Captain James B. Linder



James Benjamin Linder was born in Osceola, Iowa, on 13 October 1925, son of M.D. and Gracia (McKay) Linder. On 5 May 1943, he enlisted in the Navy and had various assignments, including the Naval Academy Preparatory School, Norfolk, VA, and the University of Kansas at Lawrence. He entered the U.S. Naval Academy on appointment from his native state in 1945.

Captain Linder graduated and was commissioned Ensign on 3 June 1949. Following graduation from the Naval Academy, he joined USS *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVA 42). In September of that year, he was detached for flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, FL. and Corpus Christi, TX. Designated Naval Aviator in 1950, he reported in January 1951 for further training with Fleet Aircraft Service Squadron SEVEN (FASRON 7). From May 1951 to April 1954, he served with Fighter Squadron (VF) 112 “Fighting One Twelve,” which deployed for sixteen months to the Korean area of hostilities, operating from USS *Kearsarge* (CVA 33) and USS *Philippine Sea* (CVA 47). He was awarded the Air Medal and the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V."

He next had duty as Fleet Training Officer, Administrative Officer, and Communication Officer at Naval Air Station, Willow Grove, PA. He remained there until March 1957, after which he attended Combat Information Center and Air Control Schools. In October 1957, he rejoined *Franklin D. Roo-*

sevelt and, while onboard, he participated in two Mediterranean cruises. He reported in August 1959 for instruction at the Naval War College, Newport, RI. During the period July to December 1960, he had replacement air group training with Attack Squadron (VA) 44 “Hornets.” He served as Operations Officer and Executive Officer of VA-172 “Blue Bolts,” which deployed in the Mediterranean aboard *Franklin D. Roosevelt* and USS *Enterprise* (CVAN 65).

In July 1962, he was assigned to the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department, Washington, DC; he served in the Legislative Branch until September 1963, when he became Aide to the Chief of the Bureau. He remained there until July 1964, after which he was Executive Officer of VA-76 “Spirits.” He assumed command of that squadron in October 1965. For outstanding service in that assignment, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross with Gold Star in lieu of the Second Distinguished Flying Cross, Gold Star in lieu of the Second Navy commendation Medal with Combat "V," Gold star in lieu of the Third Distinguished Flying Cross and the Silver Star Medal. In addition, he is entitled to wear the Numeral "14" on his Air Medal to designate fourteen strike/flight awards from 2 December 1965 to 3 June 1966. From November 1966 to January 1967, he had replacement carrier air group training with Replacement Carrier Air Wing (RCVW) TWELVE. The following month, he assumed command of Attack Carrier Air Wing (CVW) FIFTEEN. For outstanding services in that command, he was awarded the Legion of Merit with Combat "V," a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Air Medal, Gold Stars in lieu of the Fourth and Fifth Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Navy Cross, Gold Star in lieu of the Sixth Distinguished Flying Cross and a Gold Star in lieu of the Second, Third and Fourth Silver Star Medals and a Gold Star in lieu of the Seventh Distinguished Flying Cross. He is entitled to wear the Numeral "20" on his Air Medal to designate six additional strike/flight awards from 28 August 1967 to 11 February 1969. He is also entitled to the Ribbon with Bronze Star for the Navy Unit Commendations awarded the Naval Support Activity, Da Nang, and USS *Coral Sea* (CVA 43).

In May of 1968, he reported as head of the Aviation Distribution Control Branch, Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, DC. He remained there until September 1969, when he became Executive Assistant and Naval Aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs). In March 1972, he assumed command of USS *Sylvania* (AFS 2) until 1 November 1972.

Thanks to Ken Killmeyer, USS Forrestal *Association Historian*