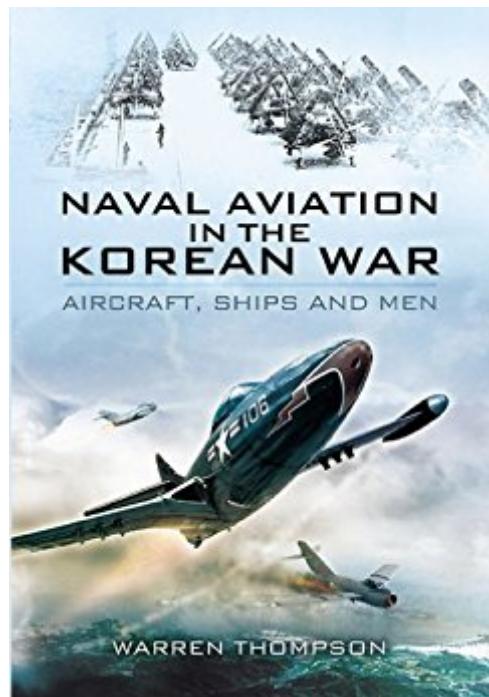


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# Naval Aviation In The Korean War: Aircraft, Ships, And Men



## Synopsis

The first part of this book covers the role of US aircraft carriers and aircraft in stopping the North Korean initial push to the south and also their role in the famous Inchon Landing and Pusan Perimeter Break out. The last part of the first chapter deals with naval operations during the Marine's Chosin Reservoir march to the sea in December 1950. The book goes on to describe the stabilization of the front lines after the Chinese had entered the war during 1951. At this time, the emphasis for naval air operations was centered on interdiction behind the lines. The focus was on trying to stop road and rail traffic from resupplying the communist troops and allowing them to build up to a major offensive. It also includes the entry of the F2H Banshee into carrier operations which gave the USA four major types of aircraft with which to wage the war. During 1952 most carrier air groups spend their time off the coast of North Korea while hitting targets up along the Yalu River, putting them well within the range of the MiG-15s. Navy F9F Panthers were used as top cover while the Corsairs and Skyraiders went after major targets such as the dam complexes up river and marshaling yards north of Pyongyang. During 1953, naval air operations were stepped up in an effort to get the communists back to the truce talks. The number of MiG-15s had grown to a figure many times that of the UN for overhead protection. The deep missions were more dangerous than ever and the Chinese brought in state of the art antiaircraft automatic weapons. The number of sorties flown by the US Naval aircraft increased over the previous year's record numbers. The war ended on July 27, 1953.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There have been precious few volumes published on the vital role USN carriers played in the Korean War, Richard Hallion's book being the only one to come to mind. Happily, we now have Warren Thompson's NAVAL AVIATION IN THE KOREAN WAR to add to the literature. A 2012 Pen & Sword Books release, Thompson's book is a comprehensive, nicely-illustrated account of NavAir in action. From 1950 to 1953, 11 carriers logged deployments to Korea. Initially CVs like Valley Forge, Boxer and Philippine Sea furnished air cover for the RoK and US forces retreating down the South Korea peninsula. Later, Skyraiders, Corsairs, Panthers, Banshees and other strike aircraft from those ships and others such as Essex, Leyte, Oriskany and Bonnie Dick flew CAS and interdiction missions for the Inchon landing, Pusan Peninsula breakout, the US pursuit of the battered NKA invaders, subsequent battles with ChiCom forces, etc. Thompson's engaging text describes the varied missions flown by the different ships/air groups during the Korean War, incorporating many first-person reminiscences in his narrative. Likewise, the book benefits from dozens of b&w and color photographs of carriers, aircraft, aircrew, strikes, crashes and so on. Given the paucity of NavAir Korean War books, NAVAL AVIATION IN THE KOREAN WAR is a keeper. It's a comprehensive, informative and engaging account of the Navy's role in 'The Forgotten War.' Recommended. \*\*\*\*\*Note: Thompson's book only deals with the 11 CV or CVA carriers that deployed to Korea. At least six smaller CVE carriers carrying USMC squadrons also served; perhaps the subject of a future book??

I was ships company a board the USS Oriskany CVA 34 from December 1951 - December 1954. We were off Korea in October 1952 - May 1953. We were back again in October - May. This book was hard to put down, very interesting. I was in the parachute loft and didn't know the particulars on the aircraft , like fuel , bomb loads and speeds. Anyone who spent time on a carrier should read this book.

As is usual with Thompson's work, this book is a joy to read and a necessity for research. It sharply reduces the extent to which the Korean War has become the forgotten war. And it points out the

great difference from using airpower as a massive force rather than killing the enemy one at a time with drones and missiles. The author covers the entire Korean war from the early days of panic to the peak of United Nations triumphs, to the intervention of the Chinese and the long stalemate of the Armistice. In his usual authoritative style he depicts how the under-strength U.S. Navy fought initially with World War II equipment, largely piston engine, with a smattering of Grumman Panther jet fighters. Thanks largely to pilot training and skill, this rag tag collection was able to confront the North Korean and Chinese forces successfully until new ships and planes arrived to handle the work. Thompson makes a point that this book is about U.S. Navy combat, for he notes that the U.S. Marines deserve a book of their own--which he will doubtless write. The book makes good use of many new photographs and concludes with absolutely invaluable appendices filled with data to which other researchers can refer. The book is a bargain!

Naval Aviation In the Korean War is a well written, well documented account of the Korean air war from 1950 until it ended in 1953. It contains numerous stories by the Naval Aviators who fought in this war. I especially appreciated the statistics of the types of airplanes flown by each squadron, and the detailed losses sustained for each type of airplane. Highly recommended for history buffs.

Korea has become the "forgotten war" to most Americans, but to those who flew the cold skies of Korea it will never be forgotten. I would suggest that a prospective reader first view the very fine film, "The Bridges of Toko-ri" before reading the book. Among the stories in the book is the death of the first African American Naval Aviator and the desperate efforts of his squadron to rescue him. At the end of the movie, the "admiral" asks himself, "Where do we get such men?" After reading this book, you will share that sentiment.

An in-depth, yet very human look at the naval air war in Korea. Thompson thoroughly explains the concepts and operations of fighting aircraft carriers and their air wings from pitching seas with ice-covered decks. The many, many recollections from those carrier veterans reminds the reader that it is not the 'things' that fight a war, but men. Historically rich yet very readable. Well done!

As an aircraft carrier veteran I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I had heard stories from Korean War vets about the awful weather they had to endure, yet still conduct flight operations. I particularly liked the descriptions of the aircraft - Skyraiders, Corsairs, Banshees, and Panthers. I have had personal maintenance experience with skyraiders and early jets so I could relate well with the book. I learned

a lot.Jim Sund LCDR USN Retired.

Excellent book for the naval aviation enthusiast. Great color photo's. Many I haven't seen before. Enjoyed the stories of the many different pilots of corsairs, early carrier jets and skyraiders.

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