The Collinsons were strong supporters of the college throughout their working lives. Never eager to be in the limelight, Peggy quietly stepped forward with a major gift to support the college library renovation project in 1993. Reluctant to be the object of much public recognition, she agreed that a small reference and conferencing space within the library could be designated the Collinson Room.

Born in Devils Lake, James Collinson and Louise “Peggy” Clausen were married August 7, 1940, in Highland Park, Illinois. They had two children—Joe (Donna) who lives in Fargo, North Dakota, and Catherine who lives in Tucson, Arizona—and three grandchildren.

Jim joined the U.S. Navy in 1942 and served in the Pacific Theater of operations during World War II until 1945, attaining the rank of 2nd Lieutenant JG. He was present during the signing of the surrender of Japan to the United States on September 2, 1945, on the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. Following the war, Jim and Peggy moved to Iowa where Jim worked as a bank examiner before returning to Devils Lake to work at First National Bank of Devils Lake. He became president in 1968, serving in that capacity until retiring in 1981. Jim was a director of the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District for over twenty years, serving one term as chairman of the board. For his contributions to water resource development, he earned the Distinguished Service Award of the Upper Missouri Water Users’ Association and the Governor’s Commodore Award. Jim was a graduate of the University of Minnesota. He was a member of Elks Lodge #1216, played the tuba in the Elks Band, and was a member of the Junior Chamber of Commerce and Toastmasters in Devils Lake.

Peggy received her education at Northwestern University in Illinois and enjoyed volunteering at both Carnegie Public Library and the library at Lake Region State College. She was a member of St. Olaf Lutheran Church where she sang in the church choir. She was a strong supporter of St. Olaf and Carnegie Public Library as well as a benefactor to LRSC, supporting the work of the college and helping to build the Paul Hoghaug Library.

The couple enjoyed spending time driving around the Devils Lake region, good conversation, and visiting with family and friends. In love with the sea, the couple took a six-week Pacific cruise to Tahiti, Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, and other places, and traveled to the Holy Lands. Their greatest joy was the time they spent in Maui, Hawaii, where they had a home in Lahaina on the west coast of Maui. While in their working years, they slipped away to Maui for six weeks; after they retired, they lived in Lahaina for six months during the North Dakota winter months, returning in April or May to Devils Lake to enjoy the summer. Jim enjoyed the sea and swam daily in the pool, and Peggy loved reading and sitting in the sun.