Keel Laid for Future USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr.



The future USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124) namesake, Col. Harvey "Barney" Barnum, Jr. (USMC, Ret.) (center) and his wife and ship sponsor, Martha Hill (left) monitor as Bath Iron Works welder Marty Fish (right) inscribes Col. Barnum's signature onto the keel plate at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) shipyard, April 6. *BATH IRON WORKS*

BATH, Maine – The keel of the future USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124) was ceremoniously laid at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) shipyard, April 6, the Navy's Team Ships Public Affairs said in an April 7 release.

The ship's namesake, Col. Harvey "Barney" Barnum Jr. (USMC, Ret.) and his wife and ship sponsor, Martha Hill, attended the event. Acting Secretary of the Navy, Thomas W. Harker, Maine Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King Jr. and Rep. Chellie Pingree were also in attendance.

With the assistance of BIW welder Marty Fish, Barnum inscribed his signature onto the keel plate. As the sponsor, Martha Hill authenticated the keel by etching her initials into the keel plate, a tradition that symbolically recognizes the joining of modular components and the ceremonial beginning of the ship.

“Col. Barnum has spent his life in service to our country and it is an honor to lay the keel of his ship,” said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager. “This ship and all who serve aboard it will be a reminder of the honor, courage, and commitment that Col. Barnum embodies.”

Barnum twice served in Vietnam and is a Medal of Honor recipient for heroic actions taken against communist forces at Ky Phu in Quang Tin Province in December 1965 after his company came under enemy fire and was separated from the rest of their battalion.

DDG 124 is a Flight IIA Arleigh Burke-class destroyer equipped with Aegis Baseline 9, which provides improved integrated air and missile defense capabilities, increased computing power, and radar upgrades that improve detection range and reaction time against modern air warfare and ballistic-missile defense threats.

BIW is also in production on the future Arleigh Burke-class destroyers Carl M. Levin (DDG 120), John Basilone (DDG 122), Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), and Flight III ships, Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126), and William Charette (DDG 130), as well as the future Zumwalt-class destroyer, Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002).