

USS EMMONS MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOOK DONATION

BOOK TITLE: *The USS Emmons: Eyewitness Accounts from Survivors of the Battle of Okinawa*
Transcribed by Cheri Pierson Yecke, P.D.
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The USS EMMONS DD457/DMS22, a World War II Navy destroyer, fought courageously during WWII earning five battle stars in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters of the war. She fought in the Battle of the Atlantic performing convoy escort duties to Murmansk, Russia; participated in the detection, prosecution and sinking of U-616 in the western Mediterranean; fought in the North Africa campaign during Operation Torch; escorted President Roosevelt embarked aboard USS Iowa to the Tehran Conference; and provided naval gunfire support off Omaha Beach, Normandy, during D-Day and later at Cherbourg, France.

On April 6, 1945, the EMMONS, while on radar picket duty off the southern coast of Okinawa, Japan, rendered assistance to a sister ship, USS RODMAN, which had been struck by a kamikaze aircraft. The EMMONS approached the RODMAN and circled her to provide maximum fire support against the attacking aircraft. Subsequently, the EMMONS found herself under heavy kamikaze attack involving over 50 Japanese aircraft. The EMMONS, with the assistance of U.S. carrier-based fighter aircraft, fought a running gun battle for approximately four hours splashing six suicide aircraft before being struck by five kamikazes in quick succession. Sixty EMMONS crew members were killed in action and several were wounded. That evening orders were given to abandon the flaming hulk and the EMMONS was sunk the following day by US naval forces to prevent her from being captured by enemy forces.

In the days following the attack on the EMMONS, when many of the survivors were being evacuated, Lt. John Griffin, Jr. asked survivors to document in writing their accounts of what they experienced during the attack.

With this valuable collection of hand-written WWII historical documents now showing their age and the difficulty in reading the handwriting of many of its accounts, the USS EMMONS Association transcribed all 60 hand-written reports and published them in this book, complete with the original 60 reports, their transcribed counterparts, and an index to the 124 shipmates whose names are referenced in those reports. The reports have proven to be a valuable resource of historical significance, while providing insight into the thoughts and experiences of the crew that day.

Today, the USS EMMONS Association, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, works to preserve the memory of the EMMONS DD457/DMS22 and honor the memory of the shipmates who perished in her sinking on April 6, 1945. The Association also maintains and facilitates contact and relationships among former crew members of the USS EMMONS, their families and friends. The heroic exploits of the WWII veterans of the USS EMMONS DD457/DMS22 and their valiant ship is well documented on the USS EMMONS Association's website, www.ussemmons.org.