

Father Daniel J. Burke, S.J.
Chaplain:
U.S.S. Philadelphia - 1941-1946.

Oct. 18, 1981:

Called Dan O'Connor, formerly my Editor, now my Ghost writer, to inform him of the fine job he did on the letter about the San Diego Reunion.

During the course of the conversation he informed me that George Brucia was planning a birthday party for Father Burke (80th). It was to be held some place in Manhattan and all former shipmates he contacted were welcome to attend. So naturally I told him to include Dot and Myself.

Oct. 19, 1981:

Power Plant - Co-Op City, Bronx, N.Y.:

I was glancing thru the Daily News and decided to look at the Obituary Column to see if people were still dying alphabetically. The first name to jump out of the newspaper at me was Father Burke's. I immediately called the Brucia Residence and told Betty to call George at work and inform him of our great loss. If she would also call Frank Amoroson about flowers.

Oct. 20, 1981:

Mass for Father Burke was to be held at - 8:00PM Tuesday Evening. I suggested that the Brucia's come over for dinner and then we would take the express bus from the Bronx down to Manhattan and avoid the hassle of traffic and parking. The bus ride was like one of our reunion tours and naturally I was the Guide.

Upon arrival at the Church a Priest was in the Center Aisle in charge of seating arrangements. He asked if we were Family (those were the good seats). We said no, but were former shipmates of Father Burke's. Upon hearing this his hand began to tremble as he reached into his pocket to show us what he removed from Father Burke's door. It was a patch which most of us have from a previous reunion, which read: - "The Galloping Ghost of the Sicilian Coast".

We then inquired if it was appropriate that we send flowers? He said it was wonderful of the Reunion Committee to do so. Lo and behold on the altar in front of Father Burke's coffin was the one and only flower piece - Ours'.

The procession was something only done on Fantasy Island. With ninety-two people of the Cloth, from Bishop down to Priest taking part in the ceremony. I never knew they had so many different colored "uniforms".

The ceremony took one and a half hours. After ten minutes I was looking to get out, but it looked like the doors were locked and Sister Betty had the evil eye on me.

One of the eulogies was very touchy and decided I was going to get a copy of it for our next Reunion. I went back stage* (I mean the Altar) and I was directed to the Priest who presented

