1862, the Monitor and the Virginia, the two legendary ironclads, met in the Battle of Hampton Roads. In the morning light of March 9, 1862, the ironclads dueled each other for four hours. The USS Monitor never fought again – the ironclads were later towed to the Confederate forts in Hampton Roads. For four hours, the ironclads dueled each other, appearing like a “floating fortress.” The Monitor, which had a wooden hull, was destroyed in a storm in 1862, while the Virginia, with a metal hull, survived the battle and remained in service for several more years.

The ironclads were a significant turning point in the Civil War. The Monitor and the Virginia were the first ironclads to engage in combat, and their battle marked the end of the wooden ships era. The Monitor’s design was innovative, with a rotating turret that allowed it to fire in any direction. The Virginia, on the other hand, had a fixed turret that was vulnerable to the Monitor’s broadside fire. The battle ended with a draw, but it demonstrated the power of ironclads and set the stage for future naval engagements. The Monitor’s sinking was a loss for the Union, but the Virginia’s survival showed the potential of ironclad technology.

The Monitor Museum is dedicated to the story of the Monitor and its commander, Captain John Worden. The museum features interactive exhibits, multimedia presentations, and authentic artifacts. Visitors can learn about the Monitor’s design, construction, and battle experience, as well as the life of Captain Worden. The museum also includes a replica of the USS Monitor’s bow section, giving visitors a chance to see what the ironclad looked like during the battle.

Visitors to the Monitor Museum can also view the Monitor’s original keel and other artifacts in a separate exhibition. The keel, which was the Monitor’s backbone, is the only remaining piece of the ship, and it offers a glimpse into the Monitor’s construction. The museum also includes a research center, where visitors can learn about the history of the Monitor and the Civil War in general. Overall, the Monitor Museum is an excellent destination for those interested in naval history, the Civil War, and the Monitor’s legacy.