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Patriots Point Debuts New Apollo 8 Exhibit Inviting Visitors to Experience Humanity's First Journey Around the Moon

A Reimagined Experience Honoring Apollo 8 and the USS Yorktown's Pivotal Role in Space History.

MOUNT PLEASANT, S.C.— Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum is proud to unveil a new Apollo 8 exhibit, commemorating one of the most daring space missions and the USS Yorktown's essential role in its dramatic recovery.

Launched on December 21, 1968, Apollo 8 marked the first time humans left Earth's orbit and traveled around the moon. As astronauts Frank Borman, Jim Lovell, and William Anders circled the lunar surface on Christmas Eve, they delivered a live broadcast watched by millions around the world. In a year defined by global unrest, Apollo 8 offered a rare moment of unity and hope.

Six days later, on December 27, the mission came to a powerful close when Apollo 8 splashed down in the Pacific Ocean. The USS Yorktown (CV-10) served as the primary recovery vessel. Yorktown's crew had trained extensively for this moment, practicing with a command module replica in preparation for the mission's return. That training paid off as divers secured the spacecraft and lifted it onto Yorktown's flight deck—an unforgettable moment linking naval service and space exploration.

In a 2018 interview, the late Apollo 8 astronaut Jim Lovell reflected on the mission's remarkable conclusion.

"We were just thankful that the Yorktown was there through the end of the flight," Lovell said. "But more than that, when I was on the carrier, I thought back to how chancy it was and how everything worked out on Apollo 8 for the people of the United States."

Now, more than five decades later, and around the first anniversary without any surviving Apollo 8 crew members, Patriots Point invites visitors to step directly into that history.



PATRIOTS POINT NAVAL & MARITIME MUSEUM

The new Apollo 8 exhibit transforms this story into a hands-on, immersive experience, allowing guests to climb inside the replica command module and imagine what it felt like to travel more than 240,000 miles from Earth. Inside the replica, visitors can envision the isolation and awe of orbiting the moon, bringing the mission's human story vividly to life.

In addition, the exhibit features original recovery equipment from the mission, including the hook and pulley system used by Yorktown's crew. Together, these elements create a powerful, personal connection between visitors, the astronauts, and the sailors who supported one of NASA's most extraordinary achievements.

This new exhibit underscores Patriots Point's commitment to telling stories where history and human courage intersect, giving guests the opportunity to not only learn about Apollo 8, but to experience it.

For more information, visit www.patriotspoint.org.

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About Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, on the Charleston Harbor, is the #1 attraction in Mount Pleasant, S.C., and is home to a fleet of National Historic Landmark ships, and the only Vietnam Support Base Camp in the U.S. Patriots Point is also headquarters to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and the agency's official Medal of Honor Museum. Visit www.patriotspoint.org for more details or find us on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

About the USS Yorktown Foundation

The USS Yorktown Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, serves as the designated fundraising organization for Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum. The Foundation funds educational scholarships, preserves military history, and supports informative exhibits throughout the museum. Through these efforts, the Foundation aims to promote America's traditions of service, leadership, duty, and sacrifice to inspire future generations.

