



Senior Correspondent PJL, Omaha NE: As an old sailor, I had the recent pleasure of visiting the USS Midway (CV-41), now moored permanently as a museum, and open daily to the public. Commissioned just as World War II was ending in 1945, the Midway sailed in the fighting Navy for 50 years. Combat included the Korean War, Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm.

As we went aboard, out of old habit, I saluted the colors and the Officer of the Deck, and then the tour. Free headphones and audio took us through the one-way route for visitors that included three main areas.

On Deck 2, we observed the galley, mess halls, crew's quarters, work shops and gedunk (ship's soda fountain and store). We were then guided up to the huge hangar deck. There we explored a dozen WWII and Korean War era aircraft. We climbed into fighters and multi-engine cockpits for photo ops. The views from the flight deck were enhanced by the impressive skyline of the city of San Diego.

We rode in a vintage two-seater flight trainer. Once sealed totally inside, we had controls and video screen in a simulated air combat scenario. We didn't realize that the boxy trainer would swing violently from side to side and upside down if we didn't handle the controls right. Fortunately, we were strapped in tight, and being inept pilots, we staggered out afterward like drunken sailors.

There are many entertainment and special events presented aboard the USS Midway, including

recognition programs for veterans of America's campaigns from WWII to Iraq and Afghanistan. For more info, go to www.midway.org.