

8-2-01

The Campbell's;

You rite and I answer. It was really nice to get your letter Sylvia and I really enjoyed reading it. In the next few days I will attempt to answer your questions and I will tell you a couple of sea stories- mine are true.....Now you all have got to realize that I was on the Evans for 41 months and I for one, enjoyed all of it. I served with a bunch of great sailors and was blessed with having three good Captains (ones that liked destroyers and the men that kept them running). My first Captain was Christie, the second was Olson, and the last one was Salmon(he served two jaunts with the Evans and was a fine individual. Now also realize that I was a radioman and one who wanted to know everything that was going on (I was nosey). In the radio shack we had to route the messages all during the day and some at night; this was a job for a seaman, but I loved to do it, and that way I kept in touch with everything. I was so good at it, that Captain Salmon wanted to take me with him when he left the Evans for another duty station. I even sat down in his state room one morning and drank coffee with him.....

When the Cunningham did a wrong turn, Olson was our Captain-The Captain or someone on the Cunningham had to answer to our leader on the Blue, as he was called to report to the Blue the next day, by little boat (Captain jig). When that Captain left the Cunningham his next ship was probably watching ice bergs float around Alaska or counting polar bears.

Sylvia you asked that I speak of some of the sailors I knew; Well at my age, that is going to be real hard. I ran around with B.J.(died 94) and one we called Dub(name I do not know) B. J. had a brother on the ship at the same time, we called Little Rich(took care of the laundry; (since I ran with his brother, I got my whites washed and pressed sometimes, so I could make an impression on the girls in California-I needed all of the help I could get. Lee Lindsey (QM) and I were really good friends; He came home on leave with me for two weeks-actually Lee was the reason I married my wife I still have. by the way Sylvia, my wife's name is T.J. No it is not the Lindsey you asked me about. Lee also had a brother that served at the same time, and he also was a QM. Lee's Mother and step Father lived in Vallejo and his step Father worked in the ship yard and help paint the Evans when we were in the yard. They tell me they can not find the Lindsey boys; I sure wish they could, as I would love to talk to Lee if he is still with us. Going to close for today and I will pick it up again tomorrow.

8-3-01

Well its tomorrow and I think I was talking about peoples. I can't recall J.C. and I also can not recall Charlie-I told you I seem to be getting old. In looking in the photo album you sent me, I do recall Bristow real well as he was a radioman and we worked watches in the shack a good many times; I see in the Evans Report that he had surgery and a stroke; I do hope he is getting along alright. I see that Butler was at the reunion as he and I were real good friends and we must have gone ashore together and looked at the sights

and probable visited some of the culture centers....Donald Cox I knew real well as he was a radioman. This gentleman probable would like to kill me, as when he came aboard he was a seaman; I saw that every no good duty that we had to take care of, make coffee clean the shack, wash and mop the passageway outside, and help clean the mask. He was new and this beats us doing all of this mess. In looking through the membership roster I ran across Jim Brayton-He worked in CIC and he and I played cards together for hours on end, when we had nothing else to do. I also ran across Ivan Bobo and he and I were real close; I slept in a double bunk, under the mess hall about three inches apart from Ivan for at least a year. That fool took more baths than any human alive, and I am not sure that he did not set a world record. He taught me to be a radioman, when I came aboard the Evans. He came to work and left work always singing. I could be copying code and I would hear that singing(what I don't know) and I knew Bobo was going to be with us. singing and all.I called him about a year ago and we had a great chat; He told me was going to write a book, and was going to write one chapter just about me.

Sylvia, you wanted to hear some sea stories that I remember. I know that the one or two that I am going to try to describe to you are true, as I was there and one of them, which no one will believe, I was a part of and the Captain told me to keep my mouth shut about it. Now remember/ I spent hours on the bridge and wandering around the ship, so I could pick up on things Sylvia.

The time and place was off of the Korean coast. The Evans was patrolling not far off the shore. Radar picked up something and we raced to see what it was-I was a mine which we disposed off with our 3inch 50's. We kept on trucking down the shore, looking for something-I would take the big glass in hopes of finding something pretty in a short skirt, but did not. Anyway we ran across another mine, which we took care of, as they can do nasty things to a destroyer. We shortly thereafter ran upon one of those straw boats with some North Koreans in it- We knew they were putting down those mines, but looking over that thing they call a boat, (from the bridge) we did not see anymore. On this trip we had a South Korean officer on board to do some talking for us. The Captain, Salmon, asked this South Korean officer to ask those idiots in that boat where they came from, and they would say nothing-The Captain told the officer to ask them again, and he again got no answer. Our Captain, had a great temper, and as we were at some sort of general quarters, with two gun mounts firing at the shore line, the Captain told the O.D. to lower #1 mount to point at that straw boat and lock and load. The Korean officer was to ask the same question again and this time he got an answer. I was on the bridge and I watched all of the goings on. The North Korean men were jumping around like chickens looking at those gun barrels and their eyes must have been bugged out like a frog. I laughed till I was sick and believe it or not, we let the fools go. Well enough for today, I will pick it up again tomorrow.

I want to ask J.C. something. That picture of Captain Meyer; I *did not have him, but* did the Evans move anywhere while he was in command, except maybe from the yard.

8-5-01

Well it is Sunday and I am still at this letter. It is hot as you know what down here and there is no end in sight. I am going to tell you another tale, one that probably few if any, knew anything about. The Evans was somewhere(I don't know-Korea, Japan, or the states) and we were attached to our Flag ship, the Blue. We were going to play games with a sub. We were to find the sub, chase it and when our sonar pinged on it(direct hit) we were to report back to the Blue(that is where the big wheel was). Well we started out besides the Blue and we started making wide circles and these circles got bigger and bigger(out of sight of the Blue) until we finally got the sub on sonar.; this accomplished we started cat and mouse games chasing the sub all over the ocean-we trying to keep up and he trying to loose us. This game went on a long time and finally we pinged over him, which resulted in a direct hit. The game being over, we were now to report back to the Blue...I have failed to tell you that we were not in sight on any land and it was nice and sunny out; well guess what, we did not know where we were and did not know where the Blue was, as we had no radar contact. Well Cato was in the radio shack, probable drinking coffee and I might have even suppose to be working, like copying code or something Sylvia. We have this inner calm system all over the ship and from the bridge, the Captain (Salmon) called and asked me to report to the bridge-off I went and upon arriving, the Captain took me on the bridge,away from other peoples, and asked me to do something for him. He asked if I knew a radioman on the Blue and could I get him to do me a favor and not open his mouth to nobody; The Captain wanted to know the exact location of the Blue now-longitude and latitude-with this information, we could find the Blue(save face etc.). Well I get on the key and talked to a radioman I knew and ask him to go next door(as CIC was next to the radio room and CIC is where all of this information comes from)and get this information and tell NO ONE. Well he did it for me and radioed the information back to me; I copied it on a scrap sheet of paper and then hustled my body to the bridge and handed the captain the information-shortly thereafter we were full speed ahead and linked up with the Blue-Points I made. In writing this note, I know we were in waters off of Japan. This good deed for the Captain got Lee and I an over night pass in Tokyo(which was not heard of). We stayed at an American hotel and had a ball(acted like rich folks).....

My retarded cats want to play so I guess I will close for now-pick it up again tomorrow; probable no more long sea stories, just some short notes Sylvia. Hope you all had a nice weekend-me I did nothing.

8-6-01

Well it is Monday and I am going to try to end this letter. I want to pass on to you a short story that I watched from the bridge-Maybe J.C. was in on this. It seems that every time we were in Honk Kong people in those little straw boats were coming around wanting something. Brass was very high on the list and our powder, to shoot those 5" shells,were in brass cans. Well one day three or four men came around in their boat wanting some brass(I am sure the pay off was in booze) and three or four of our crew

were on the main deck talking with him. It seems(after they got their heads together) that they had some and would give it to him, but they would have to bring their boat up forward, about where our anchor was. They complied with this wish alright, which they should not have done. When we trained new people to work in the gun mounts (general quarters) we had a mock shell that weighed about 50 lbs. for them to practice with(I think it was brass)One of the kind crew members that was talking to the people in the boat, went to one of the gun mounts and retrieve the shell. Now from the deck of the Evans to the people in the boat was a ways down and 50 lbs. all at once they did not bargain for. Well as you know, some sailor dropped it into the straw boat, and instead of stopping, it just went right on threw and left a rather large hole as it left their boat. The last I saw of those people, they were stuffing shirts or whatever into the hole and heading on back to shore as fast as possible. I think everybody was having a great laugh except the ones in the boat.

Then there was (I think) Bloody Mary in Honk Kong (famous person) who with her crew of girls, would wash the sides of the ship down(soap and water) for our food scraps. She did a great job and saved a bunch of work for some of our crew. At lunch time, we would get trays and fix the girls a good lunch(if you call what we ate good) and take it to the girls-they enjoyed.....

We pulled alongside a British carrier once to take on fuel (early morning) and I yelled to one of their sailors and asked if he had eggs for breakfast-his reply was, that he didn't even know what an egg was, and he asked me what animal they came from.

Well Sylvia I have enjoyed writing this letter-pardon the mistakes as this computer and I do not always see eye to eye. We have a great computer, made for us, rather for my wife not me. She uses it for work and can make the thing talk to her-me, I talk to it, but I am afraid that my language is not nice Sylvia. I do hope that you will write me back. I can not go to Denver Sylvia, as I have a terrible case of emphysema and I have to sleep with oxygen at night and the height and cold do nothing but make it worst-to many cigarettes, I get along ok when I am close to home, as I have all of the equipment at hand.

I will look for some pictures and if I find any, I will send them. I am enclosing a piece of paper that is 47 years old. This is a Ship's History-these were handed to me in the yard and I saw that every crew member got one and even the officers; I handed them out myself or saw that the crew had excess to them-I might be the only one that kept his and some where down the line, mine got oil or something on it; read the back of this paper also. As it says we were in the yard and Korea was history, and I had to go to Japan with the ship(even tho I only had 63 days left in the Navy, as the Captain said he did not have a replacement for me; peace time and we did not have many radiomen.

If it weren't for my breathing, I would get in my car and drive to Granbury and see you all.I hope that your health will not fail you all. See you all.....

I will see about printing this letter tomorrow-need to proof read it first-I am not sure I can catch the mistakes.

My very Best to the Campbells

Your shipmate

Cato

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cato", with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature to the right.