

United States Ship

U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS (DD-754)

FRANK E EVANS was launched 3 October 1944 by Bethlehem Steel Company, Staten Island, New York; sponsored by Mrs. Frank E. Evans, widow of General Evans; and commissioned 3 February 1945, Comdr. H. Smith in command.

FRANK E. EVANS arrived at Pearl Harbor 18 May for her final training, and crossed to Eniwetok, Guam, Ulithi, and Okinawa on escort duty. Reaching action waters 24 June, she was assigned to radar picket and local escort duty, often firing on enemy aircraft. At the close of hostilities, she patrolled the Yellow Sea and the Gulf of Chihili, embarked released Americans from prisoner of war camps near Dairen, Manchuria, covered occupation landings at Jinsen, Korea, and continued to operate in the Far East until 6 March 1946 when she sailed from Tsingtao for San Francisco. Immobilized there from 31 March, FRANK E. EVANS was decommissioned and placed in reserve 14 December 1949. Recommissioned 15 September 1950 for duty in the Korean war, FRANK E. EVANS sailed from San Diego 2 January 1951 for duty with the 7th Fleet. On 26 February she began her part in the lengthy siege of Wonsan, during which she engaged enemy shore batteries eleven times. On 18 June she was struck by 30 shrapnel hits, which caused minor wounds to 4 of her crew before the destroyer silenced the enemy battery. During this tour of duty FRANK E. EVANS also bombarded targets in the Songjin-Chongjin area, rescued downed aviators, and coordinated day and night bombing missions by United Nations aircraft. She returned to San Diego 4 September 1951. FRANK E. EVANS sailed 22 March 1952 for her second Korean tour, serving on patrol and bombardment duty along the coast of Korea and on the Taiwan patrol before returning to her new homeport, Long Beach, 6 November 1952. Her tour in the Far East from 13 June 1953 to 20 December coincided with the Korean armistice, and was devoted primarily to patrol duty. From 1954 to 1959 she made several deployments to the Far East. On 17 May she departed Long Beach enroute to Japan returning to same 18 December 1960. She again sailed 7 June 1962 to serve the mobile 7th Fleet throughout the Far East until return on 21 December.

FRANK E. EVANS departed Long Beach 29 July 1963 for Pearl Harbor returning home 23 August. She then sailed 24 March 1965 and participated in SEATO convoy operations from Manila to Bangkok. FRANK E. EVANS again sailed for the Far East 9 June 1966 and departed Sasebo 8 August to join Fast Carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin conducting bombardment missions on the coast of South Vietnam. She departed 9 December for Long Beach. She then sailed for Pearl Harbor with KEARSARGE (CVS-33) Anti-submarine Task Group for Yokosuka 8 October 1967. Ten days later she headed for the Tonkin Gulf to support Vietnam operations giving gunfire support off the coast during 2-18 February 1968. She arrived at Sasebo 23 February and put to sea 1 March to patrol the waters of the Sea of Japan, ready to deal with any action that might arise out of the capture of the TUEBLO by units of the North Korean Navy. She returned to Long Beach 24 March 1968. She again sailed for the Far East 29 March 1969. She arrived at Yokosuka 26 April 1969 and put to sea 30 April 1969 to operate off the Coast of Vietnam. On 26 May she departed in the screen of the Australian carrier HMAS MELBOURNE (CVS-21) bound towards Thailand.

On 3 June 1969 before dawn the FRANK E. EVANS was cut in two by the MELBOURNE. The collision happened while some 40 warships of six SEATO nations were on maneuvers, call "Sea Spirit." The destroyer's bow sank in two minutes, but the aft section remained afloat in tow by the MELBOURNE while survivors boarded the carrier. There was no fire. The destroyer was ordered back from a position ahead of the carrier to one astern, and in so doing went on a collision course. The severed forward section of the FRANK E. EVANS which gained fame in World War II by surviving a kamikaze attack went down in 5,400 feet of water and 74 men lost their lives. The stern section was towed to the Philippines by ATF-92. FRANK E. EVANS was struck from the Navy Register in 1969.