

# Harold P. Wright

Harold Wright, an Emeritus Professor of Japanese, was born of Appalachian parents in 1931; grew up in Dayton, Ohio; and was a 1949 Northridge graduate. He earned his BA in Japanese (1959) and his MA in Asian Studies (1960), at the University of Hawaii. He received a Ford Foundation Fellowship to attend Columbia University (1960-62) and a Fulbright Fellowship, along with other Advanced Research Grants, to study at Keio University, Tokyo (1962-65).

In his lifetime Harold has been an AF of L Carpenter Apprentice (1949-51), a library assistant (1956-59) and teaching assistant at the University of Hawaii (1959-60), a graduate student and researcher in New York and Tokyo (1960-65), an instructor of Japanese Language and Literature at Ohio University (1965-71), and a professor of Japanese at Antioch College (1973-2005). He also served in the Navy, first based in New Orleans and then in Japan with the Sea Bees where he was a surveyor and librarian (1951-55).

Harold is the author of nearly 20 books. One of his recent books, written with his wife, was titled *Spine Tingling Tales of Old Japan* (2007). He has three forthcoming publications in 2008 and 2009: *A Story of Japanese Poetry and Tales of a Tuckahoe* (both books and CDs), and *Quilt Scraps and Wood Chips* (Book of Ohio Tales). He wrote articles in English and Japanese which were published and/or presented at colleges and universities. Harold has translated Japanese stories and poetry into English, only to have many of those works retranslated into various languages and published throughout the world. Currently he enjoys experimenting with poetry, using various Japanese styles of composition.

Not only a teacher and an author, Harold is a storyteller. Along with his wife, Jonatha, he tells traditional and personal tales from Ohio, Ohio Appalachia, and Japan. Together they have performed and taught at

colleges, schools, libraries, community centers, and senior centers across America and Japan.

Professor Wright has received honors including: a Ford Foundation Fellowship; Fulbright Fellowship; Japan Foundation Grant, a National Translation Center Award; a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant; Antioch Sears Award for Excellence in Teaching; and a National Endowment for the Arts Literature Program Fellowship for Translators, a grant to translate the work of Tanikawa Shuntaro who is Japan's leading contemporary poet.

My interests in people have served as a focus my whole life in terms of education, research, writing, teaching, as well as the art of storytelling. In a recent work of biographical stories, I called Tales of a Tuckahoe, I wrote:

Except for my stories of Japan, that come from my having lived, studied the language and literature, and even taught in that land off and on, for way over 50 years, a lot of my personal tales take place in Northridge, the once semi-rural area north of Dayton. A large portion of my childhood memories and stories are set in eastern Highland and Ross Counties in Ohio Appalachia, where my mother was raised on a tobacco farm. Dad came from the coal mines of Perry County, Ohio . . . .

Anyway my life's a voyage from Northridge to Ohio Appalachia, to Japan, and back to Northridge and Ohio Appalachia has been a journey of exploration and celebration of people of all ages everywhere, including family, neighbors, and friends living, even, on the other side of the earth.

On June 15, 1991, Harold married Jonatha, also a storyteller, writer, and researcher. Together they continue the story telling tradition. Harold has two children, Rose Wright, born in 1957, who has a BA in Political Science from Antioch and an MA in Environmental Studies from New York University, and Larina Benson, born in 1966, who worked for years as a fashion model in Tokyo and is now a married homemaker and mother of three girls. Jonatha has three children, Rachelle Bradfute, Danielle Murphy and Brian Hickam. Together Harold and Jonatha share ten grandchildren.