



USS *Pettit* (DE-253)

Robert Lee Pettit was born in Clare, Michigan on 17 November 1906. He enlisted in the Navy 13 September 1927, and attained the rate of Radioman First Class on 16 February 1938. He died in his attacking PB4Y aircraft at Jolo Harbor, Philippines, 27 December 1941, as he remained bravely at his post in the burning, gasoline-flooded radio compartment. For his heroism he received the Navy Cross.

DE-253

Edsall Class Destroyer Escort

Displacement: 1,253 tons standard; 1,102 tons full load

Length: 306' oa

Beam: 36'7"

Draft: 10' 5' full load

Machinery: 2-shaft Fairbanks Morse diesels, 6,000 bhp

Range: 10,800 nm at 12 knots

Top Speed: 21 knots

Complement: 186

Armament: 3-3"/50; 2-40mm; 8-20mm; 3-21" torpedo tubes; 2 depth charge tracks; 8 depth charge projectors; 1 hedge hog.

History:

USS PETTIT (DE-253) was laid down 6 February 1943 by the Brown Shipbuilding Co., Houston, Tex., launched 28 April 1943; sponsored by Mrs. Robert Lee Pettit; and commissioned 23 September 1943, Lt. Commander

William B. Ellis, USCG, in command. After Atlantic shakedown, PETTIT reported for duty to Commander, Destroyers, Atlantic. Assigned to Destroyer Escort Division 20 in December 1943, she operated out of Norfolk, Va., that month to train destroyer escort nucleus crews. Later in December, she escorted a convoy from Norfolk, Va., to Casablanca, Morocco, where she arrived 2 January 1944. She returned from this assignment to Brooklyn, N.Y., 24 January 1944.

When stationed in home waters, PETTIT trained periodically at Montauk Point, N.Y., and Casco Bay, Maine. From February 1944 to June 1945, she escorted trans-Atlantic convoys principally between Londonderry, North Ireland, and New York, N.Y. She also called at the ports of Cherbourg and Le Havre, France, and Plymouth, Liverpool, and Southampton, England. After V-E day, PETTIT proceeded, via Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the Panama Canal, and San Diego, Cal., to Hawaii, arriving Pearl Harbor 25 July. She departed for Eniwetok, Marshall Islands, 27 August, and arrived there 3 September.

From September into November 1945, she searched for possible Allied survivors on islands in the southwest Pacific. In December 1945, she operated from Pearl Harbor on a weather patrol. PETTIT decommissioned 6 May 1946 and entered the Atlantic Reserve Fleet. Into 1970, she was berthed at Norfolk.

Stricken from the Navy Register on 1 August 1973, PETTIT was sunk as a target off Puerto Rico on 30 September 1974.

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