

Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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"NAME U.S. SUB AFTER CIVIL WAR IRONCLAD," HISTORY BUFFS SAY.
GRASSROOTS EFFORT UNDERWAY.

CLEVELAND - Civil War history fans want the U.S. Navy to honor the famous ironclad U.S.S. Monitor by bestowing her name on a new submarine.

The first of a new class of nuclear-powered attack submarines (NSSN) has been named the U.S.S. Virginia. "For the sake of history, tradition, and symmetry," said Cleveland Civil War Roundtable president, Mel Maurer, "it would be fitting for a submarine of the Virginia class to be named the U.S.S. Monitor."

The first Monitor battled the Confederate ironclad C.S.S. Virginia (formerly the U.S.S. Merrimack) to a draw in Hampton Roads, Va. on March 9, 1862. In doing so, the Monitor saved the Union blockading fleet from destruction. She was a technological wonder, and her clash with the Virginia marked the first time that ironclad warships had ever fought. The U.S.S. Monitor was lost in a storm off Cape Hatteras, N.C. in December of 1862.

William Vodrey (chairman of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable's Committee to Honor the Monitor) said, "The original Monitor was one of the most famous ships in American history, but there hasn't been a warship of that name on active duty in the U.S. Navy since a troop transport, LSV-5, launched late in World War II."

The U.S. Navy plans to build thirty Virginia-class submarines. The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable is leading a grassroots effort to have the Navy name one of them the U.S.S. Monitor and urging other Roundtables and their members, and other lovers of history, to write to the President, Congress, and U.S. Navy.

James M. McPherson, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian of Princeton University, supports the Roundtable's efforts, saying: "It would be most fitting to name one of the new submarines of the Virginia class the U.S.S. Monitor, in honor of the original Monitor that battled the first Virginia to a standstill in the world's first clash between ironclad warships on March 9, 1862, and thereby ushered in a new era of naval history.

Harold Holzer, noted naval art historian, said: "In her day, the Civil War ironclad U.S.S. Monitor revolutionized naval technology - and, ultimately, naval warfare itself. It would be a fitting tribute to her impact and her memory - as well as an apt acknowledgment of America's continuing quest to defend freedom throughout the world - if a new vessel could be named in the Monitor's honor. What better way to demonstrate respect for our nation's history, and confidence in our nation's future?" Holzer is also vice president of communications and marketing of the

Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, and co-chair of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and founding vice-president of the Lincoln Forum.

William R. McGrath, naval historical artist, said: "The original Monitor, designed by John Ericsson, propelled the U.S. Navy into the modern era. No longer would wooded ships control the destiny of nations. This ship revolutionized the design of warships for the next 90 years. Clearly, we should honor the original Monitor and carry on our naval heritage by naming one of our newest submarines after her."

The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, founded in 1956, is one of the oldest such groups in the country. Its members range from 17 to 94 years old, at every level of interest and historical expertise. The Roundtable reflects the ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of Greater Cleveland, but its common bond is the belief that the Civil War of 1861-1865 is the defining event of American history. The Roundtable honors those who fought, suffered, and died to preserve the Union, uphold the Constitution, and destroy slavery.

The Committee to Honor the U.S.S. Monitor was established by the Roundtable in April of 2004. The original U.S.S. Monitor was named by that brilliant, acerbic inventor, the Swedish-American engineer, John Ericsson, who predicted that she would "prove a severe monitor" to the leaders of the Confederacy.

For more information, click below:

http://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/honor_the_monitor.htm