

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

March 2023



Dorman Frazier

United States Marine Corps

Sponsored by:
Ozark Spring Chapter, NSDAR

Born and raised in Texas, Dorman Frazier grew up with a family and in a community that always wanted to help people. He was 16 years old when Pearl Harbor was bombed, and at that time he knew his involvement in World War II was coming. He didn't like the thought, but embraced it, feeling it was his duty to serve his country.



He enlisted in the Marine Corps on August 21, 1943, and completed his basic training at Mare Island in California. He chose the Marines because he had always wanted to be a Marine. He recalled a particular incident which occurred during his basic training. He was told to get in the swimming pool in his dungarees and instructed to take his pants off to make a life jacket. He prefaced the story by stating that if he had known in advance what would happen because of his success in doing this, he might not have done so well. Being one of the first to finish, he was told, "You're going to Sea School." When he finished Sea School he was sent to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

In Hawaii, he was assigned to serve on the USS Indiana, which was a part of Task Force 58 (the long-range naval striking arm of the US Pacific Fleet during the offensive against Japan). He described the Indiana as an enormous ship. As a young man, he had no idea that the United States could build something that big. The USS Indiana had two major roles in the war: 1) to provide naval gunfire for amphibious assaults; and 2) to provide anti-aircraft defense for the Carrier Task Force. During his almost 18 months aboard, Dorman participated in several battles (some bearing names of historic significance), sometimes witnessing things that no one should ever have to see.

The Marines many times were called on for the tough jobs, as they were well known for discipline, following regulations and their responsible handling of guard duty. If there was a tough job to be done, the captain would often look toward the Marines. Among Dorman's duties, he was trained to help shoot a 20mm gun—a gun which took three men working in synchronized fashion to effectively operate. The three responsibilities were: loading new shells, aiming/firing the weapon, and unloading the spent shells. Dorman specialized in the loading.

The USS Indiana participated in several engagements, including but definitely not limited to the following: the bombing of Ponape in the Caroline Islands; the bombing of Saipan; and the Battle of the Philippine Sea. During these attacks, they shot down several Japanese aircraft and had narrow misses from torpedoes—routinely coming under attack by Kamikaze planes (some flying low enough that Dorman could recognize the nationality of the pilots and literally see the whites

of their eyes). In January of 1945, they were sent to bomb Iwo Jima; and in July and August they sailed to Honshu, Japan, where they bombed coastal targets, followed by bombing ironworks at Kamaishi.

Dorman witnessed (and experienced) two typhoons and the devastation they produced. During one of the typhoons, he witnessed a destroyer being twisted and then torn apart in two separate pieces. Incredibly, each "piece" remained watertight and afloat. He describes passing other ships only to have them disappear and reappear, as the waves were like mountains. He was still at sea when he heard of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He felt that at that point the war was nearing its end and hoped he would safely return home.

Dorman was discharged on November 8, 1945, after which he returned home to Texas. "War is not a normal way to live," he stated. He was trained to kill, but, in his words, "That just isn't right." It took time for him to adjust after he was discharged. On April 9, 1948, Dorman married Cletta Belle Bates, of whom he stated, "It took a great partner to help me adjust to normal living." As of the date of this interview, they had been married for almost 75 years.

Ozark Spring Daughters are proud to honor and recognize Dorman E. Frazier as Patriot of the Month for his very patriotic and dedicated service to our great nation.