

# The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

Number 176

★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

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October 1, 2012

## 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.*

## Memoirs Of Ari Inouye

(Cont'd) Ida and I were warmly welcomed by the people of Boulder. Later we found that this was not always the case with some of the instructors who later joined us from many of the relocation camps that were located in various parts of the United States. It is not hard to imagine the apprehension, fear, and the changes that were bound to be felt, along with the stresses and strains of war, when about 100 teachers and their families descended upon the community of Boulder all about the same time.

Our first experience and contact with the new Navy students was with Shirley and Wayne Suttles from the University of Washington. Since we were looking for a home and they, an apartment, the real estate agent decided we could go together. When they found an apartment first, they invited us to stay with them until we found a home.

The home we rented at 861 Ninth Street, according to the Archives, University of Colorado, is now a heritage house. Our grandson, Nathan, who is a graduate of Boulder, found a picture of this house in the Archives. Boulder is a beautiful place nestled in the foothills of the Rockies. The Flatirons, the magnificent rock formations nearby, are Boulder's landmark.

Our new neighbors, Professor Charles, and his wife Ruth, Vavra, warmly welcomed us to the neighborhood and we developed a wonderful friendship. After the war and our return to the Bay Area, they visited us. We were able to show them many of the places of interest, such as the University of California, Berkeley campus, the Stanford Campus, San Francisco, and the three bridges, the Golden Gate, the Richmond-San Rafael, and the Oakland-San Francisco Bay Bridges.



Susumu Nakamura, "The Big Chief", April 1943, Pineau, 06\_05\_00\_06 (Detail)

In terms of the Japanese Language School (JLS), I did not know any of the faculty members when Pearl Harbor occurred, except for Susumu Nakamura. Sus taught at a Japanese language school for children in Oakland while we were students at the University of California in Berkeley. Sus and I took a class in Political Science together and shared lecture notes. He was not always

able to attend classes since he worked; he not only taught the Japanese language but drove the school bus as well. Since I left to further my education in Japan upon my graduation, I do not know much more about his involvement at Cal. To my knowledge, Sus did not teach at the University, nor was he on the faculty at the time.

As for Professor Ashikaga, "Ashikaga Sensei," I did not know him and did not take any classes from him. I do know that he was among the *sensei*, the original eleven *sensei* who taught in Berkeley, as part of the Japanese Language School. Later, the name was changed to Oriental Language School to include the Russian and Chinese Languages, as well. This took place in Boulder, Colorado.

I did know Miss Florence Walne who became the Director of the language school; Sus became her assistant. Miss Walne was the one who offered me the job of "*sensei*" and who hired me at the recommendation of Dr. Chitoshi Yanaga. (to be cont'd)

Ari Inouye  
USN JLS Sensei  
1942-1946

## Forrest R. Pitts, Ph.D., F.R.C.

RECENTLY (in 2006) Frater Forrest R. Pitts of Santa Rosa, California, has voluntarily applied his proofreading and editing skills to Rosicrucian books, rituals, and a number of other documents. As an example of his volunteer efforts, Frater Pitts was one of the principal proofreaders for the Order's recently published book, *Rosicrucian History and Mysteries*. His expert knowledge of grammar and editorial style, combined with a profound understanding of the Rosicrucian teachings and a precise eye for detail, have proven to be of immense value in this important service he has performed for the Order.

A longtime Rosicrucian,

Frater Pitts joined the Order in 1942 at eighteen years of age, with the encouragement of his father, who was an ardent admirer of H. Spencer Lewis. His AMORC background includes two terms as Master of the Santa Rosa Pronaos, and he worked alongside other Pronaos members in preparing the promotional video for the 2004 AMORC World Peace Conference. Some years ago Frater Pitts served on the original committee that designed the AMORC booth for exhibitions, and he later helped operate that booth (and its successor) at New Age Exhibitions in San Francisco and the Health and Harmony Fairs in Santa Rosa. At local Rosicrucian retreats Frater Pitts was often a presenter, speaking on poetry, learning languages, famous teenagers, and the politics of apology. Thus, Frater Pitts' most recent efforts, in applying his proofreading and editing skills to AMORC publishing projects, are part of a longtime pattern of voluntary service to the Order; and the Grand Master, Publications staff, and Rosicrucian Research Library greatly appreciate his service in this area.

Frater Pitts' professional field is cultural geography. He holds three degrees from the University of Michigan. Before his retirement in 1989, Dr. Pitts taught at major universities in the United States, Canada, and Korea for thirty-five years. During those years he created and chaired many conferences and wrote numerous articles, papers, and reviews. Frater Pitts lived in Japan and South Korea for three years each. In Japan he worked on the regional differences in rural prosperity, and later researched marriage patterns. On his first trip to Japan in 1951, Frater Pitts was honored to speak with Emperor Ralph M. Lewis in San Jose on the future possibility of introducing the Rosicrucian teachings to Japan. He also worked as an

anthropologist for a government study on Okinawa in the early 1950s concerning the sources of tension between local people and Americans. In Korea he first served as an agricultural economist for the Korean government, and devised a hand-tractor program for its farm mechanization plans. Frater Pitts held a Fulbright grant in 1971-72 to study the internal morphology of thirty-two Korean cities. He is one of the few geographers forming an intellectual bridge between the East and West.

Frater Pitts has always been interested in languages. Beginning with Esperanto club and Latin classes in high school, he continued with his interest in languages, later serving as a Japanese language officer for the Navy during World War II. He studied Mandarin for three semesters, and was tutored in Korean in 1972 for the equivalent of a full year course. Always open-minded and somewhat of an iconoclast, Professor Pitts comments that as a teacher, "It was a joy to learn of new discoveries and to pass along to my students accurate information and interpretations rather than tattered and worn outlooks."

Rosicrucian Digest  
No. 1, 2006  
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[Ed. Note: High time I honored Forrest "Woody" Pitts. He also voluntarily proofreads and edits The Interpreter.]

#### CIVILIAN WORK DURING THE OCCUPATION

(Cont'd) Shindo turned out to be very helpful, even with the baby. He told me later that he had used "the American method", whatever that is, in raising his own two sons. I taught him to drive a Jeep in a vacant lot, which was a real kick for him. We were both baseball fans and played a lot of catch in that same lot. Shindo was short of presentable clothing, so I gave him some of mine. Japanese tailors at the time had of necessity become experts in uragaeshi, "inside out" tailoring. A worn garment would be disassembled and the parts sewn together again so that the less

worn inner surfaces were exposed. The things I gave Shindo were too large for him, which made the operation even more interesting. After the garment was disassembled the pieces had to be cut down to fit a smaller person. Presto! A new suit!

One of the "sources" I was given to handle was a chap a few years older than me. He came from a wealthy family. His day job was with British Airways. I discussed with him a place we might meet without being conspicuous. He suggested that I join the Palace Riding Club, some of whose members were foreign diplomats. To participate in this elite outfit, I had to be properly attired. I ordered boots from the finest maker in town and tailored jacket and breeches. The cost of this raiment went on the tab, of course, under the category of "operational expenses." I rode a lot in Nebraska as a youth, with a western saddle or bareback. Here in Japan I had to use the little pancake English saddle which was strange to me and uncomfortable.

I went through the same drill with another source. He suggested we meet at a small restaurant in Shinjuku which specialized in wild game. This was a small place with about 12 booths and tables. The owner of the place was Tochigi Masaji, who was always in the center of things. It was staffed by his wife, his son Tsuneyasu and two daughters. The two specialties were wild boar and venison, though other game was sometimes available. Tochigi once imported a kangaroo from Australia, but he said it wasn't good and never made the menu. To my taste the wild boar meat, sliced thin, grilled on a very hot skillet and served with shungiku, spring chrysanthemums, was an unlikely combination, but delicious: with beer and/or sake, of course. I became a close friend of Tochigi-san, a stocky bearded man who always wore a red plaid flannel shirt, and went there with family and friends for many years.

Semper Fi  
Glenn Nelson [RIP Glenn]  
JLS 1944

#### Bill Beasley: An Appreciation

Like many of his contemporaries at SOAS in the 1950s and 1960s, Bill Beasley was not only a scholar of great distinction but a man of unusually wide and varied experience. He came to London as a student in 1936, and began an undergraduate course at UCL. It was an uneasy period in London, and for a young undergraduate from rural Northamptonshire, it must have been a stimulating one. The Battle of Cable Street, a violent clash between Mosley's British Union of Fascists and left-wing supporters of the East End's Jewish community, erupted in October 1936, and though Mosley's blackshirts were routed, sporadic street fighting occurred from time to time thereafter. Bill and some fellow undergraduates went to see what was going on in one such skirmish, and had to retreat speedily as missiles – mainly potatoes with razor blades embedded in them, Bill used to say – rained down upon them. As an undergraduate, Bill was a keen rugby player, and in due course won a place on the University of London rugby team. One suspects that it was this early commitment to rugby that sowed the seeds of the back trouble that was to plague him later years.

In 1940, Bill joined the Royal Navy, and the Navy may well have helped to shape his outlook, for even in the 1960s, long after the end of the Second World War, his everyday demeanor carried echoes of the bluff, cheerful camaraderie of the naval wardroom. In fact Bill began his service not on board ship but as a young officer helping to monitor German E-boat activities in the English Channel. On one memorable evening, he used to say, he found himself, much to his horror, left in charge of the vital operations room in which the Channel shipping was being closely monitored. While anxiously engaged about his duties, he was suddenly interrupted by a civilian who had no business to be there. Bill was about to give the man a piece of his mind and bundle him out,

when the civilian revealed himself as the King of Greece in exile, sent to view naval operations as a guest of the British government. Bill's later war experiences included service on the destroyer HMS Tartar, which took part in the large-scale naval operations that culminated in the sinking of the German battleship Bismarck and, following a medical examination which revealed problems with his eyesight, secondment to the US Navy's Oriental language school, in Boulder, Colorado, where he took a Japanese language course designed for naval officers. Although this marked the beginning of Bill's lifetime involvement with Japanese studies, he used to say that the language course, and his early experience of Japan in 1945, were entirely directed towards naval business, and at first gave him no particular interest in academic work. Be that as it may, Japan at the end of the war clearly left a profound impression on him, and on his return to Britain, and following demobilization in 1946, he embarked on a Japan-related Ph.D. at UCL – research work that culminated in the publication of *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan, 1834-1858*. At the same time, he began part-time teaching at SOAS, a commitment that soon led to a full-time lectureship, and, in 1954, to his appointment to the Chair of Japanese History.

In 1950, Bill was given study leave and visited Japan to collect books for the SOAS Library, to explore primary historical research materials and to develop contacts with Japanese historians (we may perhaps note here in passing that Bill was the very opposite of the blinkered, Eurocentric "Orientalist" historian as described by Edward Said). At the suggestion of Vere Redmond, then at the Japanese embassy, he became attached to the Shiryō Hensan-jo (資料編) Tokyo University's rich depository of Japanese historical materials, whose staff gave him expert guidance on Japanese-language research materials as well as valuable introductions to Japan's leading historians. For an historian interested in mid-nineteenth century Japan, the

attachment turned out to be doubly beneficial, for the Shiryō Hensan-jo had just been given responsibility by the Japanese government for compiling materials on the history of the Meiji Restoration, a crucially important phase of Japanese history that became Bill's central research interest.

By the 1960s, by which time he had paid a second visit to Japan and had become very happily married, Bill had emerged as an important figure at SOAS. His invariable good humour, his conviviality and his penetrating intellect and wisdom, made him one of the best-liked of the School's staff, within SOAS and in the university world outside. For many years, he served as chairman of the history department's Far East History Seminar, a weekly gathering that attracted a knowledgeable audience, including visitors from overseas, and that served as a fruitful forum for the discussion of East Asian history. Bill was an outstandingly good chairman. He would listen to a presentation with the utmost care, his features immobile and his eyes sometimes closed, and would then effortlessly seize on the main issues to be discussed, gently guiding those present to explore the broad intellectual questions that the presentation had raised. Almost always, Bill could find gold in the midst of what appeared at first sight to be unpromising dross, and he had the happy knack of being able to develop even the most dully descriptive subject matter into a source of thought-provoking ideas. One might add that a Beasley seminar was not an intellectual bullfight, in which the fittest survived and the weakest went to the wall, but an egalitarian and civilised pursuit of enlightenment, and one that provided inspiration for all present. The sense of fulfillment and the pleasure that he gained from his work was infectious.

Moreover, through the medium of the seminar and through his teaching and research, Bill by example illustrated what he took to be the intellectual desiderata of modern area studies. In his view, area studies should be first and

foremost firmly grounded in good linguistic competence – he would have found the notion of a Japan specialist without any command of the Japanese language too bizarre to contemplate. In addition, area studies in the Beasley view should not consist simply of the discovery of new and interesting facts about the area in question, but should be grounded in, for want of a better term, international comparative perspective. When Bill spoke or wrote about feudalism, he did so from the viewpoint of one who was very well versed in the institutions of feudal Europe; when he addressed the topic of Japanese imperialism, he brought to the task a well-informed awareness of other examples of imperialism, and used this awareness to illustrate the uniqueness of the Japanese case.

His invariable good humour, his conviviality and his penetrating intellect and wisdom, made him one of the best-liked of the School's staff.

Whether in writing books, or in teaching students, or in chairing seminars, at the heart of Bill's work was a huge enthusiasm for, and a quite irrepressible enjoyment of scholarship. Bill was occupied in doing something that he genuinely loved doing and, happily, the sense of fulfillment and the pleasure that he gained from his work was infectious and became a source of inspiration and encouragement to his colleagues, staff and students alike.

Bill was a sociable man, and enjoyed meeting Japanese studies colleagues, and for that matter anyone else who was interested, around the Common Room table for coffee and a chat after lunch. In those far off years, when the pressures on time were far less frenetic than they are today, the conversation would range agreeably over many things: Bill's wartime experiences, his early travels in Japan, his dealings with Japanese scholars, and interesting aspects of life in Japan. Sadly, however, such convivial and educative occasions became less and less frequent. Perhaps inevitably, Bill became increasingly drawn into heavy administrative duties,

including those for the University of London, an institution which in those days still had a meaningful existence, and to which Bill was intensely loyal. The effects of cutbacks in university expenditure began to gather pace, teaching loomed ever larger, and involved ever bigger groups of students, and even in the 1980s, trends in university research funding began to inexorably push people away from the broad field of area studies and into small and cramped disciplinary boxes. A new world was in the making, and Bill (in common with many others) found it not to his liking. On one occasion, Bill remarked ruefully that he himself would never have survived probation under the increasingly demanding conditions that young academics were becoming subject to. Not surprisingly, more of Bill's generation began to elect for early retirement, and he himself, his decision partly influenced by increasingly persistent and painful troubles with his back, went in 1983.

But this was by no means the end of his scholarly activities, and an enviably abundant stream of high-quality publications, particularly on aspects of Japanese imperialism, streamed from him throughout his retirement. With his death, we are deprived of an exemplary scholar and a source of penetrating ideas on modern Japan, but we are left with many vivid memories that give us very great pleasure, and that provide signposts to the best way ahead in years to come by.

*John Sargent  
Emeritus Reader in Geography  
SOAS*

*JRC News  
Newsletter of the  
Japan Research Centre  
January 2007, No. 55  
p. 6-7*

### **Norris L. Sample OLS 4/2/45-**

Norris L. Sample, born August 17, 1925, in Elmhurst IL, passed away May 18, 2009 following a 10 week illness.

Norris Sample grew up in Elmhurst, IL and was the younger of two boys. His brother Jim was 11 years older.

Norris graduated co-salutatorian from York Community High School before entering the Marine V-12 program at Purdue University. During his second year at Purdue he joined the US Navy Japanese Language School at the University of Colorado and later at Oklahoma A&M. When WWII ended he returned to Purdue to complete his education and earned a PhD in Chemical Engineering.

Norris began his career at Monsanto where he spent over twenty years working in manufacturing and operations. This was followed by 20 years with Barry-Wehmiller Co., where he worked in manufacturing and personnel.

Norris met Trudy at Purdue through mutual friends and winning bridge hands and they were married in 1952. They lived in Collinsville, IL before purchasing a home in Glendale where they started their family. In 1962 they built their present home near Westchester Elementary in Kirkwood. Norris and Trudy had three children: Norris (Norrie), Cynthia and Mark. Norris's great love and devotion for his children was demonstrated through his involvement in little league baseball, Indian Guides, Boy Scouts and PTA. Norris loved the outdoors and hobbies included gardening, fishing, golf, stamp collecting and attending musical theater. There were many fun family float trips during the summers with other families and friends. Eventually Norris and Trudy purchased property on the Huzzah near Steelville, MO and spent many weekends there with their children. Life took a tragic turn in 1979 when his oldest son Norrie died.

Grandchildren brought much joy back into Norris's life. From the beginning he was there to help support and raise his grandchildren Laura, Matt, Michael and Rachel. He helped with parties, drove them to activities, cared for them when they were home sick, shared his wisdom, and attended many, many performances and games.

First Presbyterian Church was a significant part of Norris's life. He was an Elder in the Church, and a representative to the

Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery. He served in many ways and enjoyed many activities including the Personnel Committee, Senior Advisory Board, Mission Committee, Pres Club, and the Men's Bible Study.

Norris treasured his many friends and was always interested in their lives and families. Seven of the couples that met during the early Westchester days evolved into the infamous Bridge Club. This group met the first Saturday of every month, played bridge and has shared much for over 40 years.

In retirement Norris volunteered for Meals on Wheels every Monday, and continued to dote on his bride of 57 years Trudy, helping her and supporting her in any way he could.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch  
May 20, 2009 &  
Norris L. Sample Memorial Program

### **The Reminiscences of Donald Sigurdson Willis**

[Donald S. Willis, JLS 1943,  
passed in 2009. This is an excerpt  
of a longer memoir.]

The Seattle Chapter (3) 1938-42

[Cont'd] As the war heated up, so did the number of call-ups, but I continued to be spared. Dad was going through a bad time, and things were not very conducive to study at home (we sought advice from Dr. Guthrie, but nothing came of it). Professor Macy suggested that it might be a good thing for me to study Japanese, so I enrolled in Professor Henry Tatsumi's beginning class. I think I was the only Caucasian in a class of over 20.

I have never felt so lost as in that class, I simply could not make head nor tail out of the language! My professor was unstintingly kind, and gave me the highest marks, but nothing helped relieve my trauma. I am sure this was a factor in my decision to leave school. Although it is true that I had completely run out of money, and in addition, the [Army] Reserve had become increasingly impatient — in fact, my time had run out!

My friend Thor had quit school to take up a career clerk's position in the State Department. He was posted to Bogotá, Columbia, and soon afterward wrote me to say that they needed typists, and to come down as soon as possible. How could I, when I was flat broke? So in my typical impulsive way, I applied for my passport, got certified in the three departments of a ship's crew: engine, steward, and deck, and went down to the Sailor's Union of the Pacific hiring hall, hoping to get on a vessel at the last minute [*Reminds me of an old Todd Moran mystery!*], should no union member be around at the critical moment. It was a long shot, to be sure, because all the seamen from transoceanic shipping were out of work and looking for inter-coastal vessels themselves. I did, however, come close on one occasion, and was actually being shown my quarters in the foc's'l of a lumber schooner (the *Absaroka*, later torpedoed within sight of the Southern California coast, remaining afloat for hours, buoyed up by her cargo!).

So I made another decision, to hitchhike down to San Francisco, try to get another deferment at 6<sup>th</sup> Army HQ in person, and attempt to catch another ship there. My idea was to jump ship with the \$60 or so from pay (maybe an advance) necessary to fly from Panama to Bogotá. How's that for figuring things out [*Sounds like how my bunch figured things out between 1968 and 1972?*]

I had bought a cheap kapok-filled sleeping bag in the Army, so I put inside it a change of clothes with some toiletries, etc., strapped the bag for carrying with a leather belt, and with my worldly wealth (\$4.25) secure in my pocket, I struck off down the highway, thumbing my way southward.

When I woke up from my little camp in the Siskiyous near Yreka, ice had formed overnight on the little pool nearby, but the April sun was not long in appearing, and I got to the City by the Golden Gate well before sunset. I was wearing a purple and gold UW T-shirt as I walked down market street on my way to the Bay Bridge area "South of the Slot" (that is, the Skidrow

section of town around 3<sup>rd</sup> and Howard, south of Market Street). All of a sudden I was hailed by a young man standing in the doorway of the Grand Hotel up around 11<sup>th</sup> Street (past the building with the address 1 Polk, 2 Fell). He said he was from Seattle. We chatted a while—he said he was working and if I wanted a place to stay for a while, I could share the room with him. So I did, and went to 6<sup>th</sup> Army HQ first thing, showed the major my passport and told him of my intention to go to South America, and a miracle took place: he typed, "For reason of contemplated residence outside the territory of the United States for a period exceeding three months"—the words are engraved on my brain — onto a document called "Honorable Discharge from the Regular Army Reserve" (or something like that), handed it to me, wished me luck, and I was a free man, neither in danger of being called into the service nor signed up for conscription (being already in the military).

I spent at least a week — maybe two — haunting the S.O.P., until one day a letter from Thor appeared to the effect: Forget it, all jobs are now filled.

Now it was time to go to work and save money for tuition and expenses at the University in the fall, and I had the summer to do it in. I got a couple temporary jobs which gave me a little cash to repay my benefactor, and which enabled me to buy a black suit of clothes for \$5. There was a tear in the seat of the pants, but I mended that with my sewing kit, dying the thread with black ink from my fountain pen (resourceful? You bet!). Thus attired, I showed up for an interview at The Emporium department store about a mile down Market St. from the hotel. I got the job, to sell records in the music department, at the princely salary of \$19 a week.

Now I could move out of the shared room (a relief, because the radio next door was never shut off and the Andrews Sisters sang "I'll Be with You in Apple Blossom Time" umpteen times a day, seven days a week [*a top ten hit in 1941*]). I got a room at 9<sup>th</sup> and Folsom, over a tavern, but at the end of the hall, for \$6 a

month, believe it or not! And I budgeted 25¢ a day for food. Here's how it worked: I would go to this little Chinese restaurant on Howard St., stepping gingerly around the winos stretched out on the sidewalk. Two small eggs any style, a bowl of cooked oats, half a loaf of stale bread, coffee -- 10¢(!); a Hershey bar (chocolate with almonds) for lunch -- 5¢; dinner on Howard St. -- 10¢. Once and a while a 35¢ binge at a delicatessen, a little fresh fruit at a stand — nothing extravagant. Although fares were only a nickel on the streetcars, I walked in order to save money. Entertainment was provided by the store, for they let me take out albums and single records over the weekends — as much as I could carry — and I came to have friends/customers who had the latest equipment on which to play them. I learned the music to a number of operas, and a lot of symphonic music as well (favorites included the violin concertos of Brahms and Beethoven, among others). I walked all over the city — from the Embarcadero through Golden Gate Park to Fleishacker Zoo, and back — my longest (I thought I would never make it back home!).

I was sort of a musical detective at the store. People would call up on the telephone, as for me, hum, whistle, or sing something, and I was supposed to have the record or records ready when they came in.

Thus passed the summer of 1941. Came autumn, and it was time to go back to school. Brother Ray quit his ship across the Bay in Richmond (now aboard tankers), and he carried one end and I the other as we headed south for a little vacation together. We spent the first night in a vineyard near Fresno. Then came a couple days in Yosemite, Los Angeles, San Diego, Tijuana (Mexico), back up to S.F., north via 101 to Eureka, Grant's Pass, Eugene, Portland, and finally, Seattle. We spent less than \$5 each, and travelled 2500+ miles.

Donald S. Willis  
JLS 1943

[Ed. Note: What a delightful tale about what must have been an idyllic time before war, America in 1941.]