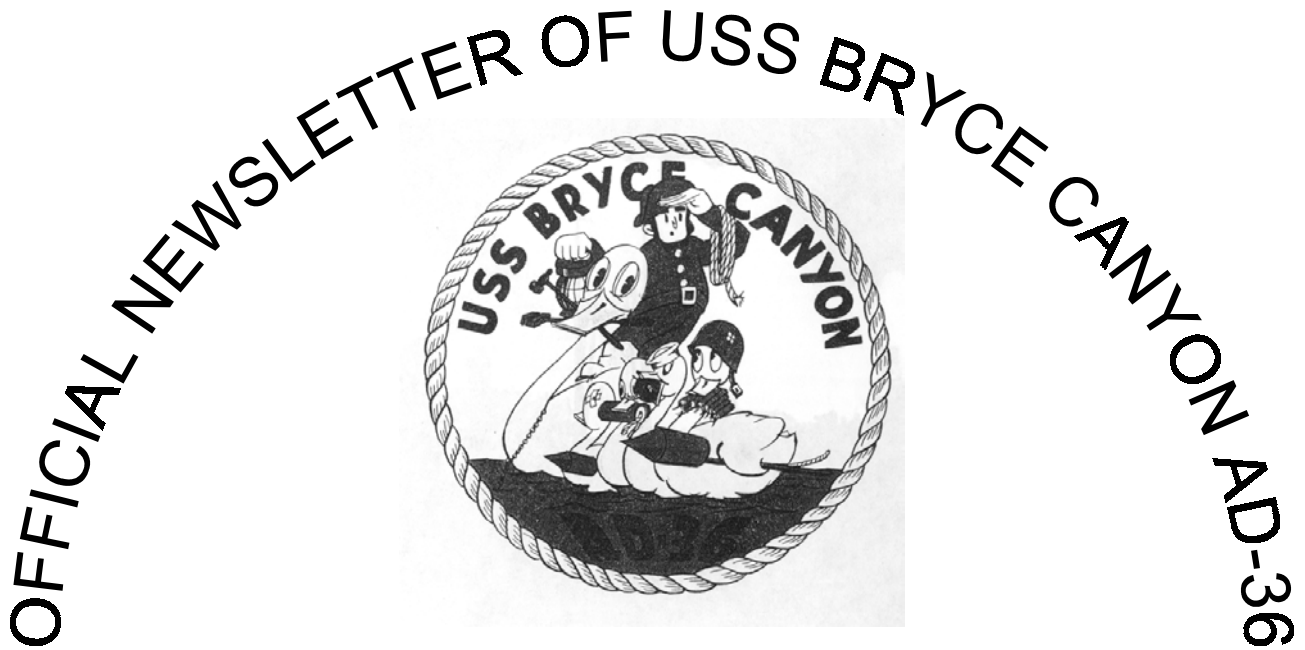


# BRYCE CANYON UPDATE

Volume 7, Issue 2

April 2002



## Points of Special Interest

- *Thanks to our readers we have the answer to what happened to the Bryce Canyon. Read pages one and two for the answer.*
- *WELCOME MAT on page three has fourteen newly found ship-mates.*
- *MAIL CALL on pages three and four has some good memories of the Bryce Canyon. See if they stir up some of your memories.*
- *James Harris shares some of his poetry with us on page five. More in later issues.*

## WHAT BECAME OF BRYCE CANYON?

*In the January, 2002 issue of the Bryce Canyon Update, Mr. J.W. Janes inquired about what had happened to the USS Bryce Canyon and we asked readers to let us know if they were aware of its fate. We received several responses from former crewmen. The following are those letters:*

Reading the January 2002 Bryce Canyon newsletter, J.W. Janes asked if anyone knows what became of the ship.

This may be of some help. I'm not too sure of the exact date, however, I

think about the early 1980s, I was sailing around Terminal Island, (Long Beach) CA on a catamaran, the Bryce Canyon appeared to be being dismantled. As we approached from the port side, I mentioned to my son, the hull line and super structure looked like the Bryce Canyon, (no hull number was visible) in passing to the starboard side, there was the familiar 36. I did have an opportunity to snap a couple of pictures of the ship.

I served on Bryce Canyon 1954-55 as Shipfitter 2nd Class in the

outside repair welding shop. Mann Hamm was the skipper.

Sincerely,  
Don Milligan, HTCS  
(Ret) USNR  
461 Sacre Land N  
Monmouth, OR 97361-1241  
503-839-2309  
dcmilligan1@aol.com

In the last newsletter, J.W. Janes inquired about the disposition of the USS Bryce Canyon. A few years back I had the same interest and inquired via the Navy Department and

*(Continued on page 2)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

my Congressman when I lived in North Carolina. I was sent the following information that I have enclosed for your submission to others. I too was a "plank owner" having been aboard when the ship was commissioned in Charleston. I was assigned to the 6th Naval District Medical Office there and knew that my shore duty time was up, so I thought I had selected a ship that would stay on the East Coast until my time was up. Little did I know! I was an HM3 in the medical department.

I hope this helps, if you already have not received the information you want. I am sending a copy of this to Mr. Janes in Hannibal, MO.

Sincerely,  
Charles O'Brien  
559 Old Plantation Rd  
Jekyll Island, GA 31527

*The following are parts of two letters which Mr. O'Brien received:*

NEWS RELEASE, OFFICE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, WASHINGTON, DC—  
FEBRUARY 25, 1980

#### **NAVY PLANS TO RETIRE TWENTY SHIPS**

The Department of Navy announced today that it tentatively plans to retire 20 ships from service during Fiscal Year 1981. This action will affect three active fleet ships, three Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force (NFAF) ships, and 14 Naval Reserve Force (NFR) ships. Among the ships being considered for retirement are two nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines, USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT and USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN. They are being considered for retirement because, with the introduction of the first TRIDENT submarine in FY 81, the SALT I limits on maximum number of SLBM launchers will be exceeded. Both submarines will have to be dismantled (missile

tubes/compartments removed) as compensation when USS OHIO goes on sea trials.

The average age of the remaining 18 ships is more than 35 years. The cost of modernizing these ships is far greater than the benefits that could be derived from their continued service.

In FY 80 the Navy will have 540 total ships, including active, NRF and NFAF ships. The comparable figure for FY 81 is 544.

The following is a list of the affected ships, their homeport and Fleet:

Bryce Canyon (AD-36) Pearl Harbor, HI — Pacific

*The list continues, but space does not allow us to print them all.*

18 July 1985

Dear Senator East,

Thank you for your recent letter in behalf of your constituent, Mr. Charles F. O'Brien, Jr., concerning his desire to obtain information and a command ball cap from USS BRYCE CANYON (AD-36).

**On June 30, 1981, Bryce Canyon was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register and decommissioned at the Naval Station, Pearl Harbor, HI. She remained in Hawaii until April 1982, when she was sold for scrap to the National Metals and Steel Company, Terminal Island, CA.**

I am enclosing a selection of historical information and a photograph of Mr. O'Brien's former ship. I am certain he will enjoy this material. If we can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,  
Jack A Garrow  
Commodore, US Navy  
Chief of Information

*The following is the information mentioned in the above letter, taken from the DICTIONARY OF*

*AMERICAN NAVAL FIGHTING SHIPS Volume 1, 1959*

## **Bryce Canyon**

Bryce Canyon is a national park in Utah.

(AD-36: dp. 8091; l. 492'; b. 70'; dr. 28'; s. 18 k; cpl. 859; a. 2 5"; sc. *Shenandoah*)

*Bryce Canyon* (AD-36) was launched 7 March 1946 by Charleston Navy Yard and sponsored by Mrs. William J. Carter, wife of Rear Admiral Carter. Little additional work was done on her until after the outbreak of hostilities in Korea. Charleston Naval Shipyard then completed the tender and she was commissioned 15 September 1950, Captain M.R. Gerlin in command.

*Bryce Canyon* transited the Panama Canal 5 December and reported to the Pacific Fleet. On 26 March 1951 she got underway from San Diego for the Far East. Arriving in Yokosuka, Japan, 12 April 1951, she spent the next seven months in Japanese waters repairing and servicing vessels based at Yokosuka and Sasebo. *Bryce Canyon* left Japan 4 November 1951 and arrived at San Diego 18 November 1951.

She got underway, via Pearl Harbor, for her second Western Pacific cruise 27 June 1952. This cruise was completed 16 February 1953 when she arrived at Long Beach, Calif. On 26 September 1953 she again sailed for Sasebo where she arrived 16 October. *Bryce Canyon* provided tender service in Sasebo, Yokosuka, Nagoya and Kobe during this tour. She returned to the United States 17 June 1954.

Her fourth Western Pacific tour commenced 25 February 1955. She serviced vessels at Subic Bay, Luzon, between 16 March and 28 April and then proceeded to Yokosuka, arriving 11 May 1955. *Bryce Canyon* returned to Long Beach 11

(Continued from page 2)

August 1955. On 9 December 1955 she departed California on her fifth Western Pacific tour which ended at Long Beach 26 October 1956. Between Far Eastern cruises *Bryce Canyon* has operated along the west coast.

*Bryce Canyon* received one battle star for her services to the forces afloat in the Korean combat area.



## 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.

*Todd Sevier*  
1405 South 15th  
Chickasha, OK 73018  
405-224-9147

*Billy Smith*  
29879 Bartels Creek Dr  
Lebanon, OR 97355  
541-451-1004

*Gerald Van Zwyen*  
620 Drummond Rd  
Mesa, WA 99343  
509-269-4230

*Jim Cody*  
12733 Daisywood Dr  
Knoxville, TN 37932

*Earle Sears (1950-58)*  
OMC R-6 Div  
7646 Spurling Ln SE  
Port Orchard, WA 98367

*Joe O'Barr (1962-64)*  
SFM2 R1 Div  
15499 Golden Star Ave  
Riverside, CA 92506  
909-780-9689

*Milo Larsen*  
115 Bixby Dr  
Milpitas, CA 95035  
408-263-1623

*Wade Schneider (1972-74) Div A*  
PO Box 101  
Moccasin, MT 59462  
wades@ttc-cmc.net

*Cletis Lewis (1961-64)*  
EM2/c Div E  
201 Catlett St  
Rossville, GA 30741  
706-866-3017

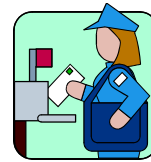
*Walter Stubbs*  
14 West River St  
Ilion, NY 13357  
315-895-7353

*Neil Carter*  
792 Graceland Ave  
Barberton, OH 44203

*Robert Buzzard*  
1467 Signal Ave  
San Diego, CA 92154-2829

*Gary Robinson*  
1618 N Castlewood Dr  
Franktown, CO 80116  
303-660-4403  
glrjdr@earthlink.net

*George Van Meter IM3*  
502 2nd Ave NE  
Dilworth, MN 56529  
vanmeter29@aol.com



## MAIL CALL

Shipmates,

From 1954 until 1957 I was assigned to the USS *Bryce Canyon*. During this time there were two memorable trips to the Philippines and Japan. At first I was assigned to the electronics storeroom, but after a few months I began keeping the food storerooms replenished at all times. With the keys to all that food, I had a lot of items to make my Navy life better. As you might guess, I was a Storekeeper.

On the first trip to the Far East we were diverted to meet a submarine in the South Pacific in order to take aboard a deceased sailor. I believe he had committed suicide. Subic Bay was the first stop and one place to remember (Olongopo). As best as I can remember, we closed shop about 13:00 each day and headed to the beach for fun and recreation. Playing ball, drinking beer etc. was the highlight of the day. Also many sailors took their mattress up on deck at night to sleep because of the heat at Subic Bay. After several months there, we left for Japan and on the way stopped by Hong Kong for R&R. After about nine months in Yokosuka and Osaka we returned to the U.S. We did stop by Hawaii on the way home. Several of us rented a car and toured the island. I believe while we were there one of the shipmates drowned at Waikiki Beach.

After several months in the states, we left again for Yokosuka. During this tour we were involved in a hurricane. We were at anchor in Yokosuka Bay and had to leave on a very short notice to get out of the harbor. It was quite a strong hurricane and we had to tie ourselves in our bunk with life jackets. There were a lot of sick men on the ship during this storm. The trips to Tokyo were lots of fun and the train rides to many parts

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance from 01/02 issue  
**\$492.35**  
Funds Received since 01/02  
**\$110.00**  
Funds Available for 04/02 issue  
**\$602.35**  
Funds Expended 04/02 issue  
**\$358.40**  
Balance Remaining for 07/02  
**\$243.95**

Thank you for your contributions for the Bryce Canyon Update. **More funds will be needed for the next issue.**

of Japan were very interesting. I still have several sets of china and crystal I purchased while in Japan. There are many fond memories of the experiences on the Bryce Canyon and many stories to tell.

Before going to Hong Kong the second time, I wrote my dad for a loan of \$100 so I could start a lending fund (slush) for those sailors who needed the extra cash. I did quite well with this and at one time had about \$1500.00 loaned out every two weeks. This extra cash surely helped out when starting to the University of Tennessee in 1957. On the way back to the U. S. the stop in Hawaii was different from the first time. We had orders to take on fuel and water and that is what the Captain did...with two five gallon cans! As some of you may remember, the Captain took the Bryce Canyon to the dock without the help of tugs and hit the dock. There was some damage done to the ship and, of course, to the dock. We arrived in Long Beach very high out of the water. I wonder what happened to the Captain for this blunder, but we sailors were happy to get back to the States.

During my career as a private citizen I was a Teacher of Biology and Chemistry, Dean of Boys, Principal, and Director of Instruction for School Systems for 31 years. I then retired and now my wife of 37 years and I enjoy traveling the globe.

Jim Ward  
140 Hermitage Dr  
Tullahoma, TN 37388  
jnward@cafes.net

### CRUISING CRETINS

*Submitted by iVillager Sandy. These are true stories from a friend of Sandy's who works on a cruise ship.*

1. (For this one, you have to know that it's really easy to get lost in the maze of corridors and elevators on a ship.) A lady asked

if this elevator went to the front of the ship.

2. Two elderly women were staring at the numbers of the floors listed above the elevator door. When asked if they needed assistance with something, one asked how they were going to be able to reach way up there to push the button for their floor.
3. A newly-wed couple, after bringing their luggage into their cabin, stormed down to the desk. The bride was in tears, and the groom was red-faced. When asked what the problem was, the groom started swearing at the desk clerk. "We booked a cabin with a view for our honeymoon, and all we get to see out the window is a parking lot!"
4. There was some mix-up with a woman's room. The clerk was trying to remedy the situation. He asked, "Would you like an inside cabin or an outside cabin?" She replied, "Well, it looks like it might rain today. I'd better get an inside cabin."
5. Two women were sitting by the pool, and one asked what kind of water they fill the pool with—fresh water or sea water. The cruise director answered, "Sea water." "Oh, that explains why it's so rough today."
6. Someone—always a man—always asks, "Does the ship run on generators?" The Cruise Director usually tells them. "No, we just have a very long power line running to the mainland."
7. "What do you do with the ice sculptures after they melt?"

### ORIGIN OF THE PEACE SYMBOL

The peace symbol that became popular in the 1960s is a combination of semaphore symbols for "N" and "D"—for nuclear disarmament. The symbol was popularized by British pacifists.

## 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"*

*The following poems were written by James I. Harris, who served aboard the BC during the fifties in Supply, S-1 Division.*

### DROPLETS IN TIME

Tears sets within thine eye that day  
Emotion allows it to slide away  
It streams down thine cheek  
Knowing of thy heartbeat sway  
Hoping that it was a 'never-day'

Pain and death thy heart fears  
Distain and murrers within thee  
breaks  
As shame for others mutes thy ears  
It harms thy soul of religious fakes

Tears upon thy face for darken  
crime  
As humanistic venturers hide covered  
in vane  
Thy heart pauses in the instant of  
time  
Should they reap their dues of our  
pain

I hold my hand to wipe thy tear  
As each trickles to thy lips  
Embrace I you in fitful scorn  
As patriots sail their ships.

Conquer of the ugly faire reprove  
Tears abundant flowing full  
Unafraid we enact our move  
Pausing as faith provided our tool

We cling to GOD  
As we hold one another  
In tears.

*I wrote this in honor for all American people who feel as I do about the hate that descended upon us.*  
*James Harris*

### SAIL UPON YOUR DREAM

Envision the currents as your mind  
takes flight.  
Voyage your dreams on sail as  
flowing breezes of thoughts move.  
You're a sailor amongst the stars!  
Thoughts are your compass as you  
navigate the starry night.

Your spirits soars to heights as you  
embrace the clouds and paint a soften  
pastel sea creating your wake without  
a rudder stern.

Listen to seascapes as melodic currents  
flow upon every breeze you  
travel

Gliding swells move thoughts creating  
your dreams as you explore adventurous  
places.

Ageless ventures weathered upon  
your face exist within your mapping  
mind seizing dreams within your inspired  
embraces.

Sail your voyage via your dreamy  
helm,  
captain your destiny en route and sail  
upon you dream.

### AS LONG AS

As long as you remain you,  
I need not worry;  
all dreams are possible,  
so I shall dream the ultimate dream.

As long as stars remain stars,  
I need not worry;  
all travel is possible,  
so I shall consider all distant flight.

As long as love remains Love,  
I need not worry;  
all love is possible,  
so I humble myself in its pureness.

As long as Heaven remains forever  
and Angels sing their Praises  
in Divine and Pure Notes Willingly,  
I need not worry;  
Perhaps now I may sing along,  
so I shall—sing joyful praises.

As long as I have you, the stars, love,  
and heaven,  
I need not worry;  
For I believe ALL is possible,  
so I shall be in complete contentment.

All factors beyond time are unending,  
I need not worry;  
For I believe ALL is ALL,  
So I shall understand fully,  
—You are Everything—

### AD-36 SHIPMATES: —YOU AND ME—

Ships moor throughout the seas  
as destiny sets our shore.  
Yet, most mates were apart,  
some never meet you and me.

Mates on other vessels and  
some on the "Golden-E-BC"  
Millions of mates in time  
with wakes between you and me.

Obligations held us in sync  
at bay or upon the ocean drink.  
We shared responsibilities  
in our shared pride, you and me.

Whether low or high tide or  
in stateside or foreign port  
we worked as one with pride.  
Yes, you and me.

Yet, we respected our functional duties  
and maybe realized more even now.  
Yes, we did well and earned our "E"  
you and me.

Our sentiment and thoughts  
never weary thinking of the sea.  
Now recalling other mates of rank or  
rate,  
like you and me.

The Navy is contained within my  
pride  
and perhaps a love within a mate's  
heart.  
I recall with a smile and maybe a  
tear  
what pride and duty truly means.

We were shipmates who made it all  
worthwhile  
in our turn and years as our faith allowed  
us to be  
in our days to be the best—Aboard  
the B.C.—  
"The best" You and me?

What else could we have been  
mate aboard the Tender splendor?  
You and me?  
Yes mate, you and me.  
—THE BEST—

## SPEECH BY JOHN McCAIN

As you may know, I spent five and one half years as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. In the early years of our imprisonment, the NVA kept us in solitary confinement or two or three to a cell.

In the 1971 the NVA moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room.

This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change and was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans on behalf of a few hundred POWs 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my room was a young man named Mike Christian. Mike came from a small town near Selma, Alabama. He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the US Navy. He later earned a commission by going to Officer Training School. Then he became a Naval Flight Officer and was shot down and captured in 1967.

Mike had a keen and deep appreciation of the opportunities this country—and our military—provide for people who want to work and want to succeed. As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing. Mike got himself a bamboo needle. Over a period of a couple of months, he created an American flag and sewed on the inside of his shirt.

Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the Pledge of Allegiance. I know the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important part of our day now, but I can assure you that in that stark cell it was indeed the most important and meaningful event.

One day the Vietnamese searched our cell, as they did periodically, and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it. That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, and for the benefit of us all, beat Mike Christian severely for the next couple of hours. Then, they opened the door of the cell and threw him in. We cleaned him up as well as we could.

The cell in which we lived had a concrete slab in the middle on which we slept. Four naked light bulbs hung in each corner of the room. As said, we tried to clean up Mike as well as we could. After the excitement died down, I looked in the corner of the room, and sitting there beneath that dim light bulb with a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend, Mike Christian. He was sitting there with his eyes almost shut from the beating he had received, making another American flag.

He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to pledge allegiance to our flag and our country.

So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, you must never forget the sacrifice and courage that thousands of Americans have made to build our nation and promote freedom around the world. You must remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

### CRUISE NEWS

Thirty-five cabins have been filled for the November 3-7 Bahamas cruise for the B. C. reunion. There are a few rooms still available since we acquired extra due to the great response. If you would like to go on the cruise, but haven't signed up yet, give us a call at 828-256-6008 and we will get you registered.

## NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE ON LINE

The Newsletter for the USS BRYCE CANYON reunion is available to download from the Military Locator & Reunion Service Inc web site.

If you are able to visit our web site and download the Newsletter, and therefore do not need a paper copy mailed to you, please let us know.

Please visit our web site at [www.mlrsinc.com](http://www.mlrsinc.com), then follow the link labeled Reunions, then scroll down until you see the listing for the USS BRYCE CANYON. Click on the button labeled Newsletters, and in a few minutes the newsletter should appear on your screen. (As a side note - it took about 4 minutes on my computer). This will only work if you have Adobe Reader 4.0 or higher. You can also download this viewer for free from our web site.

If this works for you and you would like to receive all future mailings from us in this method, please send me an e-mail requesting to subscribe to the BRYCE CANYON E-mail Roster. Each time something new is available, we will send you an e-mail informing you something new is available on the web site. **Please let us know if your e-mail address changes so you don't miss any important information.**

**To subscribe to the BRYCE CANYON E-mail Roster please send an e-mail to [SubscribeMLRS@aol.com](mailto:SubscribeMLRS@aol.com), put the phrase SUBSCRIBE BRYCE CANYON in the Subject line and type your name and e-mail address in the body of your e-mail. You will be placed in the e-mail roster.**

Your name and postal mailing address will remain in our computers and will appear on all mailing lists, etc distributed to other members of your group.

If you have any question regarding this, do not hesitate to ask!

Dina Coffey