



SOCIETY OF PROFESSORS EMERITI
Established in 1978

Washington University
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One Brookings Drive
St. Louis, Missouri 63130-4899

THE ORIGINS OF
THE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SOCIETY OF PROFESSORS EMERITI:
NOTES FROM THE ARCHIVES
(Revised)

The late Sam Soule, one of our more thoughtful members who was a devotee of medical history--an interest which we had in common--more than once urged me to write a short history of the Society. Being chronically over committed to writing, I demurred, but I promised to keep the thought on tap. As Archivist of the group, it was the natural thing to do. The result now before you is a modest collection of reminiscences fortified by verification.

By 1975-1976, when I began increasingly to see some of my friends in the faculty attain the distinction of professor emeritus only to disappear from the daily scene, I conceived a partial solution: A Society of the Emeriti. Then in 1977, when my wife Louise and I partook of Thanksgiving dinner at the home of Phil and Eloise DuBois, I broached the idea to Phil and we talked in the living room after dinner. What did he think of it? His response was unqualified so I invited him to join me in canvassing the existing Emeriti for their reaction. The vice-chancellor's office gladly provided the relevant names and addresses; there were about 85 living in the area, and we, of course, approached them first. A short letter with a reply form was sent out and, shortly, affirmative responses were received from about 30. Accordingly this group met in March and April, 1978 at the Alumni House to discuss the proposal, then to draw up a constitution and bylaws.

The stated purpose was "to encourage and promote the common interests of its members, to provide for social and intellectual interaction among them, and to serve as a clearing house for information concerning University policy of interest to the group."

The early history of the founding was reported in the W.U. Record, April 6, 1978. The present account is a brief survey of the first decade.

The first officers were: President, Saul Rosenzweig, Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry, President-elect and Secretary-Treasurer, Philip H. DuBois, Psychology. The additional members of the Council consisted of William E. Allen, Clinical Radiology, Medical School; Arthur B. Cleaves, Earth Sciences; A. Gwendolyn Drew, Physical Education; Thomas S. Hall, Biology and former Dean of the

College; Richard J.W. Koopman, Samuel C. Sachs Professor Emeritus of Electrical Engineering; and Carl Tolman, Earth Sciences and former Chancellor and Dean of the Faculty. In the course of the years the Council has been increased in size and the terms of office have been staggered. This group has become a kind of senate which under the leadership of the President and President-elect (Executive Secretary) meet regularly before the monthly luncheon meeting to plan and execute the business of the Society. The Council has played a vital and vibrant part of the Society, and those elected to it enjoy not only the luncheon but the exhilarating prelude.

After the instructive experience of the first few years, the office of Treasurer was separated from that of Secretary so that at present the chief officers and the President, President-elect and Executive Secretary, and Treasurer. Appended is a list of the presidents for the first twelve years.

The membership rapidly grew until it attained the continuing figure of about 100. The large majority live in St. Louis, or vicinity, but some who have retired to more distant places have maintained membership to receive the monthly notices and to attend occasional meetings when they are in town.

From the outset it was recognized that the Society would have a natural input of about a dozen new Emeriti each year and would be subject to some attrition as time passed. But on that basis it was anticipated that with a nucleus of members actively interested and devoted, the organization would survive and probably prosper.

It was not so fully anticipated that the group would in its membership and activities be so representative of all the schools and departments of the University. Faculty members from the hilltop, in its various departments, from the Medical School and Dental School, the Law School and the School for Social Work have mingled in the group at its monthly meetings and other events in a unique way. Few other organizations at the University have been so fortunate.

At the regular monthly luncheon meetings an invited speaker from the University or the larger community talks to the group briefly on some timely topic or on one in which he or she enjoys a special expertise. These meetings occur in all but the summer months. About a third of the registered members attend these sessions, and there is always a lively exchange among the participants that is reinvigorating in its effect.

Alumni House was almost immediately succeeded by Whittemore House, the Faculty Conference Center, as the meeting place of the Emeriti. With the gracious cooperation of the managers--first, Arthur Kleine, then Shirley Emerson--the Emeriti have practically acquired a club house of their own. The monthly luncheons are served a la carte in the fireplace room; the anniversary banquets are in the large dining room and the living room, and the Council meets are, by courtesy, held in the Board Room. Those who were not formerly members of the Faculty Conference Center usually pay the

initiation fee and become members when they join the Society, and the management generously omits to charge members of the Emeriti the regular monthly dues.

There have been special activities that supplemented the monthly meetings, e.g., the excursions to Joe Towle's country home in Chesterfield in the spring of each year while Joe still had this estate with its stable of horses. Those who attended had the opportunity to enjoy a carriage ride or to swim in the pool, and all partook of the generous seasonal refreshments. A similar shorter series of excursions occurred through the hospitality of Dr. Bob Bell who invited the group to his Hannibal abode. There have also been occasional special meetings at the Botanical Gardens and the Art Museum, usually in May.

A regular feature has been the anniversary banquet that occurs towards the end of each year, recently shifted from December to November in order to avoid the rigors of weather and the number of other obligations that characterize the last calendar month. A sumptuous dinner served in the finest Whittemore tradition is followed by a short musical program, sometimes supplemented by a sing-along and dancing.

The other achievements of the group are not remarkable, nor are they required to be. But one of these is noteworthy. At an early date a committee to study the Rights and Privileges of the Emeriti was appointed under the chairmanship of Ed Schwartz, School of Social Work. After a thorough survey by contact with various departments and schools a report was submitted that brought to light rights and privileges not hitherto fully recognized or implemented. Though it may be trivial as life as a whole is contemplated, it is notable that as a result of this study the Emeriti were granted parking permits on the hilltop campus without charge (presently \$115). Many have used this privilege--a privilege that implicitly recognizes the continuing contributions to the University and to the professions that members often share with their nominally more active colleagues.

Thus we have reached the twelfth year of the W.U. Society of Professor Emeriti. Life at its best is too short but there are simple ways to enrich its depth, and the Society is one such way.

Saul Rosenzweig
November 6, 1988

PRESIDENTS OF WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
SOCIETY OF PROFESSORS EMERITI (1978-1995)

Saul Rosenzweig	1978-1979
Philip H. DuBois	1980
Elizabeth Schreiber	1981
Joseph W. Towle	1982-1983
Leroy R. Boling	1984
Virginia Minnich	1985
Bruce Melin	1986
Paul O. Hagemann	1987
Robert R. Mains	1988
Robert M. Shank	1989
Earl E. Shepard	1990
Sol L. Garfield	1991
David Felix	1992
Renata Rotkowicz	1993
Jane McCammon	1994
Arthur E. Carlson	1995