



James Gerald Collins

JAN 6, 1948 - SEP 28, 2020



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Jerry Collins passed away surrounded by loved ones on Monday, September 28, 2020. He is survived by his son, Brad, and daughter-in-law, Jody, of Boulder, Colorado. He is also survived by his four grandchildren—Zachary, Forrest, Neil and Jane—and two great-grandchildren, all residing in Colorado. He was preceded in death by his wife Edna of 56 years, a second wife, Betty, his sister, Thelma of Corvallis, Oregon and his eldest son Courtney of Ukiah, California.

Jerry was born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah amidst the Great Depression where he learned the value of hard work, determination, and grit. He met the love of his life and eventual wife, Edna, in elementary school. In his early teen years, he saved his paper route money to buy a bicycle so he could ride across town to visit her. In the early 1940's, when the war broke out, Jerry worked in a Remington Arms plant outside of Salt Lake City until his entire senior class was drafted into the US Army.

Prior to reporting to duty, Jerry and Edna were married in the Great Mormon temple in Salt Lake City. Jerry spent the next two years training as a combat engineer and paratrooper before being sent to London. During his time in England, and when he wasn't teaching hand-to-hand combat, Jerry fell in love with theatre, routinely seeing shows whenever his duties were complete.

Jerry's first combat experience came on June 6, 1944, when he and the rest of the 101st Airborne Division parachuted into Normandy behind enemy lines as part of the D-Day invasion. Jerry would later go on to participate in, and narrowly survive, the infamous Battle of the Bulge. After eight months of war, Jerry was severely injured, which earned him a trip home and an honorable discharge.

After the war, he and Edna were reunited and immediately started a family. They welcomed Court into the world in 1946 and Brad in 1948. Both Jerry and Edna attended the University of Utah on the GI Bill, where Jerry earned his degree in economics. Edna became an elementary school teacher. Before getting his degree, Jerry started working at the new Salt Lake Refinery in



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Utah. He spent the next 38 years working his way up the ladder of the company that would become Chevron.

Jerry spent a lifetime in human resources. He was elected first president of the workers union at the refinery and represented them in contract negotiations at the plant. Later in his career, he would sit at that negotiation representing the company. His work standardizing employee relations was key to Chevron's growth in the 1960's, as was his decade-long leadership of the Office of Executive Development, which developed management at all levels of Chevron from the 1970s to the early 2000's.

Chevron brought Jerry to San Francisco in 1954, and apart from a two-year stint in Denver, Colorado, he spent the next 66 years on the peninsula in San Mateo county. Jerry had a vibrant social life and loved spending time with his friends whenever possible. He was a charter member of Sharon Heights Golf and Country club, where he served as President in 1978. He also presided over a dance club of 55 couples in the 1960's and 70's. Dancing and golfing were the two passions that drew Jerry and Edna together, and they took those passions with them as they traveled the world during their retirement years. Among Jerry's favorite memories were trips back to London with Edna, to walk the streets he traveled in his youth, visiting the theatres and exploring the country's many golf courses.

After Edna's passing, and in his final years, Jerry found comfort from the loneliness with the companionship of Betty and, later, the support of his in-home caretakers. A team of gals that kept Jerry going, his family will be eternally grateful for their loving care and support up to his last moments.

Under their care, Jerry was able to dictate his Memoirs, KEEPING ON: A memoir by Jerry Collins, Ninety-Six and Still on the Move.

Jerry will be remembered as a loving and devoted husband, a strong and supportive father and grandfather, a loyal friend, and an all-around tough SOB.

A memorial service to celebrate Jerry's life will be held on Monday, October 5, 2020 at Sky Lawn Funeral Home and Cemetery on Highway 92. A viewing will begin at 1:30 p.m., followed by a short graveside service at 2 p.m.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring James by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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