



**Missouri State Society
Daughters of the American
Revolution**

PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Robert J. Vickers

Robert Vickers entered the US Army Air Corps in the spring of 1942. Before entering the service, he was a student at the University of Missouri.

He was awarded his wings at the Victorville, CA, bombardier school in August 1943. A bombardier rode in the nose of the plane, a B-17 bomber, also known as a Flying Fortress, encased in Plexiglas. He was in the 306th bomb group and while on a mission 12 September 1944, north of Berlin, Germany, his plane was shot down. He jumped and parachuted to the ground, landing in a tree. The Germans spotted him and he became a prisoner of war at Camp Stalag Luft 1 near the Baltic Sea. He was liberated by Russian troops on May 1, 1945 and taken to France for several weeks before being returned to the United States. While home on leave, he married Helen Peterman.

Robert received the following honors/citations:

- ◇ Distinguished Flying Cross w/ 4 oak leaf clusters
- ◇ Air Medal for Meritorious Achievement w/ 3 oak leaf clusters
- ◇ Prisoner of War Medal
- ◇ European Invasion Medal



While visiting the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, Robert noticed a glass case in which was a display of photos and memorabilia of POW's of WWII. On closer inspection, he noticed that one of the items was an oven he had made for cooking while a prisoner of war. Robert and some of his family visited Wright-Patterson again in 2001, where the curator of the museum took them on a personal tour.

Anna VanHouten of the Clarence Chapter proudly nominated Robert for Patriot of the Month. She wrote that Robert is an asset to their community, letting his Christian beliefs be known by his daily living. Robert's wife, Helen, and her mother were members of the Clarence Chapter and his daughter and granddaughter are prospective members.



MSSDAR Patriot of the Month