

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution



Patriot of the Month

June 2015



Ralph K. Manley

Sponsored by:

Rachel Donelson Chapter



Ralph K. Manley was born in Springfield, Missouri, and except for the time he was in the military, lived there his entire life. His siblings included an identical twin and two sisters. Sister Dorothy was in the Women's Army Corps.

Ralph enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942 and did his Basic Training at Camp Roberts, California. He went to Parachute School at Ft. Benning, Georgia, where he was trained as a Demolitions Expert. He was assigned to the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. His duty stations were: Camp McCall, North Carolina; six months in England; Holland; Paris, France; and Bastogne, Belgium. Ralph was with the 101st Airborne when it landed on the beaches of Normandy, France, on D-Day.

By the end of the war, Ralph had attained the rank of Master Sergeant and earned the following: European Overseas Ribbon, 4 Battle Stars and 1 Spearhead (Normandy); European Theater of Operations Ribbon, 4 Battle Stars; American Theater of Operations Ribbon; Combat Infantry Badge; Paratrooper Jump Wings; Three (3) Purple Hearts and Bronze Star.

Upon returning to Springfield, Ralph went to Drury College at night on the GI bill and received his B.A. in Economics in 1949. At the same time, he worked in land development, developing subdivisions and building homes in Springfield. Ralph and Jayne Atteberry were married in 1950. The couple had three daughters, Janell, Jodell, and Jennifer. Ralph received his MBA in 1969 from Drury.

In the late 1960s, he began to teach nights at Drury—"Introduction to Business" and "Business and Society," continuing for 10 years. He then taught Real Estate and Finance full-time as a professor at Southwest Missouri State University (now Missouri State University) for 20 years, while still working in land development.

Beginning in the late 1990s, he served on the Springfield City Council for 12 years and as Mayor pro tem for 6 years. Additionally, he and his family owned a 640 acre farm near Norwood, Missouri, and ran cattle.

In September 1994, on the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Normandy, Ralph and his daughter, Janell, along with other members of the 101st Airborne Division, returned to Europe for a three week tour of Holland, France, and Belgium, visiting both Omaha and Utah Beaches.

Ralph was involved with Air Demonstration Teams for many years, accompanying the teams to Europe and around the United States. Ralph jumped at least two dozen times after he left the service. He made his last jump at the age of 80.

Ralph and Jayne enjoyed men's and women's basketball games, as well as football games, at Drury and SMSU for many years.

In 2006, Ralph wrote his autobiography, entitled The Sky is the Limit. Ralph and Jayne have four grandsons and a great-grandchild on the way. Ralph, who is 91 years old, is a resident at the Mt. Vernon Veterans Home.

The Rachel Donelson Chapter DAR is proud to nominate Ralph K. Manley for Patriot of the Month. Ralph has been a good friend to the chapter, making presentations many times.