



Media Contact:
Billy Cook
billy@enroutemarketing.com
239-734-5150 (m)

INDEPENDENCE SEAPORT MUSEUM ANNOUNCES FALL 2023 PROGRAMMING, FEATURING HISTORICAL DEEP DIVES AND HALLOWEEN-INSPIRED ENGAGEMENTS

Photos: [HERE](#)

Philadelphia, PA | September 5, 2023 – [Independence Seaport Museum](#) (ISM) is celebrating the fall season with special programming and events to provide guests with exciting opportunities to discover Philadelphia’s river of history and world of connections. Throughout October, ISM’s staff will host special programming to highlight its exhibitions and offer discounts to guests visiting in their Halloween costumes.

Guests can explore one of the largest maritime art and artifact collections in North America displayed in their award-winning exhibits before heading outside to tour their historic ships, [Cruiser Olympia](#) and [Submarine Becuna](#). ISM is a critical component of Philadelphia’s waterfront renaissance and is a popular, year-round, family-friendly destination along Penn’s Landing.

Upcoming Seasonal Programming & Events

The Museum provides special seasonal programming to encourage visitors to dive deeper into its historic ships and exhibitions. On October 21 at 2 p.m., Hagley Museum and Library historian Lucas R. Clawson will host [Captain’s Corner](#), an afternoon talk series that offers in-depth conversations on American history. Clawson will discuss how the DuPont Company dealt with disruptions in shipping and the maritime economy during the Civil War. Access to Captain’s Corner is included with admission to the Museum and free for ISM members.

On Friday, October 13, ISM will host the [Cruiser Olympia “Spook”-easy Pop-Up Experience](#), the final event of its new adults-only series where guests can step back in time aboard the oldest floating steel warship in the world. From 6 to 9 p.m., ISM will turn the historic ship into a 1920s speakeasy where the crew is dressed in period uniforms. Guests can enjoy a night of drinks, music, and games while learning about what it was like serving in the United States Navy during prohibition.

Attendees to the final *Cruiser Olympia* Speakeasy Pop-Up Experience are encouraged to wear costumes, with advanced tickets available for \$30 and \$35 at the door. Guests must be 21 or older to attend. Learn more and purchase tickets [here](#).

From Friday, October 13 to Tuesday, October 31, ISM will offer a special **Costume Promo** where every guest who wears a costume for their visit will receive two dollars off any of the ticket packages.

Inside the Museum

Families are welcome to explore one of the largest maritime artifact collections in North America. In the Richard C. von Hess Foundation Gallery, guests explore [At the Water’s Edge: Working and living along the Delaware River](#) (“At the Water’s Edge”), an exhibition detailing the history of Philadelphia’s waterfront that’s told through a series of artifacts, rare prints, artwork, and historic documents.

At the Water's Edge is highlighted by “Alice,” a rare, 19th-century portrait of an enslaved woman from Philadelphia. Alice managed and operated Dunk’s Ferry (going from present-day Neshaminy State Park, PA to Edgewater Park, NJ), where she transported passengers, wagons, and cargo for 40 years. View the portraits of Native Americans Tish-Co-Han and Lap-Pa-Win-Soe, who were actively involved in land agreements with the Penn Family, including the Walking Purchase of 1737. These portraits are believed to be among the earliest known images of Native Americans. Visitors can also get a close look at a Sea Chest that belonged to Captain John Green, who led a voyage to China aboard the *Empress of China* in 1784. The piece represents a period in history when America and China became active trading partners. *At the Water's Edge* runs through May 2025.

In [Patriots & Pirates](#), visitors learn about how Philadelphia played key role in the founding of the U.S. Navy and how sailors had to combat Pirates during the early days of the American Republic. The exhibition features harrowing firsthand accounts of this era, including a letter sent to the U.S. Congress in 1793 by Americans held hostage by pirates, requesting their return. The exhibition also details the lives of early Navy heroes such as Captain John Barry (known as the Father of the American Navy) and Captain Stephen Decatur, who led a mission to destroy the USS Frigate *Philadelphia* in after it had been captured by Barbary pirates. Historical artifacts like Captain Barry’s personal octant and Captain Decatur’s hat and buttons from his naval uniform are on display.

Philadelphia remained significant to America’s naval force as a major shipbuilding hub in the coming centuries. *Patriots & Pirates* highlights this history through a model of the Navy’s first frigate constructed in Philadelphia, the *USS United States*, and the replica 102-foot vessel Schooner *Diligence*. The replica was constructed by staff and volunteers from [The Seaport Boat Shop](#), a traditional boat shop located inside the Museum, and was based on a real ship from Captain Barry’s squadron.

The [River Alive!](#) exhibition gives visitors an up-close look at the wildlife, science, and wonder of the Delaware River and encourages exploration through various engaging, interactive components. Awarded the Special Achievement in Interactivity Award in 2020 by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), this exhibit proves that the river truly is alive and how important its conservation is to the eastern seaboard.

The award-winning exhibition, [Tides of Freedom: African Presence on the Delaware River](#), will be temporarily unavailable to the public starting September 10 as the Museum begins the process of reinstalling it on the second floor. Curated by the Lasry Family Professor of Race Relations at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Tukufu Zuberi, the exhibition shares first-hand accounts detailing the history of enslavement, emancipation, Jim Crow, and Civil Rights in Philadelphia. *Tides of Freedom* is expected to reopen by November 3.

Historic Ships to Explore

The Museum is proud to be continuing its efforts to educate the public about its historical vessels docked along the landing. Nearby the Museum are [Cruiser Olympia](#), the oldest floating steel warship, and [Submarine Becuna](#), a World War II-era Balao-class submarine. ISM began its stewardship of *Olympia*, a National Historic Landmark, in 1996 and has since overseen restorations that made it possible for the historic Cruiser to remain open for touring visitors.

Becuna also brings a storied history from her 25 years in the U.S. Navy. The submarine completed five wartime patrols in the Pacific Theater of World War II and earned four combat stars for her service. The

submarine became a museum in July 1976 as part of Philadelphia's Bicentennial Celebration and became a part of ISM's collections in 1996.

Visiting Independence Seaport Museum

ISM offers our [four admission bundles](#) to provide visitors with flexible options for visitors to learn, discover, and explore at affordable prices. The **General Admission Ticket Package** comes with a self-guided experience among the Museum's award-winning exhibitions and aboard the historic ship Cruiser *Olympia*. For those only looking to tour the historic ships, the **Climb Aboard Package** offers self-guided access to Cruiser *Olympia* plus guided tours of the ship's Engine Room and Submarine *Becuna*. Visitors who purchase the **Explorer Package** can explore the entire Museum and *Olympia* on their own before taking a guided tour of *Becuna*. For the complete ISM experience, the **Admiral Dewey Package** offers self-guided access to the Museum building and Cruiser *Olympia*, a guided tour of Submarine *Becuna*, and a guided tour of Cruiser *Olympia*'s Engine Room. Learn more by visiting ISM's admissions and add-ons page [here](#).

Before leaving ISM, visitors are encouraged to stop by the gift shop to find the perfect souvenir for the nautical lover in their life. Featuring a curated selection of items made by local artisans, with themes ranging from nautical to the City of Brotherly Love, there's something for everyone. All gift shop proceeds are re-invested in the ISM's programs, historic ships, and collections.

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About Independence Seaport Museum

Independence Seaport Museum encourages visitors to discover Philadelphia's river of history and world of connections. Stewards of Cruiser *Olympia* and World War II-era Submarine *Becuna*, ISM is home to a boatbuilding workshop, interactive exhibitions, and one of the largest collections of historic maritime artifacts in the world. Visitors can explore the historic and beautiful Delaware River first-hand by renting a boat from the Museum or by participating in one of our kayak excursions. The Independence Seaport Museum is the premier, year-round destination on the Penn's Landing waterfront. Visit daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and see our full schedule of programs and events at phillyseaport.org.