

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ON ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOSTON TEA PARTY NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER DISPLAYS ONLY KNOWN TEA CHEST FROM THAT HISTORIC DAY

First Time on Public Display since 1974

Philadelphia, PA (December 1, 2008) – On the 235th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party on December 16, 1773, the National Constitution Center will unveil *The Robinson Tea Chest*, the only tea chest that can trace to its provenance to that historic event, when 342 chests were dumped into the Boston Harbor. *The Robinson Tea Chest* will be on display in the Center’s main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*, along with a related newspaper article from *The Massachusetts Gazette* and *Boston Weekly News-Letter* from December 9, 1773. This rare chest has only been on public display twice – in 1910 at the Appalachian Exposition in Knoxville, Tennessee, and in 1974 at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Portrait Gallery Bicentennial exhibit titled “In the Minds and Hearts of the People, Prologue to the American Revolution: 1760 – 1774.”

Letters and photographs chronicle the chest’s history from the time it was recovered in the Harbor on December 17, 1773, to the present day, as it has been passed down as a treasured family heirloom. *The Robinson Tea Chest* is on loan to the Center for two years from the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum history center, a facility of Historic Tours of America, Inc.

The tea chest is a significant addition to the icons of American history that have been displayed at the National Constitution Center. Over the years, these have included treasures such as Benjamin Franklin’s copy of the Constitution, Thomas Jefferson’s manuscript draft of the Declaration of Independence, FDR’s leg braces, and tools used by the Watergate burglars.

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ADD ONE/BOSTON TEA CHEST

Admission to the National Constitution Center is \$12 for adults, \$11 for seniors ages 65 and up and \$8 for children ages 4-12. Active military personnel and children ages 3 and under are free. Group rates are also available. For ticket information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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