

*The Interpreter*

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

Number 240

★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

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February 1, 2018

**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.*

**Richard W. (Dick) Petree**  
**OLS 2/1/45-**  
**1924-2015**

The founding president of the U.S.-Japan Foundation and a former U.S. diplomat in Japan, Richard W. (Dick) Petree died Feb. 8 at a hospital in Stamford, Connecticut. He was 90 years old.

After service in the U.S. Navy during World War II, Petree earned a master's degree in East Asian studies at Harvard University and entered the U.S. Foreign Service.

A skilled Japanese linguist, his diplomatic career included postings as political counselor in the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, consul general in Naha, Okinawa Prefecture, and consul in Fukuoka.

After serving as political counselor in the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Petree was nominated by President Jimmy Carter to serve as deputy U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations for Security and Political Affairs, with the rank of ambassador. He held that

post from 1976 to 1981.

After retiring from the diplomatic corps, he was the founding president of the U.S.-Japan Foundation from 1981 to 1988.

Petree was also a longtime member of the Council On Foreign Relations.

Born in Jamestown, New York, in 1924, he was the son of Noel H. and Merle (Wilson) Petree.

He is survived by his wife, Virginia, son Richard Jr., daughter Susan and son Daniel. Following interment in Boulder, Colorado, a memorial service in Stamford is planned for early April.

*The Japan Times*  
FEB 20, 2015

**Elizabeth McKinnon Carr**  
**Sensei, 1918-2013**


Elizabeth McKinnon Carr passed away peacefully on January 14, 2013, in the company of her daughter.

Born Elizabeth Kimiko McKinnon in Tokyo on November 1, 1918, to Shinko Mishima McKinnon of Chofu, Japan, and Daniel Brooke McKinnon of Massachusetts, she grew up in Otaru, Hokkaido, Japan, where her father taught English.

She attended Ochanomizu Women's University in Tokyo, where she focused on the study of classical Japanese literature. Upon graduation in 1938, she returned to Hokkaido to teach at Hokusei high school in Sapporo.

In 1941, as war loomed between Japan and the U.S., Elizabeth and her sister, American citizens, left Japan at their parents' insistence to live with their aunt in Massachusetts.

Elizabeth taught Japanese at the Navy language schools at Harvard and in the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colorado, returning in 1943 to Harvard's Yenching Institute to continue teaching Japanese with her mentor, Serge Eliseeff. The picture here was her favorite photo, which she had taken in celebration when the war between her two beloved home countries came to an end.

In 1947, Elizabeth moved to Berkeley to be in charge of Japanese materials at the East Asiatic Library (now C. V. Starr East Asian Library) at the University of California. As the first person hired by its founding director, Elizabeth Huff, she was part of the pioneering team that developed the library into one of the most important collections of Asian books and documents in the U.S. Her largest project was the acquisition of the Mitsui Collection of Japanese and Korean materials.

In 1951, she married Professor Denzel Carr of the (then) Oriental Languages Department at U.C. Berkeley. They had one daughter, born in 1954. Elizabeth left the library to devote herself to her family, though she later returned to teaching Japanese occasionally at the U.C. Extension School.

Her interests included art, music, Japanese history, museum visits, and travel. In later years, after the death of her husband, she found solace and a new joy in the garden, a hobby shared with her daughter. Her two greatest loves were family and teaching.

She leaves behind her daughter, Helen Sorayya Carr of El Cerrito, California; her sister and brother-in-law, Lincoln and Joseph Guilfoile, their sons Richard, David, Bruce, and Paul, and their extended families,

mostly in Tokyo; and the children of her deceased brother Richard McKinnon, Patricia, Rick, Jonathan, and Christine and their families in Seattle.

<http://www.albertbrownmortuary.com/obituary?id=1167405#sthash.3rcS18lh.dpuf>

**Donald L. Bowers**  
**OLS (Russian) 1945**

Donald L. Bowers, former chief of the *Fallon Eagle*. Bowers, a native of Fallon, had served in the Navy during World War II and following the war edited an English-language magazine in Russia. While maintaining much of the look established by Greulich, Bowers made subtle changes. He introduced shorter articles, modern page designs, a new masthead, and features about events and historical Nevada characters like Mark Twain and Hank Monk.

"Don knew a lot about magazines," recalled veteran Nevada journalist Guy Shipler, who contributed to the magazine during Bower's tenure. "My recollection is that he was a good editor."

I think he was more responsible than anyone else for turning the magazine from a highway brochure to an honest-to-god magazine."

Shipler and others describe Bowers as a free-thinking intellectual who was well read, well travelled, and well connected.

"He seemed to know everyone in the state," recalled David Moore, *Nevada Magazine's* current editor, who was hired by Bowers in the early 1970s as a circulation gofer. "He really liked traveling around the state, particularly to places like Austin and Eureka."

In 1964, Bowers introduced his most sweeping changes. He persuaded the legislature to allow him to convert the free publication into one with a paid circulation, advertising and national distribution. The first issue of the new *Nevada*

*Magazine*, as most people called it, was a special commemorative Centennial edition. The 68-page magazine — the largest issue produced to that time — carried a 50-cent price tag and a message from Bowers: “This special issue of *Nevada Highways & Parks* marks our Centennial ... and also another transition ... A newer, bigger *Nevada Magazine*. Costs you a little but brings you much more.” The subscription price was \$2 for four issues.

In 1975, after 20 years as editor, Bowers retired.

Richard Moreno, “Nevada Magazine: the Early Years” in *The Historical Nevada Magazine* (Carson City, NV: Nevada Magazine, 1998), 13-14  
[Used with Permission of Nevada Magazine]

## Prescott H. Currier Captain USN OLS (Russian) 1946 1912-1994

Prescott H. Currier was born in Holbrook, MA in 1912 and enlisted in the Navy in 1929. He attended *On-The-Roof-Gang* training in Washington, DC, graduating with class number 8 in 1932.

He served in the Far East and in Washington as an enlisted man and after four years of service received a discharge. He then received an A.B. in Romance Languages at George Washington University, and was commissioned in the Naval Reserve as an ensign in 1936. Promoted to LTJG in 1940, he was called to active duty the same year.

In January 1941, LTJG Currier, USNR, together with LT Robert B. Weeks, USN, and Army representatives Abraham Sinkov and Leo Rosen, delivered American built cryptographic devices to England. This included two copies of the PURPLE machine. In reciprocity they were supplied by the British with some information about the German ENIGMA system, and were provided modern direction finding equipment.

[Although not mentioned in this biography, Currier attended the USN OLS (Russian) Program at the University of Colorado, entering in November 30, 1945, presumably

completing the course in June 1946. By November 1945, there seemed to have been different fish to fry.]

Currier was the second Officer in Charge at Kamiseya, Japan, with duty from 1952-1954. He had also been stationed in the Philippines, at the Naval Security Group Headquarters, at ONI, at Arlington Hall Station with the Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA), as Assistant Naval Attaché in London, and at the National Security Agency at Fort Meade, Maryland.



### Legion of Merit

In 1962 he retired from active service, holding, among many other decorations, the Legion of Merit with one gold star. After retirement, he moved to England where he obtained a Diploma in Comparative Philology at the University of London. He later returned to the United States where he worked as a civilian at the National Security Agency.

Currier died in 1994 at his home in Maine.

George P. McGinnis,  
US Naval Cryptologic Veterans  
Association, (New York: Turner  
Publishing Company, 1996), P.19.

[Ed. Note: CPT Currier may have been one of the most seasoned cryptographic intelligence officers to attend the USN JLS/OLS. The *On the Roof Gang* (OTRG) was a group of United States Naval Cryptologists and radiomen during World War II who are seen as the beginning of US Navy cryptology and cryptanalysis.

The “*On the Roof Gang*” was a school for radio-men and cryptologists who would go on to deploy on ships and at overseas bases and monitor foreign communications to monitor the movements, operations and intercept the message traffic of foreign navies.

In 1928 the Chief of Naval Operations understood that a group of formally trained operators was needed in the Pacific Fleet to monitor Japanese naval communications. There existed a small cadre of self-taught operators in the Pacific theater, and two of them were selected to become instructors in the “*On-the-Roof-Gang*”. Chief Radioman Harry Kidder and Chief Radioman Dorman Chauncey instructed the early classes.

Initial graduates were sent to ground stations in the Pacific to monitor the Japanese. Later the cryptologists eventually began to serve on board ships.]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On\\_the\\_roof\\_gang/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_roof_gang/)

## LT Aloysius Soden To Sister Rita Martin

CINCPAC Adv. Hq., Box 18  
FPC. San Fran.  
4 Sept.[1945]

*Dear Sister Rita Martin:*

(In script J)

Yes, I have some news for you — and rather interesting too! On Friday at 1000 Aug 31, I was informed that I was to serve as the personal interpreter to Admiral Murray, the Commander of the Marianas, in his official function as representative of the United States Navy and of the United States Government, at the signing of the surrender terms of the Japanese garrison of Truk atoll. Truk was the headquarters of the 31<sup>st</sup> Japanese Army which numbered about 90,000 men spread out through the Caroline Islands in the Marshals, and also the headquarters of the 4th fleet, a Japanese Naval command with bases at Truk and at some of the other Carolines, and also the seat of the South Seas government, Eastern Division, the Japanese civil government for the South Sea Islands. If you look at a map, you will get an idea of the vast area covered and of the number of islands in the jurisdiction of Truk. Please do look at a map —

otherwise you will have no clear idea of the importance of the surrender ceremony. In short such a surrender meant the transfer of all the Japanese mandated islands to the sovereignty of the United States.

Well, I was chosen for such a signal honor because I happened to be attached temporarily to Commander Marianas. And I was given short notice too. I was informed at 1000 Friday and at 1500 I along with the Staff of the Admiral boarded the small boat which was to take us out to the heavy cruiser *Portland* anchored off the Orote Harbor here on Guam. The *Portland* was to be the Admiral's flagship for the occasion, and it was escorted by three destroyers. The *Portland* is a fine ship launched in 1932 — a beautiful ship, I should say, and speedy — capable of almost 30 knots. I must not stop on details or I would spend too much time. Suffice it to say that the trip from Guam to Truk was most enjoyable. The sea was smooth and the ship rode well. The food was excellent — warships have better food than shore bases, they set priorities, and justly so. At long last — but really very soon — we heaved into sight of our goal, Truk, the mythical Pearl Harbor of Japan a huge atoll with a surrounding reef and interspersed coral islets enclosing a vast lagoon some 40 miles long and twice as wide in which are some ten fair-sized islands most important of which are Dublon, Moon [*Moen*], Eton [*Eten*], Faram [*Param* or *Fefan*], etc. On these interior islands the Japanese had their garrisons and their batteries both shore and antiaircraft. It was 0600 when we anchored about one mile outside the reef on the south side of the atoll on Sunday, 2 September. The Japanese envoys were expected on board at 1000; and the crew of the ship had been instructed just as how to behave. As many as possible were to wear whites. Strict silence was to be maintained during the signing ceremony; and all were to have serious, passive faces — no smiles or hilarity — we wanted to impress the Japanese with the idea that we Americans realize the seriousness of the war, that we remembered our own dead, that we still were mindful of the

treachery that started the war at Pearl Harbor. And glad to say, these injunctions were well observed — I was proud of the US Navy, very proud.

Personally I was rigged out in borrowed whites, borrowed shoes and other borrowed items — I had left all my whites at Pearl Harbor. I happened to borrow these from someone — fortunately who was about my size — and so I feel I cut not too bad a figure [see #75a for story about whites]. I had stayed up the previous night translating two speeches that the Admiral was to give. My job was to translate his words into Japanese and to render the words of the Japanese envoys into English.



Photo #: NH 62798, Surrender of Japan, 1945, Japanese delegation comes on board USS *Portland* (CA-33), 2 September 1945, to surrender the base at Truk, Caroline Islands. Those in the front row are (left to right): Lieutenant A.M. Soden, USNR, interpreter; Lieutenant F. Tofalo, USN, Officer of the Deck; Lieutenant General Shunzaburo Mugikura, Commanding General, 31st Army; Vice Admiral Chuichi Hara, Commander, 4th Fleet; Rear Admiral Aritaka Aihara, head of the Eastern Branch of the South Seas Government, and Lieutenant Kenzo Yoshida, Aide to LtG. Mugikura, (carrying bundle). Standing behind them, partially visible, are (left to right): Rear Admiral Michio Sumikawa, Chief of Staff, 4th Fleet; Colonel Waichi Tajima, Chief of Staff, 31st Army, and Lieutenant Ryokichi Morioka, Aide to VAdm. Hara, (carrying briefcase). Note Truk Islands in the distance. Collection of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph

At 1000 the gig with the Japanese envoys pulled up alongside out cruiser, and up the gangway came the delegation. First on board was the commanding office of the 31st Army, Lt. Gen. Mugikura, a short wisp of a man, about five feet; after him came Admiral Hara, Commander of 4th Fleet, a middle-size stoutish man; then came Mr. Abara, head of the Eastern French, South Seas Govt.; after him came the Chief of Staff for the 31st Army and the 4th Fleet and last came two aides-de-camp.

It was my duty to be at the top of the gangway to receive the delegation along with the Flag Lieutenant of the Admiral

Murray and to escort them to the Captain's cabin where preliminary negotiations were to be carried on. In the meanwhile the members of the crew of the *Portland* were looking on from various points of vantage — but with serious faces and in silence. After the envoys had entered the cabin and were still standing, Admiral Murray entered. He took a seat with a very serious mien and proceeded in a very business-like fashion to speak to the three envoys who were to sign. They had in the meanwhile been seated opposite him. It was then my duty to translate what the Admiral had to say sentence for sentence.

The envoys were then identified and had their pictures taken. They were then given the terms of the surrender which they would be required to sign. In the meanwhile I was called upon to translate back and forth

— and I was nervous. I tell you; but I tried my best to be calm and cool and believe succeeded to an extent. I had some difficulty now and then to catch what they (were) saying, but managed on the whole to get most.



Photo #: NH 62802, Surrender of Japan, 1945, Japanese Navy Vice Admiral Chuichi Hara, Commander, 4th Fleet, signs the document, at ceremonies on board USS *Portland* (CA-33) surrendering the base at Truk, Caroline Islands, 2 September 1945. U.S. Navy officers present around the table are (left to right): Lieutenant S.E. Thompson, USNR, Flag Lieutenant; Captain O.F. Naquin, USN, Acting Chief of Staff; Vice Admiral George D. Murray, USN, Commander, Marianas, (seated), who accepted the surrender on behalf of the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas; Captain D.N. Cone, USN, representing Commander, Marshalls and Gilberts; Captain L.A. Thackrey, USN, Commanding Officer, USS *Portland*; Lieutenant L.L. Thompson, USN, Flag Secretary, and Lieutenant A.M. Soden, USNR, interpreter. Note Marine Corps photographer in right center background, and U.S. flag used as a backdrop. Collection of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph.

After these preliminary negotiations, we led the envoys out to the quarter-deck, the main deck of the ship where the terms were to be signed. Here were lined up as many of the crew as possible, with the Marine guard there is always a detachment of Marines aboard our big warships for guard duty. At the aft end of the quarter deck was draped a

large US flag, and below the stars and stripes was drawn a table, the table on which the signing was to be done.

The whole thing was most impressive, I assure you. The Admiral Murray I took the one chair on the aft side of the table,

and opposite him was a single chair for the signers, one by one. First the Lt. General Mugikura signed, then Admiral Hara, then Mr. Aibara. During the signing I had to give various dire options in Japanese to the signers — an easy job. During the signing the only sounds heard were those of the chair scraping or cameras clicking or flash bulbs exploding. Maybe my heart could be heard beating too — never checked that point but I heaved a deep sigh of relief when the ceremony was finished and my job secure. We escorted them to the gangway, and they disappeared into their boat.

Thus ended the surrender of Truk and of the Mandated Islands from Japan to the United States.

What were my personal impressions during the ceremony? Well, I was so intent on doing my part of the job right that my impressions were very limited. However I did realize that the General Mugikura was very dejected and abstracted — his mind was elsewhere — he seemed like a man about to commit hara-kiri. Admiral Hara did not give the same impression — he seemed to take the whole affair more matter of course - I shall be surprised if he cuts open his honorable intestines. Mr.

Aibara was also of the dejected type — not as bad as the General — And may be a possible prospect for hara-kiri. Both of the Chiefs-of-Staff looked healthy and normal, as did the Aides-d'-camp — they may live.

When was in Japan, I saw their military in the height of their power and their pride; now I may say that I have seen how they handle defeat — and I presume to say that I have seen a man on the verge of hara-kiri. At the moment that I write this letter, I have no news as to the hara-kiri of the General, but I have a premonition. Well, so I have written another page in my reminiscences.

I am sorry that I can as yet give you no details as to the ultimate disposition of myself — because I do not know. Some of you have written that you would not like me to return to Japan — I am of your idea also — but as you know, the Navy does not regard likes and dislikes, desires and the opposite. If I am told to go, I'll go without too much complaining — but I shall not ask for it. I realize what the condition of the country is at this moment — and I should like to stay away from it. If it were probable that I could be in a position to help our Brothers over there — and they most probably need help at present — I should gladly go because I know that I should have to remain for only a relatively short time. However brushing up against real facts in the armed services has assured me that such a thing would not be easily done and that I probably would be in a position where I could render no help. Therefore I should much prefer to return to the States and to get back to teaching as soon as possible.

I hope that you are well and happy. Thank God that the war is over at last and that we shall soon be reunited — at least sooner than we expected some months ago when all looked dark and unsettled. I am very ready for a long stay at home and with my loved ones, I assure you. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder". Take care of yourself - and please pray for me — the armed services hardly makes a man more spiritual.

Your loving brother in (J.M.J.)

*Aloysius* (in script I)

PS: I shall do my best to send you some pictures of the surrender — but have patience please\_

*Letter provided by  
Kevin Mattessich  
Great Nephew of  
Aloysius Soden  
JLS1943  
LT USNR  
Brother, Society of Mary*

*[Ed. Note: Mr. Mattessich allowed me to post this remarkable firsthand account of the surrender of Imperial Japanese military forces on Truk on the USS Portland in 1945. I found photos depicting the very scenes described by LT Soden on a US Navy Historical Center website on the Truk Surrender.]*

### **G. LAMONT RICHARDS USN JLS/OLS STAFF (1918-2012)**

George LaMont Richards, Sr. January 17, 1918 - July 31, 2012 George LaMont Richards, 94, peacefully passed away Tuesday, July 31, 2012 in Salt Lake City, Utah. He was the last surviving child of LeGrand and Ina Jane Ashton Richards. As a family, they are once again fully united in a grand reunion.

LaMont graduated from the University of Utah and continued his education at the University of Colorado in Boulder and Northwestern University in Chicago. During World War II, he served his country as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. He was assigned to a Naval Intelligence Unit in San Francisco and then to the staff of the U.S. Navy Japanese School in Boulder, Colorado. Following his graduation from Midshipman School in Chicago, he was assigned to Amphibious Training Command, Pacific Fleet, San Diego.

LaMont had a distinguished Business and civic career. For 36 years, he was president and founder of Western Supply Company. As a respected member of the business community, he served as Chairman of the Board of Merchants Inc., President of Intermountain Electrical

Association, and President of the Utah Council of Retailers and Wholesalers. In 1986, he was a Congressional Appointee and Delegate to a White House conference on small business.

Always concerned for the welfare of his community, he served with distinction for 14 continuous years in the Utah State Legislature. During that period, he was Chair of the House Higher Education Appropriation Committee and Chair of the Judicial, Legislative, and Executive Appropriation Committee. He also served as a member of the Constitutional Revision Committee, Business and Labor Standing Committee, and Rules Committee. Following his service in the legislature, he was appointed to the Institutional Council at Dixie College.

His service to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reflected his commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ. First and foremost he was a missionary at heart. His missionary service began early, serving first at the age of 16 as his father presided over the Southern States Mission. At 19, he served in the British Mission and in the southern United States. This laid the foundation for numerous Church callings, including branch president in Boulder, Colorado and counselor in the bishopric of the University Ward in Salt Lake City. He also served as a member of the General Board of the MIA for 13 years, as a member of the Priesthood Missionary Committee and as Chairman of the Explorer Committee, BSA. Also, as a Regional Representative of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, he fulfilled assignments in Oregon, Washington, Ogden, and BYU Provo stakes. He enjoyed many years as an ordinance worker in the Salt Lake Temple. He also compiled a set of his father's talks which were published under the title: *LeGrand Richards Speaks*.

LaMont and his wife Edna Fae Firmage were married on September 9, 1941 in the Salt Lake Temple by his grandfather, George F. Richards. They spent almost 71 years together.

LaMont loved to travel and has visited numerous countries around the globe. His travel

prompted an interest in photography, a hobby he enjoyed. He also loved to golf and was a licensed pilot. He was a University of Utah sports fan, attending football and basketball games for many seasons. He especially loved his association with friends and was a member of a number of social clubs.

He is survived by his wife, Edna Fae Firmage and their four children: G. LaMont Richards, Jr. (DeAnne), Charlotte Harrison (David), J. Lawrence Richards (Julie), Shauna Hill (David), in addition to 12 grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Deseret News  
August 3, 2012

*[Ed. Note: We have very few USN JLS/OLS Staff obituaries. Yeoman George L. Richards was listed in the CU Student Directory as enlisted staff at the Naval Training School (Radio) from 1942-1944. His office was in the Field House and he lived at 840 12<sup>th</sup> Street. It would not have been unusual for junior staff to have filled in as needed at other Navy schools on the University of Colorado Campus.]*

### **\$Donations Accepted**

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### **David Hays Archives**

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### **Recent Losses:**