

Robert Bertsch, Sr., 90

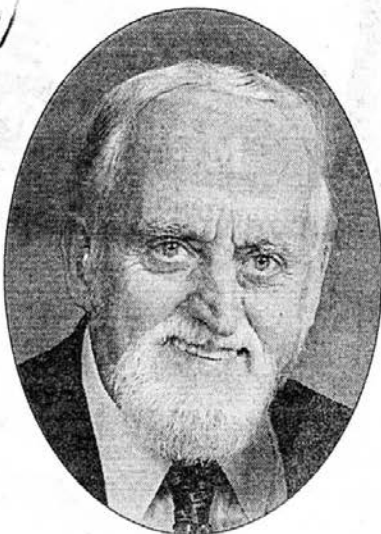
Jan. 14, 1922 - Dec. 30, 2012

HARLAN — Robert Frederick Bertsch, Sr., the son of Leonard Grover and Eva (Kottke) Bertsch, was born on January 14, 1922, in Hedrick. He graduated from Avoca High School in 1939. While in high school, Bob worked at Bake's Cafe in Avoca. He later worked at the Willamette Shipyard in Portland, OR.

October 29, 1942, Bob married Opal Maxine Blaine in Vancouver, WA. Bob served in the United States Army for three years during World War II, fifteen months of which were spent in Europe. After his Honorable Discharge, he and Opal moved back to Harlan, where he worked as Supervisor of the Iowa Department of Transportation in Shelby County; he held this post for 38 years until his retirement in 1984. Bob was an active member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, where he had served on both the church council and the new church building committee, and also taught Sunday School. Bob was a former Harlan VFW member, past-president of the Golden K Club, and a former Boy Scout leader. He was an active member and past-president of the Shelby County Museum, and had served as a member of the new Harlan High School building committee. Bob liked gardening, refinishing furniture, and traveling, especially enjoying his three trips to Europe. He was an avid Hawkeye fan and Harlan Cyclone football fan. A people-person and a gentleman, Bob took pride in teaching good moral values to his children. For many years, Bob had the pleasure of playing Santa for the Golden Kiwanis Club in Harlan. Robert F. Bertsch, Sr., died on Sunday, December 30, 2012, at the Elm Crest Retirement Community in Harlan, at the age of 90 years, 11 months, and 16 days.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents; one sister, Eva Bjornson; and two brothers, Rex Bertsch and infant James Bertsch. He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Opal Bertsch of Harlan; three sons, Bob (Jan) Bertsch, Jr., of Willis, MI, Tom (Lois) Bertsch of Columbus, NE, and Dan (Irene) Bertsch of Indianola; one sister, Evelyn Smith of Milwaukie, OR; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and other relatives and friends.

The funeral service was held on Thursday, January 3, 2013, at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Harlan, with Pastor Steve Chellew presiding. Marge Ahrenholtz served as the organist, and Jeff Johannsen was the soloist. The American Flag was presented by Bill Reid on behalf of the Helmer Reyelt American Legion Post #150. Serving as honorary casket bearers were Jim Noble, Charlotte Noble, Darlene Anderson, Amanda Bertsch, Alicia Bertsch, Catherine Wahl, Christine Bertsch, Lisa Bertsch, Kristie Bertsch, Cindy Mumm, Jane Davis, Mary Garcia, Nancy Hanstad, Kim Behrendt, and Tracy Noble. Active casket bearers were Michael Bertsch, Matthew Bertsch, Brad-



ley Bertsch, Brian Bertsch, Michael Wahl, Keith Svare, and Thomas Noble. Burial was in the Harlan Cemetery, Harlan. Memorials may be made to Myrtue Medical Center Hospice, Elm Crest Retirement Community, and Immanuel Lutheran Church, Harlan.

JOHANNSEN
FUNERAL HOME
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