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James Gordon Meeker, a longtime community activist who helped create and lead many local organizations and institutions, died Thursday at his South Meridian Street home in Portland. He was 92.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Mary Catherine.

Meeker, known by most as J. Gordon, helped organize and promote the building of Jay County High School, Jay County Hospital and the Portland Municipal Airport. He also was active with the First Presbyterian Church, Portland, where he taught Sunday School for many years, as well as several other community organizations and groups.

Meeker, 1333 S. Meridian St., served as the vice president of sales for Teledyne Portland Forge from 1946 to 1977 after serving as a lieutenant in the United States Navy from 1944-46.

A graduate of Indiana University School of Law, Meeker was named city attorney for Portland in 1935, and also served on the Portland Board of Works until 1944.

Born Sept. 25, 1910 in Portland to Fred and Grace (Ware) Meeker, he graduated from Portland High School in 1928, and in 1934 from the IU School of Law.

He served as president of the airport commission; was former president of the Portland Rotary Club and Portland Rotary Foundation; was an organizer and board member of the Jay County Boys Club; was a past board member of the Portland Country Club; was a life-long member of the Republican Party; and had been an active member or officer of many local fraternal, commercial and benevolent organizations.

Meeker was inducted into the Jay County Hall of Fame for a Lifetime of Service in 2001. He was commissioned a Kentucky Colonel in 1973.

Jack Ronald, publisher of The Commercial Review, wrote this in a 1993 story about Meeker: "Raconteur, politico, salesman, promoter, golfer, public speaker, Rotarian, civic leader, lawyer, Sunday school teacher, fund-raiser, J. Gordon Meeker has never been one to shy away from taking on a new challenge or trying out a new role."

He and Mary Catherine (McCoy) were married on July 2, 1937.

Other survivors include one son, Richard J. Meeker, Aspen, Colo.; one daughter, Mary G. Meeker, New York City; and two grandchildren.

Services are Monday at 10 a.m. in the First Presbyterian Church with Pastor Scott Solether presiding. Burial will follow in Green Park Cemetery.

Visitation is Sunday from noon to 3 p.m. at the Baird-Freeman Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to the Jay County Boys/Girls Club Community Center.

Contributed by Jane Edson