



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



### **Patriot of the Month, February 2008 Francis Merle Northrop**

Francis Northrop joined the U.S. Air Force in 1943 and completed his training about the same time that the Japanese took over the Burma Road. The Burma Road was the route that supplied U.S. troops, as well as the British and Chinese troops.

To overcome this problem, the Air Force converted B-24's to carry supplies instead of bombs. Francis was assigned duty in the China-Burma-India Theater with a crew flying supplies from India to Kuming, China. The unarmed planes were flying over some of the most dangerous terrain in the world, battling Japanese fighters, as well as weather. The round-the-clock missions carried mail, food, PX supplies, bombs, ammunition, and spare parts for equipment. On landing in China, the cargo was removed while the crew ate, and the planes were put back in the air immediately to prevent them from becoming victims of air raids. When the planes arrived back in India, ground crews loaded new supplies and fuel, and a fresh crew began the process again.

Francis logged over 1600 flying hours before he was grounded for flight fatigue and he was sent home. In 1945, after a period of rest, he was assigned to Rosecrans Field. Francis and members of his crew were given the task of being checked out on a newly arrived B-29. After three days, Francis was given the choice of taking a discharge or staying with the crew,

which would be taking the B-29, and its cargo of an atomic bomb, to Japan. Francis chose the discharge.

While in the service, Francis received the Distinguished Flying Cross two times and the Pacific Theater Air Medal.

Francis continued to work in the aircraft industry working on missile programs. He retired from the Ceridian Company.

Francis and his late wife, Marjorie, have one child, two grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Francis is a member of the Sons of the American Revolution and a former member of the Mayflower Society. Marjorie was a member of the Cornelia Green Chapter.

The Cornelia Green Chapter NSDAR proudly nominated Francis Merle Northrop for Patriot of the Month.