



WASCH CENTER FOR RETIRED FACULTY

Newsletter Vol. 1, No. 1
Fall 2009

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE WASCH CENTER FOR RETIRED FACULTY

A Conversation between Karl Scheibe and Peter Frenzel

This fall Karl Scheibe, Professor of Psychology, emeritus, will begin his sixth year as Director of the Susan B. and William K. Wasch Center for Retired Faculty. Karl was in the vanguard of those who planned and created the project in 2002 and 2003, shepherding it through to its opening in the fall of 2005.

I spoke with Karl this past summer about his relationship to the Center and the history of its development. Some years before he retired in 2005, Karl had been thinking about his post-teaching days and the directions his career might take. "It occurred to me," Karl recalled, "that Wesleyan offered few benefits enabling retirees to continue their scholarly life and meet with colleagues. As retiring faculty members, some of my colleagues and I felt we needed a place to go to think and write and read. And, when we are retired, they're probably going to want to give our offices to someone else . . ." He spoke with others in the same situation and, with the help of then Director of the Career Development Center, Andy Szegedy-Maszak, they were able to find a small group of interested retired faculty, who met sporadically over the next two years.

Karl remembers that at this time "almost accidentally, things seemed to fall together. Bill

This is the first issue of Wasch Center Newsletter. Published at the beginning of each semester, its purpose is to offer news and information of interest to the retired faculty and the Wesleyan community and to provide a record of the many programs and services associated with the Center.

Wasch had asked a group of fellow squash players to his house for pizza and beer; the conversation turned to the idea of Wesleyan creating a center like Yale's." The next week Karl got a call from Bill.

Bill has had a close and felicitous relation with Wesleyan, first as undergraduate, then as Alumni Director and member of the Board of Trustees, and now as devoted alumnus well connected to Wesleyan faculty and administration. He has worked and published in

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WASCH CENTER LECTURE PROGRAM FALL 2009

All Lectures are held on Wednesdays beginning at 4:15 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 16: Peter Frenzel, "Spells, Curses and Heroic Deaths in Old Germanic Tongues: A Dramatic Reading."

SEPTEMBER 23: Peter Mark, "Being Jewish, Being Black, Being White -- Two Early 17th Century Sephardic Trading Communities in Senegal"

OCTOBER 7: Suzanne O'Connell, "Under the Ice: Discovering Antarctica"

OCTOBER 21: Jason Wolfe, "Graying Hair, Stem Cells, and the Process of Aging"

NOVEMBER 4: Bill Blakemore, "The Many Psychologies of Global Warming, Given the Hard Realities We Face." (A discussion of the talk on Tuesday, November 3.)

NOVEMBER 18: Libby Van Cleve, oboe, and Peter Standaart, flute. "Backstage with Libby and Peter: An Insider's Look at Preparation"

DECEMBER 2: Gay Smith, "Playing for Revolutionaries: America's 1776 Lady -Macbeth"

the areas of service, housing, and quality of life for the elderly.

Bill had called Karl about ideas for a new center for retirees, saying that he and his wife, Susan, had been considering a major gift to the University for this kind of facility. It would eventually be named the Susan B. and William K. Wasch Center for Retired Faculty. Karl remembers that "it seemed at the time—and has turned out to be—a perfect thing to do." Not only was the proposal approved by the administration, but also a charter statement was registered. Now came the nuts and bolts.

An ad hoc advisory committee was set up. With funding assured, the first major task was to look for a site. The committee, working closely with the administration and physical plant, eventually selected the house at 51 Lawn Avenue and the architectural firm of S/L/A/M Collaborative in Glastonbury. The work of renovation was begun.

Construction began in early 2004 on the first two floors—the ground floor as common space and the second floor for faculty offices. The third floor was left a shell.



Karl Scheibe, Director of the Wasch Center for Retired Faculty

The oversight of the work was assigned to Barbara Spalding of Physical Plant, for whom Karl has high praise. Barbara, the architects, the administration and the committee worked in consultation with Bill's daughter Christina E. Wasch, an architect in the Northampton area.

The advisory committee established a timetable with an opening scheduled for the fall of 2005. Despite some glitches and overruns, construction was able to continue on schedule. Karl remarked, "I was finally at the point at which I could begin to make offers of office space to six emeritus faculty members." The third floor, with space enough for five more offices, would have to remain a shell until additional fund-raising was under way.

The dedication, on a sunny homecoming Saturday in early November of 2005, was a festive occasion, with an overflow of invited guests, including several present and former trustee members. Susan Wasch brought greetings on behalf of herself and Bill as principal donors. The occasion was honored by the presence of Kay Butterfield, then 98, the wife of Victor L. Butterfield, the eleventh president of the University.

Beyond the celebratory aspects of the opening, it proved a good venue for informal planning of the final piece of the plan--the completion of the third floor offices. This challenging, not to say daunting, project was completed in 2006. The house now provides space for eleven faculty offices and that of the director. Will that be enough for the coming rush of retirees in the coming years? "Possibly not." says Karl, "We may have to find additional space in adjacent buildings."

Today the Center flourishes. Besides offering the emeriti office space, it oversees the administration and bookkeeping of retiree grants. It hosts a Tuesday film series (organized and glossed by Joe Reed) and a Wednesday lecture series. These lectures, often by retired faculty members, have proved successful to the point of frequent overflow.

The Center also schedules roundtable discussions about issues specific to retired faculty. It has become the venue of the weekly meeting of the Physics Department and provides space for the

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WESLEYAN TO HOST CONFERENCE FOR COLLEGE RETIREMENT ORGANIZATIONS

In the fall of next year Wesleyan will host the biennial Conference of AROHE, the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education. The association is an international network of retiree organizations at colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada. Its mission is to promote the development and exchange of ideas to help member organizations plan new programs and achieve their goals. The dates will be October 16 to 19, 2010.

Karl Scheibe, a board member of AROHE, and Bill Wasch attended the conference at USC last fall. At that time Wesleyan agreed to host the 2010 meeting. This will be the first conference on the East Coast. The AROHE Board felt that this location would help increase the membership and involvement of the many private and public universities in this part of North America.

In late July of this past summer Karl and Bill hosted Janette Brown, Executive Director of AROHE and Barry Cullhane, President, for a preliminary planning session. The conference will give the Wasch Center an opportunity to showcase its

program to other faculty retirement centers and to encourage institutions without such a program to begin thinking about establishing this kind of facility on their campuses. In the past these biennial conferences have been instrumental in starting new centers and helping active ones improve their programs. ■

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Literary Club's discussions and for the Sunday morning meetings of the Society of Friends. Not to go unmentioned is that the Center is the venue for the Friday afternoon faculty Happy Hour several times each semester.

In looking back over these past five years and the remarkable success of the Center, Karl summarized: "I am pleased with the relatively quick progress we have made. But more important is the end product: a center of intellectual and social coherence that allows a place for our retired faculty members to pursue their scholarly activities. Thanks to the generosity of Sue and Bill Wasch and the good work of many others, we have an institution of quality which has already become an integral and respected part of the Wesleyan community." ■

OBITUARIES

Ellen Gates D Oench

Ellen Gates D'Oench (Puffin), former curator of the Davison Art Center and Adjunct Professor of Art History, died in her Middletown home on May 22, 2009. She received a B.A. from Wesleyan and a Ph.D. from Yale. Memorial donations may be made to the Friends of the Davison Art Center, 301 High Street, Middletown CT 06457 or to the Middlesex County Community Foundation, Inc., 211 South Main Street, Middletown CT 06457.

Willard B. Walker

Willard Walker (Will), Professor emeritus and co-founder of the Anthropology Department, died in Skowhegan, Maine on May 23rd. He received his undergraduate degree from Harvard and his Ph.D. from Cornell. Memorial contributions may be sent in his memory to the Canaan Public Library Building Fund, P.O. Box 28, Canaan, ME 04924 or to the Somerset Animal Shelter, P.O. Box 453, Skowhegan, ME 04976.

Stanley Lebergott

Stan Lebergott, Chester D. Hubbard Professor of Economics and Social Sciences, emeritus, died on July 24. Before joining the Wesleyan faculty as Professor of Economics in 1962, he worked at the U.S. Department of Labor, the International Labor Office, and the U.S. Bureau of the Budget. He was appointed University Professor in 1970. He is survived by his wife Ruth and daughter Karen. A memorial service will be planned for fall. In lieu of flowers, his family prefers donations to the scholarship being established in his memory at Wesleyan University. Memorial gifts may be sent to Wesleyan University, 318 High Street, Middletown, CT 06459.



FELLOWS AT WORK IN THE WASCH CENTER

The eleven emeriti faculty who have offices in the Wasch Center are engaged in a variety of projects, which range from Carmen to microbes. On the second floor, **Herb Arnold** is working on a project in which he is seeking to integrate seemingly disparate materials, including autobiographical memoirs, the history of Central Europe in the twentieth century, and the role of empire and of the Austro-Hungarian one in particular.

Bill Firshein, the lone scientist with an office at the Wasch Center, has been working on a narrative book for non-scientists called *The Infectious Microbe*, about the role of microbes in swine and other kinds of flu, bioterrorism, and emergent diseases. The manuscript is under review by Wesleyan University Press as part of its series on Science and Public Policy Issues.

Paula Paige has been writing a collection of short stories about women in various walks of life, tentatively called *Roman Holiday and Other Stories*. Her next endeavor will be the translation of an early novel by Angela Bianchini, a Jewish writer who emigrated to the United States to escape Mussolini's racial laws. *The Oleanders* is a semi-autobiographical novel in which the narrator returns to her neighborhood in Rome after a failed marriage to an American.

Yoshiko Samuel has been studying traditional Japanese Tanka, a 31-syllable verse form, and its influence on minimalist poetry in the United States and Canada. In addition, she is currently exploring the work of Shima Akito (1934-1967), a skilled practitioner of Tanka who mastered the form while in prison awaiting execution on a murder charge. Yoshiko is seeking permission from Akito's Japanese publisher to translate the poems in his collected works.

Gay Smith, a newcomer to the Wasch Center this fall, has several projects including the completion and submission of her book, *Lady Macbeth in America: From the Stage to the White House*, which has been accepted for publication by Palgrave MacMillan in 2009 or 2010. Gay will also be working on an anthology of Irish and Irish-American plays, with introductions and annotations relative to their

theater history, and her own translation and adaptation of Beaumarchais' plays about Countess Almaviva (both stemming from a course she taught and productions she directed at Wesleyan).

On the third floor, **Joyce Lowrie** is engaged in an interdisciplinary study of Georges Bizet's *Carmen*. This project grew out of a chapter on Barbey d'Aureville in her recently-published book, *Sightings: Mirrors in Texts Texts in Mirrors* (RODOPI Press), which led her to a talk on d'Aureville and *Carmen* in Strasbourg, and then to writers as diverse as Hemingway, Nabokov, and Prosper Mérimée, whose novella *Carmen* inspired Bizet.

Gertrude Hughes is selecting and editing articles by Rudolf Steiner, the founder of anthroposophy, for a short anthology of his views on meditation. She will also write an introduction to the book, which will be published by Steiner Books.

Across the hall, **Joe Reed** is finishing revisions of his book, *Saul Steinberg Secret Agent*, famed artist for *The New Yorker*, on which he has been working since 2001.

Gene Klaaren, too, is finishing a book, in which he shows the social edges of South African creation theology, from making and unmaking apartheid to advancing a new South Africa.

Jerome Long continues his research on African American men and women who served in World War II. Specifically, he is investigating the 162 African Americans who were court-martialed, found guilty, and executed during the war. He is gathering sources related to the courts-martial (including transcripts and newly-opened sealed documents) as well as interviewing descendants of the deceased when possible.

Vera Grant is tutoring a student from the Watkinson School in German as an independent study project and teaching German to a small group of children and their mothers. She also hopes to translate, with her husband, a study of genetically manipulated foods and biodiversity issues.



Gene Klaaren, Fellow at Work

WASCH CENTER FILM SERIES FOR 2009-10

All films begin at 3:15

Tuesday, October 6: Alfred Hitchcock, *North by Northwest*

Tuesday, November 3: Akira Kurosawa, *Kagemusha*

Monday, December 7: John Ford, *They Were Expendable*

Tuesday, February 9: W.C. Fields, *It's a Gift*

Tuesday, March 9: Howard Hawks, *Red River*

Tuesday April 20: John Ford, *The Horse Soldiers*

EMERITI MEET NEW FACULTY MEMBERS: A MENTORING OPPORTUNITY

The Wesleyan Center for Faculty Career Development and the Wasch Center for Retired Faculty have collaborated in the past two years in a program designed to bring retired faculty together with new faculty members. The purpose of the program is to help the latter learn about the Wesleyan and Middletown Communities.

This program is voluntary on both sides. The list of participating retired faculty consists of those who live within easy distance of the Wesleyan Campus and who have indicated an interest in serving as social mentors for new colleagues. The latter may or may not choose to participate in the program.

The program is conceived as an opportunity for mentoring rather than for professional or academic advising. Departments and programs already have formal procedures for encouraging the professional development of their young colleagues. The mentoring program is much less formal and structured. The intention is to provide lively and informative points of contact between older and newer members of the community.

With support from the Office of Academic Affairs, mentors and their younger colleagues have enjoyed lunches together at the Daniel Family Commons. The program has worked successfully for the past two years and will operate again this year. ■



Ginny & Rolly Rollefson at Retirement Reception

EIGHT FACULTY MEMBERS ATTAIN EMERITUS STATUS

The Wasch Center honored eight retiring faculty members at a reception on May 23rd as part of the Reunion and Commencement Weekend. They were welcomed to emeritus status by senior Academic Dean Don Moon and to full privileges of the Wasch Center by Karl Scheibe, the Center's director. It did not rain. Their names, positions at Wesleyan, and Ph.D. or D.Phil. institutions follow.

Anthony Aniello Infante Professor of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry (1984–2009); Professor of Biology (1978–1984); Associate Professor of Biology (1972–1978); Assistant Professor of Biology (1967–1972); Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania.

Peter Kilby Professor of Economics (1976–2009); Associate Professor of Economics (1970–1976); Assistant Professor of Economics (1965–1970); D.Phil. Oxford University.

R. Lincoln Keiser Professor of Anthropology (1990–2009); Associate Professor of Anthropology (1977–1990); Assistant Professor of Anthropology (1972–1977); Ph.D. University of Rochester.

kos st□r Professor of Anthropology (1988–2009); Ph.D. University of Chicago.

John T. Paoletti William R. Kenan Professor in the Humanities (2005–2009); Professor of Art History (1980–2009); Associate Professor of Art History (1972–1980); Ph.D. Yale University.

Robert J. Rollefson Professor of Physics (1986–2009); Associate Professor of Physics (1980–1986); Assistant Professor of Physics (1973–1980); Ph.D. Cornell University.

Gay Smith Professor of Theater (1997–2008); Associate Professor of Theater (1989–1997); Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles.

Alfred Turco Professor of English (1980–2009); Associate Professor of English (1974–1980); Assistant Professor of English (1969–1974); Instructor in English (1967–1969); Ph.D. Harvard University

“LIFELONG LEARNING” IN THE WORKS

Over the past several months members of the advisory board of the Wasch Center have been discussing with the administration the establishment of a program that would offer non-credit courses for adults in the Wesleyan and Middletown communities. The Center is now pleased to announce that the program has been approved. Retired faculty members living in the Middletown area will constitute the core of the program’s teaching staff – possibly augmented by active Wesleyan faculty and others who wish to participate and are qualified to do so.

Such offerings will be brief in duration – three to twelve classroom hours. Keeping modest the fee for students will be a high priority. While the courses will necessarily have a more specifically focused subject matter than standard academic

offerings, their topical range will be broad – ranging from arts and humanities to the social and natural sciences. The common feature will be that they are solidly grounded and intellectually stimulating – engaging the active interests of our adult community on a high intellectual level.

Advisory board members believe that this program is in keeping with the mission as stated in our charter: “The purpose of the Wesleyan Emeriti Center is to create a shared intellectual and social community where emeriti faculty may continue their scholarly activities as well as their participation in the life of the university. Specific details of the program’s operation still need to be worked out. Members of the advisory board of the Wasch Center hope you share our excitement about this new opportunity. ■



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