

RETIRED FACULTY ASSOCIATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

The First Ten Years, 1991 to 2001

INTRODUCTION

During the 1980's, various ideas about an organization for retired faculty at the University of Virginia had been floated around the University. These ideas ranged from a social club to a University-sponsored housing project for retired faculty from any university, who could take courses, play golf, and otherwise enjoy the atmosphere of Charlottesville. In early 1991, Robert Rutland met with President John Casteen to pursue the idea of organizing an association of the retired faculty at the University. According to Norman Graebner, who attended this meeting along with Bob, Kenneth Crispell, and Edwin Cohen: "The president agreed immediately and overwhelmingly. He offered a party each year as well as his office for handling all correspondence."

In following up this discussion in April 1991, Bob Rutland sent the following letter.

"Dear President Casteen:

Those of us who have served on the faculty at the University are pleased by your hospitality and remembrance of our active days. Now that we are retired, we would hope that our contribution to the University has not ended, but only entered another stage. To that end, we are considering the formation of an organization for retired faculty that would keep its activities to a low key but work for:

A. An annual luncheon with the president, where there would be free and amiable conversation about the state of the University.

B. An annual lecture by a distinguished retired professor or associate professor on a subject of general interest, to be held in the Rotunda.

C. A newsletter to be published quarterly to acquaint retired faculty of progress and plans of general interest to them and their spouses.

D. Formation of a general committee to work with the appropriate university officials relating to such topics as parking access, discounts for sporting events and the Birdwood golf course green fees, admissions to theatrical events on a discounted basis, office space for consultations.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Rutland
Norman A. Graebner
Joe Vaughn
Donald M. Medley
William H. Harbaugh
Irby B. Cauthen

Peter C. Manson
Edgar F. Shannon, Jr.
Kenneth R. Crispell
Charles M. Davison, Jr.
Merrill D. Peterson
Douglas W. Alden

Robert Bierstedt
Inis L. Claude, Jr.
Frank W. Finger
Alfred Burger
C. Knight Aldrich
Edwin S. Cohen"

President Casteen's response "was most supportive" according to Norman Graebner's description. The President wrote on May 17th: "We are...eager to find ways to implement each proposal...Thank you for your leadership on matters touching retired faculty members. I look forward to working with you."

The President's support has continued over the years, with not only his direct involvement but also that of a liaison [Robert (Chip) F. German, Jr., and others] and especially that of Linda Shifflett and Lois Lovern, who have handled all correspondence and helped in maintaining information on members and those eligible for membership.

An Ad Hoc Steering Committee was set up to develop the Retired Faculty Association at the University of Virginia. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee were:

Kenneth R. Crispell, Chairman	
Edwin S. Cohen	Frank W. Finger
Norman A. Graebner	Robert A. Rutland

The organizational meeting was held on November 21, 1991 in the Conference Room at Alumni Hall. Over fifty retired faculty members attended. The officers and members of the Board elected at that time were:

Robert A. Rutland	President
Kenneth R. Crispell	Vice President
Frank W. Finger	Secretary/Treasurer
Arthur F. Stocker	Member-at-large
Eleanor G. May	Member-at-large

A draft constitution for The Retired Faculty Association of the University of Virginia had been developed and was adopted at this initial meeting. The Constitution has been revised slightly over the years, but essentially it is unchanged.

PURPOSE

As stated in the Constitution:

"The RFA will provide a means for communication between the University administration and its retired faculty, and permit the scheduling of special events and

programs for its members on a continuing basis."

The RFA has succeeded in providing programs and special events, including the tradition of annual luncheon meetings, which the President hosts and where he reports on the state of the University.

Several attempts have been made to extend the RFA programs and purposes, including those suggested in section D of the April 1991 letter. Although these attempts have not resulted in significant changes, they have been useful in clarifying several issues of importance to the retired faculty.

First, and crucial at the University, as well as to every other university, is parking. Unfortunately, this problem seems to get worse rather than better, with no solution in sight. Second, senior discounts were not viewed as necessary or even appropriate for retirees, especially retired faculty who have both TIAA/CREF and Social Security. Third, a survey of the retired faculty indicated that the likelihood of their using assigned office spaces was too low to justify them, even though space had been offered at the Colonnade Club. However, the University computer system and the libraries are accessible. Fourth, information has been provided on health plans and University-sponsored travel opportunities. In addition, the RFA has assisted in revising and distributing the University's "Guide for Retired Faculty".

A regular newsletter was considered desirable by some members, but not to the extent that anyone has volunteered to write and publish it.

Attempts made to reinvolve retired faculty in University teaching programs have encountered problems as a result of departmental autonomy, state regulations, and the need to maintain budgeted lines. Arrangements for teaching clearly have to be made on individual bases.

Senior citizens, including retired faculty, may attend University courses without paying tuition. (This privilege is available to all seniors at public universities and colleges in Virginia.) But few courses had been offered that were designed specifically for seniors. However, in 2000 the Jefferson Institute for Lifelong Learning (JILL) was established; it has provided opportunities for retired faculty as both students and teachers.

In 1994, an effort to create a Gerontology Center, an interdisciplinary

center for the study of aging, was made by the RFA, an idea conceptualized and developed by Knight Aldrich. However, insufficient support for implementing such a project was found among the various relevant departments at the University.

In 1996, the RFA developed a small grant program for graduate students doing research related to the area of gerontology. The grant was made in 1997 and 1998 to Ewan McNay. No grant was awarded in 1999, because of a lack of worthy applicants. In 2000, grants went to Andreana P. Haley and Katherine Cook. In 2001, the award was made again to Ms. Haley. The RFA Board has decided to discontinue these grants, at least temporarily, while the program is reevaluated. Possibly some other program of assistance can be developed, one in which there will be more interest, or one which makes a more significant contribution to advancement of the field.

MEMBERSHIP

The original definition of membership eligibility as stated in the Constitution was: "The RFA is open to all former faculty members in good standing, who desire an ongoing tie with the University." Very quickly, the Board and others raised questions about the inclusions and exclusions that these words seemed to indicate. The issues, in the approximate order in which they appeared, included:

- (1) Whether "faculty" included General Faculty, as well as Academic Faculty.
- (2) Whether spouses of retired faculty were eligible for membership.
- (3) Whether there should be a required number of years on the faculty, e.g., six years, before eligibility.
- (4) Whether tenure at the University had to be immediately prior to retirement. That is, whether someone who left the faculty for another position and later retired to the Charlottesville area was eligible.
- (5) Whether spouses of deceased retired faculty were eligible for membership.
- (6) Whether spouses of deceased faculty who had not retired were eligible.
- (7) Whether those who do not have spouses could bring guests to meetings.

After lengthy discussions, it was decided and approved that the membership eligibility in the Constitution should be changed to read as follows:

"Membership in the University of Virginia Retired Faculty Association shall be open to:

- (1) All retirees who have held a full-time faculty appointment (including General Faculty) of at least one year at the University.
- (2) Spouses of these retirees, whether or not the retiree is deceased.
- (3) Surviving spouses of former full-time faculty members at the University of Virginia who died prior to retirement."

Later, after the meetings moved to the Omni Hotel, the Board agreed that any member could bring guests to the meetings.

At the end of the first year (1991 - 1992), seventy-one retirees had paid the membership fee. By 2000 - 2001, paid memberships numbered 231. [Paid memberships may represent either a single individual or two persons, i.e., a retiree and a spouse. Thus, the total number of members is probably close to 400.] As stated by Arthur Stocker, "I do think the Retired Faculty Association has been a resounding success. There was no sense of community among the retired faculty when I retired in 1984."

MEETINGS

President Casteen has hosted a luncheon each year at Alumni Hall. In addition, during the first few years of the RFA, three or four membership meetings were held at Alumni Hall in the late morning with a speaker and discussion. In 1996, when it was decided that the RFA could no longer have free use of Alumni Hall, these membership meetings were moved to Zehmer Hall at the School of Continuing Education. In addition, a meeting was held occasionally in the Garden Room of the Colonnade Club.

In the fall of 1991, in an attempt to get the members better acquainted socially and to learn more about individual interest and activities, Knight Aldrich proposed a series of luncheon meetings (in addition to the regular membership meetings) where the members themselves would speak. The first of these was held April 2, 1992, when Tom Hammond described his experiences in Russia. These luncheon meetings were held at the Greencroft Club, and Knight and his wife, Julie, coordinated all the arrangements. They recruited speakers, prepared mailings, handled transactions with the Club, and so forth.

In 1995, the Board decided that speakers at the membership meetings should be drawn from outside the membership of RFA, while speakers at the Greencroft Club luncheons should come from within the membership. At the same time, it was becoming apparent that the membership meetings at Zehmer Hall were losing popularity to the luncheon meetings and that these were outgrowing the space available at the Greencroft Club.

Thus, beginning in the fall of 1996, four luncheon-membership meetings were scheduled each year at the Omni Hotel. The numbers attending these luncheons usually have been between 100 and 130.

Each spring and once at Christmas time, receptions have been held for the membership, either in the Garden Room or in the garden of the Colonnade Club, depending on the weather. Early receptions were "catered" by wives of the members.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The material for this brief history was gathered for the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the RFA, which will be celebrated at President Casteen's annual luncheon to be held at Alumni Hall on November 12, 2001. The text was prepared by the two charter members of the RFA who are on the Board in 2001: Eleanor May and Chester Titus. The first draft was based both on memories and on information from the RFA archives in Alderman Library. Other charter members who helped refine the early drafts include: Knight Aldrich, Inis L. Claude, Frank Finger, Norman Graebner, Roland Johnson, and Arthur Stocker.

SPEAKERS AT MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS*
January 1992 to April 1996

Raymond C. Bice, Jr.	William E. Jackson
Hovey S. Dabney	K. Edward Lay
James C. Dunstan	Lee Nunn
R. Edward Freeman	Timothy S. Prinz
Raymond M. Haas	Rouhollah K. Ramazani

SPEAKERS AT GREENCROFT CLUB LUNCHEONS*
April 1992 to March 1996

Robert Bierstedt	Piet C. Gugelot	Robert A. Rutland
Inis L. Claude, Jr.	Thomas T. Hammond	Edgar A. Shannon, Jr.
Kenneth R. Crispell	John T. Harlan, Jr.	Arthur F. Stocker
Alfred P. Fernbach	Eleanor G. May	Milos M. Velimirovic
Frank W. Finger	Daniel J. Meador	William Wood
Norman A. Graebner	Richard A. Prindle	

SPEAKERS AT MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON MEETINGS*
September 1996 to September 2001

Henry J. Abraham	William A. Elwood	William D. Middleton
James A. Bear, Jr.	George P. Garrett	Helen Rodman
Rosalyn W. Berne	Thomas E. Gavenick	Larry J. Sabato
Yvonne Brandon	Carlos F. Gomez	Paul Saunier
James F. Childress	K. Edward Lay	Patricia H. Werhane
Eugene F. Corrigan	Daniel J. Meador	Karin Wittenborg
John D'Earth	Michael Menaker	

* These lists may not be complete.

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS OF THE RETIRED FACULTY ASSOCIATION

1991 - 1993	Robert A. Rutland Kenneth R. Crispell Frank W. Finger Eleanor G. May Arthur F. Stocker	President Vice President Secretary/Treasurer Member-at-large Member-at-large
1993 - 1995	C. Knight Aldrich Frank W. Finger Arthur F. Stocker Chester R. Titus Eleanor G. May Roland E. Johnson	President Vice President Secretary Treasurer Member-at-large Member-at-large
1995 -1997	James H. Bash Eleanor G. May Arthur F. Stocker Chester R. Titus Inis L. Claude, Jr. Ray W. Frantz, Jr.	President Vice President Secretary Treasurer Member-at-large Member-at-large
1997 - 1999	Ray W. Franz, Jr. Eleanor G. May Bruce W. Nelson Chester R. Titus Inis L. Claude, Jr. Grover C. Pitts	President Vice President Secretary Treasurer Member-at-large Member-at-large
1999 - 2000	Eleanor G. May Inis L. Claude, Jr. Bruce W. Nelson Chester R. Titus Anne E. H. Freudenberg Grover C. Pitts	President Vice President Secretary Treasurer Member-at-large Member-at-large
2000 - 2001	Eleanor G. May Daniel N. Mohler Bruce W. Nelson Chester R. Titus Anne E. H. Freudenberg Grover C. Pitts	President Vice President Secretary Treasurer Member-at-large Member-at-large
2001 - 2002	Bruce W. Nelson Daniel N. Mohler Helen B. Snook Chester R. Titus Anne E. H. Freudenberg Grover C. Pitts	President Vice President Secretary Treasurer Member-at-large Member-at-large