

**The Susan B. and William K Wasch Center for Retired Faculty
Wesleyan University
A Report for 2015-2016**

Introduction

The Wasch Center has completed its eleventh year of operation in 2015-16. This year featured a 10th anniversary celebration, held on Homecoming weekend in November. A video prepared by John Wareham recounted the history of the Wasch Center over the last decade. The list of speakers included Joyce Jacobsen, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and also Susan Wasch, who announced the formation of a special fund, named in honor of Karl Scheibe, who was beginning his 12th and final year at Director of the Wasch Center. The fund is to be used for any purpose that Karl considers worthy to advance and enhance the Wasch Center and its programs.

Residency at the Center is at capacity. Thirteen residents have space in the building, not including the Director. Alex Dupuy, newly retired from the Sociology Department, will be joining the house in July, occupying the space formerly assigned to Herb Arnold, who will be moving into a shared space with Mike Lovell, Paula Paige, and Duffy White.

The level of activity at the Center continues to be vigorous. Our series of Wednesday programs remain popular—the centerpiece of our community activity. We hosted seven programs in the fall semester. We also had a catered holiday party. In the spring term, we featured seven regular programs, including a performance in our backyard in May by the Mattabesett String Collective. All of our programs were well attended—usually at the capacity of the Butterfield Room—which holds about 35 people. About 2/3 of our afternoon programs consisted of presentations by retired faculty members. The remaining 1/3 were programs given by others in the community or by currently active faculty members at Wesleyan.

This year's spring program included a talk by former Wesleyan President, Colin Campbell, whose topic was, "Thoughts on Citizenship." The Smith Room of Olin Library was the venue for this lecture which was attended by about 150 people. This was the first general lecture Campbell has given on campus since his retirement in 1989, a retirement which was announced in the very same Smith Room in Olin.

We did not hold our customary reception at the end of the year for newly retired faculty members, for only four faculty members retired, and only one of them could have been present at the reception. We expect to resume this activity next year.

The Wesleyan Institute for Lifelong Learning (WILL) has completed its sixth full year of operation under the auspices of the Wasch Center. In the fall, we presented six successful short courses and a full-day program entitled "Connecticut Impressionism" held at the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme, featuring Richard Friswell. In the

spring we offered seven short courses and a full-day program entitled “Knowing and Enjoying the Connecticut River,” aboard the Riverquest excursion boat, operated by Mark and Mindy Yuknat.

The WILL program is prospering. A separate report is being prepared to describe the details of WILL. We are pleased to see that WILL continues to have a surplus of income over expenses, which surplus is being used to subsidize the Oral History project of the Wasch Center.

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board has met monthly throughout the academic year and has been an invaluable source of new ideas and a resource for the development of existing programs. The current members of the Advisory Board are: Herbert Arnold, Allan Berlind, Peter Frenzel, Rick Elphick, Pete Pringle, Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, and *ex officio* members, Susan Wasch (now deceased), William Wasch and Karl Scheibe.

Administrative Assistant

Amy Bello served as our Administrative Assistant until January, 2016. She then resigned her position in favor of a .75 FTE job with African-American Studies. She was replaced by Kait Galdo as a temporary employee until March. Kait then resigned in late April and was replaced by Holly King, who continues to serve as a temporary employee.

After Amy Bello’s departure from the Wasch Center, conversations were initiated with the Office of Academic Affairs to increase the time magnitude of this position from .50 to .75FTE. Joyce Jacobsen agreed to this increase, effective with the hiring of a new permanent occupant for this position. This arrangement will be in place for a pilot period of two years. At the end of two years, an evaluation will be conducted to determine if continuation of the position at this level is warranted.

We were fortunate to have an ITS student available mornings twice a week at the Wasch Center to assist residents with computer-related issues. We look forward to continuing this service in the fall.

Informational Meetings

We continued our custom of providing information for faculty members considering retirement. The centerpiece of this effort was a meeting in the spring semester with representatives of the Office of Human Resources, TIAA-CREF and the Office of Academic Affairs to present information and answer questions about financial benefits, insurance programs, and ongoing support for research and professional activities for retired faculty members. In addition, the Director has conferred often with senior members of the faculty who are considering retirement or who have recently retired.

Movie Series

This was the 10th year for our movie series, designed and presented by Joe Reed, Professor Emeritus of English, now ably assisted by Yoshiko Samuel. We presented movies once a month on Tuesday afternoons throughout both the fall and spring semesters.

Newsletter

In order to enrich the availability of information about members of Wesleyan's community of retired faculty members, we established a newsletter in 2009-2010. Issues have been published each semester for the past six years. The same schedule of publication is planned for the coming year.

The newsletter is edited by Peter Frenzel, who has the support of an Editorial Board consisting of Allan Berlind, Jerome Long, Joyce Lowrie, Paula Paige, Al Turco, Karl Scheibe, and Jerry Wensinger. Both issues of our newsletter for this past year were popular and well received. We expect to continue and even expand this publication.

Oral History Project

Wesleyan has over 85 living, retired faculty members. The idea emerged at one of the discussions of the Wasch Center Advisory Board in 2010 to begin a program of systematic interviews of individuals in this body about their Wesleyan careers. With the collaboration of Anne Greene, Suzy Taraba, and Sean McCann, we established a program in which five students conducted extensive interviews with five retired faculty members in the 2011-2012 year. These interviews were recorded and transcribed, and will be a permanent part of the Wesleyan Archives, as well as being available online through WesScholar.

Since this initial effort, we have enjoyed the talents of Nancy Smith as an interviewer for the oral history program. In the past year, she has retired from this service. Now Heather Zavod and Christine Foster have agreed to do this job, and have already served admirably.

We now have a total of 20 interviews that have been conducted—and the majority of these have now been transcribed, edited, and released for general use. We expect to continue to conduct about six new interviews every year.

This program is conducted with the active collaboration of Leith Johnson, University Archivist, who maintains the archives and makes the edited interviews available online, accessible through the Wasch Center website.

Funding is made possible by a donation from the Library, the Friends of the Library, and a surplus in the WILL budget. We anticipate a continuation of this project in the next year.

Transition in the Organization and Direction of the Wasch Center

Karl Scheibe was first appointed Director of the Wasch Center in the pre-operational year of 2004 for a period of three years. Until the fall of 2005, the building at 51 Lawn Avenue was in construction. It was ready for occupancy for the fall semester of 2006. Scheibe was reappointed for successive three-year terms three times, with the final term ending in June, 2016.

Scheibe announced his intention to retire as Director of the Wasch Center in the fall of the current academic year. Joyce Jacobsen, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, assumed responsibility to recruit and appoint a new Director. In January, 2006, she asked Scheibe to appoint a committee within the Wasch Center to conduct this search.

Scheibe quickly convened a meeting to which about 20 people were invited—current residents of the Wasch Center, members of the Advisory Board, and others who had had strong involvement with our programs. At this meeting, an Ad Hoc Search Committee was formed, consisting of eight volunteers: David Beveridge, Joyce Lowrie, Jerome Long, Peter Frenzel, Duffy White, Rick Elphick, Yoshiko Samuel, and Jerry Wensinger.

After prolonged and assiduous deliberation, this committee produced a recommendation that Peter Kilby and Yoshiko Samuel be appointed as Co-Directors of the Wasch Center for the next year. The committee also recommended that Karl Scheibe be appointed for a term of one year as Director Emeritus. These recommendations were accepted by the Office of Academic Affairs, and appointment letters reflecting this new arrangement were sent, signed, and returned.

In addition, it was agreed that a support group, sometimes called a Cabinet, be appointed to assume special responsibilities for the new management of Wasch Center programs and activities. An incomplete listing of these people and their functions is as follows:

- Joe Reed and Yoshiko Samuel—Film series
- Peter Frenzel—Newsletter
- Herb Arnold—Co-Director of WILL program
- Rick Friswell—Co-Director of WILL program
- Duffy White—Coordinator of Wednesday lecture series
- Richard Adelstein—Advisor for fund-raising and utilization of existing funds
- Karl Scheibe—Oral history project

Others, such as Rick Elphick, Joyce Lowrie, and Jerome Long will be part of this group, but without specific portfolios.

Other Activities and Uses of the Center

The Wasch Center was used for many other occasions during the course of the year. The Physics Department used the Butterfield Room for its regular Thursday luncheon meetings. The Quaker Meeting used the building every Sunday morning. (The Quaker Group regularly makes a contribution to the Wasch Center in consideration of its use privilege.) Every other Saturday morning the Butterfield Room houses an ESL class.

The building had numerous bookings (over 100) for activities outside of our programs or the WILL program during the past academic year.

Fund Raising

We have continued to encourage retired faculty members, alumni and others to make contributions to the endowment fund of the Wasch Center. Income realized from our endowment fund can be used to support research and travel for retired faculty members, and also to provide support for computer acquisition and repair. More generally, such income might be used to enhance other programs and activities of the Wasch Center. A number of such gifts have been received in the past academic year. A notice in the Newsletter reminds people of this gifting opportunity.

We continue to make available to retired faculty members small supplemental grants for their professional activities. The Advisory Board authorized the distribution of grants of \$250 each to retired faculty members who apply for them. The funds for these grants are drawn from interest derived from the Lemert portion of our endowment fund. Small grants must be drawn from income from this fund, not from the capital amount.

An initiative to form a Wasch Emeritus College

A proposal for a Wasch Emeritus College, to be developed and operated through the Wasch Center is currently being prepared for submission to the Office of Academic Affairs.

The objective of the proposed The Wasch Emeriti College is to foster the offering to regular undergraduate students of tutorials and honors thesis supervision by retired members of the Wesleyan faculty. This has been and is an ongoing practice at Wesleyan, but the availability of this kind of instruction is not conspicuous to most faculty members nor to students. The proposed Emeriti College would raise awareness of the possibility of matching student interests with the talents and expertise of retired faculty members. The plan would be to develop and administer this program under the auspices of the Wasch Center for Retired Faculty, collaborating with participating departments and programs.

We will propose that a survey be conducted soon of retired faculty members to determine the level of interest in such a program. Also, appropriate consultations will be

conducted with department chairs and divisional deans. The Office of Academic Affairs supports this initiative, and envisages a pilot program in the near future. Our proposal will also include modest compensation to retired faculty members for their participation.

Death of Susan Wasch

Susan Beck Wasch died on February 5, 2016, in her 81st year. Susie and Bill are, of course, the original benefactors of the Wasch Center, which will forever bear their names. But they have also been out constant and faithful supporters—attending our meetings, our social occasions, participating with our Advisory Board, and in general lending their enthusiasm and solid good sense to our operations all these years. Now we have lost Susie—and she is sorely missed.

A memorial service was held for her in on May 14th—an occasion attended by a vast crowd of family, friends, people from Wesleyan and from the broader community whose lives Susan had touched. It was a fitting tribute to one of the most significant members of our community over the last generation. We remember her with pleasure and affection.

Summary

With the end of Karl Scheibe's service as Director of the Wasch Center and with the death of Susan Wasch, this clearly is a year of major transition. This has resulted in an increased level of involvement of a number of retired faculty members, particularly those who served on the Ad Hoc Search Committee. This increased activity gives reason for solid optimism for the Wasch Center and its programs. We have many good and talented people who are pitching in with their resources.

Even after the death of Susan, Bill Wasch has continued his faithful and constructive participation in the Wasch Center's activities and programs. We are forever indebted to his vision and to his energy.

Respectfully submitted,

Karl E. Scheibe
Director