



LAFFEY NEWS

Dedicated to those who served in battle and those who pre-served in peace.



USS LAFFEY, DD724 & DD459
THE SHIP THAT WOULD NOT DIE

*"I'll never abandon ship as long as a gun will fire"
—F. Julian Becton, CO*

July August September 2019

USS Laffey Association • www.laffey.org

President's Message

I would like to take this time to hope that everyone had an uneventful relaxing summer and that none of you were affected by the sporadic and radical storms that have been experienced throughout our nation.



Chris Kirhagis

The "D" Day Flag which was flown on the Laffey on June 6, 1944, and donated some time ago by our (late) Ari Phoutrides has finally been restored. With donations from the USS Laffey Association and various other entities, the flag was taken to Washington, D.C. for a total restoration. There was an unveiling ceremony for this flag this past June commemorating "D" Day. The unveiling was done by member Commander Richard Felsing (ret.) and Mac Burdett. The flag has been securely encased and is on display in the theater of the ship.

At the Charleston, SC reunion in 2018, member Ken Workley introduced



the possibility of having a plaque made up to be mounted on a wall at the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas. The plaque was delivered and hung in the museum in September 2019.

I hope at least some Laffey Association member can be present for a possible future dedication ceremony.

Workley, who spearheaded the project and/or Meyer might both be representing the Laffey for this occasion.

The smaller plaque was unanimously voted upon by the attending members at the General Meeting. In the interim, associ-

ation member Captain Charles Meyer visited the museum and was able to negotiate a price for a larger plaque at very little more than the one we were paying for. About a year ago I had a plaque made to present to Bob Langevin thanking him for his unselfish dedication, volunteerism, donations, as well as for the numerous positions he has held in this association. I was hoping to present the plaque to Bob at the April 2019 work party, however, due to personal reasons, he was unable to attend. I therefore, sent the plaque to his brother John who conducted the presentation on my behalf. Thank You John, and Bob, I can't speak for all of us, but I sure to miss you and I'm sure so do the rest of us.

I would like to send KUDO's to Richard Felsing for numerous attendances representing the Laffey. Previously mentioned was one of them, followed by his giving a tour as well as a check on the wellbeing of a newly promoted group of chiefs who stayed overnight stay onboard our ship. I understand they even performed a "man overboard" drill (???) I also understand that there is another destroyer association



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group that Richard will host. So does everyone think I should anoint Richard as Ambassador of the Laffey?

Challenge coins are still be sold at an even pace. I am starting to run low, especially on the silver ones. I may be ordering more in the near future.

Donations seem to have increased, so if you know anyone who would like to donate money, their time, or material things that you think we may need, please do not hesitate to ask. Especially money, as all of donations help to offset all the costs we incur throughout the year. I was picked, and entrusted with the future of this organization by a strong man, and never do I want to let him or the rest of you down.

Respectfully,
Chris Kirhagis

For inputs to the USS Laffey Website www.laffey.org, email photos and text to Richard Felsing webmaster@laffey.org 843-367-2208.

Shipmates: "If anyone knows of shipmate DK1 John Edward Dave, Jr. who served aboard the Laffey in 1962, please let me know if you have any information on him. Thanks.
Chris Kirhagis,
president@laffey.org
410-633-9936.

Association Announcements

2019 Key Dates

2-9 November Fall Work Party.

Contact Mike Pereira
antiredsox@yahoo.com
401-787-3014 for info.

11 November Veterans Day 2019. As a federal holiday Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum typically provides free admission for veterans. There are usually special exhibits and a large number of visitors aboard Laffey.

Category 2 Hurricane Dorian passed close to USS Laffey on September fifth without any reported damage. Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum



Heavy seas, like the old days on the Laffey

was closed for storm preparations and cleanup for several days.

With the hurricanes high winds, all of us who served aboard Laffey recall putting out to sea to ride out a typhoon, hurricane or similar storm. We remember "batten down all hatches", "secure all loose gear so no missile hazards", "stand by for foul weather", etc. On very rare occasions after a storm, the captain would authorize the hospital corpsman to issue "medicinal alcohol mini-bottles" to selected crew members who got drenched and soaked by the storm. As an active ship in the US Navy, USS Laffey sortied with other ships to ride out a major storm.



Smithsonian Channel Combat Ships

will feature USS Laffey in a planned upcoming episode.

See <https://www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/combat-ships/1004831>.

A film crew from the Smithsonian Channel interviewed Richard Felsing who served aboard the Laffey from 1968–1970.

The interviewer was interested in the WWII history of the Laffey at Battle of Normandy and the



Battle of Okinawa and "life on Laffey". Richard spoke of the ship crew's heroism, valor, dedi-

cation, determination, and “can do spirit” He spoke of the intense grief, sadness, and loss for the 32 men who lost their lives and the 71 wounded men. He told how the Laffey’s history helped the ship’s crew to achieve a high level of excellence and combat readiness in 30 years of service for the Navy. He spoke of the dedicated men and women of the USS Laffey Association who preserve the ship, the memories and the traditions of the Laffey as a museum ship at the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum.

Naval Weapons Station Chief Petty Officers held their Chief’s Initiation

aboard USS Laffey on 23-24 August. The event was organized through the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum.



Above: Bobbie Kotlowski and his assistant from Patriots Point. Bill O’Brien; Patriots Point Volunteer. Leonard Singleton, and Richard Felsing from the USS Laffey Association. We met and greeted the first group of chiefs. They were very appreciative to be able to conduct their initiation aboard Laffey. About 20 chiefs bunked in

Forward Berthing below Chief’s Quarters and about 20 Chief Petty Officer selects chiefs slept in sleeping bags in other parts of the ship. They had a pizza dinner on the pier. Their initiation included a field day on the ship and shipboard drills. They left the ship before 5:00 am Saturday for PT (Physical Training) at 5:30 am at the Naval Weapons Station. We congratulate the CPO Selects on their advancement to Chief Petty Officer. This is an important milestone achievement in one’s Navy career. All should be proud of this achievement. We congratulate all current and past serving CPOs for their extraordinary service in the Navy.

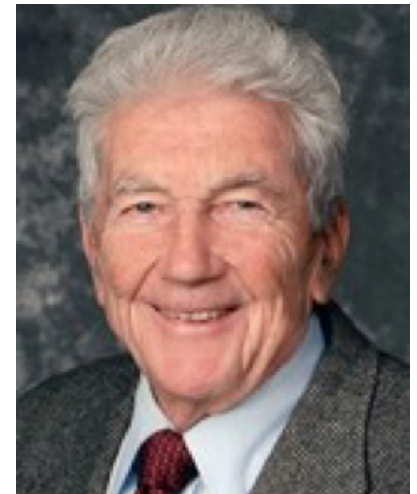
USS Willard Keith (DD-775) Reunion 13-16 October in Charleston, SC with a ship visit aboard Laffey. Both Laffey and Willard Keith are Allen M. Sumner-class destroyers. Per Wikipedia the USS Willard Keith participated in the Okinawa campaign beginning on 29 May 1945 after the attack on the Laffey on 16 April. The USS Willard Keith destroyed two Japanese planes during her tour. We welcome reunion attendees to visit the Laffey.

At the Association Work Party... three of the senior 85 year old members shared some stories of their days aboard ship during and after the Korean War. USS Laffey was frequently subjected to hostile fire in Wonsan Harbor. USS Laffey conducted a series of daring counterbattery duels

with the enemy. USS Laffey also screened the carriers Antietam and Valley Forge.



Korean War shipmates Homer Doster, Rod Morgan, John Miller



Chief Robert L. Logsdon, Jr. (1917-2018) passed away on Sept. 30, 2018. Bob was a patriot. He served in World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War. He was a great member of the association. He contributed thousands of photos from 1950s. His memory, photos, and contributions live on the USS Laffey Association [website www.laffey.org](http://www.laffey.org). On the Association page, click on Taps and on 100th Birthday Celebration. At the 2018 reunion in Mt. Pleasant, SC, during the banquet, Happy birthday for Bob was sung by all and Bob’s wife Donnis was afforded the opportunity of hearing our singing via cell phone.

USS Laffey DD724
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Donations

(Received since previous *News*,
compiled by Treasurer
George Kessler)

General Donations:

Jerry & Vibe Weber.....	\$1,000
Joseph Morales.....	\$50
Robert Johnson.....	\$225
Lawrence Sleurs	\$75
Harold Borton.....	\$200
Ed Pochatek	\$50
Norman Ward Sr	\$50
Lynwood Rankin	\$75
Fred Nardei	\$75
Charlie Meyer.....	\$200
Robert Burnett.....	\$50
Carol Lowe.....	\$25
Paul Anderson.....	\$10
Robert Tolle	\$25
Robert Baker	\$25

Work Party Donations:

James Hart.....	\$100
Harry Brooks	\$25
Oliver Long.....	\$75

Memorial Donations:

In Memory of Silver Star and Plank Owner Captain Paul B. Smith: James E. Smith Sr.	\$200
In Memory of James Hatch: Janet Hatch.....	\$200

Vice President Note

To all who are planning to
come to the November 2-9
work party please let me
know by calling Mike Pereira
at 401-787-3014 or email me
at antiredsox@yahoo.com.

The April-June 2019 *Laffey News*
is available online. Both the *Laf-
fey News* and the current roster
were emailed to all members.
Contact Membership Chairman
Kathy Pereira membership@laffey.org
(401)787-3014 if you did
not receive these emails.

Reminder: Annual dues need to
be paid on the first of each year
to keep the USS Laffey Associa-
tion functioning. Mail your check
to Kathy Pereira 92 Elmdale
Avenue, Warwick, RI 02889.
Telephone 401-787-3014 email
membership@laffey.org. Annual
members (renews every January
1st regardless of when you join):
\$25/year. Life membership (one-
time payment): 55 years old and
younger \$375; 56 to 60 \$250; 61
to 64 \$225; 65 and older \$125.