

The Indestructible USS Laffey by Slavomir Vodehnal

<https://www.laffey.org/Articles/TheIndestructibleUSSLaffeyPDF.pdf>

This is a 97 page 17 X 11" book of USS Laffey DD724 newspaper articles, photos, and illustrations. It one of the most extensive collection of newspaper articles on the USS Laffey 16 April 1945 battle that is available. The book was written by Radarman 1st Class Slavomir Vodehnal. He performed a vital function during the Japanese attack on 16 April 1945 communicating with fighter planes. The book was published by Cal Steward Printer, Lincoln, Nebr., 1980.

The book primarily presents information on the 16 April 1945 battle and crew members. It also includes information on the ship decommissioning in 1975 in Washington DC. It also includes information about the USS Laffey Association First Reunion with Admiral Julian Becton the USS Laffey Commanding Officer in WWII.

The photos below are from <https://www.abebooks.com/Indestructible-USS-Laffey-Log-Vodehnal-Slavomir/31319276013/bd>

The Indestructible

U.S. Luffry



Log Of The Laffey



The Indestructible USS Laffey

(DD 724)

Destroyermen have waged and won

Destroyermen have waged and lost . . . all that they had to give. Their lives. It is to those men, the ones who could not live to enjoy our freedom, or opportunities for success, or pleasures of home and family . . . to those who could never share our joy in reuniting as a group and could never attend a reunion . . . to the men who served and died on the USS Laffey, this publication—LOG OF THE LAFFEY—is dedicated.

FOR THOSE WELL KNOWN

We seem to give him back to Thee, Dear Lord, who givest him to us. Yet as Thou didst not lose him in giving, so we have not lost him by his return. For what is Time if not always, and life is eternal and love is immortal, and what we sometimes call death is only a horizon, and a horizon is nothing but the limit of our sight. Lift us up, O God, that we may see further; cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly; draw us closer to Thyself that we may know ourselves nearer to our beloved who are with Thee, that where they are, and Thou art, we too may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Heroic Crew Battles 22 Enemy Bombers

The destroyer U. S. S. Laffey, a featherweight with a Joe Louis wallop, came home today after taking the enemy the Kamikaze could throw at her.

She steamed into Seattle under her own power — all the way from far-off Okinawa, where, on the morning of April 16, this year, her spitting guns and durability gave the Japanese suicide squadrons great trouble in accomplishing the self-destruction phase of their mission.

But the Nagasaki pilot failed miserably in finishing their assigned task and their most business rewards were meagre. The Laffey is still afloat. The Laffey will shortly be in action again.

Today is hereby signed off that crashing plane into the research barge was in somewhat analogous to throwing snowballs on a red-hot stove.

31 of Gallant Crew Killed, Missing; Bombs Turn Ship Into Shambles

Thirty-one members of the crew were killed or missing, those of them officers. Sixty more were injured. Her gunners shot down 22 attacking Jap planes.

The wreckage of the Laffey's guns, the hull and of her officers and men, protruded the more apparent, on the appearance of each Navy barge ship.

It is estimated that about 100 tons of wreckage were swept by the Kamikaze and the remnants of a fighting ship.

The Laffey is at the Naval Station, Seattle, and under the command of Lt. Comdr. W. H. McLaughlin, a very capable man at the head of this ship, that was not of the same for getting underway, leaving Seattle at 8 a. m. Saturday, heading there via the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and will arrive tomorrow evening.

The Laffey is a 1,000-ton destroyer, built in 1918, and is the only one of her class in the Pacific.

6 A.M. FINAL

Japs Step Up Air Attacks

NAVY WASHINGTON, May 16 (AP)—As the Japanese stepped up their air attacks against the U. S. S. Laffey, the ship's crew today stepped up their own efforts to repel the enemy.

The Laffey, a 1,000-ton destroyer, was hit by a kamikaze plane today, which crashed into the ship's deck, causing considerable damage.

The ship's gunners shot down 22 attacking Japanese planes.

The Laffey is at the Naval Station, Seattle, and under the command of Lt. Comdr. W. H. McLaughlin.

Destroyer Survives 7 Nip Suicide Attacks

WASHINGTON, May 16 (AP)—The U. S. S. Laffey, a 1,000-ton destroyer, survived seven Japanese suicide attacks today.

The ship was hit by a kamikaze plane today, which crashed into the ship's deck, causing considerable damage.

The ship's gunners shot down 22 attacking Japanese planes.

The Laffey is at the Naval Station, Seattle, and under the command of Lt. Comdr. W. H. McLaughlin.

The News

THURSDAY, JULY 28, 1944

Suicide Planes 'Chill Your Blood'

"Chill your blood" was the cry of a young sailor today as he watched a Japanese suicide plane crash into the deck of the U. S. S. Laffey.

The ship's gunners shot down 22 attacking Japanese planes.

The Laffey is at the Naval Station, Seattle, and under the command of Lt. Comdr. W. H. McLaughlin.



6 SUICIDE PLANES STRIKE DESTROYER

FIGURE 42: The indestructible USS Laffey



The indestructible USS Laffey—PAGE 43



Okinawa Truth Seen Slowly Coming Out
 By David Friedman
 The Okinawa campaign has been a long and costly one for the United States. It has been a campaign of attrition, and the truth about it is slowly coming out. The Japanese have been accused of many crimes, and the American forces have been accused of many others. The truth is that the Japanese were the aggressors, and the American forces were the victims. The Japanese were the ones who started the war, and they were the ones who attacked the American forces. The American forces were the ones who fought back, and they were the ones who won the war. The truth is that the Japanese were the aggressors, and the American forces were the victims. The Japanese were the ones who started the war, and they were the ones who attacked the American forces. The American forces were the ones who fought back, and they were the ones who won the war.

Some Laffey Weapons a Major Force in Fight
 The Laffey gun, a 4.7-inch caliber anti-aircraft gun, was a major force in the fight against the Japanese. It was used to great effect in the Okinawa campaign, and it was one of the most important weapons in the American arsenal. The Laffey gun was used to shoot down Japanese aircraft, and it was also used to attack Japanese ground forces. The Laffey gun was a versatile weapon, and it was one of the most effective weapons in the American arsenal.

U.S. Air Force Staff
 The U.S. Air Force staff was one of the most important parts of the American military. It was responsible for planning and coordinating the air operations of the United States. The U.S. Air Force staff was one of the most important parts of the American military, and it was responsible for planning and coordinating the air operations of the United States.





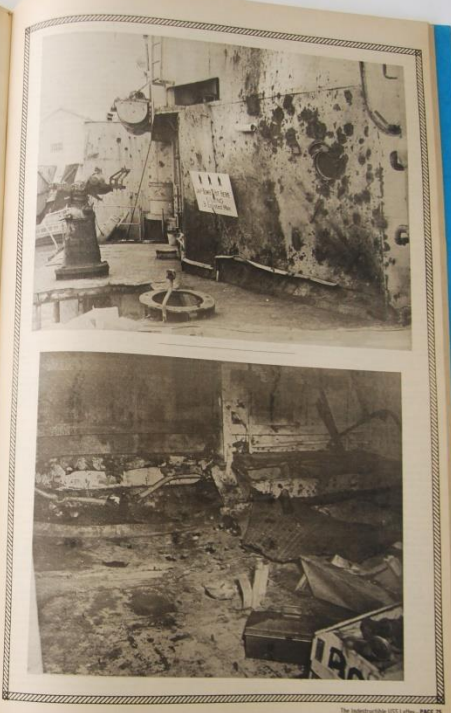
Okinawa Truth Seen Slowly Coming Out
By David Zimmerman
The Okinawa campaign, which has been going on for more than a year, is slowly revealing the truth about the Japanese military and the Japanese people. The Japanese military is not the invincible force that it was once thought to be. The Japanese people are not the fanatical and unyielding that they were once thought to be. The Japanese military is a collection of poorly trained and equipped soldiers. The Japanese people are a collection of ordinary, frightened people who are being led by a few fanatics.

Japan's Navy Weakens Along With Army
The Japanese navy, which was once considered one of the most powerful in the world, is now in a state of collapse. The Japanese navy is no longer a threat to the United States. The Japanese navy is a collection of old, slow-moving ships that are being outmaneuvered by the United States Navy. The Japanese navy is a collection of ships that are being sunk by the United States Navy.

Japanese Troops Starving
The Japanese troops are starving. They are being starved by their own government. The Japanese government is not providing them with enough food. The Japanese troops are starving because they are being starved by their own government. The Japanese government is not providing them with enough food. The Japanese troops are starving because they are being starved by their own government.

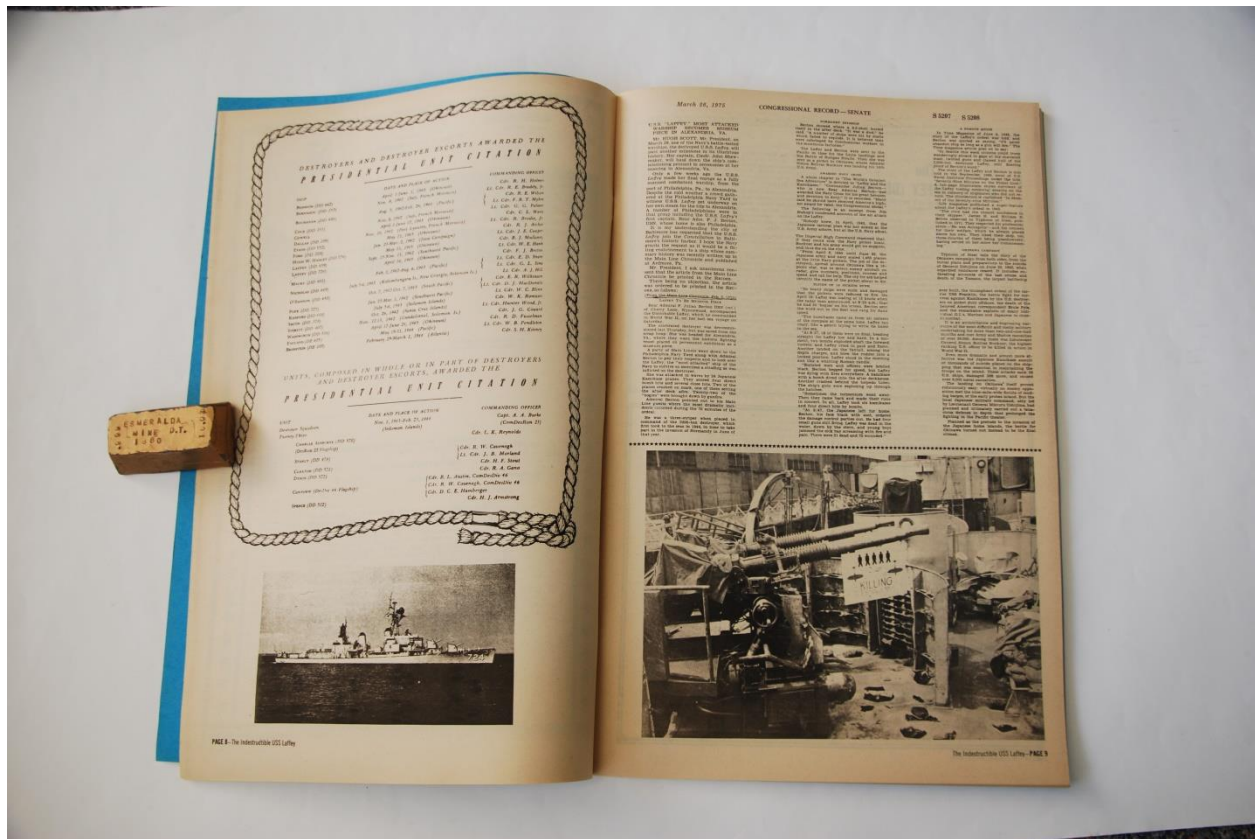
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PAGE 74 - The Internationalist (S.S. Luffey)

The Internationalist (S.S. Luffey) - PAGE 75



Slavomir "Slavy" Vodehnal

Author of The Indestructible USS Laffey

Radar Tactical Air Controller on 16 April 1945



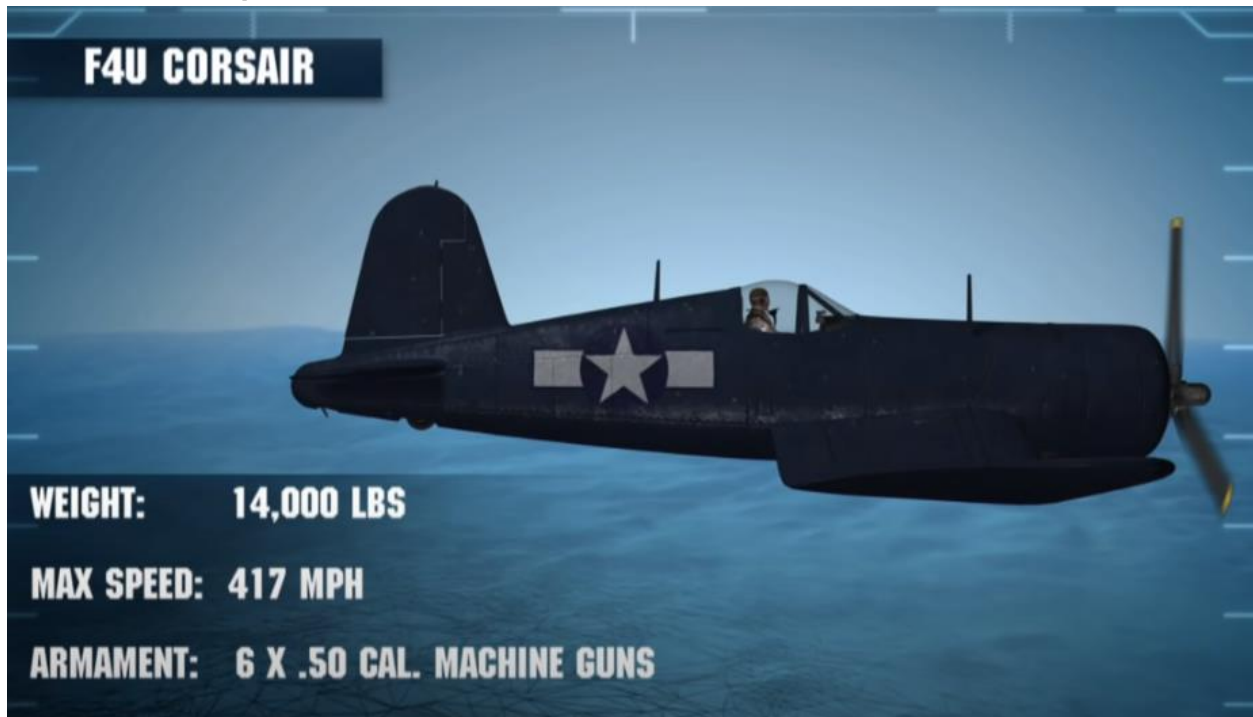
Slavomir Vodehnal
May 25, 1923 -- June 10, 2004

Radarman 1st Class Slavomir Vodehnal was part of the fighter director (FIDO) team that we picked up from the USS Cassin Young on April 14 in Kerama Retto. He performed a vital function during the Japanese attack on 16 April 1945 communicating with fighter planes.



LTJG J. Vance Porlier was also part of the fighter (FIDO) team.

YouTube: Dogfights: Japanese Kamikaze Attacks in WWII (S2, E1) | Full Episode | History <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7qlyU6wR08>



Fighter Aircraft Support 16 April 1945

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Laffey_\(DD-724\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Laffey_(DD-724))

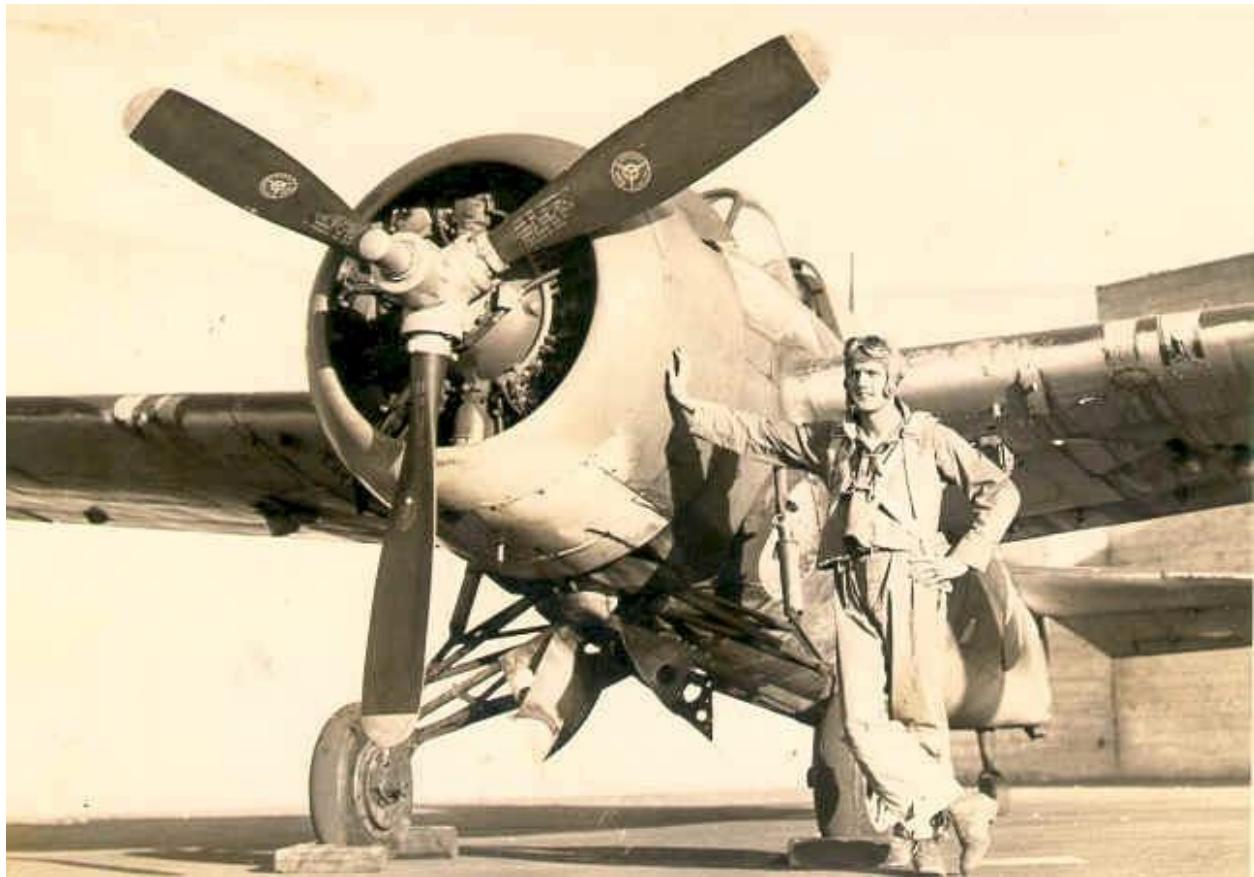
“Meanwhile, four [FM-2 Wildcats](#) took off from the escort carrier [Shamrock Bay](#), attempting to intercept *kamikazes* attacking *Laffey*. One of the Wildcat pilots, Carl Rieman, made a dive into the *kamikaze* formation and targeted a D3A. His wingman took out that dive bomber while Rieman lined up behind another D3A, opened fire, and destroyed the enemy aircraft. Ten seconds later, Rieman pursued a [Nakajima B5N](#) torpedo plane, fired, and killed the Japanese pilot. Only five seconds later, Rieman lined up behind another B5N and expended the last of his ammunition. As Rieman returned to his carrier, he made diving passes at *kamikazes*, forcing some of them to break off their attacks. The other three Wildcats destroyed a few aircraft and then interfered with the enemy's attack runs after they exhausted their ammunition until forced to return to *Shamrock Bay* when their fuel ran too low to stay. Later on, a group

of 12 American [Vought F4U Corsair](#) fighters of the United States Marine Corps intercepted the *kamikazes*. Their actions were of significant help for the *Laffey*.

Another D3A approached the disabled *Laffey* from port. A Corsair pursued the *kamikaze* and destroyed it after forcing it to overshoot the ship. The Corsair lined up behind a [Ki-43 "Oscar"](#) making a strafing approach on *Laffey* from starboard. One of *Laffey's* gunners hit the Oscar, causing it to crash into the ship's mast and fall into the water. The pursuing Corsair also crashed into the ship's radar antenna and fell into the water, but the pilot was later rescued by *LCS-51*."

An Oral History by Carl Rieman Fighter Pilot 16 April 1945

<https://www.laffey.org/VC%2094/rieman.htm>



"The next best day for me was again when I was on Target CAP. I received a vector to intercept a raid coming in over a picket ship (destroyer USS *Laffey*) northwest of Okinawa. My 6th Division this time was Collier, Ryan a new replacement - Dean and myself.

In the raid, there were about forty planes...Vals, Kates, Zeros and I don't know what else, but there was a bunch. I made a run on a Val and overran him and Dick came right in behind me and nailed him. I pulled off and ran smack into another Val and one burst and he blew all to pieces. There were so many enemy aircraft that as a Division, we got separated. I came across a Kate, gave him a full long burst and he rolled over and went straight into the water.

All this time, the Destroyer Laffey was really taking a beating. We were the first division to intercept and we did scatter them. About twenty minutes later, F6F's and F4U's came from all over and they were knocking planes down faster than you could count.

I took another Kate under fire, running out of ammo, but not before I killed his engine. I was following him down to watch him hit the water, and while still at about 500 feet, a F4U came in on a side run and blew him up right in front of me. I should have, but I did not claim the kill.

I climbed up looking for the guys and found Dick Collier with a blown gas tank dangling under his wing. We decided to land at Naha, so I followed him in and we pulled off the blown tank. We then took off and returned to the ship. "

Navy Pilots who protected the USS Laffey on 16 April 1945
<https://www.laffey.org/VC%2094/vc94.htm>

Carl J. Rieman

Richard Collier

Jocko Dean

Johnny Hocza