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U.S. Department of the Interior

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## Cape Cod National Seashore News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DATE

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### **Cape Cod National Seashore and the Chatham Marconi Maritime Museum to Commemorate Wireless Technology and the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Sinking of the *Titanic***

Nearly a century has passed since 2,240 passengers and crew set sail from Southampton, England for a transatlantic voyage on a luxury steamship enroute to the Port of New York. Four days later, on April 15, 1912, *RMS Titanic* plunged to the ocean floor after striking an iceberg in the North Atlantic. The fate of the steamship and the 1,500 souls lost is ingrained in the American memory, and has inspired countless books and films. A fact that surprises many is that Marconi's wireless station in Wellfleet played a significant role in the rescue of 740 survivors. "*Titanic 100 Years Later and Marconi's Wireless Technology*" is a week-long commemoration featuring programs by Cape Cod National Seashore, the Falmouth Amateur Radio Association, and the Chatham Marconi Maritime Center to remember the souls lost and interpret wireless communication. All activities are free and open to the public.

In addition to films and special commemorative activities throughout the week, on certain days radio operators will communicate with others around the world to honor the role that Marconi's technology played in the rescue. Seven hundred and forty passengers and crew were rescued by the *Carpathia* as a result of wireless messages sent from the Marconi Station. Today, the station site is preserved within Cape Cod National Seashore. This year's commemoration of the *Titanic* tragedy will transition into the annual International Marconi Day, which is on April 21.

**April 12 to 15, Chatham Marconi Maritime Museum, 847 Orleans Rd (Route 28) in North Chatham** 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Thursday April 12-Saturday, April 14, AND 1 PM to 4 PM Sunday April 15 : Wireless radio event and museum open to the public. Free.

#### **April 14-15, Cape Cod National Seashore, Wellfleet, MA**

9:00 AM April 14- 12 PM April 15, weather permitting: The National Seashore and the Falmouth Radio Club will establish a temporary wireless station at the historic Marconi Station Site. This is the original location where messages were sent, resulting in the *Carpathia's* rescue of *Titanic* victims. Radio operators will communicate in Morse Code, the mode of radio in 1912, to contact other stations around the world that are commemorating the event. Off Route 6, Wellfleet.

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**Cape Cod National Seashore to Commemorate Wireless Technology and the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Sinking of the *Titanic***

**April 14, continued**

1:00 to 1:30 PM: Visit Cape Cod National Seashore Headquarters to view Marconi models, view 1/8 model of the Marconi transmitter, and contemporary bronze bust of Marconi. Off Route 6, Wellfleet.

2:00 PM: Wreath Laying Ceremony, historic Marconi Wireless Station Site. Off Route 6, Wellfleet.

**April 14, Cape Cod National Seashore, Eastham, MA**

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, on the hour: *The Voice of Cape Cod*, a 12 minute film about the building of Marconi's Wireless Station in 1901 in South Wellfleet MA and the historic first transatlantic transmission sent from the USA to Europe on January 18, 1903. Salt Pond Visitor Center, Route 6 and Nauset Road, Eastham.

6:00 PM: *A Night to Remember*, 1958 black-and-white film docudrama (123 minutes) about the *Titanic*, based on Walter Lord's book of the same name. A short demonstration of a "spark gap" transmitter will precede the film. Salt Pond Visitor Center, Route 6 and Nauset Road, Eastham.

**April 15, Cape Cod National Seashore, Eastham, MA**

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, on the hour: *The Voice of Cape Cod*, a 12 minute film about the building of Marconi's Wireless Station in 1901 in South Wellfleet MA and the historic first transatlantic transmission sent from the USA to Europe on January 18, 1903. Salt Pond Visitor Center, Route 6 and Nauset Road, Eastham.

**April 19, Cape Cod National Seashore, Eastham, MA**

3:00 PM: *Rescue at Sea*, a one-hour film that chronicles the collision of two ships of Nantucket in January 1909, and role of Jack Binns, the Marconi radio man aboard one of the ships, who stayed at his key as the ship was sinking. He became known as CDQ Binns, the first hero of wireless, responsible for the saving of 1,500 people. Salt Pond Visitor Center, Route 6 and Nauset Road, Eastham.

**April 21, Cape Cod National Seashore, Eastham, MA**

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM: *International Marconi Day*, annual public event honors Guglielmo Marconi. The Cape Cod Marconi Radio Club communicates with radio operators around the globe in voice and Morse code. Visitors can test their global geography knowledge as they listen to operators making contact with stations from many other countries. (MORE)

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## **Cape Cod National Seashore to Commemorate Wireless Technology and the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Sinking of the *Titanic***

### **April 21, continued**

Those who can't visit in person are invited to tune in via shortwave radio. The former Nauset Coast Guard Station, Coast Guard Beach, off Nauset-Doane Roads, Eastham.

10:00 AM to 11:30 AM: Junior ranger activities related to Marconi's wireless technology will be offered at Salt Pond Visitor Center. Kids can use telegraph keys to learn and practice Morse Code; use walkie-talkies to pass messages; and learn about other signaling methods and codes for rescues. Salt Pond Visitor Center, Route 6 and Nauset Road, Eastham.

1 PM to 3:00 PM: Junior rangers can meet with a ranger to learn about a modern use of wireless technology- GPS. Meet at the historic Marconi Wireless Station Site. Off Route 6, Wellfleet.

Noon to 4:00 PM, on the hour: *The Voice of Cape Cod*, a 12 minute film about the building of Marconi's Wireless Station in 1901 in South Wellfleet MA and the historic first transatlantic transmission sent from the USA to Europe on January 18, 1903. Salt Pond Visitor Center, Route 6 and Nauset Road, Eastham.

*If you go:* The Marconi Station Site is located off Route 6 in Wellfleet. Salt Pond Visitor Center is located at the intersection of Route 6 and Nauset Road in Eastham and is open daily from 9:00 AM to 4:40 PM. The center includes a lobby with expansive views of Salt Pond, Nauset Marsh, and the Atlantic; a museum featuring the park's natural and cultural stories; staff to assist with trip planning, and a store with books, maps, puzzles, games, apparel, and other interpretive items. There are short films shown throughout the day. The Buttonbush and Nauset Marsh Trails, and the Nauset Bike Trail are located nearby. For more information on Cape Cod National Seashore programs, check the park's website, [www.nps.gov/caco](http://www.nps.gov/caco).

The Chatham Marconi Maritime Museum is located at 847 Orleans Rd (Route 28) in North Chatham MA 02650.

**[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)**

*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 395 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).*

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## Background

*Titanic*: A fact that surprises many is that Marconi's historic wireless station in Wellfleet played a role in the rescue. In a published New York Times interview with Harold Cottam, the sole Marconi wireless man onboard the rescue ship, Cottam recounts his purpose in making radio contact with the *Titanic* that fateful night. It was to inform the *Titanic*'s Marconi wireless men that Marconi's long-distance Cape Cod Station was sending a batch of messages to them. However, after giving the message about Cape Cod the *Titanic*'s Marconi wireless man instantly replied with, "Come at once. We have struck a berg." Thus the rescue of survivors began.

Jack Binns - *Rescue at Sea* film, Three years earlier, on a cold January night in 1909, in a dense fog, two ships collided off Nantucket. One, the *Republic*, was a luxury liner, headed out from New York City for a leisurely cruise around the Mediterranean. The other, the *Florida*, was filled with impoverished people fleeing the consequences of an earthquake in Messina, Italy, in the hope of a better life in America. The *Florida* did not have a radio operator, but fortunately the *Republic* did, his name was Jack Binns. Binns, the Marconi radio man on board the *Republic*, stayed at his key as his ship was sinking. He became known as CQD Binns, the first hero of wireless as all passengers and hands were saved, over 1,500 people. In 1909 CQD was the Marconi signal used to call all ships in an emergency. This film tells the true life story of what happened on the *Republic* which was also hailed as an unsinkable ship, owned by the same company as the *Titanic*. The *Titanic* sinks three years later. For more about Jack Binns's visit: <http://www.jackbinns.org/>

For more information about the Marconi's history-making transatlantic message in 1903 and Marconi's relationship to the *Titanic*:

Marconi's Wireless Station Site, Wellfleet, MA USA, Cape Cod National Seashore:  
<http://www.nps.gov/caco/historyculture/upload/Marconicolor.pdf>

Complete New York Times interview with the *Carpathia's* wireless operator, Harold Cottam: April 19th 1912, *Titanic's* CQD caught by a Lucky Fluke: <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9A07E0DF153CE633A2575AC1A9629C946396D6CF>

New York Times interview with the *Titanic's* Surviving Wireless Man, Harold Bride: April 19th 1912, Thrilling Story by *Titanic's* Surviving Wireless Man: <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9E07E0DF153CE633A2575AC1A9629C946396D6CF>

For more information about event partners and International Marconi Day:

Chatham Marconi Maritime Museum: <http://www.chathammarconi.org/>

Falmouth Amateur Radio Association: <http://www.falara.org>

International Marconi Day: <http://g4usb.net/IMD/>

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