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For Immediate Release:

Independence Seaport Museum Announces Plans to Reopen March 20

PHILADELPHIA, PA, March 5, 2021– The [Independence Seaport Museum](#) (ISM) will reopen its doors and welcome the public on March 20. The museum has been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic since November 17, 2020, and the reopening will give a much-needed tourism boost to the Delaware Riverfront. Visitors can look forward to learning about national maritime history and further their knowledge of Pennsylvania’s expansive waterways through the museum’s incredible exhibitions.

To ensure visitor safety, the museum will operate at a 25% capacity on a weekend-only schedule, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. The new safety precautions will ensure visitors can remain socially distant as they view multiple [attractions](#) at ISM. While the museum and National Historic Landmark ship [Cruiser Olympia](#) will reopen, [Submarine Becuna](#) will remain closed until further notice.

“We are very excited to reopen and welcome back our visitors,” said incoming ISM President & CEO, Peter S. Seibert. “As we embrace the beginning of our season, we hope that everyone will take this opportunity to visit this extraordinary museum along the historic Delaware River.”

Inside the museum, guests can explore the largest maritime artifact collections in North America. The award-winning exhibition, [River Alive!](#), gives visitors an up-close look at the wildlife, science, and wonder of the Delaware River and encourages exploration through various interactive components such as the Water Cycle Puzzle, Watershed Map, Continuum Wall, and more.

Featuring artifacts from the museum’s collection, [Tides of Freedom: African Presence on the Delaware River](#) offers gripping first-hand accounts that detail four key moments in Philadelphia’s history that touch on enslavement, emancipation, Jim Crow, and Civil Rights. ISM’s [Patriots & Pirates](#) exhibit shares rare objects that highlight the little-known story of American’s conflict with pirates and Philadelphia’s connection to the founding of the United States Navy. [Patriots & Pirates](#) also features [Schooner Diligence](#), a stationary 102-foot vessel constructed by staff and volunteers from [Workshop on the Water](#); a traditional boat shop located inside the museum.

The museum’s rotating collection of art housed in the [Waterways Gallery](#) will feature [Light on Steel on Water](#), including 13 paintings of retired ships docked at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. The paintings were created by artists attending the Wayne Plein Air Festival and will challenge viewers to see the industrial naval ships as interconnected instead of opposing forces. The paintings will remain on display through the end of the year before returning to the [Wayne Art Center](#). Click [HERE](#) to explore a digital presentation of the exhibit.

In addition to exhibits featured at the museum, ISM will offer virtual [exhibits](#) that further highlight our country’s maritime history. Go on a deep dive and learn about historical figures such as Revolutionary War hero Commodore Richard Dale, the Submarine Veterans, and the Thayer Family, Philadelphians

who survived the *Titanic's* infamous sinking. These are just a few of the exceptional curated experiences that can be found on the museum's website, available for free to the public.

You can also browse extensive [programming and events](#) centered around ISM's plans to commemorate the [Centennial Anniversary of the Return of the Unknown Soldier](#) aboard Cruiser *Olympia*. Currently the oldest steel warship still afloat, *Olympia* was chosen to return the remains of an unknown American soldier to the United States following the end of World War I. ISM will host both virtual and in-person events throughout the year, culminating with a ceremony marking the Centennial Anniversary of *Olympia's* departure from Le Havre, France, on October 25, 2021.

ISM will require all visitors entering the building or boarding Cruiser *Olympia* to wear a face mask and utilize sanitization stations installed in high traffic areas. The museum has also added signage and floor markers reminding guests to maintain a six-foot distance from others. Staff will certify workers' health through daily temperature checks workers will be required to wear face masks and gloves and work behind plastic partitions at points of sale. The museum has increased daily cleanings and adjusted certain elements of exhibits based on interactivity. Visitors are encouraged to visit [ISM's website](#) to learn more about the new safety procedures.

The museum highly recommends visitors purchase tickets in advance on the official [website](#), where they can also find admission prices and additional information. Admission tickets will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Later this spring, visitors can look forward to exploring the Delaware River from a whole new point of view with ISM's unique [On-Water Programming](#). Back by popular demand, the museum will be offering both the family-favorite, [Paddle Penn's Landing](#), where visitors can paddle around the basin, and [Kayak Excursions](#), which take participants out of the basin and onto the river. With options for every level of experience, be sure to save-the-date to spend the warmer weather with ISM safely on the Delaware River. Both Paddle Penn's Landing and kayak excursions will begin in May. Visit [ISM's website](#) for more information.

Photos: **Live [HERE](#).**

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About the Independence Seaport Museum

Independence Seaport Museum increases the awareness, knowledge, and experience of our waterways by highlighting the important role of the Delaware River through direct contact with our collections, exhibits, and the water. Our boating programs provide direct access to recreation and the scientific study of the water from the standpoints of biology and physics while art is used to represent the importance of competing uses of the river. Through our historic ships, Cruiser *Olympia* and Submarine *Becuna*, we provide the ideal platform for examining the interaction of society and water over our nation's history. Our educational student outreach programs ensure generational awareness of the museum's mission. October 25, 2021 marks the Centennial Anniversary of Cruiser *Olympia's* 15-day journey to bring the American Unknown Soldier from World War I from France to the Washington Navy Yard. We will be honoring this significant milestone throughout the year by sharing stories, presenting programming, hosting discussions, and premiering digital content. Learn more about the Independence Seaport Museum at phillyseaport.org.