

The Interpreter

Archives, University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries

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★ Remember September 11, 2001 ★

September 15, 2005

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.

Lucie Anne Porterfield WAVE, Student & Teacher

I was born in New York City on January 17, 1918, educated at Laurel School near Cleveland, Ohio, and Vassar College (A.B. 1939). Yes on Phi Beta Kappa. I have an AM and a PhD from Columbia University. The PhD was on the GI Bill and was a horrendous mistake. Before Boulder I puttered around with secretarial work, finishing that with a stint at Torney General Hospital, the old Mirador Hotel which was taken over by the Army. This was in Palm Springs, near the desert training center. I caught chicken pox, was very ill, and went home to recuperate. Home was near Pasadena and we got the *Los Angeles Times*, in which I read about the Language School. It sounded like fun, so I went down to LA to Naval Officer Procurement, got the info and called Hindmarsh when he came to town to recruit. I had one of his famous 2-minute interviews and wound up in

Boulder in July, where I checked in and wound up in the "Bastille". I flunked the physical because of lung scars, but got one of their special physicals at Bethesda and passed easily. This was probably because they were then drafting men for the invasion and just *having* a lung was an asset.

My commission didn't come until April 18, one year to the day after Admiral Yamamoto was shot down, thanks to the Hawaiian branch of OP-20-G [Actually, JICPOA, unless I am mistaken], which, in Washington, was where I spent most of the rest of the War and some of the peace. April 18 was not the only weird date of my career. When I went back to Columbia I matriculated on December 7 and was given the degree on an August 6 years later.

Like most everyone I started work at 5th and K, then we went to the Annex. The work was incredibly dull, since [by that time] most of the Japanese Navy was sunk as was their merchant marine. The messages were mostly about single aircraft taking off from (garble) and landing at (garble). I was in Captain Rochefort's office, and he had lost interest and spent most of his time doing double acrostics, which I took to much later. Rochefort, in case you don't remember, was played by Hal Holbrook in the movie *Midway*. (to be cont'd)

Lucie Anne Porterfield
JLS 1944
1918-1997

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

[Ed. Note: This bio is well known to those at the WAVE Reunion, but I think the rest of the readership will appreciate it, as well. I will continue to draw bios from the WAVE Reunion book. Her photo was also in one of the displays used at the 60th Anniversary JLS/OLS Reunion, which still shows outside the Archives.]

BIC "Hutch" Harnsberger
Passed Away 6Apr05

Photo of Ed Whan at Hiroshima

Dear Mr. Whan:

I am creating a guide of all the JLS/OLS photographs for easy access. Currently I am working on your collection. I could not read what had been written on the back of one of your photographs. You had written *Going over the bridge into Hiroshima. At the far left you can see Joe giving me the ____ (?)*. (Notice how my toes still point out?) Well, I couldn't read that one word, so I asked Dave for help. We decided to enlarge your picture by 400% to find out exactly what was being given to you. Well, turns out he was just giving you the *scoop*, or so we surmised. Enclosed please find the enlarged photocopy from that particular photo in your collection here at the Archives of the University of Colorado. We thought you might like to have this image.

Anne Getts
Student Assistant

Sister Anne:

I want to thank you for your efforts to determine the nature of a conversation of mine as I conducted a tour of Hiroshima for a small gang of conquering heroes from the cruiser on which I was a passenger. Your reconstruction was pretty good although I should probably insist that I was trying to explain that we were the good guys and Jesus blessed our efforts and that if they didn't shape up pretty soon I would unleash the Boulder Boys into the battle. Actually, the lad had seen the bomb parachute come down and had luckily averted his eyes in time. We, of course, loaded him up with US goodies.

I sit by the computer on a quiet Sunday afternoon listening to Maria Callas doing her bit. Brother Hays seems to have a way of attracting a lively staff of young women, so pass on my good wishes to him [Good wishes accepted]. He has found, I suspect, the Boulder Boys [and

women] are like tenors [and sopranos] in the great chorus.

When you think of it, the whole project was racist. There were plenty of wonderful and loyal Nisei available, but they did not have blue eyes and so forth.

Thanks for taking the trouble of sending a little past to me.

Edgar Whan
JLS 1944

[Ed. Note: Mr. Whan is quite correct. The Navy was unprepared to accept Nisei, unlike the Army, which accepted thousands into the MIS. However, while none of the attendees were Nisei, we have seen that the manner in which Caucasian Americans were taught Japanese had unexpected consequences on both the Pacific War and how America viewed Japan and Asia academically, diplomatically, politically, judicially and economically. Looking at the influence of JLS/OLS attendees and graduates on Asian affairs from 1945 to the 1980s, the racism inherent in attendance requirements has had far-ranging, unintentional benefits.

Yes, I have had unusual good fortune with my student recruits. As both Bletchley Hall and the American decryption administrators discovered about Wrens and WAVES, they were very capable at "close-up, detailed work". That is true of female archival students, as well.]

Comment on George Beckmann

The *Interpreter* that came yesterday (#77 [Yes, the backlog is long]) had a fine letter from Curtis Prendergast. When I started on 1 May 1944, Curtis was in the same class, but was assigned elsewhere for a while. By the time he returned, my family had arrived, and I had moved to Pine Street from the dormitory.

He mentions George Beckmann in his letter. I had been trying to track George down for quite a while, and I was sorry to read your note that he had died [(I am sorry for the earlier misspelling of Beckmann's name, caught by

Sidney D. Brown). We often find that we are a day late or a dollar short in our searches for JLS/OLS folks. Once, in 2000, we called one graduate, only to find he had died hours earlier.]. Through being a record collector, I met quite a few music enthusiasts, among these, Raymond Stuhl, when I first came to Kansas City. Raymond was on the music faculty at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, teaching cello. He invited my wife and me to dinner one evening in about 1950.

The other guests were George Beckmann and his wife. The meeting was a surprise to both of us. George was teaching Far Eastern History at KU, and was the head of the Ford Foundation there. He had built a Japanese house in Lawrence that was a knockout, and created a stir. Not long after meeting George, I moved to Kansas City, and when I returned, he had gone.

A side-light – in 1981 my daughter remarried. My son-in-law graduated from KU in 1956, and George taught him in one of his history classes. Another

proof that it's a small world. No Raymond did not teach him cello. *[He could have.]*

*Duane J. Flaherty
OLS 1945*

[Ed. Note: George Michael Beckmann, '47mcl, (OLS 1945) of Bellview, WA, died January 22, 1998. He was provost emeritus and former professor of Asian studies at the University of Washington. A specialist in modern Japanese history, he also served as director of the Far Eastern and Russian Institute and was instrumental in creating the Jackson School of International Studies from UW's aggregation of

area studies programs. His published work includes The Making of the Meiji Constitution, The Modernization of China and Japan, and History of the Japanese Communist Party, 1922-1945. He enjoyed gardening, especially in the Japanese style. He leaves his wife, Janet (Pitts). I could not find her.

Alberta B. Stuhl, 97, died Jan. 2, 2000 at Brandon Woods Retirement Community. Stuhl taught piano at KU. Along with her husband, Raymond Henry Stuhl, a cello professor, she toured extensively, performing throughout the Midwest and recruiting students to KU. Professor Raymond Stuhl died Aug. 28, 1994.]

All Army Issue Status Report

Dear David: First I want to thank you for forwarding my letter to Curt Prendergast. Elmer and I are now in contact with Curt and I've received a return letter from him. Next, I've just read the Aug. 1 (2004) issue of the "Interpreter" and am very interested in your data on Army Intelligence operations. I worked with Gen. Patch's G-2 Section on Guadalcanal and later in 1945 with ATIS in MacArthur's HQ in Manila and Tokyo. While with the International War Crimes

Commission in Manila I had a team of very competent Army Nisei performing translation & interpreting duties throughout the Homma and Yamashita trials. After the War, in 1950-52, I served as USMC Liaison with Army Dept. G-2 and Army Map Service.

Turning to your Status Report, you sure covered the whole spectrum of Archives' many responsibilities. Elmer and I and our wives greatly enjoyed both of the reunions you sponsored, and the chance to meet many of the individual professionals and volunteer

workers in your establishment. Congratulations on a great job!

*Semper Fi
Harry Pratt
OLS 1945*

[Ed. Note: We appreciate the praise of COL Pratt and Mr. Stone. I had hoped that the All-Army issue would be of interest. I think I have been lucky to have such students. They remember the reunion fondly. I just noticed – two responses to the Curt Prendergast letter in a row.]

Reed Irvine, 82
Passed Away November 16, 2004
[Obituary to follow]

\$Donations Accepted

There are those of you who may not have papers to donate to the Archives, but who may wish to support the Japanese/Oriental Language School Archival Project in other ways. We have set up a cash account that funds Archives activities regarding the JLS/OLS Project. You will be happy to know that we hire work-study students on this fund, tripling its value. If you wish to donate, make your check out to The CU Foundation and mail it to our contact address.