

**NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION (OP-09B9)
SHIPS' HISTORIES SECTION**

HISTORY OF USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD-754)

USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD-754) was named in honor of Brigadier General Frank E. Evans, U.S. Marine Corps.

Frank E. Evans was born 19 November 1876 in Franklin, Pennsylvania. He was an infantryman in the Spanish-American War and was commissioned in the Marine Corps 15 February, 1900. He served in the Philippines with the First Marine Brigade and had various duties in the United States before America's entry into World War I. He sailed for France with the Sixth Regiment of Marines, earning the Navy Cross and other awards for distinction of his service with the American Expeditionary Force. His post war career included duty in Haiti where from 1927 to 1930 he commanded the Constabulary Detachment and was Chief of the Gender merle d'Haiti. Brigadier General Evans was also District Marine Officer of several Naval Districts. He retired 1 December 1940 and died at his home in Honolulu, 25 November 1941.

FRANK E. EVANS (DD-754) was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company, Staten Island, New York. Her keel was laid 21 April 1944. She launched 3 October 1944, under the sponsorship of Mrs. Frank E. Evans, widow of Brigadier General Evans, U.S. Marine Corps. The destroyer commissioned in the New York Naval Shipyard 3 February 1945, Commander Harry Smith, USN, commanding.

FRANK E. EVANS (DD-754) was designed for a length overall of 376 feet, 5 inches; extreme beam 41 feet, 1 inch; standard displacement of 2200 tons; draft of 15 feet, 8 inches; a designed speed of 34 knots; and designed complement of 11 officers and 325 men. She was initially armed with 6 f-inch, .38 caliber guns; 11 20mm guns and ten torpedo tubes in two quintuple mounts. For antisubmarine warfare, she carried 6 depth charge projectors and 2 depth charge tracks.

FRANK E. EVANS departed New York 24 February 1945 for shakedown training out of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. She returned 31 March for alterations and sailed from Norfolk 23 April for brief operations at Guantanamo Bay before transit of the Panama Canal 5 May for duty in the Pacific. She arrived at Pearl Harbor 23 May and sailed the 28th with a military convoy bound by way of the Marshalls, the Marianas, and the Caroline Islands to Okinawa.

FRANK E. EVANS reached Okinawa 24 June 1945 and several times drove off enemy aircraft while on picket patrol off that newly-won Fleet Base. She remained on duty off Okinawa as hostilities with Japan came to an end 15 August 1945. On the 30th, she put to sea with a cruiser-destroyer task force that called at Port Darien, Manchuria (2-6

September) to insure release of former prisoners-of-war by the Japanese. She supported the occupation landings at Jinson, Korea, and was one of the units operating among Chinese ports to insure demilitarization in the following months. This duty came to an end 6 March 1946 when she departed Tsingtao for return to the United States. She called at Guam, Eniwetok, and Pearl Harbor, en route to San Francisco, California, arriving 31 March 1946. She entered the Mare Island Naval Shipyard 7 June 1947. She decommissioned at San Diego 7 July 1947.

FRANK E. EVANS remained in reserve until recommissioned at San Diego, 11 May 1949, Commander William C. Meyer, USN, commanding. Following a fitting out period in the San Francisco Naval Shipyard and brief operations out of San Diego, she again decommissioned 14 December 1949.

The communist invasion of South Korea and resulting intervention by the United Nations returned FRANK E. EVANS to duty. She recommissioned 15 September 1950 and departed San Diego 2 January 1951 for duty with the 7th Fleet. The destroyer arrived at Yokosuka 23 January and put to sea 3 February to join the Fast Carrier Task Force 77 off the coast of Korea. She carried out her first bombardment mission in Wonsan Harbor 26 February 1951 and engaged enemy shore batteries eleven times in the following months. On 18 June she was straddled by enemy fire and shrapnel ripped more than thirty holes in her plating. Four of her men suffered minor injuries in this action. She made a quick trip to Sasebo for repairs and was back on bombardment station 28 June 1951. The destroyer also bombarded targets of opportunity in the Songjin-Chongjin area. She departed Yokosuka 24 August 1951 and returned to San Diego 4 September 1951.

Following a yard period, and readiness operations on the coast of California, FRANK E. EVANS departed San Diego 22 March 1952 to again support United Nations Forces in Korea. She arrived at Yokosuka 14 April and sailed four days later to join the fast carriers off the East Coast of Korea. She departed the carrier formation 1 May for anti-junk patrol between Songjin and Wonsan. With cruiser MANCHESTER (CL-83), she rained destruction on enemy gun emplacements off Songjin and hit hard at coastal targets ranging to the "bombline" south of Wonsan. This duty came to an end 11 May 1952 when she rejoined the Fast Carrier Task Force 77. She returned to Sasebo 18 May and got underway the 24th to patrol in the Taiwan Straits until 20 June. She next joined cruiser BREMERTON (CA-130) to resume coastal bombardment and blockade ranging from Wonsan to Hungnam Harbor. She bombarded Hungnam Harbor the night of 5 September 1952 and continued in action between Wonsan and the "bombline" through 26 September when she again joined the fast carriers. She had a brief respite at Sasebo 9-10 October, then returned off Wonsan in company with battleship IOWA (BB-61). After gunfire support in the Kojo Area she returned to Yokosuka 18 October 1952. She sailed for home 21 October and came into her new homeport of Long Beach, California, 6 November 1952.

Following overhaul and coastal Operations, FRANK E. EVANS sailed from Long Beach 13 June 1953 and reached Yokosuka 7 July. The truce brought an end to armed

conflict in Korea but the destroyer patrolled in the Taiwan Straits and joined the screen of Fast Carrier Task Force 77 keeping watch over the uneasy truce in the Far East. She departed Yokosuka 1 December 1953 and returned to Long Beach 20 December. She had completed five additional cruises to the Far East with her return to Long Beach 28 August 1959.

FRANK E. EVANS began a new phase in her naval career 17 May 1960 when she stood out of Long Beach with the Anti-submarine Task Group built around anti-submarine warfare carrier HORNET (CVS-12). Following Fleet problems in Hawaiian waters the task group ranged to Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan and Okinawa, as a part of the powerful Seventh Fleet. The destroyer returned to Long Beach 18 December 1960 and received a modernization overhaul in the Long Beach Naval Shipyard during 6 February-9 October 1961. She again sailed with the HORNET (CVS-12) hunter-killer task group 7 June 1962 to serve the mobile Seventh Fleet throughout the Far East until return to her home port 21 December.

FRANK E. EVANS departed Long Beach 29 July 1963 with the HORNET task group for anti-submarine readiness exercises in the mid-pacific out of Pearl Harbor. She returned home 23 August and again sailed with HORNET 10 October 1963 to serve on anti-submarine warfare duty with the Seventh Fleet until 2 April 1964. She returned to Long Beach 15 April 1964 and received alterations in the Long Beach Naval Shipyard that included many improvements in her fighting ability.

She supported an amphibious assault training operation off the coast of California, then sailed 24 March 1965 as one of the units of an anti-submarine warfare task group led by anti-submarine carrier BENNINGTON (CVS-20). She participated in SEATO convoy operations from Manila to Bangkok, and joined the screen of the Fast Carrier Task Force off Vietnam 29 July 1965. After surveillance station in the screen of BENNINGTON (CVS-20), she departed 6 August to patrol in the Taiwan Straits. She rejoined the BENNINGTON anti-submarine warfare task group 20 September and departed Yokosuka 23 September for home. She arrived in Long Beach 7 October 1965.

FRANK E. EVANS again sailed for the Far East 9 June 1966. A unit of a hunter-killer group led by KEARSARGE (CVS-33), she arrived at Yokosuka 17 July. Three days later she was underway for anti-submarine warfare exercises with naval units of Japan and Korea. She departed Sasebo 8 August to join Fast Carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin. After bombardment missions on the coast of South Vietnam, and rescue of a jet pilot, she arrived in Subic Bay 5 September to prepare for patrol in the Taiwan Straits. She again arrived in the Gulf of Tonkin 21 October 1966. She plane guarded attack carriers CONSTELLATION (CVA-64) and ORINSKANY (CVA-34), then teamed with guided missile cruiser CHICAGO (CG-12) as a Positive Identification Radar Advisory Zone (PIRAZ) station. This duty continued until 14 November when the destroyer began day and night bombardment support to the Third Marines in the Tenh Quang Noai Province, South Vietnam. She rejoined the carriers 17 November and departed Yokosuka 9 December for Long Beach, arriving 20 December 1966.

FRANK E. EVANS conducted readiness exercises along the California seaboard until 17 August 1967. She then sailed for Pearl Harbor with the **KEARSARGE** (CVS-33) Anti-submarine Task Group for Yokosuka 8 October 1967. Ten days later she headed for Tonkin Gulf to support Vietnam operations through 12 November. During 10 through 18 December, she gave gunfire support to the Army's First Air Cavalry Division. After spending the Christmas holiday in Sasebo, she again gave gunfire support off the Vietnamese Coast during 2-18 February 1968. She arrived at Sasebo 23 February and put to sea 1 March to patrol the frigid waters of the Sea of Japan, ready to deal with any action that might arise out of the capture of the **PUEBLO** by units of the North Korean Navy. She departed Sasebo 4 March and returned to Long Beach 24 March 1968.

FRANK E. EVANS entered the Long Beach Naval Shipyard 7 May 1968 for an overhaul that completed 7 September 1968. Following readiness training along the western seaboard, she again sailed for the Far East 19 March 1969. She arrived at Yokosuka 26 April 1969 and put to sea 30 April 1969 to operate off the Coast of Vietnam with the **KEARSARGE** (CVS-33) Anti-submarine Task Group. Following this duty she proceeded to Subic Bay in the Philippines, arriving 17 May 1969. Here, she joined in preparation for Southeast Asia Treaty Organization maneuvers and exercises in waters reaching to Thailand. On 26 May 1969 she departed in the screen of the Australian anti-submarine warfare carrier **HMAS MELBOURNE** (CVS-21) bound towards Thailand.

FRANK E. EVANS was steaming in a darkened condition in the early morning darkness of 3 June 1969, engaged in "Operation Sea Spirit" with more than 40 ships of SEATO nations. In the action of taking a new station 1,000 yards astern of **HMAS MELBOURNE**, the two ships were soon on collision course. The Australian carrier ripped the American destroyer in two. Only the stern section remained floating. Seventy-four men lost their lives when **FRANK E. EVANS** was cut in two or perished when her bow section sank in only three minutes. Among those lost were the three Sage brothers from Niobrara, Nebraska: Gary 22, Gregory 21, and Kelly, 19. Mrs. Linda Sage, wife of Gregory, did not blame anyone for the tragic loss: "It was their wish that they serve together. That's the way they wanted it and that's the way we accepted it."

The 199 survivors of **FRANK E. EVANS** boarded **HMAS MELBOURNE** and soon transferred to **KEARSARGE** (CVS-33). A salvage party from **EVERETT F. LARSON** (DD-830) brought flooding under control before the stern section was taken in tow by fleet tug **TAWASA** (AFT-92) for Subic Bay in the Philippines.

FRANK E. EVANS arrived at Subic Bay 9 June 1969. Her stern section was stripped in floating dry dock **WINDSOR** (ARD-22) and she decommissioned 1 July 1969. Her name was struck from the Navy List the same day. The hulk of her stern section was sunk in fleet target practice.

FRANK E. EVANS (DD-754) received 11 battle stars and other awards for the Operations listed below:

1 Star/OKINAWA GUNTO OPERATION:

Assault and Occupation of Okinawa Gunto: 24-30 Jun 1945

1 Star/FIRST U.N. COUNTEROFFENSIVE-KOREA: 5 Feb-19 Mar 1951

1 Star/COMMUNIST CHINA SPRING OFFENSIVE: 22 Apr-8 Jul 1951

1 Star/U.N. SUMMER-FALL OFFENSIVE: 9 Jul-17 Aug 1951

1 Star/SECOND KOREAN WINTER: 20 Apr-17 May 1952; 21 Jul-18 Oct 1952

1 Star/KOREA, SUMMER-FALL, 1953: 16-27 Jul 1953

1 Star/VIETNAM DEFENSE CAMPAIGN: 29 Jul-6 Aug 1965; 24-26 Sep 1965

1 Star/VIETNAMESE COUNTEROFFENSIVE - PHASE II:

11-30 Aug 1966; 1-4 Sep 1966

19-31 Oct 1966; 1-24 Nov 1966

1 Star/VIETNAMESE COUNTEROFFENSIVE - PHASE III:

22-31 Oct 1967; 1-13 Nov 1967

29-30 Nov 1967; 1-20 Dec 1967

6-20 Jan 1968

1 Star/TET COUNTEROFFENSIVE: 1-20 Feb 1968

1 Star/VIETNAM OPERATIONS: 2-15 May 1969

CHINA SERVICE MEDAL: 2 Sep 1945 - 6 Mar 1946

NAVY OCCUPATION SERVICE MEDAL (Asia Clasp):

2 Sep 1945 - 6 Mar 1946; 6-11 Sep 1953

15-27 Sep 1953; 18-21 Sep 1954; 20-26 Oct 1954;

30 Oct - 9 Nov 1954; 14-27 Feb 1956

KOREAN and UNITED NATIONS SERVICE MEDAL

23 Jan-24 Aug 1951; 14 Apr-24 May 1952;

19 Jun-21 Oct 1952; 17 Jul - 5 Sep 1953;

29 Sep - 1 Dec 1953

REPUBLIC OF KOREA PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION BADGE:

23 Jan - 24 Aug 1951; 14 Apr - 24 May 1952

19 Jun - 21 Oct 1952

LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS

Commander Harry Smith, USN:	3 Feb 1945 -16 Nov 1945
Commander Frank D. Schwartz, USN:	16 Nov 1945 - 15 May 1946
Lieutenant Elmer Ozenberger, Jr., USN:	15 May 1946 - 12 Jul 1946
Lieutenant Commander Means Johnston, Jr., USN:	12 Jul 1946 - 3 Oct 1946
Lieutenant Commander Edward T. Sullivan, USN:	3 Oct 1946 - 10 Feb 1947
Lieutenant John W. Meyer, USN:	10 Feb 1947 - 7 Jul 1947
Commander William C. Meyer, USN:	11 May 1949 - 14 Dec 1949
Commander Gerald L. Christie, USN:	15 Sep 1950 - 12 Mar 1952
Commander Nelson D. Salmon, USN:	12 Mar 1952 - 17 Feb 1954
Commander John D. Chase, USN:	17 Feb 1954 - 23 Apr 1956
Commander Joseph H. Behan, Jr., USN:	23 Apr 1956 - 26 Apr 1958
Commander Ralph G. Johns, Jr., USN:	26 Apr 1958 - 4 Sep 1959
Commander Harold H. Ellison, USN:	4 Sep 1959 - 20 May 1961
Commander Joseph E. Feaster, USN:	20 May 1961 - 30 Oct 1962
Commander Nelson W. Sanders, USN:	30 Oct 1962 - 23 Oct 1964
Commander James B. Allen, USN:	23 Oct 1964 - 16 May 1966
Commander C. Thor Hanson, USN:	16 May 1966 - 26 Mar 1968
Commander Albert S. McLemore, USN:	26 Mar 1968 - 1 Jul 1969

**ORIG: MR. L. OLSSON
TYPED: 9/23/69
RETYPE: KEN ADAMS
5/14/99**