

BRYCE CANYON UPDATE

Volume 14, Issue 2

April 2009

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS BRYCE CANYON AD 36



Points of Special Interest

- *Mike Nesbit gives you a preview of what you can expect to see at the 2009 reunion in Norfolk. See the cover story.*
- *See if you know any of the seven new names listed under "Welcome Mat" on page two.*
- *There are a number of shipmates who are looking for an old buddy. "Where's My Shipmate?" on pages 2 & 3 has the names and contact information.*
- *We got a good response for the question about what surprising things you learned in the Navy. See pages 3 & 4.*

COORDINATOR'S COLUMN

AHOY, Bryce Canyon Sailors, we're 7 months away from our next ship reunion, **October 8-11, 2009 in Norfolk, Virginia**. You should be receiving your Reunion Information Packet with this newsletter. This reunion promises to be a "Great One" because we will be visiting the Largest Naval Installation in the World, Head Quarters of the Atlantic Fleet. We plan to visit the base and see all the ships in port, visit Admirals Row, see all the historic homes on the base and step aboard the Battleship Wisconsin. If you've never been on a Battleship, you're in for a big surprise. We will also be visit-

ing the General MacArthur Museum and the Rotunda Memorial where the General is buried. This unique tour will give you a glimpse into the past history of a great man. On Saturday, we will be spending the entire day at Colonial Williamsburg visiting the 18th Century historic homes and shops. Williamsburg was the capital of England's oldest, largest, and most popular colony and the seat of power in the new nation's most influential state. There are a lot of great shops, taverns and interesting things to see in Williamsburg, so you won't be disappointed. This is a reunion

not to miss. We will also be having our annual Gift Exchange, so bring a nice gift, something that you might want to receive. We had some great gifts last year, so don't cheap out. We will also have our raffle, which gets bigger every year. If you have any pictures of the BC (8X10), Naval artifacts, quilts that you've made, your old uniform, Video's by Harry, bring it and we'll raffle it off. I will be bring the "Big Gift" again, 16X24 picture of the Bryce Canyon and some other special gifts. By the way, if your uniform still fits, bring it and wear it to the Saturday Night Banquet. Last

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year we had 5 shipmates wearing their uniforms and it gave a special meaning to the banquet and our Memorial Service. These reunions are for you, the Sailors of the Bryce Canyon and your wives. There's something special about these reunions that brings people closer together, forges a bond from the past to the future and every year we hate to see it end. Mitsy and I are looking forward to seeing all of you that come every year and also the new sailors that make it for the first time and see what a great experience it really is. I appreciate all the help and suggestions that I get during the year from all of you which help to make these reunions the best of the best. If you haven't sent in your Annual BC Association Dues of \$20 (Please Do) to the Military Locator and Reunion Service at PO Drawer 11399, Hickory NC 28603. (Attention BC Dues) This money allows us to mail more than 800 newsletters out to you, four times a year, and I Thank You very much. If you have any stories about life on the BC, send them in to "Swabbie Stories", pictures are also appreciated too. If you're looking for an old shipmate, send his name into "Where's My Shipmate" be sure to include his name and years on the BC along with your name, phone number, E-mail, etc, so he can contact you. My name is Michael Nesbit (1969-71) and I'm your Bryce Canyon Association President and Reunion Coordinator. 619 562-5690 E-mail: thenezz@cox.net

2009 USS BRYCE CANYON REUNION

OCTOBER 8-11

NORFOLK, VA

NORFOLK HILTON HOTEL



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.

William Fowler

3115 Shadywood Ln
Evansville, IN 47712

Robert Lombardi

(1962-64) R-1 DC-3 Div
2770 Witches Lk Rd
Arbor Vitae, WI 54568
715-542-3338
rlomba1@hughes.net

Paul Chandler

(1966-67) HM3 Medical
3474 Robb Roy Pl
San Diego, CA 92154
619-429-4061
gordo4@cox.net

Arthur Willenbrecht

(1964-68) EN FN
15927 Via Cordoba
San Lorenzo, CA 94580
510-481-1022
awilnbr@aol.com

Leonard Niemczyk

(1972-76) YN3 Weapons
15001 35th Ave W
Lynwood, WA 98087
808-542-5287
ifniemczyk@comcast.net

Marion Graybill

305 Apache St
Columbus, NE 68601
402-564-8714

Clyde Watts

46 Pressley Rd
Franklin, NC 28734



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.

Gary Crosley (1958-63)

Died November 27, 2008

Marion Hon (1958)

Died October 11, 1992

WHERE'S MY SHIP- MATE?



Looking for a lost shipmate? Send in his name and any information you have about him and we'll see if anyone can help you locate him. The lost ship-

mates are:

Bill Wheeler was from Texas/Oklahoma area. Please contact **Abundo Gonzales (1952-53)**

1202 31st St
Hondo, TX 78861
830-426-3864

Contact **Tom Shaw, 107 N Sheridan St, Lancaster, WI 53813** Phone 608-723-2882 if you know the whereabouts of the following shipmates, whose last known addresses are given:

B.J. Adams 1706 Jones St, Gadsden, AL

B.K. Cummings Rt 3, Macon, GA
Thomas O. Thomas 241 South Pine, Waconia, MN 55387

R.A. Johnson #2 Edgemere Rd,

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Pigeon Cove, MA
Thomas Thornhill 45550 North
 Larimer, Lancaster, CA
 A. **Stellenburg** 15056 Culley, Vic-
 torville, CA

Chief James Adams ('69-71)
DC1 John Franklin Wynn, Diver
 ('69-71)
BM3 J. A. Oliver, Diver ('69-71)
SFM2 G. F. Griffin, ('69-71)
MRFN J. D. Butcher ('69-71)

If you know these men, contact
Mike Nesbit at 619-562-5690 or
thenezz@cox.net

Earl Terao DT2, Gardenia, CA
Lt Randall Stark, Dental Officer,
 AZ
Marvin Koch, DT3
 Contact *John Feazell*, 1002 W
 Portland, Springfield, MO 65807

I would like to hear from other
 shipmates who were in Charleston,
 SC when the ship was commis-
 sioned. Especially from any of those
 in the Dental or Medical division.
 Contact *Charles F. O'Brien, Jr.*
charlesobrien07@bellsouth.net
 2006 Peeble Dr, Greensboro, NC
 27410 Phone: 336-288-0291.

SOME SURPRISING THINGS I LEARNED IN THE NAVY

*This was the topic that we put out
 by e-mail for this issue of the news-
 letter. Your responses are printed
 below:*

**Charles O'Brien, HM3, Plank
 Owner:**

Two things surprised me. One
 was leaving home and going from
 NC to California at 17. I thought I
 was ready, but I had not gotten half
 thru Texas until I started to think,
 "What have I done? I'm not ready for
 this." The other thing that was a good
 surprise to me was after leaving Hos-

pital Corps School in San Diego and
 coming back to Charleston Naval
 Hospital and on the BC, was the
 respect the Corpsmen received
 from other shipmates. Medical al-
 ways seemed to have an extra
 edge, especially when "stores" (food
 items) were loaded aboard the ship.
 We had the distinct duty to look
 over the items and taste the ice
 cream! Wow!

Doug Williams, 1956-58:

One thing that really surprised
 me was the Stewards Mates. When
 I came into the Navy in 1954, most
 of the SMs were Filipino. I asked
 why and was told that they were
 only allowed to enlist in this rating.
 All were well educated and some
 even had college degrees. I'm
 happy to say that this policy was
 changed before my enlistment was
 up in 1958, and these fine sailors
 quickly went into technical and ad-
 ministrative ratings for which they
 were very qualified. Many received
 their citizenship through what I be-
 lieve was titled the Lodge Act, after
 three years of service. Another thing
 that surprised me was that we were-
 n't allowed to have civilian clothes
 aboard ship. That meant if you were
 a single sailor in the U.S. you had to
 belong to a "locker club" where you
 kept your civvies. That policy didn't
 change until after I got out. My luck!
 I've had the opportunity to see
 many positive changes in the Navy
 and the other services during my 71
 years, even if I didn't personally
 benefit from some of them. The only
 thing that currently displeases me is
 that dumb looking beret that the
 Army wears (and I'm retired Army).
 I'm sure glad I retired before that
 came about.

Ted Marsh:

I served from 1951-1955 in the
 operations dept (radar man) and did
 not realize that the Navy was oper-
 ating in real hazardous conditions. I
 realize that the men in repair were
 fully aware of the conditions many
 of the ships were operating in. If

anyone is interested, go to Google
 and then go to U.S. Navy ships: sunk
 & damaged in action during Korean
 conflict. It is amazing to me how ac-
 curate the Communist shore batter-
 ies were. We had everything from
 mine sweepers to battle ships hit and
 damaged, and many casualties from
 shore batteries and from ships hitting
 mines. For the most part, our time in
 danger was going from Yokosuka to
 Sasebo. I do remember the gunner
 mates trying to sink floating mines
 with automatic weapons.

I also served TAD aboard the *Sic-
 ily* which was an escort carrier oper-
 ating off the west coast of Korea and
 seeing the Marine pilots returning in
 shot up Corsairs. Every evening we
 went to GQ because of high flying
 North Korean scout planes would
 keep track of where we were, but
 were never attacked.

Military service should be manda-
 tory for all high school seniors. It is
 the most maturing experience one
 can get. It also creates pride and
 responsibility for the individual.

I will get off my soap box and re-
 turn to retired life.

Bob Donoho:

It isn't what happened while in the
 Navy that surprised me, but what I
 heard from others after I got out.
 They told me things that had taken
 place on the ship that I didn't have a
 clue about. Some really funny things!
 I guess being on the O-3 level, you
 don't always know what goes on be-
 low deck. I shouldn't have taken life
 so seriously during my Navy days
 and had more fun.

**Reverend Birney Phillips HTCS
 USN Ret.:**

In 1957 I arrived aboard a de-
 stroyer in Norfolk, VA, and as a
 young impressionable child, was
 aghast at the amount of cuss words
 sailors used for every sentence. It
 wasn't long before I was keeping up
 with the best of them, though I knew
 it was wrong. It was a way of navy
 life aboard ship and was apparently

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accepted, as Eleanor Roosevelt stated that "sailors have the cleanest bodies and the dirtiest minds." Every ship I went to after that seemed to echo those sentiments and included the Bryce Canyon which seemed to include a couple of newer words when a new engineering officer came aboard. However, this is a strange phenomenon, because I now get e-mails from many of them who have changed their ways and become Christians. It is extremely refreshing to me because I retired after 20 years and did a little changing of my own. To all my shipmates wherever they may be, God bless and may gentle breezes blow upon your back the rest of your lives.

Stephen Templeton, 1967-68:

One of the most interesting things I found being aboard the ship was the diversity of men. One thing that comes to mind was a person I became acquainted with that was from the Ozarks. He told me he had never seen carpeting, appliances and all the things we take for granted. It was hard to believe that in the United States that poverty of that level still existed.

Larry McKelvy:

I, along with many others, came from a small Iowa farm town. My dad ran a trucking and corn shelling business for many years. Dad would not spend any more money than was absolutely necessary to run his business.

When I went aboard the Canyon, I found out that the government did not operate like my dad did in his business. I had been aboard about two years and was working for the R2 division officer, and one day I looked out on the pier and there sat about six or eight pallets of different material for the machine shop. I went and asked him what the material was for. He replied that we were nearing the end of the physical year and we had a budget of \$100,000 for the year and we had only used \$75,000, so we

were taking on the material so we could spend the other \$25,000. I asked him why didn't the government just replace the 75 we had spent, and he said they didn't do that. I told him that was more material than we had used since I had been aboard, and he said he knew that, but that was the way it was.

Now the really shocking part to me was that we had the Gold E, and then we had to waste money when we had been very efficient that year and several before that. They still operate the same way today, and I still find it wasteful and sad.

Paul Chandler, HM3 June '66-Mar '67:

Being from Cheyenne, WY, I joined the Navy in '63 and went to boot camp at NTC, San Diego, Corps School USNH San Diego, then back to NTC till June of '66, then to the Bryce Canyon till March of '67, then to MCAS, Yuma, AZ till July '67 when I got out of the Navy. Made one WestPac cruise and seriously thought it was a government paid vacation. What more could a 21 year old, single guy ask for? Transportation, room and board, medical care and being paid on top of it, to travel to some of the most exotic places in the world, and being on a ship that only spent enough time at sea to get from one place to another, almost 4 months or so total in the Philippines, 1 month in Japan and Taiwan and a week in Hong Kong. What a deal!

It was war time and our ship definitely played its part, even though our work came to us. The experience was a lifetime worth of Good Memories. What it taught me was the world is made up of a lot of diverse people and cultures and though it takes awhile to get used to the differences, and that it is sometimes hard to accept, this is the way it is and I hope will always be. It was fascinating to see the differences in all those places compared to the States, but you know the old adage

that if you treat people the way you want to be treated, they will definitely treat you most of the time even better. I found that they were just as interested in me and our way of life as I was about them and their way of life. Even though most of the places were a lot different than what I was used to, I soon realized that they were carrying out their lives just like us, doing what they had to do and making the most of it. Seeing pictures of those places today shows a lot of changes there just like here. I know that I am a lot more tolerant of people and the way we are because of this experience and I have the Navy to thank for that!!! I try to explain the advantages of joining the service to the younger people that I come in contact with and am saddened when they don't want to hear it.

Editor's Note: Because we are mailing the registration packet along with the newsletter, we are limited in the number of pages we can use for the newsletter. If you sent in a letter or story that does not appear, please know that it will be saved and used in the next issue.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR
04/09 ISSUE**

Balance from 01/09 issue	\$2205.65
Received since 01/09	\$ 3250.00
Available for 04/09 issue	\$5455.65
Expended 04/09 issue	\$1261.32
(8 pages/848 copies)	
Postage:	\$339.20
Paper:	\$203.52
Envelopes:	\$ 50.88
Copies:	\$542.72
Labor:	\$125.00
TOTAL:	\$1261.32

**Balance Remaining for 07/09
\$4194.33**

Dues of \$20.00 are due in January of each year. If you have not already sent your dues, mail them to ML&RS. Be sure to indicate that it is for the Bryce Canyon Update.