

U. S. S. ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)-65)

CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

CVA(N)65/5700

32:HWM:rd

Ser: 2278

28 JUN 1963

From: Commanding Officer, USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)65)

To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)

Subj: Historical and Pictorial data; submission of

1958-

Ref: (a) CNO ltr ser 3209 of 5 June 1963

(b) OPNAVINST 5750.7

Encl: (1) Historical Narrative of USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)65)

(2) 3 Photographs of ENTERPRISE

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b) enclosures (1) and (2) are forwarded.


V. P. de POLX

NARRATIVE HISTORY OF USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)65) TO 1 JAN 63

The keel for the world's first nuclear powered attack aircraft carrier was laid February 4, 1958 at the Newport News (Va.) Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company. Two and a half years later, on September 24, 1960, the world's largest ship was christened the eighth ENTERPRISE by Mrs. William B. Franke, wife of the Secretary of the Navy.

ENTERPRISE began her initial "first" on October 29, 1961 when she began six days of Builder's and Navy Pre-Acceptance Trials underway. This was the first time in the naval history that the two trials had been combined. During the sea trials ENTERPRISE fulfilled and, in many cases, exceeded the Navy's hopes and expectations. She literally out-ran her destroyer escort and broke all existing records for heavy combatants. In the words of Admiral George W. Anderson, Jr., Chief of Naval Operations, "ENTERPRISE has exceeded 40mph in her initial trials. I think we hit the jackpot." ENTERPRISE then returned to Newport News Shipyard to complete outfitting.

Over 13,000 people, including 3,000 crewmembers, jammed the Big E's hangar deck to witness Captain Vincent Paul de Poix, USN, take command and place ENTERPRISE in commission on November 25, 1961. The honorable John B. Connally, Jr., Secretary of the Navy, termed ENTERPRISE a worthy successor to her predecessor, the famous CV-6 of World War II, and opined that "she will reign a long, long time as Queen of the Seas." Initially ENTERPRISE was under command of the Commandant of the Fifth Naval District, but on 20 December was assigned to Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet.

Following her fitting out period, and after setting a speed record of sorts in the deperming crib 4-5 January, ENTERPRISE put out to sea as a commissioned ship for the first time on January 12, 1962. Five days later, Commander George C. Talley, Jr., Skipper of Air Group ONE, in an F8U (F8E) Crusader, made the first arrested landing on her 4 1/2 acre flight deck. After completing CARQUALS, ENTERPRISE was involved in her initial operational assignment as a unit of the Project Mercury Recovery Force off Bermuda. After 10 days and several delays, this second attempt to put a man in space was postponed and the Big E returned to Norfolk, Va., to prepare for her shakedown cruise.

Enclosure (1)

On February 5 ENTERPRISE set sail for the Caribbean and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Enroute she stopped at Mayport, Florida, to load the A3J (A5A) Vigilantes of Heavy Attack Squadron SEVEN. This was the Navy's first operational squadron of the Mach II, heavy attack bombers. The Vigilantes of VAH-7 and the Phantoms of VF-102 were in addition to the already embarked CVG-1.

The Big E's first thousandth arrested landing was put into the record books on February 15 by LT John Brickner of VF-102 in the world's fastest fighter plane, the 1606 mph F4H (F4B) Phantom II.

ENTERPRISE wound up her shakedown cruise and training on April 5 and Commander Fleet Training Group, Guantanamo awarded her the highest score (90.3) ever made by an aircraft carrier on shakedown or refresher training, and the second highest ever given to any ship by Fleet Training Group, Guantanamo. CVG-1 perfected their air power demonstration for the many congressmen that visited ENTERPRISE at GITMO.

Soon after her return to Norfolk on April 8 preparations were made for a visit by President John F. Kennedy. The President arrived aboard ENTERPRISE on April 14 with congressmen and foreign diplomats and witnessed an awesome display of aerial and surface firepower by units of the Second Fleet. Again it was Carrier Air Group ONE providing firepower demonstrations from ENTERPRISE.

Leaving the yard on June 19, ENTERPRISE officially joined the Second Fleet on June 25. With Carrier Air Group SIX embarked, her first assignment was type training exercises in the Western Atlantic, culminated by a 4th of July visit to Boston, Mass., her first official port of call. Some 12,000 Boston area residents took advantage of the opportunity to visit the world's largest ship.

ENTERPRISE departed the Hub City on 5 July and participated in her first large scale fleet exercise in LANTFLEX 2-62 as part of TF 24. ENTERPRISE conducted her first STRIKEX, launching long range air strikes on land targets, in addition to participating in AAW and other fleet exercises. The OTC was RADM R. D. Hogle, COMCARDIV FOUR, embarked in USS FORRESTAL CVA-59. Arriving in Norfolk on July 12, she remained in port for leave and upkeep until August 3 when she weighed anchor for her initial assignment with the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean with CVG-6 embarked.