

## Patriots Point, local businesses partner to repair Vietnam river patrol boat

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A river patrol boat from the Vietnam War will be restored through a public-private partnership this month. The vessel is part of a Vietnam War exhibit at Patriots Point and will return once it has been repaired.

By Lauren Ratcliffe

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A Vietnam War boat will be repaired and preserved through a public-private partnership between [Patriots Point](#) and several local businesses.

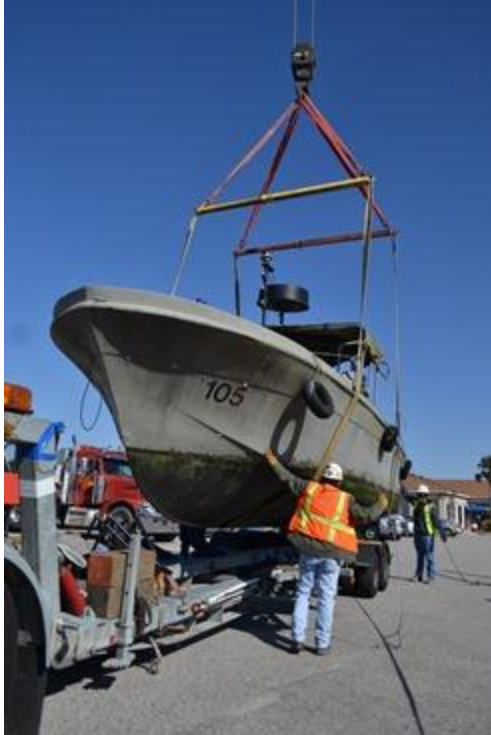
The MK1 River Patrol Boat is one of two boats in the United States, according to Patriots Point's senior curator, David Clark. It first came to the museum in 1989 and is on loan from the U.S. Navy.

On Tuesday, volunteers from [Pierside Boatworks](#), [Allstate Crane](#) and Lemmond's Marine Transport worked to hoist the boat from its position in a pond with the museum's Vietnam exhibit to a truck to transport it to North Charleston to be repaired.

Dave Coker, general manager at Pierside Boatworks, spearheaded the volunteer effort after coming to the museum to appraise the work.

"Once I saw it and listened to staff explain the lengthy process to get public funding, I was hoping to get some of it donated to lessen the task of raising the money," he said.

"That sparked the idea of getting our yard and our suppliers involved in a community project. What better way to show our appreciation for our veterans than to fix up a part of their history."



**Volunteers hoisted this Vietnam War boat onto a truck Tuesday at Patriots Point. It will be transported to North Charleston for repairs. (Photo/Lauren Ratcliffe)**

Coker took the idea to his bosses, who readily agreed and then pitched to the company's suppliers.

"Instantly I got emails back saying, 'What a great idea,'" he said.

A team of companies including, [Interlux](#), [Engineered Marine Coatings](#), Reg Brown, [Royal Touch Marine Services](#) and [West Marine](#) will work to complete the restoration in about one month. Coker expects the boat to return to Patriots Point near May 1.

The monthlong project is estimated to cost \$30,000.

Patriots Point Executive Director Mac Burdette said he was grateful for the donation because it allows a rare Vietnam War artifact to remain accessible to the public.

"With only one other MK1 PBR remaining in the United States, it is especially important that we preserve this vessel, which played a significant role in our nation's military history," Burdette said.

Clark added that with the 50th anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War approaching in 2015, the museum is looking to revamp its exhibit and the restoration of the boat is helping the museum begin.

"This will be the kickoff start to it," he said.

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