

TO THE POINT

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FOUR GENERATIONS OF SERVICE

For four generations, the Flatley family has answered the call to serve. From the cockpit of a World War II fighter aircraft to the flight deck of an aircraft carrier to the decks of Patriots Point and beyond.

The story begins with Vice Admiral James "Jimmy" H. Flatley Jr., one of the U.S. Navy's most accomplished WWII naval aviators.

In 1942, Flatley became the leader of Fighting Squadron 10, known as the "Grim Reapers." He later became Commander of Air Group 5 aboard the USS Yorktown, where he helped introduce the F6F Hellcat into combat, and made the very first carrier landing aboard The Fighting Lady on May 6, 1943. A decorated Navy fighter ace, Flatley received the Navy Cross, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, a Bronze Star and the Navy Distinguished Service Medal.

But his legacy was about more than flying. Flatley once said of naval leadership, "your first and greatest responsibility - your first and greatest challenge - is how to inspire your men." That philosophy would continue through the generations that followed.

James H. Flatley Jr.'s son, Rear Admiral James H. Flatley III, built an extraordinary naval career of his own.

A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and a naval aviator, Admiral Flatley flew more than 4,460 hours in more than 30 different aircrafts and completed 1,608 carrier-arrested landings. He served in combat during three Vietnam War deployments, flying 346 combat missions, and went on to command multiple squadrons, air wings, ships and carrier groups.

But his leadership was perhaps most evident during his combat career.

As commanding officer of Fighter Squadron 31 aboard the USS Saratoga, then-Commander Flatley led his squadron through 2,200 combat missions without the loss of a person or aircraft. During a particularly intense 1972 strike against heavily defended targets in North Vietnam, he led a 45-plane strike and was awarded the Silver Star for his leadership.

After retiring from active duty, Admiral Flatley brought that same leadership to Patriots Point.



From 1994 to 2000, he served as Executive Director of Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, laying the foundation for long-term growth of the museum and helping establish the USS Yorktown Foundation as the nonprofit organization dedicated to raising funds to support Patriots Point.



His connection to the Yorktown continued through his service on the USS Yorktown Foundation Board, where he remained committed to preserving the stories and experiences of those who served, until his passing in December 2025.

The Flatley family's commitment to service did not end with Admiral Flatley.

His sons, James "Seamus" Henry Flatley, IV and Joseph F. Flatley, both became Navy fighter pilots, while his daughter Kara Brophy served as an officer in the Navy Supply Corps. Seven of his grandchildren also serve in various capacities in the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.

Today, Seamus continues to carry the Flatley Family legacy forward.

A retired Navy F-14 fighter pilot, TOPGUN graduate and current USS Yorktown Foundation Board member, Seamus represents another generation of the family's commitment to service. Like his father and grandfather before him, he has chosen to remain connected to the Yorktown and to the mission of preserving the stories of those who served.

One day, he will pass the torch to his children, nieces, and nephews who are already training in the wings.

The Flatley legacy is ultimately about more than four generations of military service. It is about a belief in leadership, sacrifice, and the responsibility each generation has to protect and preserve America's freedom.

“Service has been a defining thread in our family for generations. The example set by my father and grandfather instilled in me a deep love of country and a commitment to serving others. I’m especially proud to see that spirit continue to inspire the next generation. Their legacy reminds us that service to our nation is both an honor and a privilege.” -- James “Seamus” Flatley, IV

BY THE NUMBERS: A YEAR OF LEARNING AT PATRIOTS POINT ... AND WHAT'S AHEAD



A sea of students boarding the ship, moving in and out of various tour routes with their hushed laughter and chatter filling the passageways. This is nothing new to the USS Yorktown (CV-10) in this chapter of her service. As South Carolina schools are beginning a new academic year, it is only appropriate to reflect on the museum's impact across the educational landscape in 2025-2026 and look forward to what is on the horizon for the 2026-2027 school year.

The museum's education department offers free programs and resources for South Carolina students and teachers in grades 3-12, funded by the Education Oversight Committee's Education Improvement Act. Options range from structured programming to enriched self-guided opportunities, and even professional development. The objective of this modern-day educational mission is to deliver standards-based, cross-curricular content that supports in-classroom learning, while highlighting the museum's collection.

This past academic year 10,404 students from 39 school districts attended self-guided and guided experiences at Patriots Point. These experiences consisted of the hands-on 5th grade programming, the flight academy, enriched self-guided programs and more.

Patriots Point has created standards-based activity kits that include a lesson plan and consumable materials that are shipped directly to the requesting school. This year 38 teachers representing 17 school districts and 2,672 students received Activity Kit materials.

Directly supporting student learning with experiences, lessons, and activities is invaluable, but Patriots Point also understands that serving students means supporting educators. This year 93 educators participated in professional development facilitated by Patriots Point for a total of 904 direct contact hours to be used towards recertification credits.

And... it is that time of year! Kids are back in school, and registration is open

for programming and resources from the Education Department at Patriots Point for the 2026-2027 academic year. Sights are set on an even greater contribution to the community than the previous. The goal: more students and teachers being served through expanding grade-level programming and in-classroom resources.



FEATURED ARTICLE

BEYOND THE MOVIES:
A TOPGUN Instructor Shares the
Real Story Behind Top Gun

If you've watched Top Gun or Top Gun: Maverick, you've probably wondered at least once: How much of this is actually real?

For Tom "Pyro" Hendricks, that's a question he can answer from experience. A USS Yorktown Foundation Board member and former naval aviator, Tom served aboard the USS Midway flying F-4s, attended TOPGUN as a student and later returned as an instructor, where he flew F-5s, A-4s, and F-16s. And he happened to be at TOPGUN when the original Top Gun was being filmed. Tom arrived at TOPGUN in May 1985. Filming for Top Gun began shortly afterward, giving him a front-row seat to the production.

So, how accurate was the movie? "The flying was okay," Tom says. The rest? Not so much.

The real TOPGUN wasn't about beach volleyball, locker-room confrontations, or competing for a trophy. In fact, Tom says there has never been a TOPGUN trophy.

The mission was much more important: train the best fighter pilots possible and send them back to their squadrons to elevate the performance of the entire fleet.

Long before TOPGUN and Hollywood came calling, Tom was learning the skills that would define his naval aviation career. He went on to complete hundreds of carrier landings, serve aboard USS Midway, and eventually become one of the instructors responsible for training the next generation of Navy fighter pilots.

When Tom reflects on his career, one theme emerges again and again: excellence isn't an individual achievement. It's built through training, discipline, mentorship, and a commitment to helping others succeed.



Ask Tom why he believes places like Patriots Point and the USS Yorktown Foundation are important, and his answer has little to do with Hollywood.

"It's not a video game. This is the real world, and these are real people that made sacrifices every day."

"That's why it's critically important to have these things – but we have to put it in perspective. People are putting their lives on the line right now, in the middle of the night, across the globe for us. A lot of people forget that."

Stories like Tom's remind us why Patriots Point matters. Behind every aircraft, every ship, and every artifact is a story of service, sacrifice, and courage. Those stories deserve to be remembered—and carried forward.



To learn more about the USS Yorktown Foundation, the Friends of the Fleet Membership, and more, scan here.



AROUND THE FLEET

TRICK OR TREAT
ON THE YORKTOWN



Princesses, cowboys, witches, and ghouls. We've seen it all during Trick or Treat on the Yorktown.

The beloved family tradition will be back Saturday, October 17th for families all across the Lowcountry to come to Patriots Point, and trick-or-treat from plane to plane aboard the historic aircraft carrier.

All visitors are encouraged to dress in their best Halloween costumes while visiting candy stations across the ship's Hangar Deck.

The event includes candy stations, Halloween activities, and more!

Tickets for the event are free, but all attendees ages 2 and up must reserve a ticket to attend. Children under the age of 2 receive free admission and do not require a ticket.

Tickets will go fast! To be the first to know, make sure you're following along with all of the events at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum.



THEN & NOW

THEN

Sailors can be seen exercising on the flight deck of the USS Yorktown (CV-10) during October 1943



NOW

Sweat on the Ship brings workouts to the flight deck of the USS Yorktown today



Don't miss the next Sweat on the Ship! Scan the QR code to learn more!



EXPERIENCE THE “AFTER” LIFE ON THE USS YORKTOWN

Slamming doors, footsteps echoing in the distance, unexplained voices, these experiences and more have all been said to be a part of the paranormal happenings onboard the USS Yorktown. But what really happens after 5 p.m. when the ship begins to settle in for the night?

For some, the adventure is just beginning. After hours, evening ghost tours offer a chance to experience a different side of the USS Yorktown, and perhaps discover what comes to life after dark.

There are several theories amongst people on the ship of whether or not spirits reside on the Yorktown, and even the most skeptical have had their fair share of encounters.



Now, most of these can be explained away by a number of things. The ship is old, it's going to make weird sounds! There are a ton of staff and volunteers running around day-to-day, that strange shadow was someone making their way to a meeting. That sudden chill, the AC finally kicked on.

Still, some experiences are a little harder to explain. A faint sound from an empty passageway, the sense that someone else is nearby, or a shadow that disappears as

quickly as it appeared. Moments like these continue to spark curiosity and speculation aboard the USS Yorktown.

It's time for you to embark on the Ghost Tour of the USS Yorktown hosted by Bulldog Tours. With our expert tour guides, you'll hear legends of sacrifice and bravery as you learn about the well-documented stories of strange, startling sights and sounds. This tour takes you to areas of the ship

normally closed to the public and gives you after-hours access to the USS Yorktown, setting the stage for an unforgettable and perhaps, “otherworldly” experience.



Are you ready to find out the truth? Purchase your tickets with Bulldog Tours today!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Remembering 9/11
September 11

Library Day
September 19

America 250 Trivia Night at Westbrook Brewing Company
September 24

Holes Fore Heroes Annual Charity Golf Tournament
October 5

Yorktown Reunion Meet and Greet
October 10

Trick or Treat on the Yorktown
October 17

Post and Courier Subscriber's Day
October 24

Veteran's Day
November 11

HOUSEKEEPING

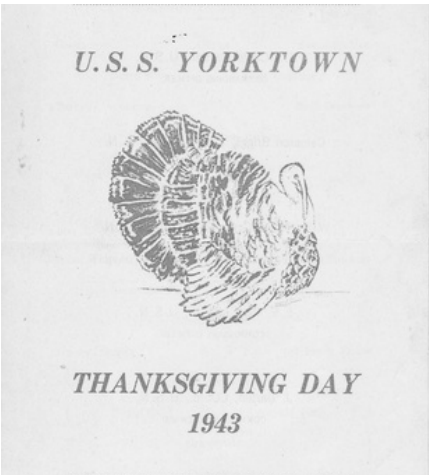


Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum is open daily from 10 AM - 5 PM
Ticket Office Closes: 4 PM

On November 26, 2026, Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

DINNER'S UP!

From the Archives: Menu for Thanksgiving Day 1943 from USS YORKTOWN (CV-10). Menu is printed in brown ink on beige paper stock. Front cover shows an image of a turkey with "U. S. S. YORKTOWN " printed above and "Thanksgiving Day 1943" below. . Inside are the names of officers and the menu items for the day and a list of the ship's officers.



MENU		
Celery	Olives	Sweet Pickles
Mixed Nuts	Fruit Cocktail	
Turkey Consomme	Soda Crackers	
Roast Young Tom Turkey		
Giblet Gravy	Cranberry Sauce	
Apple and Raisin Dressing		
Baked Spiced Ham	Pineapple Rings	
Snow Whipped Potatoes	Candied Sweet Potatoes	
Asparagus Tips	Butter Sauce	
Creamed Peas		
Waldorf Salad	Assorted Fresh Fruits	
Parker House Rolls		
Pound Cake	Pumpkin Pie	
Orangeade		
Cigars	Cigarettes	Bar Candy



America 250 Trivia Night at
Westbrook Brewing Co.

September 24 | 5:30– 8:00 PM

Test your knowledge of South Carolina's role in the American Revolution at our America 250 Trivia Night on Thursday, September 24, at Westbrook Brewing Co. Gather your friends for an evening of history, friendly competition, prizes, and great local beer as we celebrate America's 250th anniversary and Patriots Point's 50th anniversary. While you're there, be sure to enjoy Shore Leave Lager, Westbrook's exclusive collaboration brew inspired by the sailors of the USS Yorktown. Proceeds from Shore Leave support the USS Yorktown Foundation's mission to preserve history and inspire future generations.

This event is free and open to the public. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Registration is required, and teams are welcome!



CAPTAIN'S CHAIR

Hello, friends!

Fall has arrived at Patriots Point, bringing with it a new season of learning, reflection, and opportunities to experience history along the Charleston Harbor. As students head back to the classroom, learning continues aboard the USS Yorktown through exhibits, programs, and experiences that connect visitors of all ages with the stories of our nation's past.

Throughout the season, Patriots Point will also bring our community together through special events and opportunities to recognize and honor the men and women who have served and continue to serve our country. Whether exploring the ship, discovering something new, or joining us for a seasonal tradition, there are many ways to experience Patriots Point this fall.

We hope you'll spend some time with us this season and discover how the stories preserved at Patriots Point continue to educate, inspire, and connect generations.

Sincerely,

Allison Hunt

Allison Hunt
Patriots Point, Executive Director

HOLES FORE HEROES RAFFLE
HONOR A LEGACY. WIN BIG.

This year's Flatley Heroes Raffle honors Rear Admiral James H. Flatley III, who passed away in December 2025, and the extraordinary Flatley family legacy of service, leadership, and dedication to our nation. Admiral Flatley's distinguished naval career and leadership at Patriots Point helped shape the museum and establish the USS Yorktown Foundation. Every ticket purchased supports our mission to preserve our historic ships and aircraft, inspire future generations, and share the stories of the men and women who served our country.

Purchase tickets for \$25 each or 5 for
\$100 for your chance to win:

- First Prize: \$2,500
- Second Prize: \$1,000
- Third Prize: \$500

DATE: OCTOBER 5
LOCATION: CHS NATIONAL GOLF CLUB
1360 NATIONAL DR, MT. PLEASANT, SC

For questions, contact:

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Learn more by visiting,
patriotspoint.org/fundraising-events

Purchase
Tickets Here:



FUELING THE MISSION

We are proud to welcome South Carolina Federal
Credit Union as our newest Corporate Partner!



SOUTH CAROLINA
FEDERAL
CREDIT UNION®

Founded in 1936 at the Charleston Navy Yard when 14 employees each contributed \$5, South Carolina Federal has grown into a statewide financial institution while remaining committed to helping its members achieve their financial goals and giving back to the communities it serves. Their generous support helps preserve our historic ships and aircraft, expand educational scholarships, and ensure Patriots Point continues to inspire future generations through the stories of those who served.



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