

JAMES D. HOUSTON | 1933-2009

Santa Cruz writer depicted internment

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By Wallace Baine

Santa Cruz Sentinel

James D. Houston — one of California's richest literary voices who made Santa Cruz his home for 47 years — died Thursday of cancer. He was 75.

Houston, wrote vividly and warmly about California in his long career, from insightful essays on the state's magnetic sense of place to the fictional chronicle of the famous Donner Party journey in his celebrated novel "Snow Mountain Passage."



Houston

He lived with his wife, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, in a historic redwood home in Santa Cruz. The grand old house with a view of the Pacific Ocean from its crowning cupola was once the home of Patty Reed, who survived the Donner Party journey as a child.

The Houstons made a significant contribution in the popular awareness of the U.S. military's detention of Japanese-Americans during World War II with their collaborative book "Farewell to Manzanar," a memoir of Jeanne Houston's childhood spent in the Manzanar internment camp in California's Owens Valley.