

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

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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.

Navy Plankholders

1943 was a very important year in my life. I met my husband and entered the Navy. I was born in Los Angeles (Rafu), California in 1920. My public school education was excellent—in high school I not only took Latin but also Greek. In addition I received very good public and private music instruction. And so I went off to UCLA, to study more Greek and Latin and also French and German. I sang a great deal and developed a music minor to the point that after obtaining a degree in Latin (1941) I was able to pursue graduate work in both Latin (MA 1942) and musicology. I taught Latin, French and music in two San Diego high schools.

In Summer 1943 I was taking a graduate course in music at UC Berkeley and also beginning the study of Japanese. I left the University and after an interview with Hindmarsh I was accepted into the JL program. He predicted I would not graduate. I was in the last group, living at 1111 College Avenue. I really

enjoyed the course and I did graduate. My Navy career included two things I particularly recall. One was being assigned to a group working on PI material, including translating a bunch of hydro-graphic records. The other was working with Larry Brown at the Annex in assembling a list of non-naval Japanese shipping. After the war I did very little with Nihongo, mostly some industrial Telex translations.

Fifty years later I realize that what I have most enjoyed in many of my activities is structure. This was certainly true in language study, with grammar more appealing to me than literature. I concluded my career as a Lecturer in Latin at California State University Los Angeles, teaching Latin, French, and Spanish graduate students for the most part. I also taught a lot of English grammar and writing. For many years I sang art songs in lecture-recitals, particularly settings of the poems of Goethe. Since 1983 I have been writing program notes for a music festival in this area. I helped to found Music in the Mountains and was its first treasurer and second president. I have presided over a number of groups, most recently a large AAUW branch. My interest in bylaws has landed me on the State AAUW bylaws committee. More structure.

That fateful year of 1943 most importantly included meeting my husband. He was Captain William Ludwig Clauset Jr., USMCR. We met in San Diego and two weeks later he left for 27 months in the South Pacific. We were married in May 1945. We were both on active duty in Washington, but by late Fall we had both gone on inactive duty. Ludwig entered upon a business career, 42 years with the Meyercord Co, from which he retired as Comptroller in 1978. In 1973 he had obtained pay status as a 42-yr reserve, by then with the rank of Lt Col. We traveled quite a bit, especially during the years when we were

pursuing our family histories. We had been married 43 years when he succumbed to a brain tumor in October 1988. Our two children are John Hawkins Clauset, a 46-yr-old bachelor, and Louise C. Holt, married to a minister and mother of Jessica, 15, and Kevin, 14. Louise teaches kindergarten while John has a consulting business and also a partnership in a gold claim.

Two years ago I entered my family as plankholders in the Navy Memorial in Washington —my father for WWI in the submarine service; my husband; my son, a Vietnam in-country vet; and me. I feel fortunate to have had my Navy Experience.

Kay Herriger Clauset
JLS 1944

from
Boulder WAVES 50-Year Reunion
July 16-19, 1993

[Ed. Note: We were informed by Elsie Fletcher Caldwell, JLS 1944, Kay Clauset's very good friend, that Ms. Clauset had passed away after the 1993 WAVE Reunion.]

William J. Obermiller 77, OLS (1945-) 'Spanking Judge' of 1960s

Retired Whiting City Court Judge William J. Obermiller, 77, known nationwide as the "Spanking Judge" after he ordered a teen defendant's hide tanned by a courtroom bailiff in 1962, died Monday, Aug. 14, 2000, in St. Margaret Mercy Healthcare Center in Hammond after a stroke.

Judge Obermiller's 36-year judicial tenure reflects much about changes in the American justice system -- and in American society at large -- over the last four decades. While his 1962 punishment now seems outlandish, at the time it was widely praised; he was one of several judges who meted out similar sentences nationwide.

He ordered courtroom spankings for teens who were

unruly in court; long-haired ruffians were taken to a nearby barbershop for compulsory haircuts; and a high school dropout picked up for reckless driving was sentenced to 6 months' labor in the city garage.

Those punishments earned him frequent invitations to speak to homeowners, school assemblies and parents clubs, and Judge Obermiller was a guest on numerous television talk shows. But recently, he acknowledged that such punishments -- especially the spankings -- would no longer work, his daughter Alice said.

"He said nowadays this would not be the way you would treat kids," she said. She said her father was a peaceful man who feared people would think of him as violent for the spankings he once ordered.

Obermiller said her father greatly lamented that the simpler times in which those punishments were ordered seemed to have passed away forever. Whereas early defendants in his courtroom received even more severe punishment when their parents got them home, he noted that in recent years parents seldom even accompanied their children to court.

"That made him very sad, because he sensed how alone those kids were," his daughter said.

Born and raised in Whiting, Judge Obermiller graduated from Whiting High School in 1941 and from the University of Notre Dame in 1947. He served in the Navy during World War II and attended Notre Dame's law school after the war to earn his law degree. From 1953 until 1982, he worked as an attorney for the Amoco oil refinery in Whiting. Elected to the city bench in 1958, he generally handled juvenile cases, public intoxication, petty theft and domestic crimes; he was re-elected nine times and once turned down an invitation to run for mayor.

"There's no question about it: He was an institution," said Whiting City Judge William W. Ciesar, who called Judge Obermiller "a very, very good judge."

"He tried to make every effort to understand the circumstances behind the case but also to understand the individual person as a whole," Ciesar said.

"I think it was demonstrated by the uniqueness of some of his punishments."

Judge Obermiller was also distinctly softhearted. He studiously avoided sending

defendants to jail. He often gave reading and essay-writing assignments as terms of probation and once suspended his sentence for a candy store employee caught gambling at work and offered to help the man find another job.

In 1962 Judge Obermiller's public profile hit its height outside of Whiting. The summer had been a hard one for police. Gangs and "clubs" drank and fought on the city's beach, graffiti plagued its buildings and juveniles often openly challenged their parents' and the

city's authority in court.

Judge Obermiller gave that first spanking sentence to a young man who called his mother an idiot during a court session.

"All I know is, physical punishment seems to work," he told the Tribune in 1963. "Last year we had 50 arrests over the 4th of July weekend; this year we had one. Apparently the word got around."

In addition to his daughter, Judge Obermiller is survived by his wife, Ann; another daughter, Sara Gallucci; a sister, Alyce

DeLand; and two grandsons.

By James Janega
Tribune Staff Writer
Chicago Tribune, 16 August 2000
Obituary

Yoneo Sakai News Reporter, Editor, Sensei & Radio Host

Yoneo Sakai (1900-1978) was a editor for Japanese language newspapers in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York. He also traveled around the world as a correspondent for the *Asahi*

shimbun from 1931 until the outbreak of World War II when he was interned in the Granada Relocation Center. During the War, he was commissioned to teach Japanese at University of Colorado, and hosted a radio program, *Amerika Dayori* (*News from America*). The Sakai Papers are housed at UCLA, in the Young Research Library. The collection consists of Sakai's correspondence, manuscripts, published works, notebooks, and diaries.

The Yoneo Sakai Papers
Young Research Library, UCLA

JLO/Ordained Minister On Peleliu?

Dear David:

One of my sons just lent me his copy of "A Special Piece of Hell" by Bill D. Ross about the battle of Peleliu. I seem to have heard of a Marine language officer who was an ordained minister and was a language officer at Peleliu. I think he went to Boulder, but I had never been aware that there were any ordained ministers aboard. My first reaction was that I had seen this in *The Interpreter*, in which case you might be able to identify the guy. Or, my memory is malfunctioning, in which case I apologize for troubling you. Son Kent says he doesn't remember any such person

mentioned in the text.

Glenn Nelson
JLS 1944

Dear Glenn:

Before I answer your questions, I wanted to let you know that at long last the Libraries have used photographs we offered to be placed on parts of our webpage. You will never guess which photo they used for they JLS page (they picked from an array we provided), ... the photo of you burning the midnight oil, bent over a desk studying.:
<http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/arc_hives/collections/jlsp/index.htm>.

There is also a 1937 photograph of Baker Hall (the men's dormitory assigned to the JLS in 1942), used several times.

I have just searched The

Interpreter and found four stories about Peleliu: Issue #40 with a letter from Martin Orlean, JLS 1944, about Bob Moore, JLS 1944; Issue #46 comments on Edwin Dunmore, USMCEL, wounded on the island; Issue #71A, obit of Daniel Karasik, JLS 1944; Issue #75 has a letter from Theodore Harbaugh, JLS 1944. But I think you are recalling a comment by Harry Foote, JLS 1943, about Fr. John Baptiste Hasbrouck, JLS 1943 in Issue #61. Hasbrouck was a very devout Catholic during his JLS time, but he did not become a Trappist monk until after the War.

DMH, Editor

[Ed. Note: I am happy to perform such searches in *The Interpreter*, as I have all the issues in one folder and can let the computer do the looking.]