



Ross W Sterling Sr.

August 3, 1924 - August 4, 2017

Pastor Ross Sterling

August 3, 1924 Ross made his arrival to Sherman and Adeline (Pittman) Sterling in Latah, Washington and 93 years and one day later he made his last stop in Moses Lake, WA on his way to his final reunion in heaven with the many loved ones who have gone before. Ross like many of the “greatest generation” made numerous whistle stops along the way as they defended the freedom we know.

During his growing up years he followed his father’s career as a school superintendent, living in Kettle Falls, Coulee City (before the dam), Spokane and eventually ending up at his Grandparent Sterling’s farm in Chehalis, Washington.

During their travels, he was joined in the family by his sisters, Glenna Kendall and Francis Sterling (both of Seattle) and Isabell Lege (Angleton, Texas). He attended Napavine High School where the Principal took him under his wing and taught him how to build his own crystal radio set and how to transmit Morse International code. So, began one of the passions of his life... Radio Operator.

December 7, 1941, he was sitting in his grandfather’s home as a 17-year-old listening to President Roosevelt share his famous radio message alerting the nation to the events at Pearl Harbor. So, Ross’s life, like many Americans would be dramatically changed. Ross was part of the first 18-year-old draft. He was assigned to the newly formed 75th Infantry Division Headquarters

Company eventually ending up in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey at the signal school. He was so proficient at code he was also taught Japanese Code so he could act as an intercept operator.

While in signal school in New Jersey he would take advantage of weekend leave to go up to New York City. While on one of his weekend ventures at a skating rink he met a beautiful Irish lass named Rose Carol. They would continue corresponding throughout his wartime assignments.

Soon after graduation from signal school Ross boarded the troopship General A.E. Anderson and after a stop in Australia they finally arrive at Bombay, India. After a long ride in wooden troop train they arrived in Calcutta, India where they boarded airplanes and were flown into Myitkyina, Burma. He was introduced there to his wartime companion, a large black mule. He learned to load his radios on a Phillips pack saddle and truly love the mule. Ross often went hungry given the logistics of moving and supplying the 124th Cavalry from the air but he made sure his mule never did. The job of the MARS task force was to do the impossible and establish, open and build what became known as the Burma Road. The enemy had thought the task impossible but Ross's group of 5,000 American soldiers accomplished it while taking significant casualties. They would serve out the balance of the war in that theater and Ross would be relocated to China at the war's end where he was part of the occupation force in Shanghai, China. He learned to speak Chinese fluently while in Shanghai and made many friends among his national counterparts. Eventually Ross would return to stateside and was released from active Army service in Fort Lewis, WA. During the war as he was able Ross continued to correspond with Rose Carol of New York City. Now he was back home it was important to follow up with getting to know her better. He traveled across the country to pursue her and they were married in 1946. Rose and Ross returned to Washington State of course via train and they set up housekeeping in Olympia. Their daughter Jeanne Marie was born after a couple of years. Ross enlisted in the Navy Reserve for some extra income and it gave him a great chance to continue with one of his many skills as a

Radio operator. The United States was at peace as a nation so what harm could come from that...right? Sure, enough, the Korean conflict started and Ross found himself once again on the destroyer escort vessel named USS Marsh heading for Asia. For the next 3 years Ross would find himself again wearing the uniform of our country only this time it was blue not green. After his discharge from the Navy, Ross returned to his civilian job working for the State of Washington in Olympia. Ross would continue for many years as a member of the Military Auxiliary Radio System as a civilian responder ready in the event of a national crises. Two more children would join his and Rose's family; Roseanne and Ross Walter Jr. Ross's career with Employment Security for the State of Washington would take him to Spokane and eventually to Ephrata where he was assigned to open the new office there. Ross would meet his second wife Wyona Folsom there in the course of his business. Wyona and her four children (Beatrice, Bobby, Pam and Ron) would become a precious part of Ross's life. He and Wyona would share an amazing life of ministry and service until her passing in June of 1999. They owned the Skyline wrecking and towing yard, and helped start the Airway Cornerstone church in 1980. Ross was ordained as a Minister of the gospel in 1980 and would serve for 21 years in that capacity. He would be influential in leading many to Christ as well as performing the sacraments of the Church. Ross married Betty Pittman from Duvall, WA and added her 3 children to his family. Shawn, Zane and Korwyn Peck along with her grandchildren. Betty and Ross built a lovely home on West Bemis street. Betty passed away from cancer after 3 ½ years of marriage. Ross took vows of commitment with his 4th wife Emma Lou Bishop on her birthday December 12th in Leavenworth, WA and added her 5 children to his family. Steve, Hanna Laura, Linda, Mary and Dan. They enjoyed 13 ½ years sharing life, numerous trips around the country(Florida, Oklahoma, Branson), two cruises to Alaska and a lot of family and community events. Ross had the privilege of traveling in 2010 with James Paris and Gene Davis

back to Washington, DC as an Honoree of the Honor Flight Program.

Ross was preceded in death by his Parents; Sherman and Adeline and infant brother Glenn

His wives; Rose, Wyona and Betty

And his children; Bobby Folsom, Pam Lowen, Ross Sterling Jr., Foster Daughter Emargo McKee and grandson Jon Sterling.

Ross is survived by his sisters;

Glenna Kendell and Francis Sterling of Seattle, Isabelle Lege (Joseph) of Angleton, Texas

His children;

Jeannie Marie Barlia (David) Seattle, Roseanne Bryan (Mike) (Highmore, South Dakota), Daughter-in-law Aimee Sterling of Spokane.

Bea Stephenson (Don) and Ron Sterling (Auburn, WA)

Shawn Peck (Edmonds, WA), Zane Beardsley (Robert) (Silverdale, WA), Korwyn Peck (Mary) (Provo, Utah)

Stephen Bishop (Cheryl) (Wenatchee), Hanna Laura Lane (Norman) (Westport), Linda Appleby (Kirk) (Spokane), Mary Croston (Spokane), Dan Bishop (Nicole) (Moses Lake)

Numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren

Ross was a member of several organizations;

Central Washington Amateur Radio Club

The Tuesday and Thursday morning coffee group the Romeo's (retired old men eating out)

Model Railroad Enthusiasts of Central Washington

He was a member of the Faith Community Church at the time of his passing

His awards for military service included The American Theater Service Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Service Medal, The Good Conduct Medal and the Victory Medal.

Ross was a caring member of the Moses Lake and Global community for years.

Churches have buildings, A halfway house for orphans in Rivne, Ukraine has

furniture and many other people have been cared for or had their needs met and their futures changed by Ross Sterling.

W7YCW over and out now sending from a new location.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the church of your choice or the Northwest Honor Flight Fund

PO Box 28742

Spokane, WA 99928

A memorial service will be held at 10 a.m., Tuesday, August 8, 2017 at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1020 S. A Street, Moses Lake. Please sign the online guestbook at www.kayserschapel.com Arrangements are in care of Kayser's Chapel & Crematory.

Previous Events

Service

AUG 8. 10:00 AM (PT)

Immanuel Lutheran Church
1020 S. A Street
Moses Lake, WA

Tribute Wall

 Sharon
Zornes

“ *My earliest memory of Uncle Ross or Unkie Hunkie as I called him, was as a very young little girl visiting him at the Skyline Wrecking Yard where he worked so hard stripping and crushing cars and loading for scrap. I would go behind the counter and reach into the till drawer and grab change and cross the street and buy penny candy; thus my nickname I proudly carry "Tilley". He would take me in as a teenager when things got difficult in our family home and taught me about model trains and tie stories about Jesus in our times together as I would help him glue a tree together for his beautiful artscape for his trains. I attended with him and Aunt Wyona to his being ordained. He was such a strong, handsome, well educated, and kind man whom I will always treasure in my heart which is broken to hear so late. I praise God to have known him and call him my Uncle. To my extended family, Jeff and I send our condolences.*

Sharon Zornes - September 15, 2017 at 09:01 PM

LB

“ *Bea, Sorry for your loss. I will always remember Ross as being a GREAT man who was always good to his kids (you, Pammy, and the boys. I'm so sorry for your loss. Moses Lake lost a good man, but the Lord inherited a good soldier.*



L.D. Brumet - August 27, 2017 at 10:51 PM

PD

Dear Sweet Bea - I loved Ross and your whole family. I have thought of all of you many times through the years. I would love to hear from you. My email is p_doty@hotmail.com. Much love to you.

Pat Doty - October 03, 2017 at 12:29 PM

WP

“ *Good ole Ross! My first cousin, whom I seldom met because I lived in the East/Midwest and he lived way out there in Washington.*

My best memory of Ross is from 1942, when he was stationed at Ft. Leonard Wood and came for a holiday visit with us in Columbia, MO. I was seven years old and fell for him at first sight. I wept bitterly when he left! Then I may not have seen him again until 1973 at the earliest. But all my meetings with him were full of joy and cordiality.

He exemplified one of the signature properties of the Pittman/Stangler clan into which he was born: longevity. Most of us (including the future me, if I'm that lucky) lived into our 90's.

Farewell, Ross. You were one of the best.

*Bill Pittman
Schenectady, NY*

William H. Pittman - August 23, 2017 at 07:41 AM

JE

“ *This is how I remember him best. Jeanne*



Jeanne - August 10, 2017 at 02:08 PM

SB

“ *Blessed to know Ross and share many conversations and meaningful moments. What a legacy he leaves not only in this place but in eternity. So privileged to match how he and Mom loved each other and her example as she cared for him and was his advocate in his waning years. Steve Bishop*

Stephen Bishop - August 07, 2017 at 03:49 PM

AP

“ *Ross was the nicest person we have ever met. Really enjoyed his and Emmy's visits to Fl. He will be missed but is in a better place. John & Anna Posey
Dunnellon,FL*

Anna Posey - August 07, 2017 at 03:16 PM

LR

“ *Bea - So sorry for your loss. Ross was a true gentleman in all of our dealings. I liked him very much. So long, so many memories. I liked the family you grew up in. Thank you for sharing your Dad with me over the years that we knew each other.*

Larry Rigsby - August 06, 2017 at 08:55 PM

KP

“ Veteran of two major wars. Father and father figure to four sets of children. Caretaker to two wives. Ecclesiastical leader and mentor to 100's (1000's?). Patriarch and example to many, many grandchildren, so many of whom he was not related to. Charitable with his time, money, and material possessions. He knew Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, and is now re-acquainted with Him. Charity is the pure love of Christ, and he embodied the very essence of that creed. And he made my mom the happiest I had ever seen her. I couldn't possibly call him by his first name; too informal. "Mr. Sterling"? Too impersonal. It seemed natural from the time that he and my mom were married, to now, that I call him.....DAD.

Korwyn Peck - August 06, 2017 at 06:31 PM

FG

“ Emma Lou and family, I'm so sorry for your loss. Ross was a neighbor and friend for many years. In the 70's our sons bought car parts from Ross at the wrecking yard. I have Lilly's and Rhubarb from his garden he gave me starts to plant years ago. He was a good man and he shall be missed. May you all find peace in all the memories he left behind. Fran & Boyd Grant

Fran Grant - August 06, 2017 at 12:55 PM

WS

“ Wendy S. lit a candle in memory of Ross W Sterling Sr.



Wendy S. - August 06, 2017 at 12:11 PM

PZ

“ *Paula Zanter-Stout lit a candle in memory of Ross W Sterling Sr.*



Paula Zanter-Stout - August 05, 2017 at 06:14 PM

MP

“ *Mary Perry lit a candle in memory of Ross W Sterling Sr.*



Mary Perry - August 04, 2017 at 05:05 PM