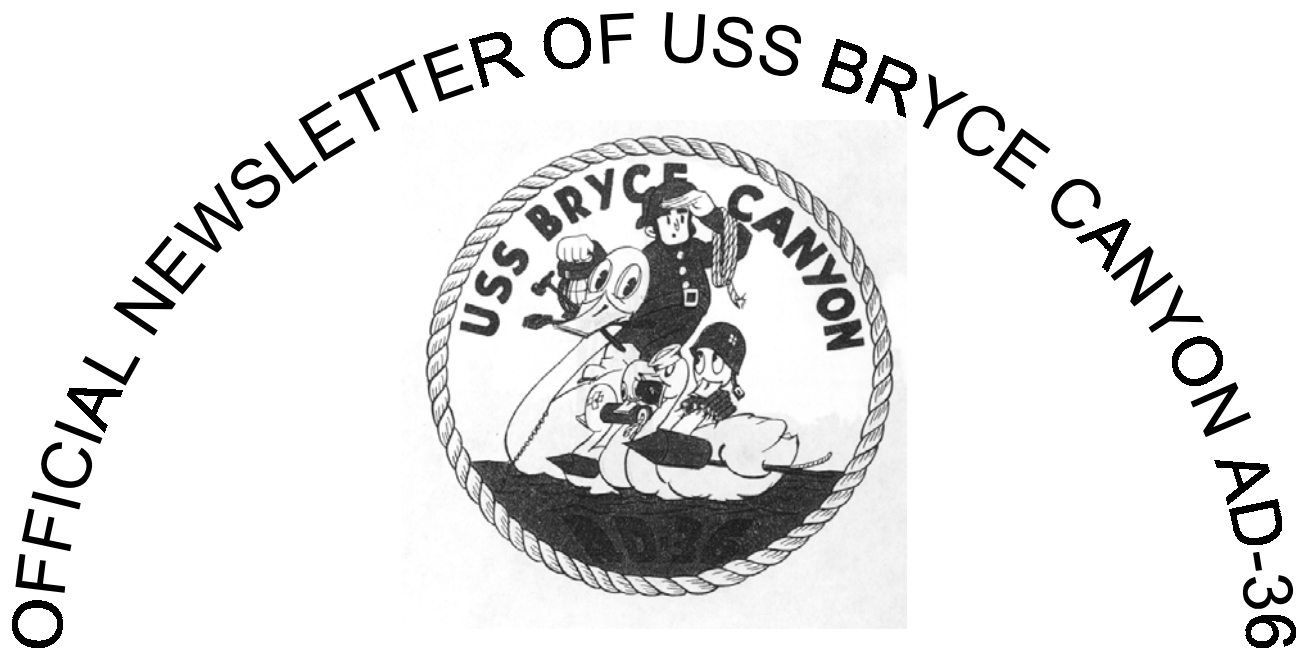


BRYCE CANYON UPDATE

Volume 7, Issue 1

January 2002



Points of Special Interest

- *Read about Bryce Canyon's decommissioning in our cover story.*
- *An article from the 1st Anniversary booklet of the USS Bryce Canyon is on page two.*
- *WELCOME MAT on page three has seven new names to add to the roster. Do you remember any of them?*
- *MAIL CALL on pages three and four has letters remembering people and events from the past. Do you remember the Cigarette Queen Watch?*

TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

Taken from "All Hands" magazine—1981

Nostalgia swept over all who knew and served aboard the ship. To many crewmen, this mass of steel and gray paint had been a home away from home, but now it was time to say so long.

Such were the feelings of the crewmen of USS *Bryce Canyon* (AD 36) when it recently joined the ranks of decommissioned Navy ships. The 30-year-old destroyer tender left the Navy at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, where it had served for 12 years as a "floating repair shop" providing repairs, along with technical and logistical

support to destroyers and other Pacific Fleet ships.

Some thought *Bryce Canyon* homely in the sense that it was big and bulky compared to the sleeker, more glamorous destroyers and frigates moored nearby. Nicknamed "Brass Canoe," its solid brass handrails and other metalwork were polished twice a day.

Also known affectionately as "Building 36" (after its hull number), the 492-foot vessel served as flagship for Commander Naval Surface Group Mid-Pacific and was a familiar sight at Pearl Harbor. In its

later years, the tender seldom went to sea. However, it made several cruises to Oahu's outlying islands—Maui, Hawaii and Kauai—and also sponsored several family cruises.

In the course of its career, AD 36 logged eight WestPacs, saw combat in Korea and serviced ships in the Philippines during Vietnam. Besides the many medals earned by the crew, *Bryce Canyon* won first place in the annual battle efficiency competition from 1955 through 1959, earning the gold "E" for five consecutive years.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

No doubt *Bryce Canyon* boasted a proud crew. Former crew member Chief Hull Technician John R. Raymond said, "We set a record for changing ships' screws in the early 1970s that was unbelievable. We saved the cost of dry-docking ships by replacing their screws underwater in 30 hours with four divers and a crane."

To Chief Warrant Officer William G. Johnson, *Bryce Canyon* was more "like family" than ship. Stationed aboard the tender for the past five years, he had the honor of securing the watch for the last time and making the final entry in the ship's log at 10:25 a.m., June 30, 1981. It read: "Decommissioned the USS *Bryce Canyon*."

Story by JO2 Deborah F. Longo & JO2 Stacey Huesmann

This story was sent to us with the following letter:

While going thru my West Pac cruise book 67-68, I came across this article that I saved and put away for memories. This article was in "All Hands" magazine in 1981. I thought that Bryce Canyon crewmembers would be interested in reading it. By the way, whatever happened to crewmembers of the Bryce Canyon of the mid 60s?

*Michael Franchak
700 NW Crosby Ave #88
Oak Harbor, WA 98277*



TAPS

The Bryce Canyon Update learned of the following shipmate's death since the last newsletter. Every member of the Association sends his heartfelt sympathy to the family, and friends of the deceased.

*Paul Ward
Died May 11, 2001*

A PAGE FROM THE PAST

Taken from the 1st Anniversary booklet of the Bryce Canyon.

On 15 September 1950, the Bryce Canyon was commissioned a ship in the United States Navy. On the day of commissioning the Bryce Canyon had become a ship. But she had a long, long way to go before she could be considered an effective unit of the Navy. The need for hard and skillful work on part of all hands was plainly evident to everyone.

Now that one year has passed we can examine the results of our efforts. To say that the task has not been easy would be an understatement. In fact, it has been very difficult. But our efforts have been successful.

As the present Commanding Officer, who also had the privilege of being the first Commanding Officer of the USS BRYCE CANYON, I wish to congratulate all of those who have helped, some more than others, some perhaps more willingly than others, to make it possible for all of us to say that the task has been well done.

M.R. Gerin,
Captain, USN
Commanding Officer

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance from 10/01 issue
\$5.23
Funds Received since 10/01
\$791.77
Funds Available for 01/02 issue
\$797.00
Funds Expended 01/02 issue
\$304.65
Balance Remaining for 04/02
\$492.35

Thank you for all the contributions for the Bryce Canyon Update. Your continued support will be important in the future also.

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The UPDATE is the official publication of the USS BRYCE CANYON Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in January, April, July and October, *subject to receiving sufficient funding*. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the BRYCE CANYON. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter.

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially share experiences.

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor of the Newsletter.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space limitations and grammar.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family, by submitting your stories and suggestions.

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"Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have To"



WELCOME MAT

The USS BRYCE CANYON Association announces the following former crewmen have recently been located. Welcome aboard and we hope to see you at the next reunion.

Hank Cox
538 S Pine Meadow Dr
DeBary, FL 32713

H.C. Woodfin
461 Coconut
Gilmer, TX 75645

Rodney Manos
(1976-79) FTG Repair (R5)
7025 Manahoac Pl
Gainsville, VA 20155-1645
703-278-9030
rmanos@earthlink.net

Richard Richmire (1965-69)
PO Box 417
New Bloomfield, PA 17068

Earl Fischer
53 Tabbert Ave
Ripon, WI 54971

Norman Thompson
(1965-69) ML 2
312 Sharon Ave
Marshalltown, IA 50158
641-752-2876

Lt Robert S. Maurer (1954)
Damage Control Officer C & R Div
193 Monroe Ave
Edison, NJ 08820

John Lippert (mid 60s)
jrlippert@ltdcmgt.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Francis Kane
(1958-61) EM3/C Div E
215 Hillside Ave
Elizabethtown, PA 17022-1367
hlc@redrose.net



MAIL CALL

ML&RS,

I just received my first issue of the Bryce Canyon Update... Thanks.. It's a GREAT newsletter with lots of information. I am going to send in a contribution to help with future printings.

Please note that I was NOT included in the Welcome Mat listings (*We took care of that this time.*) The following is my pertinent information:

Lt. Robert S. Maurer; served from Jan 1954 to Dec 1954. I was the Damage Control Officer in charge of C and R Division. I picked up the ship in Yokosuka and left it in Mare Island.

My fondest memories of the Bryce Canyon:

1. Standing deck watch while passing through the Korean War Zone in the middle of the night enroute from Yokosuka to Sasebo
2. Pitching a double header in the Armed Services league in Sasebo and getting a Japanese massage at night to heal my aching right arm.
3. Liberty in Yokosuka, including a weekend pass to Mount Fuji.
4. Short arm inspection at sea.
5. A great visit to Hawaii on the way back to the states.
6. 6 weeks at ABCD school at Treasure Island, living in the Alameda BOQ.
7. Sailing to Tacoma for Fleet Week.
8. Our basketball team while at Mare Island.
9. Liberty on Georgia Street in Vallejo.
10. Our Skipper, Mann Hamm, and our chief machinist Donnelly.
11. Last, but not least, my favorite Bryce Canyon story:
On our arrival back in the U.S.

in the summer of 1954, we had deck-side captain's inspection in our dress whites. I wear a size 14 shoe and could not find white shoes anywhere. The loyal members of my division painted my black shoes white. Because they cracked while walking, I had to go out on the deck in my stockinged feet, then put on the shoes at our muster position deck-side.

P.S. We passed inspection.

After two more ships, the USS Aucilla (a white tanker) and the USS Pillsbury (a Destroyer Escort), I left the Navy and went to medical school, using the GI Bill of Rights. I have been in Family Practice since 1962, and have recently retired to a part-time position. I hope to make one of the reunions soon.

Robert Maurer

Shipmates,

I would be interested to know what happened to the Bryce Canyon. I was on the commissioning detail in the Supply Department and served from 1950 to Dec. 1951. Fredrick Hawes was the Executive Officer and I was totally surprised to see a letter stating he got to be an Admiral. Not the same CDR that I remember.

We had a chief in the Supply Office that should have been an Admiral. Were it not for him, all the officers in the S Division would really have had a hard time. The chief's name was G.C. Carrol.

J.W. Janes
302 W Terrace Ave
Hannibal, MO 63401

(If anyone knows what became of the USS Bryce Canyon, please let us know and we will publish it in the next issue.)

Hi,

I served aboard the USS Bryce Canyon AD-36 four years, 1956-60. I worked and served with some of the greatest guys in the world over those years. I was a radioman and worked in the "radio shack." While at sea, enroute to Hawaii in 1957 my Opera-

tions Div. was on the top deck standing at attention for morning inspection. Ens. S.L. McGuire, our Communications Officer, was standing before us relaying orders for the day. All of a sudden, circling overhead, sea gulls "dive bombed" Mr. McGuire and their "droplets" hit only him. The rest of us were having a hard time restraining our laughter. Later we all felt bad for him because he was a well respected officer. I so very much enjoy reading the newsletter. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Albert J. Walker
Retired LT. Austin, TX
Fire Dept.
3403 Cambridge Court
Austin, TX 78723

To Whom it May Concern:

I was in the Pre-commissioning crew of the Bryce Canyon (AD-36) and served on it till about April 1952 as a YN2. I ultimately retired in July 1968 as a YNC. Although I have not attended any Bryce Canyon reunions so far because of reunions of other ship crews, I would like to attend one. Keep me posted.

I am enclosing a small donation to help you to continue to publish the Bryce Canyon Update.

I have a couple of items of interest you might want to print in the next Update.

While visiting a retired Air Force buddy of mine in Corinth, TX in August of 1999, he took me to a fishing barge he used to manage on a small lake nearby. He introduced me to the current manager, a retired Navy man. He and I recited our Navy resumes to each other and were pleasantly surprised to discover that we were on the Bryce Canyon at the same time period-1950-52. We both knew the same crew members, but not each other. His name is John W. Kuhn and he was a RMC on the ship. His address is:

1710 Hwy 720 E Lot 61
Little Elm, TX 75068

While I was on the ship, the Exec was CDR Frederick W. Hawes. As previously reported in the letters printed in the Update, he put on a stern appearance, but he was actually a "softie" at heart.

I remember one particularly amusing incident. The Exec became concerned about numerous incidents of ship's personnel just tossing their still lit cigarettes and cigars when they were through with them. He was particularly concerned that the ones tossed over the side might be carried by the wind back to the ship and cause a fire, maybe by entering an open port-hole. To correct this situation, he set up the Cigarette Queen Watch. If you were seen tossing a lit cigarette or cigar by someone of authority such as the Exec, an officer, a Master-at-Arms, you would be put on the Cigarette Queen Watch and carry a sand bucket, wear a heavy brown belt and carry a billy club. I believe that this watch went on for a couple weeks. The only way you got off the watch was to catch someone else tossing a lit cigarette or cigar. Of course you were permitted to go to your meals and to bed at bedtime. Even I had the watch for awhile. Finally the watch came to an end rather abruptly when Captain Gerin didn't get his breakfast on time because his steward was on the Cigarette Queen Watch.

That's all for now.

Sincerely,
Merrill H Schlicker, YNC Ret
9 Barletta Ct
Baltimore, MD 21237
410-687-4275

GREAT RESPONSE TO CRUISE!

You will be please to know that the response to the cruise for the 2002 reunion has been great! We have been able to acquire a few more rooms, so if you missed the cut-off date but would still like to go, please send in your registration immediately.

The Bahamas cruise is November 3-7, 2002.

BOSUN'S MATE

Once I was a Bosun's Mate
A real sailor to the core
I sailed the mighty seven seas
Saw many a foreign shore.

My work was always topside
In weather fair or rough
From all the work I did there
My hands grew hard and tough.

When it came to seamanship
I was a master at the game.
I know all kinds of wondrous
knots,
Not two of them the same.

I know how to rig a highline
Or fuel a ship at sea,
And when it comes to running
boats
They could all depend on me.

Worked many a month in a rigging
loft
Spliced many a wire rope,
And when it came to fenders
They knew that I could cope.

Now all that is behind me
I'm retired don't you see,
But I'll always be a Bosun's Mate
And I'll always love the sea.

*Written by LCDR Bob Prinselaar,
USCG (Ret)
Once a Chief Bosun's Mate*

MORE STORIES WANTED

We want to thank everyone who wrote in for the newsletter this issue. This is your newsletter and what most people want is stories they can relate to. Please consider taking some ideas from some of the men who have already written and tell your own story. Many of these stories probably reminded you of an incident or maybe you even remember that particular incident, but have a different perspective on it. We hope to hear from you!

Karen Hoyle, Editor