

TO THE POINT

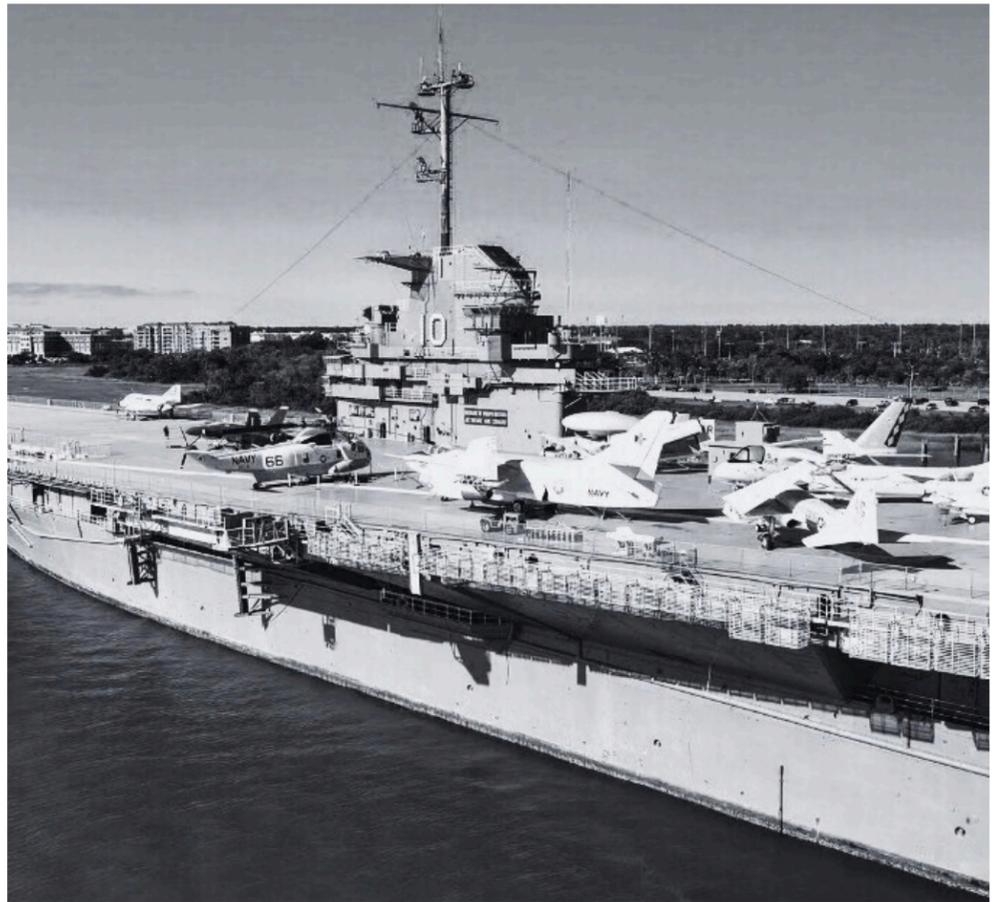
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Spring Break on Deck

By Alexis Mizell, Strategic Communications Coordinator



Laughter echoing down steel passageways. Sneakers thumping up ladders. An excited, breathless voice of a child yelling, “Come look at this!”. That’s spring at Patriots Point.

Families arrive with cameras and curious minds, and within minutes, kids are standing where sailors once stood, peering into tight quarters, and testing their bravery through narrow corridors. Parents follow close behind—sometimes reading every sign, sometimes just watching their kids light up—often realizing they’re smiling more than they expected.

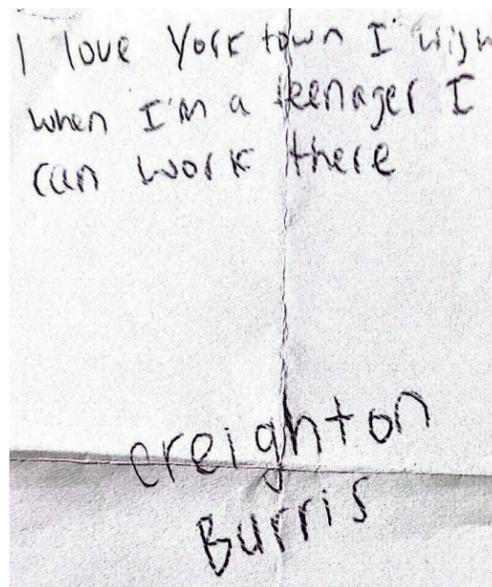
Because Patriots Point has a way of doing that. It doesn’t just show you history. It puts you inside it. You can see it on the flight deck, where kids pause for a second to take in the sheer size of the ship before running ahead. You can hear it in the questions floating through the air: Did people really sleep here? What was it like to be out at sea? How did they have the courage?

You can feel it in those quiet moments when someone lingers

over a story panel, or when a group stops for a photo that they’ll share with friends and family.

Somewhere along the way, things stop feeling like exhibits and start feeling like places where real lives unfolded. The distance between past and present gets smaller. History starts to feel less like something you learn and more like something you experience.

We’re constantly receiving drawings and letters from students and kids who visit Patriots Point that detail those feelings.



Some enthusiastically spelled out, and many filled with bright crayon sailors, bold helicopters, towering ships, and proudly drawn flags. The messages are honest and full of excitement: how big the ships are, how cool the museum is, how fun it would be to work onboard.

Together, they tell a bigger story, one about curiosity and the kind of learning that sticks because it’s hands-on and unforgettable.

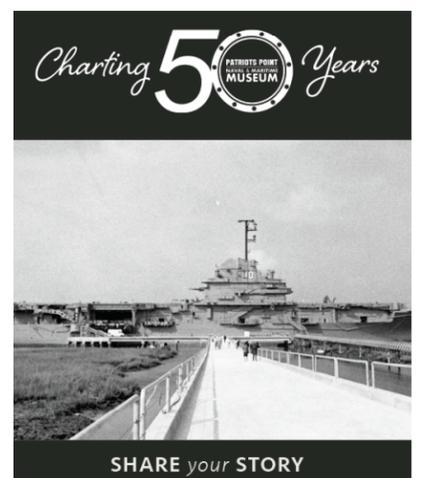
And it’s not just kids who feel it. Spend a little time here and you’ll see adults pointing out details they remember from their own visits, grandparents sharing their ‘once upon a time’ stories, and parents posing for photos in front of aircraft they once only saw in books. Patriots Point has a way of bringing out the kid in all of us; the part that wants to explore, to look a little closer, to be impressed by something deeper.

That’s what makes spring here different. It’s an adventure and a memory in the making.

As we continue Charting 50 Years, we’re celebrating not just the ships or exhibits and the stories they carry, but the people who bring this place to life every day—visitors who make Patriots Point part of their own story.

Whether it’s your first visit or one you’ve been making for years, your memories matter. Share your Patriots Point story with us and be part of our Charting 50 Years celebration.

Because here at Patriots Point, history isn’t just remembered, it’s lived.



Honoring the Past. Inspiring the Future.
LEARN MORE AT CHARTING50.ORG



FEATURED ARTICLE

Over the past 50 years, Patriots Point has evolved significantly, with a growing collection of ships, aircraft, and exhibits shaping the museum visitors' experience. Among its most recognizable icons are the USS Yorktown, the USS Laffey, and the Vietnam Experience, all of which have served as cornerstones of the site for decades. As part of Patriots Point's "Charting 50 Years" celebration, let's look back at how these key additions became part of the museum and the role they have played in its history.



The Making of a Museum

By Colby Causey, Historian

The first ship to join the fleet was the USS Yorktown (CV-10), which sailed into Charleston Harbor in 1975. Its arrival marked the culmination of years of effort by both the State of South Carolina and the Yorktown Association. Following the ship's final decommissioning in 1970, the Yorktown Association sought an opportunity to preserve the historic aircraft carrier, while South Carolina was exploring the creation of a naval and maritime museum as part of the nation's bicentennial celebrations.

In May 1975, the United States Navy sold the USS Yorktown to the State of South Carolina for one dollar. Patriots Point staff then worked to prepare the ship for public opening, while members of the Yorktown Association brought in artifacts and archival materials to create the museum's first displays.

With its opening, the USS Yorktown

became the first aircraft carrier preserved as a museum. Over time, the fleet at Patriots Point continued to grow. In 1981, the Allen M. Sumner-class destroyer USS Laffey (DD-724) was transferred to the museum. Like the Yorktown Association before them, the Laffey Association had been seeking a way to preserve their ship following its decommissioning in 1975. Working together with Patriots Point, their efforts were ultimately successful. As Captain Becton famously remarked, "Laffey, the ship that would not die, did not die."

Many of the same veterans who played a role in preserving the USS Laffey were present to welcome the ship to Patriots Point—some even riding onboard as it was brought into place alongside the USS Yorktown.

Today, the USS Laffey remains the only preserved Allen M. Sumner-class destroyer

operating as a museum ship.

During the 1980s, Patriots Point also began conceptual work on what would become the Vietnam Support Base. The exhibit was designed to recreate a naval support base operating during the height of the Vietnam War, complete with helicopters and a PBR (Patrol Boat, River).

Museum staff aimed to present visitors with an authentic portrayal of daily life for those stationed in Vietnam. One original proposal described the goal as showing "just the plain hard facts of daily operation and how they endured."

Initially, planned under the tagline "Somewhere, South Vietnam," the exhibit was intended to represent the

many support bases used during the war rather than focusing on a single location. During the 2010s, the support base underwent significant expansion and improvement. With that growth came a name change, as the Vietnam Support Base became the Vietnam Experience, reflecting its broader scope and expanded interpretation of the Vietnam War.

In 1993, the Medal of Honor Museum joined the collection of ships and exhibits that form Patriots Point, adding a powerful tribute to the nation's highest award for valor. Together, these landmarks reflect Patriots Point's long-standing commitment to preservation, education, and honoring those who served. Today, they stand as enduring reminders of how collaboration and shared history helped shape the museum's legacy.

PEOPLE OF PATRIOTS POINT

Employee of the Quarter

Annette Brown, our most recent Employee of the Quarter, is the kind of person who keeps Patriots Point running smoothly behind the scenes.



A loyal, dedicated, and hard-working custodian, Annette has been part of the Patriots Point family for two years, bringing pride and care to everything she does.

Originally from downtown Charleston, she says it's the people here who make her love coming to work, giving special thanks to Diane Brown, Edell Simmons, and the entire custodial crew for making the team feel like a family.

She shares her appreciation for Drew Barrett and the Engage Brigade for presenting her with this award.

When she's not busy being a rockstar at the museum, Annette enjoys cooking and spending quality time with her kids and grandkids.

We're grateful for her commitment, her positive spirit, and the care she brings to Patriots Point every day.

Congrats, Annette, and thank you for all that you do!

In collaboration with Patriots Point

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Edward Steichen and the WWII Naval Photographic Unit

JANUARY 22 – MAY 8, 2026

MOORE ART GALLERY | THE CITADEL

AROUND THE FLEET



Medal of Honor March Observance

By Laura Jowdy, Senior Director of Legacy Programs
Congressional Medal of Honor Society

March 25 is National Medal of Honor Day, set aside each year to honor the men and women who have received the United States' highest military decoration for valor in combat. Now, that single day has grown into something larger. In partnership with the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, the museum is marking the entire month as "Medal of Honor March," inviting visitors to spend time with the stories behind the nation's most extraordinary acts of courage.

At the center of the observance is the Medal of Honor Museum aboard the USS Yorktown. The museum is dedicated not just to the medal itself, but to the people who earned it—service members who went above and beyond the call of duty on the battlefield. Through exhibits, personal stories, and artifacts, the space asks visitors to consider what valor looks like in real terms, far beyond ceremonies and headlines. This March, two new interactive exhibits have been added, giving visitors more ways to engage with those stories and the moments that shaped them. Throughout the month, guests will see special signage and can take part in several hands-on activities. One station, set up outside the museum, invites visitors—especially

children to write letters or draw pictures for Medal of Honor recipients. The messages will be shared with recipients by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society at its annual convention later this year, creating a small but personal link between today's visitors and those who served.

Visitors can also take part in a scavenger hunt built around Medal of Honor history, encouraging them to explore the museum while learning more about the award and its recipients. Outside the museum entrance in Hangar Bay 2, a commemorative wreath will stand in honor of all Medal of Honor recipients, offering a quiet place for reflection.

While activities run throughout the month, March 25th will feature additional programming at Patriots Point. Medal of Honor experts will be available from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to share insights into the history and significance of the Medal, answer questions, and connect with visitors.

This is a rare opportunity to learn and connect with the legacy of America's most courageous servicemen and women, and their incredible acts of valor worth remembering.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sweat on the Ship

March 14 | 9 AM - 10 AM
March 25 | 7 PM - 8 PM
May 30 | 5 PM - 9 PM

Medal of Honor Month

All March Long

Medal of Honor Day

March 25 | 10 AM to 1 PM

Sunset Salute Member Event

March 26 | 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Vietnam Veterans Day March 29 | 1 PM

To show appreciation, all Vietnam veterans and their immediate families will receive free admission. The Vietnam Veterans Day ceremony and activities are included with general admission for all other visitors.

Vietnam Veterans Day ceremony will take place in the Vietnam Experience at Patriots Point at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 29, 2026.

Our Community Salutes

May 6



HOUSEKEEPING



Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

Open Daily: 10 AM - 5 PM | Ticket Office Closes: 4 PM

DECKSIDE DOODLES



From the Archives: Menu for a Happy Hour, Shipboard party aboard USS Yorktown (CV-10) on 29 June 1945. Front cover shows an image of sailors singing with "Happy Hour" printed above.

March is Member Appreciation Month

Join the Fleet. Save \$10. Celebrate 50 Years.

All month long, receive \$10 off any membership level when you join the Friends of the Fleet.

Membership supports our mission to preserve the historic ships of Patriots Point, fund educational experiences, and create engaging exhibits that honor those who served.

When you become a member, you help keep history alive for future generations.

CAPTAIN'S CHAIR

Hello, friends!

Spring brings new energy to Patriots Point—from spring break adventures and beautiful weather on the harbor to a season filled with meaningful moments of remembrance and celebration.

This time of year, our decks come alive with families, students, and visitors discovering history together, whether they're exploring our ships, attending special programs, or simply enjoying a day on the waterfront.

We're especially proud to mark occasions like Medal of Honor Day and Vietnam Veterans Day, which give us the opportunity to honor extraordinary service and reflect on the sacrifices that shaped our nation. As we continue our 50th anniversary celebration throughout the year, we're grateful for the community that has supported this museum for five decades and for the chance to keep sharing these stories with new generations.

Sincerely,

Allison Hunt
Patriots Point, Executive Director



Sunset Salute

March 26 | 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Join the USS Yorktown Foundation aboard The Fighting Lady for a relaxed evening of gratitude, history, and community as we honor 50 years of Patriots Point. This special event is offered as a complimentary benefit for members and higher-level supporters.

When you join in March, you'll receive an invitation to this exclusive celebration along with year-round Friends of the Fleet benefits, including:

- Free Museum Entry
- Tour and Onsite Discounts
- Exclusive Member Events
- Priority Booking
- Partner Discounts
- And More!

As part of Member Appreciation Month, members are invited to enjoy exclusive perks, special giveaways, and a complimentary appreciation event.

Join the fleet today and celebrate with us at Sunset Salute.

Scan the QR code to learn all the ways you can save by becoming a member or visit

PatriotsPoint.org/membership.



FUELING THE MISSION

Welcome to our newest corporate sponsor!

RoofServ is a local and veteran-owned roofing contractor committed to delivering durable, high-quality roofing solutions built to withstand coastal conditions. Their values of service, quality and integrity closely reflect our own mission to preserve historic treasures and honor those who served.



CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIALS!