

## Russell R. Sams



H-R APRIL 11, 2005

Russell Ralph Sams, 80, of Grinnell died Sunday, April 9, in his home at Seeland Park.

Funeral services for Russell Sams will be held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 12, at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell, with the Rev. Len Eberhart, pastor of Grinnell United Methodist Church, officiating. Viewing will be held today (Monday) from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Grinnell United Methodist Church.

Born July 3, 1924 in Salem, Iowa, he was the son of Lawrence and Sarabelle Sams, both ordained Quaker pastors. He moved with his parents to communities throughout Iowa, including Liberty, New Sharon and Arnolds Park, where he graduated from high school in 1942. Shortly after graduation, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and trained as a B-17 gunner and later as an aircraft radial engine mechanic. He went on to serve as an aircraft mechanic in Guam late in World War II.

He became engaged to Mildred Alberta Bundy, his high school sweetheart, while in the service and, after his honorable discharge, the two married on Feb. 8, 1946 at the Friends Church in Arnolds Park. The couple lived in Oskaloosa while he attended William Penn College there. He received a BS in chemistry in 1949.

He also attended the Drake University Seminary in Des Moines and completed studies there in 1950. From 1950 to 1954, he served as pastor to the Oak Grove Friends Church.

He began working for Donaldson Co. in Grinnell in 1952, and worked his way up from laborer to plant super-

intendent by 1966. He went on to serve as plant manager at the Cresco, Kirksville and Grinnell facilities before retiring in 1982.

He enjoyed golf and the friendships that he earned in professional and community activities. He was a third degree Mason, a past president of the Kiwanis Club, a former member of the Grinnell Federal Bank board of directors, a former chairman of the Grinnell Regional Medical Center board, an active Ambassador with the Grinnell Chamber of Commerce and a former president of the United Way in both Grinnell and Kirksville, Mo.

He is survived by his children, Mark Sams of River Falls, Wis., Cheryl Vigna of Los Angeles, Calif., and Ron Sams of Apple Valley, Minn.; three grandchildren; a brother, Roy Sams of Spencer, Iowa; and two sisters, Bonnie Wunder of Lake Park, Iowa, and Gwen Miller of Milford, Iowa. He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife.