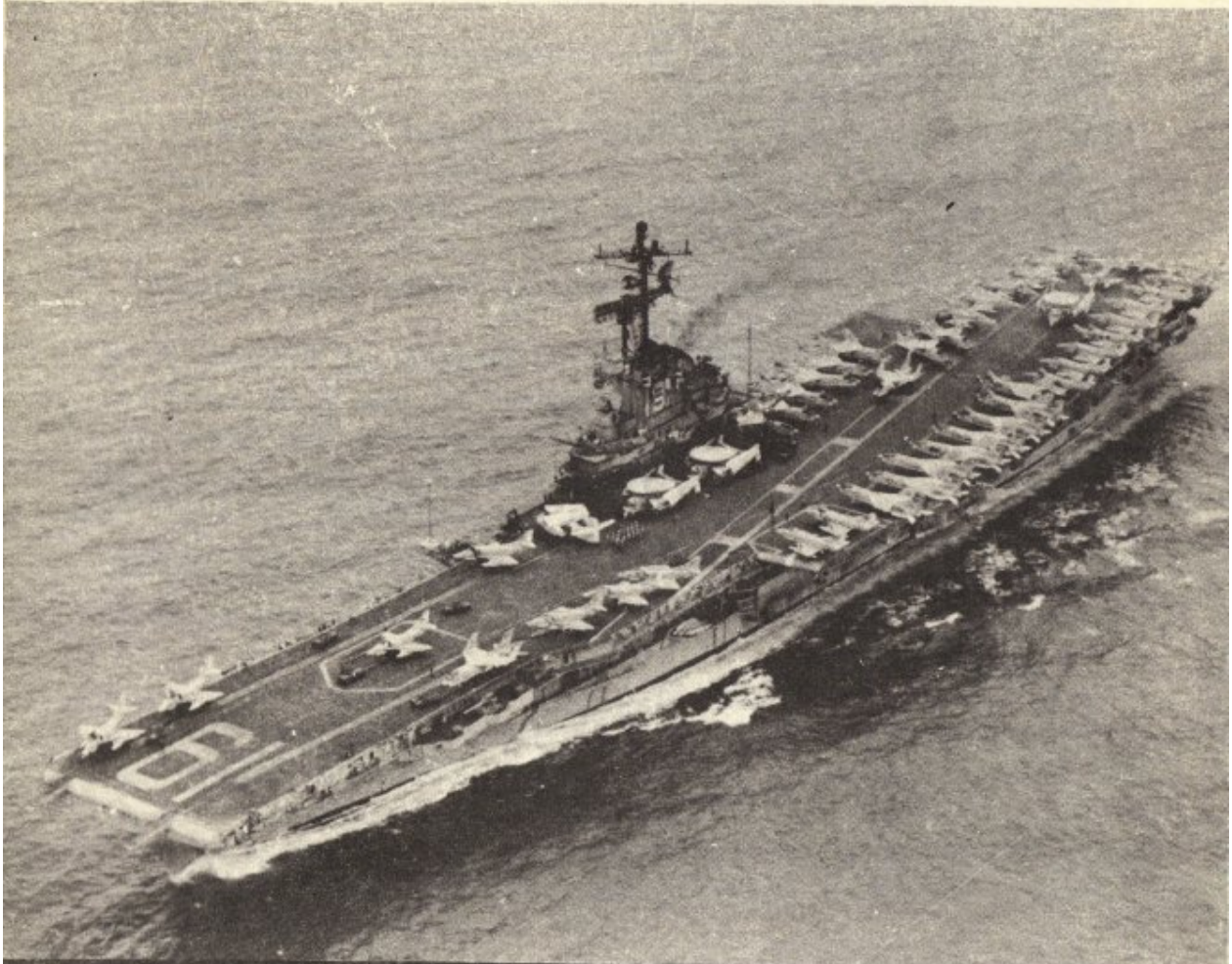


Welcome Aboard



THE
UNITED STATES SHIP
HANCOCK

"A breathless hush hung for a moment over the launching platform, punctuated only by the forthright smash of the champagne bottle as the proud U.S.S. Hancock slipped from her berth and shattered the thin coating of January ice that lay lightly over Fore River."

So the SIGNATURE of February of 1944 reported on the launching of "Fighting Hanna," as she is affectionately called by her crew. She has since become known as a gallant ship with a remarkable war record.



Guests of Hancock,

On behalf of the officers and men, I would like to welcome you onboard USS Hancock.

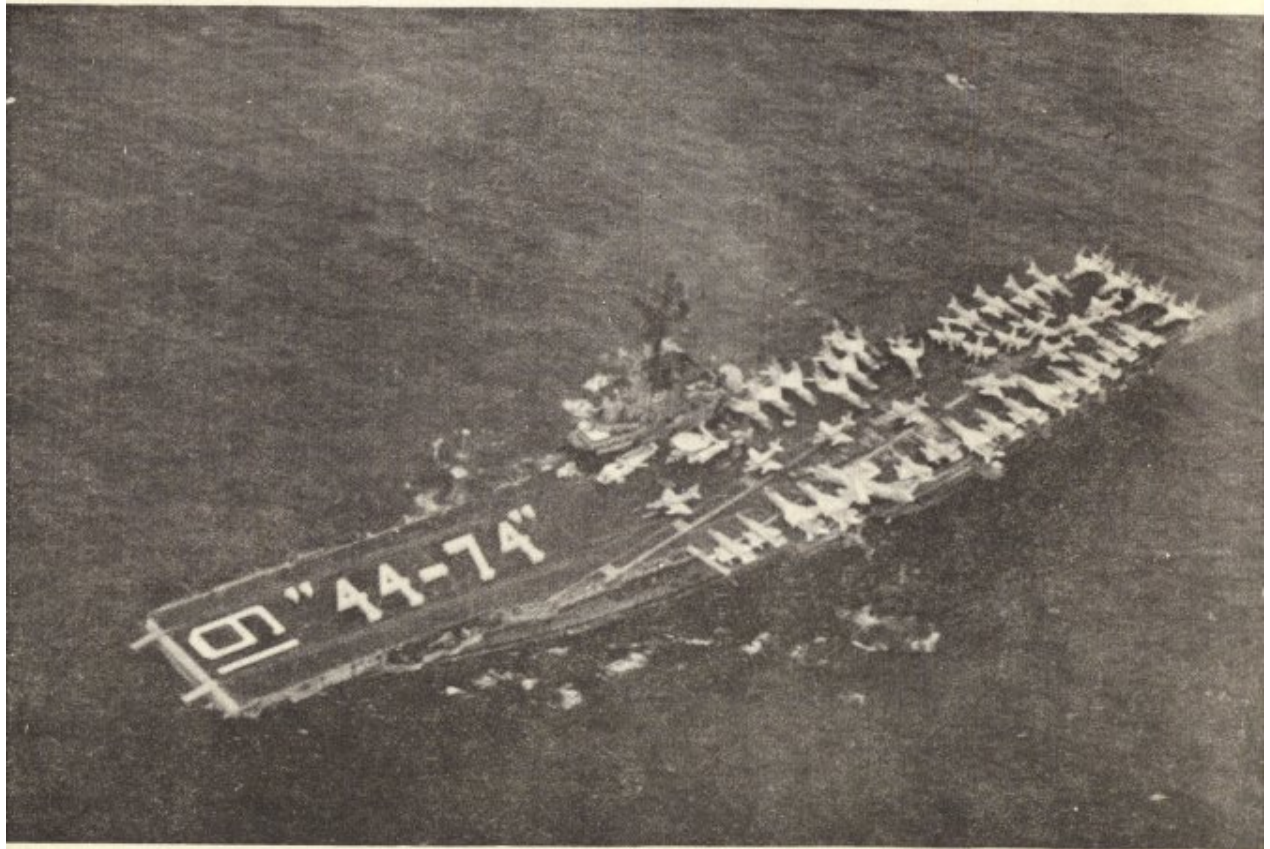
As you tour the ship, you will see only a small portion of the vast number of men, aircraft, equipment and spaces that make up an aircraft carrier. This should give you some idea, though, of the complexity of a ship this size. It is virtually a small complex city providing 3300 crewmembers with a place to work, eat, sleep and relax.

I hope your visit is both educational and enjoyable and that you will leave with a better understanding of USS Hancock and the part she plays in the United States Navy.

I invite you to return to visit Hancock again in the future.

F. G. Fellowes
F. G. FELLOWES
Captain, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer

in the past



Five ships of the fleet have been named in honor of John Hancock, famed statesman of the American Revolution. The first two were involved in that same war. The third, a screw steamer, was used as a practice ship for midshipmen at the Naval Academy in 1851 and sailed in an expeditionary force to the Western Pacific. The fourth Hancock was a transport which operated in the Atlantic, and during its many operations, took possession of the Virgin Islands from Denmark for the United States in 1917.

The present Hancock was commissioned on April 15, 1944, in Quincy, Massachusetts, under the command of Captain Fred C. Dickey. After a shakedown cruise to Port of Spain, Trinidad, and the British West Indies, she headed for the Pacific Theater of Operations via the Panama Canal.

After brief stops at San Diego and Pearl Harbor, Hancock joined Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet at Ulithi in the Western Carolines. She arrived just in time to participate in strikes against Okinawa supporting the Philippine Campaign. Swinging southwest, the task force struck enemy encampments on Formosa.

The task group then headed for Ulithi for rest, recreation and replenishment. But, before it even arrived, the Fleet received orders to the Philippines and Leyte Gulf. Hancock could not reach the gulf in time, but her planes caught up with the fleeing Japanese armada the following day. During the ensuing days, Hancock and her planes were credited with sinking three battleships, three cruisers and a landing ship.

Through this first operation and a second which followed shortly, Hancock came out unscathed while dealing a heavy blow to the enemy. In a third operation, Hancock's luck held, while her accompanying carriers were hit hard. Her next operation was cut short by a severe typhoon in which three of her escort destroyers were lost.

After three other large operations, Hancock moved in to support the Okinawa invasion. During this operation, a kamikaze plane crashed into planes parked on the forward flight deck. Though able to resume flight operations a short time later, Hancock needed extensive repairs. She was detached from the task group and headed for Pearl Harbor.

Repairs completed, Hancock again headed toward Japanese waters and, in one of her last operations, gave Wake Island a severe pounding.

With the end of World War II came the Magic Carpet Operation in which Hancock transported close to 8,000 troops back home. Next came what was to prove to be a premature retirement for the "Fighting Hanna" as she was decommissioned in May of 1947.

Upon recommissioning in 1954, Hancock became the first carrier in the United States Navy to sport steam catapults which, coupled with an optical landing system and an angled flight deck, enable her to handle the Navy's most advanced jet aircraft.

during the ensuing years, Hancock completed six intensive training deployments to Far East ports and was on her seventh when, early in 1965, increased North Vietnamese infiltration of the South led to attacks on U.S. personnel and marked the dawn of a new wartime era for Hancock.

Over the course of the Vietnam Era, Hancock made seven combat deployments during which—with Air Wing 21 embarked—she again distinguished herself as a ship worthy of note in the annals of American naval lore, winning two more unit commendations to add to the one she carried from World War II.

as she fitted out for her eighth combat deployment to the Gulf of Tonkin, peace accords were signed in Paris and the world was once again plunged into an era of peace.

but, even in peace, Hancock continued to capture the eyes and ears of the world as she demonstrated American operational readiness with an unplanned, but smoothly executed, maneuver into the Indian Ocean following the Middle East war of 1973.

Such has always been the Hancock tradition—the hallmark of professional preparedness, able to strike on a moment's notice to protect and defend the interests of the United States and the freedom of the seas throughout the world.



CVW-21

Carrier Air Wing 21 consists of five squadrons, three of attack aircraft and two of fighter aircraft. While embarked with Hancock, the Air Wing represents the fighting arm of the carrier, able to extend its might to many corners of the world to uphold American policy. The attack planes and fighter aircraft are joined by detachments of various squadrons which perform a myriad of activities from search and rescue to radar and photo surveillance and reconnaissance.

Commissioned as Carrier Air Group 21 (CVG-21) on July 1, 1955, at the U.S. Naval Air Station, Moffett Field, California, CVG-21 deployed to the Western Pacific six times—twice aboard Hancock—before it officially became Carrier Air Wing 21 (CVW-21) in December of 1963.

Carrier Air Wing 21 is commanded by Commander Mason C. Gilfry, whose task it is to coordinate the activities of the Wing with those of the ship. The job is one that involves endless hours of detailed work in aircraft maintenance, fueling and planning.

Chance Vought's supersonic F-8 Crusader serves as Hancock's main protection in addition to flying "cover" for strike operations against enemy targets. This modern jet fighter flies flak suppression missions and attack missions in combat operations. A modification of this aircraft, the F-8U, is used for photo reconnaissance.

Capturing honors as the smallest aircraft aboard Hancock is the Douglas A-4 Skyhawk flown by VA-55, VA-212 and VA-164. This single-seated attack jet can carry a total ordnance load of 8,000 pounds, yet is so compact that its wings need not be folded for stowage aboard the carrier.

Conversely, Hancock's largest aircraft is the twin-jet A-3B Skywarrior mid-air refueler, largest of all carrier-based planes. The ship also plays hostess to Grumman E-1B Tracer radar surveillance aircraft and SH3G SeaKing helicopters.



SHIP'S STATISTICS

Commissioned:
April 15, 1944

Boilers:
Eight

Decommissioned:
May 9, 1947

Overall length:
898 feet

Recommissioned:
February 15, 1954

Rated speed:
30 knots plus

Weight of anchors:
15 tons each (two)

Displacement:
45,000 tons

Maximum width:
176 feet

Screws:
Four

Crew:
2,000 ship's company
1,000 air wing

Meals served daily:
Over 10,000

Constructed:
Quincy, Massachusetts

Home port:
Alameda, California

Hanna

Protector of Freedom,
Steam maker, Sling shooter of Airplanes,
World traveler and Last of a Rare Breed,
Noisy, confident, sprawling,
City on the High Seas:

They tell me you are tough and I believe them, for I
have seen your sweating warriors under the grueling
sun, each one doing his thing.

And they tell me you are lethal and I answer: yes, it
is true I have seen the damage inflicted by your
daring pilots.

And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: on the
faces of men and boys I have seen the hunger for home.
And having answered so I turn to those who sneer at
this my ship, and I give them back the sneer and say
to them:

Come and show me another ship with lifted head singing
so proud to be afloat and seasoned and reliable and
enduring.

Flinging aircraft into the sky, amid the whine of en-
gines and bursts of flame; here is a big bold lady
set vivid against the soft setting sun;

Fierce as a lioness with eyes gleaming for action, con-
ditioned as an Olympiad ready for the competition,

Flat-topped,

Steaming,

Shuddering,

Launching, recovering, relaunching,

Under the smoke, dust all over her back, laughing with
splashing mouth, under the awesome burden of peace-
keeping,

Laughing as a young girl laughs, bragging and laughing
that under her decks is the pulse, and under her
flags the heart of the crew,

Laughing!

Laughing the noisy, confident, sprawling laughter of
youth, well armed, sweating, proud to be

Protector of Freedom, Steam maker, Sling shooter of
Airplanes,
World traveler and Last of a Rare Breed.

LCDR D. GARVEY
Hancock AIMD



