MYSTERIES FROM THE DEEP: EXPLORING UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY



INTREPID MUSEUM

FLYING FISH

EXHIBITION PROSPECTUS

MYSTERIES FROM THE DEEP

EXPLORING UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY

Dive into the world of underwater archaeology, where cutting-edge technology and expert teams uncover the mysteries hidden beneath the waves.

This immersive exhibition brings their discoveries to life, revealing lost stories, cultures, and civilizations from around the globe.



THE BIG IDEA

Human curiosity fuels underwater archaeology, inspiring teamwork, creative problem-solving, and new methods to explore the depths and reveal the mysteries of our past.



THEMES



UNCOVERING HISTORY

Submerged sites hold powerful traces of our shared past. Through discovery, analysis, and preservation, these underwater finds bring lost histories into the present and deepen our understanding of the human story.



INNOVATION & ADAPTATION

Underwater exploration demands constant reinvention. From SCUBA and rebreathers to ROVs, sonar, and photogrammetry, teams of experts refine and adapt new technologies to reach farther, see more clearly, and document worlds rarely seen.



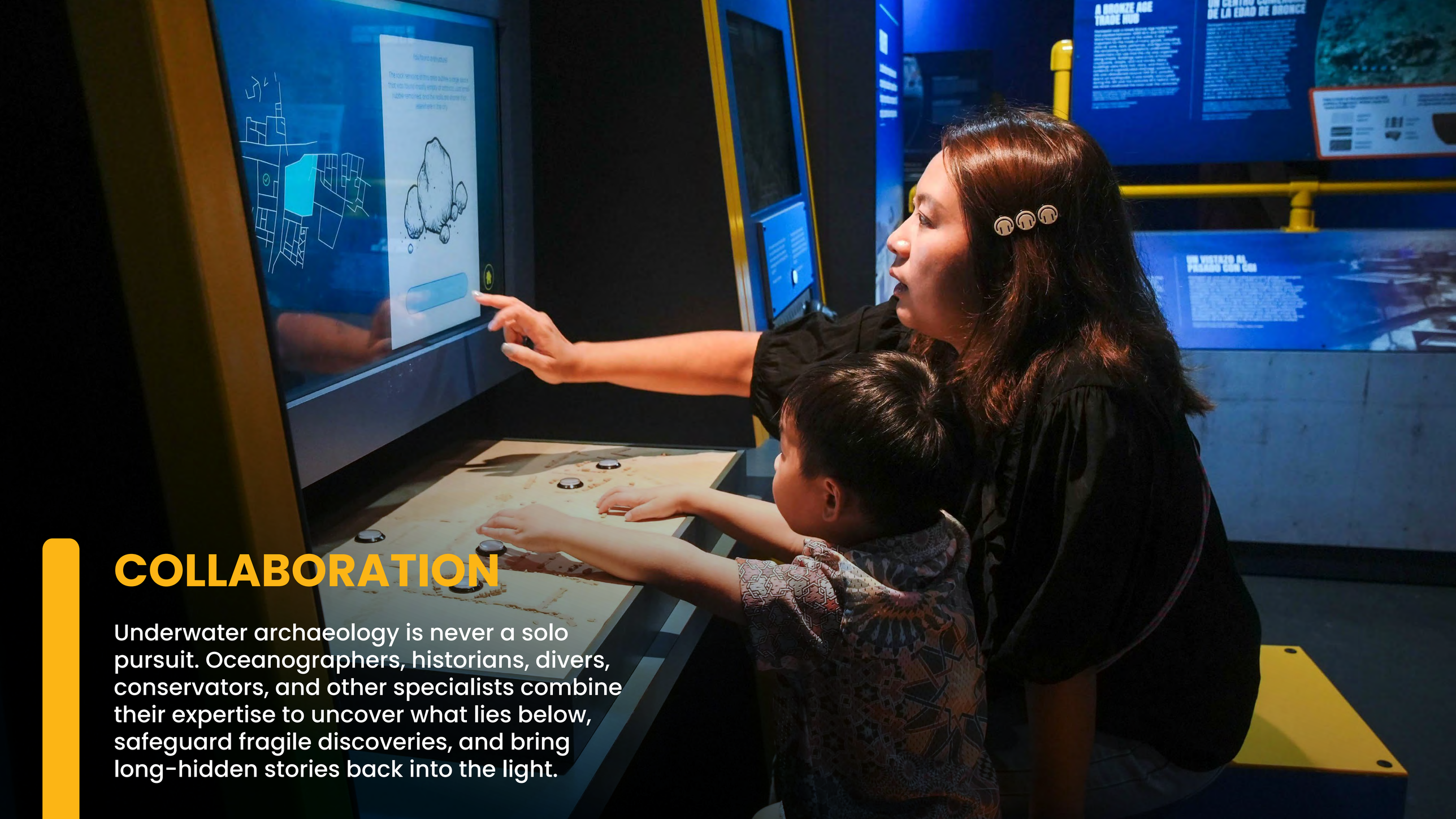
DISCOVERY & EXPLORATION

Every breakthrough begins with a discovery. Experts navigate extreme environments with courage and creativity to explore the unknown and unlock the secrets of submerged worlds.



CURIOSITY

Curiosity fuels every dive, driving teams of experts to ask bold questions, unravel mysteries, and pioneer new ways of exploring what lies hidden beneath the surface.



COLLABORATION

Underwater archaeology is never a solo pursuit. Oceanographers, historians, divers, conservators, and other specialists combine their expertise to uncover what lies below, safeguard fragile discoveries, and bring long-hidden stories back into the light.


MAKING DIVING ACCESSIBLE
1960s
In 1926, the first SCUBA (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus) gear was invented. This gear lets humans breathe from tanks instead of being connected to the surface with a hose. However, it wasn't until the invention of a more reliable breathing device, or regulator, called the Aqualung, that SCUBA gear became more widespread. Early versions of SCUBA gear included a regulator, air tanks, an oval facemask, a wetsuit, and a vest that controlled how divers floated in the water.
Image courtesy of SCUBA100, Flickr.
EL BUCEO SE VUELVE MÁS ACCESIBLE
Década de 1960
En 1926, se inventó la primera escafandra autónoma. Este equipo tiene tanques que permiten que las personas respiren sin necesidad de estar conectadas con la superficie a través de una manguera. Sin embargo, las escafandras autónomas no se popularizaron hasta la creación del Aqualung, un dispositivo de respiración más confiable, también llamado "regulador". Las primeras versiones de las escafandras autónomas incluían un regulador, tubos de oxígeno, una máscara ovalada, un traje de neopreno y un chaleco que controlaba cómo flotaban los buzos en el agua.
Imagen por cortesía de SCUBA100, Flickr.
CHANGING THE BREATHING GAME
2010s
SCUBA gear releases air that divers breathe out as bubbles. This is called an open-circuit system. A rebreather system, however, recycles exhaled air into breathable air through a closed-circuit system. The popularization of this system around 2011 changed how we explore underwater. Rebreathers allow divers to dive deeper, stay underwater longer, and explore more complex places like caves and inside large shipwrecks.
Since rebreathers don't release bubbles like SCUBA gear, divers can safely and respectfully explore caves without bubbles rising and breaking off cave formations on the ceiling.
Image courtesy of nasryan/Lauren Wilson.
NUEVAS FORMAS DE RESPIRAR
Década de 2010
Las escafandras autónomas liberan el aire que los buzos exhalan en forma de burbujas. Se llama sistema de circuito abierto. Sin embargo, el sistema rebreather recicla el aire exhalado en aire respirable mediante un sistema de circuito cerrado. Este sistema se popularizó alrededor del 2011 y cambió la forma en que exploramos el mundo submarino. Los rebreathers (recicladores) nos permiten bucear a mayor profundidad, permanecer debajo del agua por más tiempo y explorar lugares más complejos, como cuevas o el interior de grandes naufragios.
Dado que los rebreathers no liberan burbujas como las escafandras autónomas, los buzos pueden explorar cuevas de forma segura y respetuosa sin que las burbujas suban y derriben las formaciones rupestres del techo.
Imagen por cortesía de nasryan/Lauren Wilson.

HIGHLIGHTS

Discover the Secrets Beneath the Waves

Mysteries from the Deep unfolds like a choose-your-own-adventure, inviting exploration through many lenses, from history and science to ethics and discovery.

Throughout the exhibition, expert voices, authentic artifacts, hands-on interactives, and immersive case studies bring shipwrecks, sunken cities, and submerged landscapes vividly to life.

Original objects and high-impact media reveal how underwater archaeologists investigate these hidden worlds, uncovering powerful stories preserved beneath the surface.



ZONE A:
Underwater Archaeology 101

Dive into to a world few experience firsthand. Step into the environments where the experts work—exploring shipwrecks, sunken cities, and lost artifacts hidden beneath oceans, lakes, rivers, and more.

Discover the extreme conditions, specialized skills, and cutting-edge technology required to access these submerged sites, and uncover the powerful stories they hold about human history.

MEDIA

‘Meet the Experts’ Theater
Meet the field experts driving today’s most exciting underwater discoveries. Hear what drives them, what they’ve found, and why preserving submerged heritage matters.

INTERACTIVES

Artifact Storytelling
Get hands-on with the evidence of submerged history. Use a magnifying glass to examine artifacts up close and reveal the details that help archaeologists interpret underwater sites.

Where Are Underwater Sites Found?
A dynamic, interactive map brings rarely seen environments within reach—revealing underwater archaeological sites in oceans, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and even wells, and showing just how close hidden history can be.





ZONE B: Discovering

Step into the Underwater Archaeology Lab and discover how hidden worlds beneath the waves are found, mapped, and brought to light. From chance discoveries to cutting-edge sonar and robot-assisted exploration, this immersive space showcases the tools and techniques that make underwater archaeology possible

CASE STUDIES

Clotilda

Mobile, Alabama, USA

Discover the powerful story of the *Clotilda*, the last known slave ship to enter U.S. waters, through descendant-led underwater archaeology and hands-on interactives, including a touchable 3D sonar scan and layered remote-sensing views that reveal the wreck in striking detail.

Alpena-Amberley Ridge

Alpena, Michigan, USA

See how AI was used in connection with 9,000-year-old hunting sites submerged in Lake Michigan.

THE EXPERTS

Jay Haigler & Jeremy Ellis

Meet Diver and Lead Instructor with Diving with Purpose, Jay Haigler and Jeremy Ellis, a direct descendant of Clotilda shipmates, sharing their firsthand connections to this remarkable discovery.

Dr. Ashley Lemke

Meet underwater archaeologist Dr. Lemke and learn about the creation of the Alpena-Amberley Ridge AI model, working with Indigenous hunters to predict the location of other hunting sites along the ridge.

ZONE C: Uncovering

Dive into the work of documenting and excavating underwater sites, where fragile traces of the past are carefully revealed in challenging conditions. Explore the specialized equipment divers rely on and the evolving methods that make underwater investigation possible

Dynamic exhibits and hands-on interactives captures the complexity, precision, and excitement of the field, spotlighting real excavations bringing hidden histories to light. With dramatic lighting and shimmering water textures, it evokes an underwater world, honoring the determination and skill required to uncover what lies beneath.

CASE STUDIES

Hoyo Negro
Quintana Roo, Mexico

Step into a breathtaking submerged cave where ancient remains lie preserved in darkness. See how experts use detailed 3D models to study extinct animals and unlock the secrets of this extraordinary underwater site.

Monterrey Shipwrecks
Offshore Texas, Gulf of Mexico

Travel to the deep waters of the Gulf, where divers cannot reach, and only robotics can explore. Watch an ROV survey a shipwreck resting far below the surface, revealing clues from a hidden chapter of maritime history.

THE EXPERTS

Dominique Rissolo
Meet one of the lead researchers on the Hoyo Negro project, as he talks about the creation and use of 3D models in the project.

Jim Delgado
Meet the underwater archaeologist and hear him discuss how telepresence is used to involve many experts in demystifying the Monterrey Shipwreck excavation.





ZONE D: Recovering

ZONE D reveals what happens after discovery, when underwater finds are carefully studied, preserved, and interpreted. Step into the underwater archaeology lab to explore how conservators and researchers investigate artifacts, make critical preservation decisions, and navigate the ethical questions that come with recovering the past.

Through 3D replicas, conservation tools, and real-world examples, this zone shows how fragile evidence from beneath the surface can reshape what we know about history, sparking new insights and a deeper understanding.

CASE STUDIES

Pavlopetri

Peloponnese, Greece

Explore how underwater archaeologists and CGI specialists have brought one of the world's oldest submerged towns back to life, visually recreating its streets, structures, and daily world beneath the sea.

H.L. Hunley

South Carolina, USA

Witness the painstaking conservation of the Civil War's first successful combat submarine, and discover how preservation work continues to reveal new stories from this extraordinary vessel.

THE EXPERTS

Simon Clarke

Meet CGI expert Simon Clarke as he shares how digital reconstruction helped reimagine Pavlopetri as it may have appeared during the Bronze Age.

Johanna Rivera-Diaz

Meet conservator Johanna Rivera-Diaz as she talks about the conservation techniques used on the Hunley submarine and her artifacts.

ZONE E:
Forecasting the Future of Underwater Archaeology

ZONE E looks ahead to what comes next beneath the surface. As oceans change and new discoveries emerge, underwater archaeology is entering a new era shaped by innovation, urgency, and new questions about what should be explored, protected, and preserved.

Through interactive experiences and expert perspectives, this zone invites reflection on the future of submerged heritage and how today's decisions will shape what stories can still be uncovered tomorrow.

INTERACTIVES

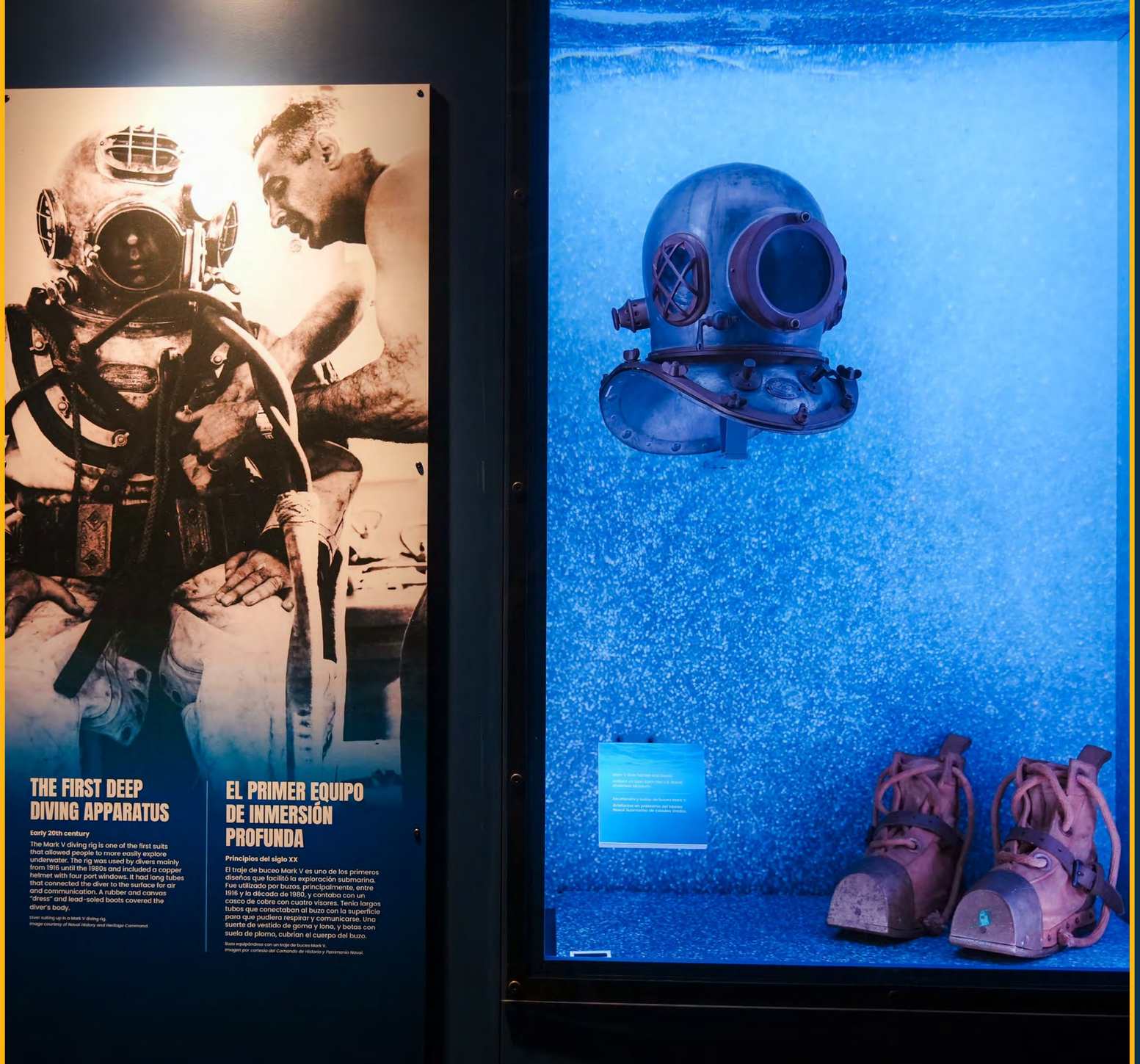
Sea Level Rise Map
Explore how sea levels have shifted across time, and see how future changes may transform coastlines, underwater sites, and the preservation of the past.

Underwater Archaeology Personality Test
Discover where you fit into an archaeology team, from explorer to researcher to conservator, based on your skills and interests.

THE EXPERTS

Future of Underwater Archaeology
Hear directly from leading experts as they share what excites them most, the challenges ahead, and how the field is evolving.





MYSTERIES FROM THE DEEP EXPERTS

GUEST CURATOR AND LEAD ADVISOR

Dr. Megan Lickliter-Mundon, PhD
Lead Archaeologist
Underwater Team, Henry M. Jackson Foundation
(CTR) supporting Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency

FEATURED EXPERTS

Dr. Ashley Lemke PhD
Associate Professor of Anthropology
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Dr. Jim Delgado, PhD
Maritime Archaeologist & Senior Vice President
SEARCH, LLC

Simon Clarke
Creative Director
Moonraker VFX

Dr. Dominique Rissolo, PhD
Research Scientist
Qualcomm Institute at the University of California, San Diego

Johanna Rivera
Senior Conservator
Clemson University

Dr. Justin Dunnavant, PhD
Assistant Professor of Anthropology
University of California, Los Angeles

Jay V. Haigler
Founding Director
Diving With a Purpose

Jeremy Ellis
Descendant of Kupollee (Pollee) and Rosalie (Rose) Allen
Former President, Clotilda Descendants Association

FLYING FISH

Flying Fish believes exhibitions can do more. For more than 12 years, we've partnered with leading museums and science centers to design, produce, and tour extraordinary exhibitions exploring science, history, culture, and beyond—engaging nearly 14 million visitors worldwide.

Our mission is to make exceptional, authentic content accessible to communities everywhere while generating new revenue for our partners. Whether creating original, turnkey exhibitions, adapting existing collections for global audiences, or supporting long-term touring strategies, we bring creative vision, operational expertise, and market insight to every project. More than a service provider, we're a trusted partner and industry ally—dedicated to expanding our clients' mission, reach, and impact.

For Museums. By Museums.

flyingfishexhibits.com

INTREPID MUSEUM

The Intrepid Museum, a private non-profit, holds a special place in New York City's cultural landscape. Founded in 1982 with the acquisition of the storied WWII aircraft carrier Intrepid—a National Historic Landmark and the centerpiece of its collection—the Museum welcomes over one million visitors annually from all around the world. Its mission is to promote the awareness and understanding of history, science and service through bold and immersive collections, exhibitions and programming in order to honor our heroes, educate the public and inspire future generations.

intrepidmuseum.org

Mysteries from the Deep: Exploring Underwater Archaeology is a traveling exhibition co-produced by Flying Fish and the Intrepid Museum.

Specifications

SCALABLE DESIGN
5,000 sq ft (500 m²)
Scalable +/- 1,500 sq ft (150 m²)
Adaptable floor plans available

PRODUCTION TIME
Ten (10) working days for installation;
Seven (7) working days for deinstallation

FREIGHT
2 x 53 ft trailers + 1 x climate-controlled trailer by land
4 x 40 ft HC containers + 1 x climate-controlled container by sea

TOUR AVAILABILITY
Please inquire

LANGUAGES
American English and Latin American Spanish

ACCESSIBILITY
The exhibition follows current best practices in Universal Design and accessibility.audiences.

Contact

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flyingfishexhibits.com