



Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution  
**Patriot of the Month**  
May 2014



**Eugene L. Hankins**  
sponsored by

**Missouris Shoal Chapter DAR**



Gene Hankins was born April 24, 1922, at the family farm northwest of Osborn, Missouri. He attended the country school "Frost" through the eighth grade and then on to Osborn High School where he graduated in 1940. He also graduated from William Jewel College, Liberty, Missouri, in 1950.

On September 24, 1942, he was inducted into the U.S. Army in Kansas City, Missouri, and then reported to Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, for active duty on October 8, 1942. While at Ft. Leavenworth he received orders to report to Camp Barkley, Texas, for basic training. After completing basic training in March, 1943, Gene was sent to Camp Harahan, Louisiana, where he was assigned to an Army Surgical Hospital Unit as a Technician Fifth Grade.

On April 28, 1943, he departed to Camp Shanks, New York, where he boarded a ship along with a 102 convoy for overseas duty. The trip to North Africa required fourteen days due to the presence of German U-Boats in the Atlantic. It became necessary to alter their course frequently to avoid being the target of the torpedoes launched by the German subs.

Gene arrived in Algeria, North Africa, on May 11, 1943, where he and his comrades spent their first month on foreign soil sleeping on the ground in pup tents waiting the arrival of the equipment and supplies necessary to set up and operate their hospital. His Unit then traveled across North Africa to Tunisia to set up a field hospital in sixteen "ward tents" to handle 500 patients of the Sicilian Campaign. His unit consisted of 30 doctors, 50 nurses, 2 Chaplains, 3 Red Cross Workers, 150 Enlisted men, Medical Technicians, Motor Pool, cooks, Post Office, carpenters, plumbers and Security workers. His job was Postal Clerk for his unit. While here they were privileged to be entertained by Bob Hope, Jerry Colona, and Frances Langford using a flatbed truck for their stage.

In April 1944, he departed North Africa for Italy. His Unit's first hospital in Italy was set up near Naples. They operated at this location near Naples for about five months before moving on Northward thru Italy. His final location in Italy was near the town of Livorno, where they were surrounded by a barbed wire enclosure since they had some wounded German POW's as patients. There were also some Italian POW's that were assigned duties to help at the hospital.

When the good news that the war had ended in the European Theater the joy and excitement of going home soon was short-lived. We were told that medical units were needed in the Pacific Theater, and Gene's unit was selected for duty there. Preparing for this new assignment required closing down their operation and acquiring new recruits to replace some of the older doctors and personnel who were not going with his Unit to the Pacific.

On August 13, 1945, Gene and his unit boarded ship and set sail for where they were told would be a 45 day trip to "somewhere in the South Pacific." After about five days at sea they received word that Japan had surrendered and their ship immediately changed course and set sail toward the good, old

U.S.A. They arrived and anchored at Hampton Roads, Virginia, on August 24, 1945.

His unit then reported to Camp Seibert, Alabama, and Gene was granted leave to go home and to report back after his leave. On October 10, 1945, he reported to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and received his separation papers as he had accumulated sufficient points for an Honorable Discharge.

He married his high school sweetheart who passed away in 2004. He has three sons, five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He retired from Hallmark, Inc. after a thirty-seven year career, is a member of the United Methodist Church, and active in his neighborhood.

His medals, awards and citations include: North Africa & Italy North Apennines Campaign, Rome - Arno Campaign, 2 Bronze Stars, Good Conduct Medal, 4 Overseas Bars. European-African-Middle Eastern Theatre Campaign Ribbon and Meritorious Service Unit Plaque w/81 Station Hospital.

The Daughters of the Missouri Shoal Chapter are proud to honor Eugene L. Hankins as the Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution's "Patriot of the Month," and extend their gratitude for his service to our country.