



Hampton

CONVENTION & VISITOR BUREAU

Media Release

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15th Annual Blackbeard Pirate Festival Announces Complete Schedule

*--Demise of most daunting colonial pirate celebrated in three-day event;
Prepare to Walk the Plank!--*

Hampton, VA- Pillage and plunder your way through the coastal seaport city of Hampton, Virginia this May 30-June 1 when the 15th annual Hampton Blackbeard Pirate Festival returns for another year of swashbuckling excitement! Celebrate Hampton's rich maritime heritage by commemorating the demise of our most infamous visitor, Captain Edward Teach, a.k.a. Blackbeard the Pirate.

During the later part of the 1600's and early 1700's, pirates roamed the coastal waters of Virginia and North Carolina in search of ships laden with tobacco and other goods. The marauders terrorized waterways and unsuspecting cargo ships, capturing goods, sailors and ships. Captain Edward Teach, better known as Blackbeard the Pirate, was the most daunting of these menacing outlaws.

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After years of wreaking havoc on Virginia's shores and economy, Blackbeard's life was finally taken in a violent sea battle with Lieutenant Robert Maynard in 1718. His severed head was impaled upon a pole near the mouth of Hampton Creek, now known as Blackbeard's Point, to serve as an unyielding reminder that piracy would not be tolerated in Virginia.

Beginning May 30, roughly 50,000 seafaring attendees, as well as Blackbeard and his crew, will once again invade downtown Hampton during the 15th annual Blackbeard Pirate Festival! Interact with Blackbeard (personified by first-person interpreter Ben Cherry) and more than 100 other authentically costumed pirate re-enactors as they run rampant on the streets of America's oldest continuous English-speaking settlement.

The festivities kick off Friday night, May 30, 7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m., at the Crowne Plaza Hampton Marina Hotel with the 15th annual Grand Pirates Ball (creative black tie or period attire enforced). The celebration, a recreation of Blackbeard's Party at Ocracoke, will feature a bounty of food, adult beverages, live music, and more. Though the festival is free, there is an admission charge for the ball. Tickets are \$35 in advance and \$40 at the door. Advanced tickets can be purchased by phone, Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., by dialing 757/727-8314.

Saturday's activities include a swarm of extemporized street skirmishes between pirates and militia (costumed interpreters), a replica of Blackbeard's pirate camp, complete with living history interpreters teaching the skills of the sailor circa 1700, and the trial and escape of William Howard, one of Blackbeard's fellow pirates with ties to Hampton. Don't miss the exhilarating re-enactment of the classic sea battle between Lt. Maynard and Blackbeard, featuring two full - scale replica vessels in the Hampton Harbor. At the conclusion of the sea battle a presentation ceremony takes place in which Blackbeard's

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severed head will be bestowed upon Virginia Governor Alexander Spotswood (1710-1722). Visitors can participate in the festivities when they join Blackbeard's funeral parade, Hampton's own version of Mardi Gras, and share in the booty from the treasure chest.

This year, the Hampton Blackbeard Pirate Festival welcomes three tall ships to the downtown docks: MEKA II, Serenity, and Bonny Rover. Based in Beaufort, NC MEKA II has an overall length of 54' and is a 2/3 - scale replica of an 17th Century, two masted pirate brigantine armed with 8 cannons. Her homeport is Beaufort, North Carolina where locals and tourist take pride in her ongoing efforts to preserve maritime heritage. The 65' gaff rigged schooner Serenity was built in 1986 in North Carolina. Serenity is currently offering Pirate Cruises and Private Charters for Yorktown Sailing Charters in Yorktown, VA. Bonny Rover, a gaff-rigged topsail schooner, is an updated design of an 18th-century revenue cutter.

This year, the event will once again feature the Blackbeard children's area, highlighting the Little Swashbuckler's Stage. The stage will host several performances, including special performances and a variety of musical acts. In addition to the children's area, guests will have the opportunity to stroll through Blackbeard's Pirate Camp where they can learn how to use a cutlass, load a cannon, or even sing a sea chantey at Pirate's Cove. At Mill Point Park, visitors can also explore a collection of 17th & 18th century period vendors selling items such as jewelry, clothing, art, and personal accessories.

Another highlight of Pirate's Cove is the Silkie's Hyde Tavern, a rustic tavern-style throwback to what a Hampton bar would have looked like in the 18th century. Feel free to rub elbows with some of the local swashbucklers and be served by wenches.

Other weekend amusements include jugglers, musicians, a pirate procession, street

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entertainers, photo opportunities with Mermaids in the children's area, cannon fire at Battery Point, period weaponry demonstrations, bird shows, and more. Head down Queens Way to check out the Blackbeard stage, complete with daytime pirate entertainment. Saturday night will conclude with a dramatic fireworks display at 9:00 p.m. over the Hampton River!

15th annual Blackbeard Pirate Festival Full Schedule

Friday, May 30

Grand Pirates Ball

7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Crowne Plaza Hampton Marina Hotel

Tickets are \$35 in advance and \$40 at the door.

Advanced tickets can be purchased by phone, Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., by dialing 757/727-8314.

Saturday, May 31 - Sunday, June 1

Bunch of Grapes Tavern:

Saturday, May 31

10:00 a.m.	Opening/Canons/Skit
11:30 a.m.	Shadow Players/Swordfighting
12:00 p.m.	Calico Jenny
1:00 p.m.	Brigands
2:00 p.m.	Shadow Players
2:30 p.m.	Picaroon Pirate School
3:00 p.m.	Trial
4:00 p.m.	Pyrates Royale

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5:00 p.m.	William the Conjuror
6:00 p.m.	Shadow Players/Picaroon Pirate School
7:00 p.m.	Brigands
8:00 p.m.	Pub Sing

Sunday, June 1

12:00 p.m.	Shadow Players
12:30 p.m.	Picaroon School
1:00 p.m.	Pirates Royale
2:00 p.m.	Motley Tunes
3:00 p.m.	House of Cadarn
4:00 p.m.	Brigands
5:00 p.m.	Pub Sing

Lil Swashbucklers' Stage Schedule:

Saturday, May 31

10:00 a.m.	CAPT JACK
10:30 a.m.	C. Shells
11:30 a.m.	Hysterically Correct Pirate Show
12:30 p.m.	Picaroon Pirate School
1:00 p.m.	Rainbow Puppets
2:00 p.m.	C. Shells
3:00 p.m.	William the Conjuror
3:30 p.m.	Shadow Players
4:00 p.m.	Picaroon Pirate School
4:30 p.m.	Stephen Christoff
5:30 p.m.	Rainbow Puppets
6:30 p.m.	C. Shells
7:30 p.m.	CAPT JACK

Sunday, June 1

12:00 p.m.	C. Shells
1:00 p.m.	William the Conjuror
1:30 p.m.	Hysterically Correct Pirate Show
2:00 p.m.	Shadow Players
2:30 p.m.	Picaroon Pirate School

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3:00 p.m.	Shadow Players
3:30 p.m.	Stephen Christoff/Picaroon Pirate School
4:00 p.m.	C. Shells
5:00 p.m.	Rainbow Puppets

Pirate Hunters' Camp:

Saturday, May 31

10:00 a.m.	House of Cadarn
11:00 a.m.	Pyrates Royale
12:00 p.m.	Motley Tones
1:00 p.m.	Hysterically Correct Pirate Show
2:00 p.m.	Calico Jenny
3:00 p.m.	Stephen Christoff
4:00 p.m.	Ships Company
5:00 p.m.	Motley Tones
6:00 p.m.	House of Cadarn
7:00 p.m.	Ships Company
8:00 p.m.	William the Conjuror

Sunday, June 1

12:00 p.m.	Hysterically Correct Pirate Show
1:00 p.m.	Calico Jenny
2:00 p.m.	Brigands
3:00 p.m.	William the Conjuror
4:00 p.m.	Motley Tones
5:00 p.m.	House of Cadarn

Blackbeard Stage/Queens Way:

Saturday, May 31

10:00 a.m.	Ships Company
11:00 a.m.	Brigands
12:00 p.m.	Stephen Christoff
1:00 p.m.	Pyrates Royale
2:00 p.m.	Motley Tones
3:00 p.m.	House of Cadarn
4:00 p.m.	Calico Jenny

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5:00 p.m. Brigands
8:00 p.m. Karnivale

Sunday, June 1

12:00 p.m. Brigands
1:00 p.m. House of Cadarn
2:00 p.m. Stephen Christoff
3:00 p.m. Calico Jenny
4:00 p.m. Pyrates Royle

Battery Point:

Saturday, May 31

10:00 a.m. Festival Opening Cannons
9:00 p.m. Barrage to Start Fireworks

Sunday, June 1

12:00 p.m. Cannon Barrage to Open Festival
9:00 p.m. Cannon to Close Festival

Roving:

Saturday, May 31

10:00 a.m. Stephen Christoff
11:30 a.m. Captain Jack
12:00 p.m. Ships Company
1:00 p.m. Susan Heely
2:30 p.m. William the Conjuror
3:00 p.m. Hysterically Correct Pirates
4:00 p.m. Motley Tones
5:00 p.m. Hysterically Correct Pirates
6:00 p.m. Pyrates Royale
7:00 p.m. Calico Jenny

Sunday, June 1

12:00 p.m. Motley Tones

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1:30 p.m. William the Conjuror 4-6
3:30 p.m. Hysterically Correct Pirates

Living History- Orders of the Day:

Saturday, May 31

10:00 a.m.	Cannon Barrage to Open Festival	<i>Battery Point</i>
10:00 a.m.	Address by Governor Spotswood	<i>Bunch of Grapes Tavern</i>
10:15 a.m.	Tavern Talk	<i>Bunch of Grapes Tavern</i>
11:00 a.m.	Naval/Pirate Skirmish	<i>Waterfront</i>
11:30 a.m.	Merchant Vessel Seizure	<i>Waterfront</i>
12:30 p.m.	Skirmish	<i>Battery Point</i>
12:30 p.m.	The Press Gang	<i>Carousel Park</i>
2:15 p.m.	Blackbeard's Last Flight	<i>Waterfront</i>
3:15 p.m.	Dockside Processional & Trial	<i>Bunch of Grapes Tavern</i>
5:30 p.m.	Pirate Funeral	<i>Corner of Wine & Queens</i>
Way		
9:00 p.m.	Fireworks	<i>Battery Point</i>

Sunday, June 1

11:55 a.m.	Cannon Fire to Open Festival	<i>Battery Point</i>
12:45 p.m.	Pirate Strike Back	<i>Waterfront</i>
3:00 p.m.	The Press Gang	<i>Carousel Park</i>
6:00 p.m.	Festival Closing Cannons	<i>Battery Point</i>

The Blackbeard Pirate Festival is schedule as follows: 7:00 p.m. -11:00 p.m. on Friday, May 30 (Blackbeard Ball- Ticketed Event); 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 31; and Noon- 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 1.

Sponsors of the 15th annual Blackbeard Pirate Festival include Bud Light/M.Price Distributing, GEICO, Hampton's Healthy Family Partnership, SweetWater Brewing Co., and WAVY-TV10/Fox 43.

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For more information on these and other Hampton events and programs, individuals are encouraged to contact the Hampton Visitor Center at 757-727-1102, or the Hampton 311 Call Center at 757/727-8311. For those into surfing the web, visit www.blackbeardfestival.com.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Pirates are available for interviews.

Please call 757/727-8314 to schedule an appointment.