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Jack Bryant and his wife of 67 years, Faye

Jack Bryant always wanted to be in the Navy.



Jack Bryant and his wife of 67 years, Faye, display the World War II veteran's medals and honors. Bryant will be the grand marshal of the Summit Hill Memorial Day Parade on May 26.

"Ever since I was a young boy, I knew I wanted to be in there," he recalled.

After he graduated in 1943 from the former Summit Hill High School, Bryant enlisted in the Navy and went on to serve for four years through 1947, during which time he was an electrician's mate, primarily aboard the USS George Clymer in the Pacific Theater.

Bryant, now 88, and one of the few remaining World War II veterans in the hilltop community, has been selected to serve as grand marshal of the Summit Hill Memorial Day parade, which will step off at 11 a.m. May 26, according to parade committee chairman Thomas Vermillion.

"I feel pretty good about it," said Bryant of his selection to head the parade. "Right now, I'm a little jittery, but I think I'll be all right."

Bryant will offer remarks at the traditional memorial service that will be held at 10 a.m. in Ludlow Park before the parade. Afterward, he will ring the old bell of the former SHHS that is located in the park, signaling the start of Carbon County's largest tribute to veterans.

"I'm very proud," said Bryant. "Riding at the head of the parade will be out of this world for me. It will be an honor to represent all veterans that day."

Bryant is a member of American Legion Post 316, Summit Hill, which will follow him in leading

the first division of the parade. It will begin at the park, proceed west on Ludlow Street, round St. Joseph Catholic Church and then travel east the entire route of White Street, disbanding at the cemetery complex at the end of the town.

A native of Michigan, Bryant came to Summit Hill with his mother, Beryl (Elsasser) Frederickson, and his late brother Charles, when he was just 3 years old. His father is the late Ernst Bryant.

The grand marshal enlisted in the Navy at the age of 17 years, six months, and was trained as an electrician's mate at the Naval Training School, Sampson, N.Y. he later trained at the Washington, D.C., Naval Yard and the Amphibious Training Base, Solomons, Maryland.

His military career saw him assigned to Pearl Harbor, where his duties included maintenance and repair of all of the ships' electrical equipment. Bryant later served in Guam, Saipan, Iwo Jima and Okinawa before returning to San Diego, where he was discharged. Later, he enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve.

Bryant proudly displays his service medals in a frame on one of the walls of his and his wife's home at 240 W. Hazard St., Summit Hill. The display also has a certification card of Jack's participation in the Joint Task Force One Atomic Bomb Test. Known as Operation Crossroads, the testing was ordered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to test the effect of the atomic bomb on Naval vessels. It was conducted at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

After his discharge, Bryant returned to Summit Hill and began employment with the former Atlas Powder Company, Reynolds, during which time he also attended the Coyne Electrical School in Chicago.

He worked at Atlas for 42 years before retiring in 1988.

In addition to belonging to Post 316, Bryant and his wife, the former Faye McMichael of Summit Hill, have been long-standing and devoted members of the Summit Hill United Methodist Church, where Jack served on the council, including having held the chairmanship. He was also the church's Sunday school superintendent and a lay reader, among other positions, while Faye was the church organist.

He also belongs to the Panther Valley Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, and is also a past firefighter with Diligence Fire Company No. 1, Summit Hill.

The Bryants were married on Sept. 4, 1947. They are the parents of three daughters, Jayne, wife of Stanley Jasinski of Palmyra; Jacqueline, wife of David Gibson of West Penn Township; and Carol, wife of Walter Scheese of Stanhope, N.J. They have seven grandchildren, Amy (Scheese), wife of Philip Stevens; Sara Scheese; Michael Scheese; David Gibson; Lauren (Gibson) wife of Josh Shimer; Jacqueline (Jasinski), wife of Derek Eisenhower; and Angela Jasinski; and also have 10 great-grandchildren, with two on the way.

In conjunction with the parade, the parade committee will once again sponsor its annual home

decorating contest. Judging by out-of-town visitors will take place on Sunday.

The details of the memorial services to be held at St. Joseph Cemetery, White Bear, on Sunday and in Ludlow Park on Memorial Day will be announced in a future edition of the Times News, as will the parade lineup.