United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name **USS Ranger CV-61**

other names/site number USS Ranger CVA-61

2. Location

street & number Naval Base Kitsap ☐ not for publication

city or town Bremerton ☐ vicinity

state Washington code WA county Kitsap code 035 zip code 98312

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

_X_ national ___ statewide __local

Applicable National Register Criteria

_X_ A ___ B _X_ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

WASHINGTON SHPO WA State Historic Preservation Office
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

	private
	public - Local
	public - State
x	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

	building(s)
	district
	site
x	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		district
		site
1		structure
		object
1		**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DEFENSE: Naval Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DEFENSE: Naval Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Post-WWII Supercarrier

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Metal
walls: Metal
roof: Metal
other: Metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

USS Ranger (CV-61) is a Forrestal-class super aircraft carrier. It is an all-steel, all-welded combatant ship built from 1954 to 1957 at Newport News, Virginia. At the time of commissioning in 1957, Ranger was the largest, most powerful warship ever built. The ship is 1,067 feet long, 130 feet in the beam at the waterline and is divided into eleven decks and thousands of watertight compartments. *Ranger* was in service in the United States Navy for 37 years serving during the Cold War with the Soviet Union, extensively during the Vietnam War and at the end of her career against Iraq during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Decommissioned in 1993, *Ranger* is in outstanding material condition internally despite a weathered exterior cosmetic appearance, retaining nearly all of the original as-constructed attributes. *Ranger* could easily become one of the most authentically restored aircraft carriers in the United States and very closely represents appearance the first four super carriers built in the late 1950s.
Narrative:

"If Ranger is always to remain young, her figure must be constantly attended."[1]

USS Ranger (CV-61) is currently berthed in the reserve fleet at Bremerton, Washington, adjacent to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. Commissioned in 1957, the Forrestal-class super-carrier measures 1,067 feet in overall length, 130 ft in beam, and 36 ft 9 inches in draft. The all-welded steel ship displaces 82,000 tons full load and retains her largely unaltered original construction profile and deck layout.

Ranger is a naval architectural wonder - the product of best minds of the greatest generation who designed her shortly after World War II. Ranger was the only one of the four Forrestal-class carriers that did not require a SLEP (Service Life Extension Program) overhaul during the 1980s. This was principally because she was well maintained in the Pacific Fleet and had earned a reputation for high reliability during the latter half of her service life.

The specific attributes of Ranger, some of which apply to the entire Forrestal-class of carirers, are as follows:

Aviation-related:

- The flight deck is four-plus acres in area and is 252 feet wide at its broadest point.
- Four advanced C7 steam catapults were installed, each in 250 feet in length – previous designs had only two catapults. A derivative of this design, the C13 is still in use today on our nuclear powered carriers.
- The ship is fitted with four large, high capacity aircraft elevators – prior ship designs had only three.
- The hangar deck aircraft parking vertical clearance is 25 feet, as compared to all previous carrier designs, which were only 17.5 feet.
- Two escalators move air crews from the protected second deck to the 03 level (gallery deck).
- Four of the eight squadron ready rooms are located on the second deck for protection.
- A fully enclosed, air-conditioned primary flight control station is located aft on the island.

Hull:

- The flight deck is the upper hull girder strength member – a first in aircraft carrier design.
- Both the flight and hangar decks are armored.
- Ballistic protected aircraft elevator doors are on the hangar deck.

1 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1962 Cruise Book.*

- The ship was constructed with a fully enclosed hurricane bow (a first on the super carriers) and an angled flight deck (again a first on the super carriers).
- *Ranger's* eight original 5-inch 54 caliber guns were removed incrementally thru 1974, the sole significant alteration from the original appearance.
- The four large sponsons fitted to support these guns, and a markedly visible attribute of a Forrestal-class super-carrier are still present – the only ship in the class to retain them thru its full life.
- *Ranger* was originally constructed with two anchors, tended from an impressive, large, fully enclosed forecastle on the 02-level forward.
- Full-load displacement is 82,000 tons, more than 20,000 tons greater than the previous *Midway* class.

Engineering:

- *Ranger* retains the four original 70,000 HP Westinghouse main engines as well as the eight, then state-of-the-art, high-pressure 1200-psi Babcock and Wilcox boilers. The engineering plant is divided in to six very large athwart-ships compartments that include four main machinery rooms (MMRs) and two auxiliary rooms. Each MMR is a completely independent power plant unto its own – a main engine, two boilers and a ship's service generator. *Ranger* was the first aircraft carrier design with this survivability feature.
- The ship develops a total of 280,000 horsepower and is capable of attaining a maximum speed of 35 knots. *Ranger* has eight 1,200-psi boilers and five evaporators capable of producing more than 440,000 gallons of pure fresh water daily. The engineering spaces retain their original arrangement and appearance. They are in outstanding, show-ready condition.
- The majority of the gauges, indicators, switches and valves in the propulsion plant and Central Control Station appear as they did from the ship's original construction. The ship has a fuel capacity of 2.1 million gallons. The fuel is stored in more than 100 tanks located in the ship's double-bottom and torpedo side-protection wing system wing tanks. Virtually all fuel has been removed from the ship.
- *Ranger* includes a Central Control Station for main engine control, a first in an aircraft carrier.
- Eight ship's service generators (1750 KW each) and three emergency generators are installed.
- Four propellers and shafts project aft below the hull, where they are each supported by two struts.
- Eight individual, air-conditioned electric switchboard control rooms are provided, one for each ship's service generator.
- The ship is fully air-conditioned, utilizing a central chilled water AC system, also a first for an aircraft carrier.
- Twin rudders project beneath the stern of the ship immediately aft of the propellers.

General Arrangement:

- *Ranger* includes 11 total decks, seven below the flight deck and three above (not includng the five+-level island).
- Above the flight deck the island structure contains the very large navigation bridge, the flag bridge, primary flight control and the funnel for the eight boilers. Multiple radar and electronic antennas are also fitted to both the island and the mast.
- The gallery deck (03-level), immediately below the flight deck from bow to stern, includes the officers' staterooms forward, the aviator's wardroom, four ready rooms, captain's cabin, flag quarters, CIC, five arresting gear machinery rooms and an extensive air wing crew berthing aft.
- The hangar deck (main deck), more than 600 feet long, is divided into two spacious bays with a set of ballistic fire doors between them
- The second deck, the damage control deck, includes the two crew's galleys (forward and aft), crew mess decks (forward and aft), the officer's wardroom and four ready rooms.
- The ship's general arrangement below decks with very few exceptions remains intact from construction.

Current Condition

Despite being berthed in the inactive reserve fleet in Bremerton since 1993, *Ranger's* current condition is outstanding, particularly inside. Any visitor would wonder why the ship wasn't heading back to sea, and any

shipmate would certainly know his way around. Much of the current condition of the ship is attributable to the excellent material condition at decommissioning and to the continuing maintenance it has undergone since being “moth-balled.”

When *Ranger* was decommissioned in 1993, the ship was officially laid up in "Ready Reserve” Status. This designation entails closing and sealing all exterior hatches and doors and dividing the interior of the ship into more than ten dehumidification zones. Each zone is provided with its own dedicated DH machine to locally maintain relative humidity at 35 per cent. By securing the ship in this manner and maintaining positive air pressure inside the ship, outside air is prevented from penetrating the ship’s interior. By blocking external moisture from the interior of the vessel, the vast number of passageways and compartments are protected from rust and corrosion. All underwater hull openings were sealed with welded steel plates. A impressed current cathodic protection was also installed, completely arresting the process of hull erosion as the ship sits in the water. The entire flight deck and all its openings (e.g., catapult and arresting gear areas) were also sealed with steel plates. All the padeyes (the attachment points where chains that are used to tie down aircraft are secured) were covered with small caps prevent standing water. The entire flight deck non-skid surface was removed and the deck was sealed with epoxy paint to protect the steel of the flight deck. Other exterior parts of the ship were also maintained by the shipyard, including scrapping loose paint / repainting, and ensuring that the exterior steel was not allowed to rust. Until 2000, *Ranger* was maintained in this state in case reactivation was required.

Once the ship was removed from Ready Reserve status, the maintenance schedule changed. Currently, although the ship remains closed and all hatches and doors remain secured, the dehumidifiers have been removed. The flight deck retains the epoxy paint and the padeyes remain covered.. The exterior spaces and hull are no longer scraped and painted, and the cathodic protection has been removed. The shipyard still scrapes the loose paint for environmental reasons, but no new paint is applied. Thus, upon first glance, *Ranger* may have a very weathered look; however, this appearance is largely cosmetic. There is minimal rust, with the exception of small to moderate amounts on the flat areas of the bridge.

Most exterior features are intact. Unlike the other Forrestal-class carriers, *Ranger* still maintains its four original sponsons that supported the gun armament. However, the anchors and chains are absent, having been re-used on the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76).

The interior of the ship is also in outstanding condition, as seen in the accompanying photographs. Nearly all of the original features are intact, and a significant number of murals and signs painted by the crew over the years remain intact and offer a personal glimpse into life at sea.

Finally, because, unlike the other three Forrestal-class carriers and its four other supercarrier successors, *Ranger* never required a Service Life Extension Program overhaul, thus its condition is the most representative of the original design of the Forrestal class.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [X] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MILITARY

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1956 - 1993

Significant Dates

1956

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

U.S. Navy Bureau of Ships (Architect)

Newport News Shipbuilding & Drydock Company

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

USS Ranger (CVA 61 / CV 61) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion "A" for its direct contribution to global history, as represented by its distinguished record of military service, humanitarian missions, prominent role in popular culture, long list of distinguished visitors, unique status as a truly West Coast ship, and achievement of a number of military and technological firsts.

Additionally, as one of the country's first supercarriers and the first American aircraft carrier designed with an angled deck, *Ranger* is also eligible under Criterion "C." Designed by the United States Navy's now-defunct Bureau of Ships and built by Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in Newport News, Virginia, *Ranger* is the product of the greatest generation of American engineering and distinguishes itself in an already accomplished field of carriers. Design features used on *Ranger* would become a standard for aircraft carriers that is still in use today.

The period of significance begins in 1956 with the ship's launch and ends with its decommissioning in 1993. Therefore, *Ranger* also meets Criterion G as a property that has achieved significance within the last 50 years through an impressive military career that spanned four decades.

Ranger's unique construction and engineering, as well as its distinguished military record, mean that Ranger qualifies for the honor of being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

USS Ranger - Narrative History

"Heed My Call. Come to the Sea. Come Sail with Me."
- Captain John Paul Jones[2]

Construction of the *Ranger* began in August 1954 the shipyard at Newport News, Virginia. The world had never seen anything like it - the third in the line of American supercarriers, this behemoth vessel (constructed using 82,000 tons of steel and aluminum[3]) would serve the United States across five decades, realizing an impressive array of historic achievements - in engineering, in military service, in humanitarian relief - and even in popular culture.

This ship would be christened *USS Ranger* (CVA 61), the eighth in a line of *Rangers* in the U.S. fleet and a direct descendant of the first USS Ranger, a sloop commanded during the American Revolution by none other than John Paul Jones himself. Named after "Rogers' Rangers," a New Hampshire militia group,[4] the first *Ranger* received the first official recognition of the new nation by a foreign state when Jones negotiated a salute from France to the American flag on 14 February 1778.[5] CVA 61's immediate namesake, *USS Ranger* (CV 4), was the first U.S. Naval vessel to be designed from the keel up as an aircraft carrier. CV 4 served 13 years and was sold for scrap in January 1946.[6]

2 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1982 Cruise Book.*
3 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1987 Cruise Book.*
4 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1960 Cruise Book*.
5 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*
6 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

When complete, the nominated *Ranger* (CVA 61) would extend a fifth of a mile long and nearly the length of a football field wide. Displacing 82,000 tons fully loaded, *Ranger* could accommodate a crew of nearly 6,000 and was equipped to stay at sea for up to four months at a time.

Nicknamed "Top Gun of the Pacific," *Ranger* was always a West Coast ship and served the United States for over 35 years, in times of war and in times of peace. *Ranger* earned an impressive array of awards for both these roles, as well as the enduring affection of the Navy, Marine, and even Air Force personnel who served aboard. Decommissioned in 1993, *Ranger* currently is berthed at Bremerton, Washington, along with other inactive ships.

A Mid-Century Engineering Marvel

"RANGER … a floating, moving, fighting, self-contained air base"[7]
- Admiral Arthur Radford

Ranger is one of eight supercarriers built shortly after World War II – a product of the minds of the greatest generation and an artifact of a time when the nation's engineering ability was unequalled. Built of 59,650 tons of steel by more than 10,000 shipbuilders of Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Virginia, *Ranger's* keel was laid 2 August 1954.[8] Launched 29 September 1956, *Ranger* joined the fleet 1 August 1957.[9] At the time, *Ranger* was the largest warship ever built; its size and power were unrivaled. *Ranger* is the third and largest of the four so-called Forrestal class of aircraft carriers, the very first generation of supercarriers begun by *USS Forrestal* and continued by *USS Saratoga*, *Ranger*, and *USS Independence*. Named after supercarrier supporter Secretary of Defense (and former Secretary of the Navy) James Forrestal, the four were completed in quick succession, partially in response to the threats imposed by the Cold War and the Korean War.[10]

Comparison of Forrestal-class Carriers[11][12]

	Forrestal (CVA-59)	Saratoga (CVA-60)	**Ranger (CVA-61)**	Independence (CVA-62)
Launch Year	1954	1955	**1956**	1958
Overall Length (Ft)	1,067	1,067	**1,067**	1,070
Breadth (Ft) (flight deck)	252	253	**270**	263
Full displacement (tons)	79,015	81,101	**82,000**	80,678

As supercarriers, *Ranger* and the others were a quantum advancement over all previous carrier designs. They were designed by engineers of the United States Navy's now-defunct Bureau of Ships (BuShips), a predecessor agency of today's Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA),

7 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1958 Cruise Book.*

8 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1958 Cruise Book.*

9 *Naval Vessel Register.* Naval Sea Systems Command. Undated. Web. 19 March 2014.

10 Friedman, Norman. *U.S. Aircraft Carriers: an Illustrated Design History.* Annapolis: Naval Institute Press. 1983

11 *Naval Vessel Register.* Naval Sea Systems Command. Undated. Web. 19 March 2014.

12 Clayton, Commander Pete. Email to the author; 12 May 12, 2014.

during a time when slide rules and drafting tables, not supercomputers and 3-D printers, were the tools of the day. In fact, *Ranger's* plans comprised 13,500 drawings.[13] Designed in response to a shift in Naval strategy away from a few strategic strikes by large, bomber-type aircraft to many tactical strikes by a larger number of smaller aircraft, the four Forrestal carriers' design improvements over the previous class of carriers included 300% more storage for aviation fuel, 70% more capacity of ship fuel, 154% more capacity for aviation ordnance, and the ability to carry 15% more nuclear weapons.[14] Supercarriers were the first U.S. designs to incorporate the armored flight deck as the upper strength member of the hull design – a major structural feature enabling the construction of these very large vessels. Electronics on these models also saw substantial improvement. [15]

Even within the Forrestal class, unique engineering elements distinguish *Ranger* from the rest of the group. First and foremost, *Ranger* was the first American carrier designed and constructed with an angled deck - a transformative British design innovation that still in use today. By separating active and parked aircraft, the angled deck improved efficiency and safety of flight deck operations by enabling launch and landing to occur simultaneously, and by preventing an aircraft that breaches the safety mechanisms from crashing into parked aircraft and causing a fire. Minor engineering adjustments included removing a notch at the stern; instead, the flight deck and after bulkhead continued directly to the transom. The sponsons also differed in shape and size from the prior two supercarriers. [16] Because, unlike the other three Forrestal-class carriers and the four post-Forrestal supercarriers, *Ranger* never underwent a comprehensive Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) overhaul, this ship is the most original representative of this important era of American seapower.

The *Ranger* displaces 81,000 tons – a 25% increase over the prior Midway class of aircraft carriers. The beam is 130 feet – nearly 20 feet greater. Hangar deck clearance is a full 25 feet versus the prior 17.5 feet. The carrier was built with four advanced steam catapults (used to launch aircraft off of the flight deck) instead of just two obsolete hydraulic designs. *Ranger's* then state-of-the art 1200 psi high pressure steam plant with eight boilers was powerful – the four engines, developing 280,000 horsepower, with four 21-foot propellers, could drive the ship at 35 knots.[17] These engineering feats allowed *Ranger* to set speed records for conventional carriers. Two 45-ton rudders enabled the sharp, fast turns for which the ship was renowned.

Ranger also included four elevators. The port side elevator, weighing 105 tons, was the largest and heaviest all-welded aluminum structure built to date.[18]

Ranger is not just a floating air base - it's also a floating city, constructed with 180 miles of piping and 290 miles of electrical cable.[19] Eight desalination evaporators ensured a constant supply of fresh water for the 5,028 enlisted and 545 officers that the ship could accommodate. Because they

13 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1958 Cruise Book.*

14 Polmar, Norman. *Aircraft Carriers: A Graphic History of Carrier Aviation And Its Influence on World Events.* Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969.

15 Friedman, Norman. *U.S. Aircraft Carriers: an Illustrated Design History.* Annapolis: Naval Institute Press. 1983.

16 Friedman, Norman. *U.S. Aircraft Carriers: an Illustrated Design History.* Annapolis: Naval Institute Press. 1983

17 Clayton, Commander Pete. Email to the author. 2 Mar 2014.

18 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1987 Cruise Book.*

19 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1982 Cruise Book.*

stayed at sea for up to four months of time, it was important for the ship to become a home away from home. Amenities like the following helped *Ranger's* city become a community:

Medical: four operating suites, a 60-bed hospital, an intensive care unit, and four dental exam areas
Media: fully functioning TV studio (KRAN-TV) and radio station (KRAN)
Transportation: two five-story escalators
Public Safety: police department, fire department, and a jail
Construction: Carpentry, welding, and machine shops
Clothing Care: A tailor, laundry, cobbler, and two dry cleaning plants
Retail: four stores
Food Preparation: 10 galleys and a bakery
Services: Two barber shops, a post office with its own cancellation, a library, a gym, and chapel space

Despite the historic value of these ships, the fate of all four of the historic Forrestal-class carriers is uncertain. *Forrestal* was given to a scrapyard in Texas in October 2013, where it is now undergoing dismantling. *Saratoga* currently sits in Newport, Rhode Island and is also designated for scrap. *Independence* is berthed with *Ranger* in Bremerton and is designated for scrap as well.

Military Might

"The decks are alive … and the planes made airborne."[20]

Although *Ranger* had many roles over its life, its combat record is both enduring and impressive. Deployed in combat from its earliest days until the very end of its active life, the ship amassed a battle record equaled by few ships. Although *Ranger's* list of combat activities is long (20 deployments of 90 days or more), the ship's two major combat operations occurred during the Vietnam War era and the Gulf War.

Commission - Vietnam Era[21]

Ranger was deployed to the Western Pacific multiple times from commissioning through 1974:

- 20 Jun 1958 - 20 Aug 1958
- 3 Jan 1959 - 27 Jul 1959
- *Ranger* launched more than 7,000 sorties in support of Seventh Fleet operations[22]
- 6 Feb 1960 - 30 Aug 1960
- 11 Aug 1961- 9 Mar 1962
- 9 Nov 1962 - 14 Jun 1963
- On 17 January 1963, *Ranger* conducted joint flight exercises with *HMS Hermes* (R 12); U.S. Navy F-4 Phantoms landed aboard *Hermes* and Royal Navy Sea Vixens landed aboard *Ranger.*[23]
- May 1964
- During this brief deployment to the South Pacific, *Ranger* became the only aircraft carrier to conduct operational U-2 flights.[24]

20 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1959 Cruise Book.*

21 "Carrier Deployments by Year." www.navy.mil. *United States Navy*, n.d. Web. 22 March 2014.

22 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

23 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1962-1963 Cruise Book.*

24 Pocock, Chris. "The Dragon Lady Goes to sea." *Aviation Historian* 15 Apr 2014.

- Note: this deployment is not considered "major" and is absent from most official deployment histories; it was just recently declassified.
- 5 Aug 1964 - 6 May 1965
- *Ranger* became flagship of Rear Admiral Miller who commanded Fast Carrier Task Force 77 and helped the Seventh Fleet maintain open sea-lanes.
- On 15 Mar 1965, aircraft from *Ranger* joined 34 U.S. Air Force fighter-bombers to attack an ammunition depot in Hanoi.[25]
- At 271 days, this deployment was Ranger's longest.
- 10 Dec 1965 - 25 Aug 1966
- Attack Carrier Air Wing 14 flew the first strikes against petroleum, oil, and lubricant storage facilities near Haiphong.[26]
- In February 1966, *Ranger* aviator Ltjg. Dieter Dengler was shot down over Laos. He initiated, planned and led an organized escape from a POW camp, becoming the longest-held U.S. pilot to escape captivity during the Vietnam War.[27] Two films were made about Lt. Dengler, a documentary and *Rescue Dawn,* starring Christian Bale. The book *Hero Found* also describes these events.
- During this deployment, *Ranger* was awarded both a Navy Unit Commendation and the Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy for battle efficiency. "Our Navy" magazine also named *Ranger* the 1966 Ship of the Year. [28]
- 4 Nov 1967 - 25 May 1968
- In preparation for this deployment, *Ranger* logged its 88,000th carrier landings and became the first carrier to deploy with the Vought A-7A Corsair II attack aircraft.
- *Ranger's* cooperation with USAF continued during this deployment; Air Force personnel were aboard during the entire cruise to evaluate the A-7A aircraft.
- In January 1968, *Ranger* was diverted for one month to the Yellow Sea in attempt to rescue the USS Pueblo, which had been captured by the North Koreans.[29 30 31]
- 26 Oct 1968 - 17 May 1969
- *Ranger* received its second Navy Unit Commendation for this deployment.
- 14 Oct 1969 - 1 June 1970
- *Ranger's* aviators flew more than 9,000 combat sorties during this deployment.[32]
- 27 Sep 1970 - 7 Jun 1971
- On 10 March 1971, *Ranger*, along with USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), set a record of 233 strike sorties for one day in action against North Vietnam.[33]
- *Ranger's* aviators flew more than 11,000 combat sorties during this deployment.[34]
- 16 Nov 1972 - 22 Jun 1973

25 Polmar, Norman. *Aircraft Carriers: A Graphic History of Carrier Aviation And Its Influence on World Events.* Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969.

26 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

27 Henderson, Bruce. *Hero Found.* New York: Harper Collins, 2010.

28 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

29 Cheevers, Jack. *Act of War.* New York: Penguin, 2013.

30 Shelton, S. Martin. Message to the author. 20 Feb 2014. E-mail.

31 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

32 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

33 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

34 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

Ranger's service in Vietnam earned the ship 13 battle stars, the most of any carrier since World War II, in addition to numerous other awards, including two Navy Unit Commendations - the Navy's second highest honor.

For the next 16 years, *Ranger* would deploy 10 more times to the West Pacific and the Indian Ocean. A list of major deployments is as follows:

- 7 May 1974 - 18-Oct 1974
  - In 1974, *Ranger* made its first peacetime deployment in 10 years, which was also the first six-month deployment by an attack carrier in many years.[35]
- 30 Jan 1976 - 7 Sep 1976
- 21 Feb 1979 - 22 Sep 1979
- 10 Sep 1980 - 5 May 1981
- 7 Apr 1982 - 19 Oct 1982
- 15 Jul 1983 - 29 Feb 1984
  - During this deployment, *Ranger* set a conventional carrier-at-sea record of 121 consecutive days.[36]
- 18 Aug 1986 - 20 Oct 1986
- 2 Mar 1987 - 29 Apr 1987
- 14 Jul 1987 - 29 Dec 1987
- 24 Feb 1989 - 24 Aug 1989

As tensions in the Middle East increased in the summer of 1990, *Ranger* prepared for its final combat role - also be one of its most significant.

Gulf War

The Gulf War was primarily a war fought by airpower, and many of those planes were launched from *Ranger*, which was the only carrier to remain in active combat operations in the Gulf for the duration of hostilities and the only West Coast carrier deployed during the conflict. *Ranger's* journey to the Gulf began in San Diego on 8 December 1990, paused briefly in the Philippines to rendezvous with the rest of the battle group, and reached its launch position in the Persian Gulf on 15 January 1991. That journey averaged 17.3 knots every hour, a speed record for a convention carrier battle group.[37] Two days later, *Ranger* launched combat operations that, for the first three days, would run nonstop, averaging 170 sorties per day during stormy winter weather. The ship's combat record also includes destroying over 100 Iraqi surface craft.[38] These sorties continued during the "100-Hour War," providing necessary air cover for ground forces. By the time the cease fire was announced on 27 February, *Ranger's* Air Wing Two had flown over 4,250 sorties and dropped 4.3 million pounds of ordnance - more combat missions and more ordnance than any other carrier during the Gulf War.[39] *Ranger* remained the only carrier in combat operations in the Gulf from 1 March - 8 June 1991. Near the end of its time in the Gulf, *Ranger*, always known for its speed, ran north at 31 knots for several hours in order to launch F-14s to enforce a no-fly zone.[40]

35 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

36 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1987 Cruise Book.*

37 Christensen, Ernie and Campbell, Jay. "USS Ranger: Desert Storm." *Foundation,* Spring 2010. Web. 17 March 2014.

38 Christensen, Ernie. E-mail to the author. 22 March 2014.

39 Christensen, Ernie and Campbell, Jay. "USS Ranger: Desert Storm." *Foundation,* Spring 2010. Web. 17 March 2014.

40 Clayton, Commander Pete. Email to the author. 1 March 2014.

For its service in the Gulf, *Ranger* received numerous awards, including a Navy Unit Commendation, a National Defense Service Medal, and Saudi Arabia's Kuwait Liberation Medal.

Ranger's final deployment prior to decommissioning occurred 1 August 1992 - 31 January 1993 in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf. Altogether, in 35 years *Ranger* underwent 24 major deployments totaling over 4,500 days.[41]

Humanitarian Missions

"Wherever we went, we made lots of friends."[42]

Ranger deployed not just in battle but also in relief. The ship and its crew rescued hundreds of refugees, provided relief to a flood-ravaged Philippines, and allowed Operation Restore Hope in Somalia to deliver food and supplies to starving Somalis.

Refugee Rescue

Many refugees owe their lives to *Ranger* and the ship's crew:

On 20 March 1981, *Ranger's* aviators spotted 138 Vietnamese refugees floating in an unseaworthy fishing boat adrift in the South China Sea. One of those refugees rescued was 14-year-old Lan Dalat, who would grow up to serve in the United States Army. In fact, his experience with *Ranger* was his motivation to enlist in the Army Reserve after graduation and later to serve on active duty after graduating college. Dalat's brother Anthony Lang also served in the U.S. Armed Forces. [43][44] For these rescue efforts, *Ranger* received the Humanitarian Service Award.[45]

In August 1989, *Ranger* rescued 39 Vietnamese refugees who had been adrift for 10 days on a barge in heavy seas and monsoon rains in the South China Sea. An A-6 Intruder spotted the barge, which had apparently broken loose from its mooring near a small island off the coast of Vietnam with 10 men on board. Twenty-nine other refugees from a sinking refugee boat climbed aboard the barge when it drifted out to sea; all were picked up by *Ranger's* crew and taken to the Philippines for medical treatment.[46]

Natural Disaster Relief

Ranger also provided aid after natural disasters. On 28 May 1976, while on deployment in the West Pacific, helicopters crews from *Ranger*, along with other American and Philippine ships, assisted in Philippine disaster relief efforts in the flood ravaged areas of central Luzon after Typhoon Olga caused massive damage in the area. More than 1,900 people were evacuated while more than 185 tons of relief supplies and 9,340 gallons of fuel were provided by Navy and Air Force helicopters.[47] [48] *Ranger* received an additional Humanitarian Service Award for its role in these efforts.

Operation Restore Hope

41 "Carrier Deployments by Year." www.navy.mil. *United States Navy*, n.d. Web. 22 March 2014.

42 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1958 Cruise Book.*

43 Dalat, Major Lan. "A Story of Rescue and Reunion." *DoDLive,* 8 May 2012. Web. 15 March 2014.

44 Bower, Melissa. "Escaping Vietnam: Two brothers tell story of their journey to America." *Ftleavenworthlamp.com.* 21 Oct 2010. Web. 15 March 15, 2014.

45 United States Navy. "Ranger CV-61, Final Determination." 30 November 2010.

46 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

47 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

48 "A Sampling of U.S. Naval Humanitarian Operations." *www.history.navy.mil.* Naval History and Heritage Command, November 1990. Web. 15 March 2014.

Perhaps *Ranger's* most significant humanitarian mission came near the end of its life, when the ship played a major role in the massive relief effort for starving Somalis in Operation Restore Hope. In December 1992, President George H.W. Bush diverted *Ranger*, its 60 planes, and the rest of its battle group battle group (the cruiser *USS Valley Forge* and the destroyer *USS Kinkaid*) from the Persian Gulf to Somalia, where the *Ranger* team protected relief convoys, provided photo and visual reconnaissance, airborne air traffic control, logistics support and on-call close air support for Navy and Marine amphibious forces. Throughout Operations Southern Watch and Restore Hope, *Ranger* took 63 digital photographs that were sent by International Marine Satellite to the Navy Office of Information within hours of being taken. This was the first time digital pictures were successfully transmitted from a ship at sea.[49] [50] [51]

Other Humanitarian Activities

In January 1973 *Ranger*, along with two other carriers, conducted minesweeping operations in the North Vietnamese waters for operation Endsweep.[52] On 6 September 1974, *Ranger*, operating east of Subic Bay, responded to a medical emergency on board the tanker *SS Permina Saludba*; four crewmen injured in an engine-room explosion were lifted by helicopter to the carrier and then to Manila.[53] Finally, during *Ranger's* 1960-1962 initial cruises to Asia, the crew donated funding and tons of clothing to local charities and social agencies.[54]

Citizen of the West Coast

> "A new seapower has come to the Pacific - Ranger, and her men."[55]

The majority of the Naval vessels on the National Register of Historic Places served in the Atlantic, but since the days of World War II, the Pacific front has been the more significant one for the United States Navy. As a near-lifelong resident of the West Coast, *Ranger* proudly represents this heritage on behalf of all Pacific Fleet ships.

After commissioning in 1957, *Ranger* briefly joined the Atlantic fleet, cruised to Cuba and then completed acceptance trials along the Eastern seaboard and in the Caribbean. On 20 June 1958, *Ranger* departed its place of birth - Virginia - and embarked upon a voyage around Cape Horn that ended two months later, first in San Francisco and then in Alameda. With that move, *Ranger* joined the Pacific Fleet and became the only Forrestal-class carrier to spend its entire career in the Pacific.

Alameda would remain *Ranger's* home for 15 years, and it was from Alameda that *Ranger* departed for its WestPac cruises to Vietnam. *Ranger* called San Diego home for its later days, from 3 Jun 1975[56] until decommissioning in 1993. It was from this port that Ranger left for the Gulf War - the only West Coast-based carrier to deploy during that conflict.

49 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

50 Associated Press. "Bush Launches 'Operation Restore Hope.'" *Deseret News,* 4 Dec 1992. Web. 15 March 2014.

51 Sia, Richard H.P. "With Mogadishu secure, some see dangers inland Gunmen fleeing capital pose threat." *Baltimore Sun*, 13 Dec 1992. Web. 15 March 2014.

52 "A Sampling of U.S. Naval Humanitarian Operations." *www.history.navy.mil.* Naval History and Heritage Command, November 1990. Web. 15 March 2014.

53 "A Sampling of U.S. Naval Humanitarian Operations." *www.history.navy.mil.* Naval History and Heritage Command, November 1990. Web. 15 March 2014.

54 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

55 Ancestry.com. *U.S. Navy Cruise Books, 1918-2009* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 2011.

Original data: United States Navy. *Various U.S. Navy Cruise Books*. Navy Department Library, Washington, D.C. (1959)

56 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

Although *Ranger* never underwent a comprehensive Service Life Extension, the ship did undergo many post-deployment refurbishments during its long life of service, and all of those also occurred on the West Coast - in San Francisco (1963-1964, 1965), Bremerton (1966-1967, 1968, 1977-1978, and 1984-1985). Even in retirement, *Ranger* has remained on the West Coast. Since 1993, the ship has been berthed at Bremerton, Washington.

This lifelong connection to the West further sets *Ranger* apart from the fleet and even from other carriers in its class.

Popular Culture Icon

> "Yet it has not been all work."[57]

Ranger's visible role in media, as well as the exposure the ship gained from the numerous entertainers who performed on board, makes the ship instantly recognizable even to those around the globe who might never have set foot on the carrier.

Two popular films of the 1980s provided *Ranger's* most visible movie roles. Perhaps fittingly for a ship nicknamed "Top Gun of the Pacific," the ship served as the set for the interiors of the 1986 Paramount film *Top Gun,*[58] including the memorable opening scenes set in the radar room and later scenes in the pilots' ready room. That same year, *Ranger* stood in for the *USS Enterprise* (the "nuclear wessel") in another Paramount film, *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home.*[59] Ranger returned to the big screen in 1991, appearing in *Flight of the Intruder*, yet another Paramount film.

The ship was also no stranger to the small screen, appearing in the 1972 TV movie *Family Flight*[60] with Rod Taylor and Dina Merrill and in a 1976 episode of the TV series "Black Sheep Squadron," starring Robert Conrad.[61]

Ranger also appeared in print, starring in a 1958 advertisement for Shell Oil drawn by noted illustrator Rolf Klep. In August 1983, *Ranger* graced the cover of *Newsweek* magazine, under the headline "Gunboat Diplomacy: Reagan Gets Tougher with Nicaragua."

Some of the 20th century's most prominent and beloved entertainers performed on board *Ranger's* flight deck, including none other than the legendary Bob Hope himself. On 21 Dec 1967, Mr. Hope's USO tour landed on *Ranger's* flight deck, where he, Raquel Welch, Les Brown and his Band of Renown, and others, brightened the spirits of sailors in the Tonkin Gulf who were away from their families for the holiday season and by that point had already been deployed for almost two months.[62] This performance was memorialized in a Bob Hope special as well as in a comedy album.

57 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1960 Cruise Book.*

58 *Top Gun,* Dir. Tony Scott. Paramount, 1986. DVD.

59 *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, Dir. Leonard Nimoy. Paramount, 1986. DVD.

60 "Family Flight." *IMDB.com*. Amazon.com, n.d., Web. 14 March 2014.

61 "Meatball Circus, Baa Baa Black Sheep." *IMDB.com*. Amazon.com, n.d. Web. 14 March 2014.

62 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

Bob Hope and Les Brown returned to *Ranger* to film the star's 1970 Christmas special,[63] this time bringing astronaut Neil Armstrong and actress Connie Stevens to entertain *Ranger* sailors who were again engaged in Vietnam War combat operations during the holiday season.

The early 1980s brought a different era of entertainers to *Ranger's* flight deck when the actress Suzanne Somers filmed her 1981 TV special on board.[64] Somers, along with singer /actress Marie Osmond, Gladys Knight and the Pips, and other well-known performers, [65] entertained sailors while the ship was in port in San Diego.

The late 1980s saw *Ranger's* flight deck transformed into a basketball court for an exhibition game by San Diego Stars - the original Carrier Classic! The team, including Harlem Globetrotters great Meadlowlark Lemon, entertained sailors from *Ranger* as well as the *USS Constellation* (CV 64), *USS Enterprise* (CVN 65) and other special guests. The event was co-sponsored by the sports television network ESPN.[66]

Diplomacy

> "[Ranger's] conduct and appearance in every port has created a fine image … of the America she represents."[67]

Ranger's high public profile was not limited to entertainers, however. From its earliest days, the carrier also hosted a number of foreign dignitaries; the presence on the flight deck of both friends and former foes further cemented the ship's significance in forging or furthering friendships.

One of the first world leaders to visit *Ranger* was Philippine President Carlos P. Garcia, who received a 21-gun salute aboard *Ranger's* flight deck in Manila Bay on 29 April 1959. Before lunch, the dignitaries viewed a demonstration of airpower aboard the ship and witnessed the accuracy of the newly developed Sidewinder missile. Upon leaving *Ranger*, President Garcia issued the following statement that describes the impact of America's newest and largest supercarrier:

> *"I have just witnessed a wonderful air show put up by this mighty attack carrier, the USS Ranger, the biggest aircraft carrier currently assigned in the Pacific area.*
>
> *Such an impressive display of aerial might could, indeed, serve as a deterrent to any scheming enemy of the Free World. It is a convincing demonstration of the determination of the great American people to preserve just and honorable peace in this part of the globe. A few hours aboard the Ranger, one cannot but realize the massive striking power potential of this mighty instrument of peace.*

63 "The Bob Hope Christmas Special (1970)." *IMDB.com*. Amazon.com, n.d., Web. 14 March 2014

64 "The Suzanne Somers Special (1982)." *IMDB.com*. Amazon.com, n.d., Web. 14 March 2014

65 United States Navy. Suzanne Somers, wearing a USS Ranger shirt, performs for the crew of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61). 1 Nov 1981. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 14 Mar 2014.

66 United States Navy. The San Diego Stars play an exhibition game on a regulation basketball court set up on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61). Meadowlark Lemon (center) is the star player. 15 Aug 1988. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 14 Mar 2014.

67 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1960 Cruise Book.*

I was very much impressed by the coordination and the clocklike precision with which the 3,500 officers and men, equipped with the most modern weapons of warfare, performed their assigned tasks. I congratulate the officers and men of the USS Ranger for a job well done.[68]"

The visit to the *Ranger* tired the President so much that he was unable to preside over a scheduled cabinet meeting that afternoon.

Several weeks later, the Japanese Imperial family became the latest foreign dignitaries to visit *Ranger*. On 19 June 1959, Princess Chichibu, the British-born widow of Yasuhito, Prince Chichibu, and Prince Takamatsu, the younger brother of Emperor Hirohito, and his wife, along with other high-ranking Japanese officials visited *Ranger* for a one-day cruise. The Prince was, himself, a captain in the Japanese Imperial Navy,[69] making the significance of the visit - coming just 14 years after the end of World War II - all the greater.

Visitors continued during the Vietnam War. General William C. Westmoreland, then commander of U.S. military operations, visited *Ranger* on 9 March 1965 to meet with Admiral Gerald E. Miller, commander of Fast Carrier Task Force 77.[70] During *Ranger's* 1970-71 deployment, the ship hosted high-ranking military and diplomatic visitors from Australia, Thailand, Great Britain, and the Philippines.[71]

The stream of dignitaries to visit *Ranger* continued throughout the 1980s. As part of his weeklong visit to the United States, Chinese Vice Premier Geng Biao spent a morning at sea on 3 June 1980.[72] [73] While on board, Vice Premier Biao observed carrier operations and enjoyed lunch.[74] This visit proved important for U.S. / China relations, as evidenced in this post-visit memo from Assistant Secretary of Defense David E. McGiffert to Secretary of Defense Harold Brown:

Vice-Premier Geng's visits to Colorado Springs, San Diego, and Hawaii went very well. The Chinese were clearly impressed by the quality of the U.S. defense establishment They were also aware that we had shown them much more than they showed you in January. This should help U.S. defense officials gain better access to Chinese facilities during future visits to China. Geng and Admiral Long got along well, and as expected Geng formally invited Bob to visit China at a convenient time.

The Chinese left happy. They also got the messages we sought to deliver. The step-by-step theme was repeated on several occasions. In his final toast in Hawaii, Geng even played back your quotation, 'A fat man is not made in one mouthful.' He also pledged that China would pursue our converging interests with the third world."[75]

68 "President's Week in Review: April 26 – May 2, 1959, Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines." *www.gov.ph.* The Philippine Government, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

69 Haberman, Clyde. "Prince Takamatsu of Japan Dies; Younger Brother of the Emperor." *The New York Times*, 4 Feb 1987. Web. 16 Feb 2014.

70 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

71 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

72 United States Navy. Vice Premier Geng Biao of China is given a tour of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61). 3 Jun 1980. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 14 Mar 2014

73 Platt, Nicholas. *China Boys: How U. S. Relations with the PRC Began and Grew. A Personal Memoir*. New Academia Publishing: 2010.

74 "Proposed Meetings with Chinese Vice-Premier Geng Biao." *www.dod.gov.* United States Department of Defense. 23 Apr 1980. Web. 14 Mar 2014.

75 "Proposed Meetings with Chinese Vice-Premier Geng Biao." *www.dod.gov.* United States Department of Defense. 23 Apr 1980. Web. 14 Mar 2014.

On 26 February 1983, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's royal yacht Britannia docked alongside *Ranger* in San Diego, California. The 2,800 naval personnel on board *Ranger* at the time turned out to greet the Queen and Prince Philip, treating the Royal couple to a display of airpower and to lunch in the officer's dining room hosted by Admiral Sylvester R. Foley, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet.[76] *Ranger's* Man of the Year, Aviation Fire Control Technician First Class James L. Baker presented the royal couple with a brass bell modeled after *Ranger's* ship's bell.[77] Photos from the occasion show the Queen inspecting the aircraft, visiting with sailors, and toasting with a California chardonnay. This visit marks one of the few - perhaps only - times that Queen Elizabeth visited an active U.S. military ship.

Just a few months later, then-Vice President George H. W. Bush and Mrs. Bush also visited *Ranger* in San Diego. On 14 May 1983, Vice President and Mrs. Bush watched an airshow, visited the bridge, addressed the crew, and received a personalized cake customized for the occasion.[78] Like Queen Elizabeth, Vice President Bush received a replica of the ship's bell, this time presented by legendary Command Master Chief David M. Hobbs - at that time, the Navy's oldest enlisted man on active duty.[79,80] Almost exactly eight years later, as president, the former naval aviator would deploy *Ranger* into battle during the Gulf War. A year after that, President Bush would send *Ranger* into Somalia to provide famine relief.

Ranger's role in diplomacy continued almost until the end of the ship's active duty. On 15 October 1992, during war games in the Persian Gulf, a Russian KA-27 Helix helicopter landed on *Ranger's* flight deck during joint war games among the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia. This occasion marked the first incidence of a Russian helicopter landing on a U.S. carrier and came shortly after the end of the Cold War.[81] Captain Dennis McGinn, *Ranger's* Commanding Officer at the time, and Captain Mihal Abramov of the Russian Destroyer *Admiral Vinogradov*, both personally greeted the Russian helicopter crew on the flight deck.[82]

76 Cummings, Elizabeth. "Elizabeth Arrives for Coast Holiday." *The New York Times* 27 Feb 1983, Web.

77 *All Hands*, April 1983. *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy. Web. 15 March 2014.

78 United States Navy. *Vice President George Bush cuts a cake baked in honor of his visit to the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61).* 14 May 1983. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 15 Mar 2014

79 United States Navy. *Vice President George Bush receives a ships bell from MCPO Hobbs during a ceremony held on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61).* 14 May 1983. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 15 Mar 2014

80 Campbell, Cheryl. "Navy enlisted man still going at 61."*NewsOK* 20 Mar 1983. Web. 15 Mar 2014.

81 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

82 United States Navy. *CAPT. Dennis V. McGinn, commanding officer of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61), greets a Russian helicopter crewman on the flight deck following the landing of a Ka-27 Helix helicopter aboard the ship*. 15 Oct 1992. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 15 Mar 2014

First in the Fleet

"Ranger brought new standards to the concept of covert carrier operations."[83]

Ranger began its service as a first - the first U.S. carrier to be designed and built with an angled deck - and continued to set records - in speed, technology, and military history, until decommissioning.

Selected *Ranger* accomplishments and firsts:

- In 1964, *Ranger* became the only carrier to hold operational U-2 flights.[84]
- In 1964, the first six-plane RA-5C Vigilante reconnaissance squadron deployed aboard Ranger.[85]
- In 1967 *Ranger* became the first carrier to deploy with the A-7 Corsair II jet attack plane.[86]
- On 21 Mar 1983, then-Lt. Elizabeth Toedt piloted the first ever landing by an all-female crew on a carrier deck on *Ranger*.
- In the Indian Ocean on 29 Feb 1984, *Ranger* set a record for conventional carrier days at sea - 121.
- On 24 Jul 1987, the first Pacific Fleet deployment of the EA-6B Prowler equipped with HARM missiles took place aboard *Ranger*.
- During the Gulf War, *Ranger* became the first U.S. Navy ship to utilize a C-band satellite dish, allowing the crew to experience the war in real-time.[87]
- Also during the Gulf War, *Ranger* achieved impressive speeds for a conventional carrier: en route to the Gulf, *Ranger's* battle group averaged 17.3 knots per hour, a speed record for a convention carrier battle group.[88] *Ranger* also hit 31 knots near the end of this deployment.
- During Operation Restore Hope, the first digital photographs transmitted from a ship at sea were sent from *Ranger*.[89]

Conclusion

USS *Ranger* (CV 61 / CVA 61) meets two criteria for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The ship's design, engineering, and construction are significant, marking the transition that ushered in a new era of Unites States naval power. As an aircraft carrier with a 35-year service record, its role in global conflicts, in humanitarian missions, and in popular culture made a substantial contribution to world history. On those bases, *Ranger* merits inclusion.

83 United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1987 Cruise Book.*

84 Pocock, Chris. "The Dragon Lady Goes to sea." *Aviation Historian* 15 Apr 2014.

85 Polmar, Norman. *Aircraft Carriers: A Graphic History of Carrier Aviation And Its Influence on World Events.* Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969.

86"USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

87 Christen, Ernie and Campbell, Jay. "USS Ranger: Desert Storm." *Foundation,* Spring 2010. Web. 17 March 2014.

88 Christensen, Ernie and Campbell, Jay. "USS Ranger: Desert Storm." *Foundation,* Spring 2010. Web. 17 March 2014.

89 89 "USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

Appendix
USS Ranger - Awards and Commendations[xc]

> "She has set a standard of accomplishment that will be hard to equal."[xci]

Ranger's list of awards is impressive and spans the ship's entire combat career, from its first days in battle in Vietnam to its last in the Persian Gulf, and honors awarded by the United States, as well as Saudi Arabia and Vietnam.

Navy Unit Commendation (3):
Awarded by the Secretary to any ship, aircraft, detachment, or other unit of the naval service of the United States Navy which has, subsequent to 6 December 1941, distinguished itself by outstanding heroism in action against the enemy

- January – August 1966
- November 1968 – May 1969
- January – February 1991

Meritorious Unit Commendation (5):
Awarded by the Secretary to any unit of the Navy or Marine Corps, which has distinguished itself under combat or non-combat conditions, by either valorous or meritorious achievement compared to other units performing similar service.

- December 1967 – May 1968
- October 1969 – May 1970
- November 1970 – June 1971
- May 1986 –July 1988
- July – August 1988

Battle Efficiency Award (3):
The Battle Efficiency Award recognized sustained superior performance in an operational environment.

- January – December 1987
- January – December 1991
- January – December 1992

Navy Expeditionary Service Medal (1):

- October 1980 – March 1981

National Defense Service Medal (2):
Established by President Eisenhower on April 22, 1953, the National Defense Service Medal indicates military service during a time of war or conflict regardless of the service member's station of duty.

- December 1960 – August 1974
- January – March 1991

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (13):
The Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal can be earned through U.S. military operations, operations in direct support of the United Nations and U.S. operations of assistance to friendly foreign nations.

- June 1960
- May 1963
- September 1964
- October 1964
- November 1964 – January 1965

xc United States Navy. "Ranger CV-61, Final Determination." 30 November 2010.

xci United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1960 Cruise Book.*

- January 1965 – March 1965
- April 1965
- January – March 1968
- March 1969
- April 1969
- January 1970
- April 1970
- December 1990

Vietnam Service Medal (25):
Awarded to all members of the armed forces who service in Vietnam and contiguous waters and airspace between 3 July 1965 and 28 March 1973

- January – February 1966
- February – March 1966
- April -May 1966
- May – July 1966
- July – August 1966
- December 1967
- January 1968
- March – April 1968
- April – May 1968
- January 1969
- February – March 1969
- April 1969
- November – December 1969
- December 1969 –January 1970
- January – February 1970
- February – March 1970
- April – May 1970
- November – December 1970
- December 1970 – January 1971
- February – March 1971
- March – April 1971
- April 1971 – May 1971
- December 1972 – January 1973
- January 1973
- February 1973

Southwest Asia Campaign Medal (3):
This award, authorized by Executive Order 12754, March 12, 1991, is awarded to members of the U.S. armed forces who served in support of Operations Desert Shield or Desert Storm between Aug. 2, 1990 and Nov. 30, 1995

- January 1991
- January – April 1991
- September –December 1992

Humanitarian Service Medal (2):
Awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who, after April 1, 1975, distinguished themselves by meritorious direct participation in a DoD approved significant military act or operation of a humanitarian nature. The HSM is presented either as an individual decoration or as a decoration bestowed upon a

military unit. Activities include natural disaster relief, evacuation of non-combatants from a hostile area, or humanitarian support to refugees.

- May – June 1976
- March 1981

Sea Service Ribbon (11):

The Sea Service Deployment Ribbon is granted to any member of the U.S. Navy or United States Marine Corps assigned to a deployable unit (e.g. a ship, aircraft squadron, detachment, battalion, or other unit type that operates away from its assigned homeport) and is forward-deployed for a period of either 90 consecutive days or two periods of at least 80 days each within a given 12-month period.

- August 1974 – January 1993

Republic Of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation (25):

Awarded by the Vietnam Government to military personnel who have accomplished deeds of valor or displayed heroic conduct while fighting the enemy and have been cited individually at the regiment, brigade, division, corps, or armed forces level.

- January 1966 (3 Awards)
- February 1966 (4 Awards)
- March 1966 (3 Awards)
- April 1966
- December 1967
- January 1968 (4 Awards)
- March 1968
- March – April 1968
- April 1968 (3 Awards)
- April – May 1968
- January 1969
- February – March 1969
- April 1969

Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (1)

Awarded to personnel who served in the Republic of Vietnam for six months during the period of 1 March 1961 and 28 March 1973

Saudi Arabia's Kuwait Liberation Medal (1)

Authorized by the Saudi Arabia government to coalition forces members who participated in Operation Desert Storm and the Liberation of Kuwait.

Battle Stars: 13 (Vietnam)

Authorized to denote participation in designated battles

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Top Gun, Dir. Tony Scott. Paramount, 1986. DVD.

United States Navy. "Ranger CV-61, Final Determination." 30 November 2010.

United States Navy. *CAPT. Dennis V. McGinn, commanding officer of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61), greets a Russian helicopter crewman on the flight deck following the landing of a Ka-27 Helix helicopter aboard the ship*. 15 Oct 1992. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 15 March 2014.

United States Navy. Suzanne Somers, wearing a USS Ranger shirt, performs for the crew of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61). 1 Nov 1981. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 14 March 2014.

United States Navy. The San Diego Stars play an exhibition game on a regulation basketball court set up on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61). Meadowlark Lemon (center) is the star player. 15 Aug 1988. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 14 March 2014.

United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1958 Cruise Book.*

United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1959 Cruise Book.*

United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1960 Cruise Book*.

United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1962-1963 Cruise Book*

United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1976 Cruise Book.*

United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1982 Cruise Book.*

United States Navy. *USS Ranger 1987 Cruise Book.*

United States Navy. Vice Premier Geng Biao of China is given a tour of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61). 3 Jun 1980. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 14 March 2014.

United States Navy. *Vice President George Bush cuts a cake baked in honor of his visit to the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61).* 14 May 1983. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 15 March 2014.

United States Navy. *Vice President George Bush receives a ships bell from MCPO Hobbs during a ceremony held on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS RANGER (CV-61).* 14 May 1983. United States National Archives, Washington, DC. Web. 15 March 2014.

"USS Ranger (CVA-61)." *www.navy.mil.* United States Navy, n.d. Web. 12 March 2014.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
__x__Other
Name of repository: Internet; library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References _____NAD 1927 or _____NAD 1983

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1				3			
2				4			

Or Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
1	**47°33'8.95"N**	**122°39'9.17"W**	3		
2			4		

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundaries of the USS Ranger CV 61 are the physical boundaries of the ship itself, being 1,067' long and 270' wide.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries were selected as per the National Park Service's guidelines for a historic structure (ship).

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rachel Shelton
organization Private Citizen date 14 May 2014
street & number telephone
city or town state zip code
e-mail Savetheranger.CV61@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner: (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name United States Navy, Naval Systems Sea Command
street & number 1333 Isaac Hull Avenue, SE telephone 202-781-0000
city or town Washington Navy Yard state DC zip code 20376

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

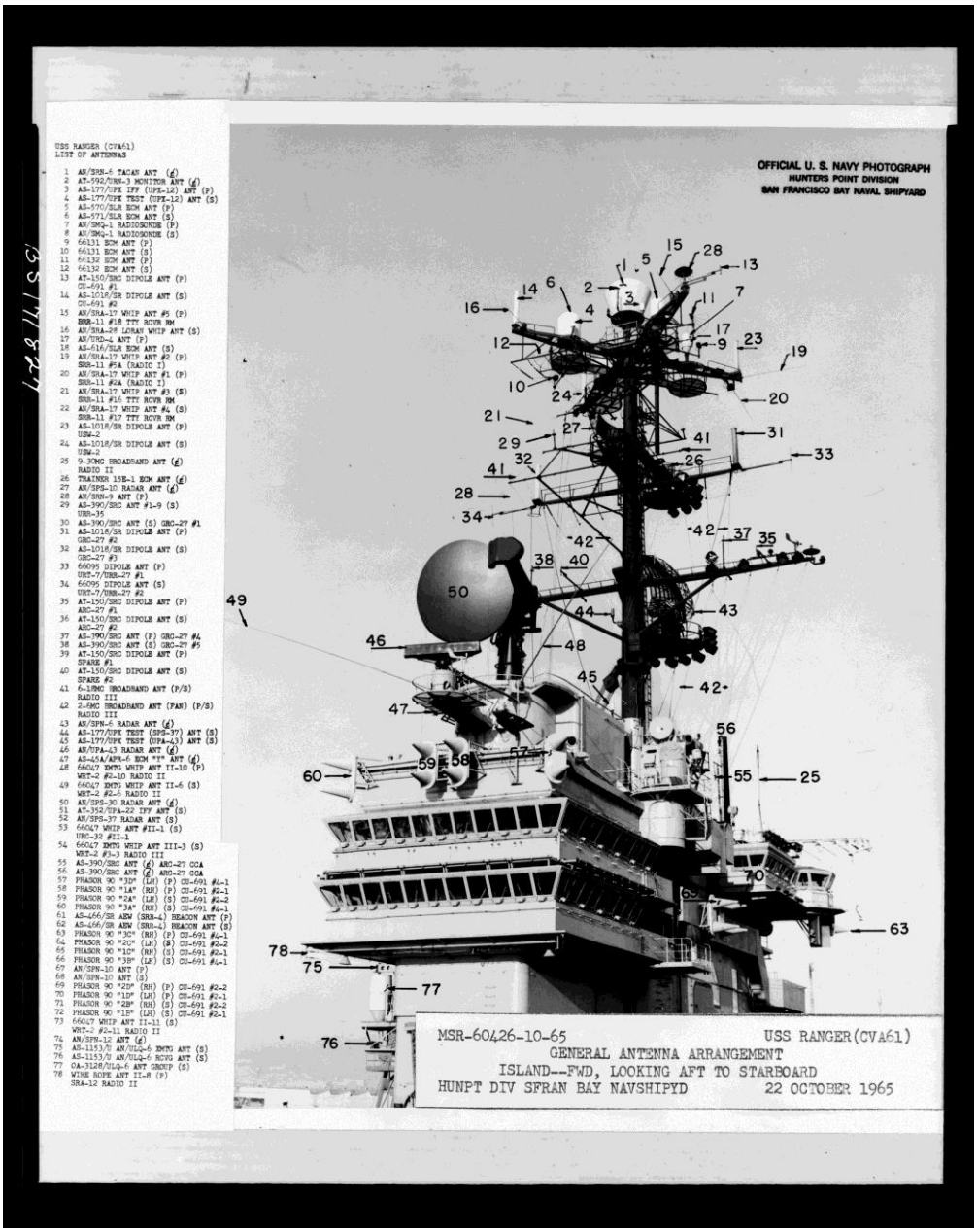
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Latitude: 47°33'8.95"N
Longitude: 122°39'9.17"W

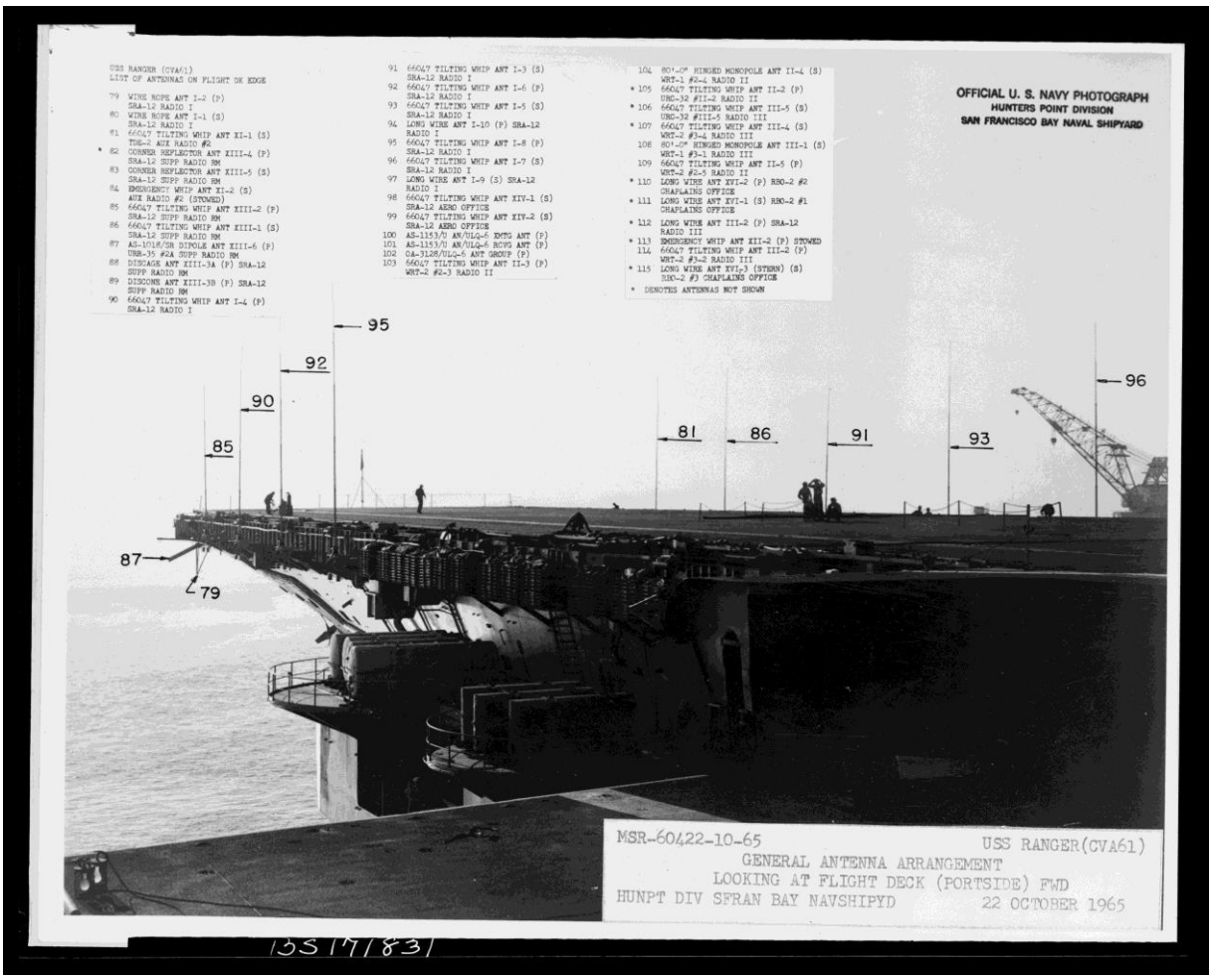
USS Ranger – **Christening with Mrs. Radford:**

U.S.S.
RANGER
AIRCRAFT CARRIER
THE EIGHTH SHIP OF THE FLEET TO BEAR
THE NAME
BUILT N.N.S.&D.D.CO. NEWPORT NEWS VA.
KEEL LAID AUG. 2. 1954
LAUNCHED SEPT. 29. 1956
COMMISSIONED AUG. 10. 1957

2241
187576

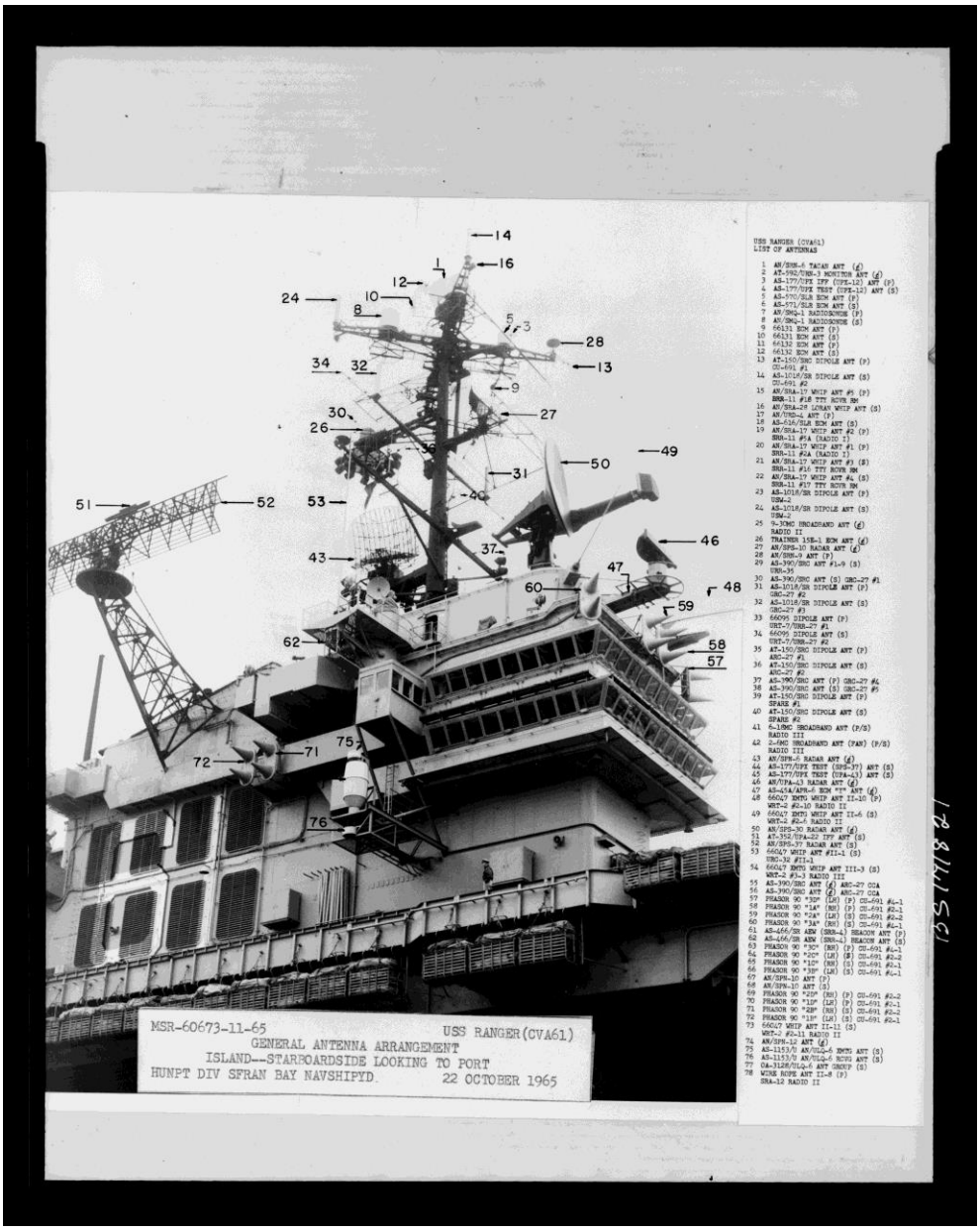


USS Ranger – **General Antenna Arrangement:**



USS Ranger – **Flight Deck, Portside forward**

USS Ranger – **Flight Deck, Forward:**



USS Ranger – **Antenna Island, Starboard.**

USS Ranger – **Ship Stern, Portside:**

USS Ranger – **Typical Bunk area:**

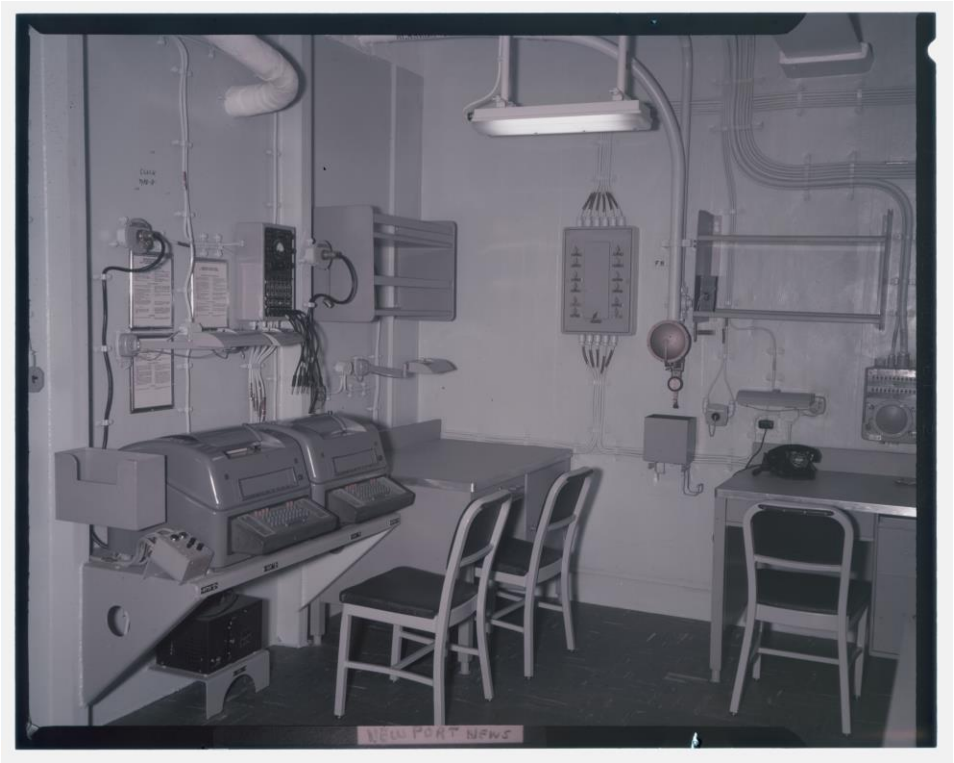
USS Ranger – **Typical Chairs, Tables and Sofa:**

USS Ranger – **Desks:**

USS Ranger – **Mess Hall:**

USS Ranger – **Typical Sofa, Lamps and Tables:**

USS Ranger – **Typical Table, Shelving and Chairs:**



USS Ranger – **Telex Area:**

USS Ranger – **Train seat sofa area:**

Screen Shots from – **Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home**, 1986

(USS Ranger Posing as USS Enterprise)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: USS Ranger

City or Vicinity: Bremerton

County: Kitsap **State:** WA

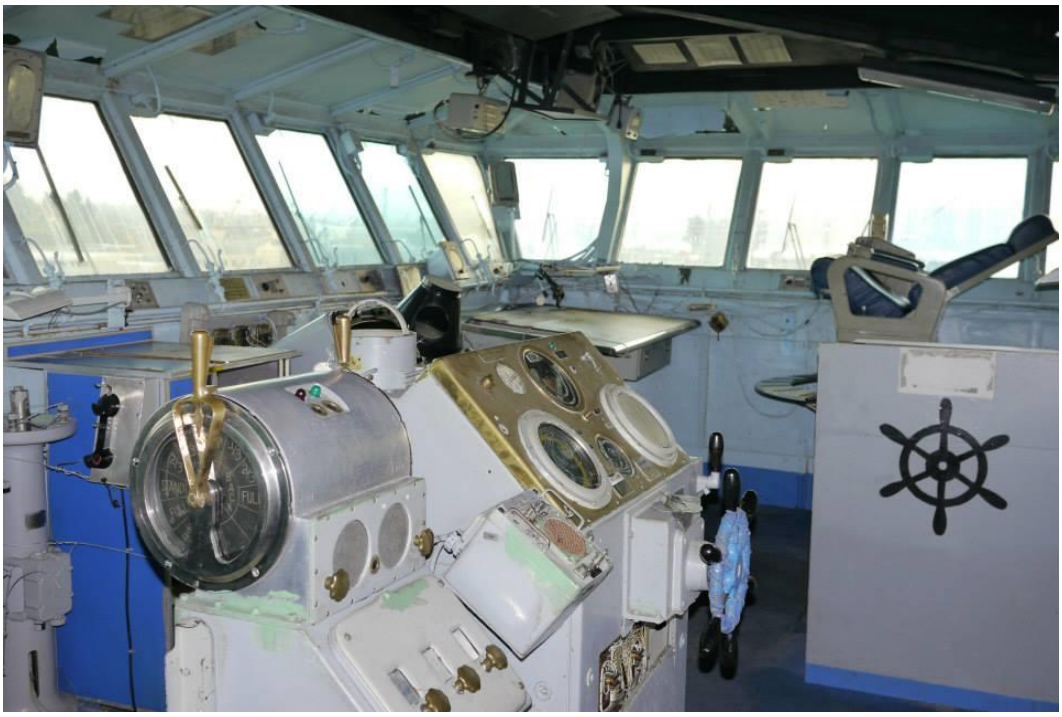
Photographer: James Gleason

Date Photographed: November 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of ___.

BEWARE OF JET BLAST,
PROPELLERS AND ROTORS
61



CV
61
TO ISLA

DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE
FLUSH DECK AND DECK
EDGE SPRG GROUP NO 2
STBD/CL FR 107-137
SPLY BY 2ND DK AZA 7
X
DANGER

3-175-1T
FR 175-176
P1

USS RANGER
CV 61

CAUTION
ASBESTOS

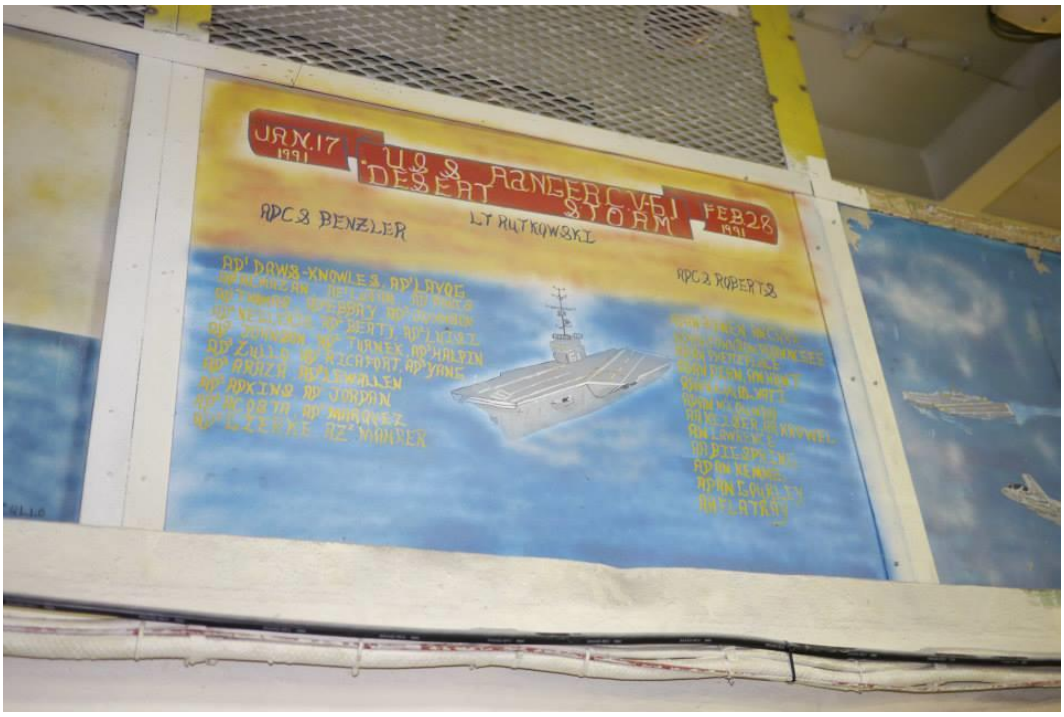
VENT SUPPLY

DANGER
HIGH
VOLTAGE

USS
RANGER
61

THEY CALLED
WE CAME
WE ANCHORED
WESTPAC 89

FP
40
80
120
160
CVA-61
03 LEVEL (GALLERY DECK)
LEGEND
BERTHING AREA
PASSAGEWAY
UP LADDER
DOWN LADDER


JAN.17 1991
U.S.S. RANGER CV-61
DESERT STORM
FEB 28 1991
APC2 BENZLER
LT RUTKOWSKI
APC2 ROBERTS

IF IT FLIES
NOW CAT'S
SMOKIN' GUNS
CV 61
WE'LL SHOOT IT