

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

October 2021



Gilbert S. "Pete" Young

United States Navy

Sponsored by:
Old Towne Fenton
Chapter



Gilbert S. "Pete" Young was born February 03, 1925. During the peak of the Great Depression, his family struggled along with many other American families as the economy presented little or no employment for the working class, Pete's family, 7 siblings and his parents, lived in a tent near the railway tracks in St. Charles, MO. During these difficult times, an oil lamp spilled, set fire to the tent and they lost what little they

had. School was no longer an option. In exchange for room and board and food for his family, Pete and his siblings worked as hired hands at small rural farms in the area. When Pete turned 17, with an 8th grade education, he enlisted on February 7th, 1942 in the U.S. Navy and 2 weeks later was sent to San Diego for boot camp. His Rank was Ships Cook Third Class, Navy Seaman.

Pete was stationed at U.S. Halavo Seaplane Base in the Solomon Islands. The accommodations were basic at best, with small huts and mosquito netting, until barracks were eventually built. The base was bombed several times, with the ammunition hut being hit and exploding nearby. Pete states the scariest time was when they had to jump in a foxhole. He was covered with ants while the enemy flyer was dropping bombs from the bay all the way inland and ran out of bombs just short of the foxholes.

During his time on the base he was Base Cook until an unfortunate accident occurred. Reaching into a case of beans, he was bit by a 6 inch venomous centipede. His hand immediately swelled, and he lost consciousness for several days. He awoke to find himself in the hospital and remained there for weeks. He often traded bread for bananas and salt for other fruits with the natives on the island. There were times he would have to stand guard in the evening. Those evenings were beautiful with palm trees swaying in the wind and stars in the sky. It was hard for him to believe a war was waging and men were fighting for their lives.

When Pete wasn't fighting the enemy, ants and venomous centipedes, he would swim in the bay-out to a sunken Japanese destroyer. There was a case of beer setting on the bottom near it. He tried several times to retrieve it but never could reach it. It was just too deep!

Discharged October 20th, 1945, he received the Good Conduct Medal, Overseas Service Medal, WWII Medal & the Honorable Service Button-also known as The Ruptured Duck Medal. Pete worked several different jobs, sometimes two or three jobs at a time to support his family. He had a career with General Motors for 30 years, retired from GM in 1980 and was a member of the American Legion. He was married for 71 years to his wife, Joyce, who passed in 2016. He has two children, a son and a daughter. He has 5 grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild. He is now 96 1/2 years old and is proud to be of the Greatest Generation.

Old Towne Fenton Daughters are very proud to honor and recognize Gilbert S. Young as Patriot of the Month for his patriotism and dedicated service to our great nation.