

**The Japanese Language School Archival Project**

*In the Spring of 2000, the Archives continued the original efforts of Captain Roger Pineau and William Hudson, and the Archives first attempts in 1992, to gather the papers, correspondence, photographs, and records of graduates of the US Navy Japanese Language School, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1942-1946. We assemble these papers in recognition of the contributions made by JLS graduates to the War effort in the Pacific, the successful occupation of Japan, the creation of Japanese language programs across the country, and the development of cultural reconciliation programs after World War II.*

**Why CU, NOT THE NAVY?**

Many of the graduates and their relatives whom we have contacted have wondered why the CU Archives rather than the US Navy is actively collecting the Japanese Language School materials. The answer to this difficult question lies in the sheer number of Navy servicemen. The armed forces have mobilized millions of service members in the last century, many of whom served for only two to five years at a time. US Naval archives can not collect and maintain the papers of all the career officers, let alone those of all servicemen. Consequently, the arms of the military unofficially depend on the efforts of archival institutions to help maintain the documents significant to US Military history. In fact, the bulk of personal military papers are held outside of military archives. Since CU and the US Navy ran the school jointly, the Archives feels well within its collecting purview. The unique importance of the JLS to CU thus warrants the Archives' proprietary feeling for the JLS Project.

-Olivia Kaferly

**Elegy to a Naturalist**

As a young would-be biologist, there were two others in our

July 2, 1942 class with similar interests, both now deceased. One was George Nace, who became an international authority on amphibians, with whom I kept in touch for many years. And my thoughts have often turned to the other friend of long ago, whose name could easily have become a household word, had not fate decided otherwise.

Tom Polhemus and I got to know one another not long after we arrived in Boulder in July 1942. We occasionally explored canyons behind the Flatiron range, but were so busy with course work that opportunities for excursions were limited. After graduation good fortune took us to Pearl Harbor, both in Naval Intelligence. Tom's duty was in JICPOA interrogation and translation, mine in the super-secret cryptanalytic unit, FRU-Pac, whose responsibility was to decipher Japanese naval codes.

At Boulder we had discovered strong mutual interests in natural history---Tom mostly in birds, mine chiefly in invertebrates and the sea. In Hawai'i I took Tom to coral reefs where we explored grottos and bottom life with goggles (face masks and snorkels had not yet been invented). But it was the trips he led into the wild mountain forests that I remember most vividly, and which inspired me forty-five years later while I was preparing a major article on the natural history of Hawai'i for *National Geographic* (July, 1990).

One day Tom called with an invitation, "Let's go to the Wainae Range and look for honeycreepers." I knew nothing about endemic Hawaiian birds in those days, but in his early twenties Tom was already a first-rate ornithologist.

So we arose early to start on the first of our forays into upland Hawaiian forests. Tom knew what to search for, and with my binoculars I was wide-eyed and ready for anything. His untrained shock of light hair made him easy to follow in dense foliage.

We were both Lieutenants (j.g) at the time, and had no problem entering Schofield Barracks, the sprawling army base that only a few years before had been attacked by swarms of Japanese naval aircraft. We drove toward the mountain backdrop, then left our Jeep and on foot followed a trail into Pohakea Pass.

As I was to discover many years later during repeated visits and residence in the islands, climbing Hawaiian mountains is no picnic. Trails are washed out by torrential rainfall, leaving nothing underfoot but trenches of slippery red mud. As we climbed, Tom would suddenly freeze, point, and there in our binoculars would be a brilliant apapane, or i'iwi, or perhaps a tiny wrenlike elepaio---birds found nowhere else in the world. One discovery after the next was thrilling to both of us, especially when we heard, then saw, an o'o, now extinct on O'ahu, and probably throughout the islands.

Hours into the climb we entered a steep-walled, heavily vegetated gulch, pushing our way through a thick growth of tree ferns, lobelias, and o'hia trees. Suddenly above us and to the side were two sharp metallic clicks, one to the left, one to the right, their sources hidden by the dense tangle of tropical vegetation. A voice rang out.

"Halt! Who goes there?" "Naval officers," I called back. "What are you doing here - sirs?" "Looking for birds," shouted Tom. There was a very long silence. Then, "You'd better haul ass the hell out of here - fast! SIRS!" We left.

We learned later that we had stumbled into the perimeter of the most advanced radar installation the United States had at the time. We scratched that area from our birding itinerary.

Tom Polhemus was a remarkable person, possibly the most gifted, dauntless naturalist I've known. After the war we kept in touch for a while, then drifted apart. Within a few years he and

his equally adventuresome bride flew by small plane over South American rain forests to the high Andes, no doubt in search of little-known birds to study. He was also a mountain climber, and somewhere in the vastness of that uncharted land they vanished.

I found innate greatness in Tom Polhemus. Despite his youth, he was the kind of man people were attracted to and followed. I am as convinced today, as I was almost sixty years ago, that here was a person whose name could be known around the world - a Roger Tory Peterson, a Jacques Cousteau, a David Attenborough. He was not a foolhardy seeker of glory and fame, but was driven by an intense joy of discovery, an obsession with truth, and a need to reveal it to others. I treasure his memory and wish we could have had more adventures together.

-William H. Amos, JLS 7/2/42  
Author's note: I would appreciate hearing from anyone with thoughts and memories of Tom Polhemus. Bill Amos, P.O. Box 342, Lyndonville, VT 05851, email: wamos@together.net

**COLLECTIONS PROCESSING**

Student Assistants, Ms. Lena Potyondy (CU 01, US History/Spanish) and Ms. Karen Gifford (CU 01, Humanities) have begun processing JLS Collections. Ms. Gifford began with the *Calvin Dunbar*, the *Ross Ingersoll*, and the *William Hudson Papers*. Ms. Potyondy started her processing with the *Guy Riccio*, the *Dean Towner*, and the *Warren Johnston Collections*. Initially we began by pulling small collections from the individual files and turning them into small collections under their own names. Those JLS graduates who send only resumes or vitas will have their resumes filed under individual files in the *Japanese Language School Collection*.

## The Facility and Hours

Archives is located in the basement of Norlin Library at the east end of the historic quadrangle on the Boulder campus of the University of Colorado.

The Archives is open MWF, 1100-1700, but is staffed from 0800-1700, M-F. Out of town researchers may arrange for early and every day entry. Photocopying and both photographic and audiovisual reproduction services are available upon request.

## To Donate

If you wish to donate your materials, please contact the Archives to insure the proper mailing address. For large shipments, the archives will reimburse expenses. Upon receipt of materials we will send the donator a deed of gift with instructions. The donator must return to the Archives signed deeds of gift. The Archives will then provide copies of preliminary inventories and guides to donors and donor families when available. Feel free to contact us at any time.

## Contact

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## New Collections

The following are further collections held or recently received by the Archives:

- Ted Adelson
- William Amos
- Jack E. Bronston
- Mary Jane Carroll
- Headley Morris Cox, Jr.
- Robert Fuld
- Hal Linker
- Ramond V. Luthy
- Frank Turner
- Edgar Whan
- Col. Thomas E. Williams, Sr.