



SENATOR JOHN HEINZ
HISTORY CENTER
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



**PITTSBURGH'S
LOST STEAMBOAT**
TREASURES OF THE ARABIA

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David McCullough to Headline Special Talk at the History Center Focusing on the Steamboat Arabia

-The two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author will join History Center President and CEO Andy Masich and Steamboat Arabia excavator Dave Hawley for an engaging discussion-

PITTSBURGH, Nov. 24, 2014 – The Senator John Heinz History Center will welcome America’s favorite historian and Pittsburgh native David McCullough for a special panel discussion on the importance of America’s river cities with History Center President and CEO Andy Masich and Arabia Steamboat Museum Director Dave Hawley on **Tuesday, Dec. 2, at 11 a.m.**

Held in conjunction with the museum’s newest exhibition, ***Pittsburgh’s Lost Steamboat: Treasures of the Arabia***, the three historians will discuss Pittsburgh as the “Gateway to the West,” the region’s booming steamboat-building industry during the 19th century, and the significance of the Arabia’s vast archaeological treasures.

The ***Treasures of the Arabia*** exhibit features nearly 2,000 objects from the Steamboat Arabia’s massive cargo. In 1856, the Pittsburgh-built vessel carrying more than one million objects hit a snag and sank in the Missouri River. More than 130 years later, a group of modern day treasure hunters rediscovered the Arabia buried 45 feet below a cornfield a half-mile from the river. Remarkably, the anaerobic (oxygen-free) environment perfectly preserved most of the boat’s cargo in excellent condition, including fine dishware, clothing, and even bottled food such as pickles and ketchup.

Following the panel discussion on Dec. 2, visitors can also see the perfectly-preserved, 160-year-old pickles – still green in their original glass jar – on display in the exhibit along with hundreds of everyday items from the 1850s ranging from shoes and dresses to hand tools and silver serving trays.

Dave Hawley, one of the discoverers and excavators of the Arabia, will be available in the exhibition gallery at noon, immediately following the talk. At 2 p.m., Hawley will lead a discussion in the History Center’s new Museum Conservation Center about the painstaking preservation efforts conducted for the Steamboat Arabia. Both the gallery talk and preservation discussion are included with admission.

David McCullough earned Pulitzer Prizes for his books “Truman” and “John Adams” and is one of the founders of the History Center, providing inspirational leadership during the museum’s relocation from Oakland to the Strip District in 1996. He is a recipient of the History Makers Award and served as the keynote speaker for the Pittsburgh 250 History Makers Gala in 2008. In 2013, Allegheny County and the History Center officially renamed the 16th Street Bridge in honor of McCullough.

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Tickets to this special event are \$20 for regular visitors and \$10 for History Center members and include access to all History Center exhibitions. Tickets to the event can be purchased by calling 1-888-718-4253 or at <http://www.showclix.com/event/steamboats>. For general inquiries, please call 412-454-6370. Based on availability, tickets may also be purchased at the door on Dec. 2 at the same rate.

For more information on the exhibit, including videos, photos, and fact sheets, please visit www.heinzhistorycenter.org.

The Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum is a museum within a museum, comprehensively presenting the region's remarkable sports story through hundreds of artifacts and interactive experiences for visitors of all ages. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city's Strip District, and are open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The History Center's museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.



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