

**OUR HISTORIC "OLD GAL" HAS RETURNED HOME TO PATRIOTS POINT!**

# LAFFEY NEWS



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

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January-February-March

[www.laffey.org](http://www.laffey.org)

2012

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – FEBRUARY 2012**

### **HALELUJAH, THE SHIP IS BACK!**

It was a beautiful morning on January 25, 2012. The flight deck of the Yorktown was crowded with Crewmembers, a Junior Laffey sailor and his family, Patriots Point board members and we can't forget the media: All 3 local channels were there video taping the historic move.

Attending the early morning return of the USS Laffey to Patriots Point was about a dozen former crewmembers and family, a group from the USS Rich, Lee Ford (former Patriots Point staff member) and I can't forget Mac Burdette, Executive Director of Patriots Point. Even Joe Lombardi, the engineer that was in charge of her dry dock rebuilding was there with his camera and a great big smile. Mary Travis-Ross, our hostess from the Quality Inn, was also there.

I think the person that this move meant the most to was on the pier. Our WWII hero of Okinawa and survivor of MT 53, Lee Hunt, couldn't make the climb up all those stairways to the flight deck and elected to watch from the pier right where Laffey was going to tie up. Actually, he had the best seat in the house once the ship rounded the bow of the carrier: He was front row center!

We also must thank SC Representative James Smith, who happens to be the grandson of Capt. Paul Smith, Gunnery Officer aboard Laffey in WWII. Paul was awarded a Silver Star for his heroism during the battle of Okinawa. James was there along with his family and was bursting with pride as the ship came home.

James worked very hard in Columbia, SC to convince everyone in the South Carolina Government that Laffey should be saved. He did a real 4.0 job and got it done. Our hearty thanks to James for all that he did. I did notice a few tears in his eyes along with mine. I guess it's OK for a man to cry.

Interviews were going on everywhere by the TV people, Mount Pleasant Patch, Post and Courier Newspaper and even the Associated Press was there. I have to tell you that all of the crewmembers did a magnificent job and actually sounded like they knew what they were talking about!

Mike Coleman and John Hudak did most of the picture and video taking. But cameras were everywhere. Walt and Marjorie Harrington along with Hoot Gibson from the USS Rich were on the parking lot watching.

Our ship came into view as she slowly made her way down the river and under the Ravenel Bridge. She had tugs on each side and one pushing from the stern. She was shining like a pair of "spit-shined inspection shoes". Everyone was back-slapping, laughing, crying and some were just being reflective. It was a very moving experience to see her, probably for the last time "at sea", moving down the river.

The engineers had removed a 60' section of the main pier to allow for the removal of the Clamagore and the placement of Laffey at her new berth. Some of us arrived on Sunday to witness the entire event: We were able to watch them remove the section of pier on Sunday. The crane holding the removed section of pier was moved to the port side

of the carrier and remained anchored for the rest of the move until it was time to return the 60' section.

Unfortunately, fog started rolling in on Sunday and that made it extremely difficult to see very well on Monday. At one point, we couldn't even see the Yorktown from the parking lot where we were assigned to witness the events (We were not allowed to be on the entrance pier). The dense foggy conditions continued throughout Monday and into the evening when the Clamagore was being moved from her berth to make room for the USS Laffey. It wasn't until Tuesday afternoon that the fog finally lifted.

The Clamagore came out of the hole she had been sitting in for over 30 years like a champ! It was dark and foggy but it was clear enough for us to see her slow movement. She was pulled out and tied up for the night because it was too dark to move her to the berth where the USCG's Ingham used to call home. On Tuesday morning she was brought around and slipped right into her new home. We all thought that she looked better there than she did in her old spot.

On the Wednesday morning high tide, the skies cleared up, the sun came up and our lady came gliding down the Cooper River like the queen she truly is. Mac Burdette provided us with little air horns to be blown at the proper time. There was also a large bottle of champagne and everyone had a glass poured by none other than the Chairman of the Board, Ray Chandler. As the ship came closer we raised our glasses in a salute to "THE SHIP THAT WOULD NOT DIE".

As the Laffey came under the bow of the Yorktown, (it really did show us how small we looked to those "bird farmers"), we blew our horns and yelled like a bunch of kids. It was fun and just a wonderful experience!

Then it was time to watch and hope there was enough water to get her to her new berth. We all watched as the tugs guided her through the 60' opening towards her berth. With only one tug pushing from the stern she slowed down. They applied more power and she pushed her way through a mound of mud and into the hole that was created by the sub. She did ride one of the pilings on her starboard side and scratched some paint but it wasn't anything that we can't fix up!

Once she was tied up we all scrambled down from the flight deck to the pier. We were so excited to see her back home. I know we would have preferred her pushed in stern first but the engineers didn't think she could have pushed her way through the mud to make it in all the way. After looking at her in there stern first it "kinda" grew on us. We will now board her from the starboard side.

I really must thank all of our shipmates that traveled so far to witness this historic event. Harhager, Ken Rohloff and Hudak from Florida, McKinney drove from Houston, TX, Mike Coleman flew from Michigan, Charlie Meyer came "all the way" from Augusta, GA or was it Folley Beach, SC, Steve Smith from Snellville, GA, Mike Dillard from Philly, our VP and his lovely bride Bob and Joanie Wampler from Bluffton, SC and Lee Hunt from Charleston, SC.

We had a special attendee, Cooper Lockett from our Junior Laffey Program. Cooper did a project for his class in Mt. Pleasant. He interviewed some of us and made a great presentation to his class the next day, complete with pictures! He is a great kid, one that we are proud to have in our association.

There were some special friends attending from the USS Rich, too. Included were Marshall Dubois, Dick Koeniger and Joe Saunders: I assured these guys that we consider them shipmates! They were really excited about the return of the ship, too. I'm sure there were many more USS Rich sailors there but it was a little confusing with all that was going on: I'm sorry if I didn't mention your name.

Don't be alarmed but when the tide went out the ship had about a 10-15 degree list to starboard. The hole left by the sub (28' beam) just wasn't quite wide enough to accommodate our Laffey (40'11" beam). When the tide goes out only the starboard half of her is in the hole, the port side is up on the mud. The engineers assured everyone that after a number of tide cycles she should settle into her own new "nest". If this doesn't work they can still go in and do some dredging to level her up.

**We can all be proud of our ship and she is back where she belongs: The Laffey remains the BEST LOOKING SHIP AT PATRIOTS POINT and we will be doing all that we can to keep her appearance up!**

We will be having work parties as soon as they tell us we can go aboard. As of this writing (Feb 6)

Patriots Point personnel are working at making the power connections. We have asked that we get water and sewage hooked up as well. The sub never had water or sewage so it may be a while until they can make the connections for Laffey. Remember, all the old connections were made on the port side and now have to be moved to the starboard side. So there is work to be done.

I do have to say that we missed Don Watson, our "First Lieutenant", who was home recuperating from back surgery. Get well soon boy, we have work to do!

I was never prouder to be a Laffey Sailor than I was that week. Everywhere we went people noticed our caps and jackets and made comments about our great ship. We did interviews on the ship before she left Shipyard Creek and at Patriots Point (0630 in the morning LIVE!!) It seemed like all of Charleston knew about Laffey and they were really excited about having her back at Patriots Point.

Patriots Point is planning a fundraising GALA in early April. After a unanimous vote by our board of directors, the Laffey Association donated \$15,000 to sponsor this GALA. We presented a check to Mac Burdette for the GALA. This is a formal affair and the tickets are \$100 per couple to raise money for the moving expenses. It will be held on the hangar deck of the Yorktown. We will get specifics to everyone as soon as they are available.

So, for now, just be proud and happy to be a LAFFEY SAILOR.

Sonny Walker  
President

**PATRIOTS POINT ACKNOWLEDGES USS  
LAFFEY ASSOCIATION DONATION**

Dear Mr. Walker,

This letter is a written acknowledgment that we have received the contribution of \$15,000 from the USS Laffey Association for the Homecoming Celebration Account.

On behalf of the entire Patriots Point Foundation board, we are all very excited about the Laffey coming home.

We look forward to our continued work with you. Please let all in the Laffey Association know as well

how happy we are about the Laffey's return to Patriots Point.

Sincerely,

Carlyle Blakeney  
President

**THIS JUST IN: OFFICIAL WORK PARTY NOTICE  
ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDENT S. WALKER**

I know everyone is anxious to get back to work **BUT**, I have been told by Bob Howard of Patriots Point that it looks like we won't be able to have any work parties until around April 15, 2012.

Patriots Point is planning on a big celebration about that same time frame. This celebration is intended to make people aware of the return of Laffey to Patriots Point and it will also serve as a vehicle to raise funds for our ship. It would be great for us to be there while our ship is the top attraction for that week. This would be especially so for any of our WWII vets who would want to be there and get as much attention as they can stand!!

We have a lot of work ahead of us. Cleaning our CPO berthing quarters, putting artifacts back on display and getting as many compartments open to the public (cleaning and painting mostly) will be our biggest job.

I won't know for a while if we will be able to stay on the Laffey or if we will have to sleep aboard the Yorktown: Patriots Point needs to get electrical, water and sewage hooked up to the Laffey. I'll know this, hopefully, when the time comes for the work party. Until then we can assume that we will sleep on Yorktown and eat wherever we can. This is what Tin Can sailors do best!

Anyone interested in attending the next work party (Actual date to be announced), please notify me by e-mail, [soncher724@verizon.net](mailto:soncher724@verizon.net), or call me at home 410-515-3223 or call my cell 410-960-5695.

**It is very important that you let me know if you intend to attend.**

See you there.  
Sonny

## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The concluding paragraphs of Admiral Becton's book, *The Ship That Would Not Die*, seem to be appropriate to mention in this newsletter as our ship returns to Patriots Point. They read as follows:

"White water no longer curls back from our Laffey's high, proud bow. There are no men at her throttles or on her bridge, and her guns no longer speak. But she is alive with shades and memories of brave deeds and the brave Americans who did them. They are still with her and will be always. It is my hope that those who visit her, most especially the young, will come to know and perhaps be inspired by them.

If that happens, then what Laffey did will not have been in vain".

**Editors Comment:** I would hope we all can reflect on these words with pride. I would also hope that our Junior Laffey Sailors will have an opportunity to visit the Laffey and begin to understand her deeds, her honor, and her achievements in both battle and peace. I'm certain that they, too, will share in the pride that we former crew members have in "our tin can"!

## THANK YOU NOTE RECEIVED BY SONNY

Dear Laffey Friends,

We appreciate the flowers the association sent in honor of our wife & mom. She would have loved them.

She so enjoyed the friendship of the association members and looked forward to the reunion and work parties.

Thank you,

Jim Spriggs, Gemma McLuckie, David Spriggs & Leila Spriggs.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Jim Spriggs' wife, Lillian, passed away on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The USS Laffey DD-724 Association sincerely regrets her passing: She will be missed by all.

## SPECIAL NOTICE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

Maintaining the accuracy of our membership roster and the mailing list data base of the Laffey News is both important and difficult.

Each edition of the newsletter requests that members notify Bob Wampler and Fred Nardei when they relocate, and many have done so over the years. However, often times we find out about your moves when the Postal Service notifies they can no longer forward your mail.

The USPS provides your new address and we re-send the newsletter to your new home. However, they do not provide phone numbers, obviously, and we need your help on this matter.

When you relocate, please contact Bob Wampler and Fred Nardei as soon as possible and inform us of your address change. Make certain that Fred Nardei, Membership Chairman, is also given your new phone number and e-mail address (if applicable) so that we have a means of getting in contact with you, if necessary, by phone or internet.

Thank you for understanding our need in mentioning this in the Laffey News: You can help us reduce mailing costs and eliminate the need to spend time researching your move. We do appreciate your help on this matter.

Bob Wampler, VP and Editor Laffey News.

## NAVY JUMPERS BACKORDERED

Week of December 19, 2011

Naval Supply Systems Command has announced a backorder of common sizes of the Navy Blue Jumper, commonly referred to as the "crackerjack," because they are in short supply. Some white jumpers are in short supply, as well. If not available in the Navy Exchange, Sailors can place backorders for Jumpers online at [www.mynavyexchange.com](http://www.mynavyexchange.com) or by calling the Uniform Support Center at 1-800-368-4088.

**Editor's Comment:** Now, ladies and gentlemen, this would not have occurred in "our Navy"!

## QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

"I'll never abandon ship as long as a gun will fire"  
Commander F. Julian Becton, C/O USS Laffey, DD-724, 16 April, 1945, Okinawa

## 2011 REUNION MEMORABLE PICTURE



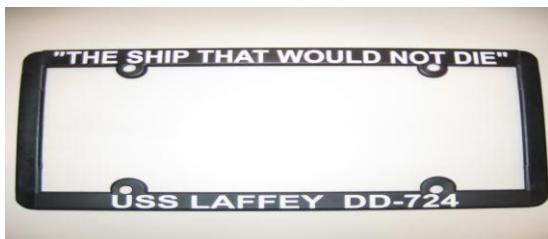
President Sonny Walker and Okinawa Battle survivor Danny Essig enjoyed a moment of genuine friendship during the Savannah reunion: Danny remains, along with other Okinawa Battle survivors, a treasure to our association and Sonny planted “a smooch” to prove it!

### NOW HEAR THIS - JUNIOR LAFFEY SAILORS

The USS Laffey DD-724 has returned to Patriots Point and continues her legacy as “the ship that would not die”. Formal plans to have you visit the ship have been on hold for two years due to the emergency repair work and delays in having her return to Patriots Point. We will now proceed to develop several itineraries that will allow for you to visit the Laffey in the future with the possibility for a sleep over on the carrier Yorktown while you are in Mt. Pleasant, SC.

Planning visits such as the above will require the approval and involvement of the management and staff of Patriots Point. We will keep you informed of any decisions made concerning this matter.

### SHOW YOUR PRIDE, SHIPMATES!



The Ship That Would Not Die has returned to Patriots Point and we want all association members to know that she lives once more! Now it's up to you to make certain everyone else knows about the Laffey!

So, let's make certain that you do your part in making everyone know that the Laffey lives! Install these plate frames around your tags and be noticed!! Remember, \$1.00 of each frame price goes to help fund the Junior Laffey Sailor Program.

So, what do you have to do to get your very own Laffey license plate frames? Well.....read on!

The price for each custom frame is \$10.00 with shipping and handling included. Decide how many frames you might want, write a check made out to the USS Laffey DD-724 Association and send it to:

Bob Wampler, Editor Laffey News  
USS Laffey DD-724 Association  
100 Landing Lane  
Bluffton, SC 29909-6060

We'll do the rest: Your car, truck, RV, golf cart, etc. will be proud and appreciative of your decision to purchase their very own plate frame!! Be noticed!!

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

Edgar “Sonny” Walker..... President  
Bob Wampler..... Vice President  
George Kessler..... Treasurer  
Julie Becton..... Secretary  
Fred Nardei..... Membership Chairman

#### Board of Directors

Ari Phoutrides  
John Langevin  
Francis LaSala  
Jim Spriggs  
John Hudak

#### Website Manager

A. J. Tarquino

#### 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 1<sup>st</sup> of January of each year. This will help to eliminate the confusion surrounding when to send your membership dues. For those who have

not yet paid their 2012 annual dues, please remit \$25.00 to Mr. Fred Nardei, Membership Chairman: His address is shown in the Laffey News Notes Section.

### 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](http://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 DD-724 Association and then sent to **Mr. Fred Nardei, Membership Secretary, 13565 SE 93<sup>rd</sup> Court Road, Summerfield, FL 34491. (RECENT CHANGE)** For membership questions please phone Fred at (317)-402-7235 (Cell Phone).

### CHARLESTON'S MEDIA WELCOMES LAFFEY

The USS Laffey DD-724 Association's website manager, A.J. Tarquino, found the below shown article that appeared in the Charleston Post & Courier newspaper. It reads as follows:

#### Let's hear it for the Laffey

Friday, January 27, 2012

The USS Laffey is finally back where it belongs at Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum. And "The Ship That Would Not Die" has a new designation:

"The best restored historical vessel in the country."

That's how Joe Lombardi of Ocean Technical Services described the World War II destroyer. The company oversaw the restoration of the ship, which

in 2009 was on the verge of sinking at its museum berth.

Since its repair, advocates of the Laffey had waited for the ship to be returned to the maritime museum. But the Patriots Point board equivocated on the matter for more than two years because of financial problems.

There was even talk of giving the Laffey away after its emergency \$9 million restoration had been completed. But ultimately the board did the right thing and worked out the details to bring the Laffey back.

The Laffey became a museum ship because of its storied history during World War II, when it was attacked again and again by Japanese kamikaze planes and yet survived. It still has a story of heroism and history to tell visitors, and the maritime museum is where it belongs, along with the aircraft carrier Yorktown and the submarine Clamagore.

Patriots Point still has to figure out how to pay the state back for the emergency loan to repair the ship. It won't be easy, but museum officials have two years to come up with a plan.

Meanwhile, the financial outlook at Patriots Point has improved over the last year, and officials are working on several fronts to expand its audience and develop plans for the daunting task of restoring the Yorktown.

The return of the Laffey to its berth at Patriots Point on Wednesday was heartily applauded by a group of veterans who served on the vessel. So it should be.

Bringing back the destroyer conveys the message that the Patriots Point Authority is committed to restoring the luster to one of the major maritime museums in the nation, and one of the biggest tourist attractions in the state.

The Laffey is expected to reopen to visitors in a month.

Go visit to show your support.

**EDITOR'S COMMENT: AMEN TO THAT!**

**PICTURES OF USS LAFFEY'S RETURN TO PATRIOTS POINT FOLLOW:**



**Now isn't this just one great sign**



**Crowd begins to assemble on carrier Yorktown**



**White Ibis flock gathers to await the Laffey**



**Laffey passes under bridge on way to new home**



**First View - Laffey first appears in the distance**



**Passing crane holding removed pier section**



**On the way to a tight turn**



**We made it through the 60' pier opening**



**Just a few more pushes and pulls!!**



**OK Now...Let's get those line handlers ready**



**Getting closer inch by inch - We'll be home soon!**



**Home at last....Home at last!**





**The Ship That Would Not Die.....Lives!**



**View of Laffey from entrance pier. Very Visible!**



**From this angle we look larger than Yorktown!**



**Reality view – The carrier Yorktown is bigger!**

### **EDITORS COMMENTS**

My wife and I went down to the Patriots Point parking lot early Tuesday evening and spotted the gathering of white ibis on an adjacent knoll (See Picture). All of the birds, and I do mean all of them, were facing the exact spot that Laffey would call her new home the next day. We considered them to be the official welcoming committee!

For those who were unable to attend the return of our ship to Patriots Point, I want to express to you my feeling that this was an extremely memorable event. Many of you will attend our reunion later in 2012 and will have an opportunity to see just how great our ship looks: We are truly the caretakers of one “fine looking” Naval vessel!

All of you who visit our Laffey before or during the reunion will have a profound sense of pride. The Laffey was attacked by 22 kamikaze planes and managed to survive the most intensive air attack ever unleashed on one ship.

### **IN MEMORY OF DONATIONS RECEIVED**

The following donations have been received in memory of Betsy Adler’s Mom, Anne McLin “Mac” Jones who recently passed away:

Alyce T. Adler – Littleton , CO - \$100.00  
Chris & Pat Handley – Maryville, TN - \$200.00

We sincerely appreciate their gifts to honor “Mac”



Our new Laffey apparel supplier is up and running with a complete line of Tee Shirts, Polo Shirts, Hats, Jackets...etc. Give Dave Bossard a call, an e-mail, or a fax to discuss what's available, what can be customized, and to place your order.

Dave is a former RM (one of Sonny's many Serfs!) while on the Laffey and he served in the Naval Reserve before retiring as an RMC. He can be reached as follows:

J.D. Bossard, Inc.  
Doing Business As (DBA) The Locker Room  
Bernville, PA 19506

Phone: 1-610-698-4653  
Fax: 1-610-488-5012  
E-Mail: [info@lockerroom4u.com](mailto:info@lockerroom4u.com)

Dave has supplied our new Junior Laffey Sailors with ball caps and will be providing Tee Shirts, Sweat Shirts, and Jackets for the previously announced essay contest winners (To be announced in the next edition of the Laffey News).

#### **A RECENT MESSAGE FROM JOEY (Folino)**

Of course it is Dec. 7, 2011, and not 1941, but the message is still the same-GOD BLESS AMERICA

I write this to say THANK YOU, each and every one, regardless of time aboard.... I am scheduled for some surgery on the 15th and I pray you will all say a little prayer for Joey. I spent two tours on our beloved ship and I will always have a piece of me in it's life. Regardless of what happens you can bet I will be ready for orders and Muster.... There is a

special place in my heart for each of you and when the "final orders" are announced I will be on station.

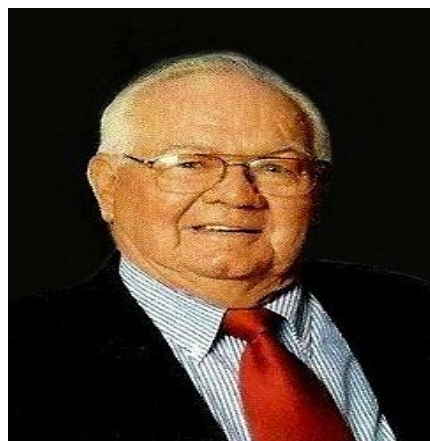
I love each of you and hope one day we will all settle for our final duty.... I am proud to have known each of you and my heart is longing to see our LADY. All Hands... know that we are one family ...and always will be.

I love you all

Joey

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Unfortunately, Joe Folino's surgery did not occur due to his ill health. Therefore the need for a prayer remains. Give Joey what would be a welcome call or send him an e-mail: (209)-667-0219) or [folino7240@att.net](mailto:folino7240@att.net)

**Taps: [Wendell V. Teachey, Sr](#)  
Courtesy of Pete Lacore**



Wendell Vann Teachey, Sr.  
September 4, 1931 - July 1, 2011

Mr. Wendell Vann Teachey, Sr., age 79 of Rose Hill died Friday, July 1, 2011 at New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington. (North Carolina)

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Katie P. Teachey; two daughters, Linda Cross and husband Mike of Wilmington, Joan Parker and husband Roger of Rose Hill; two sons, Wendell Teachey, Jr. and wife Cindy, Neil Teachey and wife Lavonda both of Rose Hill; nine grandchildren and nine great grandchildren; two sisters, Kathryn Smith and husband Clarence of Hampstead and Emily Scoville of Havelock; several nieces and nephews; two special friends, Paul Phillips and Craig King, and his dog Snoopy.

Born in Duplin County, Mr. Teachey was the son of

the late Ross and Jessie Eunice Norris Teachey. He enjoyed riding horses and fishing. He loved being with his family, his church, his friends and his dog Snoopy. He was a member and Deacon of Island Creek Baptist Church. **He was a retired farmer and a Navy veteran having served in Korea aboard the U.S.S. Laffey DD724.** He was preceded in death by two sisters, Mirian Johnson and Mae Eunice Teachey.

**Editor's comment:** Wendell Vann Teachey, Sr. was a Life Member of our association and his wife Katie remains a Life Member as well. Rest in Peace, Shipmate.

**SHIPMATE RECOVERING:** Don Watson, "the second biggest contractor in Florida" (!!), and fulltime First Lieutenant work party attendee, is now in recovery from recent back surgery. He has gone to his Gaffney, SC residence and is walking to build-up his strength. Don has informed Sonny that he hopes to be ready to go to the work party in April and Sonny informed him that he would issue him a clip board. **(Editor's Comment:** Good grief – Two people (Sonny and Don) walking around issuing orders and acting as tour guides! Recalling that picture of Sonny painting the gun mount with that itsy-bitsy paint brush, maybe we can get one of those for Don as well!!) Give Donny a call at (352)-516-3354 (cell phone) and gab a bit.

### TAPS LIST

Glenn Graham, Brother of USS Laffey Association Member Roland Graham.  
Passed Away on February 2, 2012  
Glenn was also a Tin Can Sailor having served aboard the USS Buck.

Anne McLin "Mac" Jones, Mother of USS Laffey Association Member Betsy Adler and wife of Robert Jones – Member of WWII Crew  
Passed Away January 26, 2012

Gerald "Jerry" Joseph Liebertz, Sr. PHM 1/c  
Plankowner – WWII Veteran  
Passed away January 8, 2012

Karen Lucey, Wife of Robert Lucey, FT2  
Passed Away January 5, 2012

Josephine V. Stuer  
Widow of Joseph J. Stuer BTG3  
Plankowner & Survivor of Okinawa

Passed Away on January 8, 2012

Wendell V. Teachey, Sr., YN3/C  
Served Aboard Laffey 51-54  
Passed Away on July 1, 2011  
(See Obituary Above)

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.

### JUNIOR LAFFEY SAILOR INSTRUCTS CLASS



Cooper Lockett, a Junior Laffey Sailor who attended the ship's movement to Patriots Point in January conducted a presentation on the USS Laffey to his school classmates. **Well done, Lad!**

### NOW THIS IS IMPORTANT "STUFF"!

(A) We have just been advised by Jill Michel, one of our two reunion committee members, that the dates for the 2012 reunion have been established. **Set aside September 23-27, 2012 for our next reunion!** The next newsletter will contain itinerary details, costs and a formal application to attend.

(B) Patriots Point is planning a **Gala Celebration and Ceremony** in honor of the return of the Laffey to her new home. Sonny received the following preliminary information from Mac Burdette:

Sonny: Well she hasn't sunk. The list is down from 6 degrees to 2.5 degrees. She's nesting. We are planning the celebration for the April 13, 14, 15<sup>th</sup> weekend. Probably have the party on Friday night April 13<sup>th</sup> and the formal ceremony on Saturday or Sunday. We have high hopes of opening a portion of the ship to public in early March with most of ship open the weekend we celebrate. As far as I am concerned any Laffey Association members and one guest attend for free. You guys are covered by your very kind donation. How many from the Association do you think would attend? We will probably limit the number of tickets. **Let Sonny know ASAP if you are planning to attend.**

**USS Laffey DD-724 Association**  
Bob Wampler  
100 Landing Lane  
Bluffton, SC 29909-6060

