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HAMPTON HOTELS CLEANS OUT THE COBWEBS OF THE POE MUSEUM

Edgar Allan Poe and the Poe Museum Honored by Hampton® Hotels' Save-A-Landmark® Program with Restoration Effort

Beverly Hills, Calif., October 30 – Known as the father of detective and mystery fiction, Edgar Allan Poe has been appreciated by children and adults alike for his macabre genius throughout the past 150 years. Today in honor of the internationally renowned author, Hampton® Hotels refurbished the Poe Museum in Richmond, Va. as part of its ongoing Save-A-Landmark® program (www.hamptonlandmarks.com). Housing one of the world's finest collections of Poe's manuscripts, letters, first editions, memorabilia and personal belongings, the Poe Museum features the life and career of Edgar Allan Poe, focusing on the 13 years he spent in Richmond.

The restoration effort was the sixth Save-A-Landmark project of 2008, and the 41st in the program's nine-year history. Dozens of volunteers from local Hampton Hotels worked an estimated 100 hours to prepare the museum for the upcoming celebration of Edgar Allan Poe's bicentennial in January 2009. The hotel volunteers, some dressed in their Halloween best, worked to restore the courtyard garden to its original 1920s appearance by landscaping the grounds with flowers and plant life mentioned throughout Poe's works. The Save-A-Landmark program also repaired wood damage and added a fresh coat of paint around the museum's buildings. A stone monument honoring the importance of the grounds to Poe's poem, "To One In Paradise," was also installed and further curatorial cleaning to interior Poe exhibits was also conducted. In addition, during a presentation ceremony, Hampton Hotels granted the museum \$35,000 for its ongoing preservation.

"Edgar Allan Poe created or mastered five literary genres – the short story, detective fiction, science fiction, lyric poetry and, of course, the horror story," said Judy Christa-Cathey, vice president of brand marketing for Hampton Hotels. "Poe's legacy as one of America's most influential authors should never be forgotten. Our goal is to help preserve organizations like the Poe Museum so that they may continue educating and inspiring people for years to come."

Founded in Richmond in 1921, the Poe Museum has been an institution for more than 85 years. At the time the Museum was founded, all buildings in Richmond where Poe had lived or worked had been demolished or condemned. Poe never owned property, but he grew up in several residences in Richmond

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and was a tenant of still others as an adult working in the city. After World War I, the founders of the Poe Museum used rubble from two buildings where Poe lived and worked as building materials for the original Poe Shrine, which still stands in the center of the courtyard garden. The museum attracts visitors year round, each celebrating the life of one of America's first internationally renowned authors through the various exhibitions, lectures, publications, special events, and educational programs.

In 2008, Hampton Hotels' Save-A-Landmark program has been devoted to honoring "Landmark Legends," such as Edgar Allan Poe, who each have instilled positive change in America and will remind the world of the greater legacy each of these legends have left behind. Save-A-Landmark has successfully refurbished a landmark in 31 states, with the program's ultimate goal being to "save" a landmark in each of the 50 states by the end of 2010.

The volunteer efforts at the Poe Museum helped Hampton's Save-A-Landmark program complete 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.

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