

BRYCE CANYON UPDATE

Volume 14, Issue 4

January 2010

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS BRYCE CANYON AD 36



Points of Special Interest

- *Our cover story will tell you all about the 2009 reunion in Norfolk, VA.*
- *A list of the 2009 reunion attendees is on page three.*
- *Your Coordinator's Message gives you his account of the reunion. See page three.*
- *Welcome Mat on page four has thirteen new members added to the roster.*
- *In Swabbie Stories on page five, we have letters about Master Chief Register, Mary Su's Side Cleaners and other memories.*
- *Don't miss page six where you will find a treasure of links to BC memorabilia.*

2009 REUNION IN REVIEW

On October 8-11, 2009 the USS Bryce Canyon (AD-36) held its annual reunion at the Hilton Norfolk Airport in Norfolk, Virginia. Thirty-three of the former sailors and twenty-eight of their guests enjoyed the four-day/three-night event. The reunion got started on Thursday with the opening of registration and the hospitality room. The hospitality room, as usual, became the gathering spot for memorabilia display, greeting old friends, getting to know new ones and enjoying the snacks and drinks that were available during the entire reunion. As everyone got registered, the first thing they usually did

was to pop into the hospitality room to see who was there. This is where the "reunion" really happens, and this year was no exception. At 5:00 pm the Welcome Reception brought the group together as a whole. Mike Nesbit, group president, welcomed everyone to the reunion, made any introductions and announcements that were necessary and then the reunion was "officially" underway. The first evening of the reunion typically is left free so everyone can get reacquainted and get to know any new attendees. Many of the group remained in the hotel for dinner, while some ven-

tured out into Norfolk for the evening, but wherever they had dinner, most of the group ended up back in the hospitality room before calling it a night.

After breakfast Friday morning, the optional tour to Norfolk Naval Base left the hotel for a great day of sightseeing. This was the main reason Norfolk was chosen as the 2009 reunion site. Norfolk Naval Base is the largest naval base in the world, homeport to 78 ships and 26 air squadrons. The tour passed by the 14 piers, through the Naval Air Station and Admiral's Row. The tour guide, Nancy Baker, was an outstanding

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

guide who added so much to the tour with all her knowledge of the area. Lunch was at the Officers' Club. Following lunch, Nancy told of Norfolk's colorful 325 year history as the motor coach took the group through the historic district, the restored waterfront area, as well as many other points of interest. Also on the agenda was a visit to Nauticus, the complex which includes the National Maritime Center and the Battleship Wisconsin. The Battleship Wisconsin was of particular interest to the Bryce Canyon sailors and they truly enjoyed seeing this famous ship. Next on the tour was the MacArthur Memorial, where the group was able to see the life of the famous general depicted through exhibits and displays. Last stop, and perhaps the favorite, was to the Doumar's Ice Cream Shop, home of the world's first ice cream cone machine. That ice cream just seemed to hit the spot after a long day of sightseeing! Then it was back to the hotel and some much needed relaxation before the evening meal. Soon it was time for the social hour at 6:00 pm and the dinner buffet at 7:00 pm. The remainder of the evening was free to relax and share time with friends.

Saturday morning got off to an earlier start than the day before because this tour was to Colonial Williamsburg and Jamestown. The first stop was Williamsburg, the restored colonial capital of Virginia. An historic interpreter guided the group through the past events that helped shape America's history. Shops, homes, public buildings were reconstructed on their original foundations—some being open to the public. A real sense of history was felt as one walked along the footsteps of great Americans like Washington, Jefferson, and Patrick Henry. Everyone was free to have lunch on their own at one of the Colonial Taverns along Merchants' Square. The next stop of the day was to Jamestown, the first English settlement in America. The group was able to get a feeling for the dangers and hard-

ships these people encountered when they arrived by viewing the film, gallery exhibits and artifacts on display. One interesting story came out of the visit to Jamestown. While Bob and Nancy Matteson were at the blacksmith shop, the blacksmith who was demonstrating making a nail looked up and saw Bob's hat with USS Bryce Canyon printed on it. He said, somewhat surprised, "I was on the Bryce Canyon!" His name is Greg Schneck, and he was invited to and attended the banquet that night! It always pays to wear those hats, doesn't it guys! It was a great day of learning about our great country's beginnings and everyone came away from the tour with a better appreciation of what our forefathers endured. Upon return to the hotel it was time for the annual business meeting. Mike Nesbit was again selected to lead the USS Bryce Canyon Association and Chicago, IL was chosen as the 2010 reunion location. Following the meeting there was only a short time for getting ready for the big evening ahead, so most people retired to their rooms to freshen up before the dinner hour. At 6:30 pm the evening events began with the pre-dinner cocktail hour and photo session, and then at 7:30 pm everyone moved into the banquet room for the USS Bryce Canyon AD-36 banquet. The banquet festivities began with the National Anthem, the Pledge of Allegiance and the playing of "Anchors Aweigh." Mike Nesbit made the welcoming remarks and introductions and then dinner was served. Everyone enjoyed this special time with friends in a more formal setting. Following dinner the "Yankee Swap" gift exchange and the raffle was held. The gift exchange has become a favorite activity at the reunions and it was again enjoyed by all. It is always fun to see what is brought in as a representation of one's area of the country and is, of course, fun to bring a new gift home. Also after dinner everyone enjoyed the music of Matt Neil on the piano. Following the entertainment, the Memorial Service to remember those shipmates who had died, especially those since the last reunion, was held. Chaplain Michael Harrison

lead the service with assistance from Bill Stroyan, Robert Matteson and Mike Nesbit. After a short service, names of the deceased were read and a bell was tolled for them. This service brought the activities to a close and everyone agreed it was a wonderful evening.

Sunday morning's breakfast was a private buffet, giving everyone one last chance to say good bye and enjoy a few more minutes of fellowship before heading home. It was great seeing old friends and making new ones and everyone hopes to be together again next year in Chicago. Keep your calendar open for next October and come to Chicago for another great reunion.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 01/10 ISSUE

Balance from 07/09 issue	\$3315.36
Received since 07/09	\$ 371.00
Available for 01/10 issue	\$3686.36
Expended 01/10 issue	\$983.03
(6 pages/853 copies)	

Postage:	\$232.87
Paper:	\$153.54
Envelopes:	\$ 62.18
Copies:	\$409.44
Labor:	\$125.00
TOTAL:	\$983.03

**Balance Remaining for 04/10
\$2703.33**

**Dues of \$20.00 are due in
January of each year. Please use
the enclosed envelope to send in
your 2010 dues.**

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

2009 REUNION ATTENDEES

Sidney Anderson
 Edward & Ellen Boaz
 Dick & Dorothy Casey
 Clyde & Judy Cordell
 Robert & Rita Hamm
 Garee & Carol Harrison
 William & Margaret Hart
 Roy & Linda Hendricks
 Harry & Peggy Heppler
 Paul & Karen Hunn
 Roy & Evelyn Hutchens
 Richard Ingram & Sibul Malle
 Jimmy & Marge Janes
 Gregory Kruszka
 William & Johnnie Levy
 Hugh MacDougall
 Anthony & Virginia Manuel
 Samuel & Barbara Marsh
 Gene & Mardell Martin
 Robert & Nancy Matteson
 Robert Maurer & Loretta Catino
 Domingo Moran
 John Neill
 Matt Neill & Lillian Adams
 Michael & Mitsy Nesbit
 Clyde & Mary Lou Patrick
 James & Paulette Riley
 Ronald & Jacqueline Ross
 Richard & Janet Silvernail
 William & Farol Stroyan
 Thomas & Helen Wallace
 Hal & Jan Winslow

Total Members: 33
Guests: 28
GRAND TOTAL: 61

COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

AHOY Bryce Canyon Sailors: We had a great reunion in Norfolk Virginia with over 65 people in attendance. We stayed at the Hilton Hotel which was only a few miles from the Airport and the Norfolk Naval Base. The base tour was great, we got to see the USS NEW YORK (LPD21) before it sailed for New York City. A large part of the ship was built from the metal from the Twin Towers in New York City. We toured Admirals Row which hi-

lighted some of the most beautiful homes you'll ever see on a Military Base. We had a great lunch at the Officers Club and then went into town to see the General MacArthur Memorial where he and his wife are buried in the Rotunda. We also got to see the 1950 Chrysler Imperial which MacArthur used until his death in 1964. On Saturday we went to Colonial Williamsburg. The weather was great and we had a personal tour of Williamsburg, then everyone was on their own to explore, have lunch and see the sites. After lunch we then went to Jamestown which became the first permanent English Settlement in 1607. There in Jamestown, we had a great surprise. While Nancy and Rob Matteson were touring the Foundry Area, the employee, Greg J. Schneck that was demonstrating how they made things back in the good old days noticed their USS Bryce Canyon Hats and screamed out, "I was on the Bryce Canyon!" After he calmed down and the Paramedics left (just kidding) we discovered that Greg was on the Bryce Canyon from 1978 to 1981 when the ship was decommissioned. Then the rest of our group heard the news and ran over to meet the new BC member. I took down all his information and we invited him to our Saturday night Banquet. He showed up for dinner, brought some BC Memorabilia, had a fabulous time and even won a prize during our "Big Raffle." He brought a Brass Plug that was inserted in the end of the "5" Gun on the bow of the ship. It had USS Bryce Canyon all over it. A very nice Keep Sake from our ship. Greg promised to come to the next reunion. What a place to find a former Crew Member. The gift exchange went great except for the fact that CWO Hal Winslow (69-71) didn't win anything. Chaplain Mike Harrison sitting next to him, did win a gift. Everyone had a great time during the gift exchange, raffle and dinner; we hope Hal comes back. Both Hal and Mike were on the ship with me in 69-71, it was good to see you, Hal, and your wife Jan. We

also went downtown in Norfolk and toured the USS Wisconsin (BB-64). This was a huge ship almost 900 feet long with 16" Guns that shoot over 25 miles. There is no ship quite like a Battleship. We had a lot of new members attend and it was sad to see it all end. Those of you that didn't come, missed something very special. The January Newsletter will have your Annual \$20 Bryce Canyon Dues flyer enclosed. Please send those in ASAP so we can continue to pay for our four annual newsletters. Please indicate on your check that it's for the USS Bryce Canyon. I hope to see you all again next year in Chicago at the Great Lakes Boot Camp. We're going to give all the members on our mailing list (Approx 800) a chance to vote on where we go in 2011. We're looking at the West Coast and voted for the following cities: San Diego, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Arizona, Tucson. Please call and let the Military Locator or myself know your choice. We have till 2011 to pick a place. If you have other ideas for Reunion Locators, please let us know. I'm Michael Nesbit (69 to 71) your Reunion Coordinator and USS Bryce Canyon Association President. Call me anytime (619) 562-5690, E-mail: thenezz@cox.net. I hope everyone had a "Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday."

2010 USS BRYCE CANYON REUNION

OCTOBER 7—10

CHICAGO, IL

NTC GREAT LAKES VISIT
FRIDAY, OCT. 8

This newsletter can also be accessed at the web site
www.mlrsinc.com/brycecanyon.



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.

Greg Schneck (1978-81)
3116 Weathers Blvd
Toano, VA 23168
757-566-3336

Edward Brown (1965-67) ICC
Horsefly_38866@yahoo.com

Charles Van Rickley
(1973-75) MR3 R-2 Div
larryVR@cox.net

Jonathan Freitas
(1978-79) SK3 Supply
13 S Montgomery St
Walden, NY 12586
jonathanfreitas1215@yahoo.com

Thomas Walley
(1969-70) SK2 Supply
135 Culpepper Dr
Jackson, MS 39212
twalley2@comcast.net

Stacey Hopkins
(1977-80) ETN2 R-4 Div
3650 Cottage Grove Ave
Des Moines, IA 50311
515-333-8504
staceyhopkins@gmail.com

Leo Ainsworth
(1971-72) SK2 Supply
1838 Madrona Ave
St Helena, CA 94574
707-486-1703
fantasyvineyards@gmail.com

Randall Lemons
4521 Hunters Landing Dr
Chesterfield, VA 23832
804-381-5718
lemondogs@yahoo.com

Freddie Zeiler
(1974-76) BT3 Repair
PO Box 591
Ozark, AR 72949
479-264-8065
freddiezeiler@gmail.com

Louis Lassen
(1964-66) LI3 R-2 Div
16203 Santa Ana Ave
Fontana, CA 92337

Hal Winslow
(1969-72) CWO2 E/Repair/E3
817 Monroe Ave
Asheboro, NC 27205
336-626-7675
hwwinslow@embarqmail.com

Ray Hughes
(1952-53) PF3
1812 Crystal St
Anderson, IN 46012
765-643-8074

Richard Taylor
(1967-69) MMFN M Div
PO Box 385
Santa Fe, TX 77510
409-925-5532
richardktaylor@verizon.net



TAPS

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

Emmert Bjerg
(1950-52) MM1/c M Div
Date of death not reported

Julian Grey
(1950-52) SN1 6th Div
Died June 24, 2009

Edward Boyes
(1957-61) MRI MRC R2 Div
Died October 3, 2006

Jack Gove
(1966-68) CDR S-1 Supply
Died November 22, 2008

James Twyford
SK3 S-1 Div
Died April 1986

Bernard Vice
Early 1950s Korean War Era
Died April 11, 2008

EMMERT L. BJERG

Emmert L Bjerg passed away Friday, October 30, 2009. Emmert was born March 12, 1922 in Exira, IA to Emilia (Jorgensen) and Jens Bjerg. He graduated in 1941 from East High School in Des Moines. He served in the Coast Guard during WWII on the destroyer escort Kirkpatrick. He was recalled to active duty by the Navy during the Korean Conflict and served on the Tender Bryce Canyon as Chief Petty Officer.

He married Priscilla Parks in Des Moines on January 28, 1945. He worked for Brown Engineering, Des Moines Pittsburgh Steel and Solar Aircraft. In 1957 they moved to Newton, IA, where he was a methods engineer at Maytag Company until his retirement.

He was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church. He was proud to be the Scoutmaster of Newton's Boy Scout Troop 354. By his leadership, it became one of the best scout troops in the district.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Priscilla; sons, Gregory (Colleen) and Robert (Kathi); 3 granddaughters; a sister and brother-in-law and several nieces and nephews. Emmert was preceded in death by his parents and one sister.

BERNARD LUKE VICE

Bernard Luke Vice was born November 21, 1932 in Theriot, LA and died April 11, 2008. He was in the Navy four years in the early 1950s. He served on the Bryce Canyon during the Korean War and was in Japan for a couple of years. He retired as a Special Agent for the U.S. Treasury Dept. after which he taught school for ten years in Houma, LA. He was predeceased by his daughter. He is survived by one son Chris, four grandchildren, one great grandson, a stepdaughter, and three step grandsons, also two brothers and three sisters.



SWABBIE STORIES

Gerald G Ryals, ETCS, USN (Ret.):

The note from CWO2 Trowbridge about Master Chief "Cash" Register brought back some very fond memories of the Chief.

When I reported aboard the Bryce Canyon as a wet behind the ears 3rd class ET, MC Register was R-4 Division Chief. He maintained balance in the division during periods of very heavy workloads and was like an anchor, holding the division to its mooring. He also used his personal Amateur Radio equipment to maintain a MARS station aboard for crewmen to talk to family back home. Thanks to the Chief, many of us were allowed to visit with our families over the radio. Back then, of course, SNAIL mail was the only other method of communicating and some of us recorded tape cassettes and sent them back and forth. When we returned from WestPac after the '66 cruise, he invited my wife and me over to his home in Fountain Valley and we got to meet his wife. He did this in part because he knew of my interest in Amateur Radio. When we left his house that afternoon, he gave me an old SW radio receiver that he no longer used to spur along my interest in Amateur Radio. I will probably never forget this man, his fairness and his interest in the young sailors who worked for him. I will never forget his Amateur Radio call sign either. It was and lives in my memory as WB6NJB.

CWO Trowbridge was still a CPO when I reported aboard and had received notice of going Warrant. I don't remember him that well, but I appreciate his writing the note that triggered my response.

Robert "Doug" Williams, SMSN ('56-'58):

I loved reading the articles in the July issue about Hong Kong and Mary Su's Side Cleaners. They certainly brought back old memories. When we were there on the Bryce Canyon and the Renshaw (DDE 499), these ladies cleaned, chipped, red-leaded, and painted the sides of the ships, all for just the garbage every day. We were told that a charitable society for widows and orphans sponsored these ladies (who worked from the deck of and

lived in tiny living spaces below deck of small boats that seemed to be only about 15 feet long), and that the edible garbage went to feed the widows and orphans and the other garbage went to feed hogs that were sold in the market to raise funds. I remember that on one of our visits to Hong Kong a crew member picked up a puppy and brought it aboard. When the side cleaning ladies saw it they got all excited and started talking a mile a minute. They were making motions that they would like to have the puppy. We thought it was because they loved small animals, but when they started making eating motions with their hands, we got the idea. Unfortunately, the puppy died a few days later. The crew member was very careful to dispose of it in such a way that it did not become a meal. My other memory of Hong Kong (in addition to the China Fleet Club) was coming back from liberty on a water taxi late at night, three sheets to the wind, with choppy water and missing the accommodation ladder and falling into the bay. As I recall, I had to retake a number of vaccinations because the water was very polluted, even back then. Finally, being a signalman striker, when I had duty I remember checking out what was going on in the hotels during the evening because the ship's telescope was on the signal deck. Ah, sweet memories of youth. How things have changed in a half century. Sailors can now have civilian clothes aboard ship, for example. Wow! That means they don't have to join locker clubs! Ah, well, we survived and we had a good time and lots of great memories. I will admit, however, that after using the GI Bill, getting a degree, and being commissioned in the Army, I liked the ground service and continuing shore duty much better, even if it meant a year in Vietnam.

Best regards to all surviving BCers. May a host of angels dance at your feet.

Dick Madsen:

I found this photo (See page 6) of "Bryce Canyon Storekeepers" which was taken in the Yokosuka EM Club, located just outside the Base, in Feb or Mar 1954 I believe. Second from the right in this picture is Joe O'Brien, SK3 (Wisconsin). I am Richard Madsen SKSN (Minnesota) and sitting in the middle (4th from right or left); on my right is Bob Turner, SK2, and I am not sure this is correct information. I am sorry I cannot remember the other

names. Aside from the picture, some names that do come to mind are: SK1 Pearson (Name may be wrong but he was tall and lanky, and was skilled at smuggling a "bottle" aboard). Names I am sure of and would enjoy hearing from/about are: Andrew Urness (Iowa), Richard Steiner (Hollywood), Robert Dupont (New Orleans), Robert Walker (Wisconsin).

Doesn't look like I can make the reunion, as much as I would like to, but will continue to enjoy the BC news.

Editor's Note: The following two letters are correspondences between Don Banks and the family of Harold Savoie who was one of the sailors removed from the USS Barton by USS Bryce Canyon crewmen.

Mr. Don Banks,

I just read the story you published about the USS Barton. I was moved by the story because one of the sailors your crew removed from the boiler room was my uncle. His name was Harold J. Savoie. He was from south Louisiana. My mom is Harold Savoie's sister. She and I were very happy to read your publication. I know it must have been hard on the whole crew having to do this job. Mom and I would like to personally thank you for your achievements and getting our soldiers back home. Your commendations may not have satisfied the Navy officials, but they are in our hearts. Again, thank you.

Glynn Prosperie and my mom, Vivian Savoie Prosperie

Dina,

I talked to this family last night. The only thing they knew was that their loved one was killed on a ship someplace during the Korean War. I called them last night and had a wonderful conversation with both of them. It brought tears to my eyes, but comfort to my heart. We probably talked for 45 minutes. The information, pictures, etc are now being passed to other members of the family, with great happiness of their new found knowledge.

Don Banks

USS BRYCE CANYON WEB SITES & OTHER NAVY RELATED LINKS

New U.S.S. Bryce Canyon web sites and other Navy related links: Each of the sites below represent many hours of work and preparation, including: scanning (making electronic copies) of cruise books, photographs, materials, and organizing, and uploading the materials and images to the web sites.

Special thanks and acknowledgement to the shipmates below, without whose contributions, the sites would not be what they are today: **Harry Heppler** for allowing me to scan his copy of U.S.S. Bryce Canyon's First Anniversary Booklet; **Matt Neil** for his many excellent and artistic photographs of Pearl Harbor, our WestPac ports of call, and of our Long Beach, CA homeport; **Tony Manuel** for his many pieces of mind boggling memorabilia, Plan of the Day, "pocket guides," patches, early issues of the Bryce Canyon Newsletters, and his 2009 reunion photos; **Bill Stroyan** for allowing me to scan his 1957-58, and 1959 WestPac cruise books, and his 1956 Boot Camp cruise book; **Greg Kruszka** for allowing me to scan his 1967-68 WestPac Cruise book; **Bill Kidder** for providing numerous photos of shipmates, a San Miguel beer bottle and sake bottle; **Jim Erickson** for giving me his extra ship's plaque; **Paul Chandler** for allowing me to scan his 1963 Boot Camp cruise book; **Arthur Willenbrecht** for allowing me to scan his 1964 Boot Camp cruise book; and **Quarterdeck.org** for their wonderful web site and rich history of the Naval Training Center in San Diego.

If you have materials or photos you would like placed on one of the web sites, please contact Bruce Campbell at: techwrtr@bayarea.net or by phone: 408-729-6088. Note: **Copyrighted material will NOT be placed on any web site.**

Military Locators Reunion Services,

<http://www.mlrsinc.com/brycecanyon/> has graciously agreed to place our <http://ussbrycecanyonad36.shutterstock.com/> link on their web site under "Association Web Site."

<http://ussbrycecanyonad36.shutterstock.com/>

- This link contains sections for U.S.S. Bryce Canyon patches
 - U.S.S. Bryce Canyon First Anniversary Booklet
 - U.S.S. Bryce Canyon Miscellaneous Photos Section
 - U.S.S. Bryce Canyon Memorabilia Section
- <http://brycecanyonreunions.shutterstock.com/>
- This link contains photos from U.S.S. Bryce Canon Reunions from San Diego, CA 2005 up to Norfolk, VA 2009
- <http://brycecanyoncruisebooks.shutterstock.com/>
- This link contains U.S.S. Bryce Canyon WestPac Cruise Books from the following years:
1956, 1957-58, 1959-1960, 1966-67, 1967-68

<http://westpacportsofcall.shutterstock.com/>

- This link contains photos from the WestPac Cruise of 1966-1967
- Oahu-Pearl Harbor, Ford Island, and the WesPac ports-of-call including: Taiwan, Kaohsiung, Philippines, Subic Bay-Olongapo-Corregidor Island, Hong Kong, five days of R&R, Japan, Yokosuka and Tokyo

<http://brycecanyonnewsletters.shutterstock.com/>

- This link contains previous issues of the Bryce Canyon Newsletters

<http://bootcampcruisebook64411.shutterstock.com/>

- This link contains cruise books from Boot Camp, San Diego only, for the following years and companies:
56-373, 63-289, 64-133, 64-411

A big thank you to Bruce Campbell for compiling all this information for your use.



BRYCE CANYON STOREKEEPERS YOKOSUKA EM CLUB 1954

Far right is Joe O'Brien, fourth is Richard Madsen, fifth from right is Bob Turner. The remaining are unknown.