

News Release

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Hampton History Museum to host midwife talk, M.S.G. Acoustic Blues Trio, Horror Tours in October

Hampton, VA – The Hampton History Museum welcomes October and the Halloween season with “The Witching of the Virginia Midwife,” a talk on how midwives have been demonized by historian D’Anne Graham, on Monday, October 3. Additionally, the always entertaining M.S.G. Acoustic Blues Trio performs their first in-person concert as part of the museum’s Front Porch Music Series on Wednesday, October 19.

After an absence of several years, the museum’s reanimated “Hampton Horror Tours” hit the streets with stories of mystery and the macabre for two tours nightly from October 25-30. These frightfully fun walking tours are a fundraiser for the museum.

Port Hampton Lecture

The Witching of the Virginia Midwife

Monday, October 3, 7-8 pm

Museum members free, non-members \$5

Join historian D’Anne Graham for this fascinating exploration about the changing status of the Virginia midwife. Was she a witch? Pillar of the community? Agent of the state? Wise woman or uneducated killer of mothers and babies?

D’Anne Graham is an independent scholar of women’s health and medicine history. In the late 1990s, she was an early leader in the grassroots effort to decriminalize midwifery in Virginia through community organizing and policy work. Returning to finish her degree in 2005 and 2009, she was one of the first recipients of the Virginia Commonwealth University Undergraduate Fellowship Award when she began historicizing Virginia midwifery.

Graham is a recent Virginia Humanities Fellow researching the archives at the Library of Virginia for her forthcoming book *A Parcel of Murdering Bitches: Childbirth and Women’s Autonomy from the Original Colony to the #MeToo Movement*, charting the history of birth and midwifery from Colonial Virginia to the current debates on childbirth, consent, bodily autonomy (#MeToo) and licensure. The Virginia experience reflects the larger themes of American women’s childbirth experience—state control and surveillance of the female body; the usurpation of women’s authority in the birth chamber by the rise of male-dominated medicine as a profession; and the influence of race and class on everything from the status of midwives to the control of racial

categories on birth records under eugenics.

She holds a BA in religious studies with a minor in history from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of Arts in Health Advocacy from Sarah Lawrence College.

The fate of midwife Joan Wright, accused of witchcraft in September 1626, is portrayed in the Hampton History Museum's Hampton Horror Tours taking place October 25-30 (more below).

Front Porch Music Series

M.S.G. Acoustic Blues Trio

Wednesday, October 19, 6-8 pm

Museum members free, non-members \$5

Join us for the M.S.G. Acoustic Blues Trio in concert! M.S.G. performs acoustic blues, roots, and spiritual music in the Piedmont style and writes original songs steeped in their honored traditional influences.

This trio can raise-the-roof with old-fashioned house party tunes, make you laugh with their witty originals and then make you weep with blues ballads!

M.S.G. is Miles Spicer, vocals and guitar; Jackie Merritt, bass harmonica and vocals; and Resa Gibbs rub board, percussion and vocals.

Beer and wine will be available for purchase. Proceeds benefit the Hampton History Museum.

Hampton Horror Tours

Tuesday, October 25-Sunday, October 30

Two tours a night, leaving the museum at 6:30 pm & 8:00 pm

With no sightings in over two years, our Horror Tours are back to bring tales of mystery and the macabre to the streets of Hampton...and with more fun and fright than ever before! Even if you've been a regular on our Horror Tours in the past, you won't want to miss their reincarnation! There are new stories, new personages to meet from the mists of time and plenty of surprises in store!

Leaving from the museum, these 60-minute tours include eerie tales of old Hampton and the Coastal Virginia area. Each tour will include the grisly side of Hampton history, a spooky lantern tour of the St. John's Church graveyard, and other points of fright along Queen Street and around Downtown Hampton.

Adult tickets: \$14 in advance, \$16 at the door; children 12 and under \$12 (not recommended for children under 8).

Proceeds benefit the Hampton History Museum. Call 757-727-6824 or visit www.hamptonhistorymuseum.org/donate.

Can you help us out of our "dry spell"?

We're working on an exhibit exploring alcohol production, prohibition and the temperance movement in Hampton and Phoebus from the late 1800s-1930s. We need your help in finding artifacts, just a few, to interpret this fascinating period of our past: bar signs, alcohol production equipment (could be agricultural as well), personal articles

related to the subject, anti or pro alcohol items, and other things with a Hampton provenance directly related to the subject.

Your artifact may be in the exhibit. We need just a few iconic items, and your help in locating them would be greatly appreciated! Please email contact information, description and any photos of the artifact to history@hampton.gov.

Museum Series Events Available Online

The museum's lecture and concert series are recorded live and posted on the museum's Facebook page, YouTube channel and website, www.hamptonhistorymuseum.org.

Hampton History Museum

The Hampton History Museum is located at 120 Old Hampton Lane in Downtown Hampton. There is free parking in the garage across the street from the museum. For more information call 757-727-1102 or visit www.hamptonhistorymuseum.org

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Image library:

HHM 1: 16th century woodcut depicting woman in birthing chair assisted by midwives. Public domain.

HHM 2: M.S.G. Acoustic Blues Trio, courtesy of M.S.G. Acoustic Blues Trio.

HHM3: Diane Kniskern as midwife Joan Wright in the Hampton Horror Tours in 2018.

Partially bordered by the Hampton Roads harbor and Chesapeake Bay, Hampton, with the 344,000 sq. ft. Hampton Roads Convention Center and the award-winning Hampton Coliseum, is located in the center of Coastal Virginia and the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. Hampton is the site of America's first continuous English-speaking settlement, the site of the first arrival of Africans in English North America, and is home to such visitor attractions as the Virginia Air & Space Science Center, Fort Monroe National Monument, Hampton History Museum, Hampton University Museum, The American Theatre, among others.