

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Proudly "Spotlights" our October 2010
Patriot of the Month



**Grover C.
Mullins**

Sponsored by:

**Henry County
Chapter
Windsor, Missouri**



Grover C. Mullins was born July 31, 1920 in Houstonia, Missouri. At the age of 17 he moved to Windsor, Missouri where he still resides. To aid his country during World War II, Grover joined the Army Air Force at the age of 22. From June 1942 to October 1945, Technical Sergeant Mullins was assigned to the 303rd Bomb Group, 358th Squadron. He arrived at the 8th Air Force Base in England in August of 1943.

Grover's 8th mission was on November 26, 1943, a wintry day, 67° below zero when the nose section of his aircraft was shot off. For his gallant service to save the airplane and the lives of the remaining crew, Grover was awarded the Silver Star, the nation's third highest award. His citation, in part, reads: "During the bombing run, his aircraft was subjected to fierce frontal attacks by enemy fighters. A cannon shell shattered the plexi-glass nose of the plane, killing the navigator, seriously wounding the bombardier and knocking out the oxygen supply lines on the right side of the aircraft. Sergeant Mullins quickly removed the wounded bombardier from the nose compartment and after administering first aid to him, secured emergency supplies of oxygen for his comrades who were without oxygen and

furnished them with additional ammunition. Having accomplished this, he released the bomb load then made his way to the cockpit. Upon finding the co-pilot unconscious, he revived him, thus enabling him to assist the pilot in handling the crippled bomber. In addition to performing these self assigned tasks, Sergeant Mullins found time to man his guns and assist in warding off repeated attacks.” Grover stated that this was one of his worst missions.

On Grover’s 13th mission, January 11, 1944, he and his crew were shot down and taken prisoner by German forces. He was 23 years of age. He spent the next 16 months in Stalag-XVII-B, Krems, Austria. There were between 20,000 and 30,000 American, Italian, Russian, French and English soldiers in the camp. The camp was terrible, with no heat during winter and edible food hard to find. Breakfast consisted of black bread, which was brought into camp in a wagon pulled by team of horses. The Germans would take a loaf and cut off a piece about 2 inches square for each prisoner. Grover said it was hard and tasted about like a piece of wood. The noon meal was watered soup and there was no evening meal. Water ran for only 30 minutes each day from randomly placed spouts throughout the camp. Prisoners were deloused in hot showers once a month. Toilets were outdoor privies. Each barrack held 300 to 400 soldiers with eight people per bed. The beds were double in length, double in height and placed only four feet apart.

Prisoners of War received a Red Cross care package once a month minus cigarettes and sugar, which the German had removed. The Prisoners of War were allowed to mail one postcard to their family each month. During Grover’s 16 months of confinement, Grover’s family received very few pieces of V-mail. Three feet deep trenches were dug around the camp. Both Axis and Allied forces bombed the prison; however the Allied forces did not do it intentionally.

In March 1945, Grover went on the last “Death March”. Grover and his fellow soldiers were liberated in France on May 3, 1945. They were taken to the nearest seaport where they set sail for home and arrived two weeks later.

Grover’s medals include:

- Presidential Unit Citation
- Good Conduct
- Legion of Merit
- American Campaign
- Air Medal

- **Prisoner of War Medal**
- **World War II Victory Medal**
- **Purple Heart**
- **Silver Star**

Grover and his wife, Joan, have two sons and three grandchildren. He is owner and operator of an appliance store. Grover is a life member of the American Legion, American Veterans, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Purple Heart Association, and American Ex-Prisoner of War Organization. He is also a member of the Moose Lodge, Odd Fellows Lodge, Stalag 17B, and a charter member of both the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana and the World War II Memorial, Washington, DC.

Grover is proud to be honored at the Brick on Brick Walks at the World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, in Clinton Square, Clinton, Missouri and at the Windsor Museum, Windsor, Missouri.