

Bill McIver Photo by Bart Everett



Sandra McIver Photo by Bart Everett



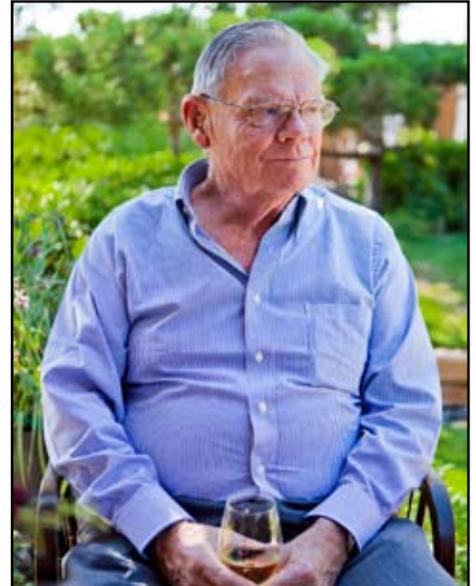
Sandra's Book Cover Downloaded From Internet

Yu-Yu-Jiteki Party

By JACKSON SELLERS

July 2011

The party at my Lake Forest home came together nicely. Guests constituted precisely half of the ten *Yu-Yu-Jiteki of America* members – **Bill McIver** and wife Sandra, **Terry Sutherland** and Deanie, **Bart Everett** and Cammie, **Ken Asano** and Harue, and hosts **Jackson Sellers** and Yoshi. The logistics of the dinner party were not as simple as they might seem. The McIvers, after driving down from the San Francisco area for Los Angeles promotion of Sandra's newly published knitting book, were staying at a Santa Monica hotel. Okay, just get on nearby Interstate 405 for an hour or so and you'll come into Lake Forest. The trouble was, it was "Carmageddon" weekend. That's what Los Angeles was expecting – freeway Armageddon, end-of-world chaos – as a ten-mile stretch of I-405 was closed for maintenance. It didn't happen, of course, but it was a worry for many travelers. Bart and Cammie, who live in Los Angeles near the area impacted by "Carmageddon," took the precaution of coming south to Newport Beach on the day before the *Yu-Yu-Jiteki* party, leaving them with a relatively short drive to Lake Forest the next day. Ken and Harue live only three miles from us, on a beautifully gardened acre, but Ken, a Japan native, was obligated that Sunday to speak before a Los Angeles group with ancestral ties to Miyagi Prefecture, which suffered greatly in the March 11 earthquake and tsunami. By the way, Japanese refer to the disaster as "3/11," *a la* America's "9/11." Ken managed to do everything – speak at the group's luncheon and



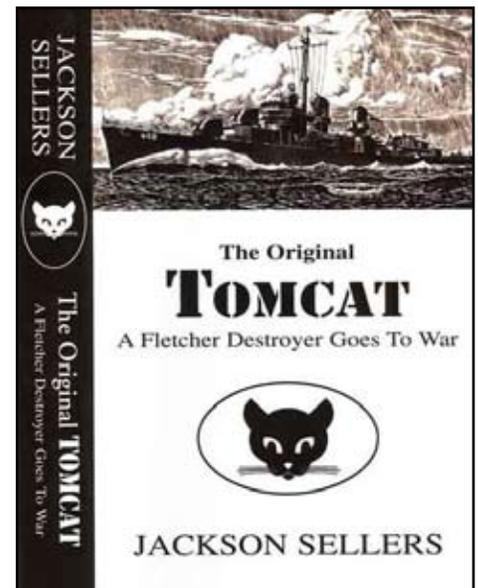
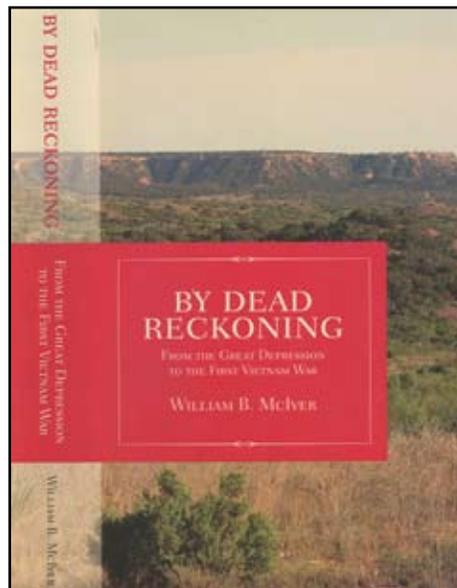
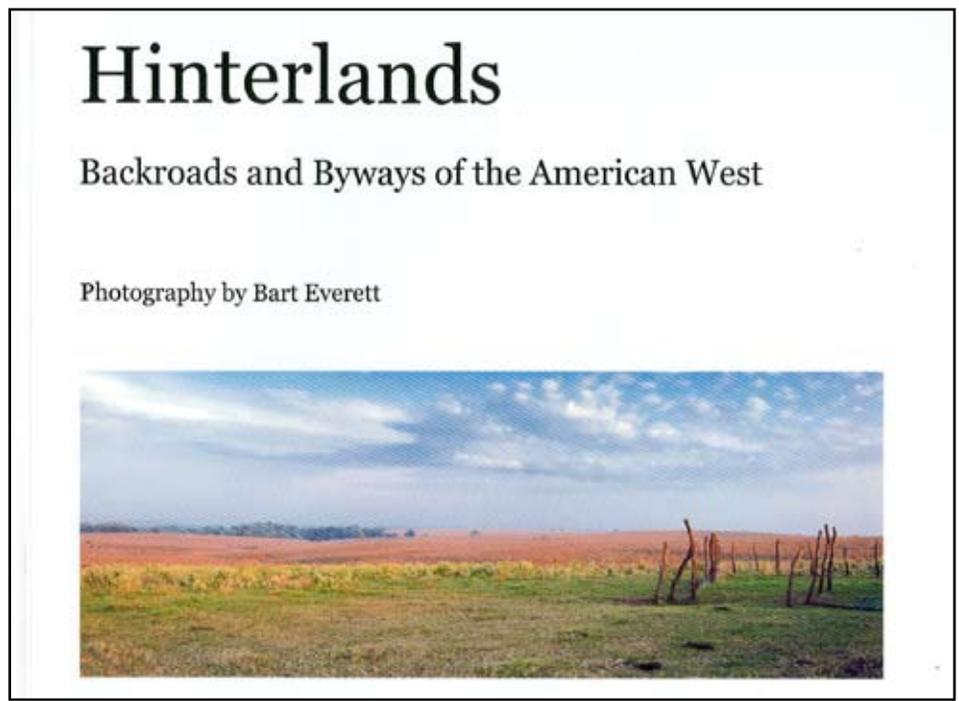
Terry Sutherland Photo by Bart Everett



Deanie Sutherland Photo by Terry Sutherland

arrive on time at our party. Yoshi was especially happy to see Harue, who immediately joined her in the kitchen and helped with the cooking and preparations. Terry and Deanie, in San Diego for a Naval Academy class-of-1954 reunion, drove up to Lake Forest but had to leave at sunset to catch a red-eye flight back to their Florida home. Sandra never misses a knitting stitch no matter where she is, even on my patio. Her knitting book, *knit Swirl!*, is shown at bottom left. It's doing fabulously well. Amazon is selling the book at the rate

of 1,000 copies per month. Only 5,000 were initially published. Sandra has ordered 15,000 more from her Hong Kong publisher, with 1,500 going directly to a British bookseller. But Sandra was not the only author among us on that afternoon and evening. Books by *Yu-Yu-Jiteki* members – Bart’s *Hinterlands*, Bill’s *By Dead Reckoning* and Jackson’s *The Original Tomcat* – were displayed along with Sandra’s on a coffee table. Sandra, by far, was the bestseller among us. But this wasn’t a literary party. This was a social and eating party. Drinking, too. I provided the hard stuff. Yoshi served *sake* and home-made plum wine. Bill brought a couple of bottles of wine, including a vintage Matanzas Creek wine, a product of the Sonoma County winery that made the McIvers rich and famous. Ken and Bart had never before met Bill and Terry. As *Yu-Yu-Jiteki* members, they had communicated by email with Bill and Terry but never face to face. Bill and Terry, however, were *USS Colahan* shipmates, like me, and had associated up close from time to time in the past. Anyway, the party gave strength to *Yu-Yu-Jiteki* relationships. As founder of the little group, I’m pleased by that. I only wish **Yutaka Katayama**, **Masa Usami**, **Phil Jordan**, **Jim Hayes** and **Shozo Usami** could have been with us. Even so, it was the biggest *Yu-Yu-Jiteki* party so far. As usual, Yoshi’s gardens garnered compliments. As usual, Yoshi gave me no credit, claiming, with much justification, to have done all the work herself. As usual, I simply noted that all those heavy stones, front and back, didn’t walk in by themselves. This was Bill and Sandra’s first visit to my home, so there was a guided tour, of course.



If I say so myself, some interesting things decorate my walls, collected over a lifetime. All have stories behind them. The McIvers liked the master bathroom’s soaking tub, where we can sit in shoulder-high hot water and gaze out at the garden. The tour had just reached my 500-square-foot workshop, above the double garage, when Yoshi called up and insisted that I go, right now, and pick up *sushi* and *tempura* from a Japanese restaurant down a nearby street. I rushed away to duty and Ken

helped me. Meanwhile, Yoshi and Harue were adding to the catered *tempura* in the kitchen, deep-frying lightly battered prawn and shrimp concoctions in rice-bran oil. Ingredients included chopped carrots and green onions, even chrysanthemum leaves from the garden. When eaten, *tempura* must be dipped into a warm sauce laced with grated *daikon*, a huge white radish. Initially, I was charged with the grating task. “No,” said Ken, a Japanese born and raised. “I’m better at it than you are, and you might



Cammie Everett Photo From Bart's Website

nick your knuckles.” But when Harue learned her husband would be doing the grating, she said: “Ken never grates daikon at home.” She did it herself. Anyway, the dinner table was loaded with food. My digital camera was charged up and ready to go, but I never touched it. Instead, I asked Bart to snap pic-



L.A. Times colleagues **Bart Everett & Jackson Sellers** Photo by Kim Kaneko

tures with his expensive Canon. He took only several photos. “Jackson, the party was too enjoyable to take pictures,” he said. That was nice to hear, but it complicated my report plans. I had to scrounge for images of the ten people at the party. At above left, Cammie tries on a hat at a fair somewhere. At above right,

Bart and I pose early last year outside Bobby D’s, a Lake Forest sports bar. Below, in a previous visit to our home, Harue and Ken sit beneath a painting of a Kabuki dancer. And just last April, Yoshi waits impatiently for sea snails to broil at a hole-in-the-wall joint in Kagoshima, the southernmost seaport in mainland Japan.



Harue Asano & Ken Asano Photo by Jackson Sellers



Yoshiko Iizuka Sellers Photo by Jackson Sellers