



Earl Hall Bradford quietly passed away May 21, 2010, after a sudden heart attack, joining the many beloved family members and friends preceding him to Heaven. He was 87 years old at the time of his passing.

Earl was born Nov. 17, 1922, in Laurel, to Charles Dickens Bradford and Margaret Mary (Hall) Bradford. Earl had an older brother, Robert Lloyd Bradford (Louise) and a treasured aunt and uncle, Ray and Lillian Gaab, of Missoula.

Earl married the love of his life, Alice Montana (Johnson) Bradford, "Sweet Lovable Alice," June 16, 1948. They were married on "The Bride and Groom Show," a radio program in Los Angeles,

Calif., because they had such an interesting courtship. They have lived in Bozeman ever since.

Earl is survived by his wife, Alice; four children, Gini, Bob, Jim and Sari; 10 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren, with two more on the way. He had six nieces and nephews that were always deeply loved. Earl was a fabulous husband and wonderful father. He was a role model, not only for his own children, but for countless young men and women who still lovingly refer to him as Uncle Earl.

Earl attended school in Laurel, Glasgow and Bozeman, where he graduated from Gallatin County High School in 1942. He entered Montana State College and joined the U.S. Air Force during his sophomore year. He was stationed in Italy, France and Germany as a P47 pilot. He attained the rank of captain and was a member of the Caterpillar Club from bailing out of his damaged fighter aircraft. Upon his honorable discharge from the Air Force, Earl returned to MSC, and graduated in 1949 as a mechanical engineer.

Earl was the transportation manager at the Canyon Hotel in Yellowstone National Park, worked at the Sport Shop Exclusive Menswear, Wagner's Menswear and retired from Samsonite Luggage Corporation after 26 years of service. He also worked at Ressler Motors as a driver.

He dedicated his life first to his family, then to the community he loved, Bozeman, and to service to others. He was active in the Lamda Chi Alpha Fraternity, Les Bouffons, Jaycees and Noon Optimists Club. He was a charter member of the Bozeman Breakfast Optimist Club, an avid Bobcat Booster, a Paul Harris Fellow, and a member of the Mayflower Descendants. The Optimist Park and picnic area is dedicated in part to Earl for his driving force in creating a wonderful escape for people to enjoy.

Earl will be cremated. A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday, May 25, at First Methodist Church on Willson Avenue.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in Earl's name to the American Diabetes Association or to the maintenance of the Optimist Park through the Bozeman Breakfast Optimist Club.

Earl will be missed by family, friends and the community.