



# Newsletter of the USS Cusk (SS/SSG-348)

First Missile Submarine of the Silent Service



**From the Deck Log** - A couple of interesting excerpts from the Cusk's Deck Log courtesy of the National Archives. The first one is a bit of an 'Ooops' dated Saturday morning, 6 April 1946. The newly commissioned USS Cusk is in Narragansett Bay on the north side of Rhode Island Sound.

15 APR 1946

LOG BOOK

OF THIS

U. S. S. \_\_\_\_\_

COMMANDED BY \_\_\_\_\_

U. S. N. \_\_\_\_\_

Division, \_\_\_\_\_

Squadron, \_\_\_\_\_

Flotilla, \_\_\_\_\_

Fleet, \_\_\_\_\_

Commencing \_\_\_\_\_ 19 47

at \_\_\_\_\_

and ending \_\_\_\_\_ 19 47

at \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE FORWARDED DIRECT TO THE BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL AT THE END OF EACH MONTH

*"...Moored as before. 0808 Got underway in accordance with ComSubLant speedletter A4-3/(1827) dated 30 March 1946, to conduct torpedo firing trials; steering various courses at various speeds on No. 1 and No. 4 engines. 0825 Submerged. 0845 No. 8 torpedo tube failed to fire. 0848 Fired No. 7 torpedo tube. 0849 Heard noise as of a wire alongside hull. 0851 Surfaced and discovered a sunken torpedo marker buoy fouled on stern planes on port shaft. 0900 Anchored in 20 fathoms of water riding to 50 fathoms of chain on bearing 148T from southern light, Gould Island at 1000 yards range. 0925 YTD4 moored to port side. 0926 Veered to 75 fathoms of chain. 0945 Diver from YTD4 commenced inspection of fouled buoy chain. 0953 Diver reported one turn of chain about top and bottom blade of port screw, slight nicks in two blades. 1032 Chain and buoy cleared from port screw. 1034 Diver on board YTD4. 1035 YTD4 got underway from port side. 1043 Anchor at short stay. 1045 Anchor aweigh, steered various courses at various speeds conducting torpedo firing trials. 1059 Submerged. 1059 Fired No. 7 torpedo. 1115 Fired No. 8 torpedo. 1116 fired No. 9 torpedo. 1116 Surfaced. 1133 Fired No. 10 torpedo. 1135 Changed speed to stop. 1153 Commenced steering various courses at various speeds to conform to channel of Narragansett Bay. 1155 made daily inspection of magazine and smokeless powder samples; conditions normal."*

*Signed, E.J. Zellmer, Lieut. USN.*

The next entry is from 12 February 1947 when the Cusk made submarine history by launching a Loon Missile at sea. Reading the log, one might think this historical launch that changed submarine history and technology forever was little more than routine.

*4 to 8 Moored as before. 0430 Secured battery charge and #2 engine, commenced a zero float on the auxiliary engine. 0745 Mustered crew on stations; no unauthorized absentees.*

*8 to 12 Moored as before. 1100 Made daily inspection of magazine spaces; conditions normal. 1115 Underway steering various courses at various speeds, in accordance with CTG 17.9 Op. Order 8-47, enroute firing area. 1127 Clear of entrance channel Port Hueneme, Calif. Set courses 130T and pgc speed standard on #3 and 4 engines. 1151 Slowed to two thirds and secured #4 engine. 1153 Commenced circling on station*

*12 to 16 Underway as before, circling on station. 1459 Manned Battle Stations Loon Action. 1509 ComSubDiv 71, Commander Henry MUNSON, USN, came aboard. 1539-30 Fired Loon. 1546 Answered bells on all four engines. 1551 Set course 300T and pgc. 1555 Secured #1 and 4 engines. 1559 Commenced steering various courses at various speeds conforming to Port Hueneme Channel; secured from Battle Stations Loon Action.*

*Signed, W. Dedrick, LTJG, USN*



**Cusk Webpage Improvements** - Many changes completed and in progress. Here are some of the highlights: **Homepage** ([www.ussscusk.com](http://www.ussscusk.com)) - A few examples of the "Sights and Sounds" page has been added to the homepage. These are actual recordings of Cusk dives and video clips and are in multiple formats, i.e., Windows, Apple, etc.. An abbreviated version of the Eternal Patrol page has been added near the bottom of the homepage to list our shipmates who have departed in the past few years.

**Crew Lists** - Found on each Year page, the names of crewmembers have been fully reconciled with all the names in the USSVI's database. The overall list of crewmembers is still not complete, nor is it totally accurate, but it's a lot closer. Our master database has 1,073 men identified as having served aboard the Cusk during





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her 24+ years of service. USSVI only shows 690 crewmembers although obviously, not all of us joined USSVI (yet?). Nonetheless over 100 more names have been added. Crew lists for each year have also been expanded to include everyone who was on board the Cusk at any time during a particular year rather than showing only their first year on board. Riders, TAD personnel, and Plankowners have also been identified, plus individual information has been added where available. Your input is always helpful and appreciated so please take a few minutes when convenient to check your information. Corrections, additions, and any interesting tidbit about yourself (sea stories included) will also be much appreciated.

**Eternal Patrol Page** ([www.ussscusk.com/Eternal.htm](http://www.ussscusk.com/Eternal.htm)) - This section has been greatly expanded using USSVI's information. Over 50 new names were added to our Eternal Patrol page along with pictures and obituaries where available.

**Cusk Museum Display Case** - In addition to the plaque mentioned below, one of the Cusk's claxons (donated by Jerry "Audie" Johnson.) will be going "live" in the Cusk display case. The museum's curator has enthusiastically approved its installation including an activation button for people to push. They love the idea of interactive displays and he said not to worry about the loud noise. But then...he hasn't heard it yet.

**Pictures & Memorabilia** - Thanks to your contributions and USSVI's website, over a hundred new pictures from various years have been added with more on the way.



Memorabilia wise, I recently received an email from a man asking if I might be interested in the plaque you see to the left. Of course I wrote back immediately thanking him for asking and explaining how it would be an invaluable addition to our collection of the Cusk's history. I offered to pay for both the plaque and any shipping charges, but he refused any payment and promptly sent it to me. It is solid bronze, measures 8" x 15", is slightly curved, and it weighs about 10 pounds. My guess is that it was originally attached to the Cusk after commissioning, or perhaps it's

from a memorial somewhere. It shows the first laying of the Cusk's keel of 25 May 1944 rather than the second re-laying date of 2 December. I asked the man where he got it and he said he found it in a local garage sale. He said the owners told him that they had found it in their granddad's garage after he had passed away. Hopefully you get my not so subtle point here. Do you have any little piece of the Cusk's history that might end up in a garage sale someday? Or worse, the trash?



Your Cusk treasures are obviously yours to keep and pass on as you wish, but please don't forget that we have a permanent display case in the Merritt Island Veteran's Memorial and Museum. It is dedicated solely to USS Cusk and is owned by her crewmembers. If you have a donation, I'll gladly pay the shipping charges.

**Got Ink?** Remember Hotel Street? It was a rough area of bars and tattoo parlors in Honolulu 'occasionally' frequented by submarine sailors. Many drank their dolphins there or stopped into Sailor Jerry's tattoo parlor to "get ink done" as they call it nowadays. Having just earned my dolphins the night before we pulled into Pearl,



Sailor Jerry's was one of the first places I went to get those fish permanently tattooed on my shoulder. Fast forward almost 50 years and my wife and three daughters are trying to convince me to get them "refreshed". Not exactly my idea of a great birthday present, but yes, I am proud of them and they did look more like a big smudge than a pair of dolphins. Next thing I know, I'm in a local tattoo parlor talking to an artist who asks if I have a picture of the original for him to go by. I said no and casually mentioned that it had been done by some guy named 'Sailor Jerry' in Honolulu back in

the day. One would have thought that I had just invoked the holy name of God as the entire parlor went silent as all the other artists suddenly came out of their individual work areas to see his work. For a moment, I





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thought they were all going to get down on their knees and do the arms in the air "We're not worthy!" thing. It seems that Sailor Jerry is very well known and highly revered in the tattoo world, to put it mildly. Then they showed me three huge commercially made books, about 15" square and 1½" thick, and all three were filled with color pictures of Sailor Jerry's tattoo art. And not only was Sailor Jerry a god of the tattoo world, there's also a spiced rum named after him complete with his picture and some of his art work on the label. Looking through all those books brought back the memory of those same pictures I had seen on the walls in Sailor Jerry's parlor that night in Honolulu so many years ago. He was indeed quite the artist. His real name was Norman Collins and he died in 1973.

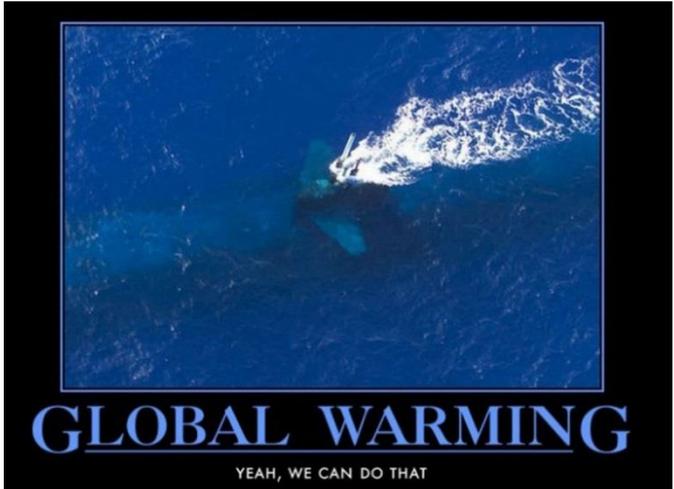


**Balao Class Submarine's Test Depth:** The last newsletter slightly mischaracterized the Cusk's test depth. According to [www.navsourc.org](http://www.navsourc.org) (a great Naval website by the way!), the thicker high tensile steel used in the Cusk and late model Balao Class boats did indeed enable a test depth of 650'. However, for safety reasons it was set to 450'. Later, the head of the Bureau of Ships, Admiral Cochrane, changed the test depth to 400' over concerns that the trip pump would not perform adequately at the 450' depth. How it eventually became 412' is unknown.

**Cusk Trivia:** The Cusk was one of 122 Balao Class fleet submarines built between 1942 and 1948 at several different shipyards. What unique characteristic did the Cusk and some other Balao Class boats have that would easily identify the shipyard in which they were built? *(Answer on next page)*

**Address Changes & Email:** Please let me know if your home or email address changes. And thanks much to those of you who have offered to save printing and mailing costs by printing their own newsletters. However, I have learned that a "Moved, No Forwarding Address" or "No Such Person" mark on a returned newsletter is an effective, albeit sad way to find out if one of us has departed on Eternal Patrol. Fortunately, that's not the only reason newsletters are returned so again, please help me keep up.

**Cusk Newsletter:** A personal note...producing the Cusk newsletter is my total pleasure and the fact that you enjoy it is all the thanks I'll ever need. I'm often asked if I accept donations and the answer is, yes of course, but they are never solicited nor required. Thanks to the many who have donated in the past, there has always been more than enough to cover the costs. I'm just glad you enjoy it.



**Recent departures on Eternal Patrol:** More detailed information, pictures and obituaries (when available) may be found on the "Eternal" page of the website [www.usscusk.com/Eternal.htm](http://www.usscusk.com/Eternal.htm). Here are some of our recently departed shipmates:

Name	Departed	Served aboard Cusk
James Hume, TM1(SS)	15 January 2015	1956 to 1960
James E Walker, EM3c(SS)	2 February 2015	1946
Leo P Kunkel, EN1(SS)	18 February 2015	45 to 48 & 52 to 58
Earl R "Dick" White	May, 2015	1949 - 1950
Walter Bud Reid, MOMM2(SS)	15 August 2015	46

SAILORS! REST YOU OARS!

*"Of all the branches of men in the forces there is none which shows more devotion and faces grimmer perils than the submariners." - Sir Winston Churchill*





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**Cusk 2016 Reunion Information:** 23 to 29 April, Cocoa Beach, Florida. Pre-cruise tours and banquet on Saturday and Sunday, 23 & 24 April. Cruise to the Bahamas begins Monday 25 April from Port Canaveral returning early Friday morning, 29 April.

**Cruise Reservations – Final Payment Deadline is 9 February 2016:** If you haven't made your reservations yet, the sooner the better as you never know when/if the ship might fill up. Call Carol at (800) 910-9291 to reserve your cabin and pay your deposit. She can also help you with cruise insurance (~\$150 for two).

**Hotel Reservations:** **Cocoa Beach Days Inn** (Very nice and one block to the beach.): (800) 245-5225 or (321) 784-2550. **Cocoa Beach Best Western** (Even nicer and oceanfront): (800) 962-0028 or (321) 783-7621. Both hotels have free hot breakfasts and provide free parking during the cruise, which will save you \$15 to \$18 per day if you drive your own car. Don't forget to ask for the special "Cusk Reunion" room rates.

**On-Shore Reunion Activities:** \$60 per person for the Saturday afternoon Welcome Reception, Sunday bus rental, driver, tours, drinks, snacks, and Sunday evening banquet. My contact information: Cell-(321) 213-3567; Email: [usscusk@att.net](mailto:usscusk@att.net); Postal mail: USS Cusk 2016 Reunion, c/o Tom Roseland, 1635 Sea Shell Drive, Merritt Island, FL 32952. Please make checks payable to "Tom Roseland". No rush on payment to me, but sooner is better, and helpful. All on-shore activity payments are fully refundable prior to the activity date.

**CCAFS & KSC Tour Status:** The Cape is still at DefCon-2 status due to the increased terror threat level. As mentioned previously, this "may" prevent our tour and a Plan B is under development. Will keep you advised.

**2018 Reunion:** The date, place, and coordinator(s) of the 2018 Cusk Reunion will be determined aboard ship at our 1400 meeting on Thursday, 28 April. Ideas and volunteers are highly encouraged. One need not be present to volunteer. All Cusk Reunion information is available at [www.usscusk.com/reunions.htm](http://www.usscusk.com/reunions.htm).

**Who's Coming to the 2016 Reunion?** To date we have 27 cabins reserved on the cruise with 57 on the sailing list and 62 coming to the pre-cruise activities. The list includes:

- |                                |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Les & Dorothy Atchison (60-62) | Richard & Mary Baylon (47)     | Don & Becky Birch (68-69)       |
| Jim & Diana Branske (66-69)    | Paul & Roberta Clark (63-66)   | Dave Duerr & Guest (66-68)      |
| Larry & Judy Franklin 61-62    | Roger & Nancy Gile 58-60       | Ron & Darlene Gile (59-60)      |
| Chuck Harner, (60-63)          | Don & Dee Horton (57-58)       | Bill & Mary Hrbacek (59-63)     |
| James & Joan Hughes (58-59)    | Jim & Nelda Johnson (67-68)    | Jerry Johnson (66-69)           |
| Alan Kallas & Guest (66-67)    | Lee & Joni Krabill (66-69)     | Jim & Suzanne Mallery (68-69)   |
| Bob & Peggy McDonald (51-53)   | Richard & Mrs. Murphy (62-64)  | Bob & Janet Nelson (66-69)      |
| Gino & Editha Rillamas (66-69) | John & Cheryl Reynolds (66-68) | Tom & Patrice Roseland (66-69)  |
| Dennis & Chris Schultz (67-69) | Ron & Alice Shook (59-60)      | Richard & Joanne Specht (59-60) |
| John Troutman & Guest (68-69)  | Dick & Teresa Wagstaff (64-66) | Gary & Sandra Wood (68-69)      |
| Larry & Darlene Wood (68-60)   | Zeke & Beverly Zellmer (46-48) |                                 |

**Sea Stories:** A short but funny story by Gary Long...

We went on patrol in 1961 to the North Pacific. Barkel had a weight problem. Not bad, but it bothered him. He had the top bunk just outside the galley. When we went on patrol we always lined up just outside the galley for chow. So what I did was, while Barkel was sleeping and we were lined up for chow, I cut off a small piece off his belt. Each day after that I would cut off another a small piece. Before long, he got paranoid about gaining weight and refused to eat. We always told him that the Patrol was doing him good as he was gaining weight, and the fact that his belt was getting tighter was the "proof". Finally we got to feeling sorry for him and EM3 Reid told him what was going on. Fortunately we had a spare belt for him.



**Cusk Trivia answer –** The Cusk's anchor was on the starboard side which was unique to EB boats. All other Balao Class boats had their anchors located on the port side.

*Next newsletter - Pre-Reunion Edition in March 2016. Suggestions and Sea Stories encouraged. Fair winds, following seas, and Green Board to all!*

