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SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™ COMMEMORATES 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF FAMED OCEAN LINER’S MAIDEN VOYAGE WITH MIGHTY SHIP AT WAR: THE QUEEN MARY PREMIERING SUNDAY, AUGUST 21 AT 8 PM ET/PT

One-Hour Special Sets Sail On Epic Journey To Explore Action-Packed Life of Ship

New York – July 28, 2016 – All aboard Smithsonian Channel this August, as the network sets sail on an epic journey to chronicle the spectacular life and times of the singular vessel R.M.S. Queen Mary, as both a luxury passenger liner and a wartime troop ship. MIGHTY SHIP AT WAR: THE QUEEN MARY, a new one-hour special timed to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the famed ocean liner’s maiden voyage, will premiere Sunday, August 21 at 8 p.m. ET/PT on Smithsonian Channel.

Bigger and more powerful than the Titanic, and faster than any other ship in her class, the Queen Mary is the last survivor of the golden age of ocean liners. Built by master craftsmen in Scotland shipyards, she helped drag a nation from the depths of The Great
Depression and set sail as a symbol of new hope and a better future. She played a critical role during World War II, ferrying troops and Winston Churchill across the Atlantic. Then, after nearly 4 million miles sailed in 31 years at sea, The Queen Mary retired to Long Beach, California, where she's drawn over 50 million visitors since 1970.

With exclusive access to the magnificent liner and extensive archival footage and photographs, MIGHTY SHIP AT WAR: THE QUEEN MARY will explore the action-packed life of the ship and take viewers through some of the most dynamic periods of the 20th Century. The ocean liner set a new benchmark in transatlantic travel, transporting movie stars, politicians, and royalty luxuriously across the North Atlantic for over three decades, between 1936 and 1967.

In 1939, the ship was transformed into the largest and fastest troopship, ferrying Allied soldiers during World War II through enemy infested seas. The Queen Mary helped make D-Day possible and by the end of the war had transported almost a million men across the Atlantic. Adolf Hitler offered a $250,000 reward for any U-boat captain that could sink her, but her size and speed made her unsinkable. The documentary also explores the ship's darkest day when, in October 1942, she accidentally collided with her escort vessel, the HMS Curacoa, slicing it in two. Ordered not to stop under any circumstances, the captain of the Queen Mary had no choice but to continue, leaving 338 men to drown.

The one-hour special gives unique insight into life on the ship, featuring interviews with historians and experts, including a tour by Queen Mary’s Honorary Captain Everette Horde. It also includes firsthand accounts by passengers who walked her decks, such as Heather Beagley, who was lucky enough to sail on the iconic maiden passage, and singer Johnny Mathis, who performed on the rough seas of the Atlantic. Viewers will also hear from U.S. Army troops who crossed the Atlantic to fight, revealing what the liner was like during wartime, and two “G.I. Brides” who boarded the Queen Mary post-war to join their American husbands in the States.
MIGHTY SHIP AT WAR: THE QUEEN MARY is produced by STV Productions in for Smithsonian Channel and BBC Scotland. Matt Pinder is the producer and director. Michael McAvoy serves as executive producer for STV Productions. David Royle and Charles Poe serve as executive producers for Smithsonian Channel.

Smithsonian Channel™, owned by Smithsonian Networks™, a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, is where curiosity lives, inspiration strikes and wonders never cease. This is the place for awe-inspiring stories, powerful documentaries and amazing entertainment across multiple platforms. Smithsonian Channel combines the storytelling prowess of SHOWTIME® with the unmatched resources and rich traditions of the Smithsonian, to create award-winning programming that shines new light on popular genres such as air and space, history, science, nature, and pop culture. Among the network’s offerings are series including Aerial America, Million Dollar American Princesses, The Weapon Hunter, Mighty Ships, Mighty Planes and Air Disasters, as well as critically-acclaimed specials that include Civil War 360, 9/11: The Heartland Tapes; MLK: The Assassination Tapes and The Day Kennedy Died. Smithsonian Networks also operates Smithsonian Earth™, through SN Digital LLC., a new subscription video streaming service delivering spectacular original nature and wildlife content. To learn more, go to www.smithsonianchannel.com, or connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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