

**News Release  
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## **Miss Hampton II Bids Farewell to Hampton**

**Hampton, VA** - On July 28, 2021 in the aftermath of a quick but angry thunderstorm, the Miss Hampton II hoisted anchor for its farewell cruise up the Hampton River. This time the familiar hospitable crew was not aboard. After 32 years of operation on the downtown Hampton waterfront, the Miss Hampton II was sold to Capewater Tours, Lewes, DE. The new owner intends to operate the vessel out of Cape Henlopen.

The sale, initiated several weeks earlier, came amid a season with a nearly-full boat for every tour. The Miss Hampton II, official tour boat for the City of Hampton, offered tours six days a week and charters based on availability from mid-April through October, or as long as the fall weather allowed. Purchased in 1989, the 117-passenger vessel had been in continuous service in Hampton.

“We have watched the tour become a focal point in the presentation of the history of Hampton. Boat tour narrators have enlightened out-of-state guests with the fascinating folklore and factual events that helped shape the city in the past 400 years,” said co-owner Captain Mike Hebert, who helped broker the boat purchase, served as general manager and captained the vessel for 32 years.

Boat co-owner Jim Holt has watched the waterfront evolve into an inviting vibrant area. He witnessed changes along the Hampton River, the expansion of the Bluewater Marina, the impacts of time and storms on businesses like Amory’s Seafood and the growth of Virginia Air & Space Science Center, the Hampton Carousel, lively restaurants, craft brewers and The Landing Hotel at Hampton Marina. Over the years, the tour narrative always reflected the changing landscape and vessels entering Hampton Roads. The advent of containerized shipping spawned a new era of super ships, some capable of carrying over 20,000 containers. Passengers aboard Miss Hampton II have witnessed the arrival of these massive vessels, submarines, cruise ships and U.S. Naval ships.

“When we first began operations there were entirely different classes of aircraft carriers, destroyers, cruisers, frigates, and submarines. We have seen the demise of the nuclear-powered cruiser during our tours. Newer, more modern aircraft carriers, destroyers, and submarines have arrived, which required our tour guides to adapt their narrative,” said

Hebert.

The most significant change to the tour was made in 2020 when Fort Wool's grassy park-like setting was transformed to become a bird habitat during Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel construction. Prior to 2020, Miss Hampton visitors were treated to an hour-long walking tour of the historic island fort, accessible to the public only by boat.

“While we wish the best for the Miss Hampton operating partners, we had hoped the harbor tour would continue operating Hampton's waterways. There's significant demand for a harbor tour departing from Hampton. We are working to locate a new tour operator to share Hampton's maritime history and the incredible Hampton Roads harbor,” said Mary Fugere, director of the Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau.

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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.