

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution Proudly Honors



Patriot of the Month

October 2016



Urban L. Butler United States Navy

Sponsored by:
Caroline Close Stuart
Chapter

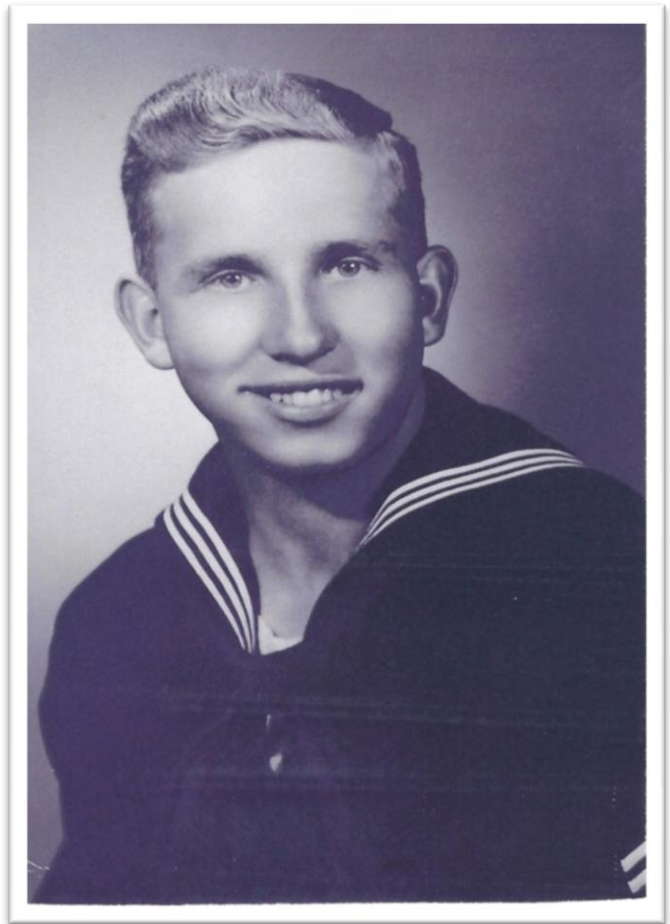
Urban L. Butler became a very young sailor from a rural community and went by railroad across the United States on a train from St. Louis, Missouri, to San Diego, California. At the time he had finished high school and was farming on a small family owned farm. When needed, he enlisted in another community and was told to report in January 1952, first stop, boot camp.

Not having traveled much, he was somewhat anxious about what the future might be. He had three older brothers that had been in the Army, one in World War I on the beaches driving a bulldozer and clearing a path for the troops to get from ship to shore. The other was

stationed in Africa with a medical unit and helping the War effort by procuring the needed medical and surgical supplies under very difficult circumstances, and the third in the war for just over a year, but also in the Army. Two older brothers had been deferred, one for his occupation of farming and was told that he needed to grow the crops to feed our nation, and the other was medically deferred.

Urban's first ship of service was the *USS Skagit (AKA-105)*. The mission for this assignment was to load supplies to build a Prisoner of War Camp in South Korea. He was then transferred to the *USS Lincoln County (LST 898)* where he served as a deck hand. After Signal Corps training in Bainbridge, Maryland, he was assigned to the *USS Calvert (APA-32)* where he served as a Petty Officer Third Class Signalman. The ship was in the area of South Korea, Inchon River, and Wonsan Korea.

During his time on the *USS Calvert* the ship spent three days with winds of eighty five miles per hour as they endured Typhoon Grace, north of the Philippine Islands. After the ship was repaired, they sailed to North



Vietnam to move people to South Vietnam. A total of 2,000 people were moved per trip and four trips were completed.

Urban's most memorable event during his time in service was the Operation Passage to Freedom. The North Vietnam Army told the people of North Vietnam that they should not board the American ships, that they would be killed or thrown overboard, and none of that was true. He said, "It didn't happen." He recalls being protected by the *USS Missouri (BB-63)* and states "not one life was lost" to the North Vietnam Army while the operation was conducted. An old man died of natural causes and a baby was born. Another vivid memory is that of having a cargo of 500 drums of aircraft fuel and states it was "unloaded very quickly."

Other assignments included a move of a Seabee detachment, training to do Amphibian landings and put troops ashore on enemy held land. He attained the rank of Petty Officer Second Class Quartermaster Signalman, who is someone who uses Morse Code on a signal light with blinks or by using hand flags that are colored to be visible from the shore. The Signalman stood high on the tower of the ship to relay his messages. Now 57 years later, he can still remember the Morse Code.

His last two places to train were Iwo Jima and Okinawa. After a week of Rest and Relaxation in Hong Kong, he returned to the United States where he served his remaining enlistment. He was honorably discharged in January 1956.

Urban has received the National Defense Service, United Nations Service, Korean Service w/1star, and the Good Conduct Medals.

Prior to his service, Urban was a self-employed farmer and single. He is active in local civic affairs by being a member of the Town Board and attends local church services. He remains active in the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. He is married and has two sons whose families live in communities around his home town.

Urban is proud of his service to his country and community. The United States Navy afforded him the opportunity of seeing our nation and world. He cherishes the travel and friendships he formed.

Caroline Close Stuart Daughters are proud to honor Urban L. Butler as Patriot of the Month for his patriotism, dedication, and service to our great nation.