

MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



Proudly Honors
PATRIOT OF THE MONTH
NOVEMBER 2024



ELLEN O'COIN
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APRIL 1965 – JUNE 1967
AIRMAN SECOND CLASS (E3)

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Saint Charles Chapter, NSDAR



Ellen grew up sheltered in the small farm community of Maitland in northwest Missouri. She was the oldest of 5 brothers and sisters. There were 13 in her high school graduating class. She did not feel that there was a future where she was. She did not want to marry a farmer and live that life. She wanted an adventure. She wanted to spread her wings and fly.

She joined the Air Force on a lark. Ellen and two girlfriends went to St. Joseph, Missouri, and walked past the recruiter's office. They decided one would go talk with the Navy, one with the Army and she would talk to the Air Force. She came out signed up and the other 2 came out and had declined. She worked as a keypunch operator in a supply squadron and was the assistant to the Major on base. She hoped to see the world but recalls she really only saw North Detroit.

There are two things she is most proud of during her time in service. First, once she went on a 'hop' to Mexico in a plane nicknamed a 'flying box car' (which she thinks was a C-130.) The pilot came out and asked if anyone wanted to fly the plane and her hand went up. The instructions were "Keep this horizon line straight" (on the instrument panel). She said she lasted about 10 seconds. Second, Ellen met her husband at Selfridge Air Force Base (AFB) where he was stationed. It is now an Air National Guard Base. She visited the base later and was surprised that everything looked so much smaller than she remembered.

Ellen has been married for 57 years and has two children. She has lived in Omaha, Des Moines, Chicago, St. Louis, and now Lake St. Louis. She worked as a key punch operator and retired from Mastercard.