



# Hampton

CONVENTION & VISITOR BUREAU

**Media Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 29, 2019**

Contact: Chadra Pittman, 757/317- 0001  
[thesankofaprojects@gmail.com](mailto:thesankofaprojects@gmail.com)  
Seamus McGrann, 757/727-6841  
[mmcgrann@hampton.gov](mailto:mmcgrann@hampton.gov)

## **REMEMBRANCE:**

**8th Year Sankofa Honoring the African Ancestors of the  
'Middle Passage' at Buckroe Beach June 8**

**Pre-event Lecture '...Dying, but fighting back: The Myth of African  
Docility'  
At Hampton History Museum June 3**

**Hampton, VA** - For the 8th year in a row, The Sankofa Projects will host its annual International Day of Remembrance ceremony on Saturday, June 8, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. on Buckroe Beach in Hampton, VA. The ceremony will be to the left of the Main stage at North 1st and Pilot Avenue, at the far end of the beach. As a lead-in to the Remembrance Day event, The Sankofa Projects will present a special lecture at the Hampton History Museum on Monday, June 3 at 7:00 p.m.

“Over the nearly four centuries of the (Transatlantic) slave trade, millions of African men, women and children were savagely torn from their homeland, herded onto ships, and dispersed all over the so called ‘New World’, according to noted historian Dr. John

**-More-**

**1919 Commerce Drive, Suite 290 | Hampton, Virginia 23666  
757.722.1222 | 800.487.8778 | fax 757.896.4600 | [www.hamptoncvb.com](http://www.hamptoncvb.com)**

## **REMEMBRANCE: 8th Year Sankofa Honoring the African Ancestors of the 'Middle Passage' at Buckroe Beach June 8- Page 2**

Henrik Clarke. "Millions would walk on board the enslavement ships never to disembark those ships alive. Many jumped overboard resisting enslavement while others were cast overboard and left to drown in the Atlantic. These are the Africans whom the world FORGOT and whom we honor annually at Sankofa's Remembrance!" says Chadra Pittman, Founder & Executive Director of The Sankofa Projects.

Annually since 2012, through her organization and programs, Pittman has been telling their story; giving voice to this injustice and educating the public about the perilous journey of the Middle Passage which consumed the lives of so many during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Following a tradition of Tributes to the Ancestors spearheaded by author and activist Toni Cade Bambara, Remembrance at Buckroe Beach was born.

"The Middle Passage is the untold chapter in the annals of slavery. Remembrance is a spiritual ceremony and a communal gathering which remembers the Africans the world forgot, is a celebration of their lives and is the funeral these Africans never received." says Pittman. "Hosting Remembrance in Hampton is historically significant to the narrative of enslavement," she adds. "We acknowledge the *beginning* of slavery in the United States at Point Comfort in 1619 and the catalyst for what would become the *end* of slavery with the Contraband Decision in 1861 at Fort Monroe, now, through Remembrance, we acknowledge the horror of what happened in the Middle (Passage)."

The program of Remembrance will include a ceremonial walk around the *Tree of Remembrance*, educational presentations, traditional African dancing and drumming, community presentations, tributes dedicated to Native Americans/First Nations people, Bay Shore Beach and the innocent slain and Freedom Fighters who lost their lives in the global pursuit of justice. The Honorable Dr. Mary T. Christian will give the keynote.

**-More-**

**REMEMBRANCE: 8th Year Sankofa Honoring the African Ancestors of the  
'Middle Passage' at Buckroe Beach June 8- Page 3**

Throughout the program, there will be theatrical presentations, poetry, meditation, and traditional African and African American spirituals. The program features a Kemeti Opening, a Drum Call to the Ancestors, musical and dance performances and a Communal Offering dedicated to the Ancestors.

At 12:00 noon an International Libation for Remembrance will be orchestrated by Baba Orimalade Ogunjimi of Ile Nago. Occurring simultaneously across the United States and internationally, Communal Libations will take place in the cities where Remembrance and Tributes to the Ancestors are held.

Event sponsors include the Hampton History Museum and the City of Hampton Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services. This event is free and open to the public. Attendees are asked to respect the sanctity of the sacred ceremony. Traditional African attire and/or white clothing is encouraged. Organizers suggest that attendees bring beach chairs and umbrellas to provide. Those wishing to participate in the Communal Offering to the Ancestors should bring fresh flowers.

**PRE-REMEMBRANCE EVENT**

**Port Hampton Lecture**

**“When the Cargo was Human and the Trade was Flesh: Agency & Resistance of the  
Africans the World Forgot Before and Beyond 1619”**

**Hampton History Museum**

**Monday, June 3, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Museum members free, non-members \$5**

In preparation for Remembrance Day 2019, join Chadra Pittman Walke, founder & executive director of The Sankofa Projects, for “When the Cargo was Human and the

**-More-**

**REMEMBRANCE: 8th Year Sankofa Honoring the African Ancestors of the  
'Middle Passage' at Buckroe Beach June 8- Page 4**

Trade was Flesh: Agency & Resistance of the Africans the World Forgot Before and Beyond 1619” at the Hampton History Museum as part of their Port Hampton Lecture Series on Monday, June 3, 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

In 2019, the world remembers the 400th year since the first ‘human cargo’ arrived at Port Comfort (now Fort Monroe) in Hampton, Virginia. Those ‘20 & odd’ Africans disembarked the White Lion and the ‘trade in flesh’ officially began in British North America. However, before their arrival in 1619, there was a journey known as the Middle Passage, which forcibly transported millions of Africans throughout the world during the Transatlantic ‘Slave’ Trade. Whether dying on the shores or left to drown at sea, the Middle Passage tragically consumed the lives of millions. These are the Africans that the world forgot and for whom, Pittman works diligently for the world to remember.

For the past 8 years, through her lectures, publications, community programs & Sankofa’s Annual International Day of Remembrance, Pittman gives voice to this missing chapter in history. Like the name of her organization ‘Sankofa’, Pittman will take attendees on a journey through time where she will “reach back to the past”, draw correlations to present day injustices to create a future where we recognize our shared humanity. From Fort Elmina to Fort Monroe, the New York African Burial Ground to Bay Shore Beach & Resort, hear the voices of the cargo and learn about the International Movement of Remembrance.

Pittman has long contested that, “The history of slavery remains gravely incomplete if the horror of the African experience on the Middle Passage, the terror & torture imposed during the Transatlantic trade and lives of the millions of Africans who perished continues to be disregarded.” Join Pittman as she gives voice to these neglected

**-More-**

**REMEMBRANCE: 8th Year Sankofa Honoring the African Ancestors of the  
'Middle Passage' at Buckroe Beach June 8- Page 5**

narratives, engage in an honest conversation about humanity, yours and theirs, for as Bishop Desmond Tutu states, "My humanity is bound up in yours; for we can only be human together!" We must remember the Africans that the world forgot and acknowledge their humanity which was denied.

The lecture is free to museum members, \$5.00 for non-members. 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.

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.

###