

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / March 1, 2024

**The Mariners' Museum to Commemorate the 162nd Anniversary
of the Battle of Hampton Roads on March 9, 2024**

NEWPORT NEWS, VA — The Mariners' Museum and Park continues to honor their mission of “connecting people to the world’s waters and to one another” with their annual commemoration of the legendary Battle of Hampton Roads on **Saturday, March 9, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** (Eastern time). This year’s event is in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS). Activities for the day will highlight the history, science, and technology behind this pivotal naval engagement through activities appropriate for families, enthusiasts, and experts alike.

“This is such an important engagement opportunity for the Museum,” Senior Director of Advancement Sabrina Y. Jones said. “It combines all the elements our community enjoys – the history of the *Monitor* and its role in the battle, inspiring stories of crew members, and the celebration of a new era of naval technology. Our multi-decade effort to conserve USS *Monitor* artifacts means we have endless opportunities, year after year, to share exciting discoveries. This piece of maritime cultural heritage is the gift that keeps giving!”

On Saturday, March 9, visitors will be greeted with engaging activities throughout the Museum, with particular focus on the USS *Monitor* Center and Batten Conservation Complex. A unique feature debuting this year is the first-ever public viewing of *Monitor*’s skeg beam since its 1862 launch. Other activities include artifact interpretation throughout the galleries, a scavenger hunt specially designed for elementary-aged mariners, immersive science and code-breaking activities, interactive sessions with Historian Dr. Jonathan White, a lecture with Author and Historian John V. Quarstein, an underwater ROV activity with NOAA, and more. There will be a food truck stationed in front of the Museum, as well as snacks and water available for purchase in the Museum’s Gift Shop.

Quarstein will present a lecture on Commemoration Day about the famous ironclad clash. The lecture will take place both in person in the Explorers Theater at 12 p.m. and virtually through a live stream. A book signing with Quarstein will follow at 1 pm. This in-person lecture, along with all the activities on Commemoration Day, is included in \$1 admission and free for Mariners' Museum Members. The live-streamed lecture is free to watch, and advance registration is required.

“The entire Mariners' team and our partners at NOAA *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary have the privilege to honor the story of USS *Monitor* from its creation to its recovery,” Senior Material Culture Educator Jennifer Hackney said. “This year, we have chosen to highlight the courage present throughout *Monitor*’s life: the courage to spy on its eventual battle foe of CSS *Virginia*, the courage to innovate and construct the first fully-iron ship, and the courage to step on board a ship that would find its eventual

fate in the Graveyard of the Atlantic. Even today, we need ceaseless courage to conserve *Monitor* so that its legacy remains steadfast in our galleries and hearts for generations to come.”

For more information about the Battle of Hampton Roads Commemoration, visit <https://www.marinersmuseum.org/series/battle-of-hampton-roads/>.

Media interested in interviewing The Mariners’ team about upcoming events for the Battle of Hampton Roads and USS *Monitor* conservation should contact Senior Director of Advancement, Sabrina Y. Jones, at sjones@MarinersMuseum.org.

The Mariners' Museum and Park connects people to the world's waters because through the water – through our shared maritime heritage – we are connected to one another. The organization is an educational, non-profit institution accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It preserves and interprets maritime history through an international collection of ship models, paintings, and other maritime artifacts. The Mariners’ Museum is home to the USS *Monitor* Center and is surrounded by the 550-acre Mariners’ Museum Park, one of the largest privately maintained parks open to the public in North America. The Mariners’ Museum Library is the largest maritime library in the Western hemisphere. Because of the Museum’s world-class collection and its reputation for high-level exhibits and programs, in 1999, the US Congress designated The Mariners’ Museum as one of only two maritime museums that comprise America’s National Maritime Museum. To provide access to the incredible stories told through its Collection, admission to the Museum is only \$1 per person. For hours and information, visit MarinersMuseum.org, call (757) 596-2222, or write The Mariners' Museum, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA 23606.

###