

2018 USS Sylvania Reunion  
Norfolk, Virginia  
FINAL NOTICE

The 2018 USS Sylvania Reunion will be in Norfolk, Virginia on September 6-9, 2018. It will be held at the Sheraton Waterside Norfolk, 7777 Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA. For room reservation phone for Starwood/Sheraton (888) 625-4988, choose number 1 for new reservations and ask for the USS Sylvania Reunion group with the room rate of \$119 plus taxes. for a king and \$119 plus taxes for a double. Call in Sheraton national reservations at 1 (888) 625-4988 or go web link at <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/sylvan18>. This Sheraton is part of the Starwood system so you earn Starwood points.

To reduce reunion costs, two sailors can room together. The room rate does not include breakfast. There is a full-service restaurant off the lobby, and also an express coffee and bakery items in the lobby. Our room rate will be extended three days before the reunion and three days afterwards. There is a fee to park your car in the parking ramp adjacent to the hotel. The room **reservation deadline is June 6, 2018.** It is very important that you let me know of your interest in attending. We would really enjoy seeing you at the 2018 reunion in Norfolk, VA, September 6-9, 2018.

Post cards were sent to over 400 of the former crew, because we do not have an email address and the remainder of 700 crew members were notified by e-mail, on our web page [www.usssylvania.com](http://www.usssylvania.com) and as an event on our Face Book page at [www.facebook.com/usssylvania](http://www.facebook.com/usssylvania).

**ACTION** - Call in our hotel reservation to the Sheraton Waterside Norfolk NOW!! I need to inform the Sheraton the number of rooms to keep in our room block. After that date, they will release our rooms for others. The banquet caterer needs attendee count for table service and ordering food. Send registration form with registration fees, Meet and Greet Spirit of Norfolk cruise, Friday bus tour of Naval Base and fees for the banquet by June 6, 2018 to John D. Pierce, 3093 Kissing Rock Lane, Lowell, MI 49331. My e-mail is: [piercesylvania@gmail.com](mailto:piercesylvania@gmail.com).

This Final Notice contains our typical Reunion Registration Form for the 2018 reunion with the **reunion Registration Form deadline date of June 6, 2018.** It will be posted on Facebook at [Facebook.com/usssylvania](https://www.facebook.com/usssylvania), and our web page [www.usssylvania.com](http://www.usssylvania.com) and the remainder to be notified by the US Mail. I have confirmed and signed contracts for the Meet and Greet Harbor Cruise, bus for the Navy Base Tour and Saturday night banquet dinner price. Our dues for 2018 - 2019 are \$25. We update the **crew mailing list of over 700 of the crew**, if you want a copy now, please let me know.

**What:** 2018 USS Sylvania Navy Reunion

**When:** Reunion Schedule Plan of The Day and Costs

Thursday September 6<sup>th</sup> Registration begins in the hospitality room. Meet and Greet afternoon harbor cruise boards at 6:15 PM to 6:30 PM and cruise time departs at 7:00 PM and returns at 9:30 PM. This cruise allows us to view the harbor and Navy vessels from the water aboard Spirit of Norfolk (includes interactive entertainment and buffet dinner each adult \$64). **FIRST COME FIRST SERVE** to reserve a cruise seat. We want those people **who know there will take the cruise** to e-mail me or send in the registration form to reserve a seat on the cruise now. We have 35 seats reserved for us now, and we may need more seats.

Friday morning September 7<sup>th</sup> 9:00 AM group tour to take a bus to Naval Station Norfolk with lunch on base return at 3:00 PM (each adult \$62),

Saturday September 8<sup>th</sup> Liberty Call and evening banquet dinner (each adult \$46)

Sunday September 9<sup>th</sup> noon for good byes and departures.

**Where:** Sheraton Norfolk Waterside, 777 Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA 23510.

RESERVE YOUR ROOM NOW. Early September is a busy time in Norfolk. A large group is in the hotel early in the week of September 3<sup>rd</sup> and they may have most of the Harbor View rooms through Wednesday. Therefore, if you want a room on Tuesday or Wednesday you may not get Harbor View room or beds types you desire. The Sylvania room block is reserved for our group Thursday through Saturday night. There will be an overlap of rooms desired by people with a room with one king or one with two queens.

**ROOMS - FIRST COME FIRST SERVE** We want those people **who know there will attend** the reunion to reserve a room now. We have 50 rooms now, but are going fast – we want more rooms for us!! If we get more reservations, the hotel will increase our room block of more rooms to accommodate all of our group. When you make your room, reservations specify either Harbor View or City View. People reserving later (50%) will get a room but have City View rooms remaining and maybe get a king rather than two queens beds.

Regular reunion activities at the hotel begin Thursday noon, September 6<sup>th</sup> and ends Sunday, September 9 at noon. Our registration is at the designated hospitality room. The Hospitality room is open noon on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> and closes at noon Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. This room is a general-purpose meeting room and hospitality room is for socializing and R and R. This is a **BYOB and snacks format**. Sylvania Memorabilia – Think what you might have and want to be to the reunion to show off such as old navy jackets, beach towels, lighters and cruise books.

### **Volunteers**

At the reunion, we will need help from volunteers. I will have a sign-up sheet for people to help with the registration desk at the hospitality room, be at the hospitality room during the harbor cruise and during the bus tour of the Base. Also, at the banquet we would like to have a host and hostess before dinner, a note taker for names of people at the photo session and general help.

**Dress**

At the banquet, there will be a photo session for the crew per decade and portrait of the sailor and spouse/guest. During the reunion, women dress casual and a warm jacket for the season. If the weather is still hot everyone may want to wear shorts. This reunion is in the fall for Norfolk, so bring jackets for any harbor cruise, walking along the harbor on the boardwalks and historic district strolling.

**Banquet**

The banquet is on Saturday evening, September 8th at 7:00 pm at the hotel banquet facilities. There will be a cash bar. Photo session at 6:00pm - dress is business casual for individual and group photos. Photos will be of the plank owners and crews per decade (60s, 70s, 80s and 90s)

We hold a RAFFLE after the dinner for fun and a money maker for crew member searches. We always are asking for unique raffle items such as nautical items like artwork, books or ship models. Remember gifts are unique and that also can be in carry-on luggage for aircraft.

**Transportation**

Downtown Norfolk is accessible by a transit system called FRED. FRED is an open-air golf cart for 4 to 6 people in the downtown area. It is not ADA.

Airport Transportation by the Norfolk Light Rail Transit from the airport to Downtown/FRED  
Most major airlines operate out of the Norfolk International Airport. The hotel does not have shuttle service. Rent A Car - If you plan on getting out of the waterfront area rent a car. There is a lot shopping in the area, but you will need a car to travel to Virginia Beach, Oceana Naval Air Station, Little Creek Amphibious Base, shop or eat away from the downtown area. The hotel does not have a shuttle.

Parking is now an issue in Norfolk. Our reunion gets a break in the parking rate in the City lot next to the Sheraton. Visit [Norfolk.gov/parking](http://Norfolk.gov/parking) for more information.

**What to do in Norfolk**

Sheraton Waterside Norfolk is our host hotel, it is adjacent to the Waterside Market Place which is an entertainment venue with many restaurants, bars and shops. Norfolk's premier dining and entertainment district is a central place where you can hang out, dine and relax with your whole family. It features the best of national, regional and local restaurants and offers live music, festivals and more. Located in the heart of the coastal business district and adjacent to the City of Norfolk's world class waterfront and festival site is called Town Point Park. Click on the web site <http://watersidedistrict.com>

Next to the Waterside waterfront is the Nauticus Featuring Battleship USS Wisconsin (BB-64). The BB 64 is no longer a US Navy ship, so most spaces are now open to the public – NOTE NOT ADA Compliance because of the ladders to different levels of the ship.

There are numerous Naval Base Cruises and viewing the dry docks by Victory Rover, Spirit of Norfolk and sailboat excursions on the Elizabeth River that depart the Waterside park area –

click on [www.navalbasecruises.com](http://www.navalbasecruises.com). Note that the Spirit of Norfolk is our Meet and Greet Thursday night event. If you arrive on Friday, you can go on the boat any day for a lunch cruise or evening dinner cruise. For boat boarding and other information on the Spirit of Norfolk call 1(866) 445-9283.

Come early to Norfolk area on the 6<sup>th</sup> because there so much to see and do in the area. Contact Norfolk Conventions and Visitors Bureau (CVB) at (757) 664-6620 or (800) 368-3097. On the web click [visitnorfolktoday.com](http://visitnorfolktoday.com) for detailed travel information and guides. Contact the CVB for more info on food, southern cooking, fish dinners, bars and shopping areas. In the downtown area and Mall are national chain restaurants such as: Longhorn, Outback, Chilies, Applebee's and Red Lobster.

**Historic** - Norfolk dates back sever hundred years. Most notable are neighborhoods in Ghent and Freemason Historic District

**Art** – boutiques and galleries featuring local artiest. Architecture of 1700 and 1800s homes and Civil War History Architecture and historic structures, Norfolk has one of the largest National Historic Landmark Districts in the US.

**Shopping** - Small shops with modern décor stores, funky junk shops, chic boutiques and fine art and craft galleries, and locally made fashion, food and home goods. Regional Malls are MacArthur Center, Military Circle Mall and Norfolk Premium Outlets.

**Military interest** - Active and retire military can get on some parts of the nearby bases. These bases include the Amphibious Base and Oceana Naval Air Station

One of the stops is near Dumars Ice Cream shop. (<http://www.dumars.com/>)  
The bus tour on Friday also goes through the riverfront section of the city along the Elizabeth River. There lots of shops, restaurants and bars for music and food.

#### **Extra tourist venues**

Portsmouth, VA [www.oldtownportsmouth.com](http://www.oldtownportsmouth.com) for the information on the 400-year history. History stems from the maritime roots a location on the Elizabeth River named after Queen Elizabeth and was ruled by the British.

Commodore Movie Theater 1945 Art Deco-style motion picture theater  
[www.commodoretheater.com](http://www.commodoretheater.com)

The Lightship Portsmouth Museum

Olde Town Farmers Market on Saturday

The Bier Garden German Restaurant and Tavern, Portsmouth

Beaches at Virginia Beach

Architecture of 1700 and 1800s homes and Civil War Battlefields.

MacArther Memorial

Chrysler Museum of Art

Historical neighborhoods from 1700s with antique shops nearby

Norfolk Botanical Garden

Cape Henry Lighthouse

Virginia Maritime Museum in Newport News, VA

Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach and Naval Amphibious Base in Little Creek

Washington, DC Military Monuments and Memorials – Contact John Pierce for tourists details

Colonial Historical Sites, Fort Monroe, Portsmouth and Williamsburg

### **Social Media**

Check out Facebook for interesting Navy items and pictures on US Navy Salty Dogs, American Battleships and US Ships and Sailors. I have posted a few Sylvania and UNREP pictures on these three sites. Facebook is fun and useful; - go on the web for Facebook and request to be a friend or “request to come aboard”.

Also visit Facebook for your rate. I’m on FB for Quartermasters, and there is on for Boatswains Mate and Deck Division called “Deck Apes R Us”. Check out the web for You Tube for Navy videos and Resupply At Sea.

### **Reunion Dues**

Dues are \$25 for the 2018- 2019 time periods. We use dues to locate former crew members, update our web page and there is an annual fee for the domain name: USS Sylvania.com. Also, post cards and mail outs are expensive. In the past, dues payers also received the [Sylvania Mailing List](#). If you cannot pay the dues, send \$5 to John Pierce for a copy.

### **Locate More of The Crew**

Thanks for sending your address for our files and mail outs. If you relocate, please send us your new address. If you know of other crew member who may not be on our mailing list to get information, please let them know and forward their information to me. If you are looking for a work or liberty friend, search on the web under White Pages for that person. Also, check your cruise books or photos which may contain names and home town/states

## USS SYLVANIA MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

Write to John Pierce for these items and please specify your shirt size and add \$5 for S&H. Resupply of some of these items are taking place now, so we are **taking orders from you**, as the stock arrives, we can mail your items ordered.

1. As an operating funds maker, we have in stock the Sylvania (AFS-2) First Med Cruise T-Shirts \$14 and \$16 for 2XX or larger size. This T-shirt is for the crew who served on the First Sylvania Cruise 25 April 1965 to 30 September 1969.
2. Generic USS Sylvania T-Shirt (for all dates) with the USS Sylvania (AFS-2) and seal/logo with UNREP ships and a helo. Price is \$15 and \$20 for sizes 2XXL and larger.
3. Generic USS Sylvania (for all dates) golf shirts with collar and breast pocket. The inscription of USS Sylvania is over the pocket. Price \$24 and \$26 for 2XXL and larger
4. An USS Sylvania beer stein with grey lettering on clear glass with the USS Sylvania (AFS-2) seal/logo and side view of Sylvania. Price is \$15. **Shipping for this item is \$10**
5. An AFS-2 ball cap - \$15 done with scrambled eggs is \$17.
6. An USS Sylvania (AKA-44) WWII ball cap - \$15 and with scrambled eggs is \$17. An USS Sylvania (AKA-44) golf shirt color is dark blue with gold trim on the collar and sleeves

## **Obituaries**

Capt. Cyrus Fitton USN Retired CO mid-1968 to 1969

Others sailors from around the USA

Jerry Hale, Chief Radioman

John Lind, Seaman

James Cannaughton, Seaman

John Ringo, Seaman

## **WWII USS Sylvania (AKA-44)**

In 1994 for the FS-2 decommissioning, we located approximately 50 of the former USS Sylvania (AKA-44) officers and crew, of which 15 of the crew and two officers attended. By earl 2000 , we located up to 125 of the AKA-44 crew. The deceased list is extensive, and most are presumed passed away. In 2016, I corresponded with those WWII Vets on the mailing list to verify those who are living. A total of 5 are remailing with good addresses, and three will attend this year's reunion.

## **USS Sylvania (AFS-2) Status**

She was towed from the James River in VA and other ships from the ghost fleet are being dismantled by International Shipbreaking Limited Port Bownsville, TX. This is occurring on the Mexican side of the Brownsville, Channel. Check out the web at

[www.navy.memoriesshop.com/Brownsville](http://www.navy.memoriesshop.com/Brownsville). Also check on line for SinkEx for the target practice of USS ship; USS/USNS Mars.

### **Sylvania Reunion – Social Media**

We are updating the Sylvania web page at [www.usssylvania.com](http://www.usssylvania.com) with new reunion information. Check out the Guest Book for new crew members. Face Book - we are now on Face Book at [www.facebook.com/usssylvania](http://www.facebook.com/usssylvania) so look up the Sylvania, the crew or add your name to it.

There are several Face Book groups with Naval interest with ship pictures, aircraft sunsets and firing of naval guns **These sites are US Navy Salty Dogs and US Ships and Sailors I have pictures posted on Sylvania and UNREP pictures on these two sites. Face Book is fun and useful; - go on the web for face book and request to be a friend or “request to come aboard”** I belong to Salty Dogs, Battleships. Check out your rate, I have heard of one for Quartermasters, Snipes and others

## **SYLVANIA REUNION REGISTRATION**

### POST ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR

Date: September 6 Sheraton Waterside- 9th, 2018

Time: Reunion Registration begins on Thursday at 12:00 p.m. on Sept. 6, 2018.

Reunion Headquarters: **Sheraton Waterside Norfolk, VA. For room reservation Phone (888) 625-4988. Hospitality room location will be posted in the hotel lobby.**

**Format:** The four-day session is a social function for shipmates and their families that will include a Meet and Greet Harbor Cruise, a Navy Base bus tour, raffle prizes and a banquet. Attendees will be former USS Sylvania (AKA-44 and AFS-2) 1964-1994 officers, crews helicopter crews and guests. This will be a great get away vacation!!

**ACTION: Send registration form with registration fees, dues, Harbor Cruise, Naval Base bus tour and dinner cost for the banquet by June 6th 2018 to: John D. Pierce, 3093 Kissing Rock Lane, Lowell, MI 49331.**

**Call in your hotel reservation to the Sheraton Waterside N O W!!**

John QM3 1967-68 home ported in Naples, Italy Cell (517) 927-3312



**REGISTRATION FORM USS SYLVANIA REUNION**

REGISTRATION FORM to be sent to John Pierce by JUNE 6, 2018

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SHIP NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE/GUESTS \_\_\_\_\_

Year on Sylvania \_\_\_\_\_ Rate/Rank \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Kids Names \_\_\_\_\_  
Ages \_\_\_\_\_

REUNION DUES - ALUMNI CREW MEMBER 2018-2019 period \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

REUNION REGISTRATION FEE - CREW MEMBER (one per family) \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

This fee covers the cost to have a private hospitality room in the hotel FROM Thursday at noon to Sunday at noon and some raffle items. Snacks, beer and other alcoholic beverages may be brought in by attendees. (BYOB)

**Thursday**, September 6<sup>th</sup> **Meet and Greet Harbor** Cruise aboard the Spirit of Norfolk

viewing the Navy ships from the River and buffet dinner Adult fee \$64 x = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Friday**, September 7<sup>th</sup> Group Bus Tour for window viewing of Norfolk Naval

Station, with lunch on base and ice cream treats on return to hotel

Adult fee \$62 x = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday**, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 REUNION BANQUET - Photo session and cash bar begins at 6:00 pm and dinner at 7:00pm - Includes buffet dinner, tax and tip.

Buffet Dinner includes: 2 meat items -black skillet fried chicken and sliced pork loin, creamy cole slaw and assorted green salad with tomatoes, red skinned smasher potatoes and southern green beans, biscuits and cornbread. Dessert is cobbler and chocolate Hersey Cake, served with coffee/tea/iced tea. Price includes tax and gratuity.

Adult fee @ \$46.00 x = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Children (under 11) @ \$ 23.00 x = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Children under age 11 (call John P. for other arrangements)

Reunion Dues, Registration Fee, Harbor Cruise, Naval Base Bus Tour and Banquet Dinners

Check Enclosed is a check payable to John D. Pierce

TOTAL CHECK AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate any special diet or disabled requirement**

ACTION: Send pre-registration form RSVP and check by June 6, 2018 - payable to: John D. Pierce, 3093 Kissing Rock Ln., Lowell, MI 49331 E-mail [piercesylvania@gmail.com](mailto:piercesylvania@gmail.com), PH (616) 897-5178, cell PH (517) 927-3312.

**CANCELLATION DEADLINE: A refund will be made - If you need to cancel, you need to contact the hotel TWO DAYS PRIOR to your arrival date. The refund for the Harbor Cruise and Naval Base bus tour is August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Also, contact J. Pierce by August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 for the registration fee and banquet refund.**

(Keep a copy of this form)