

# On Or About This Day In Phil's Archives

PHIL'S BLOG

FAMILY - UNDER CONSTRUCTION (REGISTRATION/PASSWORD REQUIRED)

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## Buddy's Letter to Home - February 22, 1954

3/17/2024

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On this day, February 22, 1954 a letter from my Uncle Buddy was sent....oh wait, today is March 17. I hope you had a Happy St. Paddy's Day. Sorry for the delay to post this story. Anyway, onwards and upwards...here is my post....

I never met my Uncle Buddy. He was the youngest boy of the Fallon Family and was born in 1931 (two years older than his sister Ann, my mom). He was baptized, Patrick Joseph Fallon, Jr. and he was given the nickname 'Buddy' at a young age. His parents, Patrick and Marie (Groarke) Fallon had 12 children, of which 10 survived birth.

When I was growing up, his photo was in a frame always on display. The rest of his siblings (my Aunts and Uncles) also kept a photo of Buddy somewhere in their homes. And while I knew this photo was my Uncle, and he served during the Korean War, I was too young to know more. Eventually I did ask questions. And hear stories. I wanted to know more about him and what he was like. He left behind photos and letters and a deep hole in the hearts of those who knew him. One story I heard recently was from my cousin (his niece) when she was a child of about 10

## Author

I have been interested in preserving family history for many years. Hope you enjoy.

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years. She remembers him being home on leave, standing on the sidewalk. Seeing him standing there, she ran towards him and he grabbed her and lifted her up to the sky. I love that picture in my mind. How many of us have had a child run to us and we lift them up, and hug them and hold them?

Buddy lived to be 23 years old, dying unexpectedly in August 1954. But I will write more about his death at another time. Meanwhile, let me introduce him by providing this letter below that he wrote to his family 6 months before he passed away. Buddy enlisted in the Navy in October 1951. By that time, the Korean war had been going since 1950 and it eventually ended in July 1953. He was due to finish his service in October 1955.

I have transcribed the letter because his handwriting is sometimes difficult to read. Let's just enjoy reading his words from 70 years ago, February 22, 1954.

## TRANSCRIPTION

*22 February 1954  
Monday 12:45 AM  
At Sea, Enroute  
Hong Kong, China*

*Dear Mom, Dad, & All.*

*Want to get started on a few lines now that I may have this letter ready to go in the next day or so. - First I'll try to bring you up to date:*

*At present we are out at sea & enjoying fair weather, sailing & a slow period. All this we deserve & maybe a wee bit more.*

*We left Yokosuka, Japan on the 11th of this month. It was quite an operation that we were on. They kept us on the go close to 24 hours a day. Now that it is all over it doesn't seem too bad but at that time I wouldn't admit it.*

*There were 3 other Destroyer Escorts (DE's), four Destroyers (DD's), 4 Destroyer Escorts of the DDE type. They are a bit larger than us, like all the rest. Also worked with a cruiser & 3 submarines. Along about the last few days we teamed up with Task Force 77 – the Glory Navy of the Korean Conflict. We worked with them the first cruise over here. Most of the Exercise was done down around Okinawa waters.*

*The Radarman were on "heel to toe" watches or watch on & watch off. The rest of the ship was in a 4 section watch. One section was on watch from midnight 'till 6:15 AM. The next section came on from 6:15 'till noon. Then the first section came back on & took the watch over from noon till evening show[?] around 5:15. The 2nd section takes over from 5:15 'till 8:00 when the first section went back on watch from 8:00 PM 'till midnight. Don't get confused. But that kind of routine can do it. We were allowed to sleep while off watch, but were often called out of half sound sleep to go to General Quarters.*

*We arrived in Okinawa on the 17th, everyone glad to see land & a port again. I had liberty that night & a gang of us went ashore. Liberty was up at 11 PM on the dock. We have a bite to eat & a few drinks at the NCO club. Our motor whale boat broke down & all of the liberty party had to [find] rides in other ship's liberty boats. It was 3:30 AM by the time I get back.*

*The next day I had the duty and got Shore Patrol. This was the corker. Due to recent breaking in & robbing, I had to guard a quonset hut full of beer!!!! After 5 hours I secured my post & reported that they shouldn't worry – no one could get at the beer 'cause I tried!!!! Was back aboard ship around midnight.*

Left Okinawa on the 19th and arrived in Formosa on the 20th. Our section rated liberty again so I went ashore. No sense being all the way over here & not stopping in for a beer. We were warned not to eat any food at all ashore. Went on a liquid diet that night. Don't worry! We didn't get ashore 'till 6:00 PM & liberty was up at 10.

Departed from Formosa yesterday morning & will arrive in Hong Kong sometime this AM. We'll be here four days & leave on the fifth for Sasebo. Here is the bargain center of the world & wish I had a couple hundred dollars. Everything is cheaper here & you can get a terrific buy on clothes & jewelry. But that's the breaks.

That's about it. I'm on watch & have to pay a little attention to my work. --- Kay said she'd stop over one of these days. --- Belated Birthday greetings to Irene and Tom when you see them.

Love,  
Bud

22 FEBRUARY 1964  
MONDAY 12:45 AM  
AT SEA, ENROUTE  
HONGKONG, CHINA

Dear Ma, Dad, & All,

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Departed from Ponape yesterday morn-  
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