

FORRESTAL (CV-59) later AVT-59

Final Determination: 30 November 2010

Built By: Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company

Keel Laid: 14 July 1952

Launched: 11 December 1954

Commissioned: 1 October 1955

Decommissioned: 11 September 1993

For a complete history of the ship, see *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships* entry for FORRESTAL at <http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/f3/forrestal.htm>.

Deployments:

Mediterranean (Including patrols in North Atlantic and Indian Ocean): 21

Western Pacific (Vietnam): 1

Eastern Atlantic: 1

Awards:

Presidential Unit Citation: 0

Unit Awards Received

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal [AE]

Joint Meritorious Unit Award [JU]

Meritorious Unit Commendation [MU]

Navy Battle Efficiency Award [NE]

Vietnam Service Medal [VS]

Dates

19 Jan–7 Mar 1962

5–10 Sep 1982

13 Oct–5 Nov 1982

30 Apr–16 Jul 1991

1 Jan–31 Dec 1973

1 May 1987–8 Oct 1988

1 Jun–12 Dec 1991

1 Jul 1974–30 Jun 1975

1 Jan–31 Dec 1988

23–30 Jul 1967

12 Aug 1967

Noteworthy Accomplishments / Events:

1955: First “Super Carrier”

1963: Conducted trials that included landings and take offs of a Lockheed C-130 (*Hercules*) (BuNo 149798), accomplished 29 Touch and Go landings and 21 full stop landing. This aircraft may be the largest known aircraft to land and take off from a carrier.

1967: After five days on line at Yankee Station in the Gulf of Tonkin, an accidental launch of a missile starts a major fire that killed 132 sailors and injured 62. Ship suffered major damage including seven large holes in the flight deck, fire damage in below deck areas and shrapnel damage to the island. Lessons learned incorporated in training film *Learn or Burn*.

1989: Supported U.S. Diplomats during the Malta Summit between President George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev. Her assigned air group provided CAP overhead during the summit.

1991: CV-59 selected to replace LEXINGTON (AVT-16) as the Navy's training carrier. Ship reclassified AVT-59 and was under conversion when the Navy decided to decommission her.

Conclusion:

FORRESTAL meets the criteria to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. She is the first of her class and the very first "Super Carrier." All carriers built since owe something to the basic FORRESTAL design.

Sources:

Evans, Mark L. *DANFS* Entry for FORRESTAL (CV-59).
<http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/f3/forrestal.htm>

Friedman, Norman. U.S. Aircraft Carriers An Illustrated Design History. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis 1983.

Grossnick, Roy. United States Naval Aviation 1910 – 1995. Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C. 1996.

Polmar, Norman. The Naval Institute Guide to the Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet 15th ed. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis 1993.

Polmar, Norman. The Naval Institute Guide to the Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet 18th ed. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis 2005.

Command Histories and Command Operations Reports for FORRESTAL (CV-59) in the collections of the History and Archives Division, Naval History and Heritage Command (formerly the Historical Center, Naval Warfare Division, Ships' Histories Branch).

HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAKEHOLDER COMMENT:

Historic preservation stakeholder comments received are considered when preparing final determinations. The initial determination for this vessel was made available for comment by

historic preservation stakeholders for 60 days. During that time, the Navy received zero (0) written comments.