other iconic locations such as [Amelia Earhart's Birthplace and Museum](#), the [Barnum Museum](#), and the [Poe Museum](#) will be refurbished in 2008 through Save-A-Landmark as well. The list of legendary figures was generated from a nationwide survey, conducted by Hampton Hotels, to celebrate the accomplishments of those Americans who have inspired change, overcome adversity and made a difference.

“Laura Ingalls Wilder was an innovator in American literature. We’re proud to be able to help repair the grounds in which she lived, wrote and taught,” said Judy Christa-Cathey, vice president of brand marketing for Hampton Hotels.

Those looking to discover other locations devoted to historic individuals – or to possibly nominate their own “Landmark Legend” – can visit the Save-A-Landmark site at www.hamptonlandmarks.com and click on “submit a landmark” to enter a nomination for a legendary landmark. Below is just a sample of “heroic” landmarks already included in the program’s online database.

- **Jesse Owens Memorial Park**, Danville, Ala.: This park honors Olympic great [Jesse Owens](#), an Oakville native who won four gold medals in the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, the first American and the second athlete in history to win four gold medals.
- **Jackie Robinson Birthplace**, Cairo, Ga.: Born here on January 31, 1919 to sharecroppers and enslaved grandparents on what was once a plantation, [Jackie Robinson](#) – the first African-American major league baseball player – was just two years old when his mother packed up Jackie and his four siblings, hopped on a train and headed to California.
- **Hellen Keller Birthplace**, Tuscumbia, Ala.: This small birthplace cottage was the site of the remarkable story of [Helen Keller](#), the woman who was struck blind and deaf after becoming ill around the age of two. The home, called Ivy Green, eventually became the living quarters for Helen and her teacher, Anne Sullivan, whose huge teaching strides with Helen began by simply spelling out the word "water" in Helen’s hand as she pumped water over it.
- **Celia Cruz and Freedom Tower**, Miami, Fla.: The Cuban songstress [Celia Cruz](#), “the Queen of Salsa,” performed at Freedom Tower during a 2001 fundraiser to turn the site into a museum, and was later brought to the tower after her death so tens of thousands of mourners could pay their last respects to the legendary singer. Known as the Ellis Island of the Cuban community, Freedom Tower is where immigration officials processed more than 500,000 Cubans who fled the country in the 1960s.

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.

Landmark nominations have been a key element of the Save-A-Landmark program's success since its inception in 2000, with thousands of nominations provided by the public. Submissions can be made online at www.hamptonlandmarks.com or by mailing recommendations c/o Save-A-Landmark to 8730 Sunset Blvd, 5th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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, the leading global hospitality company, with more than 3,000 hotels and 500,000 rooms in 74 countries, 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.

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