Louis Rothwell

1929-2010

Louis "Jay" Rothwell, 81, passed away in peace on Mother's Day morning May 9 in Cheyenne.

He was born Jan. 25, 1929, in Camden, Ark.

In July 1948, Jay and Virginia Sue Prince were married in Camden and immediately departed for Fort Jackson, S.C., to follow his career in the U.S. Army. Over the years they raised two children. Vicki was born in occupied Germany and Rick was born in Lawton, Okla. Jay and Virginia shared their lives for 46 years until Virginia's death in 1995.

Col. Rothwell served honorably as a soldier in the U.S. Army for 31 years. He enlisted as a buck private in 1947 at the age of 17, commissioned as a second lieutenant of field artillery in 1949, and served in the Army with officer status until his retirement in 1978. He attended the Command and General Staff College, the Armed Forces Staff College and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska. He served overseas for multiple tours in Germany, Korea and France. He was a faculty member, chief of instructional departments, and ultimately secretary of the Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Okla.

He earned numerous awards and decorations, including induction into the Field Artillery School's Hall of Fame. Jay's final regular Army assignment was senior advisor to the Wyoming Army National Guard in Cheyenne.

Jay grew up in rural Arkansas near the town of Camden. He attended all 12 grades at Fairview School, where he played quarterback for the high school's first football team. He was also captain of the basketball team. He graduated as co-salutatorian in 1947. Jay was an enthusiastic alumnus who helped organize numerous reunions.

Jay and Virginia spent the rest of their life together in Cheyenne while making the world their home. They toured all 50 states and visited many countries in Europe, South America, the South Pacific and the Far East. To spread this love of travel, he became a charter member of the Cheyenne Friendship Force.

In addition to his worldly interests, he was very involved in his home community. He was an active member in the Wyoming chapters of the Military Officer's Association of America and the Sons of the American Revolution. He served his community for 35 years as a Hixon Fellow and member of the Kiwanis Club of Cheyenne. He also enjoyed golf (twice making a hole-in-one), bird hunting, travel and above all making new friends.

Jay was preceded in death by his wife, Virginia Sue Rothwell, who died in Tucson, Ariz., in March 1995, and is buried in Camden; his infant son, Ronald Wray; his mother and dad, Alpha and Jack Rothwell of Camden; his step-father, Jake Carroll of Camden; and his sister, Sue Brian of Camden.

He is survived by daughter, Vicki, husband, Ray of Fort Collins, Colo.; son, Rick and wife Val of Cheyenne; and three grandsons, Randall, Craig and Glen. He is survived by two brothers, Jack Rothwell of Camden, and Ray Rothwell of Kerrville, Texas. He is also survived by dear friend, Betty Lee.

Funeral services will be 2 p.m. today at Schrader Chapel with Chaplain John A. Rasmussen officiating. Interment will be in Camden. Honorary pallbearers will be Randall Rothwell, Craig Rothwell, Glen Czaplewski, Ray Wasson, Chuck Wing and Brad Hooper.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Davis Hospice Center or Wyoming Military Officers' Association in care of Shrader Funeral Home.