Independence Seaport Museum Announces the Opening of Three New Exhibits

Learn about the rich history of rowing, visit the Museum’s new floating wetlands, and discover the WWI heritage of Cruiser Olympia


“These three exhibits provide Philadelphians and visitors to our City distinct opportunities to experience the history, science, and community of our local waterways,” said John Brady, president and CEO of Independence Seaport Museum. “Rowing has long been central to recreation on Philadelphia’s rivers and we are excited to share many different personal stories about this hallowed sport. Our new Floating Wetlands further expand our commitment to the sciences and maintaining the health of our water. Finally, Cruiser Olympia is the only remaining vessel of her kind who took part in World War I and we are proud to honor the legacy of our Navy and soldiers with a new exhibit.”

Philadelphia Rowing: Breaking Barriers
March 31- October 9
The eleventh exhibit in the Museum’s Community Gallery Series, “Philadelphia Rowing: Breaking Barriers,” shares the history of rowing in Philadelphia as well as the innovations and accomplishments that have broken barriers of class, gender, race, age, and ability. Community members Virginia Baltzell, Hanley Bodeck, and Gardner Cadwalader worked with the Seaport Museum’s Chief Curator, Craig Bruns, to share the history of the first women’s rowing club, stories of leading edge adaptive rowing, and of individuals that have risen from modest beginnings to personal fulfillment and gold-medal achievement.

The exhibit features artifacts from Philadelphia’s Boathouse Row, local collectors and rowers, and the Museum’s own collection. The exhibit will be accompanied by various activities from March through September including a book signing for Dotty Brown’s Boathouse Row, Waves of Change in the Birthplace of American Rowing, kayaking class, film festival, documentary screening, and a panel of esteemed local rowers. To learn more about the upcoming rowing exhibit and programs visit:
http://phillyseaport.org/breakingbarriers.
**Floating Wetlands**  
April 23  
Celebrate Ecology Day on April 23 by helping with the installation of the Floating Wetlands exhibit on the Seaport Museum’s docks at 11 a.m. Floating Wetlands, small islands containing native plant species, not only serve as attractive landscaping for the Seaport Museum’s boat basin and Spruce Street Harbor Park, but also provide a habitat for marine life and improve water quality in the Delaware River. Floating Wetlands help combat the runoff that pollutes Philadelphia’s waterways, such as pollutants from lawns, roads, and other urban surfaces.

**World War I USS Olympia**  
June 16  
Many people know that Cruiser *Olympia* served as Admiral Dewey’s flagship at the Battle of Manila Bay but not that this ship carried the body of the Unknown Soldier from France to the United States in 1921, or that she is the second oldest surviving US naval ship afloat, largely rebuilt for use in World War I.

Learn about the roles the Cruiser *Olympia* played in the Great War, including coastal patrol and ship escort; intervention; peace keeping and humanitarianism; and finally transporting the Unknown Soldier back to our shores. Visitors can also step aboard the oldest floating steel warship, *Olympia*, to see what life was like for the naval personnel who inhabited it.

To learn more about the upcoming exhibits and how to purchase tickets visit [phillyseaport.org](http://phillyseaport.org)

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**About Independence Seaport Museum**  
Independence Seaport Museum deepens the appreciation, understanding and experience of the Philadelphia region’s waterways through history, science, art and community. The Museum maintains one of the largest maritime collections in North America, combining more than 25,000 artifacts with hands-on exhibits, small boat rentals and large-scale models. The Museum houses a traditional boat shop, the Workshop on the Water; J. Welles Henderson Archives and Library; and Penn’s Landing Playhouse. The Museum also includes two National Historic Landmark ships: Cruiser Olympia, and Submarine Becuna. Located at Philadelphia’s Penn’s Landing Waterfront, the Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visit [phillyseaport.org](http://phillyseaport.org) for more information.