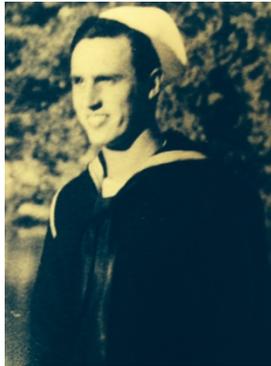


Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution



Patriot of the Month

January 2015



Harry E. Hall

Sponsored by:

Armstrong Chapter



Harry E. Hall graduated in May 1945 from the Laura Speed Elliott High School in Boonville, Missouri. He attended the summer semester at Central Methodist College in Fayette and enlisted on July 10, 1945, in the Navy and was delayed going to basic training in San Diego, California, until November 1945.

After basic training, he volunteered to go to Submarine School at New London, Connecticut. Following schooling, he was sent on a troop train to Mare Island, California, then a week later he boarded the General Butler Processing Troop Ship to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, where he was assigned to the USS Queenfish SS393. Harry says the 1-1/2 years he spent on the Queenfish was one of the best experiences of his life, with several submarine firsts. They were the first electrical crew to build their own battery cells, the first underwater tow of another submarine although not highly successful, and the first to install General Electric slow speed motors, eliminating the bull gear noise. After a research run along the International Date Line testing specific gravity and temperature of ocean water at various levels, the Queenfish cruised past the Arctic Circle several hundred nautical miles and eventually returned to Pearl. Harry shared the story about building battery cells. The crew unsoldered the connecting bars, removed the cell caps, and pulled the lead plates and separators. The cell cases were then dumped of their electrolytes in a pit about 5' x 5' x 4' deep. At one point, Harry was hit by a lift car and was knocked into the pit and went completely under. Fellow crewmen pulled him out and by that time he was completely naked. They showered him, rubbed soda on him and got him a new pair of overalls. Years later, he is still here. He stated while doing this overhaul, the crewmen were constantly given blood tests for possible lead poisoning. When the overhaul was completed, they eased out of the Pearl dry dock and headed for open seas and a shakedown. They went to a depth of 25' and all departments tightened packings and checked for water leaks. With all departments checking in, they surfaced, then dived to 412' which was excessive.

Harry was discharged in January 1948 as a Seaman First Class at Alameda, California and returned to Boonville, Missouri by passenger train. Medals received were the Good Conduct Medal, Twin Dolphins (qualified on a submarine), and the WW II Victory Medal.

After being discharged from the Navy and returning home, Harry married Mary Melton of Boonville on March 28, 1948, and moved to Kirksville to attend Kirksville State Teachers College starting in the fall of 1948. He graduated in May 1950 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education, and in May 1951, he graduated with a Masters Degree in Administration along with a Superintendent's Certificate.

Harry's first job after graduation was as a Superintendent/Coach at Philadelphia, Missouri, where he stayed for two years. All his jobs in education were in Missouri and were at the following places: Gilman City for two years as Superintendent, Palmyra as Assistant Superintendent and Principal for two years, Canton which was associated with Culver Stockton College for ten years, Higginsville for eleven years as Superintendent, Westran School at Huntsville for eight years as Superintendent, retiring in 1986 ending with a total of thirty-five years in education.

Harry and Mary had four sons and five grandchildren. The sons are Mike and David; Mark and Dale who are deceased. Harry's wife, Mary, passed in 1961. Harry met Judy Lillard Steinbeck of Canton, Missouri, while he was Superintendent at Canton and she was teaching there. Judy was a young widow with two very young children. They married on February 14, 1963, and Harry gained two step-children and eventually there were 5 step-grandchildren.

In 1957, Harry took up flying as a new interest. After retiring, he also established the Queenfish Newsletter that has reunited crew members and families, children seeking their father's submarine service, and others seeking related facts. One highly interesting request came from England from a son whose father had been a POW of the Japanese and worked on the Bridge across the River Kwai. He never told his family of his experience before he died. He did mention being picked up by a submarine named Queenfish. He had been aboard the Japanese troop ship the RAKUYO MARU that was sunk by a U.S. submarine. The Queenfish rescued fourteen British and Aussie POW's found drifting. Harry had a photo of the father as he was being pulled from the water. Harry states the rewards have been great and the Queenfish Newsletter has become one of his hobbies.

Harry is a member of Moberly First Baptist Church, member of the Moberly American Legion, past member of the Submarine Veterans of WW II, member of the Huntsville Rotary Club and a member of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI). Harry is a first cousin to the late Laurana Schamma, who was a long time member of the Armstrong Chapter DAR. Harry's ancestor, William Hall, was a Sgt. Major in the Revolutionary War. William's father, Leonard Hall, was given 2,000 acres of land by Patrick Henry for leading the Indians in the French-Indian War. Leonard had two sons who were chainmen for Surveyor Daniel Boone.

The members of the Armstrong Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution wish to extend our gratitude and thanks to Harry E. Hall for his service to our great country.