

The Interpreter

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Our Mission

In the Spring of 2000, the Archives continued the original efforts of Captain Roger Pineau and William Hudson, and the Archives first attempts in 1992, to gather the papers, letters, photographs, and records of graduates of the US Navy Japanese/Oriental Language School, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1942-1946. We assemble these papers in recognition of the contributions made by JLS/OLS instructors and graduates to the War effort in the Pacific and the Cold War, to the creation of East Asian language programs across the country, and to the development of Japanese-American cultural reconciliation programs after World War II.

Evelyn (Betty) Knecht Hansson

WAVE to Sweden

Evelyn Knecht was born in Monroe, Oklahoma, December 21, 1917. Moved to Pennsylvania at the age of three. Graduated from Gettysburg College in 1940 with a BA in English, Phi Beta Kappa. Worked as clerk in the State Civil Service until accepted into JLS, to which I had applied after reading the announcement in *The Key Reporter*.

Assigned to Women's Reserve Quarters at 1005 Broadway, with Lt. Hines as house mother. My mother seems to have saved all my letters from the time in Boulder, some I am enclosing. Excerpts from these that tell a bit about our lives there [*We will get to these later*].

After WAVE training in Northampton, sent to Washington, DC. Worked at 5th and K, writing for *ONI Review*, and filing prisoner interrogation reports. On discharge from the Navy took job with G-2 in Tokyo, writing and editing in

CIS. Most memorable and rewarding of my two year contracts (1946-48 and 1950-51) was the opportunity to hold English conversation classes two nights a week at Tokyo Imperial University. When lack of heat in the classrooms stopped the program there, my students (16) asked me to continue somewhere else. The first place was a room at the Old Keijo, the women's hotel, in summer on the lawn beside the moat of the Imperial Palace, at other times wherever we could arrange a place. We eventually became known as "The Lambs Club" and the weekly meetings and other activities with the students continued until I left Japan for the last time in 1951. During the time I was back in the States [1949], Nancy Pearce, Helen Craig, Pat Shannon, and Blanch Belitz continued the meetings, which by then had become more of a discussion than a teaching class. The ties we formed then remain to this day [1993]: Christmas letters from a few of the students (now very successful businessmen or public servants), and visits from three of them to our home in Sweden, the latest just a year ago.

After the first two-year contract in 1948, Margaret Dilley and I decided to return to the States by way of Europe. We flew first to Shanghai, then to Hong Kong, where we boarded a Swedish freighter. My future husband was second mate on that ship. In 1952, Nils Hansson and I were married and I came to Sweden to live. He was a widower with two small children. They and my own two girls are now grown, and we have nine grandchildren, ranging in age from 5 to 22. One daughter, unmarried, is a district doctor in Lappland, not far from the Arctic Circle. When our youngest daughter reached 16, I started teaching as a "home-language" teacher in the public schools until retirement age. The grandchildren, all of whom live

in the Gothenburg area, keep me busy now.

Evelyn (Betty) Knecht, Hansson
WAVE, JLS 1944

from Boulder Waves:
50 Year Reunion
July 16-19, 1993

[Ed. Note: Mrs. Hansson's short recollections will be printed as a column, called "Knecht Recollects".]

From the OLS to the Ministry

I have read the past copies of *The Interpreter* with a great deal of interest and fond nostalgia. After enlisting in December 2, 1942 in the Navy's V-12 Officer Training Program, I was called up for active duty in July of 1943 at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa. and on to Officer Training School at Cornell University in August of 1944. Just before we were commissioned as line officers, I was walking by the bulletin board at our housing unit in Baker Tower East and read a notice inviting interested persons with certain educational qualifications to be interviewed at a certain hour and place for special language training. Since I already had accumulated a concentration of foreign language credits in the two years of college I had completed, I signed up to find out what was behind the rather enigmatic notice.

When I walked into the interview in some remote campus office area I saw a hand written note on the doorframe of the interview room: "Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Malayan." With that considerable increase in information in what was on the other side of the door I knocked and walked in. There sat a naval commander who incidentally had been head of one of my earlier training programs. My college records were spread across the desk in front of him. As I remember it, his first, and I believe, his last

words were, "Dieter, what do you want to take?" I presumed his question had something to do with the list of languages outside on the wall, so I blurted out "Chinese." And that was it. After our commissioning at the end of November and two weeks leave, I was on my way to Boulder just before Christmas 1944. With typical Navy timing, when I arrived and reported for duty at the desk in the lobby of the dorm, the officer informed that everyone at the school had been given Christmas leave and my classes would not begin until two weeks later. Our Cantonese group was small and tight-knit:

Bill Bevan - Eventually became dean of Duke Univ.; was prominent in American psychological circles and, I believe, has a lectureship named for him by the national society. Wife is Dotty. Bill is now in assisted living near Duke which recently named a building on campus in his honor.) Address: Dr. William Bevan, 10 Boardman Court, Durham, NC, 27703-1314

Edwin Bock was a young second generation Chinese-American who came in the program about a year after the rest of us. I don't know if he ever finished the program. All the rest I mentioned here graduated from the full eighteen month course, I believe.

Burt Brody - No post-Boulder contacts.

Don Dalley - We kept in touch with Don and his wife Dottie until they both passed away in the late nineties in Seabrook, MD. He was quite an accomplished artist and I believe worked for the government. He is survived by a daughter.

Bob Fabik - My room mate for the first year. I got married and moved off campus for my last six months. We did not have any contact after that. I have searched and found his phone number recently, I believe.

Bob Fields - No post-Boulder

contacts.

Charles Latimer - No post-Boulder contacts. *[on our list]*

Our professors as I remember them were Leung Sin Sang, Fong Sin Sang, Wong Sin Sang, and another whom I can clearly picture in my mind but can't name now. We ate lunch with them every day except Saturday and Sunday with English a forbidden language. Classes four hours every day, singing our words in the proper nine tones of Cantonese. Exam every Saturday, followed by a Chinese movie. I believe we saw every movie made in China before the war. I gave the Cantonese valedictory and we were graduated in June of 1946 and gone. I have some pictures of the group if you would like to have copies.

I was stationed at the Naval Communications Annex on Nebraska Ave. in Washington, DC for several months after graduation. Our designation had been changed from line to intelligence. For that brief period before I was released to inactive reserve duty in August 1946 I was translating radio transmissions from the Chinese mainland looking for intelligence on the movements of the Chinese Communist armies on the move after the close of the war. In 1948 as a reservist I spent a month again at the Nebraska Avenue Center in Washington. I resigned my commission in 1951 after completing my training and ordination to the ministry. I served mainly in church-related higher education, eventually retiring from Asbury Theological Seminary in 1990. I served as provost and vice-president and director of a three-year Pew Trusts funded research project in the closing years of my fifteen years on the faculty there.

Thanks for your work on behalf of all of us who are still around to be part of its development and for those who no longer can.

Mel Dieter
OLS 1946

[Ed. Note: You are very welcome.]

Lillian Inana Kreider
Passed away May 19, 2005

So What ! (VI)

For my next awakening I was in a very white bed at the Aiea Naval Hospital above Pearl Harbor, not far from JICPOA; and a naval-officer nurse in a very white uniform stood by the side of a rather old doctor, who must have returned himself to service. This kind gentleman told me that I was on the mend, although I still showed signs of the hepatitis; he suggested that the time had come to put in for resignation. "Right now we can give you more help."

Further recovery brought me to my feet and the awareness that I had lost approximately forty pounds. My clothes hung loosely about me when I set out to visit my brother at West Loch and to pick up at JICPOA and at my B.O.Q. such belongings as I had left behind. Somehow my prize possession the Rose-Innes dictionary had made it all the way; by now every one of its margins had filled with 5 and 10 snapshots of Grace which had brightened each of her many letters to me.

Now in early August the war against Japan suddenly collapsed, and here I was Back at Pearl Harbor where it had all began. From my hospital bed I heard of Hiroshima (August 6th), of Nagasaki's destruction (August 9th), and on August 15th CINCPAC's order, "Cease all defensive operations against Japan." Thus final surrender came on the heels of the first nuclear warfare; by then I was gathering my things together, closing my knapsack, and taking a flight back to the United States. I was tagged for the St. Alban's Hospital, New York, where I would undergo final examinations and an official release from my commission, and, at last, rejoin wife. Upon departure, I heard my doctor say, "You do know, don't you, Thornton, that you have a heart murmur."

Robert D. Thornton
JLS 1944

\$ Donations Accepted

Those wishing to send contributions, please mail checks (made out to the CU Foundation) to our contact address.

Robert E. Brandon JLS 1944 (1922-2004)

Robert "Bob" Ellis Brandon, 81, died on Wednesday, May 19, 2004 at his home in Pine Grove following a lengthy illness.

Bob and wife Betty Brandon located Amador County as their new home in 1974 during a quest for a lifestyle change following successful professional careers for both of them in the Los Angeles area. Bob left his position as president of the Bowes Agency, at the time the largest independently owned advertising agency in Los Angeles, where he managed a number of major accounts. He served a term as president of the Western States Advertising Agencies Association.

His creativity and skills first benefited the then-Amador Dispatch, where he became advertising manager for publisher Dan Barnett. He then applied his talents to real estate, becoming a founding partner and broker with Mother Lode Realty. "I just love helping people and I especially enjoy working with them to find their new homes and learn about Amador County," he said once describing why that career was so fulfilling to his interests and abilities.

He was president of the Amador County Board of Realtors in 1987.

Bob's remarkable communication abilities were especially significant as he did not learn English until he moved with his mother from the Icelandic immigrant community of Mountain, N. D. to Southern California when he was five years old. He maintained contact with cousins and enjoyed American Icelandic activities. Two years ago he chronicled his unusual Icelandic heritage in a narrated video of historic family portraits and documents, along with photographs of his own visit to Iceland, as a gift for his children and grandchildren.

His linguistic abilities were further tested during World War II, when he attended the US Navy Japanese Language School at the University of Colorado in Boulder. He then became part of an elite Marine Corps group trained intensively in the

Japanese language. He served as a first lieutenant interpreting intercepted communications and later as a translator for occupying forces on Japanese islands and in Nagasaki. He returned home in 1946 to complete his degree in journalism from the University of Southern California, where he was graduated Phi Beta Kappa.

He and Betty traveled extensively around the world. His many diverse interests included art and gardening. He was active in Trinity Episcopal Church and many social and civic activities. But his greatest interest was always his family and encouraging small children. Through the years many youngsters came to regard him as their second grandfather. He took special joy in activities with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. *[He signed on to our mailing list in 2000.]*

He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Betty Brandon of Pine Grove; daughter Kelli Belt and her husband Errol of Granite Bay and their son, Kyle and his wife Amanda and daughter Kelli Grace of Carmichael; daughter, Kim Brandon of Pine Grove and her children, Chelsea McClellan and her husband Dave and children Michael and Kylie of Pollock Pines, and Penn Brimberry and his wife Gillian of Dublin; son, Casey Brandon and his wife Margaret of Amador City *[Now on our mailing list]*.

Amador Ledger Dispatch
May 28, 2004
Jackson, CA

Leslie L. Youngblood Entered OLS 9/45 Passed Away

Leslie L. Youngblood, Jr., age 84, died August 22, 2004 at his residence in Williamsburg, VA. After graduating from Emory University, '41C-42G, he entered the US Navy Oriental Language School in 1945. He was a key executive of Mobil Oil, Senior Naval Aide in the Eisenhower White House, Commanding Officer of the *USS Cushing*, Rhodes Scholar and godfather.

New York Times
8/25/2004