



USS Cusk Newsletter

Spring 2018



"...Make your depth six-five feet smartly! Shut the hatch!"

2018 Cusk Reunion - April 9 to 13, Richland, Washington: Join us Monday through Friday at the Red Lion Richland Hanford House Hotel. Steve "Willy" Wilson (67 to 69), also of Richland, is coordinating all of the arrangements, and he has planned a great agenda. Phone numbers, web addresses and a reunion application form are on the last page of this newsletter.

This is an excellent hotel with special USS Cusk Reunion nightly rates of \$109 for a king or double room. The hotel is pet friendly, has free WIFI, free breakfast, a pool and an exercise room. Our rates are good for three days before and after our reunion. Additional information is on the USS Cusk webpage at www.usscusk.com. Click on "2018 Reunion".



Red Lion Richland Hanford House Hotel. Call (800) 910-9291, Hotel Direct: (509) 946-7611 for reservations, or go to www.redlion.com/richland

Monday, April 9:

1500 to your arrival time - Check-in to Red Lion Hanford House Hotel

1500 to 2200 - Reunification Indoctrination & Sea Stories in the Cusk Hospitality Room (Room opens daily at 0900)

Tuesday, April 10:

0600 to 0900 - Breakfast in Red Lion Dining Room

0900 to 2200 - Continuing reunification and sea stories in the Cusk Hospitality Room

1200 to 1500 - 14 Hands Winery wine tasting and shopping (free)

1545 to 1600 - Visit USS Triton (SSRN-586) Memorial site (Free)

1730 to 1900 - Dinner at Sterling's Restaurant (next door to Red Lion, Dutch Treat)

Wednesday, April 11:

0600 to 0900 - Breakfast in Red Lion Dining Room

0900 to 1300 - Tour the Manhattan Project National Historical Park and Hansford Reactor (free)

0900 to 2200 - Cusk Hospitality Room socializing, snacks and drinks

1330 to 1500 - Lunch at The Emerald Restaurant

1530 to 1730 - White Bluffs Quilt Museum, Farmer's Market, Antique stores, Free time, Shopping, etc.

1800 to 1930 - Dinner at TBD Restaurant

2000 to 2100 - Planning meeting for 2020 Reunion (in Cusk Hospitality Room)

Thursday, April 12:

0600 to 0900 - Breakfast in Red Lion Dining Room

0800 to 1200 - Free time for shopping and exploring

0900 to 2200 - Cusk Hospitality Room socializing, snacks and drinks

1230 to 1500 - Water to Wine Cruise on the Columbia River (\$42 per person/\$36 Senior)

1800 to 2000 - Banquet in the Hanford House Banquet Room (\$37.50 per person)

Friday, April 13:

0600 to 0900 - Breakfast in the Red Lion Dining Room

1100 - Farewells and Checkout





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Sea Stories: "A Word to the Wise" A great tribute by Norm Carkeek to the Cusk's most famous crewmember.

"Sometimes when we have been subject to living with a real hero, we occasionally forget with whom we are dealing. Therefore, that is the daily life of a Submarine Sailor and the way he deals with his shipmates. After reporting to Mare Island Naval Shipyards I was assigned to the business of folding ships blue prints, this job lasted about ten days. Then I was ordered to join the crew of the USS Cusk SSG-348, which was in its final stages of overhaul.

I reported to the Chief of the Boat (Nuttleman), who directed me down the ladder to the bottom of the Dry-dock, where the boat was being readied for its formal paint job. I was greeted by a diminutive Chief (CPO) wearing dungarees. He informed me his name was Chief Saunders and he would be my boss for the time being. I shortly learned that when one referred to him, he would be called "Swish", which seemed to be an unusual name.

At this point Swish wanted to introduce me to what he called a chipping hammer and a half. One was air driven and the other hand driven. Next, he wanted to introduce me to the bowels of the boat (the various ballast tanks that are located underside the boat). I then learned the methods of using both the air drive and hand drive chipping tools, (sans goggles, sans hearing protection, sans breathing protection), it was a wonderful experience, especially when after an hour or so when one would light up a cigarette. I also particularly enjoyed being covered with a fine paint dust that could not be blown off. All the while Swish would encourage us to keep at it and stating that it would soon be over and we could go back to enjoying our experience of going through a shipyard overhaul.

At the end of our shift, Swish would tell us to coil the hoses and place the tools where we would find them the next day. At this point he would say, "A word to the wise is sufficient". Somehow this simple statement rang a bell with all of us, and everything was stored away correctly. And, sure enough, we found them easily the next day.

Somehow we all made it through the overhaul, and would soon depart Mare Island, but some tiny issues had to be resolved. We were ready to test the operation of the boat with the shipyard dignitaries, engineers and lead-men (shipyard dignitaries) aboard the boat in order to prove their worthiness as to efficiently overhauling the boat. We went through several maneuvers and then made a shallow dive (fifty feet), we checked for leaks and all was well. We surfaced as part of the routine, and then started to make our deep dive (one hundred and fifty feet); everything seemed to check out as we descended. At about one hundred feet an emergency occurred. There was a popping noise, and suddenly a great gush of sea water was suddenly pouring into the radio shack from the overhead. It was not only spraying, but coming in as if from a nozzle under very high pressure. Soon all of the equipment in the shack was saturated with sea water. Obviously the order to surface was immediately given and the boat surfaced without any problems but strained nerves and chagrin from the Mare Islanders.

The crew immediately went to work in cleaning and removing the water. I'll never forget how amazed I was with Herb Graham, Radioman 1st, who dismantled everything, cleaned and dried out the equipment, and had it all back to working in very short order. I also remember Swish when he uttered his patented phrase "Great gobs of boiled owl shit", as the event was taking place. It seems, a hole had been cut through the pressure hull to install some sort of valve, or pipe, then the plans changed, but the hole was not repaired. Also the cork installers had simply covered over the hole with cork.

Along came the painters and painted over the freshly applied cork. Apparently the combination of the cork and paint had created enough of a seal to hold about twenty two pounds pressure against the opening. The testing was over, and we bid adieu to Mare Island.

As we headed south I realized I had not seen the entire interior of the boat. I went to the Forward Torpedo Room, and visually checked it out (not always knowing what I was looking at), then proceeded aft through the Forward Battery, the Control Room, the Crews Dinette, the Forward Engine room, the After Engine room, and the Maneuvering Room. And then I entered the After Torpedo Room, where-upon I came face to face with two strangers. I later learned their names as something Quinliven and something Smith.

I knew there was some humor involved as they acted as if I were an enemy agent, as they began earnestly asking "who I was, and what was I doing there". I tried to answer them but they insisted I was a spy, and each one grabbed my wrists and pinned them against my back. I obviously knew they were in the midst of some ritualistic prank, so I repeated my innocence as I was bent forward from the pressure they exerted on my arms. What they didn't know was that I had been a gymnast since the age of ten, and was very flexible.

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Finally, when the ideal fulcrum was achieved, I continued the bend over until I did a flip, landing on my back, at which time I brought my feet directly between their legs and kicked them both (gently) in their crouches, at the same time they let go of my wrists. I grabbed their ankles and pulled their feet from under them causing the two of them to move headlong onto the deck. There were some "What the's" coming from them both as they went down.

I stood up, brushed my hands off and exited the compartment. What I didn't know until sometime later that one of the two torpedo men had gotten onto the sound powered phones and informed whoever answered that they were not to mess with me, as I was some kind of black belt Judo Master. Later that day, I spied Quinliven talking to Swish, and again I heard Swish say, "word to the wise is sufficient." Quinliven nodded his head in agreement.

Whenever Swish had to give an order, or a job, simple or complicated, he would end up saying this same phrase, and somehow the job or order was completed without complications. If, however, something did not come out correctly his next famous phrase would be, "Great gobs of boiled owl shit" would be heard, loud and clear, followed by some unprintable words.

Swish was born Jan 12, 1918, in Richmond, Virginia, and his southern accent stayed with him until his dying day. Swish was small in stature, tiny by most descriptions. His height in bare feet was about 5'3", weight near 120 lbs. Small for a Gunners Mate. Early on he purchased some Adler Shoes which raised his height about 2 1/2". But, that did not disguise his small frame. He had a lack of facial hair, except there was always a hint of a mustache. This lack of hair gave him a youthful look that stayed with him into his adult majority.

He tried to enlist in the French Foreign legion when he was seventeen years old. He was told to come back in four years and try to enlist again. He enlisted in the US Navy at age eighteen (1936), and spent some time on board destroyers, honing his skills as a Gunners Mate. He then volunteered for Submarine Duty.

He made five war patrols in the Atlantic and seven patrols in the Pacific while stationed aboard the USS Barb. On one of the patrols his efficiency in helping the skipper during Battle Stations was so outstanding that he received the Silver Star Medal. He again received the Silver Star during the rescue of Australian and English soldier prisoners of war that were aboard an unmarked freighter controlled by the Japanese Navy who were transporting them to Japan to work as POW's. The ship should have been marked with a Cross, but was not, and then sunk by the USS Pampanito. The Barb and the Queenfish were able to rescue several of the POW's. Swish was awarded the second Silver Star as a rescuer who would swim out to the victim, tie a line on them so they could be brought to the Barb for rescue.

Swish received the Bronze Star with "V" for his actions while on the team of eight men who were sent ashore of a Southern Japanese Island to plant a bomb, triggered by a micro switch, beneath the railroad tracks. It destroyed a sixteen car train when the weight of the train actuated the switch, and caused an explosive charge to detonate. It turns out that this was the only land action, on Japanese soil, taken by American forces during the war against Japan.

Swish received a total of fifteen medals, and commendations, including his Dolphins and Combat Patrol pins. It was always interesting to watch the various flotilla and division inspecting officers who, during an inspection, would stand in front of Swish and stare at his left chest reading the medal ribbons.

Bob McDowall and I kept in touch with Swish after his retirement. Swish drove his Jaguar XK120 to race in quite a few road races sponsored by Sports Car Club of America (SCCA). He built an experimental aircraft and learned to fly it, having quite a few hair rising incidents. Shortly before he died, I called him and he informed me he was recovering from a broken hip. He was on the roof of his house, cleaning the leaves by brushing them into the bed of his pickup, he fell and did the nasty on his hip. But, he was recovering and would soon be back on his feet.

I called him again, about a year later and asked him how he was doing. He said he was trying to recover from a badly broken hip. I said it is unusual that it is taking over year for this healing. He said the broken hip I was referring to had healed perfectly. He again was cleaning his roof when he fell a second time and seriously caused major damage to the previously damaged hip. This time he drove the Femur into the hip socket and pretty well destroyed it. Swish said to me, "It is funny that I've tried to kill myself under all kinds of dangers, i.e. Submarine Service, road racing and flying, only to essentially do it falling off my roof while cleaning it. Swish died a few months later, the break would not heal.

Yes Swish, did you utter the usual, "A word to the wise is sufficient", and when did the words, "Great gobs of boiled owl shit", last leave your mouth?"

Respectfully submitted, Norm Carkeek, USS Cusk, 1949 to 1951





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From the Cusk's Deck Log: These are excerpts randomly selected from the Cusk's Deck Logs stored in our National Archives in Maryland. This first entry is from 25 June 1959 and appears to be after a Cusk softball game. Who won the game is not known, although obviously, it wasn't one of Mike Fallatt's better days.

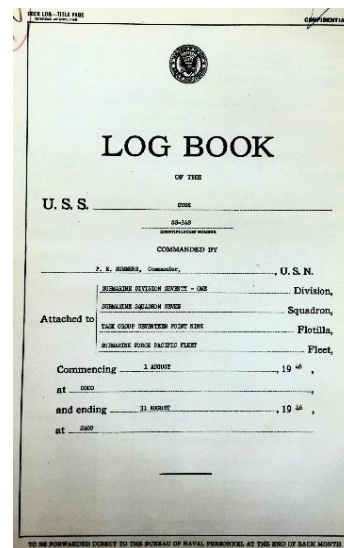
08-12 Moored as before. 0800 While participating in organized athletics on 6-24-59, Fallatt, Michael J., 517-34-26 SOSSN(SS), USN received a fracture of the right thumb when struck on the right hand with a softball bat. Not due to his own misconduct. Treatment administered by the Medical Department, U.S. Naval Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, T.H. Disposition: Duty. 0915 While inspecting the After Battery for grounds, discovered a crack in the jar of cell A110. Jumped cells number F104 and A110 out of battery and pumped them dry. 1030 Conducted daily inspection of Magazine, conditions normal.

(Signed) C. L. Coleman, LTJG, USN

"...All back one-third, take in two!" - This entry describes the Cusk's last maneuvering watch in San Diego as she gets underway for the last time. The date is Thursday, 11 September 1969 and the Cusk, now AGSS-348, is headed to San Francisco for decommissioning.

08-16 Moored as before. 0800 Mustered the crew at stations, absentees, none. 1515 Mustered the crew at quarters, absentees none. 1530 Stationed the Maneuvering Watch, made all preparations for getting underway. 16-20 Moored as before. 1606 Underway in accordance with COMSUBFLOT One weekly OP-SKED 37-69 enroute to Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, California. Steering various courses at various speeds to conform to the San Diego Channel. Captain is on the Bridge, Navigator is in the Conning Tower. OOD at the Conn. 1621 Passed Ballast Point abeam to starboard, distance 200 Yds. 1644 With Buoy #1SD abeam to starboard, set course 270° at speed 12 Kts.

(Signed) Robert L. Starkey, LT, USN



Eternal Patrol: These are our shipmates who have departed on Eternal Patrol in the past year. Additional information, pictures and obituaries (where available) may be found on the Cusk website at www.uscusk.com/Eternal.htm

Name & Rank	Served aboard Cusk	Departed
Larry D Franklin, LTJG	1961 to 1962	14 January 2018
Ron Shook, STC(SS)	1959 - 1961	12 July 2017
Phillip L Williamson, TM1(SS)	1945 to 1946 (Plankowner)	5 July 2017
Mike Keelin, STS2(SS)	1962 to 1965	31 May 2017
Robert J Strosser, TM2(SS)	1946 (Plankowner)	6 March 2017
Richard Rushlow, ET1(SS)	1953	4 March 2017
Chuck Harner, LT	1960 to 1963	1 March 2017

SAILORS! REST YOU OARS!

Reservations & Payment Form

Name: _____ Spouse: _____ Total # attending: _____

Family/Friends attending: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Cell #: _____ Email: _____ Years onboard Cusk: ____ to ____

Attendee Costs: Water to Wine Boat Cruise # ____ x \$36.00 each = \$ ____ + Reunion Banquet # ____ x \$37.50 each = \$ ____

+ Hospitality Room & Transportation costs # ____ x \$35.00 each = \$ ____ = **Total Enclosed: \$ ____**

Meal choice (each): ____ London Broil Beef ____ Char-grilled Salmon Fillet ____ Sage Rubbed Pork Porterhouse

Vegetarian Choices: _____

Make checks payable to "Steve Wilson" Please detach and mail this form with payment as soon as possible to:

USS Cusk 2018 Reunion, c/o Steve Wilson, 410 Basswood Ave, Richland, Washington 99352-4041

You can also email Steve with your attendee count info and send payment via **PayPal to:** subs566@gmail.com

