

**Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Proudly Honors**



Patriot of the Month

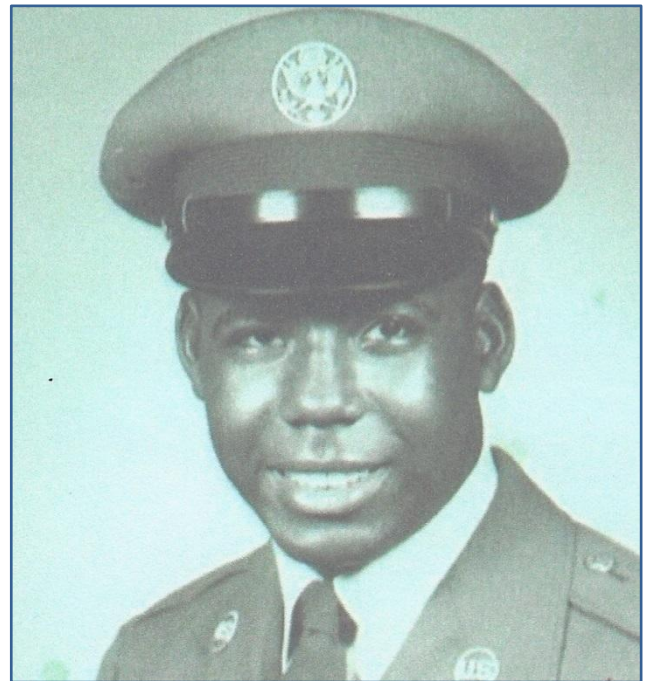
May 2018



Shelton Ponder

United States Air Force

Sponsored by:
**Alexander Doniphan
Chapter**



Shelton is a veteran of the United States Air Force who served from April, 1962, until April, 1966. Prior to his enlistment, Shelton attended Bethany College but left to do what his conscience dictated. He tried to follow his hero and older brother, William, in the United States Marine Corps. Because of an ankle injury, the Marine Corps turned Shelton down, but his test scores caused the recruiter to take him to the Air Force recruiter, who on that day signed Shelton up to a four year enlistment. Shelton defined his enlistment as 'my great social experiment' during the myriad of events of the 1960's. Armed with the most remarkable attributes of humanity, Shelton began his commitment to serve his family, his country, and with an abiding faith that transcended anything not of a positive entity.

After finishing basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas, Shelton was one of six airmen selected (as a 'rope') to be in charge for other airmen from all over America. In all situations of great deliberation Shelton would mentally travel back to Liberty for 'centering' and went beyond himself to tender his best solutions regardless of the other person(s) background. He won over the majority of the airmen by being determined as friendly, fair, and focused on the mission of the United States Air Force.

Shelton was stationed at Kessler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, during the Civil Rights Movement, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and much civil unrest in that area. After finishing his course as a Morse Intercept Operator, he was assigned to Elmendorf Air Force Base, Anchorage, Alaska, in the 6981st Security Service. Shelton was the only African American out of 106 personnel assigned to this station at the time he served but he did so with dignity and stated that he never let the prejudices of some that he served with affect him. He was raised to believe what others thought and said

negatively was their problem and he kept his attention focused on how he could continue to learn and serve his country to the best of his abilities.

Shelton was later assigned to Detachment 13, 11th Radar Bomb Squadron in Wilder, Idaho, where high altitude bombers were scored during the progression of the Vietnam War. He did Airmen Progress Reports for officers and enlisted men, written communications to headquarters, and any other administrative duties required for the Detachment. The assignment required basic civility mannerisms that always proved to be of value regardless of the climate. His slogan: Focus, Concentrate, Execute! Nothing has served Shelton greater than his commitment to serve on the many entities in the neighborhood, greater community, and America-at-large.

After his military service, Shelton traveled the country, worked various jobs, became active in human rights movements, but as a writer, he pursued the interest in writing papers, forming writing groups, motivational speaking, teaching, participating in civic matters. While he is very humble in speaking of his own accomplishments, it was noticed that he had received much praise for his community involvement and had a plaque on his wall where he was awarded "The Liberty, Missouri, Martin Luther King Jr. Outstanding Public Service Award," on "January 21, 2013." After completion of his first book of poetry, "Sand Script" several years ago, the book is now due to be published this spring. Also, another book, "Write Out Of My Heart" is due out later this year. As a playwright, he has written and portrayed an educator, "Mr. Gantt, Modified" on stage for thirty years. He currently is vision impaired but doesn't let that slow him down. One thing that has never left Shelton is an old quote from his ancestors who have been in Clay County, Missouri, for 200 years: "Be a credit to your race." He has extended that to be "the human race," where we all begin and end. It is what we do along the way that will dictate the ultimate sum. He chose POSITIVE.

Alexander Doniphan Chapter Daughters are very proud to recognize and honor Shelton E. Ponder as Patriot of the Month for his very patriotic and dedicated service to our great nation.