

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

Number 100

★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

June 1, 2006

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.

Mah Wai Lok and Louis Leung

Chinese Language Instructors

Mah Wai Lok was a retiring and reserved man, led an interior life and never imposed his philosophy or the philosophy of Lao Tze. After contacting his son, it seemed that I knew more about father than did his son.

Another note on Professor Mah. His name means Mah-horse, wai – v – to become, to be, to act or to perform, lok – camel, according to Chinese custom at 21, one can change given names – a horse becomes a camel, horse/speed – camel/endurance. He liked to show that when you say his name in reverse (it is a palindrome) - camel-horse from endurance to speed. Lao Tze's treatise of 5,000 characters was based on palindromes. He took the name because it was a palindrome, *Tau Teh King*.

Louis Leung painted on campus every afternoon after classes (beauty of trees,

especially in autumn), surrounded by admiring students. Chinese approximation of Flatow means fat – law, lai – courtesy, ban – two trees which cast a shadow. He who follows the law is cautious as the two trees cast a shadow the person leaves an impression. The name was given to me by Dr. Mah

Professor Bernard J. Flatow
OLS 1946
fatlaiban@aol.com

[Ed. Note: Professor Flatow has generously offered four Louis Leung watercolors, in his possession, to the University of Colorado. We helped him to find a home for them in the CU Library's East Asian Library.]

What a Way to Wage War IV

August 1945. The bombs fell, Japan surrendered, and Melbourne went wild. The streets were jammed with people, singing, cheering, weeping, hugging. That night at our hotel there was a celebration. All the old ladies who lived there got out evening dresses they hadn't worn for six years, and came down to dinner with bottles they had been hoarding for just this occasion. The United States Navy contingent brought dates, there was an orchestra, and for several hours all of us, young and old, military and civilian, Aussies and Yanks, ate, drank, sang, danced, waved flags, and generally whooped it up. It is one of the most vivid memories of my time in Australia.

That time was coming to an end. A few weeks after the surrender, several of my colleagues and I were ordered to proceed to Japan to join a project called the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, or USSBS, pronounced Usbus. This project had the task of determining how effective our bombing campaign had been, including finding out what kind of damage had been done to what kind of structures by what kind of bombs. USSBS teams were sent to various

Japanese cities; after a short time in Tokyo I was assigned to a team that went to Nagoya. We were quartered on the top floor of a newspaper building, in space that had served as a sort of club for the officers of the paper. On the floors below, the newspaper was still functioning, and the other interpreters and I used to go down there to chat with the young reporters during their leisure time. We would take things to eat and drink, and they shared with us the sweet potatoes they were always roasting in a wood-burning stove.

The work was interesting. Our team consisted of a dozen or so men, mostly Army but some Navy, and every morning we would go out to visit bombed factories and other buildings in Nagoya and the surrounding countryside. At each place we would be greeted by the Japanese owners or managers, invariably with tea and something to eat. From the beginning we were astonished by the total cooperation we received as we went about our investigations. Tours were given, documents produced, statistics provided, photographs brought out, all with more cheerfulness than we might have expected from people who had lost the war and knew they had to follow our orders. I was the interpreter in many of these encounters, and this posed a problem. I was a Navy guy, and as far as the Japanese language went, I was used to reading and talking about cruisers, depth charges, convoys, and battles at sea. Now, it seemed, I was supposed to be able to talk about girders, reinforced concrete, and factory organization. This led to a certain amount of innovative interpreting. (finis)

Wallace M. Erwin
JLS 1943

The following account is adapted from The Princeton Class of 1942 During World War II: The Individual Stories. Ed. Charles B. Blackmar, The Class of 1942 Princeton University, 2000.

Dick T. Greenwood

JLS 1943

I spoke with my sister and she is interested in helping build a file. She does have some kind of a release from command regarding Gloucester. We will send you a copy along with other information as we find it.

I have been thinking about the information you are looking for. We may not have that much. After WW II, my dad worked for the Central Intelligence Agency up into the 50's. And he wasn't much to talk about the past. I am certain much of the information was classified.

Things I do know that he lived in China for a while. He spoke Chinese. He also lived in Bangkok, then Siam. He was working for the Siamese Police Dept. My mom has an engraved silver set that was given to him with his name by that police Dept. I do not know in what capacity he was working while in China or Thailand. But he was some type of government agent. He told me they had stashes of stuff buried in different locations, guns, gold, etc., in case they ran into trouble. I was born in Bangkok in 1953 after my dad brought the family over. Sounds like the beginning of a Tom Clancy novel.

We left Bangkok about a year after I was born, moving to Fairfax, Virginia. He went on to fight in the Korean war. I think he got out after that and we moved back to Seattle.

Somewhere along the way he learned to speak and translate Russian. I remember in the 60's he helped his sister do some translation for the University of Washington on a book called the Slavic Review.

You probably don't know that prior to joining the Marines, he attended the UW. He was athlete and star football player. Wearing #50 from 1939-1941, he went to the Rose Bowl. In addition, he was one of the first body builders in the area: and if that isn't

enough, a amateur boxer, as well. He once told me he took a fight and was beaten, later to find he had fought the west coast champion out of San Francisco. Well that is enough reminiscing for now.

Mr. Stacey Greenwood

[Ed. Note: I found Mr. Stacey Greenwood during my "Google" search.]

Walter E. Winebrenner Reprise

Thanks for the e-mail with Lina Winebrenner's address. In 1970 I moved my RC Cola, Int'l. Division Office from Tokyo to

Manila to be closer to the center of Pacific operations. At that time, Ted was President of the AIG insurance group for the Philippines. He was also President of the Manila Army-Navy Club, which included both U.S. and Philippine Officers. We saw each other regularly over a period of four years, at the Club and socially. Lina was very active in the entertainment and garment industries. She had a Philippina dance group which traveled the U.S., Asia & Europe putting on dance and fashion shows in major hotels and theaters. They were stunning

girls and I'm sure Ted knew them all! At Boulder, Elmer and I knew him as "kami no Oh kami".

I returned to California in 1974, and saw Ted only once when he visited San Francisco shortly before his death. He was an unusual man, excellent scholar and linguist. He learned his Japanese in 1942 while interned in a Japanese camp in Shanghai as a reporter for the *Shanghai Evening News*. He was repatriated on the 2nd trip of the *Gripsholm*, joined the Navy and was sent to Boulder where he joined Elmer and myself in August 1944. He was very close

to senior officials of the Philippine government in connection with their work on the development of nuclear power and the type of insurance required. He met and married Lina in Manila. Her family had large pineapple plantation holdings on Mindanao. The last I heard from him, he was attempting to develop a resort and casino on that property.

Maybe this will serve to fill in some of the gaps in the data you have on Ted.

*Semper Fi
Harry Pratt
OLS 1945*

Sensei Toki: Language to Ceramics

After the War Akiko Leslie and Rayer Toki founded the Leslie Ceramic Supply Company in Berkeley, which opened in 1946 during a period when ceramics was becoming recognized as an art rather than a craft. Rayer Toki's son, John, recalled that some patrons of the family business were among the most respected ceramic artists of the 20th century, including Robert Arneson, Stephen DeStaebler, Viola Frey, Bailey, and Peter Voulkos, founder of the ceramics

art program at the University of California, Berkeley.

The Toki family was always supportive of sculptors, both developing and established. For more than 25 years the family funded major scholarship awards for Cal State Hayward's annual Student Art Show.

Many times the senior Tokis recognized exceptional talent long before the artists attained fame, and the couple were known for their generous support of "starving artists," who often repaid their kindness — and sometimes long overdue accounts — with art in lieu of

cash. Thus began the tradition, which their son continues, of filling the Berkeley store with objects d'art.

The Toki art collection now includes more than 400 objects, some of which were featured in the 1998 exhibit "More Than Clay: The Toki Collection of Ceramics" at the Pence Gallery in Davis and the Richmond Art Center.

John Toki assumed much of the management of the business upon the death of his mother in 1982, and he became its owner and president when his father died in 2000. His siblings chose

to pursue other careers. John's fraternal twin Walter is a physicist, and his sister Ellengale Toki-Oakley is a math educator and a mother.

*From Nancy Ackley,
"John Toki's Feats of Clay",
Magazine CSUH Alumni
Association, Fall 2002*

Yes, my late father is Rayer Toki (deceased January 2000) who taught Japanese to US Naval officers during WWII at Boulder and after WWII, he and mother lived in Stillwater. I know he would be honored that this work has been recognized.

*Walter Toki
Professor of Physics
Colorado State University*
