

LAFFEY NEWS



U.S.S. LAFFEY DD724 & DD469

Dedicated to those who served in Battle...and those that Preserve in Peace

Jan - Feb - Mar

2010

2009 Branson Reunion Review

This is the first reunion that I have "attended" for a long time that I didn't have to set up. I have to say that the girls, Jill Michel and Gemma McLuckie, did a fantastic job and made it enjoyable for all of us who were there. If you didn't go, I can only say that you really missed a good one.

The hotel was really great, the people there were really friendly, and the shows were fantastic. Thanks so much girls, Cherie and I had a super time.

We had our board meeting and our general meeting on Monday. Jill and Gemma agreed to handle the next reunion in Charleston. John Langevin also agreed to help with the reunion. Speaking of John, again this year he supplied the bar items for the hospitality room at his own expense. Many thanks again this year John.

Elections were held at the general membership meeting. The following officers were unanimously elected or re-elected by voice affirmation:

Sonny Walker	President
*Bob Wampler	Vice President
George Kessler	Treasurer
Julie Becton	Secretary

*Bob Wampler agreed to serve as V.P. after Jim Cox decided to step down after many years of service. My thanks are extended to Jim for a job

well done. He will be missed. I thank everyone for their confidence in us to keep the association going. I promised everyone that I would continue to do my best to make y'all proud.

The lucky winner of the ship model was Fred Nardel. Congrats go to Fred who has also "graciously" accepted to take over as Membership Chairman for our retiring chairman Pete Lacore. Pete agreed to take the position "temporarily" when Jim Spriggs stepped down. That was about 6 years ago. Thanks "Petey" for a great "temporary" job.

This year's reunion will be in Charleston. We hope the ship will return to PP in time for it!

We are investigating a Cruise Reunion for 2011. Our Reunion Committee will be checking this out and will advise us at a later date. If anyone has any ideas or remarks about our reunions please notify us.

Sonny Walker
President - USS Laffey Association

Editor's Note: I have it on good authority that some arm twisting went on and it seems the only way Fred was going to get his winnings, the ship's model, was to volunteer as the next membership chairman!!

Another Editors Note: Well done to Jill and Gemma for their efforts in delivering one of the best reunions possible - Keep up the good work!!

The torch has been passed

After many, many years of handling the duties of the Membership Chairman for the USS Laffey Association, Pete Lacore has decided to give up his "highly paid" position and send his membership roster data base on to Fred Nardei.

Pete has informed us that he is going on a world cruise with all the money he saved from the "high wages" he has earned while acting as the Membership Chairman.

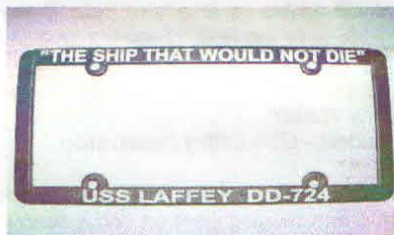
Well, we all know that the position does not pay a cent and in reality Pete's world cruise will probably be a kayak trip on the Mississippi!

We wish Pete the best in "his retirement" and thank him for his years of devotion and dedication to the USS Laffey Association.

Please refer to the Laffey News Notes in this issue: Fred Nardei's address and phone number are now listed under Membership Chairman.

Editor's Comment: Let's all help Fred (and me) in his new job by verifying your addresses and phone numbers as shown on the website roster. Each of you should also check the listing to verify that you are current in your dues. Please see that Fred and I are informed of any discrepancies in your listing. For those of you who do not have access to a computer, please give Fred a call or send him a note inquiring about your dues status and to verify your address/phone listing.

Plate frames still available for purchase



During the reunion, I (Bob Wampler) took orders for the above shown new plastic plate frames. These custom frames are being made on a multiple quantity order basis only for the prices we will be charged. The cost per frame is \$10.00 with direct to you shipping and handling included.

Of that price, one dollar will be set aside to help fund our Laffey Junior Sailor Program and to help with our coincidental attempts to increase Associate Membership in the Laffey Association. In other words, each \$1.00 we net from this promotion will become "seed money" for developing future growth in our membership.

This membership expansion will be something that is essential now that "The Ship That Would Not Die" will, seemingly, last longer than many of us who served onboard her!! Hopefully, the next issue of the Laffey News will provide details.

Please send any order for this new auto plate frame to the following address along with your check for however many you want to purchase at \$10.00 each:

Bob Wampler, Editor Laffey News
USS Laffey Association
100 Landing Lane
Bluffton, SC 29909

To simplify the accounting/bookkeeping the check should be made out to Bob Wampler. I will then issue two checks, one to the supplier for his direct shipment to you and one to our Treasurer, George Kessler, for the seed money donation. I will group together your individual orders to assure that we get the custom plate frame at the price quoted by the supplier. For those who ordered the frames since the reunion, the supplier has shipped them directly to all of you.

Special Work Party Donations Received

Late last summer and early fall we received donations to the "Work Party Fund" that were not listed in the last edition of the Laffey News. We would, at this time, like to acknowledge the generous gifts made to our fund:

Jorja and Larry Kremer.....\$2,000.00

(This work party donation was given in memory of Jorja's Mom and Dad, Al and Debby Csiszar. It should be noted that the Csiszar's were staunch supporters of the USS Laffey Association over many, many years.

The following additional work party donations have been received:

Edward A Hughes, FTSM/(SS).....\$100.00

Although he did not serve on the USS Laffey, Edward did serve on two tin cans during his Naval Career. He authored a "college paper" titled "Once I Was a Navy Man" written after his first hitch. We hope to have this paper in the next issue of Laffey News.

Larry Sleurs, SN 1/C, (57-59).....\$200.00

Although Larry did not specify the intention of his generosity, we have dedicated his donation to the work party fund where it will be of extreme value when we are once again allowed to perform maintenance of the USS Laffey.

**USS Harold J. Ellison DD-864 Association
.....\$250.00**

Harvey Peet, SMSN, (62-63).....\$ 50.00

Bob Lucey, FT2, (60-63).....\$100.00

Donations specific to the Work Party Fund are sincerely appreciated. It has been well over a year since we have been able to do maintenance onboard the Laffey and, with the passage of time, there will be much to do once we have permission to continue with our duties. Please continue to support the work party fund...Those who attend the work parties are sincerely appreciative of your donations.

A message from the web site manager

A letter from "A.J." was received too late for inclusion in the last edition of the Laffey News. What follows are comments and views expressed by A.J. Tarquino regarding the ship's movement into dry dock last August:

"I am the youngest sailor who attended the ship's escort to dry dock. I served an enlistment aboard the USS Laffey...and my thoughts and concerns for the Laffey are as follows:

What necessary fixes are they going to do to the USS Laffey? Will the new hull last forever...Or at least as long as possible with new protective technologies? What about plastics? Are there new paints and epoxies that can withstand salt water much longer now?

And, how are we going to keep the USS Laffey above the water line maintained if we don't have more "recruits" coming to both the work parties and the reunions? How do we get the younger generation interested in keeping the Laffey in ship-shape for others to go aboard and sense how we shipmates lived, worked and played at sea?

We need my generation's sailors to get involved with the USS Laffey Association. How do we accomplish this and keep the ship for generations to come? I am certain that I am not the only shipmate to have these questions and concerns. **(Editor's Note: This issue has been of concern by many of us and we are about to begin a continuous and deliberate effort to increase membership...Look forward to future announcements in the Laffey News)**

Aboard the tourist escort boat, I had similar thoughts that I had experienced when I stepped back on the Laffey for the first time in almost forty years. After serving most of my four year enlistment ('69-'72), and my two weeks of reserve training ('73), aboard the Laffey, I had lost track of the ship.

My first of many trips down to Mt. Pleasant was as a volunteer on a work party. Living in Ohio, the drive to the Laffey was about twelve hours. I had no clue what I was getting into. Just about dusk I ended up in downtown Charleston. By the time I found Patriots Point, it was dark. I could see the ship, but had no clue where I was to go or who I was suppose to get in contact.

I parked my car and proceeded to walk down the pier. No security people stopped me, and I made it to the first gate on the pier. The gate had a chain lock on it, but the padlock wasn't latched. I wasn't sure if I was trespassing or if it was ok to unchain this gate and proceed with caution! I then continued my walk to the next gate, which was also chained and unlocked. I was thinking at this time, why shut the gate and place a chain around it, but not secure the lock?

I walked across the gang plank and was on the Laffey! The hairs on my arms began to raise and I remember that same odor of rusted steel, that 'Laffey' memory from years ago, and I felt

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like I was nineteen again! What a feeling I had to be back onboard the Laffey!
Barry Shugarts found me, and told me I was at the right place and welcomed me aboard. What an enjoyable first work party this was for me. Every volunteer made me feel at home, almost the same way I remembered it almost forty years ago!

Watching the USS Laffey being towed to dry dock gave me that same sense of being among friends. Knowing the Laffey had once again survived the threat of scrap steel, or of being placed at the bottom of the sea was a relief. I had a strong sense of gratitude to all of those who helped save her this time.

I also had thoughts about the thirty-two men that gave their all on April 16, 1945. Without their fight in WWII for the freedoms we enjoy today, what would life in the United States be like? Those thoughts scare me! I am thankful and honored to be a part of the Laffey family.

...AJ Tarquino, MM2 ('69-'73)

Photograph Provided

Subject: August 19, 2009 photo

Hi Sonny,

Though I am no longer a part of the USS Yorktown Association, I will always hold special the ships and the men who served aboard them.

When your ship was towed up to dry dock, I was on the pier at the new waterfront park. I would not miss seeing her move!

I took several photos from the pier, though I did not make it to the end of the pier before she did.

This photo was taken with my Black Berry. I regret not having the digital camera in hand at this moment as it would have been a better quality picture. Still, I think you may like this if you do not have one.

Should there be anything I may be able to help you do, please do not hesitate to call on me.

Respectfully,

Gwen Corey

Former Shipboard Director of the Yorktown Association



USS Laffey in Transit to Dry Dock

And now, an answer for A.J.

Joe Lombardi, AMS, Project Manager, Marine Surveyor and Consultant, Ocean Technical Services, LLC, Gloucester, MA provided the following report on repairs made and the Fleeting of USS Laffey:

Subject: FLEETING OF U.S.S. LAFHEY

Folks,

The Sumner-Class destroyer U.S.S. LAFHEY was fleeted and floated on her new hull bottom this past Tuesday at Detyens Shipyard, N. Charleston, SC after a lengthy restoration. This marks a new beginning for this very important and historic vessel and an important restoration effort by Patriots Point Development Corporation.

U.S. COATINGS did a fine job in preparing the vessel for the follow-on work by the shipyard; this firm is now engaged with the interior lower space painting/preservation work.

The Detyens Shipyard and MMIF steel fabrication crew, welders, riggers, cleaners, fire

watches, painters, dockmasters did a masterful job in removing the 1/4" steel doubler plate that covered 81% of her original shell plating, itself badly corroded. They then removed that original plating to bare frames and bulkheads from the 13' waterline down to and including the keelson, bow to stern. All rivet seams, sea chests and overboard discharges previously below the waterline were removed or plated over. The entire hull was sheathed in new 3/8" A-036 mild steel plate and welded. I might add that the shipyard superintendent for Detyens, Mr. Eric Williams, performed magic in keeping to the schedule. Well done!

The four machinery spaces had required extensive repairs and wholesale replacement of the five transverse bulkheads, longitudinal and transverse frames. The keel was largely replaced from Frame 72 to Frame # 148; a very difficult and dangerous endeavor. The reefer flats and other areas aboard were extensively restored with new plating.

The shaft packing glands and rudder posts were repacked with new flax packing and tightened into the stops. External covers were welded over the shaft tubes and shafts to prevent any additional water from entering the ship.

Both anchor chains, 10 & 12 shots with both 4,000 lb. Baldt anchors were hydro-blasted, primed and painted and re-inserted into the chain lockers and hawse pipes.

The hull was hydro-blasted to SSPC-6 profile. The freeboard from the sheer to the waterline was coated with a single coat of INTERNATIONAL 300V primer and one coat of INTERNATIONAL POLYSILOXANE haze gray topcoat. The boot-top (or waterline) was coated with two coats of 14 mil INTERNATIONAL 300V primer coats and a single coat of black INTERNATIONAL POLYSILOXANE. All lettering and draft marks have been completed. The hull bottom below the 5' waterline was coated with two 14 mil coats of INTERNATIONAL 262 primer. Zinc sacrificial anodes will be hung over the sides to protect the hull from galvanic corrosion until a permanent impressed cathodic protection system can be installed at her permanent berth at Patriots Point.

The interior was washed down and coated with two 14 mil coats of INTERNATIONAL 300V primer coats in the spaces fore and aft of the machinery flats. The new steel bulkheads, frames and foundations within the machinery spaces received two coats of EURONAVY epoxy primer coats to preserve these interior scantlings.

LAFHEY launches in the near future and that schedule will be forthcoming/announced by Patriots Point. I have enjoyed immensely the cooperation of all of the great crew at Patriots Point; they did such a masterful job in keeping LAFHEY afloat for the better part of eight months until a shipyard berth was possible; much is owed to them for their care of the ship.

It was my privilege to serve as Project Manager for this progression.

All Hail LAFHEY! She looks like a toy soldier!

Joseph W. Lombardi, AMS

Sonny Walker comments on February 8th Event

On Friday, January 22, 2010, President Sonny Walker made the following comments regarding what was thought to be an opportunity for the membership to attend the "re-commissioning" of the Laffey at the former Charleston Navy Yard:

All Hands:

This is to inform everyone about the "re-commissioning" of the Laffey on Feb. 8, 2010.

Because the ship is now at a Federal pier there is a security problem.

We could only have three of us to represent the association present at the press conference.

I was told this morning (Friday Jan 22) that it is only going to be a brief press conference and then the media will be invited to tour the ship to see the work that has been done.

Ari Phoutrides is flying in to represent WWII people and Mike Coleman is flying in as our photographer.

We have to provide our personal info to them for a security check BEFORE we can even go on the facility.

This entire ceremony is only going to be an hour long.

So, I CANNOT bring anyone else due to security rules.

It sounds like it is not going to be a big deal. It is being done just to get the media involved in fund raising for Patriots Point.

Again, I am sorry for getting everyone's hopes up but this is the best we can do. I PROMISE we will be able to ride the ship to Patriots Point when they get the new pier built.

Right now I have no idea when that will be.

I'll let you all know as soon as I find out.

Thanks,

Sonny

The Perils Of Patriots Point And Her Ships

Being a former shipmate who had served on the Laffey during "The Forgotten War" Korea, I would like to voice some of my opinions.

When the Laffey was brought down to Patriots Point in August of 1981 there was great pride felt with us veterans knowing without ships like the Laffey there might never had been a Patriots Point.

We are very grateful about "Her" going to the yards for the second time to have a lot of tender loving care done to "Her." I understand after the Laffey leaves the yards they are not sure where to dock "Her."

From what I have observed over the years, (and I have helped work on "Her" since the middle 80s), is that great historical ships belong in a "Maritime Museum." Lately all you see is more docks for pleasure boats surrounding our great ships.

I guess where the Laffey was tied up and also where the Coast Guard Cutter was will be taken

over by more docks and pleasure craft. I would bet that of all the people that have boat slips near the historic ships most have never visited them or know anything of their histories.

I think I can speak for all Veterans when I say we may be getting old but we have defended our great country and carry a heart full of pride knowing that ships like the Laffey are still around to tell their stories and honor all those that were killed defending our great country.

My thanks to all that had a say in saving the Laffey.

Walter H Harrington
Summerton SC

Editor's Note: The above letter of concern by Walt was sent prior to the movement of the CG Cutter and before we knew that the temporary berthing location for the Laffey after repairs were made would be the former Charleston Naval Station.

TAPS LIST

The following shipmates and/or USS Laffey Association members and/or their close relatives have been transferred to a better duty station:

Walter W. Hoch, S2C, Plank Owner
Served Aboard from pre-commissioning through European Theater Operations
Passed Away January 26, 2010

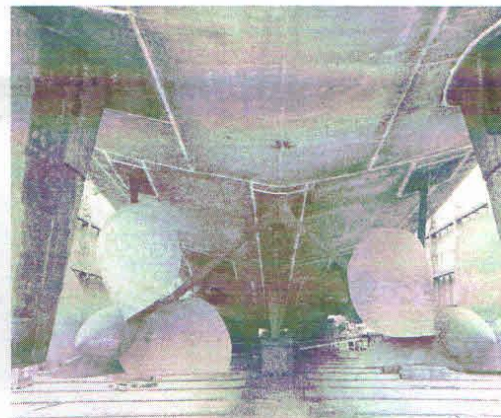
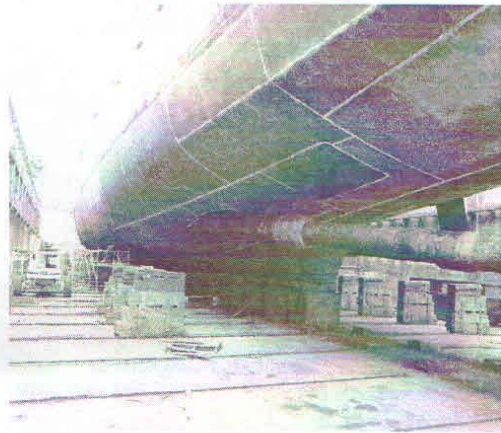
Robert Koenig, Sr. EN2
Served Aboard 68-72
Passed Away January 23, 2010

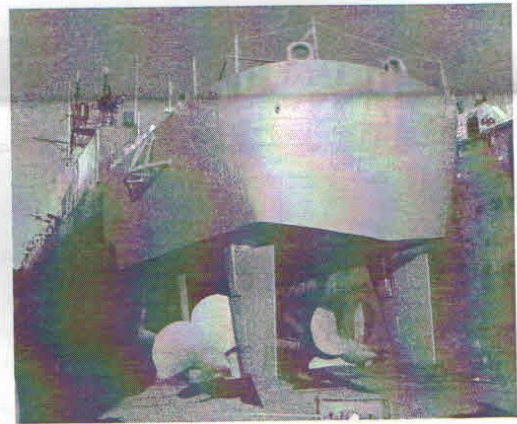
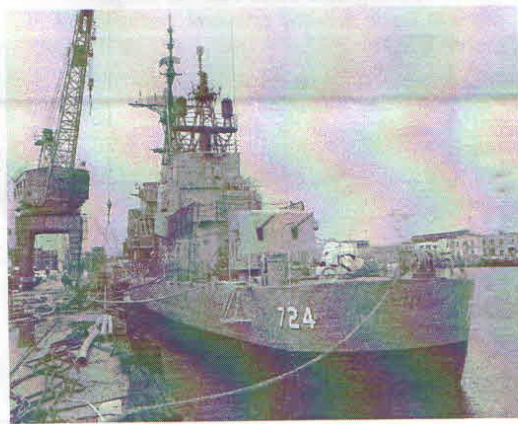
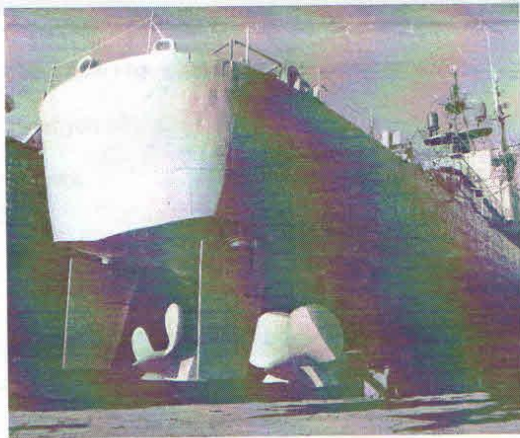
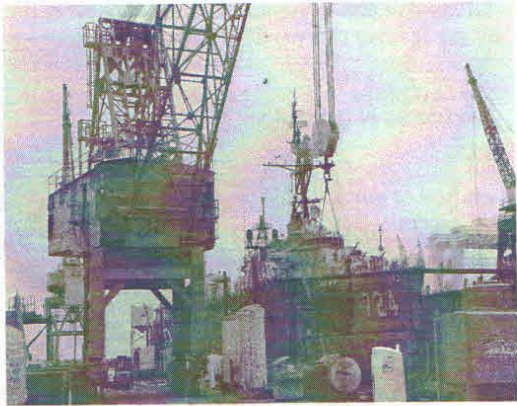
Fredine McBryde
Widow of Luther McBryde
Passed Away December 5, 2009

Glenn M. Setmire, BM2/C
Served Aboard 2/44-10/45
Passed Away on November 2, 2009

Please take a moment in silence to honor and reflect upon the memories of those who have passed away: May the departed rest in peace.

Recent Photos: The following photos show the Laffey before and after painting at the dry dock:





In Memory of Donations

In addition to the earlier donation mentioned previously in memory of Al and Debby Csiszar, the following donations have been recently received in memory of Glenn M. Setmire:

Mrs. June Setmire, Widow of Glenn.....\$500.00
Sharon Setmire, Daughter of Glenn.....\$100.00
Barbara Anne Visconti.....\$ 25.00
John Setmire.....\$ 50.00
Mr. & Mrs. John Setmire..... \$100.00

The USS Laffey Association mourns the loss of another of the Laffey's World War II crew and we share in the grief of family members and friends who have recently experienced Glenn's passing.

The above donations will be used to continue the legacy and the history of Glenn's ship, the USS Laffey DD-724. May we never forget the valor and courage of those who served aboard her in battle.

President Message February 2010 (Latest News)

Hello to all hands,

I have just returned from Charleston (again). Dick Trammell, Executive Director of Patriots Point, asked me to attend a press conference at the ship on Monday Feb. 8. I asked how many could attend and he told me that three people would be good. Ari Phoutrides flew in from Portland, OR to honor the anniversary of her commissioning ceremony on Feb 8, 1944 in Boston. Lee Hunt came in from Daniels Island (Charleston area) for our second WWII Plank Owner to attend. I must say that I was honored to be there with our two heroes. (Yes Ari and Lee, I said HEROES).

The media people just fell in love with these two and they were on TV and quoted in the newspapers. I was really proud to listen to their stories.

The press conference was held by Dick Trammell and he informed the press about the repairs that were made to the ship. Joe Lombardi explained what work had been done. We presented Joe Lombardi with a plaque thanking him for what he did for the ship. Joe was very appreciative. I told him that it was tough giving it to a New England Patriots fan. We had a good laugh.

We then went aboard the ship to show the press the spaces that had been worked on. I have to say, you snipes will just go nuts when you see those BRAND NEW BILGES. They are absolutely beautiful. They replaced longitudinal beams, parts of the keel and the new hull plates. The plates are 3/8 inch which makes them thicker than the original hull. Everything was painted and looking like a \$2.00 shoe shine.

Now the bad news: Patriots Point wants to put her at a new berth. As of right now they want to put her where the sub is now. They will build a finger pier alongside the Laffey and put the sub on the other side of the new finger pier. OR.....if they can get the money.....put the sub on shore as a dry land exhibit. I really hate to drag things out like this but until they get another \$5 million dollars to do this, the Laffey will sit at a berth at a pier on the Cooper River. It doesn't look like she will be returned this year. We really can't make any decisions yet until Patriots Point obtains more funds.

Patriots Point personnel are now working on the ship and are trying to get her ready for the public. I wish that we could help them BUT....there are so many security problems, mostly caused by the Homeland Security rules, that it would be very, very difficult for us to get in there to work. She is being allowed to stay at the "Veterans Terminal" (old Navy Base) until May 31, 2010, free of charge. After that.....we don't know what is going to happen. All of these things are still "up in the air".

Our reunion was planned for this coming October in Charleston. With the ship where it is, we couldn't get in there to see it and it wouldn't be ready for visitors. We are contemplating postponing the reunion until the ship is returned to Patriots Point. I know this will probably set all kinds of attendance records. Gemma McLuckie, Jill Michel and John Langevin were working hard trying to get the reunion together and now they have been hit with this little tidbit of info. All we can say is please hang in there and hopefully we'll know something soon.

While we were in Charleston, Ari and I went aboard the Yorktown and saw the new exhibit they have on the hangar deck displaying Laffey memorabilia, plaques and a model of the ship. The History Channel program of the Laffey's

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Now the bad news: Patriots Point wants to put her at a new berth. As of right now they want to put her where the sub is now. They will build a finger pier alongside the Laffey and put the sub on the other side of the new finger pier. OR.....if they can get the money.....put the sub on shore as a dry land exhibit. I really hate to drag things out like this but until they get another \$5 million dollars to do this, the Laffey will sit at a berth at a pier on the Cooper River. It doesn't look like she will be returned this year. We really can't make any decisions yet until Patriots Point obtains more funds.

Patriots Point personnel are now working on the ship and are trying to get her ready for the public. I wish that we could help them BUT....there are so many security problems, mostly caused by the Homeland Security rules, that it would be very, very difficult for us to get in there to work. She is being allowed to stay at the "Veterans Terminal" (old Navy Base) until May 31, 2010, free of charge. After that.....we don't know what is going to happen. All of these things are still "up in the air".

Our reunion was planned for this coming October in Charleston. With the ship where it is, we couldn't get in there to see it and it wouldn't be ready for visitors. We are contemplating postponing the reunion until the ship is returned to Patriots Point. I know this will probably set all kinds of attendance records. Gemma McLuckie, Jill Michel and John Langevin were working hard trying to get the reunion together and now they have been hit with this little tidbit of info. All we can say is please hang in there and hopefully we'll know something soon.

While we were in Charleston, Ari and I went aboard the Yorktown and saw the new exhibit they have on the hangar deck displaying Laffey memorabilia, plaques and a model of the ship. The History Channel program of the Laffey's

battle at Okinawa is being shown on a loop along with the story of the USS Franklin. There are pictures of her in dry dock too. One of the volunteers told me that a lot of visitors ask about the ship and are upset that she is not there. The new display fills the void a little.

I'm sorry that I can't give you better news but this is not going to last forever. I have all the faith in the world in Dick Trammell's ability to come up with the bucks. He is working tirelessly to bring the ship "home".

Finally, please keep our shipmates who are in sickbay in your prayers.

Sonny Walker
President

**USS LAFFEY DD-724 ASSOCIATION
OFFICERS AND STAFF**

Edgar "Sonny" Walker..... President
Bob Wampler..... Vice President
George Kessler..... Treasurer
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Newsletter Staff

Bob Wampler.... Editor and Circulation Manager

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Please be reminded that the Board of Directors of the USS Laffey Association voted to have all dues payable on the 1st of January of each year. This will eliminate the confusion surrounding when to send your membership dues. For those who have not yet paid their 2010 annual dues, please remit \$25.00 to Mr. Fred Nardei at the address shown in the Laffey News Notes Section.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: The Laffey News is intended for distribution to active membership and is included in your membership dues.

LAFFEY NEWS NOTES:

- Please notify the editor (Bob Wampler) of any change in your address and inform him of any spelling or numerical errors that are contained on your newsletter mailing label. Changes and corrections should be sent to the editor whose address is shown on the back page of this and every edition of the Laffey News (or call and leave a message at 843-705-2296). You should also include a **new phone number** if your address changed.
- USS Laffey Association Membership Applications can be found at our website: www.laffey.org. Please encourage others to join or rejoin our dedicated and proud membership!
- Annual \$25.00 membership fees, life membership fees, and new membership \$25.00 fees should be in the form of a check or money order made out to the USS Laffey Association and then sent to Mr. Fred Nardei, Membership Secretary, 10876 Daylight Drive, Camby, IN 46113. For membership questions please phone Fred at (317)-856-8158.

OUR FAIR LADY!



LOVERLY, LOVERLY.....LOVERLY!

For those of us who were able to attend the ship's movement to dry dock last August, the above photograph made the early morning departure well worth the effort!

Ship's Store

The Ships Store - as we have known of it in the past - no longer exists. In place of maintaining our own inventory and charging shipping costs, we have made arrangements with **KT Creations** to provide us with various ship store items.

Prices will be slightly higher. However, the additional costs will be offset by (1) pricing will include shipping and handling costs, (2) **KT Creations** will refund 12% of sales to the Association, and (3) we will not have to invest money in maintaining an inventory.

Pricing for some typical items are:

Polo shirts with pocket \$33



Polo shirt with your name on right side \$38

Jacket- Navy blue, 100% nylon, flannel lined, snap front \$42



Jacket with small ship design on back and name on front on right side. \$47

Jacket, with large design on the back of the jacket. \$71

Smaller design on the front and name on the front included. Motto of "Ship that Wouldn't Die" on the back too

Sweatshirt- Navy blue, long sleeve pullover \$33

Sweatshirt with name on right side \$38

Ball cap- Navy with gold lettering and ship design (the photo is \$20 hat and of better quality) \$15



Visit the website at: **KT Creations** to view the merchandise and order: www.ktcreations.pages.qpg.com

If you are not comfortable ordering off the website, mail your order by using the [order form at this link](#)

(Editor's Comment - Prices shown above are per the current Laffey website pricing. Always verify pricing with KT Creations when placing any order for Laffey ship's store items.