

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.

Regional Reunions Generate Interest But Little Action

A number of JLS graduates wrote in concerned that 2002 might be too late for a reunion. 2001 was too early for us. When the symposium fell through, I thought it might be prudent to find out if there was any interest in summer regional mini-reunions for 2001.

While I received a number of replies, the response was like asking for volunteers to step forward at morning formation – the whole unit took a step backwards. That is not to say that I do not understand. I do. When I consider my parents (of your age) entertaining, I remember their infirmities. In the past, they entertained often – my mother being a champion hostess. The more I thought about the burden placed upon hosts, the less I felt that any mini-reunions would occur. If any are planning small gatherings, do not let this article dissuade you. I would also like to thank those who tried.

David M. Hays, Instructor/Archivist

Great Entrances

After August 11th, 1945, there were still many Japanese military units that had yet to surrender, disarm and repatriate to Japan. JLOs were often detailed to perform interpretation for such capitulations.

At one island, the Japanese military commander had decided to perform the surrender with the utmost of ceremony: full uniforms and regalia, units drawn up for inspection, a band playing, and swords and flags surrendered, in this way to gain the most honor from a demeaning exercise.

So there were the ranks of Japanese troops in their dress best, formed up on the parade ground. Meanwhile, the assigned JLO was being transported to the island via landing craft. At that very point, he observed what thousands of Marines before him had already discovered -- decamping a landing craft was no mean feat. For no sooner did the Japanese formation strike up their band and come to attention, than the JLO fell face first, headlong, into the surf.

*Story from Frank Tucker
JLS 1943*

[Ed. Note: Names were withheld due to both suspect memory and an unwillingness to further ridicule the JLO in question.]

Reprise on Sensei Hosts

"As I read through *the Interpreter* (a fine title) for April 1, I noticed the recollection of Dr. Robert Thornton. Mr. and Mrs. Okamoto entertained my husband and me at dinner and bridge.

How they ever came to invite us, I do not remember. But we had a wonderful time – on several levels. Mrs. Okamoto prepared Japanese dishes (topped off with lemon meringue pie!). She gave me new Japanese recipes, written in a beautiful America hand. And they were excellent bridge players. They

had two small children. Their gracious hospitality was very touching and memorable; we were lonely, poor, and far from home."

*Sincerely,
Priscilla L. Kschinka
2150 Indian Creek Blvd. E.
Apt. B 220
Vero Beach, FL 32966*

Another Take on Late JLS Graduates

"Now, turning to the February 15th *Interpreter*, I find that I am among the 7/44-7/46 Entrants. The reason I was so late in your group of students in that, a month after Pearl Harbor, my unit of the 2nd Marine Division (then at San Diego) was sent to defend American Samoa. Shortly after my arrival, Captain Ferdinand Bishop, USMC, a 1937 graduate of the Embassy School in Tokyo, was directed to conduct a 6-month course in beginning and military Japanese. We had no BIJs in the Brigade, so they selected people with some foreign language background. I'd been a French major at UCLA, so I became a Japanese Language Officer instead of an 81mm mortar platoon leader. This was probably a distinct advantage as mortar units tended to attract lots of enemy fire.

In October '42 we joined the 1st Marine Division in the Solomon Islands on Guadalcanal. After the Guadalcanal operation, we went to New Zealand to refit, and we were sent to POW camps in New Zealand and New Caledonia to interrogate and translate. The next operation was Tarawa (only five days), and we escorted the Korean labor POWs (there were no live Japanese) back to Pearl Harbor.

Having completed better than two years in the South Pacific, two of us from the Samoa School, myself and Lt. Elmer Stone, were ordered back to the US for leave and more education. We were assigned to

enter the July 1944 class, along with Ens. Winebrenner, who'd been a prisoner in a Japanese Internment Camp in Shanghai. Because all three of us had had previous training in Japanese, a shortened course was set up for just the three of us. We completed our course in July 1945 and Winebrenner and I were sent back to the Pacific.

As far as I know, we three, plus a Navy Commander who escaped from the Philippines and got to Australia via Indonesia, were the first students to have had actual contact with Japanese forces in the field prior to arrival in Boulder. The Commander was a student in the Malay course. I should mention three other graduates of the Samoa School attended Boulder: Capt. William Croyle, Lt.'s Seldon Brown, and Ralph Baker. They all graduated from Stillwater."

*Col. Harry D. Pratt, USMC ret.
JLS, 1945*

Yet Another Coincidence

It turns out that unbeknownst to the students, staff, or faculty of the Archives, one of our staff is actually the son of a JLS graduate. Harvey N. Gardiner, long-time staff archivist here, is the son of late Clinton Harvey Gardiner, JLS 1944.

After leaving Boulder, the elder Gardiner attended the Princeton School for military government, served on the military government staff at Fort Ord and Monterey, and was assigned to the 3rd Marine Division as interpreter to General Blake's staff. He also spent five months at Truk and related areas removing Japanese personnel. He was an academic historian whose work on South America included Japanese topics.

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.

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.

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[www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/arv/
frontpage.htm](http://www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/arv/frontpage.htm)

New Collections

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

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New JLS Website:

<[http://www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/arv/col/
jlsp.htm](http://www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/arv/col/jlsp.htm)>