

Russell Dean Brines, 1911-1982

Venice High School Graduate, Winter 1928

An updated Biography

By Marilyn McClellan, Wife of Charles McClellan, Class of '52

Russell D. Brines, born in 1911, graduated from Venice High School in the Winter Class of 1928. While a student at VHS, he served as Student Body President; was a member of the "B" football and baseball squads; and served as a member of The Oarsman staff. Upon graduation, Brines attended Pomona College in California.

Brines began his newspaper career at the Honolulu Advertiser and the Star Bulletin in 1935 and later joined the Associated Press. As an AP journalist, Brines covered the search for Amelia Earhart after she disappeared in 1937. He became interested in Asian affairs, especially those of China and Japan, and was assigned to the position of Associated Press correspondent at its Tokyo Bureau from 1939 until 1941.

During the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1941 Brines was reporting from Manila. He was arrested by the Japanese and interred in a camp at Santo Tomas, near Manila. When the American forces under General Douglas MacArthur freed the Philippines from Japanese control in 1943, Brines was liberated. He continued his career covering World War II in the Pacific and eventually became chief of AP's Tokyo Bureau.

Brines continued as a correspondent in the Korean and Viet Nam wars and became the Associated Press Far Eastern bureau chief. While in the U.S. in 1954, he gave a speech before the National Machine Tool Builders' Association titled "Can we win the battle for Asia?" From 1955 to 1961 he was a correspondent and editor of the Copley News Service.

Brines first book "Until They Eat Stones" describing the treachery of Japanese soldiers was published in 1944. In 1945 Brines was with MacArthur's forces in Tokyo reporting on the Japanese surrender. On September 10, 1945 he and fellow AP reporter Murlin Spencer published an exclusive interview with General Hideki Tojo, the man who led Japan to war.

Brines next book "MacArthur's Japan" published in 1948 covered the American occupation and reconstruction of Japan. Brines was contributor to "With MacArthur in Japan: A Personal History of the Occupation" authored by William Sebald, published in 1965. "The Indo-Pakistani Conflict" Brines' last book was published in 1968.

Today Brines' large collection of papers, which include correspondence, notes, research files, manuscripts, and photographs, are housed in the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming.

Brines retired to Florida and for some years prior to his death in 1982, he was an instructor at the University of Florida in Gainesville. Subsequently his wife of many years, Barbara Borey Brines, established the "Russell Brines Scholarship in International or Political Reporting" at the university. Mrs. Brines died on April 11, 2011 in Carlsbad, California, eight days short of her 99th birthday.