

“ANYTIME, ANY OCEAN

As the United States fought to recover from the impact of the December 7th attack, as new ships and aircraft and weaponry were being built, as America’s armed forces were being trained, joining their European Allies in the battle against Hitler’s forces, the war in the Pacific was raging and the line was being held.

The men of Destroyer Squadrons (DESRON) 12 and 21, knew what was at stake and what they had to do. They fought, and they somehow held the line, earning the respect and esteem of the entire Navy by their courage and determination.

They served aboard ships like the USS Nicholas DD449 (Flagship of DESRON 21), O’Bannon (DD 450) Taylor (DD468) and ships from DESRON 12, Lansdowne (DD 486) and Buchanan (DD 484).

Upon the departure of DESRON 21 from the South Pacific Forces in October of 1943, Adm. William Halsey sent this message:

“...DESRON 21 always will be remembered when Cactus, Munda, Kula, Vella and the Slot are mentioned, you may be sure I will welcome you back with open arms, any time, any ocean, hearts and flowers, Halsey”.

And, Halsey did welcome them back, ordering that DESRON 21’s Nicholas, O’Bannon and Taylor, because of their *“valorous fight up the long road from the South Pacific to the very end...”* be given the honor of escorting the Allied Fleet into Tokyo Bay on the final journey toward war’s end.

And on September 2, 1945, it was Destroyers Nicholas, O’Bannon, Taylor, Lansdowne and Buchanan that carried the delegates and dignitaries to USS Missouri to sign the Instrument of Surrender and witness the final, formal end of World War II.

***Presented by former crew members of the USS Nicholas DD 449.
In memory of David C. McComb, founder of the Destroyer History Foundation,
Whose exceptional efforts helped preserve the legacy of the
American Destroyer Squadrons of World War II.***

