

Obituary

Died: Thursday, March 17, 2011

Stevensville- Joseph (Joe) S. Gates, 89, of Stevensville, surrounded by his loving family passed away March 17, 2011 of

natural causes.

Joe was born Dec. 31, 1921 to Edward and Mary Gates of Opportunity the 6th of 7 children. He attended Beaver Dam and St.

Peter's School in Opportunity and Anaconda, MT. He worked at Anaconda Mining Company in the Zinc Dept. until he enlisted

in the Air Force Jan. 1942. He was assigned to Cherry Point, NC. and immediately transferred to Miami, Florida. His first

assignment was as a radio operator. He then graduated with high honors in marksmanship at Gunnery School in Panama City,

FL. and became Sergeant. He was stationed out of Miami where he was a Radio Operator Mechanic Gunner. He flew routes to

Cuba, Gulf of Mexico and the Carribean, under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Navy. Under the direct orders from President

Franklin Roosevelt and General "Hap" Arnold he flew secret missions to Brazil, Amazons, the Ascension Islands and W.

Africa searching for enemy subs. He returned to the states and was assigned to Langley Field, VA where he became the first

radio instructor. He was discharged Nov. 15, 1945.

Joe moved to the Bitterroot Valley in 1946 where he became a House Moving Contractor.

He married Lois Scalf Aug. 27, 1949. They made their home in their Three Mile Area farm in May of 1955 where they raised

their four children and a variety of animals "pets".

Joe was involved with the Cub Scouts, St. Mary's Choir, Knight's of Columbus and American Legion Post 94. He was most

proud of the restoration work he did on the Old St. Mary's Mission and Pharmacy. He was also one of the men to help build the

first alter on St. Mary's Peak.

One of his favorite things to do was to take a Sunday drive, a lot of them through the valley and show off all the houses he had

moved. He enjoyed the farm life. He loved all animals especially his pigs, horses and dogs. Above all else, Joe loved his

family and he always loved to visit.

He was preceded in death by his parents Ed and Mary; Brothers, George, Ted, John, and Donald sisters, May and Elaine; and

great friend, Reggie Bush.

He is survived by His Wife of 61 years, Lois; sons, J. Samuel and wife Pattie and James and wife Janet; daughters Teresa and

husband Bob and Christine and husband Rick; and four precious grandchildren, Katie, Amanda, Lizzie and Robbie.

Visitation will be held on Monday, March 21, 2011 from 4:30 - 7:00 pm at St. Mary's Catholic Church with Vigil Services

following at 7:00 pm. A Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday, March 22 at 10:30 a.m. at the church with burial to

follow in St. Mary's Cemetery. There will be a reception following the committal services at the church parish center.

The family would like to thank all those whom cared for Joe; Three Mile Emergency Response Team, Dr Crews and crew, and

Community Medical Center.

In lieu of flowers the family suggests that memorials be made to the Fox Hollow Animal Project, 155 Fox Hollow, Hamilton,

MT 59840 or to St. Mary's Mission in Stevensville, MT.

Condolences may be left for the family at www.whitesittfuneralhome.com.

Service Summary

- *Service details not available* -