

# DEADWOOD WALL OF FAME 2016

## John Clinton Smiley

**Born: February 25, 1904**  
Rawlins, Wyoming

**Died: November 16, 1970**  
Buried at Oakridge Cemetery

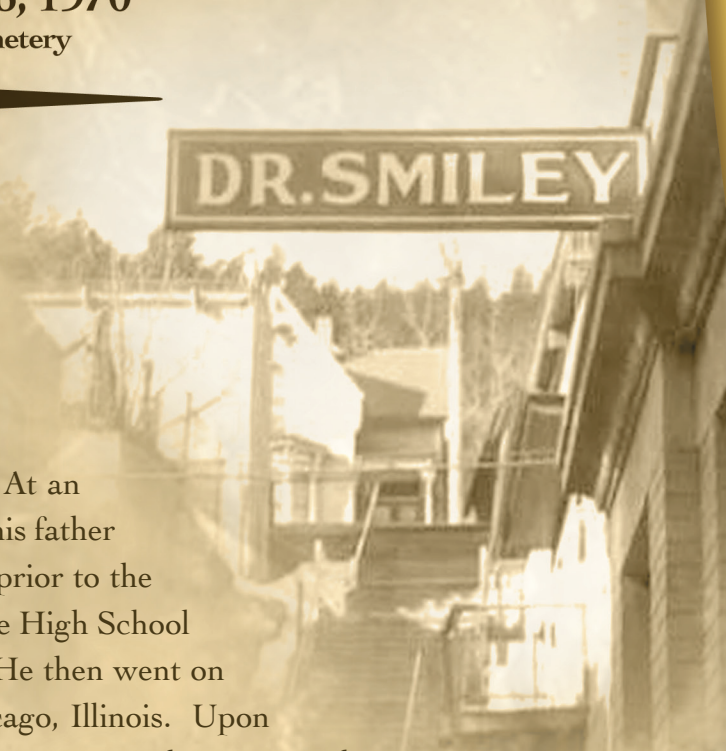
Dr. John Clinton Smiley, or “J.C.” by friends and family, has been recognized as one of Deadwood’s unsung heroes through his tireless effort of keeping his patients healthy and safe. Numerous written and verbal testimonials recall Dr. Smiley as a highly skilled physician and surgeon who served with compassion and selfless dedication during his tenure at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Deadwood.

Dr. Smiley was born on February 25, 1904 in Rawlins, Wyoming. At an early age, the Smiley family moved to the Belle Fourche area, where his father became one of the largest sheep ranchers in western South Dakota prior to the Great Depression. In 1922, Smiley graduated from the Belle Fourche High School and enrolled and graduated from the University of South Dakota. He then went on and received his medical degree from Rush Medical College in Chicago, Illinois. Upon graduation, Dr. Smiley held a two year surgical residency at the Agnes Hertzler Memorial Hospital in Halstead, Kansas before returning to South Dakota. On June 27, 1934, the Deadwood Pioneer-Times newspaper reported, “*Dr. J.C. Smiley, formerly with the Watertown, S.D. Clinic will establish himself in the practice of surgery and medicine in Deadwood*”.

Upon his arrival, Dr. Smiley opened a clinic on the second floor of the First National Bank in downtown Deadwood. For the next 36 years, Dr. Smiley practiced medicine in Deadwood. Former patients of Dr. Smiley remember climbing the stairs to his office and how he was able to comfort them during times of distress. Dr. Smiley frequently made house calls to his patients and helped in the delivery of countless babies. During and after the Great Depression, some of Dr. Smiley’s patients “paid” their bills with chickens, eggs, fruits and vegetables and homemade items.

In 1941, Dr. Smiley enlisted in the United States Navy during World War II and served in the Pacific Theatre. Prior to his overseas service, Dr. Smiley canceled all of his current patient bills. In 1943, Dr. Smiley was honorably discharged from the service and returned to Deadwood where he continued to practice medicine until his retirement in 1970. When not on call, Dr. Smiley and his family spent time at their second home in Sand Creek, Wyoming where he enjoyed gardening, horseback riding, and fly fishing. To insure that he didn’t miss a call, Dr. Smiley had a large bell connected to the telephone line. This bell was then mounted on the outside of his home and insured his availability for round-the-clock care of patients if needed.

The legacy of Dr. John Clinton Smiley can still be witnessed today through the memories of patients whom he helped during his lifetime. It is for this reason that Dr. Smiley is recognized as an important individual in Deadwood’s history.



DEADWOOD  
SOUTH  
DAKOTA

A National Historic  
Landmark