

Leisure Worlder of the Month

J.A.C. "Cliff" Grant

LAGUNA HILLS—Lunch at the White House with President Eisenhower. An audience with Pope Innocent at the Vatican. Taking a trip to Taiwan as a guest of the Taiwan government. Meeting Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and Prince Phillip of England. Riding a camel in Egypt and an elephant in Ceylon.

Although it sounds like the opening to "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous," these experiences and more belong to one of Leisure World's very own, Cliff Grant.

To recount and honor Cliff for all he's accomplished, he will be named "Leisure Worlder of the Month," on Wednesday, August 5. The ceremony begins at 10:00 a.m. in Clubhouse Six and is sponsored jointly by Home Federal Savings and the Leisure World Historical Society. The public is invited to attend.

James Alan Clifford Grant, known to his friends as Cliff, and professionally as J.A.C. Grant, was born in Grand Forks, N.D., the second son of Canadian-born parents. Before he was five, the family moved to California.

Cliff went to Inglewood High School, to Southern Branch University of California and then to Stanford where he earned three degrees culminating in a Ph. D. in a combination program of Political Science and Law. He married Helen Allison in 1928 in a garden wedding with harp music by an American Indian in tribal dress.

Cliff taught for a year at the University of Wisconsin when he took his bride there. She liked everything but the cold winter weather which made her miserable. Cliff liked Wisconsin and was advancing rapidly.

When an offer from UCLA came, Helen thought it was a gift from heaven, so reluctantly Cliff left for a new school without status or an adequate library. He expected to stay at UCLA only until an offer came from a quality university in a mild climate. But he found UCLA stimulating and growing and when offers did come, he turned them down.

Cliff stayed at UCLA 47 years as a Political Science professor, Dean of Social Sciences, chairman of the Academic Senate, as well as chairing many important committees, including one that supervised the establishment of the Law School.

In the last six years he was a part-time assistant to the President of the University. He feels that he has made a real contribution to the development of UCLA, which has become one of the nation's great universities. The research library now is rated second only to Harvard's. UCLA gave Cliff an honorary LL.D. degree and an outstanding teaching award. He also has many plaques and cups to show for his many interests and activities.

In 1938 the Association of American Law Schools published a collection of the best articles on constitutional law, and devoted much space to Cliff's articles. This gave him instant status, inclusion in "Who's Who in America," and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He used the fellowship for research in Mexico, studying Latin-American Law and improving his Spanish. In later years he was able to lecture several times at the Law School of the National University, including teaching a short course in its post-graduate program. He was Vice Chairman of the Second in Bogota, Colombia, 1977. He served as advisor to Mexico's Ministry of Finance, giving seminars for the unit heads on fiscal problems of Federalism.

In 1956 Cliff was personal advisor to President Ngo Dinh Diem of Vietnam, and consultant to the Ministry of Justice. This proved to be one of the most interesting, but least satisfying experiences of his life.

During WW II Cliff was Vice Chairman of the Regional War Labor Board. This got him into the newly developing field of labor arbitration. He is still a member of the National Academy of Arbitrators, and occasionally handles a difficult case. He was a founding member of the L.A. City Employee Relations Board which he chaired.

One of his most interesting appointments by President Nixon was an eight year term on the Oliver Wendell Holmes Deviser. It meets four times a year under the chairmanship of the Librarian of Congress, and is preparing what it hopes will be a definitive history of the Supreme Court.

Cliff was a volunteer for many years with the L.A. County Lung Association, serving on its board and chairing many committees, including its Air Conservation Committee and Long Term Planning Board.

Cliff always took advantage of the wonderful academic custom of sabbatical leaves, which gives two-thirds salary every seventh year for study and research. Cliff's first sabbatical was Washington, D.C. where he worked diligently in the Library of Congress and Helen looked up geneology. The second sabbatical was a trip around the world where Cliff visited fifteen legislative bodies and an equal number of supreme courts for his new interest in comparative law.

Other sabbaticals were in England, France, Spain, and Germany. One year he taught at Johns Hopkins School of International Studies in Bologna, Italy. This led to his visiting Yugoslavia for the U.S. State Department to lecture at each of its five law schools.

Cliff's greatest interest lay with his students. The Grants had open house once a month, sometimes with a speaker, but always with refreshments. Ninety to 120 students would assemble in the Grant's large recreation room. Helen made the cookies, figuring five per person. Helen worked with foreign student organizations and entertained foreign students, especially on holidays to acquaint them with American celebrations. When the Grants travelled abroad they were often entertained by some of the students who had returned to their homeland. In 1980 in Thailand they were guests for four days in a Thai home complete with a gold-roofed spirit house.

Cliff and Helen Grant came to Leisure World in 1977. Cliff had not been here but a short time when he was offered a job on the Hearing Board of the South Coast Air Quality Management District, which job he kept for over six years. Even with being gone all day Cliff managed to square dance three nights a week. He and Helen were co-presidents of Fun Shop Stars and later co-presidents of the Globe Twirlers, both square dance groups. Cliff was president of Club 30, a ballroom dance group. After retiring from the air pollution group, Cliff joined Saddleback Kiwanis and is at present their program chairman. He is immediate past president of Academicians. Helen drags Cliff to meetings of Laguna Hills Braille Transcribers to which she belongs, especially when that group goes on a field trip to the Braille Institute.