

On February 16, 2000, a well-known, long-time member of Newtown Monthly Meeting of Friends, died at age 84 - Ralph Samuel.

At his bedside were Louise, his wife of 55 years, their four children - David, Carole, Barbara and Peter, and several of the 11 grand children.

Louise was so much a part of Ralph's life, sharing so many interests together, both work and fun. They met in 1944 in Georgia. Ralph, a New Yorker, was a Lieutenant in the 10th Armored Division, and Louise a social worker from North Carolina. They married, and soon after, Ralph was sent to Europe in time for the Battle of the Bulge. He became a Captain and a wounded, decorated hero. Louise and Ralph had their first child, David, on the day of the German's surrender.

Ralph E. Samuel, Jr., son of a well-known family, went to the Ethical Culture School in New York. His father was a liberal Wall Street broker. Ralph showed early signs of going his own way. He went to the then radical University of Wisconsin rather than an eastern Ivy League school. He was very active as a writer for the newspaper there, the Daily Cardinal.

Ralph graduated in the midst of the Great Depression. He could have worked for his father on Wall Street, but he wanted to be a reporter. However, jobs were scarce. Instead he joined the campaign to unseat fascist "Boss" Hague, Mayor of Jersey City. Later he became a union organizer for the Amalgamated Garment Workers. Soon the war came along and Ralph set off to rid the world of Hitler and the Nazis.

After the war, Ralph and Louise moved to New York City and then to its suburbs. Later they moved to rural Richboro, Bucks County and began farming. Ralph was not a Gentleman Farmer; he was a hard-working dairy farmer, including the 5 A.M. milking. He still had time, however, to take active interest in all worthwhile causes.

Newtown Friends School had started and they sent son, David there. All four children graduated from Newtown Friends School, and later, George School. Miles and miles of daily driving of children to and from school. Ralph was on the Board of NFS and headed the First Fund Drive. He also became a member of the new Newtown Rotary Club, and the Newtown Improvement Association.

It is said that son, David, got his parents to take him to Newtown Monthly Meeting's First Day School. Soon all of the Samuels were members, and generous with their time and talents.

Although Ralph had many interests in Newtown, he was also active in Richboro and Bucks County organizations. He was, for example, President of the Northampton Free Library. Always active in

politics, local and national, Ralph lost by a very close vote an election to the U.S. House of Representatives. Louise's social work background soon resulted in starting and heading the Maple Leaf Day Care Center.

Not all of Ralph and Louise's time was used in "good works". They were Bridge and Tennis players. Louise enjoyed cooking and they hosted many dinners as well as their big Fourth of July picnic. Ralph enjoyed horseshoes and swimming also, and both of them were great gardeners. How could you not notice their devotion to a series of dogs! They very much appreciated the arts and the theatre. Frequently they found time to go to New York to visit relatives and to see the latest show, concert or exhibit.

As his children got more independent, he started easing out of farming. Ralph then bought the Delaware Valley Advance and became its Publisher. He wrote a weekly column called "Publisher's Privilege." This was eagerly looked forward to each week by very many readers. The Samuel's were now able to take time for another love of theirs, travel. He would send in his column from Europe, Africa, Asia, the Far East, and even an island in the Indian Ocean.

At home, he continued to be active. He was President and Board member of Planned Parenthood, Bucks County, on the Board of Chandler Hall. Ralph remained the same - dedicated, a good friend, and truly modest.

A few years ago, Ralph and Louise made the difficult decision to sell their beloved Turnabout Farm and move to Pennswood Village.

All his life, Ralph was interested in making the neighborhood and the world a better place. He is a wonderful memory and much missed.

Donald I. Sparks

Don Sparks
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