

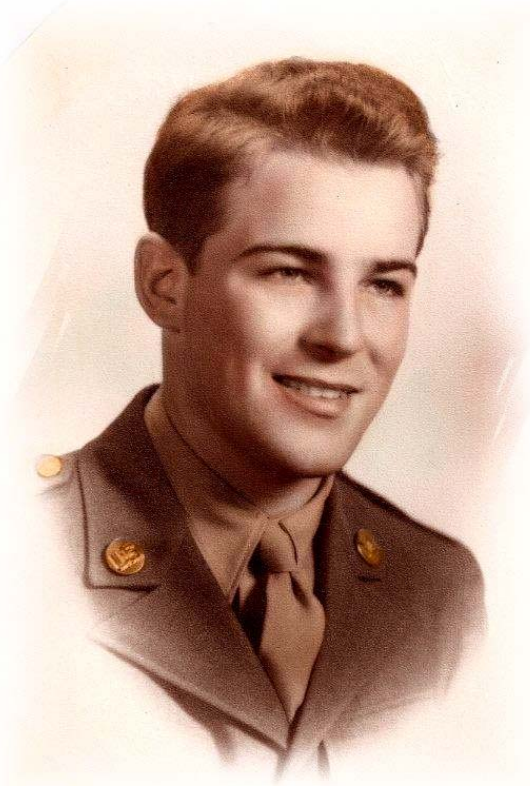
Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Proudly "Spotlights" our December 2010
Patriot of the Month



Robert F. Wilcox

Sponsored by:

**Armstrong Chapter
Armstrong, Missouri**



Robert Wilcox graduated from Huntsville High School in 1939. He started college at the University of Missouri in the fall of 1939, and attended through May 1942. He was drafted into the Army on November 17, 1942 and went for basic training at Herbert Smart Airport in Macon, Georgia, a chemical base. He received Advanced Individual Training to handle poisonous gases at Camp Seibert in Gaston, Alabama. Due to a lot of stored mustard gas leaking at Camp Wheeler, Hawaii, he was sent there. A year was spent loading the gas onto barges, taking it out in the Pacific Ocean and dumping it. Robert and others unloaded a boat that had brought nerve gas to Honolulu.

Later, Robert went to the Island of Tinian, which still wasn't completely secured from the Japanese. He was there when Colonel Paul Tibbets, Jr. took off in the *Enola Gay* to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Staff Sergeant Wilcox had his hands on all the incendiary bombs that came under chemical warfare and any incendiary bomb that left Tinian and dropped on Japan. According to Robert, there were more B-29s on the Island of Tinian than on all the other islands combined.

Robert stayed on Tinian until the peace treaty was signed with Japan. On November 5, 1945, he left on a troop ship bound for San Francisco. Robert then went to Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas where he was discharged on November 17, 1945.

His medals include:

- World War II Victory Medal
- Pacific Campaign Medal with 2 Battle Stars
- Good Conduct Medal

Robert married Margaret Yance of Headland, Alabama on December 8, 1945. They returned to Moberly and Robert enrolled at Missouri University for his senior year. He graduated in May 1947 with a BS Degree in Agriculture. After graduation he worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Kansas City, Missouri for six months. Robert returned to Moberly and worked as Manager of the F. M. Stamper Company Mill for thirty-six years, retiring in 1983.

Robert and Margaret have three children and five grandchildren. He is a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and Rotary Club, where he is a past-president. He served ten years on the Moberly Housing Authority and is currently vice-president. He also served four years as a County Commissioner, was on the Board of Directors at Commerce Bank for nineteen years and was chairman of the church board for three years, as well as being church treasurer for thirty years.

Robert shared a story about his induction into the Army. He was missing his right index finger, the "trigger" finger. When going for his physical, the commanding officer told him he was going to be discharged because of the missing trigger finger. Robert told him he didn't want to be discharged. The commanding officer sent another soldier with Robert's papers for the physical, so Robert would not be discharged, thus allowing him to complete thirty-six months in military service.