



USS Cusk SSG 348 Newsletter

Volume II Issue 7

June 2009

Shipmates

It is my sad duty to inform you of the passing of Richard S. Godfrey who entered into Eternal Patrol on February 22, 2009.

Sailor rest your oars



Cusk Reunions

At the present time, there are two Cusk Reunions being planned. San Diego CA in the summer of 2009. and Colorado Springs in 2010.

Who's invited?

USS Cusk crew members, their families, friends, neighbors, etc. — anyone you want to bring. Please try to make one of the reunions, we would like to see and greet you.

Itinerary and details:

San Diego 2009:

Friday, July 17:

Early arrivals meet for dinner at a TBD San Diego Hotel lobby.

Saturday, July 18:

Bus tour of San Diego,
Harbor cruise of San Diego Bay,
Submarine Base tour, and dinner.

Sunday, July 19:

Board the Carnival Cruise Ship "Elation" ETD is 5:30 p.m. Group seating for dinner (and all meals on board) on-board entertainment.

Monday, July 20:

Spend the day on Catalina Island (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) dinner, sunset, and on-board entertainment at sea.

Tuesday, July 21:

Spend a day in Ensenada, Mexico (9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.).

Wednesday, July 22:

Fun day at sea.

Thursday, July 23:

Return to San Diego (ETA 8:00 a.m.).

Cruise Costs:

Inside Cabin: \$429 + \$87.60 taxes & fees = \$516.60 per person.

Ocean view (outside) cabin: \$479 + \$87.60 taxes & fees = \$566.60 per person.

Notes: All costs include cabin, all meals, and all on-board entertainment for 4 nights and 4 days.

Upgrades and larger cabins available. Rates drop about \$200 per person for 3rd and 4th person in cabin. 4 and 5 person cabins available. Costs are based on double occupancy.

San Diego City Tour and Harbor Cruise: \$44 per person; San Diego dinners and hotel costs are being negotiated—details so when/what to pay:

Refer to cruise for "USS Cusk," Booking ID: 51C0B5.

Pay by Check:

Mail check payments to:

Carnival Cruise Lines_
Attn: Cash Dept. - MSRV 406N
3655 NW 87th Avenue
Miami, FL 33178

Pay by Credit Card:

Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover ® Network, and Diners Club Credit Cards are accepted.

By phone: 1-888-CARNIVAL

Online: <http://www.carnival.com>

More information to follow soon. Let Tom Rusland know if you have any questions or if you need any additional information. A hardcopy version will be

mailed to everyone on his Cusk mailing list within a week. He will also post more information about this cruise and the 2010 Cusk Reunion on the USS Cusk website soon (<http://www.usscusk.com>).

Our booking agent at Carnival is George Quiroz. Click on his name to send him an e-mail. Remember to refer to the USS Cusk cruise and our booking number 51C0B5.

UPDATED PASSPORT REQUIREMENTS

New travel requirements for U.S., Canadian and Bermudian citizens recently went into effect on June 1, 2009.

While the new Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) requires valid passports for land and sea travel, a final ruling was issued allowing leniency for

U.S. citizens traveling on "closed-loop" cruises, i.e., sailings that both originate and terminate in the same U.S. port.

Documentary requirements under WHTI for "closed loop" cruises are not limited to cruises that travel only to contiguous territories or adjacent islands. This means U.S. citizens calling on ports in Honduras, Panama, Costa Rica and Belize will also be exempt from the passport requirement.

U.S. citizens taking "closed-loop" cruises are not required to have a passport but will need proof of citizenship such as an original or certified copy of a birth certificate, a certificate of naturalization, a passport card, an enhanced driver's license (EDL) as well as a government-issued photo ID. Children are also required to bring proof of citizenship and if 16 and over, a photo ID is also required. Canadian and Bermudian citizens are required to have a passport for air, land and sea travel, including all Carnival cruises.

Although a passport is not required for U.S. citizens taking "closed loop" cruises, we strongly recommend all guests travel with a passport (valid for at least six months beyond completion of travel). Having a passport will enable guests to fly from the U.S. to a foreign port in the event they miss their scheduled embarkation or to fly back to the U.S. if they need to disembark the ship mid-cruise due to an emergency.

If a cruise begins and ends in different U.S. ports or begins and ends in a foreign port (such as our 2009 Alaska and Hawaii cruises), a valid passport or other recognized WHTI-compliant document is required. A valid passport is required if you are traveling on any of our Europe cruises.

All guests need proper proof of citizenship in order to travel and failure to present a valid document at check in will result in denied boarding and no refund will be issued.

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In 2010 a reunion is being planned to be held in Colorado Springs CO.

Dates August 15, 2010 check-in day
Check-out August 19 a.m. 2010 Hotel Clarion & Conference Center, 314 W. Bijou Street
Colorado Springs CO 80905
Phone No. 1-(719) 471-8680

The Hotel is conveniently located off Interstate 25 at exit 142. Please do not make hotel reservations until after January 1, 2010, as their computers are not set up for 2010 yet and they do not have a code number for the USS CUSK SS 348 reunion.

Room Rates will be \$84 plus tax each day you are staying.

Amenities at the Hotel:

1. Complimentary hot buffet breakfast daily in the restaurant

Breakfast consists of scrambled eggs, sausage, ham, breakfast potatoes, waffles, rolls, doughnuts, 3 kinds of cold cereal, milk, juices, coffee, tea, fresh bananas and apples. What more could one want?

Airport Shuttle

The shuttle tries to run every hour to the airport. The front desk at the hotel will have to know your arrival time and which airlines. Airlines coming into Colorado Springs are Allegiant Air, Continental, Delta, Frontier, Northwest, United and U S Airways.

There is complimentary shuttle service within a 3-mile radius of the hotel.

When wanting to use the shuttle, you must set it up with the front desk.

The hotel lobby is large and a great relaxing area. Complimentary Parking, Internet service, e-mail, fax, coin operated laundry service, indoor pool and beautiful courtyard and gazebo are provided.

In the room:

Coffeemaker, hair dryer, microwave, fridge, iron/ironing board, and television.

Attractions:

USAF Academy, Garden of the Gods, Pikes Peak with Cog train to the top of the Peak. An evening of supper and western stage show at the flying W ranch.

One afternoon we will have lunch and some shopping in Manitou Springs.

On Wednesday evening, we will have a banquet at the hotel.

There will be free time, for other attractions you may want to take in.

The hospitality room will be open for all to enjoy. The hospitality room has large patio doors leading to the outside courtyard, which makes it a great area to sit and relax with each other.

This gives everyone an idea of what will be happening at the 2010 Cusk Reunion in Colorado Springs.

We will let everyone know more details, about expenses and daily schedule.

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Planning these Reunions is good because it gives more Cusk crew members a chance to attend a Cusk reunion. Information on these reunions will be covered in the Cusk newsletter in the future. Please plan to attend one of these reunions.

I am asking for contributions to the Cusk newsletter fund, please give what you can. Make your checks payable to the USS Cusk newsletter and send to:

William E. Vincent
10249 Ainsworth Dr.
Cupertino, CA 95014-1001

Thanks, your editor

For Your Information

Liberty Bars

by Unknown Subvet

Our favorite liberty bars were unlike no other watering holes or dens of iniquity inhabited by seagoing men and women. They had to meet strict

standards to be in compliance with the acceptable requirement for a sailor beer-swilling dump. The first and foremost requirement was a crusty old gal serving suds. She had to be able to wrestle King Kong to parade rest, be able to balance a tray with one hand; knock bluejackets out of the way with the other hand and skillfully navigate through a roomful of milling around drunks. On slow nights, she had to be the kind of gal who would give you a back scratch with a fly swatter handle or put her foot on the table so you could admire her new ankle bracelet some "mook" brought her back from a Hong Kong liberty.

A good barmaid had to be able to whisper sweet nothings in your ear like, "Sailor, your thirteen button flap is twelve buttons short of a green board." And, "Buy a pack of Clorets and chew up the whole thing before you get within heaving range of any gal you ever want to see again." And, "Hey animals, I know we have a crowd tonight, but if any of you guys find the head facilities fully occupied and start urinating down the floor drain, you're gonna find yourself scrubbing the deck with your white hats!"

They had to be able to admire great tattoos, look at pictures of ugly bucktooth kids, and smile and be able to help haul drunks to cabs and comfort 19 year-olds who had lost someone close to them. They could look at your ship's identification shoulder tab and tell you the names of the Skippers back to the time you were a Cub Scout.

If you came in after a late night maintenance problem and fell asleep with a half eaten Slim-Jim in your hand, they tucked your peacoat around you, put out the cigarette you left burning in the ashtray and replaced the warm draft you left sitting on the table with a cold one when you woke up.

Why? Simply because they were one of the few people on the face of the earth that knew what you did, and appreciated what you were doing. In addition, if you treated them like a decent human being and didn't drive 'em nuts by playing songs they hated on the jukebox, they would lean over the back of the booth and park their soft warm breasts on your neck when they sat two Rolling Rocks in front of you.

Then there is the imported table wipe down guy and glass washer, trash dumper, deck swabber and paper towel replacement officer. The guy had to have baggy tweed pants, a gold tooth, and a grin like a 1950 Buick. And a name like "Ramon," "Juan," "Pedro" or "Tico." He had to smoke unfiltered Luckies, Camels or Raleighs. He wiped the tables down with a sour washrag that smelled like a skunk diaper and said, "How choo navee mans tonight?" He was the indispensable man. The guy with credentials that allowed him to borrow Slim-Jims, beer nuts and pickled hard-boiled eggs from other beer joints when they ran out where he worked.

The establishment itself. The place had to have walls covered with ship and squadron plaques. The walls were adorned with enlarged unit patches and the dates of previous deployments. A dozen or more old, yellowed photographs of fellows named "Buster," "Chicago," "P-Boat Barney," "Flaming Hooker Harry," "Malone," "Honshu Harry" Jackson, Douche Bag Doug, and Capt. Slade Cutter decorated any unused space.

It had to have the obligatory Michelob, Pabst Blue Ribbon and "Beer Nuts sold here" neon signs. An eight-ball mystery beer tap handle and signs reading: "Your mother does not work here, so clean away your frickin' trash."

"Keep your hands off the barmaid."

"Don't throw butts in urinal."

"Barmaid's word is final in settling bets."

"Take your fights out in the alley behind the bar!"

"Owner reserves the right to waltz your worthless sorry ass outside."

"Shipmates are responsible for riding herd on their ship/squadron drunks."

This was typical signage found in classy establishments catering to sophisticated as well as unsophisticated clientele.

You had to have a juke box built along the lines of a Sherman tank loaded with Hank Williams, Mother Maybelle Carter, Johnny Horton, Johnny Cash and twenty other crooning goobers nobody ever heard of. The damn thing has to have "La

Bamba," Herb Alpert's "Lonely Bull" and Johnny Cash's "Don't take your guns to town" in memory of Alameda's barmaid goddess, Thelma. If Thelma is within a twelve-mile radius of where any of those three recordings can be found on a jukebox, it is wise to have a stack of life insurance applications within reach of the coin slot.

The furniture in a real good liberty bar had to be made from coal mine shoring lumber and was not fully acceptable until it had 600 cigarette burns and your ship's numbers or "FTN" carved into it. The bar had to have a brass foot rail and at least six Slim-Jim containers, an oversized glass cookie jar full of beer-nuts, a jar of pickled hard boiled eggs that could produce rectal gas emissions that could shut down a sorority party, and big glass containers full of something called pickled pigs feet and polish sausage. Only drunk Chiefs and starving Ethiopians ate pickled pigs feet and unless the last three feet of your colon had been manufactured by Midas, you didn't want to get anywhere near the Polish napalm dogs.

No liberty bar was complete without a couple of hundred faded ship or airplane pictures and a "Shut the hell up!" sign taped on the mirror behind the bar along with several rather tasteless naked lady pictures. The pool table felt had to have at least three strategic rips as a result of drunken competitors and balls that looked as if a gorilla baby had teethed on the sonuvabitches.

Liberty bars were home and it didn't matter what country, state, or city you were in, when you walked into a good liberty bar, you felt at home. They were also establishments where 19-year-old kids received an education available nowhere else on earth. You learned how to "tell" and "listen" to sea stories. You learned about sex at \$25 a pop! from professional ladies who taught you things your high school biology teacher didn't know were anatomically possible. You learned how to make a two cushion bank

shot and how to toss down a beer and shot of Sun Torry known as a “depth charge.” We were young, and a helluva long way from home. We were pulling down crappy wages for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a-week availability and loving the life we lived. We didn’t know it at the time, but our association with the men we served with forged us into the men we became. And a lot of that association took place in bars where we shared the stories accumulated in our, up to then, short lives. We learned about women and that life could be tough on a gal.

While many of our classmates were attending college, we were getting an education slicing through the green rolling seas in WestPac or the Med experiencing the orgasmic rush of a night cat shot, the heart pounding drama of the return to the ship with the gut

Those Who Sail Beneath the Swells

by Bob ‘Dex’ Armstrong

In every generation, the navies of the world always seem to find the necessary number of that ‘special breed of man’ needed to man their undersea ships. Those truly magnificent fools with the requisite pride and spirit of adventure needed to voluntarily crawl into an iron cylinder full of similar mental defectives and take the contraptions to sea.

I can’t speak for the rest of the Navy. The only ‘rest of the Navy’ I ever met, were perpetual shore duty shore patrols. Looking back I can’t remember one positive interaction I had with any sonuvabitch sporting an SP armband. The last thing they were interested in, in the old days, was spreading goodwill. My entire short-lived naval service career was spent with like-minded jaybirds who actually liked going to sea in what closely resembled a sinkable septic tank.

I actually thought that to be a sailor, one had to go to sea. Sailing had to involve stuff like seagulls, saltwater and large metal objects that were painted gray, displaced tons of water and bounced around a lot in heavy weather. How guys who interpreted photographs in a windowless building in Omaha, Nebraska called themselves sailors was way beyond the level

of comprehension of a seventeen-year-old who cut his teeth on books about Pacific submarine action. Lads who turned up at New London back in the 1950s weren’t the kind of young men whose sense of naval adventure could be satisfied inventorying jocks and socks in some damn quonset hut in East Rat’s Ass, Minnesota, or typing liberty cards at some shore station where they hot-patched weather balloons.

Submariners had no desire to belong to any organization that issued clothing designed to blend in with poison ivy plants, required you to dig holes and own a personal shovel, or any desire to eat unidentifiable food out of little green cans in the rain. We liked hydraulic oil-laced coffee, crawling up on a pre-warmed flash pad and freely exchanging insults with men as equally ugly as ourselves. We enjoyed knowing that in any unscheduled altercation, our entire crew would show up to extract our drunken fanny and chastise those we had stirred up.

Back in the old days, (before any of you modern day techno undersea swashbucklers get a twist in your bloomers, I only know about the old days. I never rode anything that was intended to go below 412 feet or stay down for several months at a time.) So, as I started to say, back in the old days, the old leather-faced, hardboiled Chiefs used to say, “Gahdam sailors belong on ships, and ships belong at sea!”

There was some kind of selection process that they put you through at New London that eliminated the fainthearted, the not totally committed, guys lacking desire to engage in intimate cohabitation with members of the opposite gender, communists, bedwetters, whiners, and anyone who entertained the slightest desire to be stationed in Omaha, Nebraska.

The system, God bless it, sorted out the true believers and packed the rest off to the surface fleet, Omaha, and God knows where else. And they put us on boats. A lot of us went to old, late in life, boats with combat histories. They were old World War II boats with racks, that once bunked our heroes, the men we wanted to be accepted by, and to be exactly like. We qualified, and in so doing we joined the continuous chain that is, and will always be the U.S. Sub-

marine Force.

I don't know what the dreams and aspirations consist of for the young men of today. Ours was a far simpler time. We grew up chasing fireflies, shooting marbles, spinning tops, teaching each other yo-yo tricks, shooting each other with BB guns, playing two hands below the waist tag football, neighborhood kick the can and pick-up-game after school hardball. Nobody cried, tattletailed or went home to pee. Back then, you didn't have to have made all 'A's in diathermic razz-a-ma-tazz physics or have a working understanding of the components in the formulation of the universe, to ride submarines.

You had to have an understanding of honor, loyalty, faithfully performed duty, obedience to command, respect for leadership, and total and absolute faith in your ship and shipmates.

Added to these qualities, a true boatsailor had to have a wide-screen sense of adventure and the same brand of curiosity that has lived in the hearts of those in every generation who ventured beyond known limits. And you had love dancing with the devil. Somewhere, real major-league devil dancing got shot out the garbage gun. But some things never change. It's still pitch black dark below 150 feet, a boat is always no farther than 9 miles from land (straight down) and the skipper's word is law.

And so far, every generation has worn the same insignia and nobody ever forgets the hull number of their qual boat or the name of their first COB. There are many common denominators among the worldwide community of undersea sailors.

When the Kursk went down, I was struck and frankly dumbfounded by the genuine outpouring of sympathy for the families and loved ones of the lost boat sailors. To me, they had always been our enemy. Up to then, I had given no thought to the similarities found in our manner of service and the commonality of the danger of operating deep within a hostile environment surrounded by potential death on all sides.

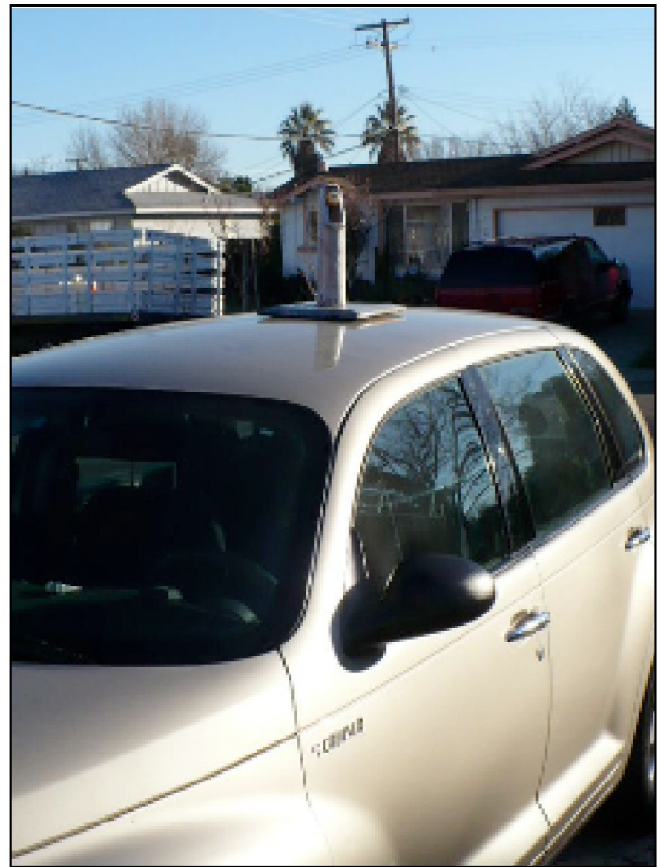
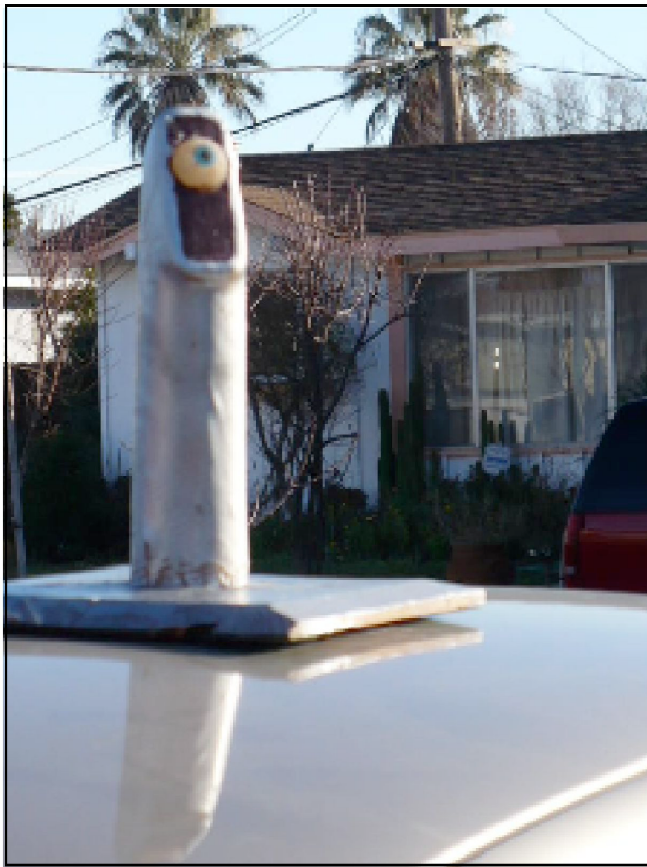
Likewise, I never cease to be surprised by the way that submariners embrace their adversarial counterparts. There appears to be a universal acceptance with implied forgiveness of all German U-boat crewmen. You never hear the term 'Nazi' U-boatmen. The term 'German' has become substituted for the term 'Nazi.' America has a short national memory and everybody gets out of the penalty box in one generation. I sat in a theater rooting for the former 'bad guys' in the film DAS BOOT. What we were seeing on the screen, was a boat full of sons of Hitler sneaking around and sinking our citizens. But the fact that we, having lived a similar life inside a recognizably similar pressure hull, elicited a sympathy and irrational forgiveness. In short, we related to both the characters and their circumstances.

I guess that in the final analysis, all submariners are brothers when you look into the depth of their souls. That is good. In times of war, nobody who transits the surface of the world's oceans loves submarines. Submariners and submariners are viewed as implementers and practitioners of the black arts...backstabbing, bushwhacking sonuvabitches. We slip up from hiding below the waves and blow ships to pieces in a totally unfair, unsportsmanlike fashion. Any way you cut it, that's the way we made our living.

We black sheep, we predatory sharks, we saltwater sneaky Petes stick together. We are a very small group when you consider the total world population and the percentage that never had any desire to crawl into a steel tank and sink out of sight. Submariners, when all is said and done, are special unique people who are the only ones who truly understand each other, and ever will.

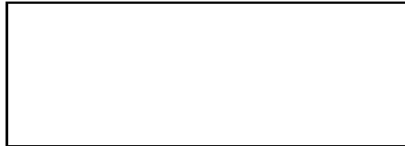
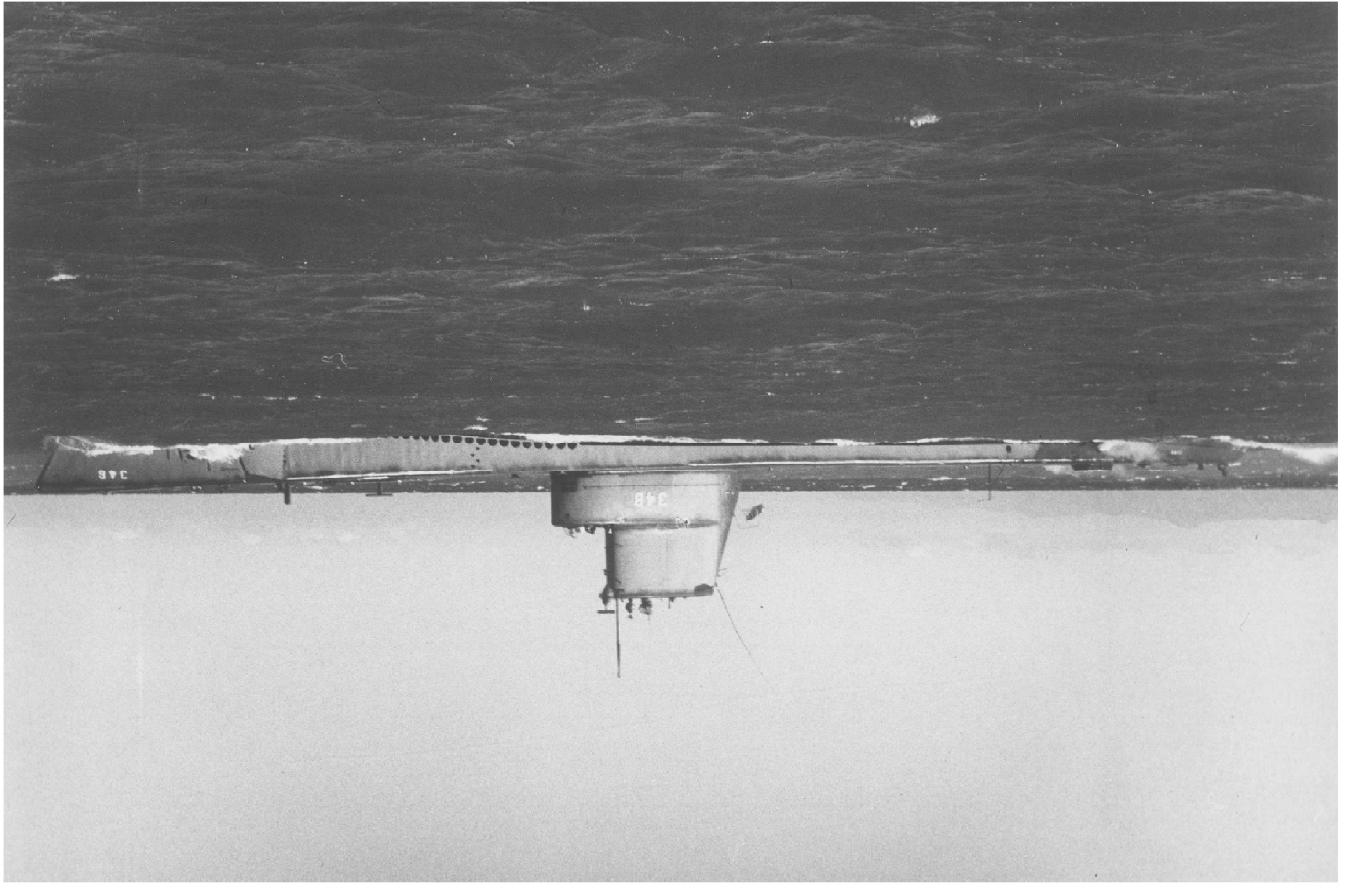
The old warhorses who fought submarine wars are leaving us. These submersible sea dogs passed down the lethal reputation we carried and the awesome respect our boats were given.

I for one have been both honored and extremely proud to have been a part of this fine body of extraordinary adventurers and patriots.



A Cusk sailor car





**USS Cusk SSG 348
Newsletter**



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