



---

## NATIONAL CIVIL WAR NAVAL MUSEUM

### PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Stewart McWhorter, Marketing and Public Relations Intern  
(706) 327-9798  
[intern@portcolumbus.org](mailto:intern@portcolumbus.org)

## Port Columbus opens Black History Month Exhibit

To honor Black History Month, the National Civil War Naval Museum at Port Columbus is planning a series of special exhibits throughout February. Featured will be the stories of four African-Americans who played important roles in Civil War naval history.

First displayed is the story of Columbus area businessman and former slave Horace King. Besides being a well-known bridge and building builder, King was also a regular contractor to the Confederate Navy Yard in Columbus. Photos of King and some of his structures are featured in the exhibit.

Beginning February 11, the story of Robert Smalls, a slave and harbor pilot in Charleston, SC will be featured. Smalls led a midnight escape of his family and many other slaves, stealing a Confederate military ship and sailing past Confederate forts to reach the Union Navy blockade outside the harbor. According to museum officials, Smalls' post-war story is a fascinating one of politics and more.

On February 18, the museum will tell the story of Moses Dallas, a slave and harbor pilot in Savannah, who participated in and was killed during a commando raid of Confederate sailors to capture the USS Waterwitch. Dallas was given a hero's funeral by the Confederate government after the successful raid. Port Columbus has just begun a fund raising effort to reconstruct a full-scale USS Waterwitch exhibit outside the museum.

The final exhibit, opening February 25, features William Gould, who escaped slavery by rowing to a US Navy ship and enlisting in the Navy. Gould kept a detailed diary which has been recently published and is for sale at the museum.

Port Columbus' Director of Programs and Education Matt Young wrote the text for the exhibits and said that these stories and others are a part of the permanent exhibit at the naval museum. "The exhibits we are preparing for Black History Month are more detailed and can be seen just as you come in the front door of the museum," said Young. "African-Americans played a significant role in the naval war, making up nearly 15% of the US Navy, and serving on many Confederate Navy ships as well," said Young.

A selection of book titles on African-Americans in the Civil War is on display in the museum's store for the month of February. These titles are part of the specials available throughout February.

Museum hours are 9-5, seven days a week. Admission fees are \$4.50 for adults, \$3.50 for active military and seniors 65 and older and \$3 for students. Visitors six and under are free. For more information, call 706-327-9798 or see the Port Columbus website at [www.portcolumbus.org](http://www.portcolumbus.org).

