

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Proudly spotlights our May, 2011
Patriot of the Month



Lois Algren Stitch

Sponsored by:

**St. Louis-Jefferson
Chapter
St. Louis, Missouri**



Lois Eileen Algren Stitch was born in Red Oak and raised in Manilla, Iowa. She attended Polk County, Iowa's three-year nursing program after high school, graduating in September 1951. She was inspired by the World War II movies about "the noble nurses" to become a nurse. Lois stated, "This is where I wanted to be." She enlisted in the United States Air Force shortly after graduation because she wanted to "take care of soldiers." Lois was employed by the Polk County Hospital until she received her commission as a 2nd Lieutenant on April 12, 1952. She attended Officer Indoctrination School in Montgomery, Alabama. Her first assignment was at Dow Air Force Base, Bangor, Maine in early June 1952.

In early October 1952, Lois received orders for a new assignment at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Anchorage, Alaska. Lois travelled to San Francisco to join her new unit before flying to Anchorage and she remembers with fondness the Friday night before the departure she "met a handsome young Lieutenant," who was also shipping out to Elmendorf Air Force Base. Four weeks later, she and Morton Stitch, that "handsome young Lieutenant" were married by the last Federal judge in the Alaska Territory before statehood.

During her assignment at Elmendorf, Lois' job allowed her "to take care of soldiers," the first and foremost reason for her enlistment. She was pleased to serve in a ward where she was doing exactly what she had come to do. Although she did not work with wounded soldiers, she says there were many accidents at the base requiring hospitalization of the injured personnel. The daily challenges faced by the Alaskan winter season combined to make Lois' daily routine at the hospital anything but routine. She remembers one time when a camp bus was delayed for fifteen minutes while a moose stood firmly in the middle of the road and refused to move!

Lois was discharged on June 19, 1953, as at that time, women were required to be separated from the service if they became pregnant. In October 1953, Lois and Morton travelled to Brooklyn, New York, his enlistment site, where he was discharged. Their first child was born in New York shortly after Morton's discharge.

Living on Long Island for nine years, all of the couple's four children were born in New York. In 1961, Morton, an electrical engineer, accepted a position with McDonnell Aircraft and the family moved to St. Louis, Missouri. Lois was happy to be a stay-at-home mother, involved with the Boy and Girl Scouts of America. She has been a member of the St. Louis-Jefferson Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution since 1999. Morton and Lois were happily married for fifty-five years before he passed away in 2008.

In 2010, she travelled to Washington DC to the Women in Military Service Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery, which includes the names of both Lois and her United States Marine Corps sister. This was a very proud moment for her! A few weeks later, on a Veterans Day trip to a local restaurant, Lois found out that she can still fit into her uniform, "With the zipper half up!" Lois is a patriot we can all take pride in.