

# On Or About This Day In Phil's Archives

PHIL'S BLOG

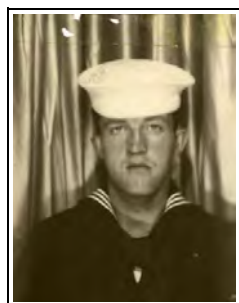
FAMILY - UNDER CONSTRUCTION (REGISTRATION/PASSWORD REQUIRED)

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## Buddy's Drowning

8/3/2024

0 Comments



70 years ago this month, August 1954, was a very trying time for the Fallon Family. Ok, 'trying' is an understatement. It was a horrible and tragic time for the family. August 3, was the day Uncle Buddy drowned, but he was not found until August 18. The Family did not receive official notice until August 22.

Patrick "Buddy" Fallon was a Radarman, Third Class on the ship USS Marsh. Buddy enlisted in the Navy on October 15, 1951 when he was 20 years old. After finishing his basic training and other training course in June of 1952, he was assigned to the ship USS Marsh.

From this point on, the USS Marsh was active in the Korean War and part of a number of skirmishes until an armistice was put in place in July 1953 which basically ended the Korean War.

Fast forward 3 years later to Sunday August 1, 1954; while Buddy was serving onboard the USS Marsh, the ship arrived in the port of Seattle Washington to be a part of the Seafair Festivities that was taking place in the city. The next day, Monday, and Buddy was granted a 19 hour liberty, meaning, he was able to leave the ship, explore the city, and return to the ship by Tuesday at 8 am, August 3.

That Monday, 1:00 pm local time, Buddy did just that. He left the ship in the company of his shipmate, Kenneth Heintz, also a Radarman like Buddy.

That afternoon and evening, Buddy and his shipmate Heintz enjoyed their leave and according to a statement Heintz made in the investigation of Buddy's death, Heintz stated:

## Author

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

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STATEMENT OF HEINTZ, Kenneth W., RD2

Monday afternoon, 2 August, FALLON called at the hotel about 3:00p.m. FALLON had brought up a fifth of Vodka and some mix and we had 2 or 3 drinks. There were FALLON, my girl, her cousin and mother, and myself. We talked for sometime and then went out for Pizza around 7:00p.m. While sitting in ~~the~~ <sup>K.W.H.</sup> the Restaurant, FALLON had a few drinks and after we finished eating, we were going to a night club out of town. We couldn't find the club, so came back and stopped for a drink at some bar which closed while we were there. FALLON then got some, a six pack, of beer and we went to the Chinese Gardens, <sup>K.W.H.</sup> and a fter hours place. We had a hard time finding it and must have been 2:00a.m. when we got there. We stayed for about an hour and then went back to the hotel, where FALLON went up to the room to say goodbye to my girl's cousin and mother. My girl and I waited in the car and he was gone for approximately one-half hour. When he came out of the hotel he had the Vodka we didn't drink, which we took over to another hotel where FALLON left it for some of our buddies. Then, we drove out to the pier where FALLON got out of the car, at the top of the viaduct by the stairs leading <sup>K.W.H.</sup> down to the gate. My girl and I then drove off, time was about 5:00a.m. as it was starting to get daylight. FALLON was in a very jovial mood all evening and didn't appear to be too drunk when I let him out of the car.

*Kenneth W. Heintz*  
KENNETH W. HEINTZ  
555 39 23, RD2  
U.S. Navy

WITNESSED BY:

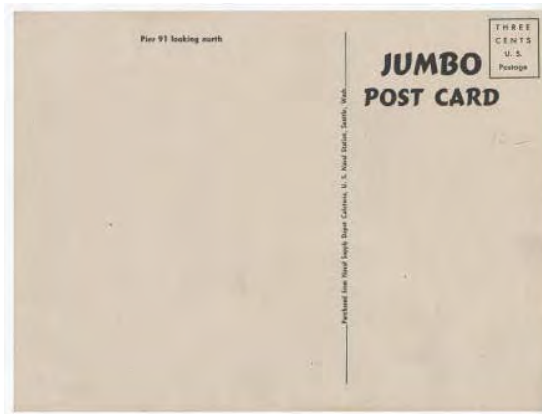
*[Signature]*  
R. F. KNIGHT  
LTJG, USNR

*[Signature]*  
L. F. SNAPP  
LTJG, USNR

When Buddy left the car and Heintz, he would have climbed down the stairs leading to the Ship Entry. From this point, it is unclear what happened. The person on duty at the Marine Sentry Post #2 stated he heard a car door slam and a young sailor, 17 or 18 years old came down. The Marine also stated that 5 minutes later 3 sailors, all intoxicated, came down the stairs.

Whatever may have happened is unknown to us. All we do know is that Buddy never made it to the ship and the ship sailed out to sea on August 4.

It wasn't until August 18 at 7:20 am, that Buddy was discovered in the water on the east side of Pier 91. An autopsy was performed and it was determined "no evidence of injury or cause of death other than by drowning".



23 August 1954

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of August at 7:20 A.M. several enlisted men and I walked south on pier 91 from the head of the pier. At about 100 yds. distant from the head of the pier (91), Benson A.D. noticed a body floating in the water near the pier. Benson called to the rest of us and we retrieved the body of a sailor. Gladowski, G.A. called the gate policeman to the scene. The policeman arrived in less than a minute and took charge of the situation. I then returned to the USS Rambach.

Ronald H. Miles SN  
436-69-84

Witnessed:

O J Macree  
Pdr, USNR.  
Columbia Station  
Seattle, Wash.

15 days and no Buddy. He was last seen on August 3 and his body found August 18. Buddy kept in touch with his family on a regular basis. I am not sure if he made phone calls, but he wrote letters. The occasions I would hear the story of Buddy's death, it was often said, his mother (Grandma Fallon) became worried during this time period and knew there was something wrong. She felt something was not right and that it was odd that no one had heard from Buddy.



The official telegram to the Family was sent on August 22. You will see there is a discrepancy with the date of death; one record states 'about August 3' and another shows 'August 2'. The official investigation concluded it was August 3.

WESTERN UNION	
<b>CT SERVICE</b> is a full rate message or Cablegram unless its delayed character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.	<b>SYMBOLS</b> DL=Day Letter NL=Night Letter TT=Int'l Letter Telegram VT=Int'l Vitegram-Ltr.

The time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

**LD34 QF LONG DL PD**

**WUX TDC GREATLAKES ILL 301AMC AUG 22 1954**

**MR PATRICK J FALLON SR DLR AFTER 12 NOON**  
**3940 W POLK ST CHGO**

192225Z. WITH DEEP REGRETS I OFFICIALLY NOTIFY YOU OF THE DEATH OF YOUR SON PATRICK J FALLON JR 304 75 02 RD3 FROM DROWNING WHILE IN THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY AT SEATTLE WASHINGTON ABOUT 3 AUGUST 1954. YOU WILL RECEIVE DETAILS BY LETTER. I WISH TO ASSURE YOU OF EVERY POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE TOGETHER WITH MY SINCERE SYMPATHY IN YOUR GREAT LOSS. IN THE BELIEF THAT YOU WILL BE IMMEDIATELY INTERESTED IN MAKING BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS OFFERED. HIS REMAINS WILL BE PREPARED AND FITTINGLY ENCASED AND HELD UNTIL YOU NOTIFY THE U S NAVAL HOSPITAL BREMERTON WASHINGTON BY COLLECT TELEGRAM OF YOUR WISHES. BURIAL MAY BE IN ANY OPEN NATIONAL CEMETERY YOU SELECT OR REMAINS WILL BE DELIVERED ELSEWHERE IF DESIRED. PLEASE STATE WHERE YOU DESIRE REMAINS TO BE SHIPPED GIVING FUNERAL DIRECTORS NAME AND ADDRESS UNLESS SHIPMENT IS TO BE MADE DIRECTLY TO A NATIONAL CEMETERY. REMAINS WILL BE SHIPPED BY RAIL UNLESS COMMERCIAL AIR FREIGHT IS REQUESTED AND AVAILABLE TO DESTINATION. IF REQUESTED AND PRACTICABLE ONE PERSON CIVILIAN OR MILITARY MAY ESCORT REMAINS TO A PLACE OF BURIAL WHEN RAIL TRANSPORTATION IS USED. AN ESCORT CANNOT BE AUTHORIZED WHEN SHIPMENT IS MADE BY COMMERCIAL AIR EXPENSES OF ESCORT AND OF CARE AND SHIPMENT OF REMAINS WILL BE DEFRAYED BY NAVY. YOU WILL BE ALLOWED AND ADDITIONAL SUM NOT TO EXCEED 125 DOLS FOR FUNERAL AND BURIAL SERVICES IN A PRIVATE CEMETERY OR 75 DOLS FOR SERVICES NOT

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

**END SHEET 1**

## **PATRICK J. FALLON**

Requiem mass for Patrick J. Fallon Jr., USN, 23, of 3940 Polk, who was drowned Aug. 2 in Seattle, Wash., was said Thursday at Presentation church.

A former student at Presentation Grammar school and St. Philip's and St. Patrick's High schools, he was serving aboard the USS Marsh, from his Presidio, San Francisco, Calif. base., when the accident occurred. Fallon entered the Navy in October, 1951, and had an RD3 rating.

Survivors include his parents, Patrick J. Sr. and Marie; five brothers, Rev. Martin P. of Danville, John, Thomas, James, and Edward; four sisters, Sister Mary Patricia, OFB of Haugen, Wis., Mrs. Mary Stenson, Ann, and Mrs. Irene Gamboney, an associate in her husband's business, the Gamboney Funeral home.

Burial was at Queen of Heaven cemetery.

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