Hi, Have we met?

I’m Olympia.

Kicking off in February 2020, Independence Seaport Museum will begin observing Cruiser Olympia’s 125th anniversary through commemorative programming, temporary exhibits, and family activities.
Cruiser Olympia has been docked in Philadelphia for nearly 100 years and has served in various capacities, starting with exhibiting as part of the Philadelphia Navy Yard’s annual public Navy Day events, officiating construction celebrations of the Delaware River Bridge (later renamed the Benjamin Franklin Bridge), and most notably as a Museum ship starting in 1957.

Over her years in the city, Olympia has welcomed visitors of all ages, from school students who marvel at her sheer size, adults who want to see a part of history, and even descendants tracing the steps of a family member’s service on-board. We are excited to celebrate her commissioning in the city she’s called home for so many years!

Fun Facts About Cruiser Olympia to Celebrate Her 125th Commissioning Anniversary

1. She’s the oldest floating warship in the world and is one of only two ships left from World War I (the other being the Battleship Texas).

2. In 1903 she became the first U.S. Navy ship to use Wireless Telegraphy (radio) for “strategic” gain.

3. Olympia contains the last surviving example of an “oscillator,” an early iteration of pre-sonar technology.

4. During her service, Olympia saw Utah, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona all become part of the United States.

5. The medical world as we know it changed during her years of service with the invention of aspirin, insulin, and X-Rays.

6. Olympia served under 6 presidential administrations, but only one president, Theodore Roosevelt, stepped aboard and that was in 1904 during the Grand Naval Review.

7. Cruiser Olympia’s last act of service was the ceremonial transportation of the American Unknown Soldier of World War I from France to the United States. He now lays entombed at Arlington National Cemetery.
FEBRUARY 2020

**Olympia’s Commissioning Celebration**  
February 5, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Celebrate Olympia’s commissioning anniversary with free admission to Olympia as well as Submarine Becuna and the Museum. Climb aboard for guided tours every hour starting at 11 a.m. plus have a chance to ring Olympia’s bell at 1:25 p.m. Imagine the life of a sailor by testing your knot-tying skills, lie in a hammock similar to those the crew slept in, and try to fit all of your belongings in a ditty box while you’re aboard.

Inside the Museum, be sure to explore Olympia’s role in World War I in our exhibit, *World War I: USS Olympia*, and check out the Curatorial Corner in the lobby with rotating thematic displays of artifacts and photos through the ship’s history.

**Youth and Opportunities in Society: 1890s to Today**  
February 15, 1 p.m.

Explore the challenges and opportunities youth face today with guest speakers Juwan Z. Bennett of Temple University and Dr. Uade Da Silva, Lieutenant, USN, Retired. Bennett will discuss the challenges of equal opportunity for youth in today’s workforce, while Da Silva will speak about contemporary race relations in the Navy. Explore the different opportunities and roles open to seamen during Cruiser Olympia’s service time in the 1890s.

MARCH 2020

**The Changing Role of Women in the Navy: 20th Century to Present**  
March 14

Join the Cruiser Olympia Living History Crew to explore the roles of women on board ships and in the Navy during Olympia’s time period.

**Cruiser Olympia Hard Hat Tours**  
Bi-monthly, starting March 28

Hard Hat Tours return this spring for Olympia’s 125th! Explore more than 12 areas of the warship normally only reserved for staff. Learn about Olympia’s technical details (did you know she was one of the first ships to have a radio communications system installed?), what life was like aboard for her crew, and more!
APRIL 2020

Philadelphia Science Festival: Citywide Star Party
April 17, 7 p.m.
Climb aboard and learn all about the stars from astronomers as part of the Philadelphia Science Festival!

May 2020

Battle of Manila Bay Commemoration
May 2
Step on board with the Olympia Living History Crew as they explore the history of the American Navy and highlight society at the height of the Victorian age. Visitors will experience what life was like aboard the vessel in 1898 through demonstrations of ship-to-shop signaling, artillery drills, and more.

Olympia’s Waterfront Splash!
May 9
Join us for Olympia’s official 125th birthday party! A special ceremony featuring guest speakers and the unveiling of a gift for Olympia will take place that morning. Stay tuned for more information.

Join the Living History Crew for activities aboard the ship and learn more about what life was like for her crew. Stick around for the season opening of Admiral’s Tavern, our pop-up beer garden on Olympia’s fantail open all summer long! Sign a birthday card for Olympia and of course, enjoy some cake.

#Olympia125
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If you have questions, or would like more information, please contact:

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