



USS Duluth. (Photo by Rebecca J. Moat, U.S. Navy)

## A future for the USS Duluth

By [Roger Reinert](#) on Oct 9, 2015 at 3:56 p.m.

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The USS Duluth has a rich history. First launched in 1965, she sailed her first mission to Vietnam and spent the better part of the next decade sailing around the South Pacific. In the following years, the ship also went on a peacekeeping mission to Lebanon, spent time in Panama, helped with oil-spill cleanup in Alaska and took part in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. The USS Duluth was decommissioned in 2005 and subsequently salvaged.

As a proud Duluthian, senator and member of the U.S. Navy, I feel strongly that the ship is an important part of our city's history. As such, she deserves a place in our community to call home. Last year, former USS Duluth crew members were instrumental in getting the ship's anchor dedicated along the Lakewalk in downtown Duluth. If you've not yet seen the memorial, I encourage you to stroll along the Lakewalk and do so. Their efforts resulted in a beautiful remembrance for the vessel and her crews.

But there are hundreds of other pieces of memorabilia and history in storage, waiting for a home and to be displayed, from uniforms to her silver coffee service set to the ship's portrait and everything in between. The alumni crew of the USS Duluth are sitting on a goldmine of memorabilia and historical documents.

The USS Duluth has a very active former crew who also believe in the value of these documents. Over the past few years momentum has been building to find a permanent home for all of this valuable history and create a museum. I support this venture. Duluth is incredibly lucky to have had two United States naval ships named in its honor. (The first was in commission 1944-1949.)

The challenge has been, where? Finally, there may be a possible new home available soon. It became public recently that a developer is in the initial planning process of turning Duluth's old Armory into a mixed-use development. The developer intends to honor and include history of the Armory in the reuse and that could possibly include museum space for the USS Duluth.

Many don't know that in addition to serving as a training facility for the Army, the Duluth Armory was also a home for the Navy militia, which existed prior to the creation of the Navy Reserve in which I serve. As other possible options have fallen through or not worked out, this space represents a bright future.

If you are inspired by the possibility of a home for the USS Duluth and her history, please contact me or Don Rowe at [Don.Rowe@ussduluth.org](mailto:Don.Rowe@ussduluth.org). Rowe is former crew member who lives in Ohio and is passionate about the ship. As a community, I hope we will rally and show support for this proud piece of local history.

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