

Powers, John Foster (05/30/1938--06/08/1984).

John Powers started life on Maui, where he was born, and then in Hawaii, where his family lived for two and a half years near the edge of the crater of Kilauea volcano. John became a Coloradan in fifth grade, when his dad, a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, was transferred to Denver in late 1948.

After serving in the U.S. Army in 1956, John started at Grinnell in 1957. He received a B.A. degree in History from the College in 1961. He was on the freshman swimming team and the staff of the annual yearbook. John lived in Cowles Hall.

Immediately after Grinnell, John was a lab and pilot plant operator in Denver for the Gates Rubber Company. He then started a graduate program in history at Colorado State College, where he obtained a M.A. degree in 1968. As a graduate student he also taught history at Aims Community College in Greeley, Colorado. Sometime after this, John worked as a supervisor of a crew building the Eisenhower Tunnel through the mountains west of Denver. Later on, John worked in the U.S. Geological Survey's personnel department.

John in 1963 married Linda Lucille Huntoon, and after their divorce, he was married in 1971 to Mary Susann Wheeler. He and Susie had their only child, William Wheeler Powers, in 1981.

In June 1984, after a year-long illness, John died of cancer. He was survived by his wife, their three-year-old son, John's parents and a sister (Margaret (Powers) Bogle).

One of his friends remembered a trip with John and Susie to Hawaii in 1980. "There cannot be a better companion for a trip to Hawaii than John. He knew where all the best snorkeling and beaches were. He knew the volcanoes by name, and which ones had recently erupted. He knew which plants were native and which were not, as well as what they were called in Hawaiian. He helped Susie to wake us up in the middle of the night to see the fluorescent tide and the night blooming cereus. He tirelessly drove us around three islands, knowing to prepare to eat lunch where there were no restaurants, although we, of course, also ate sushi at the famous Monkey Bar in Honolulu."

This friend also talked about the annual New Year's Eve party he and his wife started with John and Susie. They "met at the Japanese market in downtown Denver on New Year's Eve, where we bought all the ingredients, and then returned to John and Susie's home to make and eat sushi and sashimi courses until midnight. John blew the Hawaiian conch to welcome in the New Year."

John's family also fondly treasures John for being a proud father, for discussions about history, for games of bridge, and for being a Broncos fan. Nor can they forget his wonderful mimicking talent (he did great, funny imitations of Jonathan Winters and the U.S. Army Master Sergeant at Ft. Leonard Wood where John served after high school). John loved music, especially Hawaiian music and that of The Weavers folk singers. Unfortunately, his death prevented him from fulfilling his dream of participating in the community Messiah sing the Christmas of 1984.