



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS CANOPUS (AS-34)
FPO New York 09501

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From: Commanding Officer, USS CANOPUS (AS 34)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09 B9), Washington Navy Yard,
Washington, D.C. 20390

Subj: USS CANOPUS (AS 34) 1970 Command History (OPNAV Report
5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Basic History

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted
as the Command History for USS CANOPUS (AS 34) for calendar year
1970.

R. M. Hoover
R. M. HOOVER

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BASIC HISTORY

Command Organization

USS CANOPUS (AS 34) was under the command of Captain John Meredith DAVIS, USN, 512998/1100, until 25 July 1970, Captain Richard Martin HOOVER, USN, 542992/1100 assumed command on that date and commanded throughout the remainder of 1970.

During the period 1 January through 4 May 1970, CANOPUS was under the operational control of Commander Submarine Flotilla SIX in Charleston, S.C. On 5 May 1970, operational control was assumed by Commander Submarine Squadron FOURTEEN in Holy Loch, Scotland.

CANOPUS officially changed home ports on 5 May 1970, when Holy Loch, Scotland became the third homeport for the ship, the U. S. Navy's largest submarine tender. Bremerton, Washington had been the home port for CANOPUS prior to the move to Scotland.

Summary of Operations

1 January 1970 found CANOPUS undergoing a major overhaul and conversion in the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington. CANOPUS was being converted for the POSEIDON missile capability, the first submarine tender in the fleet to be so configured. During the period of overhaul, 75,000 man-days of shipyard work were performed on CANOPUS; extensive repair and refurbishments were to be found in all departments.

On 9 February, CANOPUS departed Puget Sound and stopped at Bangor, Washington for the purpose of loading munitions for gunnery training. This two-day evolution was completed and CANOPUS sailed south for Acapulco, Mexico. CANOPUS enjoyed a well-earned four-day stop in Acapulco, where she was warmly greeted by the American Ambassador to Mexico. The officers and men were well received by the local populace and each gained a better understanding of the other.

The 26th day of February 1970, will long be remembered as the first day CANOPUS crossed the equator and many fine sailors were christened "shellbacks" by King Neptune. This important event took place at latitude 00° and longitude 84°W.

The Panama Canal was transited by CANOPUS during the period 28 February to 1 March 1970. A brief stop at Rodman Naval Station on the Pacific side preceded the uneventful passage across the Isthmus.

Enclosure (1) to CANOPUS ltr
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Guantanamo Bay, Cuba was the next stop for CANOPUS on her eastward journey. 4 March 1970 was the date of arrival. Three weeks of intensive underway training was completed on 25 March, and CANOPUS left Guantanamo Bay with the highest score ever attained by a tender type ship.

On 28 March 1970, CANOPUS arrived in Charleston, South Carolina for a three-week load-out of supplies prior to crossing the Atlantic to her new home in Holy Loch, Scotland. This was a homecoming of sorts, as it was in Charleston that CANOPUS had been commissioned five years previous. On 24 April 1970, CANOPUS departed Charleston enroute to Holy Loch, Scotland.

CANOPUS arrived in the Holy Loch, Advance Site One for the refitting of fleet ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), on 5 May 1970 and relieved USS SIMON LAKE (AS 33), her sister ship.

At Site One, CANOPUS assumed the responsibility for refitting Submarine Squadron FOURTEEN SSBNs. During the eight-month period from May to December 1970, CANOPUS completed twenty-seven SSBN refits, requiring a total of 174,000 man-hours.

Included in the refits was a first for deployed FBM submarine tenders; CANOPUS was the first non-stateside tender to accomplish two major reactor plant alterations, SHIPALT SSBN 866 and SHIPALT SSBN 895.

During the night of 28 November and early morning of 29 November, a serious fire occurred on board CANOPUS. The fire broke out in the CPO Baggage Compartment, and generated intense heat and heavy smoke. The fire resulted in three fatalities: Boatswain's Mate Third Class Glenn O. WILFONG Jr., Seaman Apprentice Arthur C. BELT and Fireman Recruit Carl P. THUNDERBIRD. Petty Officer WILFONG was standing watch as the detention facility guard immediately above the CPO Baggage Compartment, while THUNDERBIRD and BELT were both prisoners. The performance of the hose teams and the timely and courageous actions of individuals who made repeated rescue attempts was commendable. Fourteen men have been recommended for awards as a result of their actions in combating the fire. While the damage was extensive in the small area in which the fire was contained, repairs were effected on Site and CANOPUS was never "off the line".

1970 ended with CANOPUS on Site in Holy Loch, Scotland, her primary mission - the upkeep/refit of Atlantic Fleet SSBNs.

Special Topics (CONT'D)

(2) Distinguished Visitors Aboard CANOPUS during 1970

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
2 Jul	Dr. Theos J. THOMPSON	Commissioner, Atomic Energy Commission
13 Jul	The Honorable Carl WALSKI	Asst. to the Secretary of Defense (Atomic Energy)
11 Aug	The Honorable John W. WARNER	Under Secretary of the Navy
11 Aug	VADM A. R. GRALLA, USN	Commander, Military Sealift Command
11 Aug	RADM F. E. HAMMOND, USCG	Chief of Operations
11 Aug	RADM W. S. MAILLARD, USNR	Member of Congress
26 Aug	The Honorable J. P. ADDABBO	Member of Congress
9 Sep	VADM Eugene P. WILKINSON, USN	Commander, Submarine Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet
6 Oct	The Honorable Charles A. BROWSHER	Assistant to the Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management)
6 Oct	RADM Gene R. LAROCQUE, USN	Inter-American Defense College
12 Oct	RADM Joseph L. HOWARD, SC, USN	Commander, Naval Supply Center, Charleston
2 Nov	RADM Francis J. FITZPATRICK, USN	Commander, Naval Communication Command

(3) Statistics of importance to mission fulfillment (1970)

Engineering	Overhauled 23 small boat engines.
Operations	Handled over 4,000 messages per month since arrival on Site One.
Disbursing	Monthly Payroll of \$500,000. Foreign Funds Exchanged monthly: \$250,000

Statistics of importance to mission fulfillment (CONT'D)

Repair	27 SSBN refits - 174,000 man-hours expended.
Administration	57 officers and 1302 enlisted men aboard as of 31 December 1970. Reenlistment statistics: 15% First term reenlistments. 86% Career eligible reenlistments.
Medical	Outpatients 7,500 Physicals 450 Admissions 200 Laboratory Procedures 8,500 Immunizations 7,000 Prescriptions filled 13,000
Dental	18,000 Dental Procedures.
Supply	9,000 requisitions per month 100,000 different line items available. \$1,000,000 OPTAR per year.