Alvy Ray Smith
(June 8, 1920 – March 13, 2015)

Alvy Ray Smith, 94, a longtime resident of Clovis passed away on March 13, 2015. He first came to Clovis in 1946 and raised a family of three children here. He was first employed in the management of El Rancho Milling Company, a cattle feed manufacturing company here, and then served prominently in the Clovis school system for many years.

Alvy was born on June 8, 1920, in Mayhill, NM the son of Alvy Ray Smith who was born in Cloudcroft, and Sina Maudie McKindrey who was born in Texas. He grew up in Mayhill and attended high school in Cloudcroft. Alvy received the bachelor of science degree in Range Management from New Mexico State University (then A&M) in Las Cruces. From its ROTC program, he also received a commission as a second lieutenant in the US Army shortly after Pearl Harbor.

Despite Alvy’s tight association with New Mexico, his paternal heritage was Texian: his great-great-grandfather, James M. Smith fought in the Battle of San Jacinto and was thus a founding citizen of the Republic of Texas. His great-grandfather Jesse Richard Smith was also a Texian. Alvy’s maternal heritage was Irish from the part now known as Northern Ireland. His great uncle James Gilliland was accused, along with Oliver Lee, of the infamous murders of Judge Albert Fountain and his young son in early New Mexico Territory, but both were found not guilty. The unsolved murders continue to rankle southern families to this day.

Before departure for World War II service, Alvy married Edith Hortense Sanders of Tularosa on June 24, 1942, in Texas near where he was stationed. After the war, they moved to Clovis and remained there for most of their married life, except for 15 years in Las Cruces after their retirement. They returned to Clovis, in 2012.

Alvy’s first service in World War II was in Europe in the 97th Infantry Division, where he attained the rank of Captain and was awarded the Bronze Star for heroism. Although he was never able to talk about it, he helped liberate a Nazi concentration camp, Flossenburg, in Germany in 1945. At the defeat of Germany, he was then sent to the Pacific theatre to begin the invasion of Japan. He was en route aboard a ship in the Philippines when the atomic bombs and surrender were announced, thus surely saving his life. He was instead part of the occupying forces of Japan. After the War he was promoted to Major.

Alvy received a Master's degree in School Administration from Eastern New Mexico University. He served on the Clovis School Board for many years, several as President. Alvy taught biology at Clovis High School for three years, then was Vice Principal for 17 years.

Alvy joins in death his daughter, Rita Louise Echols, buried in Clovis and a son-in-law Doug Lockwood. He is survived by his wife; sisters, Margaret Coleman and Lucy Gray; daughter, Valerie Lynn Aucutt (Bobby) of Clovis; his son Alvy Ray Smith III, "Jerry" (Alison) of Berkeley, California; five grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Alvy and Edith were longtime members of Central Baptist Church of Clovis. They joined the charter members before they even had a building.

A Celebration of Life Memorial will be held at a later date.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Muffley Funeral Home and High Plains Crematory. 575 762-4435 mufleyfuneralhome.com