

MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



Proudly Honors
**PATRIOT OF THE MONTH
OCTOBER 2025**

DOUGLAS L. GIFFORD
UNITED STATES ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
1985 – 2013

Sponsored by: Troy Chapter, NSDAR



Douglas L. Gifford was interviewed at the Old Jail Museum, preserved by the Lincoln County Historical Society, Troy, Missouri, on September 15, 2025. He was born to two teachers, Jerald and Patricia (Freese) Gifford, and is the oldest of four children. He was attending Southwest Missouri State University, married with one child, when he walked into a recruiter's office and joined the Army National Guard. He chose the Army National Guard because it offered the most opportunities and provided adventure and financial benefits. Before enlisting, he felt unfocused, lethargic, and in a dead end. He attended basic training at Fort Leonard Wood and completed Officer Candidate School in 1988, and was commissioned on July 8, 1989. The worst part of military life was the first day of Basic Training. He will never forget meeting the drill sergeants for the first time, the drill sergeants yelling, and being loaded onto cattle cars. The hardest part of the military was Officer Candidate School. Candidates are evaluated individually from day one, looking for leadership skills.

He was deployed in October 2001 to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, arriving by plane, landing in Macedonia. He commanded a Military Police Unit. The National Guard units provided peacekeeping and stability as a part of NATO's K FOR (Kosovo Force). The biggest danger in Kosovo for his unit was the bad roads and danger of being attack while driving in Humvees. He did well and, after returning stateside in June 2002, was asked by commanders what new assignment he was interested in being appointed. Military History was the response.

In October 2002, he was appointed commander of 135th Military History Detachment unit. The 135th Military History Detachment was deployed to Iraq in February 2003. Moving into Iraq, his unit was based at LSA Anaconda, Balad, Iraq, tasked with interviewing and collecting documents to record the ground war in Iraq. The recorded documents of 3rd Military History group were sent to the Center of Military History in Washington, D.C. Doug was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for commanding a prototype Military History from his service in Iraq. Iraq had nicer roads, but people were trying to kill you all the time. He returned stateside in September 2003. He remembers the day he was to depart he was to board a C1-30 plane. The departure was delayed half an hour for a memorial service for a deceased armed serviceman returning home on the same plane. Seeing a large plane sitting on the tarmac for a long time, enemy forces started a mortar attack on the base. The plane was able to depart safely.

In February 2008, Doug was deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, as Provost Marshal for the 110th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (KFOR 10). Douglas received the Bronze Star for his service

in Kosovo. Doug returned from his deployment in April 2009.

Doug had many different appointments during his years of service, while not on active duty, including two years as an OCS Senior instructor. He requested a staff ride assignment at Pilot Knob/ A staff ride is a three phase educational exercise where military personnel study a historical military campaign or battle to learn lessons applicable to contemporary military operations, leadership, and decision-making. This experience led to a writing career, he authored the following titles, Where Devotion and Value Meet, The Battle of Pilot Knob, Staff Ride and Battlefield Tour Guide, Shiloh Battlefield Tour Guide, The First Day April 6, 1862, Pea Ridge, Battlefield Tour Guide and Military Staff Ride.

Doug names two men that stand out as leaders in his military life. Major North Charles was a wonderful example and a smart, good man. Colonel David Lewis, his Executive Officer, was a mentor and believed in Major Gifford. His Army National Guard career has had many, many rewards, benefits, and opportunities. He was able to witness and be a part of making history.

He advises anyone to join the National Guard and put in 20 years.

