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March 8, restaurants vie for awards in History Bites event

Newport News, VA – Ten of Hampton Roads’ top restaurants and caterers will compete March 8 for iron skillet awards as they prepare Civil War-era delights from the North and South. The event is part of the March 7-9 Battle of Hampton Roads Weekend at The Mariners’ Museum.

Winners for History Bites: A Food-Tasting of Historical Proportions will be selected in several categories, including Judges’ Choice, Ironclad Chefs’ Choice, Best Presentation and Peoples’ Choice (1st, 2nd & 3rd place). The menu will include Sausages and Apples, Chicken Croquettes & Rissoles, “A Nice Little Dish of Beef,” Tinned Beef Pie, Mulligatawny Soup, Sliced Apple Pudding and Skillygalee.

“We have had great success with our food-tasting events,” said Nancy Newman, the Museum’s director of special events, referring to “Ironclad Chef” in 2011 and 2012 and “Dishing Up Virginia” in 2013. “This brings together the best components from them – the fun of a food tasting, coupled with the excitement of a competition.”

The event will be emceed by “Virginia’s Secretary of Taste,” Hampton Roads food writer Patrick Evans-Hylton, author of *Dishing Up Virginia*. The panel awarding “Judges’ Choice” iron skillets to winners includes Stephanie Cooke, producer of WAVY TV’s Hampton Roads Show; David Nicholson, food writer for *The Daily Press*; Jae Sinnett, host of “Sinnett in Session” on WHRV Radio and Abraham Lincoln interpreter George Buss. Civil War food experts Wisteria Perry and Eric Jeanneret will have food-related exhibits at the event, and will present the iron skillet award for best historical interpretation.

Participating restaurants and caterers include Boxwood Inn, The Catering Company, CP Shuckers, Culinary Institute of Virginia, Fin, The Grey Goose, Harpoon Larry’s, Miss Mary’s Catering, Schlesingers/Opus 9 and Smoke BBQ.

Tickets are \$35 in advance and \$45 on the day of the event. The ticket includes unlimited tasting selections and one drink ticket. There will be a cash bar offering beer, wine, grog and Barbados Punch. For tickets, visit BattleofHamptonRoads.com.

Battle of Hampton Roads Weekend at The Mariners' Museum commemorates the 152nd anniversary of the historic clash of the ironclads USS *Monitor* and CSS *Virginia*. The weekend includes presentations by noted Civil War historians, family programs, Civil War-era interpreters and a tour of Civil War sites. It also serves as an introduction to the photography exhibition *Between the States: Photographs of the American Civil War from the George Eastman House*. A full slate of weekend programming is available at BattleofHamptonRoads.com.

The Mariners' Museum, an educational, non-profit institution accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, preserves and interprets maritime history through an international collection of ship models, figureheads, paintings and other maritime artifacts. It is home to the USS *Monitor* Center, which is the official repository for artifacts recovered from the Civil War ironclad ship. For hours and information, visit www.MarinersMuseum.org, call (757) 596-2222 or write to The Mariners' Museum, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA 23606.