



CASEMATE MUSEUM FOUNDATION NEWS



President Lincoln and Fort Monroe



Lincoln is believed to be in the small group at lower center, next to the officer pointing at something with his sword.

Lincoln's birthday is February 12th and President's Day on the 17th, making this a good time to highlight the 16th chief executive's relationship with Fort Monroe.

President Lincoln's first visit was the longest and the most productive. On May 6, 1862, he arrived at Old Point Comfort by steamboat, accompanied by cabinet secretaries Salmon P. Chase and Edwin M. Stanton. He stayed in Quarters No. I, where he conferred with the fort's Commanding General, John Wool, and Flag Officer Louis Goldsborough. The discussion was how to capture the Confederate port of Norfolk.

On May 9 Lincoln was rowed to Fort Wool to observe firing operations of the James rifle and the experimental Sawyer gun. After the guns silenced the enemy batteries at Sewell's Point, Army units from New York and Massachusetts were transported across the Hampton Roads waterway and forced the surrender of Norfolk. Lincoln visited the city on May 11 and sent a congratulatory message to the 78-year-old General Wool. He also travelled by horseback to view the ruins of Hampton caused by the fires and the newly established contraband "slabtown."

According to a soldier's diary, Lincoln paid a brief visit to Fort Monroe during the summer of 1864 to consult with General U.S. Grant about the campaign against Petersburg and Richmond. His final visit was on February 3, 1865, when he met with Alexander Stephens and other Confederate leaders aboard the *River Queen*, anchored just off Fort Monroe. This so-called Hampton Roads Peace Conference failed to end the war and Lincoln returned to Washington, DC without actually going ashore at Fort Monroe.

There is a bizarre footnote to this Lincoln chronicle. After his tragic assassination on April 14, 1865, co-conspirator Samuel Arnold escaped from Washington and reached Fort Monroe where he found work. On April 17, he was arrested and spent four years in prison before receiving a presidential pardon.

Fort Monroe- February 2025

Free Programs & Tours

WED & SAT 11:00 am	KNOWLEDGEABLE MINDS & SKILLED HANDS Black History Month Tour Fort Monroe Authority - 1-hour guided walking tour Starts inside the Visitor & Education Center
THURS & FRI 11:00 am WED & SAT 3:00 pm	GIBRALTAR OF THE CHESAPEAKE TOUR National Park Service - 45-minute guided walking tour Starts outside lower level of the Visitor & Education Center
FRI & SAT 1:00 pm	BLACK HERITAGE AT FORT MONROE TOUR National Park Service - 1- hour guided walking tour Starts outside lower level of the Visitor & Education Center
WED. FEB 26 9:30 am - 10:00 am	FORT FRIENDS (NEW PROGRAM!) Fort Monroe Authority - 30 min program Caregiver and me program - sensory exploration and more! Takes place in the Visitor & Education Center

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2025 ANNUAL EVENTS!

Contraband Commemoration Program..... May 17, 2025
Independence Day at Fort Monroe..... July 4, 2025
African Landing Day August 21-23, 2025
Ghost Walk October 2025
Veterans Day at Fort Monroe..... November 8, 2025



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EVENTS AND TOURS

757 - 690 - 8181
publicprograms@fortmonroe.org
fomr_interpretation@nps.gov

www.fortmonroe.org
www.nps.gov/fomr





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Boy Scouts at Fort Monroe



Feb 8th marks the 115th anniversary of the founding of Boy Scouts of America. In 1918 Fort Monroe chartered its first organization of Boy Scouts as Troop 1.

This Regulation Scout Coat was worn by Eddie Farnsworth at Fort Monroe in the early 1920s. He was a 1st Class Bugler and Platoon Leader with BSA Troop 1. He was commissioned in 1932 as a Second Lieutenant in the Coast Artillery and had a distinguished career rising in rank to Colonel. BSA Troop 31, the *Moat Monsters*, founded in 1925 is active today at Fort Monroe and traces its lineage to the first troop.

FREE MEMBER TOUR OF THE 1862 LOWER PENINSULA CAMPAIGN SATURDAY MARCH 22ND

CONTACT DENNIS MROCZKOWSKI AT M4SKI@COMCAST.NET FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO RESERVE A SPOT ON THE TOUR.

SUMMARY

From April 4 to June 1, 1862, Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac moved up the Virginia peninsula between the York and James Rivers toward Richmond. After the fall of Portsmouth and the scuttling of the ironclad CSS Virginia May 10-11, the Union navy could safely advance up the rivers and protect McClellan's flanks. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, was charged with defending the Confederate capital.



George B. McClellan

Our tour will begin by car at 9:00AM at Fort Monroe in front of the Casemate Museum. We will visit part of the Confederate defensive line along the Warwick River, some Confederate earthworks at the site of the battle of Dam Number One, Confederate earthworks at Yorktown, Redoubts 1, 2 and 4 and the "Bloody Ravine" in Williamsburg ending at the Fort Magruder Inn. The tour will involve easy to moderate walking and last about four hours.



CASEMATE MUSEUM FOUNDATION NEWS



FORT MONROE: A Winter's Tale



The recent snowfalls in Hampton and vicinity—the first in several years—remind us that such picturesque and potentially dangerous weather is now a rarity. There is photographic evidence in the Casemate Museum archives to suggest that winters at Fort Monroe/Old Point Comfort were once much more severe many years ago than they are now. The picture above was taken in January 1899. The covered deck in the moat is the Officer's Club deck and the structure adjacent is the landing for the Maid of the Moat. The 40-gun Water Battery is in the right center background.

The historical record begins in late December 1608 with Captain John Smith's foraging expedition by boat to find food for the starving Jamestown colony. A sudden blizzard forced Smith and his crew to land at or near Point Comfort, where they were welcomed by a peaceful tribe of Kicotans. Smith spent the New Year's holiday with these benefactors and later praised their culinary skills, writing that "we were never more merry, nor fed on more plentie of good Oysters, Fish, Flesh, Wild-foule, and good bread...."

Several snowstorms that hit Fort Monroe in late February 1934 merit particular attention, especially one in which melted snow turned to sheets of ice that made transportation by cars and trucks very hazardous and by cyclists impossible. Shipboard travel to icebound Baltimore was suspended for several days.

On the positive side, such conditions have allowed the fort's children to use their sleds, throw snowballs, and build snowmen. It was ever true that one person's miserable environment was another person's winter wonderland.

Agenda

Forty-second Annual Meeting of the The Casemate Museum Foundation, Inc.

10:00 AM

Fort Monroe Visitor Education Center

Second Floor Conference Room

Monday January 27, 2025

- I. Call to Order (President)
- II. Roll Call (Margaret Seitz, Secretary)
- III. President's Remarks
- IV. Review of Minutes
- V. Museum Director's Remarks
- VI. Treasurer's Report (Nancy O'Malley, Treasurer)
- VI. Committee Reports:
 - a. Gift Shop
 - b. Membership
 - c. Fundraising (WAA)
- VII. Old Business:
- VIII. New Business
- IX. Announcements and Adjournment