



Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Patriots of the Month
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Edith F. Lee Elrod



Sponsored by:

Rachel Donelson Chapter
DAR



Howard L. Elrod

Two young people joined the United States Army, met, and fell in love..... this is their story

Edith F. Lee Elrod graduated from Hutchison High School, Hutchison, Kansas, in 1949. Her mother was very involved with the Salvation Army when Edith was a child, and Edith thought it would be the same in the United States Army, so at the age of eighteen, Edith and a friend enlisted. Edith tells how scared she was, never having been away from home, and she very quickly realized what a new environment she was in. She immediately decided to keep her mouth shut and stay out of trouble as much as possible.

Howard L. Elrod graduated from Joplin High School, Joplin, Missouri and enlisted in the United States Army in October, 1947. He had three years of ROTC while in high school. He was sent to Ft. Knox, Kentucky for basic training and assigned as an automotive mechanic.

In early 1948 Howard, a Staff Sergeant, was assigned to the General Headquarters Motor Pool in Tokyo, Japan. While there, in addition to his Motor Pool duties, he and about 28 others were sent to Formosa to find out what Chiang Kai-shek needed in military aid.

Edith was sent for basic training to Camp Lee, Virginia. When they first got to the camp everyone was sent to get their clothing. She tells about being asked what shoe size she wore and when she told them a 7 was told an 8 would do! All their clothing was given to them and they had to roll it all up and put it over their shoulders and off to their barracks. She says the roll of items were so large and hard to carry, but she gritted her teeth and dealt with it.

Edith also tells about the beginning of training. They were to learn to march, and march they did --from morning to night. The afternoon of the first day, she was sent to the Chaplain. Not knowing what to expect, she went in and was told now was the time for a "good cry," and then back to marching.

An interesting day occurred not long after she began work in her assigned processing position. Edith, a Sergeant was assigned to work for General Mac Arthur in the message center. She very quickly learned to keep her mouth shut and not discuss any of the messages sent.

Howard tells about some of the fun times in Tokyo. General Mac Arthur had a yacht which he would let personnel use on weekends for rest and relaxation through the Special Services. One weekend when Howard was on board they took a cruise from Tokyo to Yokohama. Just off the coast of Yokohama the guys decided to swim to shore thinking it was only about a mile. Howard was sure he could make it and dove in and started swimming, not realizing he was going against the tide. Well, he just about didn't make it and thanks to two of his buddies, they helped him to the beach. He took a boat back to the yacht!

A fashion show was being held for the personnel, and one day Howard had purchased tickets. He had noticed Edith and was very interested in meeting her. He invited her to go to the show with him; and very soon they had a second date to a Sunrise Church service, and they began to "keep company".

Once Edith and Howard decided to marry, each had to go before their commanding officers for an interview and permission to marry. Then there were two ceremonies, one before the American Consulate May 29, and then a church wedding on June 9, 1951, which is the one they choose to celebrate. They spent their honeymoon at Shinkansen Ski Resort in Japan. Howard had intended to make the Army a career and was offered the rank of Master Sergeant in a year if he would stay in the military. After he and Edith married, they felt they should return home and raise their family in the United States.

Edith and Howard were discharged in 1951 at Ft Carson, Colorado, and then went back to Joplin. Howard went to work for Sunshine Biscuit Company for a short time and then for Folger's as a District Sales Representative where he retired after 31 years. Edith worked for several businesses: Pacific Mercury, Royal Mc Bee, and, finally, Positronics where she was a supervisor. Edith retired after 20 years.

Edith and Howard have one daughter, one son, two grandsons, and one granddaughter. Once retired, they "hit the road" traveling for a number of years all over the United States in their motorhome. Many of their trips included South Padre Island fishing. They have been members of South Haven Baptist Church and have provided many fish dinners from their trips for church parties. They also had a Gold Wing motorcycle and rode many miles traveling everywhere. One great trip lasted about two weeks when one afternoon they decided they wanted a lobster dinner and took off for Maine.

The Rachel Donelson Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution wish to extend our gratitude and thanks to Edith and Howard Elrod for their service to our great country, and are pleased to honor them as our MSSDAR Patriots of the Month.