



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*

October, November, December 2021

USS Laffey Association www.laffey.org

President's Message



Chris Kirhagis

Hello everyone!!

I just need to know one thing, and that is where in the heck did 2021 go?? It seems like it came and went at a blink of an eye, but I can say that most of 2021's memorable moments in my mind are the vast improvements we are making on the Laffey.

The past November work party produced approximately twenty-six (26) volunteers. I think that is one of the highest numbers we've had in a November work party. There was a lot that was accomplished, too many to describe in my message but evident by what Richard Felsing has placed on the website. I will point out a couple of things such as the Stoners who replaced a lot of rusted metal that they fabricated, welded, and coated. Thanks much, gentlemen. Then we had

little Mikey and Jimmy Bossard coordinate the deck preparation of the fantail and the torpedo deck covered with the new primer coat which was supplied by Sherwin-Williams.

Arlene McCullough and Tracy Sowers brought their large amounts of assorted sweets that were well appreciated for our taste buds but not our waistlines 😊 then we have out VP Mike Pereira who fed us with fine cuisine three times a day for all of us. That in itself is a task considering the equipment and preparation area we have to deal with, thanks Mike!! Everyone else know what they did and for that we thank you.

There will be some changes in the Charleston reunion in October 22' that Leigh Ann will elaborate on. These changes are based on input she has received during the Gettysburg and since from attendees.

As I previously mentioned about Sherwin-Williams products, I have since contacted Mr. Vollman in reference to the material required to complete the fantail project in April and I am awaiting his response.

Before I forget, I also want to thank Jimmy Bossard for his donation of a boo boo bag (medical kit) that was desperately needed. Just ask Jimmy of the condition of the previous one. Thanks Jimmy!!

Our April 22' work party will have a strange twist to our dates, and they will be from Tuesday April 5, 2022, through Tuesday April 12, 2022. This is due to the fact that our most notable recognition day of April 16, 1945, falls on a Saturday where Good Friday is the day before and Easter Sunday is the day after. I want everyone to make it home safely and in time for this religious holiday.

This quarter as well as all year long I would like to thank everyone for their generous donations. Our accumulative donations have been astonishing. One in particular was a donation from Ken McCullough's mom who donated \$500.00 posthumously. When Ken approached me at the last work party, he advised me that his mom's request after her estate was settled that she wanted to donate this amount as she loved the Laffey just as much as her son.

We have had some material, parts expenditures, as well as the need to purchase a new refrigerator. In the later part of November, I had completed a grant proposal for the Patriots Point Foundation (PPF). I am currently waiting for their decision on this matter. We did obtain approval from PPF for expenditures at the April 21' work party.

Our February work party will be held from February 12 – 19,

Vice President report

November work party was once again a success as we got more done than we thought we could. What a great crew we have. Bravo Zulu everyone. It is great to see that we have sons, grandchildren, wives, daughters, nephews and other family members and friends of former Laffey crew members putting in

2022. This was done to accommodate several of the association members that wish to be there but have medical procedures in conflict for an earlier date. Please inform me if you are able to make this mini-work party. There is still plenty to do.

In closing, by the time you all receive this newsletter, your holiday festivities will most likely be over. I would like to thank everyone for their support and

hours of hard work in helping in any way to make our work parties successful. I cannot say thank you enough to them.

Now for April our main focus is to complete the fantail. Once that is done, we will not have to do it again for many years because of the new material that we are going to put down. It is not cheap so I hope Sherwin Williams can

know that we have one common goal for the Laffey. I hope you all enjoyed your festivities and may 2022's new year find all of you healthy, happy, and prosperous.

Respectfully,

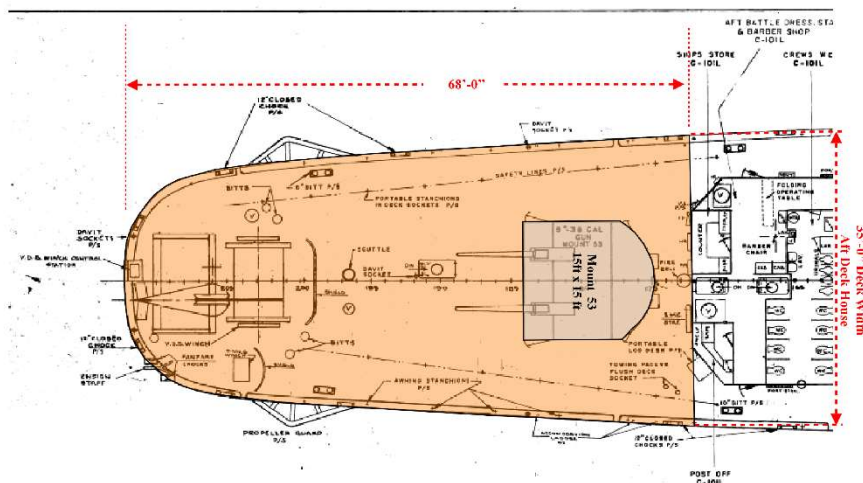
Chris Kirhagis, President
 USS Laffey Association
 president@laffey.org
 410-633-9936

help us with the cost. I am going to post the project estimate for all to see. So if you are coming to the April work party let Chris or I know.

Thank you for the support.

Mike Pereira
 Laffey Association, Vice President

USS LAFFEY DD-724



Estimated Area of Deck Surface
 2,350 Sq Ft

By: David Coates - Maint Mgr

FANTAIL PRESERVATION PROJECT

Paint & Non-Skid System Product	Paint & Non-Skid System Particulars	Paint & Non-Skid System Cost*
Primer: Seaguard 5000 Universal Primer	Primer: 195 Sq Ft at 5 mils total thickness (total) p/gal = 15 gal	Primer: Cost p/gal: \$ 28.80 Total: \$ 397.50
Epoxy Filler (for repairs): Steel Seam FT-910	Filler: Apply 5 mils - 1/2". Estimate required 10 gallons = 05 kits	Filler: Cost p/gal: \$ 74.00 Total: \$ 740.00
Non-Skid Coating: American Safety Ms-375G	Non-skid: Apply by rolling - Estimate 35 sq ft p/gal = 13 kits	Non-skid: Cost p/gal: \$ 57.00 Total: \$3705.00
Top Coat: Sherloxane 800	Top Coat: Sherloxane 800 - Est 200 sq ft p/gal = 12 gal	Top Coat: Cost p/gal: \$85.00 Total: \$1020.00
Solvent / Thinner MEK reducer / cleaner	MEK reducer / solvent - Estimated thinning / cleanup = 10 gal	MEK: Cost p/gal: \$23.00 Total: \$ 230.00
Misc consumables - roller/brushes/grind pads	Consumables are considered bulk and estimated cost % = 05 %	Consumables Cost x 05% Total: \$ 305.00
		Grand Total Material: \$6400.00

*Based on current product pricing - 5% markup and 9% - tax included

Upcoming Association Events

12 – 19 February 2022 Mini-Work Party

Our February work party will be February 12-19. This was done to accommodate several of the association members that wish to be there but have medical procedures in conflict for an earlier date. Please inform Chris if you are able to make this mini-work party. Email: president@laffey.org phone: 410-633-9936

Current News

6 - 13 November Fall 2021 Workparty Completed – Many thanks to all participants and all donors at this work party. Well Done. We accomplished a great deal of work maintaining the best museum ship in the US Navy. Selected photos below. For additional photos see <https://photos.app.goo.gl/hKBS1hfUgRnuid3K9>.



On Top of Gun Mount: Jim Bossard and Mike Pereira Jr

Left to Right Standing: Ken McCullough, Don Albright, Steve Papp, Gary Barylski, Sonny Walker, Bill Kunnman, Dave Bossard, John Nettles, John Hudak, Rachael Kendrick, Harry Stoner, Jim Sehy, Steve Doyle, Max Saus, Mike Pereira

Kneeling: Frank Stoner, Rich McKinney, Chris Kirhagis, Steve Bade, Buck Stoner, Josh Aldridge

Not Shown: Mary Bossard, Arlene McCullough, Pete Liller, Ken Workely



Left Side from Front: John Hudak, Ken McCullough, Arlene McCullough, Buck Stoner, Harry Stoner, Steve Doyle **Right Side from Back:** Jim Bossard, Rachel Kendrick, Chris Kirhagis, Tacy Sowers, Mary Bossard, Dave Bossard



Ken McCullough, Bill Kunnman, Jim Sehy. Sonny Walker telling a tall sea story that Arlene McCullough isn't buying.



Chris Kirhagis, Tracy Sowers, Rachel Kendrick, Jim Bossard, Ken and Arlene McCullough, John Hudak



Ken McCullough keeps a "ship shape" tool shop.



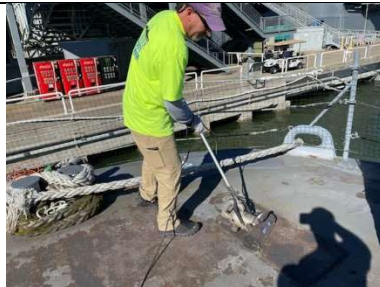
Fantail Crew: Jimmy Bossard, Mike Periera, Jr, Jim Sehy, Gary Barylski, Don Albright, Ken Workely, Steve Papp, Bill Kunnman, and many others.



Pete Liller, Mike Pereira Jr, Steve Papp, Ken Workely, Don Albright



Steve Papp



Bill Kunnman (Sonny Walker Son in Law) running the grinder.



Three Amigos Chris Kirhagis, Sonny Walker, Gary Barylski



Chief Leonard Singleton Patriots Point Volunteer leads tours of the Laffey 2-3 days a week. Thanks so much Chief Singleton for your service every week on the USS Laffey.



Harry Stoner and Buck Stoner metal fabrication for port side repair.



Harry Stoner Welding



Chris Kirhagis with former USS Ault crewmember. Chris briefly served aboard USS Ault an Allen M. Sumner-class destroyer like USS Laffey after boot camp



Medical Bag/Kit Donation from Jim Bossard Thanks Jim for the Medical Bag/Kit Donation for all of us ole timers that get boo boo's.

2021 USS Laffey Association Fall Reunion Photos

2021 USS Laffey Reunion October 3rd-7th was a great success in Gettysburg, PA.

We greatly appreciate Reunion Coordinator Leigh Ann Zerden's excellent work and coordination to make the reunion a great success for over 60 attendees. We appreciate Association Photographer Mike Coleman for taking photos of this event.





Bill & Marianne Furman with Daughter Leigh-Ann Zerden



Aggie and Mike Coleman

Congratulations to Ken Workley on winning the Bartlett Laffey Doll who will travel with him this year. Congratulations to Kathy Pereira on winning the Raffle of the framed Laffey picture donated by Aggie and Mike Coleman.

	
Ken Workley	Kathy Pereira

Reunion Photos from Mike Coleman

Meet & Greet <https://photos.app.goo.gl/mHQQLYXyVkhmkh1h6>

Tours <https://photos.app.goo.gl/wrV5vPF5op8YQhTq6>

Memorial Service <https://photos.app.goo.gl/wadFRVcVQqdh8T637>

Farewell Dinner
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/fCc2QnZQuKXh64oj9>

Portaits <https://photos.app.goo.gl/CQ15QVo6GukHCVeS8>

Message from Leigh Ann Zerden, Reunion Coordinator

Reunion 2022 will be held in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina from October 2nd through the 6th. I am busy making all the arrangements for next year reunion but have not booked anything yet. I will be sending updates to our website and our Facebook page as soon as I have more information. I will have all information and the registration form in our April Newsletter. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to call Leigh Ann at 302-249-5591. The 2023 Fall Reunion will be in Atlantic City, NJ.

Congratulations to Hilary Becton Wagner for Over 10 Years as Association Secretary

Well done Hilary for your service as the USS Laffey



Association Secretary for over 10 years. We appreciate how you assisted the previous Secretary Julie Becton. You were there at the first USS Laffey Association Reunion in 1966. Your father Admiral Julian Becton got us aboard the USS Laffey at the Navy Base in Norfolk, VA with so many World War II shipmates. You have always been a great supporter of the USS Laffey through its history of active service, reserve service, decommissioning, and museum ship at Patriots Point Naval and

Maritime Museum. We appreciate your attending so many USS Laffey Association reunions since 1966. Well Done Hilary. Thanks for a job well done.

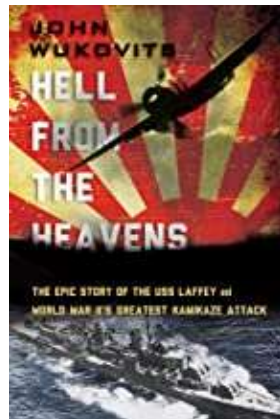
Congratulations to New Association Secretary Jill Michel

At the Annual Association Meeting on 6 October 2021 in Gettysburg, PA, Jill Michel was voted in as the new Association Secretary. Jill has



been very active in USS Laffey events for nearly 20 years at reunions, work parties, ceremonies, etc. For approximately 10 years, she was the Association Reunion Coordinator. These reunions were filled with fun games and events that were enjoyed by all. Jill's father was Machinist Mate 1st Class John Michel who was a USS Laffey plankowner and survivor of the April 16, 1945 attack. John received a Meritorious Mast and Commendation Letter for valorous conduct aboard the USS Laffey during the Battle of Okinawa. With a hammer and chisel he made a hole in the After Engine Room bulkhead, pushed a hose into the After Diesel Generator Room, and saved the lives to two trapped shipmates. Jill, we love your recollection of meeting one of these two men at an association event.

Laffey Movie Update Destroyer: Hell from the Heavens

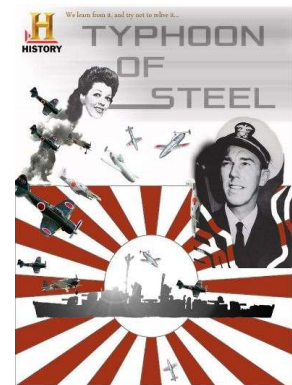


There are two potential Laffey movies. The first is Destroyer: Hell from the Heavens. The second is Typhoon of Steel (below).

Per <https://www.comingsoon.net/movie/129351-destroyer-hell-from-the-heavens> , "The film will be based on the John Wukovits book titled "Hell From the Heavens: The Epic Story of the USS Laffey and World War II's Greatest Kamikaze Attack". In 2017 Mel Gibson and Rosilyn Ross visited the Laffey and met with Chris Kirhagis and Sonny Walker. No new info has been received on this movie. We will publish movie news when available.

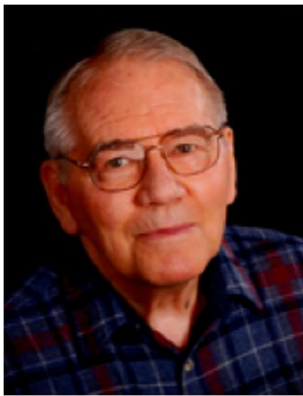
Laffey Movie Update Typhoon of Steel.

Julian Winston (relative of Admiral Becton's wife Elizabeth Winston Becton) sent this internet link to Chris Kirhagis



<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt9020650/>

"The Story of Navy Commander Frederick J. Becton, of the WWII Destroyer Laffey, the Resilient Ship and Brave Crew that Survived the Greatest Kamikaze Attack of the conflict at Okinawa." No new info has been received on this movie. We will publish movie news when available.



In memory John William Conard (August 27, 1930 - December 17, 2021) Per Sonny Walker "We think he was a BM on board during Korean War. I only met him at one reunion years ago." He was member of the USS Laffey Association. His residence

was Alexandria, MN. See

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/23418045/john-william-conard> and www.laffey.org/Shipmates/TapsToHonorFallenShipmates.pdf

Asbestos Exposure on US Navy Ships

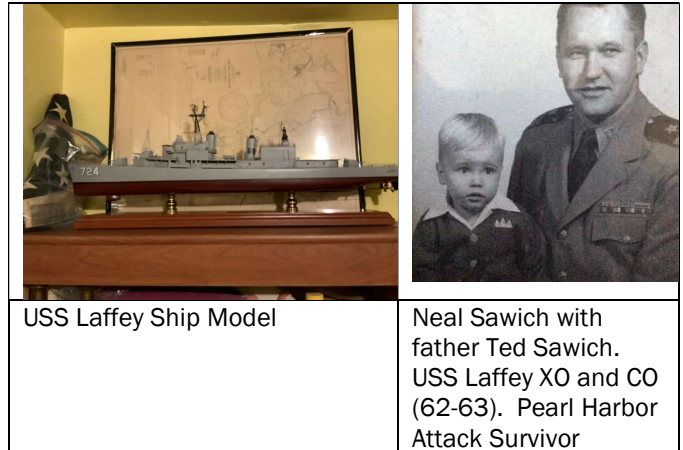


<https://www.asbestos.com>

Received from The Mesothelioma Center at Asbestos.com "Navy veterans were at risk of asbestos exposure and developing mesothelioma, a rare cancer that can take 20-50 years to develop. Our website features extensive information on asbestos and we work 1-on-1 with individuals to help them find local doctors, treatment centers and support groups all at no cost. We even have a page where one can search any Navy ship to see if it contained asbestos <https://www.asbestos.com/navy/ships/>. Our site helps inform Navy veterans that visit your site of the dangers of asbestos and the steps involved if affected. Please take a look at some of the great information we have at <https://www.asbestos.com/navy/> "

Call (833) 918-2801 for more information about mesothelioma of the lungs and steps to initiate a VA claim.

From Neal Sawick Winner of the USS Laffey Model Raffle on his Facebook Page



"Found the perfect place to put the model of the Laffey. On top my bookcase. The display case will be coming soon. The map behind the Laffey is a map of Pearl Harbor, the day of the attack. My father used this when he did lectures at area high schools in Northern Virginia. The flag in front of the ship, per my father, flew on the Randolph the day of Glenn's historic flight in 1962. I have no proof, just my father's word. It wasn't long after that that my father came aboard the Laffey as the CO." See 1954 USS Laffey World Cruise <https://www.laffey.org/Cruises/1954%20World%20Cruise/1954wc1.htm>

Laffey Fantail Repairs

Extensive Laffey fantail repairs completed. Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum workers have removed 2 reels on each side of the hatch leading to After Berthing, the large VDS (Variable Depth Sonar) reel, 2 large mooring bollards and a large air vent. These repairs improve the water tight integrity and



provide more open space on the fantail for events and ceremonies.

Annual Dues Reminder from Membership

Chairperson Kathy Pereira. 2022 Annual Dues are due 1/1/2022. Mail your check made out to the USS Laffey Association to: Kathy Pereira (Membership Chairman) 92 Elmdale Avenue, Warwick, RI 02889. Annual members renew every January at \$25/year. Lifetime Membership, which is a one-time payment, is as follows: 55 years old and younger \$375; 56 - 60 \$250; 61 - 64 \$225; and 65 years and older \$125. If you are unsure as to your status or need to update our records if you have moved or changed your phone number or Email address, contact Kathy Pereira at 401-481-1954.

or email membership@laffey.org. You may also pay using PayPal. Click on the PayPal icon on the USS Laffey home page www.laffey.org. Be sure to include your name and the words "Annual Dues".

Paper Laffey News US Postal Service

(USPS). Currently we are publishing the Laffey News on the website www.laffey.org. Tap on Laffey News at the bottom of the page. We are also emailing the Laffey News pdf file to all members with an email address, and USPS mailing paper copies to all who have requested the paper Laffey News. Please contact the Membership Chairperson Kathy Pereira 401-481-1954 membership@laffey.org to be **added to the USPS mail list** if you would like.

Donations Update from Treasurer George Kessler.

All donations are greatly appreciated. Anyone wishing to make a donation, should make the check payable to the USS Laffey Association and mail to

George Kessler
9686 Baughman Rd
Harrison, Ohio 45030

You may also make a donation on PayPal. On the Laffey homepage www.laffey.org, tap on the PayPal icon at the bottom of the page. Enter the donation amount and comments, e.g. In Memory of.....

Work Party Donations:

Gary Kozlowski -----\$100.00
James Sehy -----\$25.00

Memorial Donations:

In memory of Glenn Setmire
Sharon Setmire (daughter) -----\$50.00
In honor of Jean & Paul B. Smith
James & Nina Smith -----\$150.00
In memory of and honor of Paul Brides
Smith Sr. & Mrs. Jean Sotore Smith
Julia Comer -----\$200.00
In memory of deceased members of the
USS Harold J. Ellison DD-864 Family
USS Harold J. Ellison DD-864 Assoc --\$ 100.00
In memory of Karl Bussert
Mark Kersey (grandson) -----\$500.00
In memory of Cdr. Theodore Sawick XO
of USS Laffey in the 50's / CO of USS
Laffey 1962-1963
Neal Sawick (son) -----\$50.00

General Donations:

Mike Coleman -----\$90.00
Cindy Romberger -----\$100.00
Charles Meyer-----\$100.00
Gary & Pam Barylski -----\$100.00
Chris Kirhagis -----\$100.00
Melissa Blockhus -----\$2,000.00
Estate of Helen McCullough -----\$500.00

USS Laffey Website www.laffey.org Send inputs to Richard Felsing webmaster@laffey.org 843-367-2208.

Laffey News Send inputs or comments to Pam Barylski Newsletter Editor newsletter@laffey.org

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USS Laffey 2021 Reunion