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The Compton at war



Commissioned November 4 1944  
Decommissioned—September 27 1972

USS Laffey (DD-724) By Joe Napoli

The USS Laffey is on display at Patriot’s Point Just outside of Charleston, SC. On our last visit to Charleston, during our 2009 reunion, we visited Patriot’s Point and had the opportunity to go aboard the USS Yorktown, the submarine USS Clamagore and a Coast Guard Cutter. Unfortunately, the USS Laffey was in a state of disrepair at the time and shipboard tours were not available.

The USS Laffey is a Sumner class destroyer, as was the Compton, and served during WW2. It is known as “The ship that would not die” after surviving an attack by 22 Japanese bombers and kamikaze aircraft.

Repairs, restoration and improvements were made to the ship since our last visit and she is now open for visitors. The Combat Information Center (CIC), the radar room, was improved and now has interactive programs that simulate sight and sounds of activities that take place in CIC.

As a former Radarman, I am looking forward to checking out the CIC. I am not sure what era the electronic equipment on display is from is from but I am sure it will bring back memories. I am also curious about the engine room. I never ventured below decks to the engine room areas on the Compton. I remember heads of snipes popping up from small hatches on the deck from time to time. They would take a brief look around, take a breath of fresh air, then disappear.

Our snipes will be in their glory visiting the Laffey. The engine room areas have a project entitled “Bringing the engine room back to life” The new exhibit allows visitors to climb down to the engine room passing an emergency diesel generator that comes to life with the sound of the unit starting. Visitors are then surrounded by sights and sounds simulating the ship being underway.

In researching our reunion I learned that Charleston is now a very popular place for Navy reunions, as well as for general tourism, now that the Laffey is back in business.

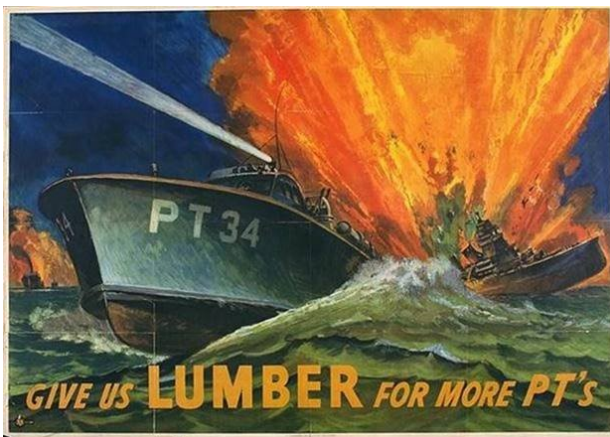
Note: see page #2—pictures of the actual battle damage the Laffey suffered...  
See pages 3 - 5 and 7 for reunion information

The “Compton Newsletter” is available in color—on our below WEB site  
Webmaster, Phil Prekel has posted 34 past newsletters from February 2009  
to the present on our below listed Internet Website...

The Ship "That would not sink" ...



USS Laffey DD724—after Kamikaze attack...



These pictures may be from a bygone time but, we as loyal Americans must remember those battles and sacrifices it took to win that terrible war and not to allow those causes to repeat.

# Charleston Reunion 2018

Here we go again! Another reunion is in the works. We are all set for our next reunion in Charleston, South Carolina. The hotel that we selected is the **Crowne Plaza Charleston Airport**, a short distance from the airport and right next to the Charleston Tanger outlet mall. The hotel meets all our needs and can host a reunion of our size. The Compton room rate is **\$129** a night, breakfast included, plus tax. The phone number for reservations is **1-866-358-6255**.

Please make your hotel reservations early. You can always cancel 24 hours in advance at no cost. We expect a nice turnout at this reunion so we want everyone to be able to get a room. Early reservations also allow us to better plan the banquet and tour. The reservation cutoff date is **March 22, 2018**, after that we cannot guarantee that you will get your rooms.

The dates of the reunion are **Monday April 23, Tuesday April 24 and Wednesday April 25**. We booked mid-week dates to get a reduction in room rates. Of course, the reunion rates are in effect three days prior and post event for those who wish to stay longer. Free airport shuttle transportation is provided.

A reunion agenda and menu's will be published in a newsletter. The basic format will be followed; Monday check in, Tuesday group tour and Wednesday meetings and banquet.

Our group tour will leave the hotel at 9:00am and start with a leisurely driving tour of the Charleston area in coach busses. Then we will stop for lunch at the **Harbor Breeze restaurant** which is Patriot's Point right next to the maritime museum site. After lunch, we go to **visit the ships at Patriot's Point**, the **USS Laffey** will be the focus of our attention I am sure. Included in the price of the day long tour, which will be **\$85**, will be tour guides, deluxe motor coaches, admission to Patriot's Point and Lunch at the Harbor Breeze.



Crown Plaza—Charleston SC



Compton Associate Member—Sigward Pohl takes advantage of his travel time, after his attending The Warwick Reunion to visit “Mount Rushmore”.

## **Civilization in 2017- this is price-less!!! WELCOME to 2017**

- ◆ **Our Phones** - Wireless
- ◆ **Cooking** - Fireless
- ◆ **Cars** - Keyless
- ◆ **Food** - Fatless
- ◆ **Tires** - Tubeless
- ◆ **Dress** - Sleeveless
- ◆ **Youth** - Jobless
- ◆ **Leaders** - Shameless
- ◆ **Relationships** - Meaningless
- ◆ **Attitudes** - Careless
- ◆ **Babies** - Fatherless
- ◆ **Feelings** - Heartless
- ◆ **Education** - Valueless
- ◆ **Children** – Mannerless

**We are ~ SPEECHLESS,  
Government ~ is CLUELESS,  
And our Politicians-are WORTHLESS!**

Annual USS Compton Association dues are \$20.00 per year. If you received an envelope with this newsletter the dues are due now or will be due within a short period of time...look for the hand written date on your address label. This is the date when your membership has expired or will soon expire...

Compton Members—thru October 1st—who additionally contributed to our association  
Willie Thompson William Guzzy Paul Meyer Andy Kelly Harold Richardson  
Joseph Feeney Jack O’Neil William Collier Mike Olson Keith Streissguth  
Al Haley Robert Johnson

# Charleston Reunion Registration form

Member’s Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/guest \_\_\_\_\_

Rank/Rate \_\_\_\_\_ Years aboard \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Please enter above info as you would want it on your name tag.  
(Attach additional names if necessary.)

Number in Party \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet Meal Selection: Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Beef \_\_\_\_\_ (@ \$55 per person)

Number taking tour \_\_\_\_\_ (@\$85 per person, lunch included) Total Amount enclosed:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form and check to: USS Compton Assn., PO Box 6621, Monroe Twp., NJ, 08831-6621.  
Make check out to USS Compton Assn. Please respond by Thursday March 22

## Charleston Banquet Menu

Dinner entrees served with petite rolls  
Garden salad (choice of two dressings)

**Entrees;**

**Filet Medallions** with mushroom Demi-glace

**Grilled Balsamic Chicken Breast** with Tomato, Basil, Mozzarella and Balsamic Drizzle.

**Dessert;** Cheese cake, Coffee

**Was Compton Association Member—Paul Woodbury—Shanghaied or had a connection to go back to sea???**  
**Lets check the pictures...**



Looks like a tourist to me—camera and binoculars !!!



Start him out with a “Filet Mignon” - What???



Did they promise him this army truck to sign up?



This massive cargo ship's Bridge—looks like a one person show!!

The real story: Paul's good friend is Master Captain Jonathon Pratt of this giant cargo ship—M/V MAERSK ATLANTA.  
When you are a naval veteran and have a chance to get back to sea on a working ship—YOU GO!!!

Paul boarded this 74,642 tonnage cargo ship on May 12, 2017 in Savannah Georgia to Houston Texas off-loaded cargo and then returned to Savannah to complete Paul's part of the trip.

This massive ship has a total crew of 21 sailors and one supernumerary (Paul) for this trip.  
According to the supernumerary ( meaning extra person) the trip, food and private suite made this a fantastic trip.

# Charleston 2018 Reunion Agenda

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## Monday April 23

12:00 noon Hospitality room open, reunion registration, refreshments.

## Tuesday April 24

6:00am-10:00am Breakfast in the Sweetgrass Restaurant

8:45 am Gather for group tour.

9:00am Busses leave the hotel for the driving tour of Charleston and Patriot's Point.  
Hospitality room open for those not taking the tour.

11:30am Tour lunch at the Harbor Breeze Restaurant.

3:30pm Tour leaves Patriot's Point for the return trip to the hotel.

## Wednesday April 25

6:00am-10:00am Breakfast in the Sweetgrass Restaurant

9:00am Hospitality room open.

10:00am General Meeting and Memorial Service.

6:30pm Gather at the banquet room for group photographs.

7:00pm -11:00pm Banquet plated dinner and dancing. (*Casual dress as always.*)

## Thursday April 26

6:00am-10:00am Breakfast in the Sweetgrass Restaurant

Have a safe trip home!!!

**SPECIAL NOTICE:** We are having difficulty in reaching the outside photographers from the (Warwick—Boston) Reunion if you have not received your pictures—please give Joe Napoli that information. Contact info for Joe on page 1 of this Newsletter.

Fellow Compton sailors: please send me your pictures from your days on our ship.  
I promise to send them back the very next day, after I receive those special memories.

**Jack Heidecker**  
**54 Mt Top Ct**  
**Hazle Twp PA 18202**  
**570 450-5545**



"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING,  
A VETERAN DIED TODAY."

**Obituaries: USS Compton DD705**



**William "Bill" Autry**—June 4 1925—April 26 2017, 91 years old and served on the USS Compton during WW2 he is listed in his obituary, rated as a Fireman First Class during his Compton service. Bill is also honored as being a former Mayor in Ashland VA and a man whom all who knew him as being a special friend willing to help you out—anytime.



**Larry E Beaulieu Sr**—EM3, born January 7 1938 passed July 20 2017 in Livermore ME. Larry served on the Compton 1958—1962. After leaving the navy in 1963 he pursued a varied and fruitful life including early morning milk deliveries until retiring in 1997. Then Larry involved himself in real estate and his two passion's—gardening and hunting...



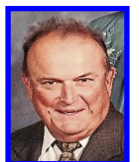
**Kay Prochazka**—RM2, 1955-57, born June 29, 1937 passed June 30, 2017 in Centennial, Colorado. He loved spending quality time with his wife, also named Kay. And retired from the telecommunications industry after 36 years. Kay was an active Compton Association member and a donation in his honor will be made to Tin Can Sailors.



**Earl R Mileson**—MM2, 11/1951 to 11/1954, born October 2, 1931 passed July 30, 2017 in Lawrenceville GA. Earl retired from the navy to help his wife raise their children. He worked for many years with Albany International in both management and consulting before retiring in 1991. Internment will be in South Portland, Me his hometown. A donation in his honor will be made to "Tin Can Sailors".



**William J Sweet**—Captain USN (ret), born October 16, 1929 passed in Derwood, Maryland on August 13, 2017 at 87 years of age. Bill graduated from Dartmouth College in 1952 with a degree in Mathematics and then was commissioned a Ensign in the US Navy. He served on the USS Compton and later commanded the USS Davis DD 937.



**Fredrick Link**—FP2C, September 1954 to November 1957. He was 83 years old when he passed on August 31, 2017 in Mullica Hill, New Jersey. Fredrick was an active Compton member and attended Compton Reunions. Fred retired from US Air after 35 years and was very active in social and community activities A donation in his memory will be made to TCS.



**Warren Delaware**—BT3, born December 03, 1925 passed August 19, 2017 in Boston MA. He was a combat veteran of WW2 and recalled back for the Korean Conflict. Among his many assignments, during his service to our country, was on the USS Compton (time period unknown).