



Joseph H. Moore, 89, of Great Falls, a decorated Army veteran and longtime Fort Benton community leader, died of natural causes recently at Peace Hospice, Great Falls, Montana. He was buried with military honors in Riverside Cemetery.

Joe was born May 4, 1920, to Harry and Lucy Moore in Minneota, where he attended country school through eighth grade in Rural District 77, and graduated from Minneota High School in 1938.

Joe started working in banking at the Farmers & Merchants State Bank in Minneota in 1940, after working one year for Land of Lakes Creamery.

His banking career was interrupted by World War II. During World War II, Moore served in the European Theater in the medics with the 3rd Armored Division, 83rd Armored Reconnaissance.

He landed at Omaha Beach on D-Day +3, and was involved in the Battle of the Bulge.

He was wounded twice during the war and awarded the Bronze Star for Heroic Achievement, two Purple Heart medals for wounds received in action and the Belgium Fourragere, and attained the rank of captain by battlefield promotion.

In 1945, while in the hospital at Hereford, England, he met Mary Catherine Kelly, an Army nurse from Miles City, Mont. They were married in Miles City on May 27, 1947.

In 1951, he was transferred from Farmers & Merchants State Bank in Minneota to Chouteau County State Bank in Fort Benton, Mont., which became known as First State Bank, where he spent the rest of his banking career.

He became president in 1964 and, after a 42-year banking career, retired in 1982. Moore was a longtime community banker who believed in the personal touch of relationship banking, visiting his customers and not working the normal banking hours.

He was active in the Fort Benton community as a member of the Immaculate Conception Parish, serving on the parish council and the finance board. He was also a member of the Third and Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus for more than 50 years, also having served as grand knight, faithful navigator and treasurer of local council for 25 of those years. He also was treasurer of the drive for the new hospital in 1954 and 1955, and served on the hospital advisory board for the Sisters of Charities and the county hospital board.

He was a member of the American Legion and VFW, and also past commander of both. He served on the board of directors for Chouteau County Veterans Memorial, was past president and secretary of the Fort Benton Kiwanis Club, and a member of many state service associations.

Moore moved to Great Falls in 1994. He enjoyed gardening, tending to flowers, hunting, fishing, cooking and playing the "concertina accordion" when offered the chance. Known as "Grandpa Joe" to many, he was a man of his word with a firm handshake, and was always eager for stories and conversation.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary, in 1992; an infant son, William Joseph, in 1952; a son-in-law, Jim Farrell; his parents, Harry and Lucy; one brother, Bernard; and longtime Fort Benton family friends, Dixie and Rudy Lusin.

Surviving are his children, Kelly Moore of Helena, Theresa (Lyman) Fellows of Bozeman, Mont., Mary Jo (Steve) Mattocks of Mesquite, Nev., and Bill (Julie) Moore of Plano, Texas; four grandchildren, Stephanie Mattocks, Brian Mattocks, Cody Moore and Kayla Moore; two step-grandchildren, Lana Fellows and Lisa Shaw; four great-grandchildren; four brothers and one sister; numerous nieces and nephews, all in Minnesota; and the Lusin sons, Gary, Dennis and Randy, and their families.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Historic Restoration of the Old Church, Web site www.oldimmaculateconception.net; P.O. Box 849, Fort Benton, MT; Peace Hospice, 2600 15th Ave. S., Great Falls, MT 59405; or a charity of your choice.