

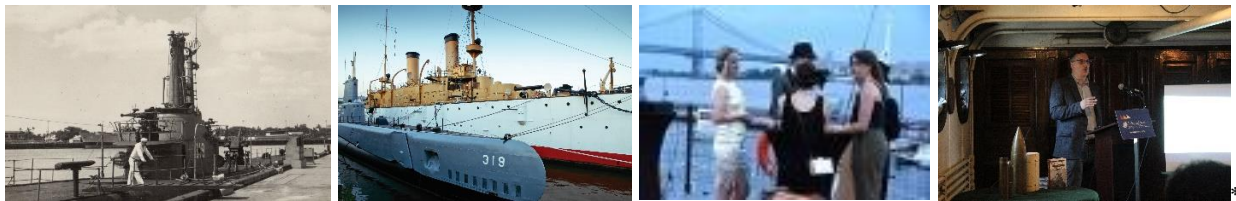


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INDEPENDENCE SEAPORT MUSEUM USHERS IN THE SUMMER SEASON WITH SHIPBOARD ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES



Philadelphia, PA (May 6, 2024)—Independence Seaport Museum (ISM) is gearing up for the summer season with programming and events that allow visitors to explore Philadelphia’s river of history and world of connections, all from aboard its two historic ships, *Olympia* and *Becuna*.

“Philadelphia is a city that was born from the Delaware River,” states Peter S. Seibert, President and CEO of the Independence Seaport Museum. “As you make plans for the summer, I encourage you to come down to the river and begin exploring its rich history by attending one of our programs.”

Coinciding with Memorial Day Weekend, the museum will celebrate [*Becuna*](#) (“Becky”)’s 80th birthday with a weekend full of programming and special discounts from Saturday, May 25 to Monday, May 27. A World War II-era submarine, “Becky” was commissioned on May 27, 1944, at Electric Boat Company in Groton, Connecticut, and sent immediately to the Pacific Ocean, where she engaged the naval forces of Imperial Japan during World War II. In 1951, *Becuna* underwent modernization as part of the United States Navy’s Greater Underwater Propulsion & Power Program (also known as the GUPPY Program), where she was refitted with a streamlined hull and a snorkel system, among other upgrades. “Becky” is the only Guppy 1-A type submarine remaining anywhere in the world. Relocated to Philadelphia in 1969 after she was decommissioned, *Becuna* was made a museum in July 1976 as part of the Bicentennial Celebration of the Declaration of Independence and moved to Penn’s Landing to be docked alongside the *Olympia*.

On Saturday, May 25, at 10 AM, ISM will host a ceremony commemorating the 80th anniversary of *Becuna*'s commissioning, recognizing "Becky"'s service to the country and honoring all those stationed on the submarine during the 25 years she was an active-duty vessel as well as the service she continues to perform today educating younger generations on subjects ranging from history to science to technology. Speakers will include Captain Dennis Dyckman, who served aboard in 1968 as an ensign, and Meghan Rathbun, whose grandfather rode *Becuna* during his time as commander of Submarine Squadron 8 and then commanding officer of the Submarine School in the 1950s. The day will also include thematic programming aboard the ships, and ISM will be joined in the building by the US Geological Survey and the Philadelphia Water Department, which will teach visitors of all ages the importance of Philadelphia's waterways and the health of the Delaware River, home to history and a major resource for the city.

Throughout the holiday weekend, the museum will also offer special promotions to celebrate *Becuna*'s historic milestone. Visitors who purchase either the Climb Aboard, the Explorer, or the Admiral Dewey admission packages will receive a special memento to remember *Becuna*'s 80th Birthday Bash. The Climb Aboard package is a ship-centric offering that features self-guided exploration of *Olympia* and a guided tour of the cruiser's engine room, plus a guided tour of *Becuna*. The other two options, the Explorer and Admiral Dewey packages, include self-guided exploration on *Olympia* and a guided *Becuna* tour in both packages, plus a guided tour of *Olympia*'s engine room with the Admiral Dewey selection, in addition to self-guided exploration in the museum building. Additionally, shoppers in the Museum Store will receive an 8.0% discount on any *Becuna*-themed merchandise. ISM will also introduce its expanded historic ship schedule, which will run until Labor Day. Guided tours of *Becuna* will be offered daily at 11 AM, 1 PM, 2 PM, and 3 PM, alongside guided tours of *Olympia*'s engine room at 11 AM, 2 PM, and 4 PM.

"These ships were never designed to last this long," says Independence Seaport Museum's Shipboard Interpretation Manager Greg Williams. "*Becuna* is still here 80 years later, serving as a link to our past and educating younger generations about our nation's history. It is a remarkable thing and a testament to ISM's commitment to her as her caretaker."

[Olympia](#), the oldest floating steel ship in the world, will also be the site of events throughout the summer. Back again for a second year, ISM's "Captain's Corner" series will be offered once a month aboard the ship. The series will cover various topics, but all have one common thread: highlighting themes relevant to the museum's two historic ships. Guests can learn about how *Olympia*'s baseball team helped build international relationships with Asia with Kater Miller from the National Museum of the Marine Corps on [May 18](#), the American Army in the Phillippines during the Spanish-American war with PhD student Derrick Rowe on [June 29](#); the naval life and leadership of Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz on with Dr. Tyler R. Bamford from the Naval History and Heritage Command on [July 27](#), and Hitler's plan to stymie the Americans in the Atlantic Ocean with K.A. Nelson, the author of *Killing Shore: The True Story of Hitler's U-boats Off the New Jersey Coast*, on [August 17](#). The cost per program is \$15 per person and includes access to the lecture and self-guided exploration onboard *Olympia*. [ISM members](#) receive free admission.

Summer evenings at ISM will come alive with [Olympia After Hours](#), a series of special events that the museum will launch in June. Back due to popular demand following a similar event held in 2023, *Olympia After Hours* will include speakeasy evenings plus three new thematic evenings for those 21 and older. On June 14, July 12, and August 9, attendees will be transported to a 1920s-era speakeasy, complete with jazz music, themed cocktails, and mocktails. On June 28, July 26, and August 23, visitors can experience different themes, including a celebration of Pride month (June 28), a sci-fi night where guests will travel to far-off realms (July 26), and a 90's night where attendees can relive the recent decade (August 23). Tickets for each event are \$35 per person and include one complimentary drink. [ISM members](#) receive free admission.

Rounding out summer programming is a new event on *Olympia* scheduled for Saturday, August 3. ISM will be joined by Nerd Mall and Origins of Play for [Olympia Con](#), a full day of gaming and exploration. From 10 AM to 4 PM, gaming enthusiasts, anime lovers, and collectors will unite for an unforgettable experience filled with cutting-edge video game tournaments, thrilling anime and cosplay, amazing vendors, and more. To make the day sweeter, Philadelphia's own Bassett Ice Cream will be available during the event, selling ice cream to those onboard. Additional information and ticket options will be announced shortly on ISM's website.

About Independence Seaport Museum

The Independence Seaport Museum (ISM), founded in 1960 as the Philadelphia Maritime Museum, encourages visitors to discover Philadelphia's river of history and world of connections. Stewards of the *Olympia*, a nineteenth-century cruiser, and the *Becuna*, a World War II-era submarine, ISM is home to interactive and award-winning exhibitions, one of the largest collections of historic maritime artifacts in the world and a boatbuilding workshop. Accredited by the American Association of Museums since the 1970s, it is a premier, year-round destination adjacent to Spruce Street Harbor Park on Penn's Landing. Visit daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and see our full schedule of programs and events at phillyseaport.org. Visit <https://www.phillyseaport.org/admissions-hours-of-operation/> to learn about ticket packages and guided tour options.

About Bassetts Ice Cream

A family-owned and operated business founded in 1861, Bassetts Ice Cream is America's oldest ice cream brand. Using unique recipes handed down from generation to generation, Bassetts has been churning out high-quality ice cream for over 160 years. To learn more about the company's history, where to purchase ice cream, and more, visit <https://www.bassettsicecream.com/>.

About Nerd Mall

Nerd Mall is South Jersey's ultimate resource for all things nerdy. Once four separate stores, Nerd Mall houses action figures, video games, comic books, board games, skateboards, collectibles, card games, RC Cars, Yo-Yo's, and so much more. Located in Woodbury, New Jersey, the company hosts regular game nights, D&D games, and events all in its courtyard. To learn more, visit <https://nerdmall.com/>.

About Origin of Play

Origin of Play strives to be the best Gaming Entertainment Company possible. Team members enjoy working with different clients, bringing their imaginations and visions to life. To learn more about past and current projects, visit <https://www.originofplay.com/>.

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*Images: *Becuna* docked at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii in 1949, Weilminster Collection, 2009.015; *Becuna* moored alongside *Olympia* on Penn's Landing; Guests aboard *Olympia* for an evening speakeasy that is part of the new *Olympia* After Hours series; speaker Dominic Etzold lecturing during his Captain's Corner presentation from April 2024.