

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution Proudly Honors



Patriot of the Month

October 2021

Jack Hamlin

United States Coast Guard



Sponsored by:
Rachel Donelson
Chapter

After graduating from Springfield (now Central) High School, Jack Hamlin enrolled at Drury College (now University). Around the same time, he was recruited to play for the New York Yankees farm club in Joplin. The next summer, he played in the semi-pro Ban Johnson League out of Manhattan, KS.

Then came Pearl Harbor. Jack tried to enlist in the Naval Air Corps, but it was discovered that he had an enlarged heart, due to having had rheumatic fever, and he was disqualified. Instead, he joined the U.S. Coast Guard on Feb. 4, 1942. Jack was sent to New Orleans, LA, for training, then on to Boston, MA, New York, and Newport, RI. His rank was Boatswain's Mate First Class. Sixty- seven years later, he was made Chief Boatswain.



In June 1944, the Coast Guard became part of the invasion of Normandy. But the Coast Guard was not there to fight. Its job was to rescue soldiers. Though Jack had never helped anyone from the water before that day, he and other members of the Coast Guard, tied to their small cutters with a flotation device, jumped into the water and pulled wounded soldiers from the 48-degree water. The men on his cutter saved about 70 soldiers that day. Collectively, the 60 Coast Guard cutters, named Rescue Flotilla One, saved 1,486 soldiers and one British nurse.

The next day, June 7, Jack was credited with shooting down a German fighter plane that was strafing American soldiers on Utah Beach.

Jack received many citations, medals, and awards, including the Bronze Star.

Jack left the service in 1945 and returned to the states. He spent some time at Cumberland University, where he played football. He then returned to Missouri and enrolled at the University of Missouri to study law. Jack's father, grandfather, and many members of his family were lawyers. He graduated from law school, then flunked the bar exam. In 1951, he was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives. Then he decided to go into insurance. He started his own agency in 1952 and operated it independently for 40 years.

Jack continued to play baseball. He played a season in Nebraska and then signed with the Springfield Generals, playing with the likes of Whitey Herzog and Jerry Lumpe. He met his future wife

after a ball game one evening. He and Sis were married for 60 years, had three children, six grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Later, he would manage teams, serve on the Springfield Park Board, chair the local Chamber of Commerce athletic committee, and chair the National Softball Tournament Committee.

In 1971, he was appointed the deputy collector of revenue at the Missouri Department of Revenue; appointed to the Springfield Planning Commission in 1973 and in 1977, was part of Springfield's charter revision committee.

Jack has returned to France several times. He is always treated like a hero there. In 1994, he was one of 75 American troops invited to have dinner with the Queen of England in commemoration of D-Day's 50th anniversary. On his 2014 trip to France, he was awarded the French Legion of Honor.

Jack, a native of Springfield, will celebrate his 100th birthday in a few weeks.

Rachel Donelson Daughters are honored and are proud to honor and recognize Jack Hamlin as Patriot of the Month for his patriotism and invaluable service to our great nation.