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## **HAMPTON HOTELS SETS SAIL TOWARDS ANOTHER LANDMARK REFURBISHMENT**

*Hampton Hotels' Save-A-Landmark volunteers restore the last known maritime signal tower in America*

**Beverly Hills, Calif., May 28** – More than 200 years ago, local sea Captain Lemuel Moody ordered the construction of the Portland Observatory to serve as a communication station for Portland, Maine's bustling harbor. Today, volunteers from Hampton® Hotels' Save-A-Landmark® program worked an estimated 75 hours to preserve the treasured landmark, which now operates as a museum. Declared a National Historic Landmark in 2006, the Portland Observatory is the last known remaining historic maritime signal station in the United States.

Hampton Hotels' Save-A-Landmark refurbishment efforts sent more than a dozen volunteers worked on various refurbishment projects to prepare the Portland Observatory for its busy summer season. These projects included the cleaning of the exterior of the tower, repair damage from the sea air and polish the interior. In all, Hampton Hotels' Save-A-Landmark program donated \$10,000 toward the refurbishment, which will also provide the Observatory's exterior with a fresh coat of paint from contractors who specialize in historic structures.

"After weathering storms for more than 200 years, the Portland Observatory is in need of some TLC," said Judy Christa-Cathey, vice president of brand marketing for Hampton Hotels. "The Portland Observatory stands as a beacon of the city of Portland and the important maritime history of the United States. In our year of 'All-American Landmarks,' Hampton is helping to ensure that future generations of visitors will have a chance to stand in the shadow of this iconic piece of Americana, through the hard work of our local Hampton volunteers."

In 1807, native Portland resident, Captain Lemuel Moody, gave the order to begin building the 86-foot high tower to facilitate communication between ship and shore in Portland's harbor. Before the construction of the tower, ships entering the harbor could not be seen from the docks of Portland. But with his ingenuity, Captain Moody developed a system to identify incoming vessels from as far away as 30 miles alerting subscribing merchants by hoisting signal flags identifying their vessels. He coined the phrase "signalizing" to describe his system.

Although the tower ceased its signal activities in 1923, the Portland Observatory still offers spectacular views of Portland's harbor and serves as a symbol of the city's rich seafaring heritage. Most importantly, as the last remaining maritime signal tower, the Portland Observatory stands as a symbol of the American "Golden Age of Sail." Currently, Greater Portland Landmarks operates the Observatory as a museum and historic site, offering educational programs and seasonal guided tours.

This refurbishment is the third landmark of the nine "All-American Landmarks" that will be refurbished in Hampton's 2009 Save-A-Landmark campaign. This year, Hampton is devoted to restoring sites that represent what it means to be American, such as the Robert Frost Farm and Washington House, the "Birthplace of the Ice Cream Sundae." Communities across the country showed their American pride by casting thousands of votes to help elect the landmarks that will be restored this year. The public voted for their favorite "All-American Landmarks" in nine states, including Maine, Minnesota, Kentucky, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Each site that Save-A-Landmark will refurbish reflects the individual personalities of the states and their residents, such as the Portland Observatory Museum, and signifies defining moments in the country's past.

Over the past decade, Hampton has worked to preserve 43 other 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 tens of thousands of volunteer hours, donated several tons of supplies and worked with matching grants – all at an investment of more than \$3.5 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. The Save-A-Landmark program has already successfully refurbished a landmark in 34 other states, continuing on with the ultimate goal to "save" a landmark from each of the 50 states by the end of 2010.

#### **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 3,300 hotels and 550,000 rooms in 77 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™, Home2 Suites by Hilton™, Homewood Suites by Hilton® and The Waldorf=Astoria Collection™ as well as the recently launched Home2 Suites by Hilton™. The company also manages the world-class guest reward program Hilton HHonors®.

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