

U.S.S. MULLINNIX (DD-944)
FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, 09501

12 August 1966
At Sea in the South
China Sea

Familygram Number 3

Dear "Folks,"

It seems as if a lot has occurred since the last "Familygram" dated 23 June. I shall try to bring you up to date on our activities.

We fueled at Manzanillo, Mexico the evening of 25 June. Have your relative on MULLINNIX tell you the details of that visit, as I cannot go into all the details necessary for you to fully appreciate some of the problems. Basically, the fuel pier was ninety feet long and MULLINNIX is 418 feet. We used rocks ashore to secure our lines and could only take fuel on board from one station. It was an interesting fuel stop, but one I do not want to experience again. From there we proceeded independently to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, arriving on 3 July. I know I am prejudiced (having lived there for almost seven years), but Hawaii is one of my favorite places. However, our ten day stay there was extremely busy. We had a three day Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI), briefings and upkeep. I believe the ship did very well on the ORI considering the long shipyard period and no opportunity for refresher training. Everyone gave his best and we all learned from the experience. Our best score (in the nineties) was received on Shore Bombardment Exercises. Everyone received time to visit Hawaii and see all the tourist attractions. We departed Pearl Harbor the morning of 14 July for Subic Bay, Philippines, with fuel stops at Midway Island and Guam. We only spent three hours at Midway, but two-thirds of the crew were able to go ashore and see the "sights" of Midway. It is primarily famous for the "Gooney Birds" that infest the island. These birds are very comical and have big bodies, short wings and require a jet runway (almost) to get airborne. Midway is one of the few places these birds nest, and, consequently, is an official game preserve for the birds. We spent two days in Guam, arriving there 23 July, so everyone got to see the island. It was the first time I had been back to Guam since 1960, and I was impressed with the growth. We finally arrived in Subic Bay, Philippines, on 29 July after steaming 11,700 miles from Norfolk. On 30 July, Commander Destroyer Squadron THIRTY-TWO returned "home" and broke his pennant in MULLINNIX. Once again we were flagship for the Squadron.

Our stay in Subic Bay was short, as we departed the morning of 31 July, bound for the coastal area in the vicinity of Vung Tau, Viet Nam, to be part of Task Unit 70.8.9, the Naval Gunfire Support Unit. Our mission was to provide shore bombardment support to the troops ashore, U.S. Marines, Army, and Viet Nam forces. The last two weeks have been varied and busy. We did such things as the normal shore bombardment of Viet Cong installations, operations in support of our forces and we actually anchored about ten miles up the Saigon River and destroyed Viet Cong supply dumps and buildings. While there in

in the Saigon River, the Squadron Doctor, the Squadron Chaplain, and our Supply Officer and Chief Hospitalman went ashore in MUX's motor whale boat. Doctor Josephy, of New York City, held sick call for the people of the village of Can Gio, thirty miles southeast of Saigon, in order to give the villagers an opportunity for medical consultation. Normally there is no doctor in the village, and medical visits are infrequent, because all land approaches are controlled by the Viet Cong with the only safe access being by boat or helicopter. During the two hour clinic period, seventy-three patients were treated for complaints ranging from a bone tumor in a seventy year old man to common colds in children.

Another unusual assignment was MUX riding "shotgun" on a marine truck convoy. The convoy went from Da Nang to Phu Bai along coast highway one, which runs along the sea. The highway is basically controlled by the Vietnamese, but the hills are controlled by the Viet Cong. MUX steamed a mile offshore and escorted the convoy. I like to believe our guns being trained on the hills discouraged any attacks on the convoy. In any event, the convoy was not molested and made it to Phu Bai without incident.

In the last ten days we have fired approximately 2,000 rounds of 5"/54 and 3"/50 caliber ammunition. The gunners have worked hard to keep all guns in top shape - and all hands have performed in an outstanding manner. The hours have been long, but griping has been short. It seems to be true that when there is a job to be done Americans get with it and get it done with as little fuss as possible. I know it is true of the MULLINNIX crew. There have been many reports written on MUX, but I have picked one at random which was dated 9 August. It reads as follows: "The destroyer USS MULLINNIX hit enemy concentrations with approximately 160 five inch rounds of ammunition. Air spotter reported one secondary explosion and overall target coverage as outstanding."

I believe that sums-up the last several weeks in two short sentences.

We are presently enroute back to Subic Bay for six days of upkeep and recreation. We shall arrive in Subic tomorrow evening, 13 August. On 20 August we shall depart and rejoin Task Group 70.8 in whatever assignment is given to us. I know we shall do it well. Until I have the opportunity to write again, my best to all of you.

Best regards,



G. R. NAGLER

CDR G. R. NAGLER, USN
USS MULLINNIX (DD-944)
C/o FPO, New York 09501