



# Military Heritage Museum

900 WEST MARION AVENUE • PUNTA GORDA • FL 33950 • 941-575-9002 • WWW.MILITARYHERITAGEMUSEUM.ORG

## Student and Youth Groups Field Trips & Activity Programs

### Museum Experience Summary

Designated as a learning institution by the State of Florida, the **Military Heritage Museum** is located at 900 W. Marion Avenue in Punta Gorda, FL. The museum re-opened on April 16, 2019 and is just a few steps away from its former location at Fishermen's Village. Through a blend of integrating artifacts, veteran museum guides, computer-interactive graphics, live performance, and audiovisual; the Museum provides unique innovative experiences in its 17,000 square foot facility.



Military Heritage Museum  
Punta Gorda, FL

One of the most popular tours begins on the first level with special rotating exhibits in the Atrium followed by the Tall Ship and Aviation Exhibits by the Gulf Theater. Next take an interactive walk-through history with three unique **Heritage Galleries**: from the Revolutionary U.S. military history through 20<sup>th</sup> century exhibits, right up to modern conflicts. Nearby, the **Hall of Heroes** is a special gallery dedicated to honoring and remembering many great leaders in our history. This gallery also tells the stories of the Florida Medal of Honor recipients and shares the video stories of veterans from southwest Florida.

Along your journey on the first floor, you will find the fully stocked **Ship's Store** with its souvenirs, books, and other military-themed merchandise. Feel free to relax at our tables inside the **P-51 Club**, as well as outside along our veranda with its nice views of the marina and harbor.

On the second level become part of history through simulations and virtual reality utilizing our aircraft, tank, and range simulators. In the **AIT School**, "fly" an F-16 Fighting Falcon or P-51 Mustang, command the helm of a Navy destroyer, experience the smokeless laser gun range, or drive a tank – four incredible simulation experiences. The second level also includes the **War Room**, home of the Museum's **Kids Discovery Zone** and virtual reality exhibits including **Google Expeditions**. Take a parachute jump or explore both inside and outside the International Space Station. On the second level be sure to stop by the full-service **Academy Library**, which contains over 5,000 books and publications as well as military ancestry research stations. Finally, every visit requires time in our beautiful state of the art 247-seat **Gulf Theater** watching one of the military-themed documentaries and films featured daily.

*"If you haven't been to the NEW Military Heritage Museum yet, you haven't been to the Military Heritage Museum! If you think you've 'been there done that', you haven't. Like most people in PGI, I've been to the museum when it was located on the Fisherman's Village pier. I can assure you that there's no comparison. It's easily one of the best entertainment values around." – Mark K. 7/19/2019*

## Field Trips & Activity Programs

The Military Heritage Museum is designed to meet the needs of both individual or group experiences; and offers a great educational opportunity for children, college students, and anyone else looking to better understand military history and heritage. The Museum's broad mission scope starts with U.S. military beginnings in the Revolutionary War through modern times; as well as a span that covers all military branches. This allows programs to be tailored in multiple ways including:

- Grade-specific curriculum focus
- Alignment to one or more of the Florida State Social Studies Statutes
- Specific historical periods
- A group's unique mission, ex. Navy League, JROTC, Civil Air Patrol
- Special topics or programs, ex. Merit badges, model builder clubs



The ideal Museum youth group experience is designed for groups of students rotating around pre-determined program areas; each of which has been tailored to align with the theme of the fieldtrip or activity.

A standard youth group experience would include the following specific activities:

- Self-guided or volunteer veteran lead tour of the **Heritage Galleries**
- Movie or documentary in the **Gulf Theater**

- Google Expedition or virtual reality experiences in the **War Room**
- **Academy Library** hands-on activity

The specific activity focus and length would be tailored around the needs of the group. The standard recommendation is to begin with the **Gulf Theater** experience for the entire group and then break up into smaller groups for a 30 minute per activity rotation. For optimization of the learning experience, the ideal size of the smaller groups is 8-10 students.

Depending on the group size, one or more volunteer veterans will be assigned to each youth group to assist the chaperones throughout the group's on-site experience. Groups may wish to bring their own lunch and snacks, though the Museum does offer the ability to provide lunch or other snacks for an additional fee. There are designated table and seating areas set aside for groups to enjoy lunch as well as **The Ship's Store** for souvenirs.

*"We must never forget our heritage and our heroes of this country. This facility is very beautiful. Several hands-on virtual reality interactions make it really cool!" - Shellbell*

## Museum Program Areas

- **Academy Library:** multiple activities including historic books and periodicals, online research, video viewing stations, and hands-on activities – both independent and facility learning. Groups up to 15.  
**Activities:** create a theme-related poster, topic scavenger hunt, topic related craft.



- **Hall of Heroes:** facilitated re-enactment of key moments in U.S. History. Groups up to 15.  
**Activity:** Debate in character on theme-related topics.
- **Heritage Galleries:** facilitated tours through three unique galleries from the Revolutionary War through current conflicts, special exhibit area and hall exhibits. Ideally up to three groups of 8 to 10. **Activities:** View Museum Galleries with focus on historical period topic or take a scavenger hunt throughout the museum to discover artifacts throughout U.S. military history.

- **Advanced Individual Training School (AIT):** immersive aircraft, marine and land simulations.  
**Activities:** Aircraft simulators, naval simulator, smokeless laser gun range.  
\*Certain activities designed for ages 10 and up.

*"I took my son here a few months ago and he is still talking about how amazing it was. You get a lot for what it costs to get in. Unlimited knowledge, stories, and history. If you go on the right days, you will also have the opportunity to talk to Veterans and hear some of the most amazing stories. Can't wait to have some free time to go back and see it all again. Check out the VR tours and simulators. Don't forget to make a stop at their library also." – Nikki Nicole*

- **War Room:** instructor guided 360° experiences utilizing Google Expeditions, artifacts, graphics, and video. Virtual Reality headsets with unique experiences from different military branches. Learn what life was like as a Minute Man, travel to the beaches of Normandy where D-Day took place, or travel to the International Space Station. \*Certain activities designed for ages 10 and up. \*

Learn about 8 iconic battles from the Revolutionary War through Operation Desert Storm.

**Discovery Zone**

activities for ages 6 and up include: Battle Tanks, Signaling Station, Military Production and more. **Activities:**

Facilitated expedition to topic related location, virtual reality halo jump, battle with laser tanks, learn about iconic battles.



- **Gulf Theater:** movies, lectures, live performance. Seating for 247. **Activities:** View topic related movie, oral presentation essay.
- **Flag Plaza:** facilitated activity demonstrating flag etiquette. Groups up to 10. **Activity:** review of flag history, flag etiquette.

Between the ever-changing variety of program offerings available throughout the museum, our special and rotating exhibits, and the many simulated activities available throughout the second floor, there is more than enough reason to keep coming back year-round to the “new” and exciting **Military Heritage Museum.**

*“This museum has been completely transformed into a world-class facility, rivaling some of the best museums in our country. If you have not yet seen the new museum in the old IMPAC University building, then take some time this week and be proud of this special hidden gem in our city of Punta Gorda.” – Carlton P. 7/1/2019*