

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

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★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

October 1, 2002

Our Mission

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, letters, photographs, and records of graduates of the US Navy Japanese/Oriental Language School, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1942-1946. We assemble these papers in recognition of the contributions made by JLS/OLS instructors and graduates to the War effort in the Pacific and the Cold War, to the creation of East Asian language programs across the country, and to the development of Japanese-American cultural reconciliation programs after World War II.

Sensei Story

John McLean gave me an enthuasiastic roundup of the Boulder gathering by phone. He said he had a photo of himself, me and Yoshida Sensei in New York (sometime in the '40's). I don't recall that occasion, but I do remember that, when the language school went on leave for holidays, most of the faculty, as recent internees, were meant to restrict their travel to a certain radius from Boulder. Yoshida-San, however, irrepressibly extroverted, preferred to spread his wings somewhat beyond the prescribed limitation, and managed to get to New York and back "without incident". When asked how he had managed this, he replied that he had pinned a huge badge on his lapel reading "I am Chinese". Train passengers and others would typically say, "Oh, I can always tell the difference" and, in some cases, throw an arm around his shoulder and escort him to the bar for a free drink...

Tom Flournoy
"Winter" JLS 1944

A WAVE Comment

Each issue of *the Interpreter* seems to be more fun to read than the last. I thoroughly enjoy them all am very grateful to those of you who edit and mail so often.

However, there has been a lack of information from us WAVES. You did mention "Momo" Hofstra's marriage to a British Officer Kennedy. So now you are hearing from a WAVE.

I went to the last JLS reunion with my Boulder Roommate, Kay Herriger Clauset. She married a Marine Officer (not JLS). But alas, Kay is no longer with us; and I can't face another reunion without her.

You have done a great job tracking down former sensei; but I haven't noticed the name of Jimmy Inomata. He was a kibe, I believe; rather tall and handsome, I thought. He was interested in sports, as was I. Although I had always been second team or worse caliber, at Boulder I seemed, by comparison to all the super-intellectuals there, to be quite a sports woman. So Jimmy and I played tennis, learned to ride horses, went ice skating and trekking through the mountains until one day, as we were walking on a quiet Boulder street, we saw some older sensei walking toward us. Jimmy immediately became uncomfortable and said, "Let's go up a side street. They don't like to see me with you." And that was the last time he invited me to do anything with him.

So you see that prejudice can work more than one way. We WAVES had a drill instructor named Hamburg. One time when some of us were having a coke with him, he started making derogatory remarks about our sensei. I listened for a few minutes and then said, "Your name sounds very German to me. You know we're fighting the Germans as well as the Japanese." To which he replied

very gamely, "Well, I'm more brawn than brains, I guess."

We WAVES weren't allowed to go overseas and didn't do any interpreting, as far as I know. Our main job was working on messages, maps, etc. in Washington, DC. But after the war, some of us applied for jobs in Japan. I chose Korea at a little better pay and in the land of my birth. I had a very interesting time there doing propaganda work for the Army of Occupation and later the State Department. It was in Korea who also working for the USIS. The Korean War caused to leave Korea for Tennessee and a career in travel.

Elsie Fletcher Caldwell
JLS 1944

[Ed. Note: Your kind words are appreciated by me, as well as by Karen, Cynthia, Megan, and others who have typed in stories, folded, addressed and mailed the newsletters. Alas, we are at the mercy of those who send us stories. The only WAVE to email or write us consistently has been Marylou S. Williams whom I should hire as a correspondent. The men write of the WAVES but theirs is the view of outsiders. We salute your friend and WAVE, Kay Herriger Clauset and would be pleased to print up an obit in this newsletter.]

Plucked from the Sea: Response to Memorial Day Message

The column in *the Interpreter* of May 15th about friend Glenn Slaughter's obtaining the surrender of a Japanese army doctor in the final days of the Okinawa operation, struck me by the many similarities between that operation involving the 29th Regiment and our parallel operation carried out eight months earlier on Guam by the 3rd Marines. These similarities included: both were carried out in high surf off the coast; both used a prisoner or other local to broadcast the appeal to surrender (I can still hear the endless "Kaigan mada dete kite kudasai"); both used an LCI

gunboat for the operation; and both had to use a strong swimmer to get the surrendering Japanese through the surf. A difference was that we plucked far more out of the sea and filled the LCI to overflow, (I slept in the hold only with prisoners) while Glenn's unit took far more on land, as I understand it. Probably the most important similarity was the satisfaction Glenn and I had in the fact that our most important activity in the War was a humanitarian one.

The project greatly increased the number surrendering thereafter on Guam and probably equally so on Okinawa. A far more complete article describing this operation was in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* of November 20, 1944.

Sincerely,
Walter B. Williams
USMCR, JLS 1943

Reprise of Stories

I have been most interested in recent copies of *the Interpreter*, many old memories have been reawakened. Friends from that period in our lives have been mentioned and quoted: Glenn Slaughter, Jack Pierce, Bob Kinsman, Dave Anderson, the Holtom brothers, etc. Having grown up in Boulder, I have been interested in the names of Dr. Gustafson, whose daughter was a friend, President Robert Stearns, who introduced me to my husband in his home and whose daughter Marion has been a close friend for years. She and her husband, Justice Byron White are now living in Denver. [Byron White passed away April 15, 2002, just two weeks after this letter was written.]

I would like to second a letter in *the Interpreter* recently, which stated that the early classes were never referred to as "the Boulder Boys." I had never heard the term until I read it in *the Interpreter*. I can also attest to the fact that there was a close harmony between the Sensei and their families and the students. We had several close friends that

we kept in touch with for years including Martha and Yuji Imai. The citizens of Boulder were, to the best of my knowledge, most hospitable to the sensei and their families.

I have recently had a lovely visit with Hart and Gen Spiegel, old friends from the Language School days, and Hart brought me news of several friends with whom I have lost touch.

A couple you gave mentioned in *the Interpreter* who were most friendly to the Language School students were Muriel and Francis Wolle. Muriel was head of the

Art Department at CU for years and was a close friend and neighbor of ours. We used to walk our wire-haired terriers together when I was growing up. I have two of her paintings and several of her charcoal sketches hanging in my den, reminding me of the old Colorado ghost towns. Later she married my Shakespeare professor, Francis Wolle, and they had many happy years together. At the time we were married in 1942, Francis Wolle was still single and was the unofficial “Housemother” of the Sig Ep house where many of

The JLS students lived including my husband [*you mean the ‘Bastille Bastards’, Slaughter, Holtom & Co.?*]. He was very kind to the students and took them under his wing while they were in Boulder. I was in his Shakespeare class at the time and he came to the wedding, gave our marriage his blessing, and allowed me to cut classes for a week to go on our honeymoon. Now I have rambled on long enough, do you see what a flood of memories your *Interpreter* has opened up?

Betty L. Gregg

New Collections

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

- Brady, John H., Jr.
- Newell, Robert
- Pratt, Harry

\$Donations Received

The Archives has recently received generous donations from:

- Ashikaga, Toshi
- Foley, A. “Mike”
- Johnston, Eunice