

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

Number 238

★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

arv@colorado.edu

December 1, 2017

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.

An Interview with Dr. Verner Chaffin on March 16, 2012

(Cont'd from Issue #237, p. 3)

Dr. Myers: You were there when MacArthur did the transition from the Japanese Occupation; isn't that correct?

Dr. Chaffin [JLS 1944]: MacArthur was the Supreme Commander, and he took the place of the Emperor. He could out-emperor the Emperor. And the Japanese transferred their respect and veneration of the Emperor to MacArthur. They accepted MacArthur because he was such an authoritarian person and such a leader. So even the Emperor found it necessary to come and pay a courtesy visit to MacArthur.

The Japanese would line up to see MacArthur leaving for lunch at the Dai-Ichi Seimei Building, the number one insurance company building. He would be coming out, and he'd put on a show with his body guards walking ahead. He would be walking along and get in his car. His car said USA Number 1. His

license plate was USA-1.

Dr. Myers: And he had the pipe?

Dr. Chaffin: Yes.

Dr. Myers: Did you ever come into contact with MacArthur?

Dr. Chaffin: I did a couple of times. His intelligence chief, Major General Willoughby, gave us carte blanche entry into any restricted area in Japan, or south of the 38th Parallel, north, or south of the 38th Parallel, which would include much of Korea, for purposes of intelligence. They cooperated with us and all we had to do was show that pass and show that we were part of the intelligence team.

I was assigned to the Naval Technical Mission to Japan. That was a unit that was in charge of dismantling all of the four major naval bases the Japanese had. They had one at Yokosuka up near Yokohama. They had another one at Kure, and another one at Sasebo which was in Kyushu, and one at Maizuru, which was up on the China Sea. We dismantled all of those, and we were looking for any hidden weapons that were in the provisional stage like secret weapons that they were working one developing when the war ended. When we found experimental weapons – we found a number of them – they were packed up and sent back to the United States for further analysis. We had experts in that type of thing to help us make the decision as to what was important enough to go back. So that was our mission in Japan, and it certainly paid big dividends to be able to speak the language.

I remember going to see Dean Miazawa at Tokyo University. I started off referring to Tokyo University as “Akamon” which means “Red Gate.” Alumni and friends of Tokyo University referred to it in that manner because it did have a red gate at the entrance to the campus. My use of the term got the interview with Dean Miazawa off to a good start, but it changes rather

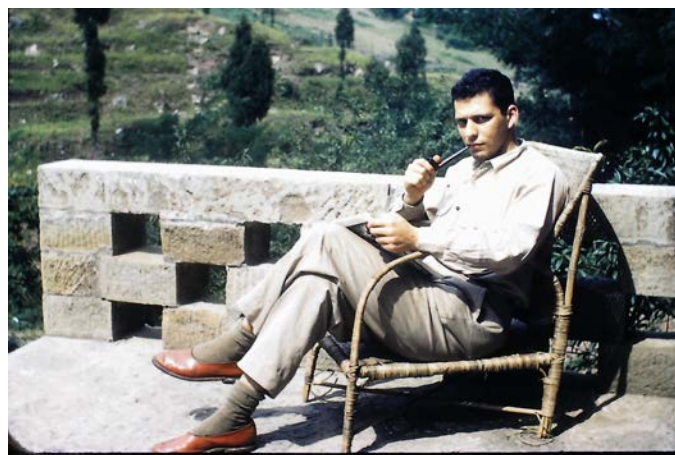
quickly.

Earlier I had used a group of Japanese workers to pack some war materials to be sent to the United States for testing and analysis by our scientists. I had heard the workers' Japanese for days. It was ungrammatical and crude. Unwittingly, I picked up some of their language and wound up speaking two types of Japanese in my conversation with Dean Miazawa. He was visibly shocked and asked, “Where have you been?” And I said, “Oh, I'm sorry. I apologize for using such bad grammar.” He laughed but it was viewed as a serious discourtesy on my part.

[read the rest of the 72 page oral history in The Journal of Southern Legal History]

*Excerpt from
Cayce Myers,
“An Interview of Dr. Verner
Chaffin”, The Journal of Southern
Legal History:
XXII (2014), 51-52.*

A RETURN TO CHINA



[Professor Dore Levy – daughter of Marion Levy, JLS 1943] My part in the adventure began when I was invited by Brown Travelers to serve as Talking Head to their Fall tour, “Classic China and the Yangtze River.” I have never been able to say “yes” before, as a trip to East Asia takes at least two weeks: impossible to manage during a regular term. As I am on sabbatical this year, I realized

that my schedule and Brown Travelers' were finally aligned.

As important as my schedule, our interests were well matched. My research is firmly in China's imperial past, and we were going to visit many crucial sites, the kinds of places where I live in my spirit but never get to view with my own eyes. Furthermore, the trip included a place that I would never go for research, but had POWERful personal reasons for visiting: the city of Chongqing in Szechuan. This is a nexus of family lore, where my father spent his wartime assignment as a Japanese language officer in the Navy scaling the surrounding peaks looking for traditional villages, talking to peasants whose lives were only then, after many dynastic cycles, on the precipice of change. My “Dear Old Dad” was the sociologist who made “modernization” a household word *[at Princeton]*: I thought it would be fitting to see what had happened to his wartime eyries in 2012.

By the time I signed on, the tour had already filled with adventurous travelers, most of whom were disgustingly fit and energetic, both physically and mentally. They were more than capable of tackling the most bizarre and challenging concepts, historical narratives, and aesthetic propositions – and they gave me as good as they got. And unexpectedly, as I accompanied them on their

China trek, I followed a sentimental journey of my own that they supported, respected, and helped me to navigate when the waters got rough.

Let me explain. A peculiarity of my generation in Classical Chinese studies in the U.S. is that we had to sign on, as it were, with the knowledge that we might never be able to set foot on the land to which we dedicated our careers. I began to study Chinese when Mao was still alive, the Cultural Revolution was in full swing, and the Gang of Four had further refinements planned. Inspired if not really convinced by Arthur Waley's mind-blowing announcement that visiting China or Japan would interfere with his visions of these lands, I soldiered ahead with Classical Chinese, for two reasons. First, these texts were under my hands, in western collections and would not be hidden or destroyed. Second, and more hopelessly, at a time when the regime was committed to burying the past – not least by rustivating and hounding many of its intellectuals to death – many of us felt that sinology, the study of China's classical tradition, must be preserved outside China if it was to survive at all. This was the 1970s, after all, and the pace of modernization in China was glacial. No one could have predicted that China would become rich, jump straight into postmodernism, and welcome the outside world, if not exactly with open arms, with shrewd strategies of globalization.

Once in China, I experienced what I knew in my head; namely, that it's past now coexists with its present in dizzying juxtaposition. In Beijing, where the group climbed the Great Wall in a snowstorm that recalled what it must have been like to man that barrier in bitter weather a millennium ago, I met one of my former students, who has lived in Beijing and worked as a journalist for 15 years, married, bought an apartment, lives in Beijing. They even picked me up in their car. The first time I went to China, in 1979, there were no private cars. The avenues streamed with bicycles, and in order to visit an old colleague of my father's

beyond my security-approved zone, I had to bribe a taxi driver and hotwire his car to get to the meeting. A trip in the winter of 1984 did little to dispel the references to Orwell. In 1998, things were beginning to move, but I was caught up in official Brown University business and could not get out to see much for myself.

And here were Jonathan and Amy, driving through the city with nary a bicycle in sight, heading for the Vietnamese restaurant, Susu, which they own and Amy manages. I realized that being propelled half-a-day into the future, across the International Date Line, has become a symbol of being able to travel to China's future and see that it is now. And while I have spent my career studying its past, to be able to stand on Chinese soil, to feel the gravity of China's continuous center of culture from its earliest beginnings to now on this very soil, made me break into tears again and again.

I had already had some inkling of the successful careers of my strange and quixotic cohort of sinologists in Hong Kong, 2010, at the First International Conference on Chinese Ancient Texts and Traditional Culture. I viewed the enormous program, and realized that of the 60+ scholars from China attending the conference, all but two had studied for their Ph.D.'s in the west, mostly in the U.S. The only ones with Chinese Ph.D.'s were under 35 years of age. The work matters.

Perhaps the most exotic part of the trip was the cruise down the Yangtze River from Chongqing to the Three Gorges Dam. I have read thousands of poems about the Yangtze River, but would never have been able to sail on her historic bosom were it not for the Brown Travelers. We flew from Xian to Chongqing to catch the boat, which according to Chinese tradition's sense of auspicious beginnings, was due to set sail in the evening. Although we had only half a day in this city, it crystallized past and present for me in a way that no other place could have done. I know that Chongqing was transformed from an obscure backwater by

the flight of Chiang Kai-shek from the Japanese, with a flock of intellectuals trailing behind him. It makes sense: the Kingdom of Shu, better known as Szechuan, has been the refuge of choice for millennia. Backed into the Tibetan mountain ranges, ringed with mountains to protect the plateau, at the juncture of two great rivers, it is a great place for defense, if not for offense. Even its famous mist protects it: while the Japanese sent bombers from Yichang down the Yangtze, and did a lot of damage, much of the time they could not risk their planes in the fog and rain.

Chongqing technically is no longer part of Szechuan, but its own municipality, directly under the control of the central government. This is partly because there is a need to have a base for directing the development of China's west, and the location is ideal -- west but not too west, leaning to the center but not central. Perhaps more urgently, the city population has jumped to about 11 million within the city limits, and 33 million (!!!) in the municipality as a whole, making it the most heavily populated unit in China. When my father was posted here it was the back of beyond, and now it has a larger population than many countries! This is the result of the displacement of millions of people, most of them peasants, by the construction of the Yangtze River Dam. Their villages were drowned; they were settled in forests of high rises, which did not make the elders among them happy, though the younger generation rejoices in its expanded horizons. It is sobering to think that such a population would be dispossessed and forced to migrate and retool completely in the name of modernization.

Someone like me is bound to feel ambivalent about the Three Gorges Dam. This epic project has been the business of the last 10 years, but it has been in the planning for a century. It has been a dream of modernization for so many regimes. Originally projected to provide China with 10% of its electric POWER, because of the rapid rise of prosperity and demand it only

makes up 3% now – soon a mere 1%, if rates of development are sustained. Standing on the dam, I sympathized with the effort to move away from coal, which comprises 70% of China's energy sources. But the Chinese sturgeon can no longer go upstream to spawn: they are far too heavy to jump up a fish ladder. Villages are drowned with the villagers' ancestors, and thousands of unexplored archaeological sites. In this case, the past really lost, and while Mao would be pleased, I looked out onto the industrial miracle and felt regret.

Only six of us signed on for a two-day extension of the tour to Nanjing. Arriving on a perfect day for sightseeing, we opted to head straight for the east side of the city to see "Purple Hill," where the first Ming Emperor has his tomb, and where the Republic of China built Sun Yat-sen's mausoleum. Both are elegant places to stroll, climb and contemplate the achievements of their tenants, but Sun Yat-sen's tomb complex is a modern symbolic wonder. Magnificent cedars, paved ramps and steps, leading up through several gates 392 steps to the tomb itself. When you climb to the top, you can look back and see that the steps have been built in such a way that they seem to disappear, and instead of a stairway you see what looks like a ribbon of paving leading away down the slope. The architect intended to represent the idea that revolution is hard, but if you get to the top, you will look down upon a smooth road to the future. There are 392 steps to represent the 392 characters in the 1912 Constitution. It does make you wonder: our Health Care Reform Act is 2300+ pages -- how could such a document ever have been so compact?

If 21st century China has not precisely embraced its past, recreational involvement with its monuments and artifacts has become a mode of self-discovery, and self-expression, for many Chinese. Tian'an Men Square throngs with tourists from far parts of China, who have come to see where the Revolution triumphed, and gaze at the palaces and temples of the reactionary past. Fengshui

guides individuals and families in their selection and decoration of their homes and workplaces. Painters open studios and accept apprentices, children play with pet cats, dogs and pigeons, nightlife is part of everyday life, especially for the young.

And young intellectuals write poetry again – just for the fun of it. Our tour guide, Vicki Zhang (Zhang Mei), is a woman of many parts. She is a student of fengshui, or the philosophies of divination arts, and one of her pursuits is poetry. She wanted to translate her own poems, and I teach a seminar on literary translation. We worked together in odd moments, especially in airport cafes waiting for flights hither and yon. Translation between Chinese and English is a muddy business, but we thoroughly enjoyed the attempt. Here is one of her poems:

Early Spring Song

Zhang Mei

Morning so bright, so lovely the scene -- how does Heaven do it?
It's early spring -- just the third month -- my feelings spill over.
Lakeside willows, a bright sunset cloud, like the flash of a single sail,
The leaning moon climbs through my bamboo blinds, balanced halfway uphill.
Pear blossoms just like snow, grass like mist:
The flowers speak not a word, my heart is serene.
Morning? I hear a magpie call, I wake from my spring dream,
This moment aware my mortal self is fully in this world.

Dore J. Levy,
Comparative Literature
November, 2012

[Ed. Note: I include Professor Dore Levy's story, or a return to where her father served during WWII, partly to show another example of the effect the USN JLS/OLS had on the children of the former JLOs and OLOs. Photo of Marion Levy in Chongqing courtesy of Professor Dore Levy.]

VERNON CRENSHAW USMCEL (1918-2003)

Vernon Crenshaw led an interesting life: born in Aransas Pass, Texas, salutatorian in his High School Class. He volunteered for the enlisted man's version of Japanese Language School when he was

tired of carrying a mortar tube up and down the hills at Camp Elliot. He managed to get a copy of the Naganuma text and convinced his CO to use it for the 7 out of 30 guys who survived the 5 month grind of Kanji and Kana.

In the summer of '44 he went to Pearl and got to practice spoken Japanese on the POWs there. He taught Japanese to other soldiers as he rode the Sea Runner out to Peleliu Island.

In short order, from September '44 to April '45, he was promoted from PFC to 2nd Lieutenant, the last step being when he talked some counterattacking Japanese out of their caves and bunkers in January '45. Vernon was sure he could have talked more of the Japanese out, but the Army guys wanted to get "combat pay" of 10\$/month extra, so they killed them. Vernon also remembered an incident where the Japanese POWs requested rice, so he let them go, under guard, back to a cave to retrieve some rice. At the cave, the holdout Japanese soldiers shot the rice foragers dead.

He enjoyed several trips from Peleliu to Guam to deliver prisoners into the care of his EL classmate from Camp Elliot, Calvin Dunbar. Dunbar ran the larger POW stockade on Guam. Vernon also worked with Boulder grad Lt. Danny Maley in setting up loudspeaker systems on Peleliu in July of 45 to help coax out the few remaining Japanese.

Vernon saw Bobby Riggs (yes, the battle of the sexes opponent of Billie Jean King) on Peleliu in '45 after the Sea-Bees built some tennis courts on the island. Vernon loved to play tennis. His son Henry and I played with him in the 1960s and 1970s.

Vernon, who had to drop out of Baylor University in 1936 to support his mother, brother and sister, finally wound up at Harvard in the 1980s. Sergeant Hiroshi Funasaka, grateful for kind treatment by Crenshaw on Peleliu, wrote a war memoir, *Falling Blossoms* that credited the friendly Texan with saving his life. The memoir was on the shelves of the Harvard University library. In 1966,

Vernon and his wife Georgia were given the grand tour of Japan by Funasaka and eleven other POWs Crenshaw knew on Peleliu. Utsunomia POWs gave Vernon a small porcelain lantern with their names on it. Funasaka gave him a 350 year old samurai sword. Vernon gave Hiroshi a Japanese Bible.

Funasaka also gave Japanese author Yukio Mishima a samurai sword—thanks for writing an introduction to his memoir. Mishima used the weapon as part of a grisly suicide ritual in 1970, after an abortive coup at the Japanese Self-Defense Force HQ in Tokyo. Funasaka, at Crenshaw's urging, was baptized at Omori Megumi Church in Tokyo in 1972.

Visits to Japan and Dallas followed for Vernon, Hiroshi and other family members. Vernon died in 2003 at Christian Care Center in Garland, Texas. Hiroshi died in Tokyo in 2006.

Michael Shepherd
History Adjunct

Dallas Baptist University
shepherd.mike@sbcglobal.net

[Ed. Note: I consulted with Mr. Shepherd regarding a longer version of this article, on missionary military language officers and interpreters, which I was able to help direct to Remembrance magazine, the publication of Pacific Historic Parks. At my request, he sent me this version.]

E. Roald Carlson Class of 1948 OLS 3/20/45-

There was one lone professor of Philosophy at St. Olaf College when I returned from the United States Navy in September of 1948 after spending the last 10 months of my enlistment on the island of Guam serving in the Naval Operating Base at Apra Harbor there and doing part time work as a translator of Japanese as I had learned that language somewhat as a student at the Naval Oriental Language School at the University of Colorado at Boulder having been commissioned as an ensign in the United States Naval Reserve in March of 1945. That Professor of Philosophy was Dr. William H. K. Narum who had just received his doctorate in

Theology from Princeton Seminary. Professor Howard Hong, who had been the Professor of Philosophy had been selected as the administrator of a Lutheran Relief Agency in Europe seeking to serve the huge needs of Lutheran Refugees and others in Europe in the aftermath of World War II. Dr. Hong had specialized in the study of Soren Kierkegaard in Denmark before the war . . . knew Europe better than many members of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America at the time . . . and went to Europe to head up that monstrous effort -- enlisting the help of students like Loren Halvorson, Ed Bersagel and Anderson as able assistants. Dr. Hong, and his able assistants along with many others, did a great work. He returned to St. Olaf once during my two years as a junior and a senior there when he spoke in Chapel one day about his experiences and ministry -- the Chapel (the old Gym) was full, many of them veterans of the war who knew the destruction and pathos of the residents of Germany and other nearby countries as well as the plight of the hundreds of thousands of refugees who had fled the encroaching advance of the Russian Army and Communism and made their way into camps set up all over the place to house them and then provide food for them as well. It was a great work and in his Chapel Talk Dr. Hong told of driving his Jeep along an Autobahn once and picking up a lone hitch-hiker with whom he conversed regarding his plight and being told that he was a "Nihilist" now as nothing made any sense anymore to him as he viewed the situation in Europe and his future there. I have never forgotten the picture Dr. Hong painted and his mention of the term "Nihilist" as that was a new term to me. I was fortunate to have Dr. Hong as a professor of Freshman English Literature in the second half of my Freshman Year at St Olaf (January-June of 1943) when Dr. Arthur Paulson was pulled out of English Classes and became an Instructor in Navigation for the United States Naval Cadets in the Pre-Flight Program of the V-

5 effort of the Navy to train pilots for the thousands of planes being produced by a rejuvenated industry. The one thing I remember from Dr Hong's class was his effort to expound on Thomas Hardy's book, "The Return of the Native" . . . an effort I discussed with him several times when I returned to the Hill and visited with Dr. Hong about that semester, when he helped me so much in appreciating English Literature. In my Philosophy Major I focused on Kierkegaard rather heavily and then to do my Philosophy Major Thesis (required at the time and for which I received 3 credits) I wrote a long paper on Dostoyevsky and particularly his message in "Crime and Punishment" and "Brothers Karamasov" -- two books that sort of changed my life as Dostoyevsky wrestled with the great themes of sin and forgiveness and God and hope and whatnot!

Graduating with honors in the Department of Philosophy, a great surprise to me, I went on to Luther Seminary, Biblical Seminary in New York City, and finally earning a Master's in Theology at Princeton Seminary in June of 1953 . . . and then being ordained as a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church at Henning Lutheran Parish, Henning, Minnesota, Ottertail County in August of 1953 serving three churches in the city and countryside. The GI Bill was a "God-send" to me and many others. I used up all 48 months of education on the GI Bill.

After four years I was called to Immanuel Lutheran Church on Snelling Avenue across from Macalester College where I served seven years and then accepted a call to Bethany Lutheran Church in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, New York serving 17 years after which I was at Concordia Lutheran Church in Superior, Wisconsin for ten years . . . retired at age 65 and have lived in St. Paul across the avenue from Stub Hall of Luther Seminary ever since.

My wife is the former Marjorie Jean Mueller, born and raised in Bemidji, MN and a graduate of Concordia College in

Moorhead, MN -- later earning a Masters in Library Science at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, N. Y. She served for years as a Counselor at the Educational Opportunity Center in Bedford-Stuyvesant where students seeking to get up from poverty learned a trade and went to work in Manhattan mostly as clerks and secretaries in the vast office buildings there.

We have four daughters . . . the Rev. Kristine L. Carlson, pastor of Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis, Dr. Paula Carlson, soon to be installed as the 10th President of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, the Rev. Janet Carlson who served a parish in Winthrop, MN and then Grace Lutheran Church, in Lincoln, CA (a suburb of Sacramento) and now a Real Estate Agent in Sacramento, and Carolyn Carlson, an Executive Editor of Viking Penguin Publishing in New York City I am now 89 years old, in good health, and happy that I studied Philosophy at St. Olaf and was exposed to great thinkers who stimulated in me good thinking and later action seeking to serve people in a calling as a Lutheran Pastor.

*Philosophy Department
St. Olaf College*

<http://wp.stolaf.edu/philosophy/1949-and-before-alumni/>

[Ed. Note: This was the first thing we were able to find on him. Unfortunately, when we contacted the St. Olaf College Alumni Office we discovered he had passed away in March of 2015. His obituary will be in the next issue.]

John Edward Allen JLS 1943, 1920-2015

John (Jack) E. Allen, 95, a retired CIA officer, died June 12, 2015, at Falcons Landing Retirement Community, in Sterling, VA., where he was beloved and admired by the residents and staff alike. The cause was heart and kidney failure.

Mr. Allen was a loyal friend to many people: both his keen intellectual curiosity and his sense of humor remained with him until the end. As a manager in the CIA he exhibited a sense of fairness, and great empathy; he cared deeply about the

welfare of his colleagues and their families. He worked hard to break the glass barrier for women and minorities with whom he worked.



Mr. Allen attributes his intellectual curiosity and academic success to his grandfather who taught him Latin, and introduced him to the Great Books before he entered elementary school.

Mr. Allen was completing his course work at the University of Michigan when Pearl Harbor was bombed on Dec 7, 1941. Michigan was one of the few schools to offer a course in Japanese Language, and Mr. Allen devoted his last semester to the study of Japanese with his usual academic vigor. He mastered the language and became fluent in German and French, and could read Latin; he also learned Greek as well as some Spanish and Italian.

After graduation Mr. Allen joined the Marines and was sent to the Navy School of Oriental Language for intensive study of written and spoken Japanese. Mr. Allen earned the bronze star for his service as a Marine intelligence officer in Makin, Marshall Islands, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima, taking part in the initial invasions of these islands. Mr. Allen participated in the surrender of a major Naval base in Southern Japan.

Mr. Allen attended the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies after the war, completing all course work for his doctorate. He would say he was "All but dissertation."

In 1948, Mr. Allen joined the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), an overt branch of the CIA created in 1941 to monitor open source

communications of the Axis powers. Mr. Allen rapidly rose to bureau chief and ran FBIS stations in Cyprus, Okinawa and Tokyo.

Mr. Allen retired as deputy director of FBIS in 1973 and devoted his time to travel, reading and mentoring young friends, most of whom were children of his colleagues at FBIS. Mr. Allen's prized possessions were his books.

Mr. Allen's funeral Mass was held at Christ the Redeemer Church of Sterling and he was interred at Quantico National Cemetery.

<http://www.obitsforlife.com/obituary/1119347/Allen-John-Jack.php>

LT Aloysius Soden Recognized for Service on Truk

"In my remarks on Truk on 2 September 2015, I have decided to focus on the USN JLS/OLS and how its graduates changed history. I will use Brother Soden as the case history.

Also, because I want to develop publicity here on Guam, I would like to research CPL. Cal Dunbar, of Pineau 11_02_00_10, Guam, 1944: CPL Dunbar, SSG Anderson, PFC Hanson, LT j.g. Oliver, LT j.g. William G. Jones, CPT Sandagger. [We did.]

This year the University of Guam removed the general education requirement of two semesters of a "foreign" language, to our dismay! Its Japanese language program had been very popular.

I leave for Truk in three days and will be unable to rely on internet and copying services there."

"I mailed an inquiry to Saint Louis for Lt. Soden's service record DD-214 -- since I have no idea as to the contents in his file at Boulder. Off to my K-57 570 AM radio interview (broadcast live on Guam Fox 6 and live steaming) now. The PNC (ABC) TV news interview will air at 5:30 p.m. on 2 Sept. while I am in Truk (Chuuk)."

*Dianne M. Strong
Ed.D.*