

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution



Patriot of the Month

November 2015



George R. Gayler

Sponsored by:

Nodaway Chapter



George Gayler was born in 1921 at Canton, Illinois, where his father was superintendent of schools. His family later moved to Macomb, Illinois, where his father took a professional position at Western Illinois Teachers College. After completing his education through high school at this institution, he then enrolled for the college courses. It was here that he met Barbara Beer who would later become his loving wife. Along with his academic studies, he took civilian pilot training which qualified him to enlist in the Army Air Force Pilot Program in 1942. With only one quarter remaining to obtain his degree, George left his academic pursuits when he was called to active duty with the U.S. Army Air Force at Chicago, Illinois, in January, 1943. After receiving his "Wings" at Brooks Field, he was now a "full-fledged pilot and in November, 1943, Lt. Gayler was sent to Pampa, Texas, as an Air Force advanced flight instructor. George and Barbara were married on June 11, 1944, in Abington, Illinois, and lived in Pampa, Texas, until November, 1944, when he received overseas order to report to Virginia. Barbara moved back to Abington where she stayed and taught school during George's military tenure. After boarding the troop ship not knowing where he was going, they crossed the Atlantic on a long ocean voyage that included stops at several ports and passage through the Suez Canal before docking in India. He then joined up with the 27th Troop Carrier Squadron, a part of the 14th U. S. Army. Lt. Gayler, stationed at Kunming China, flew a C-47 airplane that carried troops and supplies for the U.S. and Chinese troops fighting the Japanese Forces.

Lt. Gayler served his tour of duty in China from November, 1944, to December, 1945. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Air Medals and several Unit Citations. He was honorably discharged from the military in February, 1946. George finished his Bachelor of Arts Degree at Western Illinois University and continued his higher education at Indiana University where he earned his Master's Degree and his Doctorate of Philosophy Degree in 1949. The Dr. George Gayler family moved to Missouri in 1949 where George became a professor of history at Northwest Missouri State Teachers College, Maryville, Missouri. Professor Gayler retired from Northwest Missouri State University in 1987 after 38 years of dedicated service.

George has remained active in the community as a member of the Men's Forum, Maryville Host Lion's Club (served as club historian for 45 years), Community Retired Teachers, Historical Society Museum and the Maryville Post 100 American Legion. He and Barbara have two children, Dr. Richard Gayler and a daughter, Janet (deceased 1999). They have three grandchildren (one of whom is a U.S. Marine Major) and six great grandchildren.

The members of the Nodaway Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution are proud to nominate George R. Gayler as Patriot of the Month. The Gayler family deserves our congratulations, and we thank them for their dedicated service to the U.S. military, the university, and to the community.