

# Bernard Hotchkin <sup>614-R</sup> 1-145-2015



Bernard Hotchkin, 92, of Grinnell died December 31, 2014, at his home.

Bernard was born February 17, 1922, in Grinnell, Iowa, the son of William Philip and Elizabeth Harter Hotchkin. He was raised on farms near Newburg and was a 1939 graduate of Newburg High School. He was a veteran of the United States Army Air Corps during W.W. II and served with the 460th Bombardment Group in the European Theatre as a waist gunner on a B24 bomber.

On June 15, 1946, he was united in marriage with Caroline Lidtka, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Grinnell. A

union of 68 years! The couple lived at several places in the area prior to moving to their farm north of Grinnell in 1960. They moved to Park Place Condos in Grinnell in 2007. The couple wintered for 16 years in Yuma, Arizona.

Bernard worked as a carpenter throughout central Iowa and founded Hotchkin and Sons Construction. He also farmed in the area. He retired in 1990. He was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church; Newburg Alumni serving as past president; Newburg American Legion; and Chester Royal Grange.

He enjoyed traveling throughout the United States in an RV with his wife. He also enjoyed woodworking, playing dominoes and other games, and photography.

Survivors include his wife, Caroline of Grinnell; six children, LaRita (Jim) Steiner of Heber Springs, Arkansas, Wil (Deneen) Hotchkin of Maricopa, Arizona, Martha (Wallace) Woods of Village Mills, Texas, Philip (Beth Fisher) Hotchkin of Grinnell, Edward Hotchkin of Des Moines, and Helen Jo Hotchkin of Grinnell; nine grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by his parents; one son, William (Bill) Hotchkin; one daughter-in-law, Betty Hotchkin; one grandson, Jason Hotchkin; and one sister, Anna Marie Mortensen.

Funeral services are scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, January 6, 2015, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Grinnell with the Rev. Ron Hodges officiating. Organist will be Marilyn Kriegel accompanied by the St. Mary's Choir. Vocalist will be Edward Hotchkin. Pallbearers will be Matt Blakenfeld, Austin Frascht, Aaron Hotchkin, Dustin Hotchkin, Don Kriegel, Terry Lewis, Randy Lidtka, Richard Mortensen and Zach Story. Burial with military honors will be in Hazelwood Cemetery in Grinnell.

Visitation will be held from 2:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Monday at the Smith Funeral Home. The family will be present from 6:00 to 8:00 Monday evening. A vigil service has been scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Monday at the funeral home.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the St. Mary's Capital Campaign.

## PATRIOT GUARD TO HONOR HOTCHKIN

The family of Bernard Hotchkin, a World War II veteran who died on Dec. 31, has requested a Patriot Guard escort for Hotchkin's funeral and interment tomorrow, Jan. 6.

Patriot Guard Ride Captain Terry Mitchell of Pella has set the rally point for Patriot Guard riders at St. Mary's Catholic Church at 9 a.m. where the Hotchkin funeral will begin at 10:30. Mitchell will bring American flags, and Guard volunteers will establish a "flag line" outside the church and then in Hazelwood Cemetery around the burial site. Guard volunteers on motorcycles will lead the funeral procession from the church to Hazelwood.

Hotchkin served with the 760th Bomber Group, 15th Air Force, United States Army Air Corps, as a waist gunner on a B24 bomber during World War II. He flew on 51 missions from April to July of 1944 from a base near Spinazzola in southern Italy which was close enough to Mount Vesuvius to be covered in ash by a volcanic eruption in March of 1944.

Hotchkin kept a journal and noted that his first bombing mission targeted the air base in Mostar, then in Yugoslavia and now in Bosnia-Herzegovina where one bomber was lost. Other missions included several cities in Romania, the former Yugoslavia, Hungary, northern Italy, France and Austria. Some flights encountered little ground or fighter resistance while others experienced heavy opposition with losses of aircraft. Near the end of his service, Hotchkin's group began bombing in Germany, meeting heavy resistance.

Hotchkin flew his final mission in late July of 1944 and recorded in his journal that he "got out and kissed the ground" when his plane landed. He had flown a total of 393 hours of bombing missions all across Europe.

614-R  
1-145-2015