

Contributed by Wolfgang Hechler

**DECOMMISSIONING  
AND  
TRANSFER CEREMONY**



USS CHEWAUCAN (AOG-50)

TO

ARC TUMACO (BT-67)

U. S. NAVAL BASE  
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

1 JULY 1975

## MISSION

CHEWAUCAN is 311 feet long and displaces about 4000 tons fully loaded. She is powered by four sixteen cylinder diesel engines developing 3740 horsepower.

Originally designed as a Gasoline Tanker to carry aviation fuels, CHEWAUCAN now can supply ships of the Second and Sixth Fleets with several different types of petroleum products including the new Navy Distillate Fuel, JP-5, Lubricating Oil and Motor Gasoline. She has fuel for everything from Aircraft Carriers to your family car. All told, the ship can hold over 600,000 gallons of cargo products for delivery to other ships.

Normally, the ship refuels other vessels at anchor, but she has the capability to replenish her customers underway, both day and night, alongside or astern. CHEWAUCAN has self defense capabilities provided by her 3-inch and 20-millimeter guns. Although old, she has been extensively modernized for crew habitability which includes a new galley and mess decks, air conditioning and a library.

CHEWAUCAN, along with her sister ships NOXUBEE and NESPELEN, are the only AOG's on the Atlantic Coast. As such, they are often called on to do many and varied jobs. In fact, in 1970 CHEWAUCAN helped salvage a civilian tanker that had run aground in Charleston harbor by taking on part of her fuel load until she could be refloated. This instance is merely one example of the fine "Can Do" spirit on CHEWAUCAN.

## MISION

EL CHEWAUCAN TIENE UNA ESLORA DE 311 PIES Y DESPLAZA 4,000 TONELADAS A PLENA CARGA. LA PROPULSION ES DE MOTOR DIESEL, Y CUENTA CON 4 MAQUINAS DE 16 CILINDROS CADA UNA POTENCIA TOTAL DE 3740 CABALLOS DE FUERZA. ORIGINALMENTE EL CHEWACAN FUE DISENADO PARA TRANSPORTAR GASOLINA DE AVIACION. AHORA EL BUQUE PUEDE APROVICIONAR BUQUES CON DIFERENTES COMBUSTIBLES. NORMALMENTE ESTA DISENADO PARA APROVICIONAR BUQUES FONDEADOS PERO PUEDE REALIZAR APROVICIONAMIENTO EN EL MAR A BUQUES.

PARA DEFENSA EL CHEWAUCAN CUENTA CON INSTALACIONES DE ARMAMENTO DE 3/50 Y 40 MILIMETROS. EL BUQUE ES VIEJO PERO LO HAN MODERNIZADO. LAS HABITACIONES Y EL COMEDOR CUENTAN CON INSTALACIONES DE AIRE ACONDICIONADO.

EL CHEWAUCAN, JUNTO CON EL NOXUBEE Y NESPELEN, QUE SON SUS BUQUES HERMANOS, SON LOS UNICOS EN SU TIPO EN LA COSTA ATLANTICA, POR ESO SUS MISIONES SON MUY VARIADAS. EN 1970 EL CHEWAUCAN AUXILIO A UN BUQUE MERCANTE QUE SE ENCALLO EN EL PUERTO DE CHARLESTON. SU AYUDA CONSISTIO EN RECIBIR DEL MERCANTE SU COMBUSTIBLE PARA AYUDAR A SU FLOTACION. ESTE CASO ES SOLO UN EJEMPLO DEL "ESPIRITU" CON EL QUE CHEWAUCAN CUENTA.



## HISTORY

USS CHEWAUCAN (AOG-50) was built in Savage, Minnesota and was commissioned in February 1945. The last six months of WW2 saw the CHEWAUCAN ferrying gasoline to advanced Naval Bases in the Aleutians and the Hawaiian Sea Frontier, including Eniwetok and Midway Islands. After the War, she returned to the West coast, but continued to ferry gasoline to Alaska and the Pacific Islands.

The Year 1948 proved to be an historic one for the CHEWAUCAN. After journeying through the Panama Canal to Norfolk, Virginia, she underwent an extensive shipyard overhaul where she was converted to a combination Gasoline Oiler. After this conversion CHEWAUCAN became one of the twelve Charter Members of the U. S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. The original Sixth Fleet Mini-Oiler spent most of the next eight years in the Mediterranean, returning to the States only for shipyard overhauls and upkeep. Finally, in 1956, the CHEWAUCAN's homeport was changed from Norfolk to Naples, Italy. As part of her contribution to further the mobility of the Sixth Fleet, her crew designed a method to fuel Destroyers and smaller type ships at sea, and operation originally believed beyond the capability of the AOG.

In July 1960, CHEWAUCAN's homeport was once again changed to Charleston, South Carolina. Since then, she has alternated between Charleston and the Mediterranean on a rotational basis with the two other Atlantic Fleet AOG's on cruises of about six months duration. She has made well over 200 ports of call to countries throughout Europe, the Mideast and Africa.

CHEWAUCAN is currently a member of Service Squadron Eight, of the Atlantic Fleet Surface Force, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia.