



Hampton

CONVENTION & VISITOR BUREAU

Media Release

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Hampton's Streetcar 390 Project Hosts Open House, Fundraiser July 13

--View the Historic Trolley's Restoration Progress--

Hampton, VA - The public is invited to get an up-close look at Streetcar 390 during a special Open House on Saturday, July 13 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 57 Patch Road on Fort Monroe. Along with the Open House, as a fundraiser, Firehouse Coffee 1881 of Fort Monroe is sponsoring an ice cream social and will be serving ice cream for a \$5.00 donation per bowl. There will also be a Silent Auction and a model train layout will be on display as well as other activities throughout the day.

Volunteer members of the Streetcar 390 Project will be on hand to answer questions about the history of the car, the restoration and the history of streetcars on the Peninsula. The event is free and open to the public.

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“We waited a long time to get the restoration underway and we are now full steam ahead,” said Streetcar 390 Project committee head Greg Siegel. “We will go as far as our funds will take us,” Siegel added. “This open house will give the public a look at the progress after a few months of work. We will be holding periodic open houses throughout the years giving the community a chance to see the progress we are making in bringing the 390 back to life. The speed of the restoration will depend on how fundraising goes. The more money that is raised the faster the project can get done. We hope at this event to keep raising funds to keep the restoration going.”

In August 2017, 71 years after it was removed from service, the last Hampton Streetcar, #390, was returned to Hampton for restoration. Over the last few years, the volunteer committee has raised funds to begin the multi-year restoration process that started in May 2019.

The Open House will be held at 57 Patch Road on Fort Monroe, where the streetcar is undergoing restoration. After arriving on Fort Monroe, follow the signs to the event location. For more information call the Hampton Visitor Center at 757-727-1102. Follow Hampton's Streetcar 390 Project on Facebook for the latest updates.

A Brief History of Hampton's Streetcar 390

Built in 1917 and delivered to Hampton in 1918, the 390 was in use until January 1946. It was one of 20 remaining streetcars running before all streetcars were discontinued in favor of buses.

The 390 was built by the J.G. Brill Company of Philadelphia, PA. The car was of the type called a semi-convertible. This model featured windows that opened completely to let the

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air flow throughout the car making for a more comfortable ride for passengers than other models of the era. When the 390 arrived in Hampton it was 8'6" wide and 46'7" long, and could carry 52 seated passengers and approximately 47 standing, although this number was often exceeded during peak periods.

After it was pulled from service, the 390 was sold to John and Mary Anderson for \$100. It was moved to their Grafton property in York County, where the couple turned the car into their home where they lived until 1977.

While returning to Baltimore from Virginia Beach with his family in the summer of 1977, one of the members of the Baltimore Streetcar Museum noticed the streetcar along the side of Route 17, and stopped to inquire about it. The semi-convertible model was once common in Baltimore, but the museum did not have one in its collection.

Arrangements were made to have the car donated to the Baltimore Streetcar Museum.

The 390 has been sitting at the Baltimore Streetcar Museum since then. The museum periodically performed restoration work on the car over the years, but decided in 2013 to offer the 390 to Hampton to bring it back home. The 390 was welcomed back to Hampton with a ceremony on August 2, 2017.

Restoration and Display

The trolley's return for restoration was spearheaded by Hampton's Streetcar 390 Project with support from the Hampton History Museum. The Fort Monroe Authority is providing a facility for restoration to take place in. Restoration work will be done by Keith Bray, who has restored a number of streetcars for organizations around the country, with support from a group of volunteers.

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After the 390 was loaded into building 57, Greg Siegel, Mike McHenry, Hank Mummert and restorer Keith Bray conducted a survey of the car to start the process of building a timeline of restoration.

After restoration, plans call for the streetcar to be placed in a custom-built pavilion across from the Hampton History Museum in Downtown Hampton. The pavilion will not just be home to the 390 but will act as a learning venue featuring a multi-media display that will take visitors on an exciting ride through Hampton during the 1930s. Along with this, there will be interactive displays about how the streetcar system functioned and how it shaped the physical and cultural development of Hampton.

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 Center, Fort Monroe National Monument, Hampton History Museum, harbor tours and cruises, Hampton University Museum, The American Theatre, among others.

During 2019, Hampton commemorates the 400th anniversary of the first African landing in English North America at Hampton's Old Point Comfort on Fort Monroe National Monument. In addition to honoring the men and women who arrived in 1619, the city will also celebrate the contributions of African Americans have made to our city, state and nation. A commission has planned events across the entire year to recognize and celebrate African American impact, including a three-day long Commemoration event, August 23-25.

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