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Artifacts from the Historic Destroyer USS Laffey Headed to France for the Commemoration of D-Day

*Patriots Point, USS Yorktown Foundation and Commemorative Air Force band together to honor Navy's
Support of the D-Day Invasion of World War II*

MOUNT PLEASANT, S.C. – Three artifacts from the historic U.S. Navy destroyer USS Laffey will be flown aboard a World War II-era C-47 from Charleston Executive Airport (JZI) to Normandy, France, to be displayed during the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of D-Day on June 6, 2024. Three organizations that honor WWII service men and women, the USS Yorktown Foundation, Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, and the Commemorative Air Force (CAF), have joined forces to symbolically bring the USS Laffey back to Europe eight decades after the ship and crew supported the invasion of France.

The USS Laffey (DD 724) is the last remaining U.S. destroyer to see action at D-Day. An original piece of the ship's hull, a valve-control wheel, and a damage control plug will be flown to Europe by the Commemorative Air Force aboard a World War II-era C-47, affectionately named "Ready 4 Duty." The plane will land at the Charleston Executive Airport on Sunday, May 12, for a ceremonial handoff of the Laffey artifacts.

"We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to send a piece of the ship back to Europe as world leaders assemble for events to commemorate the momentous 80th anniversary of D-Day," said Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum Executive Director Allison Hunt. "Patriots Point and the state of South Carolina are proud to be the current home of the USS Laffey, and this mission to Europe will help us keep her story alive."

Ready For Duty will be available for public tours at the Charleston Executive Airport starting at noon on May 12. In addition, a limited number of seats are available to purchase for one-of-a-kind flights aboard the historic plane that will include a pass directly over the USS Laffey and Charleston Harbor. To purchase seats



PATRIOTS POINT NAVAL & MARITIME MUSEUM

on one of only three flights, click [here](#). The ceremonial hand-off of Laffey items to the Commemorative Air Force will happen at 1:30 p.m.

"As we commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Invasion of Normandy, we pay tribute to the unwavering bravery of those who served during World War II," said USS Yorktown Foundation Chairman Chauncey Clark. "The USS Yorktown Foundation is immensely proud to join hands with Patriots Point and the Commemorative Air Force in events like these, which serve as important reminders of the sacrifices made and the valor displayed by our heroes. Through our collective efforts, we ensure that the legacy of those who served lives on, inspiring and educating future generations about the importance of courage, honor, and service to our country."

In addition to the four artifacts from USS Laffey, the Commemorative Air Force is also transporting items from aboard the Battleship Texas (BB 35), the last remaining U.S. battleship that supported the D-Day invasion, and Landing Ship Tanks (LST) 325 and 393.

"It is a privilege for the CAF to attend these important anniversaries, honoring the American spirit's fight for freedom and aid to those in need. Participation in such events ensures that the memory and significance of our heroes' brave actions are cherished and preserved for generations to come," said Hank Coates, President/CEO of the CAF.

Funding to support the USS Laffey's inclusion in the Navy to Normandy program was provided by the USS Yorktown Foundation.

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About Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, on the Charleston Harbor, is the #1 attraction in Mount Pleasant, S.C., and is home to a fleet of National Historic Landmark ships, and the only Vietnam Support Base Camp in the U.S. Patriots Point is also headquarters to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and the agency's official Medal of Honor Museum. Visit patriotspoint.org for more details or find us on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

About the USS Yorktown Foundation

The USS Yorktown Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to raising funds to provide scholarships for educational programs at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, as well as supporting new exhibits, symposiums, and special programs. The Foundation's mission is "to cultivate a unique learning environment that connects generations by celebrating America's history and its heroes, inspiring freedom, patriotism, leadership and service." For more information, please visit www.USSYorktownFoundation.org or call 843.881.5925.

About the R4D Ready 4 Duty

Constructed in 1944, Ready 4 Duty (Bureau Number 50783) is an R4D-6S, the U.S. Navy's version of the DC-3 and C-47 Skytrain. After serving in various capacities, including airlifting wounded service members, and evaluating experimental electronic warfare technologies, the Commemorative Air Force acquired the aircraft, which serves with the CAF's Dallas/Fort Worth Wing, based in Lancaster, Texas. This is her second transatlantic flight with the CAF; the first was made in 1985 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the maiden flight of the DC-3.



PATRIOTS POINT NAVAL & MARITIME MUSEUM

About the Commemorative Air Force

The Commemorative Air Force (CAF) is the world's largest flying military aircraft museum, dedicated to educating, inspiring, and honoring with flight and living history experiences. With over 65 years of operation, the CAF maintains an airworthy fleet of vintage military aircraft for people to experience firsthand. The organization boasts more than 11,000 members and a fleet of over 175 vintage military aircraft distributed throughout the United States. For more information, visit www.Commemorativeairforce.org.

