



NEWS RELEASE

York County Public Affairs
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Yorktown Kicks off the Christmas Season with an Exciting Weekend of Festivities

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The first weekend in December brings friends, family and neighbors to Historic Yorktown to sing, shop and share memories!

Christmas Tree Lighting

The fun kicks off **Friday, November 30**, with the annual **Christmas Tree Lighting**. This particular event dates back to 1945 when the pastor of Yorktown Baptist Church, with the help of the County Clerk's office, decorated a cedar tree that stood at the corner of Main and Ballard Streets. The York County Historical Committee who sponsors this ceremony has worked hard to keep this ritual going ever since.

The tree lighting takes place at Riverwalk Landing, but the evening festivities begin at the Yorktown Victory Monument at 6:30 p.m. when the Mt. Vernon Elementary School Mustang Chorus and Fifes & Drums of York Town perform. The TRADOC Brass Band will entertain those who go directly to the waterfront. At 7:30, the procession from the Monument will head down historic Main Street to Ballard Street, and down to the waterfront where the official ceremony will take place. After the lighting of the tree, Santa will be available to take wish list requests from children in attendance.



Christmas Market on Main

The excitement continues **Saturday, December 1**, with the **Christmas Market on Main Street**. This year, more than 90 vendors, artists, musicians, and food trucks will line the street making it Yorktown's biggest market to date! Visitors can expect chestnuts roasting on an open fire, kids' activities like DIY colonial ornaments, and jolly greetings from Santa Claus.

The Town Crier rings in the market at 10 a.m., followed by a performance from the Fifes & Drums of York Town to officially open the market. Main Street entertainment begins at 10:30 a.m. with strolling instrumental ensembles, caroling, and holiday arrangements concluding at 1:45 p.m.

The Peninsula Model Railroad Club will present an exhibit of antique model trains in the lower level of York Hall. The Gallery above will open early that day at 9 a.m. and just down the

street, On the Hill Gallery also will be selling unique work from local artists. Other historic buildings and museums to visit include: American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, Yorktown Battlefield, Nelson House, the York County Historical Museum, and the Watermen's Museum. Just a short walk (or Trolley ride from Main Street), you'll find Black Dog Gallery, Redcoat Antiques and Riverwalk Landing businesses waiting to welcome you in the spirit of the season.

The free Christmas Market is co-sponsored by Village Events and York County.

Lighted Boat Parade

Following the Christmas Market on **December 1**, the waterfront will light up with the spectacular **Lighted Boat Parade**. This annual tradition is sponsored by the Yorktown Lighted Boat Parade Committee and Wormley Creek Marina with pre-event festivities beginning at 6 p.m. with Center Stage Academy.



Guests can enjoy Historic Yorktown restaurants and food vendors, and quench their thirst with complimentary hot cider served by Boy Scout Troop 123 of Seaford. The Yorktown Chorale and the Fifes & Drums of York Town will perform by the glow of a beach bonfire as the crowd awaits the magnificent parade of lights, which officially starts at 7 p.m.

More than 20 sail, pleasure, and work boats will coast down the York River, competing for "Best in Show." The judges are looking for four things: Wow Factor; Color and Light; Originality and Theme; and Spirit. They rank each boat accordingly to get an average that then determines the winner. Contestants really get into the spirit of the event and many start planning their themes months in advance.

Guests attending the Lighted Boat Parade are encouraged to park at the York-Poquoson Courthouse or the County Administration Building. From there, it's a short walk to the waterfront. An extended, modified Trolley route will run from 5 to 9 p.m. making stops at those locations as well as the Victory Monument, and the intersection of Water and Read Street. Additional parking (for this evening only), will be available at the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown beginning at 9 p.m.

Cookies with Santa

On Sunday, **December 2**, from 1 to 4 p.m., the Celebrate Yorktown Committee presents **Cookies with Santa** at the Gallery at York Hall. Children and parents can visit with Santa, enjoy complimentary refreshments and do some holiday shopping too! The Gallery showcases the work of hundreds of local artists. Visitors will find ornaments, paintings, quilts, pottery, and so many other one-of-a-kind pieces that make perfect Christmas gifts and stocking stuffers.

As an added safety precaution, families are encouraged to bring flashlights to assist in navigation around town during evening events. No rain dates are scheduled for any of these featured holiday activities.

Additional Event Info:

- www.visitryorktown.org
- York County Tourism Development: (757) 890-3500
- Facebook, Instagram & Twitter: Visit Yorktown
- #visityorktown and #york757

Additional photos available at <https://bit.ly/2DRvDIH>.