Claiborne K. "Clay" Rowley passed away November 21, 2018 at Close to Home Hospice House in Gillette, Wyoming. He was born June 28, 1936 to Meril Rowley and Esther Sorenson Rowley in Sheridan, Wyoming. Clay was raised and worked on the family ranch located near Arvada, Wyoming where Clear Creek flows into Powder River. The ranch was homesteaded by his grandfather, Niels Christian Sorenson in 1894. He attended a one-room school house on the ranch where his mother was the teacher at times. Clay learned how to drive at age eight and was driving confidently around Billings, Montana by the time he was 11.

He graduated from Sheridan High School in 1954, serving as Treasurer of his senior class. He graduated from the University of Wyoming in 1958, earning a degree in Geology, professional curriculum. Immediately after graduation, he took a job with Continental Uranium in Denver, moving from there to California, and then to Jeffrey City, Wyoming. In 1968 he moved to Casper, Wyoming to work in uranium exploration for the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company, mainly near Pumpkin Buttes. In 1981 he transferred with Cleveland Cliffs to Rifle, Colorado, commuting from his home in Glenwood Springs. When Cleveland Cliffs closed their Rifle office, Clay took a job with TriHydro Corporation in Laramie. Later he worked for the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, commuting to Cheyenne from his home in Laramie. He retired in 2001 and moved to Sheridan in 2002, where he and his wife built their retirement home. He remained actively involved in managing the family ranch, which is rented by Kelby and Lacey Kretschman.

Clay enjoyed hunting with friends for many years. He was also a true UW Cowboy football fan, holding season tickets since 1960, often traveling long distances to attend the games, staying to the end even in snowstorms. He was very interested in Western history, reading books and newsletters and traveling extensively to historic sites in Wyoming and Montana. He was also interested in his family history. A rodeo fan, Clay and his wife held season tickets to the Cheyenne Frontier Days finals and twice traveled to attend the Calgary Stampede. Clay and Gayla enjoyed many travels but their favorite was a trip on the Alaska Railroad.

Clay kept in touch with friends from all stages of his life and was well known for the more than 50 personal Christmas letters he sent each year. He enjoyed sharing stories of his life growing up on the ranch. Probably his most often-told story was a description of how his Dad used an inverted tank on top of the ranch house water well to capture methane gas and used it to power household appliances. This was always accompanied by a carefully drawn illustration.

He was a lifetime member of the NRA. After moving to Sheridan he was active in the Powder River Basin Resource Council and the Big Horn City Historical Society.

Clay was married to Joyce Enfield in 1959. They had one daughter, Leslee, and divorced in 1964. He was married in 1969 to Gayla Soloman. They have one son, Steve. He was preceded in death by his parents and half-sisters Mildred Knapp and Wilma Toll. Survived by his wife of 49 years, Gayla Rowley; daughter Leslee (Rod) Richardson of Gillette, Wyoming and grandchildren Emily, John, and Maureen Ransone; son Steve (Sara) of Urbandale, Iowa, and grandchildren Georgia and Sydney Rowley; sister-in-law Connie (Gary) Mahaffey and niece Kristen and nephew Brenton Mahaffey.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to Powder River Basin Resource Council, 934 North Main Street, Sheridan, WY or Big Horn City Historical Society, P. O. Box 566, Big Horn, WY 82833 or to a charity of your choice.

In Loving Memory Of



June 28, 1936 - November 21, 2018

