

Nick's Seafood Pavilion



Photo courtesy of Jim Krikales.

After a vacation stopover in Yorktown, Nick and Mary Mathews decided to return in 1944 to open a restaurant. The original Nick's had 35 seats. Later, Nick's Seafood Pavilion, famous for its fine seafood menu and ornate decor, expanded to seat 440.

Nick's welcomed many dignitaries and entertainers. Among others, John Wayne, Elizabeth Taylor, Fred McMurray, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Randy Travis, the 1980 Winter Olympic torch relay runners, and two Russian military defectors dined at Nick's. The couple openly expressed their love of America and Yorktown and generously supported many projects and causes, including donating land for the development of the Yorktown Victory Center. That generosity also extended to military members in uniform, who always ate free-of-charge at Nick's.

In 1983, "Miss Mary" was chosen to sponsor the USS *Yorktown* (CG48), becoming the first immigrant to

christen a U.S. Navy ship. "Mr. Nick" passed away, unexpectedly, on the way to the christening ceremony. Mary died in September 1998. The Mathews and the restaurant are fondly remembered, however, the restaurant was severely damaged in 2003 during Hurricane Isabel and was subsequently demolished.



Photo courtesy of York County.

