



Tipton County Museum,
Veterans Memorial & Nature Center

Veteran of the Month For June, 2018

Grady William Turnbow, Jr.

Born on July 6, 1932, Grady Turnbow enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserves in Jackson, Tennessee at the age of 17 and transitioned to the regular Navy at age 18. In May of 1950 he attended boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois. His training was in aviation maintenance and his future jobs would include Aircraft Organizational Maintenance Officer, Technical Instructor, Aircraft Organizational Maintenance/Material Control Officer, Ground School Instructor, and Aircraft Maintenance Quality Control Officer. He worked his way through all the enlisted and warrant officer ranks as traveled the world, seeing places like Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Thailand; Japan; and Vietnam. Unfortunately his time in Vietnam and Thailand resulted in him being exposed to Agent Orange for 14 months, leading to multiple health issues later in life. After 25 1/2 years of service, Grady retired from the Navy as a Chief Warrant Officer 4 (CWO4) on July 1, 1980. He enjoyed his time on active duty and is grateful and honored to have served his country. For his service to our country he earned numerous medals including the Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation (Civil Actions Medal, 1st Class Color w/ Palm), Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation (Gallantry Cross Medal Color w/ Palm), Meritorious Unit Commendation (2nd Award), Navy Unit Commendation, Award for Patriotic Service, National Defense Service Medal (2 Awards), Good Conduct Medal (Five Awards), Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, and Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

Grady met his wife, Mable Ruth Garrison, while they were in high school. They knew early on they would get married and raise a family; and that is just what they did, marrying in 1954. Grady and Mable were partners in every sense of the word, both during his long and fruitful Navy career and after. Following his retirement, he spent several years as the maintenance man for her flourishing beauty shop in Millington. What they did together wasn't important; simply being together was what mattered – family was everything. They have two daughters, Deborah Wallace of Memphis and Sherrie Denise Holland of Dyersburg. Sadly Mable passed away as a result of cancer on August 20, 2014. They had been married 59 years, 6 months and 11 days. Grady is blessed with three grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren with one on the way, and several step grandchildren. Grady attends church services at the Chapel onboard Naval Support Activity Mid-South in Millington and is a member of the Military Officers Association of America. Navy Chaplain David Mowbray nominated Grady for Veteran of the Month.