
Mary (Russell) Foss

MADISON -- Mary Russell Foss, 106, Maine's oldest citizen, joined her beloved family members and friends in their lofty Heavenly place on May 17. Aunt Mary, as she was known to all her family members and friends, was born in East Madison on July 9, 1904, to Lewis Whittier Russell and Lillase Alma Russell. She married Henry Foss on June 27, 1931.

Aunt Mary lived a long and progressively illustrious life, though she thought of herself as a hard-working farm girl who was fortunate to enjoy the "good Maine life." When in her 90s, she and her sister flew to California to visit relatives. When her 100th birthday was on the horizon, she thought it was time to write her memoirs. After graduating from Athens Academy with highest honors at 16 years old, she taught in the Pleasant Ridge one-room school. She also taught in several other small area towns before teaching in Athens prior to her marriage to the love of her life, Henry Foss, of East Madison. The newlyweds lived on "the Foss Farm" on the East Madison Road until purchasing their home on Main Street in Madison in 1941.

Mary's long life enabled her to experience travel by horse and buggy, cross Lake Wesserunsett on the packet-boat Margaret B., ride the trolley from Lakewood to Skowhegan, to the development of the automobile and airplane and space ships. She has been the recipient of the Boston Post Cane, awarded to her as Madison's eldest citizen in 2005. She was recognized as Somerset County's eldest citizen at the Somerset County Bicentennial Celebration. Aunt Mary was the guest of State Rep. Philip Curtis and Maine's House of Representatives in 2009, and the Madison Town Report was dedicated to her in 2009. Everyone who knew and loved Aunt Mary recognized her delight when playing Bingo at Madison Kiwanis Club, Skowhegan Area [Elks Club](#), Madison [Veterans of Foreign Wars](#) and American Legion organizations and Madison Senior Citizen's luncheons and events. Most recently, she was recognized by the Maine Healthcare Association with the REMEMBER ME Lifetime Achievement Award 2011 at the Maine State House Hall of Flags. Mary was a faithful member of both the Madison Historical Society and the East Madison Historical Society. She shared the honor of being East Madison Days' Parade Marshal with her friend, Thelma Mantor, and she enjoyed the memories of days past when riding in Alfred Jackson's Model-T Ford at the head of the Parade.

Mary was predeceased by her husband of 58 years; her sisters, Mildred Russell Oak, Faye Russell Foss, Roxie Russell Valliere and Mayola Russell Bolduc Gagne, all of Skowhegan; and by her nephews Richard Bolduc of Norridgewock and Wendell Oak of Bucksport. She is survived by nieces "Katie" Valliere-Denis Ouilette of East Madison, and Marilyn Bolduc Tozier of Fairfield Center; nephews Allan Oak of Cincinnati, Ohio, Ray Oak of Hondo, Texas, Raymond Bolduc of College Park, Md., and David Bolduc of Clinton. Also surviving are grand-nieces, grand-nephews and great-grand-nieces and -nephews, as well as special friends Dot Moran, Edith Booker, Dassie Jackson, Lena Arno, Darthea Atkinson, Susanne Ketterer, Atty. Ernest Hilton and Gary Malbon.

The family is especially grateful for the love and care extended to Aunt Mary by the entire administration and staff at Maplecrest Living and Rehabilitation Center in Madison, as well as to the Beacon Hospice Volunteers who were a comfort to Aunt Mary in her final days.

At Aunt Mary's request, there will be no visitation or funeral service. A graveside service at Forest Hill Cemetery in Madison will be held on Wednesday, May 25, at 2 p.m. with the Rev. Mark Tanner officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Giberson Funeral Home in Madison.

Mary truly loved kitty cats, and one of her favorite activities was visiting the Skowhegan Animal Shelter. At her request, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in her name may be made to the Skowhegan Animal Shelter, P.O. Box 453, Skowhegan, ME 04976.

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