

2013 REUNION - A GREAT SUCCESS - SEE INSIDE

LAFFEY NEWS

THE USS LAFFEY DD-724 – THE SHIP THAT WOULD NOT DIE



“I’LL NEVER ABANDON SHIP AS LONG AS A GUN WILL FIRE”: CO F. JULIAN BECTON

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

January-February-March

www.laffey.org

2014

President’s Message

Spring 2014.....Well, Almost!

This has certainly been a great winter eh? It is February 13 and snowing like crazy here in Maryland. Even our Florida folks have been chilly. I know the Wisconsin people are “Popsicles” by now.

As I write this quarterly message we are in the middle of another nice snow storm: 14 inches last night and now we are getting another 4 inches tonight. C’mon spring.

We are looking forward to another great year for our association. This summer Patriots Point is sponsoring a D-Day Memorial on June 6th. They have given us berthing space on the USS Yorktown from June 5th until June 13th. They would like us to conduct tours of the Laffey since she is believed to be the last DD that was present at the Normandy Invasion. Patriots Point would like as many of our WWII vets who were at Normandy to try to make it to Charleston. So far we have Ari Phoutrides and Lee Hunt coming to the event. I am sure they will be a great hit with the visitors.

Our memorial tree has been planted and the plaque is on order. We are hoping to have everything in place for dedication during our 2014 reunion in September. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jeff Jacobs for all of his efforts in getting this “Live Oak” tree (Donated by Bartlett Tree Experts) planted. He has been working hard getting the plaque and the base available for their dedication. Thanks Jeff



Speaking of the coming reunion, our reunion chairperson, Jill Michel, lost her sister on Feb. 12, 2014. Joan was 62 years old and died of cancer. Please keep Jill in your thoughts and prayers.

Our spring work party will be held April 13-19 2014. We have berthing space aboard the USS Yorktown. We will also have a memorial service on 16 April to honor our 32 fallen heroes of the Okinawa Battle. If you are interested please let me know. We have

about 20 signed up so far. Please contact Sonny Walker 410-515-3223 or soncher724@verizon.net.

Our 2014 reunion is just about finalized. Jill has been working very hard and has had some rough spots with the passing of her sister Joan. I spoke with Jill and we will be staying at the Quality Inn and Suites at Patriots Point as usual. She checked with some other hotels but they were just too expensive and couldn't accommodate all of our needs. She is coming up with a lot of activities for us too.

We are really looking forward to the dedication of our Live Oak Tree at the head of the parking lot outside of the Ships Store. We will dedicate the tree before we have our annual memorial service aboard the ship.

I spoke this morning with Dinah Folino, wife of Joe Folino. Joe had a stroke last week and is in rehab. His right side was affected. They have him walking some but he can't speak yet. Joe has recently started speech therapy. Please keep Joe and Dinah in your thoughts and prayers.

Dave Harhager is on a maintenance program for his cancer. He is planning on being at the April work party. Let's thank the Lord for bringing Davey through this serious disease.

See y'all at the work party April 13-19, 2014.

Sonny Walker

President

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life-time's experience. **Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.**

US NAVY'S MOST INTIMIDATING CREATION YET JUST HIT THE WATER – OCTOBER 23 2013

The USS Zumwalt hit the water Oct. 29th 2013 and is due to start patrolling during 2014.

The Zumwalt was originally estimated to cost about \$3.8 billion, but so much technology was crammed onboard that its cost has nearly doubled, and after the first three are built, production will stop.

With all the new weapons systems the navy wants aboard the Zumwalt, planners installed an onboard power plant that could provide power to 78,000 homes (around 78 megawatts).

The Navy just put its newest destroyer, the USS Zumwalt, into the sea. Constructed by General Dynamics with weapons systems and software from other companies, the Zumwalt "DDG-1000" Guided Missile Destroyer is like the I-phone 6 of naval ships.

Its "tumblehome" hull avoids enemy radar while composite armor absorbs it, advanced weaponry strikes from more than 100 miles offshore, Linux-based networking in the bridge allows for purchase and implementation of off-the-shelf software, and an all-electric drive system keeps her purring quietly like a well-fed tiger.



The USS Zumwalt hits the water

Computers and automation have reduced the crew size to a bare bones 158. (By comparison, the USS Barry, Arleigh-Burke Class requires 210 sailors.)

Sean Gallagher of Arstechnica referred to the Linux-powered bridge as a "floating data center" and wrote that it was akin to the bridge on Star Trek's Starship Enterprise.

On the outside, the USS Zumwalt not only looks cool (rule #1), but it's a full 100 feet longer than existing classes of destroyer.

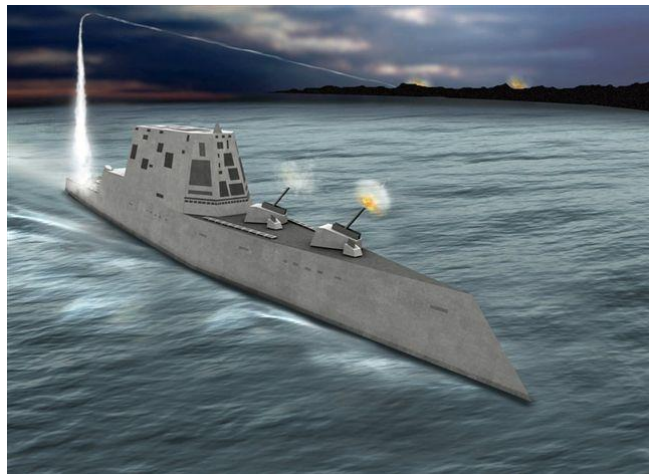
According to the Navy's press release, "the shape of the superstructure and the arrangement of its antennas significantly reduce the ship's radar cross section, making the ship less visible to enemy radar at sea." The hull of the ship is made of a composite material which effectively absorbs radar waves.

The Zumwalt's weaponry is tailored for land attack and close-to-coast dominance and will also have a sensor and weapons suite optimized for littoral warfare and for network-centric warfare.

BAE Systems Land and Armaments developed the ship's advanced gun system (AGS), which will be able to fire advanced munitions and the Zumwalt class vessels have two landing spots for helicopters.

Zumwalt has a peripheral vertical launch system (PVLS), which consists of 20 four-cell PVLS situated round the perimeter of the deck. The ship also has space for two medium-lift helicopter systems.

And finally, the new long range attack projectile (LRAP) — the DDG-1000 will be armed with tactical Tomahawks, standard missile SM-3s, and the evolved Sea Sparrow missile.



EDITOR'S QUESTION: DID YOU EVER THINK THAT TIN CANS WOULD LOOK LIKE THIS??!



The onboard power could enable the first uses of the Navy's Magnetic Rail Gun project, which combines magnetic currents and electric fields to fire projectiles at 7 times the speed of sound.

WORDS OF WISDOM

“Men are equal; it is not birth but virtue that makes the difference”
Voltaire



Bartlett Laffey, Medal of Honor Recipient – The Civil War - For his heroic actions at the battle of Yazoo City, MS on March 5th, 1864

USS LAFFEY DD-724 ASSOCIATION OFFICERS AND STAFF

Current Officers

- Edgar “Sonny” Walker..... President
(soncher724@verizon.net)
- Bob Wampler..... Vice President
(rdwjcw@hargray.com)
- George Kessler..... Treasurer
(gfkessler09@yahoo.com)
- Hillary Wagner.....Secretary
- Mike Pereira.....Membership Chairman
(antiredsox@yahoo.com)

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

**PLEASE SAVE THESE DATES!
THE 2014 REUNION DATES ARE CONFIRMED**

Our 2014 reunion will be located in Charleston/Patriots Point. The reunion dates are Sunday September 28, 2014 (Arrival Date) through Wednesday October 1, 2014 with an AM departure on Thursday October 2, 2014. Planned events will conclude on Wednesday evening.

Watch for event itinerary details and hotel information in future editions of the Laffey News.

NOW HEAR THIS.....NOW HEAR THIS!

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

It's that time of the year again: For those members who are not life members and instead pay their dues on an annual basis, the USS Laffey DD-724 Association several years ago established January first as the due date for annual membership dues (for 2014).

The annual fee for membership in the USS Laffey DD-724 Association is \$25.00/year. Your check should be made out to the USS Laffey Association and mailed to our new Membership Chairman Mr. Mike Pereira, 92 Elmdale Avenue, Warwick, RI 02889. The check should indicate it is for 2014 membership.

If you are uncertain concerning your membership status, please contact Mike Pereira at 401-787-3014. Mike will gladly look into our membership roster and inform you of your current status.

ALL HANDS – A MESSAGE FROM SONNY

I just got off the phone with Dinah Folino. Joe had a stroke last night. He is in the hospital and resting. He's recovering movement in his right side.

His speech is not good. Dinah says it is like he is speaking in another language. The doctor said that, with speech therapy, he will recover.

Joe was just trying to decide if he should have an operation to prevent strokes but hadn't made up his mind and then this hit.

Please keep Joe and Dinah in your thoughts and prayers

Sonny (2-18-2014)

SHIPMATES PASSING

All Hands:

We lost another shipmate recently. Norman D. Neuleib HTC passed away Jan. 24th, 2014. Norm was on Laffey 56-63. He was the best welder in the entire Navy, according to Member John Hudak!

Norm has battled cancer for a while. He fell and broke his leg a while back and never really recovered.

I haven't heard any specifics on his funeral but will pass it on as soon as they become available. Norm lived in Geneseo, IL

Please keep his family in your prayers

Sonny - (2-25-2014)

TAPS LIST

Thomas Spray EM2
Served aboard 1959-61
Passed away September, 2010

Charles J. "Joe" Gerber RD2
Served aboard 1954-58
Passed away Nov. 27, 2013

Ralph R. Andrews WT3/c Plank Owner
Served in WWII Survivor of Okinawa
Passed away Jan. 30, 2014

Joan Michel
Daughter of John Michel MM2 WWII
Okinawa Battle Survivor
Sister of Member Jill Michel, Laffey Annual Reunion
Coordinator
Passed away Feb 12, 2014

Norman D. Neuleib HTC
Serve Aboard Laffey 56-63
Passed Away Jan. 24 2014

Please take a moment to recall these recently deceased members and pray that their families are comforted as they journey down grief's pathway.

Hi All – (Editor's Note – That's y'all for us Southern Folks)

Need a nice warm jacket for a miserable winter like we have here in Pennsylvania? With this Jacket shown below you can also advertise your favorite ship....The USS Laffey.

STYLE 4750 - The Express Jacket

- 100% Oxford nylon outer shell
- Coated for wind and water resistance
- 7oz diamond-quilt lining

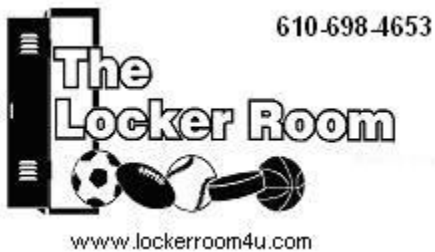
- Raglan Sleeves
- Fleeced lined collar with inside storm flap
- Outer right chest zipper pocket, front zippered pockets and inside chest pockets
- Open bottom hem, side seam zippers to accommodate accessories
- Velcro cuff closures
- Reflective tape down sleeves/across back
- Left sleeve accessory pocket

Adult Sizes: S-5XL

- Up Charges Apply

Locker Room Laffey Ship Store Price:

Sizes S - XL **\$80.00**
 2XL - 5XL: \$ 2.00 up charge per size



Home of the USS LAFFEY Ship's Store:

EDITOR'S COMMENT: There seems to be no end to the winter weather this year. Please give Member Dave Bossard a call to order this jacket.

Please note all of the snow Dave had shipped in to his home to create the snowy picture!!!

IN MEMORY OF DONATIONS

From Patricia A. Wilson: \$100.00. In memory of her Dad, Robert E. Kennedy

Sharon S. Setmire: \$50.00. In memory of her Dad, Glenn Setmire

The USS Laffey DD-724 Association sincerely appreciates the above generous donations. We assure you that the donations received will be put to good use in the maintenance of the Laffey as a memorial to history and to all who served on her.

A MEMBER'S RECENT SUGGESTION

It would really look neat if the ships store had merchandise in it: If Patriots point would go along with it and maybe help.

Perhaps the members could save up their empty tooth paste cartons (the little carton that the tube comes in). The same with bars of soap. I have wrist watches that no longer work and just take up space in my dressing table drawer. I am sure some people have some dime store jewelry that they no longer use. These things could be made up to make that ships store at least look like it did, and it gives the ship a look of being active.

Also in the small arms locker, I was wondering if the Charleston Police could be contacted to supply appropriate fire arms for that cabinet. I am sure they have confiscated fire arms. They would have to make them unserviceable, without damaging the looks of the gun.

I think things like this would help make the ship look more alive. Everything helps, from the lights on the electric panels, to the plexi-glass covers on the hatches, looking down into a compartment.

I have some friends who had been on vacation and they were traveling on the East Coast. They stopped at Patriots Point and toured the Laffey, I have not heard their report yet but I guess they talked to some one on the Yorkton who knew me. I am guessing it was probably Malcom.

Sorry I will not be able to make the D-Day Memorial Service: It sounds like it will be a real good time.

John Miller, Lifetime Member

A SAILOR'S POEM

For all of you old salts... and 13 buttons too.

From Fred Thiesz

Come gather round me lads and I'll tell you a thing or two; About the way we ran the Navy in nineteen fifty two.

When wooden ships and iron men were barely out of sight; I am going to give you some facts just to set the record right.

We wore the ole bell bottoms, with a flat hat on our head; Always hit the rack at night and never "went to bed."

Our uniforms were worn ashore and we were mighty proud; Never thought of wearing civvies, in fact they were never allowed.

What happened to the KiYi brush, and the old salt-water bath; Holy stoning decks at night cause you stirred old Bosn's wrath!

We always had our gedunk stand and lots of pogeey bait; And it always took a hitch or two just to make a rate.

In your seabag all your skivvies were neatly stopped and rolled; And the blankets on your rack had better have a three-inch fold.

Your little ditty bag, it is hard to believe just how much it held; You wouldn't go ashore with pants that hadn't been spiked and belled.

We had scullery maids and succotash and good old SOS; And when you felt like topping off, you headed for the mess.

Oh we had our belly robbers but there weren't too many gripes;

For the deck apes were never hungry and there were no starving snipes.

Now you never hear of Davy Jones, Shellbacks or Polliwogs; And you never splice the mainbrace to receive your daily grog.

Now you never have to dog a watch or stand the main vent; You even tie your lines today, back in my time they were bent.

We were all two-fisted drinkers and no one thought you sinned;

If you staggered back aboard your ship, three sheets to the wind.

And with just a couple hours of sleep you regained your usual luster; Bright eyed and bushy tailed, you still made morning muster.

Rocks and shoals have long since gone, and now it's UCMJ; Then the old man handled everything if you should go astray.

Now they steer the ships with dials, and I wouldn't be surprised; If some day they sailed them from the beach computerized.

So when my earthly hitch is over, and the good Lord picks the best; I'll walk right up to HIM and say, "Sir, I have but one request.

Let me sail the seas of Heaven in a coat of Navy blue; Like I did so long ago on earth way back in nineteen-fifty-two.

EDITOR'S COMMENT – Admit it...This brings back a lot of memories!!!

Navy Evaluating New Boots

Week of February 24, 2014 (From Military.com)

New footwear could soon be making its way to the fleet. A new lightweight boot with a composite replacement toe will begin evaluations from Sailors and naval aviators in the 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th and Pacific fleets, starting this month. The six-month user evaluation is slated to conclude in August. If the new boots get favorable reviews by Sailors, a proposal would be made to Navy leadership to consider using the composite toe caps versus steel toe caps in future footwear production.

Commanders Worry Budget Cuts Will Hurt Readiness (From Military.com-February 2014) U.S. commanders in the Pacific, Africa and Central Command told lawmakers Wednesday that they were concerned that spending reductions proposed in the 2015 defense budget would cut down on military readiness. **Editor's comment – Shameful**

AND NOW.....MORE REUNION PICTURES!



The Jazz Band parade re-enters the Sheraton



Ah-h-h...Just as good as food on the Laffey!



We nearly won – Just needed a lot more time!



Now, just who is that “masked lady”??



Sonny Walker’s “modest new career launch”



Some folks dress “kinda” funny in “N’Awlins”!



Yes Indeed....This is “the street”!



Time to sit down - Too much “walkin” going on.



Typical “daytime” view of Bourbon Street area



Another excellent “Kodak Moment”



Now Look – This is how it’s going to be!



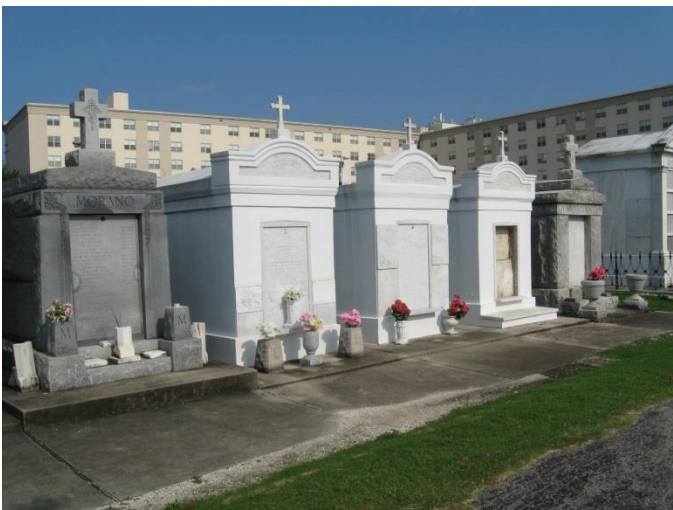
Our very own municipal water tower



"They" just don't feed me enough at reunions!!



Four white ibis touring the city park



City bus tour stops at above ground cemetery



These folks mingled with the white ibis birds!



Now, explain that to me once more



The beauty of the city park



We finally finished that “darn ship’s puzzle”!



So tell me...who sat us right next to the band??



Bartender...We’ll have one of everything!



These chow lines just don’t move quickly!



“The Doc” in deep, really deep study



Enough with the food....It’s time for coffee!



We'll take six (4" x 6") prints please.



"Old Nine-Ninety-Nine" has an after dinner talk



But wait...I wanted that piece!



Dinner was great - coffee and desert are better!



Ah-h-h...We'll recommend this meal to anyone!



And now - It's time for Fred's after dinner nap!

**USS Laffey DD-724 Association
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