

## **Vignette**

### **USS Talladega Long Beach to Portland 1964**

In the summer of 1964, about the time David Coughlen had his first birthday, the Talladega went from Long Beach, up the coast of California and Oregon to the Columbia River and then to Portland for a yard maintenance period. Aboard were two (and a seventh) civilian Coughlen's and a 1962 red Corvair Monza. A Play pen was tied down in the Marine Troop Officer's quarters holding David with his mother, Marilyn, being the only occupant of the 100 or so bunks. All other wives were able to sleep in their husband's private staterooms as they were senior officers. I was just a lowly junior officer and had a roommate, Mike Mathews.

I was the officer of the deck (OOD) conning the ship when we turned East to head up the Columbia river toward Portland, and soon took aboard the pilot.

There were other officer's wives aboard, no other children. Marilyn reminded me that I was the only officer who did not attend the evening movie in the wardroom with his wife. However, I was the only officer with a wife onboard who had to stand watches around the clock. Sleep was always precious when you had to be up half the night to stand the watch from 11:30 PM until 4 AM, or from 3:30 am to 7 AM or miss the movie because you were on watch from 7:30 PM until

midnight. Looking back, I should have sacrificed some sleep to be more attentive to Marilyn. One of life's regrets.

We were fortunate to find a place to rent for 6 weeks in Lake Oswego. Across from our pad were large blackberry bushes. I took some to the wardroom to share for breakfast. David loved the fresh blackberries and consumed them for much of the stay. We learned that those berries were a real challenge when it came to changing diapers.

This was during the 1964 summer Olympics as the star American swimmer that year was from Lake Oswego. All went well. I flew pregnant Marilyn and David back to her parents in Albuquerque while I drove the coastal highway down to Monterey, California for my last active duty station, and the birth of Kathleen at Fort Ord. Another story for another vignette.

Tucker Coughlen Ltjg 1962-1964