



Woodrow "Sam" Hays

October 23, 1920 - September 8, 2010

On the wings of faith and love, Sam Hays passed from this earth to his heavenly home to be reunited with his beloved wife, Roberta, on September 8, 2010 at 6:03 p.m. at Bloomington Hospital. Born to Roscoe and Della Hayes (Sam's last name was forever changed by an error upon discharge from the U.S. Army) in rural Monroe County, Same was the third oldest in family of seven children.

When World War II began, Sam, like so many others of his generation, unselfishly and proudly answered the call to serve his country in 1942. Pfc Hays was an U.S. Army Anti-Aircraft Gun Crewman, which involved assisting in firing and maintaining a mobile 90 mm gun for defense against enemy aircraft. He served part of his deployment in Panama, an experience that he talked about all of his life. He was honorably discharged in 1945, having received the World War II Victory Medal, the American Theater Ribbon and the Good Conduct Ribbon. Then he headed home to Indiana, where his beautiful wife, Roberta (Tootsie) awaited to begin building their family. While he never got the son he wanted (that was to come much later in the form of his only grandson), he did get what Roberta, who usually got her way in such matters, wanted—"two beautiful, little blonde girls." And Sam was never disappointed, but promptly fell in love a second and third time.

He was employed for over 40 years at Victor Oolitic Stone Quarry, retiring as a machinist who cut the gigantic slabs of limestone out of the earth. Working outdoors everyday became a way of life for him, which he did

right up to his illness nearly three weeks ago. Maybe that's how he acquired such a beautiful, permanent tan which never faded, even in his last days in the hospital. Sam was a proud member of the Laborers' International Union of North America Local #741 since 1961, faithfully driving to the union office each month to pay his dues and chat with others in the brotherhood.

Sam was a devoted member of the Burgoon Baptist Church, nestled in the rural landscape near where he grew up and enjoyed and honed his great outdoor skills and love of nature, which included some of the most inspired mushroom hunting in three counties. His church offered even greater comfort to him after the passing of his wife, and he repaid their love for him by rarely missing a Sunday, driving from his home in rural southern Monroe County to the little church past Lake Monroe off of Hwy. 446.

Sam was a fabled storyteller, a jokester without peer, a man who could make up a song about anything or anyone just by hearing one word of association, and a natural dancer who made up steps and dances for his grandchildren that they still talk about and try to recreate. There are more "Sam Hays stories" that are treasured by his daughters, siblings, nieces and nephews, sons-in-law, grandchildren, other family, friends and business associates that time will ever erase. He loved life, loved a fun outing, loved to eat, loved to laugh, loved to talk and talk, loved to be outside doing anything, but most of all, loved, loved, loved his family. That is truly what mattered most to Sam-his family and their well-being and happiness. In later years, he was no longer hesitant about declaring that love, always ending visits and phone conversations to his children and grandchildren with "I love you" or "Papaw loves you".

We will hear those words forever, along with the same ones from his wife, our mother and grandmother, Roberta. To be their children is our privilege, honor and blessing.

Sam is survived by his daughters, Molly (nee Patsy) Stewart and husband Rober and Sherry Dick and husband Roscoe, all of Bloomington. He leaves behind four very loving grandchildren: Jill Cass and husband Bob;

Tobias Dick and wife Hope; Courtney Stewart and husband Mike Waddell, all of Bloomington; and Nikki Stewart-Ingersoll and husband Rob of the United Arab Emirates. Four great-grandchildren will lovingly carry on Papaw Hays's genes and (hopefully) zany shenanigans: Emily Rose Dick, Joshua Tobias Dick, Alexandra Amaya Cass, all of Bloomington and Sadie Quinn Stewart-Ingersoll of the United Arab Emirates. He is also survived by two sisters, Thelma Blackwell and Mary Ann Polley, both of Bloomington and a host of devoted nieces and nephews, each of whom could tell their own favorite Uncle Sam story.

Sam was preceded in death by his parents, Roscoe and Della, his beloved wife of 66 years, Roberta, in 2008, his sisters Marie Adams of CA, Betty Mueller of Martinsville and Laverne Dumas of Bloomington; his only brother, Alvin Hayes of Bloomington and one great-grandson, Tjerck Stewart-Ingersoll at birth.

A Celebration of Life service will be lovingly presided over by Sam's minister, Rev. Harold Godsey of Burgoon Baptist Church on Sunday, September 12th at 2:00 p.m. at Allen Funeral Home, 4155 S. Old St. Rd. 37, Bloomington. Friends may call at the funeral home from 1:00 p.m. until the time of services. The Monroe County Veterans Honor Guard will conduct rites at the conclusion of services at the funeral home. Sam will be cremated, as he and his wife both decided.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Burgoon Baptist Church or the Monroe County Animal Shelter in care of Allen Funeral Home.

Life with this great life force seems impossible now, but we will carry on, just as he always did, still finding the laughter and fun in life, and secure in the knowledge that he is home once again with his "Bert". We will honor, protect and carry on his legacy of "family is everything". Your work on earth is done, Old Shep. Now you can begin your watch over us from on high. We love you!

Tribute Wall

AR

“ I am so sorry to hear that Sam passed away. I am so glad I had the opportunity to meet your dad, he was such a pleasure to be around. You will always have all the wonderful memories of him to comfort you. God bless you all.

Amy Sams RN - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM

KR

“ My deepest sympathy. I had the honor of talking with Sam & his son in law Roscoe on a regular basis. I will never forget the time he was wearing nail polish. He said his granddaughter wanted to paint his nails. We had many laughs together. God bless all of you.

kathy kalotta RN - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM

CA

“ Dear Sherry and Family, I am sorry to hear of your loss. I know you will miss your dad but he will always be with you in your heart and memories.
Love, Carol R

Carol Rhudy - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM

RD

He was a great father-in-law miss him every day

Roscoe Dick - January 09, 2025 at 12:25 PM

BC

“ *Dear Sherry and Family,*

We are sorry to hear that your dad didn't make it to his 90th birthday. We were pulling for him! Let me know if there is anything I can do.

Barb and Lisa

Barbara and Lisa Curry, Clemons - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM

CA

“ *Molly, I'm so sorry about your dad. I'm here if you need me. Love,
Carrie*

Carrie Ellis - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM