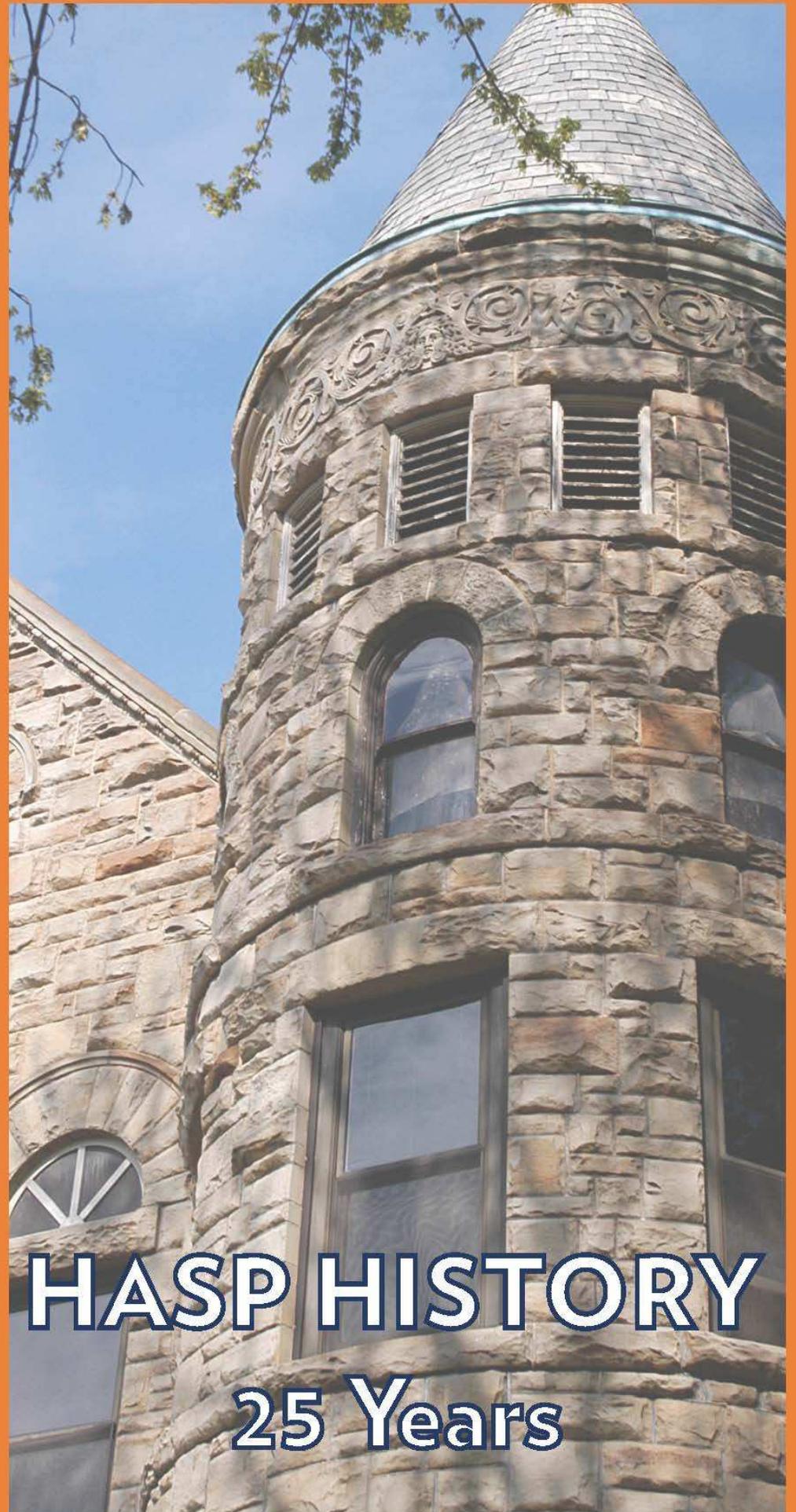


25th Anniversary

1988-2013



HASP HISTORY
25 Years

HASP

**A Twenty-Five-Year History
1988-2013**

The Hope Academy of Senior Professionals

HASP

**A Twenty-Five-Year History
1988-2013**

**Kimberly K. Mendels
Executive Director
2013**



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Kimberly K. Mendels grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and was raised by an extraordinary, dedicated, Christian single mom. She received her BA in psychology and social work from Hope College in 1993 and her master of social work from Grand Valley State University in 1998. She is married to Kevin, and they have three daughters, Madeleine, Abigail and Lilly; an English springer spaniel, Miles; and a turtle, Sheldon. She came to HASP as executive director in May of 2007.

Copy editor and page layout: JoHannah Smith

All photos courtesy of HASP members and archives

*This history of HASP is dedicated to our founder,
John Hollenbach, and his wife Winnie,
in grateful appreciation for this organization,
which inspires, informs, serves, and supports
Hope College and the community we love.*

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Special thanks also to previous executive directors, Evie Smallegan, Jan VerHelst, and Diana Marsilje, for their careful record keeping, leadership, devotion, and support of the academy. To our founder, John Hollenbach, and his wife Winnie, I express gratitude for this gift that twenty-five years later continues to enrich the lives of seniors, students, the college we love, and our community.

To my dear friend and trusted assistant, Amy Berarducci, who handled many extra tasks and details so I could research and who makes life better in numerous ways. And finally to my husband Kevin and our three beautiful daughters, Madeleine, Abigail, and Lilly, who were very understanding of all the extra evenings spent at the office for this project.

*Kimberly Mendels
Executive Director, HASP*



Back row (l-r): Kim Mendels, Jack Hyde, Elton Bruins, Jerrald Redeker; front row: Jan VerHelst, Trudy VanderHaar

Foreword

This paper is the result of months of research through the HASP archives and supporting documents in the HASP office from over the last twenty-five years. It was inspired by the twenty-five-year anniversary committee: Elton Bruins, Jack Hyde, Jerry Redeker, Trudy Vander Haar, Jan VerHelst, and Kim Mendels, executive director.

Minutes of board of directors meetings, annual meetings, committee meetings, letters of correspondence, annual bulletins, curriculum calendars, photographs, and any and all supporting documents were collected, organized, and reviewed for the writing of this document.

This publication is a detailed summary of HASP's first twenty-five years, including information regarding the founding of the academy and the growth of its membership, its service, curriculum, monthly programs, special events, communications, budget and finances, physical space, and personnel.

It is our hope that this piece will both inform and inspire members of the academy for years to come.

The Importance of Lifelong Learning

As you approached retirement, did you ever worry about how you would stay busy and engaged with all the free time you would inherit? Did you worry about how you would keep your mind active?

Lifelong learning fills those potentially empty hours with interesting and engaging challenges. The world is full of great and generous minds who are at their best when learning something new. These are the kinds of individuals who ask questions, reinvent themselves, get energy from shifting gears, and live lives of quiet—and sometimes not so quiet—inquisitiveness. These are lifelong learners. These are the members of the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals (HASP).

Senior adult learners have a wealth of lifetime experience that allows them to learn, assimilate, question, and think critically about what is being presented. Senior adult learners are fun; they are not passive learners. Lifelong learners share the trait of curiosity—the search for answers or the quest for transformation on some level—and are one of the fastest growing populations. Lifelong learning is vital to boosting your opportunity to enjoy a satisfying retirement, and it keeps you intellectually and socially engaged.

John Hollenbach, Hope College professor emeritus of English and HASP founder, must have known all this, because in his own retirement, he decided to do something about it:

Shortly before I retired from my working career at Hope I began to reflect—with some foreboding—on the prospect of being cut off from the stimulus which that career gave to the life of the mind and constant growth. About two years before retirement, I began receiving brochures from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, telling about an organization under the aegis of the college for retired professionals who wished to continue to grow (ASPEC)—an organization dreamed up and put into place by the then president of Eckerd. Sounded exciting: organized year-round learning activities and interaction with the undergrad student body for people who had retired from their professions/vocations. The cost was a bit formidable—a \$1,000 initiation fee and \$60 monthly dues! To make such an investment worthwhile necessitated, in my opinion, moving to St. Petersburg. How about a home-grown version here in Holland instead? A year-round Elderhostel operation, much more modest. Ideally, anchored on Hope College campus, with its library and its campus facilities that surely would have a little unutilized space for meetings or courses.¹

Nine years later, John wrote his first memo to the relatively new Hope College president, John Jacobson, outlining the idea for HASP. Ironically, Jacobson had previously served as vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Florida Presbyterian College in St. Petersburg, Florida, which became Eckerd College, the college that inspired Hollenbach's idea.

John Hollenbach founded HASP in May 1988; it is the product of this inspired man and his inspired idea. John played the leading role in HASP, serving as the organization's first president and director, and he surrounded himself with other professionals who assisted him in the full development of the academy. Twenty-five years and just over six hundred members later, this is HASP's story:

¹Dr. John Hollenbach, "The Camel's Nose, Hope College/HASP Relationship" (undated).



Dr. John Hollenbach, Hope College Professor
Emeritus of English, HASP Founder

More about HASP's Founder

John Hollenbach was a Hope College professor of English and a former academic administrator. He earned a bachelor's degree from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, in 1934, a master's degree from Columbia University, New York, in 1935, and a doctorate from the University of Wisconsin in 1941. He was a member of the Hope faculty from 1945 to 1978, when he retired as professor emeritus of English. John stayed active at Hope in the two decades following his retirement, serving as executive secretary of the presidential search committee that selected John H. Jacobson to become Hope's tenth president in 1987. Hope College presented him with an honorary LHD on May 8, 1988.

Hollenbach joined Hope's English faculty at the advent of the post-war enrollment boom under the GI Bill. Hope's enrollment during World War Two had declined from 555 during the 1941-42 school year to 312 by 1944-45. But after the war, by 1946-47, enrollment had more than tripled to 1,300. Hollenbach served as dean of the college from 1947 to 1955 and vice president from 1957 to 1965. Between 1955 and 1957, John was dean of the faculty of arts and sciences at the American University in

Cairo, Egypt, and spent a year as visiting professor at the American University of Beirut. He served as director of the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) and spent a summer in Yugoslavia under a grant from the US Office of Education and the Department of State.

John filled these positions with great distinction, and his time overseas was something he treasured and which added to his global understanding of education. In addition to his work managing Hope's growth early in his administration, he was also active in curricular development at the college, playing a major role in a 1963 curriculum revision that yielded the college's current "Senior Seminar" program. He chaired the department of English from 1967 to 1973. John died at his home on Sunday, April 19, 1998, at the age of eighty-five.²

It is easy to see how a man of John Hollenbach's experience and passion for learning and service developed the vision and plan for an organization from which so many retirees continue to gain so much.

The Early Beginning

John wrote a memorandum to President Jacobson in November of 1987 titled "Thoughts on Developing a Hope Academy of Senior Professionals." This idea was stimulated by the accounts of ASPEC (the Academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College) and by occasional conversations with Hope colleagues about using the talents of retired Hope staff. In this memo Dr. Hollenbach outlined the purposes or goals of the proposed academy, potential participants, location, activities, projects, costs, funding, and the governing structure. This memo was discussed by Jacobson and Hollenbach on November 25, 1987, and the decision was reached to visit with the director of ASPEC in St. Petersburg, Florida, when the two were in that area in February.

This conference took place with Dr. Leo Nussbaum on February 9, 1988, and a second discussion between Hollenbach and Jacobson on February 16 resulted in the decision to explore the concept with others: first with Hope College provost Jacob Nyenhuis, then possibly the associate deans

² Hope College Press Release, Office of Public Relations (April 20, 1998).

(and perhaps a faculty committee), and finally a group of seniors who might be eligible and interested in identifying with such a program (retired faculty and other local senior professionals).³ Provost Nyenhuis served as a charter member on the first executive committee of HASP and, like President Jacobson, was strong and steady in his support of the development of the academy.

Dr. Hollenbach sent a letter to a list of senior colleagues inviting them to participate in a discussion on March 25, 1988, on the campus of Hope College, to further consider the concept and to assess their interest in becoming members of such a program. Approximately twenty-five of the invitees attended this initial meeting. Several others, although interested, expressed their regret at not being able to attend. John Hollenbach chaired the meeting, and Lars Granberg prepared the minutes. There was general agreement that the concept of HASP as presented by John contained rich possibilities. They noted, however, that if these possibilities were to be realized, HASP would need to develop a focus and require the commitment of individuals to active participation and leadership. The group expressed its desire that John would continue as chairman and that he would set about the business of organization by selecting a small, representative planning group. It was agreed that John, with the cooperation of both the college president and provost, would select the planning group and proceed to develop an operating structure and program.⁴

In May 1988, Dr. Hollenbach distributed the formal prospectus of the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals, written primarily for local senior professionals who may have an interest in joining the academy as charter members and with information for Hope staff, students, and board members who could draw upon the resources of academy members to carry out the central mission of the college—the education of students.

This prospectus detailed the idea, purpose, and possible direction and programs of the proposed academy as was crystallized in the preliminary work of the planning committee and its founders. This committee included: John Hollenbach, President Jacobson, Provost Nyenhuis, and five retired or semi-retired senior professionals from the group of twenty-five who endorsed the idea and urged such an academy be formed in the March 1988 exploratory meeting. The five included two other Hope emeriti professors, Paul Fried (history) and Lars Granberg (psychology), and three non-Hope senior adults, Vern Boersma (physician), Marion deVelder (minister), and Dalton McFarland (professor emeritus of management, University of Alabama at Birmingham).

The academy was conceived as both an independent organization and an auxiliary arm of Hope College. Its purpose included—yet extended beyond—participation in the program of educating the Hope student. Equally important were the goals of furthering the growth of members themselves and of providing leadership in and assistance with programs to meet this goal. The overall goals of the academy and the college therefore are similar: each serves the other and is served by the other. This symbiotic relationship is reflected in the title of the academy, which links it with Hope College, and in the pattern of governance and the basic location of its activities.

Dr. Hollenbach described the profile of the academy:

The Hope Academy of Senior Professionals is an association of retired professionals and significant achievers in other careers who join others in comparable circumstances to continue to broaden their own intellectual horizons, enhance their cultural and social lives, and at the same time help enrich the lives of other members of the Hope College and Holland area communities. Under the aegis of Hope College, the Academy provides an environment and facilities conducive to such pursuits and furthers such learning and sharing through a variety of programs and projects.⁵

³ John Hollenbach to John Jacobson, memorandum, “Thoughts on Developing a ‘Hope Academy of Senior Professionals’” (November 5, 1987).

⁴ Hope Academy of Senior Professionals, minutes (March 25, 1988), Maas Conf. Room, written by Lars Granberg.

⁵ John Hollenbach, “Prospectus, The Hope Academy of Senior Professionals” (May 1988).

The proposed pattern of governance for HASP was written to reflect the close relationship between the academy and the college. Success in fulfilling the purpose of the academy would depend on both the active participation of academy members in planning and carrying out the various programs which they would develop and the support of their undergirding college. The prospectus as a whole was considered the official guideline for the operation of the academy for its initial year. The executive committee of eight, made up of two members of the administrative staff of the college, three retired Hope professors, and three non-Hope retired or semi-retired professionals was chosen and empowered to authorize and institute programs for the academy, seeking the advice and counsel of the charter members. By the end of the initial year, the executive committee was to prepare bylaws to set forth in detail the structure and governance of the academy and then present them for consideration and action by the membership. It was recommended that the bylaws include an executive board as the heart of the governing structure, with the majority of its members elected by and from the active members of the academy, and that one or more of its members be appointed by the Hope College president from the Hope staff.

Dr. Hollenbach explained the rationale for the name “Hope Academy of Senior Professionals”: “Hope,” which ties it to the college; “Academy,” reflective of groups led by Plato and Socrates that met in the Forum; “Senior,” for those who are retired or semi-retired; and “Professionals,” stemming from the original concept that members of the academy shall be “mature persons with records of achievement in a career of one of the professions, commerce, industry, science and technology, or public service; show evidence of broad, humane interests, intellectual vitality, the ability to participate in personal investigation and group projects, and the readiness to share their experience, findings, and special skills with each other, with the students and staff of Hope College, and with others in the community who seek their advice and help.”⁶

Incidentally, the academy did not begin using its HASP logo—now so familiar and easily identified—until six years later, in June of 1994. The logo was created by member George Claver, with permission from the college to use their anchor logo as the *A*. Naturally, HASP shares the Hope College colors of orange and blue.

The official founding meeting of HASP was held on May 31, 1988, in Maas Auditorium, Hope College. President Jacobson called the founding meeting to order, and Rev. Marion deVelder gave the invocation. There were thirty-eight people in attendance. Dr. Jacobson first addressed the group with his perspective of the Hope academy in the context of the strong movement at that time in the United States, especially in higher education circles, toward addressing the interests and needs of adults beyond the typical college age.

Jacobson then turned the meeting over to John Hollenbach who reported on the work of the planning committee which had prepared the prospectus. He indicated a number of directions, beyond the member meetings, that the academy might take in its initial year and emphasized the importance of members assuming leadership in suggesting and implementing activities. Dr. Hollenbach then proposed the pattern of governance recommended in the prospectus, and it was adopted, as was the proposal that program meetings of the members (and invited guests) be held on the first Tuesday of the month in mid-morning.

Members were informed of the next meeting and given instructions to fill out a form for establishing the vitae of members for a resource bank. They were also given a questionnaire to request ideas for programs and member meetings and that members assume leadership. Those present who wished to become charter members were asked to sign the charter membership roll, and dues for the initial year were set at twenty-five dollars. After the formal session of business adjourned, the group moved to a luncheon where Dr. Renze Hoeksema addressed the group on the topic, “U.S. Government Involvement in Humanitarian Programs in Third World Countries,” followed by a group discussion.⁷

⁶ John Hollenbach, “Hope College’s Institute for Learning in Retirement,” presentation of the Association for Continuing Education (ACHE), Eastern Michigan University (April 28, 1994).

⁷ Minutes, founding meeting of HASP (May 31, 1988).

Although thirty-eight people were in attendance at this founding meeting, there were more who had indicated their desire to be part of the charter membership. The list of forty-eight names includes those who were not able to make the initial meeting on May 31 but who are nevertheless included as part of the charter membership (see appendix for their signatures).⁸

In the academy's initial year, Dr. Hollenbach worked with part-time secretarial help supplied by Hope College, and activities included monthly program meetings, two discussion groups, a dinner-theater program, and a birding hike. In April of 1989, HASP was invited to join the newly-created Elderhostel Institute Network, an association of twenty-five Institutes for Learning in Retirement located on college or university campuses around the country, which shared HASP's philosophy of self-help, peer learning, and service. HASP was off to a great start!

In this first year, member Lars Granberg was appointed to head a committee to prepare HASP's first set of bylaws, and the working committee structure was proposed. These served as the operational guidelines until the first constitution and bylaws were adopted in 1991. By 1994 the board had voted to accept a constitution and bylaws revised by the chair, James Townsend. The major thrusts of this revision were:

1. HASP is a branch of Hope College and subject to superintending control by the president of Hope College.
2. The president and vice president of the board of directors shall be elected by the full membership of HASP.
3. The executive committee shall become a permanent committee of the board of directors.
4. The title of executive secretary be changed to executive director, and the title executive board be changed to board of directors.

Changes to the constitution are subject to approval by HASP membership and the Hope College president. The official documents that made HASP a branch of Hope College were signed by Hope College president John Jacobson and HASP president Norm Lunderberg on February 7, 1995. Additional minor amendments to the constitution were made in 1997, 2002, 2004, and 2007, giving HASP the current constitution.

The board of directors currently meets quarterly and includes the president, vice president, treasurer, the six standing committee chairs (curriculum, communications, membership, monthly program, service, and special events), six members at large (serving 3-year terms on a rotating basis), the executive director, and two members of the college faculty/staff appointed by the college president. Other permanent committees of the board of directors are the executive committee, nominating committee, personnel, and audit committee.

In Article II of the constitution, the nature and purpose of HASP was very carefully and intentionally worded:



Norman Lunderberg (*left*), HASP president (1995), and Dr. John Jacobson, Hope College president

⁸ Evie Smallegan, executive director, memo to charter members of HASP (January 11, 1996).

The Hope Academy of Senior Professionals is a *peer-led* institute for learning in retirement, constituted as a branch of Hope College. Its purposes are:

1. To enrich the intellectual, cultural, and social lives of its members, and
2. To make available a wealth of wide-ranging knowledge, talent, and experience to Hope College and the greater community area.

HASP is subject to superintending control by the president of Hope College. The membership of HASP has responsibility for designing, managing, and carrying out its various activities and programs.⁹

John Hollenbach and John Jacobson believed HASP should be exactly that—a retirement institution run by its members as volunteers. Many lifelong learning organizations are run and/or directed by a dean or an administrator at the educational institution. HASP, however, has a wonderful autonomy and a trusted responsibility from the college in the way it was designed. The words “branch of Hope College” are legal terms provided by former member James Townsend. These words make HASP as much a part of the college as any other campus department. HASP is self-supporting and works to not cost the college anything, nor does the college profit from HASP. The academy has its own operating budget supported primarily by membership dues and course fees, and accounting and managing the budget are responsibilities of the HASP treasurer and executive director.

Membership

As the years went by, membership continued to grow, and new challenges were frequently faced in regard to the levels and process of membership, meeting space, personnel, and academy goals and purpose. Particular areas of concern were for members to still know each other in spite of the increasing numbers and to provide course leadership, a core principal HASP was founded on—the concept of members teaching each other.

The initial prospectus outlined that spouses of members would automatically share in the use of the resources and could participate in the programs of the academy without the responsibilities of full membership. They were considered, “associate members.” As such they could share in the use of academy and college facilities, and they were welcome to attend the programs of the academy. They did not pay dues, but neither did they have the responsibilities and voting privileges of active members.

The process of membership involved a member of HASP inviting a candidate to attend a monthly meeting or two as a guest. Following the guest attendance of a candidate, the host member was required to:

1. provide the candidate with basic information about HASP;
2. explain responsibilities of membership to those interested in joining HASP; and
3. send the membership chair a letter of recommendation, including basic information about the background of the candidate.

Upon receipt of the letter of recommendation, the membership committee would evaluate the credentials of a candidate. Then if the executive board reached a unanimous decision for the candidate, they would authorize the committee to extend an invitation for membership. If the committee had reservations regarding a candidate, it was required to submit its report to the board for final determination. Membership approval had to be reported to the executive secretary, who on behalf of the academy would issue an invitation to join and outline the responsibilities of membership. The process would be complete upon the nominee’s acceptance of the invitation, the completion of a member data

⁹ HASP Constitution and Bylaws (2013).

sheet, and payment of annual dues. The new member would then be introduced to the academy at a monthly program meeting.¹⁰

In 1992 the board approved a revision of Article III, Section 1 of the constitution and bylaws regarding membership. The suggested change was that it should read: "Be of retirement or semi-retirement status with a good reputation and with a record of achievement in a career of one of the professions, commerce, industry, homemaking, science, technology, or community or public service." Issues arose around how the committee would make conclusions regarding a person's reputation. This revision was voted on by the full membership at the June 1993 annual meeting; it was defeated by a two-to-one margin, and the decision was made to leave the constitution in its present form.

By June of 1995, HASP had grown to 249 members and 137 associate members. The committee drew up a sponsor guidelines document; a sponsor invitation packet, containing information on the academy and membership requirements and responsibilities; and nomination forms and made them available at monthly meetings and in the HASP office. The committee also developed a sponsor orientation packet for sponsors to share with their new members and new member badges/name tags, which were kept in storage cabinets that were brought to and from meetings. The badges proved to be a great help in becoming acquainted with fellow members.¹¹

By 1996, however, the committee and organization as a whole was struggling with the role of associate members. Membership was 276: 95 women and 181 men. The membership committee estimated a projected growth of up to 410 or more members by 1999, based on past growth. This projected growth pattern raised a number of key issues among the committee and the academy: adequate space; maintaining membership interest, loyalty, and commitment in such a large organization; the role of associate members; and possibly placing a cap on membership. A greater distinction between member and associate member benefits was necessary.

By January of 1997, the membership committee and the board recommended associate status be officially deleted. This was passed by the membership at its annual meeting in June of 1997, and associates were given until August 1, 1997, to become members without full application and pay membership dues. Membership at this time was 302: 106 women and 196 men.

On multiple occasions (1989, 1991, 1998, 2001, 2002), the board again wrestled with the discussion of placing a cap on membership. In 2001 there was another unanimous decision *not* to place a cap on membership. The membership committee, however, later proposed a task force for strategic planning, which in 2002 presented the board with the recommendation to place a cap of five hundred on the membership, but the board rejected it with a vote of eight to six. A new prorated dues structure, however, was put in place for new members who joined in the middle of our fiscal year. The role of sponsors continually needed to be emphasized, and there was increased awareness of the need for a more structured orientation process.

By 2005 the membership process had been simplified, and boxes for holding membership badges were no longer in use. Members were responsible for keeping their own badges and wearing them to HASP meetings, classes, and special events. Candidates for membership were still required to attend a monthly program meeting as a guest before applying for membership but could then submit their application with a check for the appropriate dues. A letter of acceptance was sent by the membership secretary, along with a letter from the HASP president, an information book, and a curriculum guide. New members were still recognized at the monthly meeting, and the committee organized new-member orientation meetings, which were held twice a year beginning in 2007, the same year HASP membership reached over five hundred members.

Proposals for different levels of membership came before the board of directors several other times. In 2005 a proposal for partial dues for "snow birds" was discussed but was deemed not advisable, and in 2008 a request for part-time membership was voted down unanimously. The board of directors believed that the membership fee was considerably lower than many similar organizations and worth

¹⁰ Membership Committee Minutes (June 1, 1993).

¹¹ Membership Committee Report (June 6, 1995).

the investment, even if some members were absent part of the year. The committee and the board in 2008-9 also wrestled with proposals for an alumni-status membership, but after numerous discussions, they again moved for no change in membership requirements and membership level. This motion passed in June of 2009 with only one objection.

In May of 2012, HASP reached the six-hundred mark. In January 2013, as it moved closer to its silver anniversary, HASP had over six hundred members—just under two hundred of whom were graduates of Hope College. In terms of gender balance, there are currently over 250 men and more than 350 women.

In 2012-13 the committee again wrestled with the membership process and the importance of stressing the requirements and commitment of membership. The mentor/sponsor letter of recommendation was reinstated as a requirement to accompany applications, a copy of membership requirements from the constitution and bylaws is attached to every application, and they continue to hold orientation meetings along with sending evaluation forms to new members at the end of their first year for further evaluation of the membership process.

The current constitution and bylaws state the requirements for membership:

1. Be of retirement or semi-retirement status, with a record of significant career achievement.
2. Show evidence of broad humane interests, intellectual vitality, inquisitiveness, and a willingness to contribute to the enrichment of the lives of fellow members, Hope College students, faculty, and staff, and members of the local community.
3. Be committed to participate actively and with civility and to bring credit to HASP and Hope College. Members are expected to participate in the programs of HASP by attendance at monthly program and annual business meetings, by occasional enrollment in curricular and special event offerings, by sharing insights and experience in HASP programs designed to benefit members, as well as others in the college community or by serving as a member of a HASP committee.¹²

The HASP membership committee neither scrutinizes individual applications nor votes on them within the committee as was done in earlier years, nor does it require proof of “significant career achievement,” since the work of many members has been homemaking and volunteering. The academy has determined that nurturing the desire to keep learning, to engage in discussion, and to be of service to others is its top priority. Note HASP’s membership growth and progression of dues in the following tables:

Membership Growth	
Date	Number
1988	48 (charter members)
1993	210
1998	399
2003	450
2008	535
May 2013	610

Table 1. Number of HASP Members, 1988-2013

¹² HASP Constitution and Bylaws (2013).

Progression of Membership Dues	
Date	Annual Dues
1988	\$ 25 (initial dues)
1989	\$ 30
1991	\$ 50 (increase to support hiring of first executive secretary)
1993	\$ 60
1994	\$ 90 (increase to support move to Anderson Werkman building)
2010	\$100 (increase to support monthly meeting at Haworth Center and additional administrative support)

Table 2. HASP Membership Dues, 1988-2010

Monthly Program

The monthly program meetings were the initial activity of the academy, and since its beginning they have been held on the morning of the first Tuesday of the month, with the exception of June when the annual business meeting and luncheon is held at that time. Another exception made in HASP's early years was in March, when academy members would participate in Hope College's Critical Issues Symposium. The monthly program has long been a central aspect of the academy, providing the key element of "community" for the membership as a whole. At these meetings, academy business is conducted, and guests and new members are introduced prior to the educational presentation. It was the early recommendation of the academy to draw as much as possible from its own membership for both the monthly program and courses offered. On occasion, when leadership was not available within the membership, the program committee was given the freedom to solicit from outside the membership. This was easier in the academy's early years when membership was smaller, and the programs were mostly provided by HASP members. But it has proved more and more difficult as the organization has grown in size. HASP had a strict no stipends/honorarium policy for speakers until January of 2008. The board of directors then voted on a proposal from the monthly program committee to provide monthly speakers with a one-hundred-dollar honorarium and mileage, if outside the Holland area. This proposal passed by a majority vote.



Monthly Program Meeting, Haworth Center, Hope College

Monthly program meetings have been held in multiple places throughout the years, affected by growth in membership. In the first year, average attendance ranged from thirty to forty-eight, and meetings were generally held in Maas Conference Room. Meetings were also held in the reading room in the Joint Archives, which at that time was in the lower level of Van Wylen Library. HASP then grew to the point that in late 1991 Maas Auditorium was needed. Meetings were moved to Haworth Conference Center in April of 2010, when attendance grew to over three hundred. On multiple occasions, the HASP board of directors wrestled with the idea of and with offers to hold meetings at either Freedom Village or Evergreen Commons, but they declined those offers, since the academy is part of Hope College, and it wants to maintain its visibility and presence on campus.

Monthly program speakers have at times been entertaining, but mostly the program is intended to intellectually challenge members and stretch their minds, as well as serve as a social time for the membership. The committee works to provide timely, relevant, and interesting program content, as well as to give the membership opportunity to interact socially and intellectually. They work largely from recommendations and suggestions made by the HASP membership.

The office of the executive director has kept a detailed record of every speaker for monthly program meetings since the academy's beginning, for committee and member review and for current and future planning.

Curriculum

There was one committee when HASP began, the educational program committee, but by the summer of 1990, it became necessary to split that committee into the monthly program committee and the curriculum committee. HASP courses were originally referred to as "seminars" and "mini-courses." In the first year, two special-interest discussion groups were formed. The first, focusing on modern Soviet Russia, was directed by Renze Hoeksema and led by volunteers from within the group. Participants read duplicated articles, and lively discussion focused on designated topics. The second interest group, directed by Evie Smallegan and John Hollenbach, focused on analyzing the Arab and Israeli cultures, as revealed in fictional and non-fictional works. Average attendance for these groups was ten, and these meetings were generally held in Presidents' Room of Graves Hall. HASP publications also mention a discussion group on environmental issues.

Over the years, courses were frequently held in Presidents' Room as well as other available classrooms across campus, including frequent use of Granberg Room in Van Wylen Library, Maas Conference Room, Otte Room in Phelps Hall, and Winants Auditorium in Graves Hall. Today HASP enjoys its own dedicated classroom equipped with audio/visual equipment on the second floor of Anderson Werkman Financial Center at 100 East Eighth Street.

Mini courses from four to six sessions were offered periodically during 1989-90. In this beginning year, there were two: "The Worlds of Mark Twain" (led by John Hollenbach) and "American Sects." In June of 1991, Dr. Hollenbach, retiring as HASP's executive secretary, was nominated to succeed Renze Hoeksema as curriculum chair. Curriculum offerings grew quickly, since surely this was the heart of the HASP organization.

The following paragraphs and the statistics in table 3 were taken from the HASP curriculum archives; they illustrate growth, changes in course format, and some of the discussions along the way.

By 1993-94, under the direction of Bill Bloemendaal as curriculum chair, the committee had reorganized itself into subcommittees: fine arts (visual and performing), humanities (creative writing, language/culture, literature, philosophy, religion), social sciences (anthropology, business/economics, education, history, law/justice, political science, psychology, sociology), science and technology (biology, chemistry, physics, computers, environmental issues, health, medicine, transportation), and a foreign study tour curriculum (discontinued by 1995-96). Each subcommittee had from five to eight members. The subcommittees worked to initiate ideas for classes, with a balance of the study areas, and to acquire leaders and coordinators from within the

membership and then brought these to the coordinating council for approval. The coordinating council consisted of each of the subcommittee chairs: the curriculum chair, the vice chair, and the secretary of the curriculum committee. Courses were originally held during the academic year only. The first summer curriculum was not offered until 1994.

In 1996 the curriculum committee wrote the following in the annual report: “HASP tries to avoid ‘how to’ courses, such as watercolor painting, bridge, etc. We leave that up to Evergreen Commons or the Holland Arts Council or adult education programs. HASP offers intellectually challenging types of courses. That is not to say ‘how to’ courses are not intellectually challenging. However, HASP does not want to duplicate courses offered by other community organizations to which many of our members belong and are active participants.”¹³ This has been an ongoing debate in the life of HASP for curriculum committees as they manage the many diverse and expansive ideas for course ideas that arise from the membership. It is not, however, HASP’s goal to imitate or duplicate courses and opportunities available in other community settings.

In 2002-3 the committee initiated a series of “one-day courses” that were scattered throughout the spring term and asked for membership feedback about whether or not this worked well enough to justify continuation. They were well received, particularly considering the travel and commitment patterns of retirees.

Years	Number of Courses Offered		
	Summer	Fall	Winter/Spring
1991-92	-	12 total	
1992-93	-	7	8
1994-95	8	14	18
1995-96	10	15	17
1996-97	8	18	17
1997-98	8	15	17
1998-99	11	14	14
1999-2000	15	15	17
2000-2001	15	15	18
2001-2	9	17	22
2002-3	12	17 multi-session/ 5 single-session	5 single-session/ 4 monthly courses

Table 3. Number of HASP Courses Offered, 1991-2003

¹³ Bill Bloemendaal, chair, “Curriculum Committee Report” (June 4, 1996).

Years	Number of Courses Offered		
	Summer	Fall	Winter/Spring
2003-4	10	16 multi-session/ 5 single-session/ 4 monthly	18 multi-session/ 7 single-session/ 4 monthly
2004-5	16	20	16 multi-session/ 8 single-session/ 5 monthly
2005-6	17	32	18 multi-session/ 7 single session/ 6 monthly
2006-7	21	38 (41*)	37 (35*)
2007-8	21	33	38 **
2008-9	26	30	38 ***
2009-10	25	44	37
2010-11	23	35	38
2011-12	18	36	43
2012-13	22	34	37
* Number of course sessions held in the afternoon, due to large numbers. ** Afternoon sessions were reduced based on the response of 300 members to a questionnaire regarding meeting times and number of courses offered. *** Increased need for afternoon courses again.			

Table 4. Number of HASP Courses Offered, 2003-13

HASP in 2013 continues to function with a similar framework for course planning. The curriculum chair is a member of the board of directors and has four subcommittee chairs for fine arts, social studies, humanities, and science/medicine/technology. Each subcommittee chair is responsible for the make up of their committee, and committees vary in size, depending on the preference of the subcommittee chair and the number of interested members. Course proposals and ideas come from within the subcommittees and from the general membership. Once a proposal has been approved by the subcommittee, it goes on to the full curriculum committee for approval and scheduling. The academy continues to strive for a balance of course offerings covering the four areas, to offer a balance of multi-session and single-session course offerings each term, and particularly to advocate for member leadership

As the membership has grown, so has the curriculum calendar and the number of course participants. Currently courses are offered year round, Monday through Thursday, morning and afternoon, and Friday mornings. Courses are generally ninety minutes in length and vary in size from eight to over one hundred participants at any given time. When course enrollment surpasses one hundred, the course is moved to a venue larger than the classroom, usually the Knickerbocker Theatre. There have been multiple discussions within the committee and the board of directors about whether or not to limit course enrollment numbers, since class size can have a considerable impact on question-and-discussion time, which is central to HASP's purpose. In the academy's fourth year, 1992, the board wrestled with questions of irregular attendance, types of courses to be offered, convener or teacher approach, and whether or not to place a cap on enrollment. At this time, HASP relies on the individual course presenters to place a limit on enrollment if they so desire. In addition, although HASP monthly



Members enjoy discussion and participation in a HASP course

program meetings are open to guests, HASP courses are limited to members only.

Below is a portion of a memo Dr. Hollenbach wrote to leaders of HASP in November 1992. It is still good advice for the academy in curriculum considerations:

I have one general recommendation. Try to design your course so that you will promote active participation by the participants enrolled. Courses vary in objective. Some are more completely aimed at “informing” than others. Especially for these, lecture is a good approach. But the most vital classes are those that promote active interchange, with participants sharing their reflections on the meaning and significance of what has been read or seen or heard, and asking questions or sharing their use of their knowledge to solve problems. In other words, let’s de-emphasize passive listening. If this means putting a cap on the number that should be in the group for a course, let’s do it, if this is important to get such active involvement. If the goal is primarily to provide information, and lecture is predominant, the class size can be unlimited. But even here it is good to include assigning some advance reading, so that the lecture can be more meaningful, and the session can then include time for questions and comments and even reports.¹⁴

In addition to annual dues, members pay for courses for which they register. In 1993 the course fees were \$5 for courses with four or more sessions. There could also be a nominal fee at the discretion of the committee for shorter courses. Course fees were raised to \$10 after a \$7,000 budget shortfall was noted in 1996. The curriculum fee structure was modified again in June of 1997 to \$5 for courses from one to three sessions and \$10 for courses of four or more sessions. Fees were re-evaluated again in 1999, with no change. In 2004 a \$50 per person maximum fee was suggested to the board of directors and referred to the curriculum committee for further study, but it never materialized. The 2005-6 budget was based on a fee of \$5 per course and approved by the board. In June 2009, new course fees were proposed: no fee for single-session courses, \$5 for courses from two to four sessions, and \$10 for

¹⁴ John Hollenbach, curriculum chair, memo to leaders of HASP (November 23, 1992).



John and Winnie Hollenbach

courses of five or more sessions. This proposal passed with only one objection. The last increase began with the fall semester in 2010 and remains today: single session, \$3; two sessions, \$5; from three to five sessions, \$10; six or more sessions, \$15; and monthly courses, \$10. This increase, along with a \$10 increase in dues that year, supported the academy's move to Haworth Center for monthly program meetings and paid for the addition of a part-time assistant to the executive director.

Several monthly courses have long been a tradition of HASP. They include Books and Writers (beginning in 1992), Non-Fiction Books (1995), Writing Memoirs (1991), Computer Experiences (1993), and What's New in Science (2001). The memoirs course has assisted many HASP members in writing their memoirs for personal or family use and for publication in the *HASP Review*; several have even been privately or professionally published.

Curriculum is central to HASP's purpose and is one of the main reasons retirees take an interest in HASP.

Generally over half the membership enrolls in courses each term. John Hollenbach was passionate about HASP curriculum. In a 2012 interview, Dr. Hollenbach's wife, Winnie, stated, "John was always thinking about HASP. All day, every day. He was always dreaming up what the next course should be and had so many ideas."

Service

Service is a critical element of the academy's vision and a requirement of HASP membership. The founders believed in the reciprocal relationship of HASP and Hope College. Service is important not only to the college but also to the membership and community.

One of the service committee's purposes is "To ascertain ways in which the knowledge, skills, and experience of the HASP membership can be used in the service of Hope College's various programs." HASP members have been serving from the beginning. Already in 1988-89, HASP members served as discussants in classes and interviewees for the Japanese students from Meiji Gakuin University who were carrying out oral research projects. They established a preceptor program for Hope pre-med students, participated in developmental psychology classes, and more.

HASP members who were medical doctors also furthered the academy's service. In 1989-90, for instance, member and retired physician Vern Boersma participated for an entire semester in the senior seminar "Medicine and Morals." Members again worked with the Japanese students from Meiji Gakuin University, judged the Model UN, and participated in developmental psychology classes. There were similar activities in the following years, and current HASP members continue to participate annually in developmental psychology classes and the Model UN.

In April 1995, President Jacobson committed Hope College to apply as an adapter college of what was taking place at Eckerd College. HASP participated in a project through Eckerd College funded by a Fund for Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) grant. In November 1995 Alfredo Gonzales, John Hollenbach, and Lamont Dirkse, then chair of the service committee, attended a conference at Eckerd College. One of the principal objectives of Eckerd College in establishing their Academy of Senior Professionals was to enhance the education of their students by utilizing the extensive resources of its academy members, first as resource colleagues and second as discussant colleagues. At Eckerd College (as well as at Hope College), the students have been almost uniformly enthusiastic about their benefiting from having academy members participating, and the appeal to academy members is the extension and continuation of their own liberal arts education.

Following that first conference, Lamont Dirkse and his colleagues from HASP continued their

fine work. In the spring semester of 1996, thirty-nine HASP members participated in classes that included developmental psychology, Model UN, and education classes. Alfredo Gonzales, Lamont Dirkse, and Gene Jekel attended a follow-up conference at Eckerd College in 1997.

The “FIPSE Project Report” states:

The intent of our participation in this project was to facilitate inter-generational learning between college students and senior professionals. As an organization, one of our goals was to be involved in life-long learning experiences. HASP members represent a rich source for educational enhancement, a living resource capable of bringing to the classroom different dimensions of life and living. We are, in fact, a living library, representing many facets of the world of work, which can be tapped to enrich the classroom experiences.¹⁵

In the fall of 1997, Gene Jekel assumed the role of coordinator for HASP Service to the Academic Program at Hope College. He wrote letters to send to new Hope College faculty and first year seminar faculty that are still being used. Elliot Tanis succeeded Gene Jekel when he retired in 2000. Tanis was sharing an office with Lamont Dirkse, when Dirkse asked him if he would be interested in succeeding Jekel, who was in his fourth year as coordinator. Elliot was appointed in the summer of 2001 for a three-year appointment. Twelve years later, he is still the organization’s “special” appointment as HASP’s faculty liaison for service.

During Elliot Tanis’ tenure as faculty liaison, more than twenty Hope College departments have used HASP members. From 1994 to 2013, HASP advertised for volunteers for more than three hundred requests and has provided more than fifteen hundred volunteers. A few highlights follow:

2001-2: One HASP member was a guest in “Business, Ethics, and Faith Integration.” The instructor said he was very gracious and generous in sharing his time and stories with the students.

2002-3: HASP member and retired physician Vern Boersma met the entire year with professor Allen Verhey’s class, “Medicine and Morals.”

2003-4: The highlight of the spring semester was that our then president, Louis DiGuiseppe, was a model for an art student!

2004-5: Professor John Shaughnessy was teaching a seminar course called “Practical Aspects of Memory.” Three HASP members volunteered, and all remembered to attend.

2005-6: One of the most daunting requests came from professor Amanda Barton of the nursing department. She needed someone to accompany a group of seven pre-health-professional students to Dulce, New Mexico, over spring break. This meant flying to New Mexico and then driving the students for three hours to the reservation. This adult would help the students process what they were seeing and learning and help to deepen and enrich the spiritual and vocational exploration side of the trip. Of the three volunteers, Mary Dood was chosen to accompany the group, and although she was excited about this opportunity before she went, when she returned, she was ecstatic. One of the student leaders wrote: “Mary was a wonderful asset to our trip. She was always there when we needed her and was like a motherly figure to all of us. She even cooked most of our meals and made it feel a little more like home. I think that she was the right person for the trip because she is such a giver. Also she was very involved in our meetings and was willing to help.” Professor Barton wrote: “This type of trip is a wonderful

¹⁵ Dr. Elliot Tanis, “HASP Service to the Academic Program at Hope College” (February 5, 2013).

place to use your HASP volunteers. Their wisdom and experience helps the students to process a powerful time in their life when they are confronted with questions of vocation, calling, culture, and the brokenness in the world.” This last statement can be applied to all HASP volunteers.

2011-12: A professor wrote to HASP volunteer panel members: “It was wonderful indeed to have you visit our economics class today. The panel was very successful, and your comments were ‘just what the doctor ordered.’ The feedback has been very positive, and you each made a very good and strong impression on the students. Please know that your partnership with Hope College is greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for giving of your time and sharing your experiences so well.”



Mary deForest, classroom volunteer

Developmental psychology classes request many volunteers each semester. Students are amazed by the vibrancy and life experiences of HASP members. And HASP members appreciate their interaction with Hope students.¹⁶

Although member Elliot Tanis is the liaison between Hope professors and HASP volunteers, sometimes HASP members get involved directly with a department or a professor to offer their expertise or volunteer time in the department and/or work directly with students.

HASP members also volunteer outside of Hope’s campus. The service committee has made many other valuable opportunities

available throughout the years. It is the committee’s job to review requests that come in from the community and to determine which projects HASP will get involved in. HASP members have assisted in area schools as tutors and reading partners; they have helped with special events and worked as assistants in libraries, literacy programs, and computer labs. HASP has even provided bell ringers for the Salvation Army during the holiday season from 1993 to 2003.

Another enormous service project for HASP has been to provide guides for the Tulip Time trolley tours. This project was born from a Holland history vignettes mini-course that Randy Vande Water taught in 1992. HASP participation first began in the spring of 1993, with fifteen HASP



Tulip Time trolley guides: Audrey Bloemendaal, Roy Berry, unidentified

members serving as tour guides and Jan Ver Helst as coordinator. Jan Ver Helst and Randy Vande Water wrote the script, with assistance and editing by local historian and HASP member Elton Bruins. This project continues today, with HASP now providing over fifty guides each year. Coordinators have included Tom and Sue Ten Hoeve, Jayne Ver Lee, Linda Gebben, and Larry Lynn.

Additionally HASP members have been involved as volunteers in numerous local organizations over the years, including: the Alzheimer’s Association, the Advocacy and Resource Center, Women in Transition, United Way, the Grand Rapids Symphony as docents making presentations to fifth graders in area public schools and as ushers for concerts performed for area school children, the Challenge of Children conference as

¹⁶ Dr. Elliot Tanis, “HASP Service to the Academic Program at Hope College” (February 5, 2013).

assistants on campus for many years, CASA, Kids Hope USA, LEAP West Michigan, KANDU, Holland Museum/Cappon House, Children’s Advocacy Center, OAR, Inc., and the American Red Cross.

Special Events

Originally the committee for planning “special events” was called the social/recreational committee. The purpose of this committee, now the special events committee, is to plan and administer special social, cultural, educational, and recreational events to enhance opportunities for meaningful friendships among members and their spouses. The committee works to provide at least one event per month, with the occasional exception of November and December, due to the holidays. The first social event HASP hosted was in October of 1988, to attend dinner in Maas Center followed by the theatre performance, “The 1940s Radio Hour.” Sixty-two members and spouses attended. The dinner and theatre performance has since become an annual event. Hope’s Summer Repertory Theatre has also become an annual event, and HASP attends a performance and enjoys a reception with the Hope College president.



President’s Reception and Theatre Night, with Dr. James Bultman

Trips consist of day tours, overnights, or extended tours. The first overnight trip was in May of 1991 to Chicago. The first Shaw Festival at Niagara on the Lake, in Ontario, Canada, was also in the



HASP special event trips use Hope busses for transportation

fall of 1991, which became a HASP tradition, alternating with trips to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. HASP's first international study tour involved fifteen members on a trip to Mexico in 1994. A second international tour was a ten-day trip to the Netherlands in 2000.

Other events include:

Grand Rapids Symphony Pops concerts; Mexico trip, two weeks in 1994; Caribbean cruise, World of the Mayas, seven days in 1995; industry tours, frequently an annual event, includes a tour of a local industry and a luncheon; Chicago trips for theatre shows, museums, boat tours, walking tours, neighborhood tours, Navy Pier, the Bahá'í Temple, Chicago Botanical Gardens, and more; trip across Lake Michigan via the Badger and an overnight in Door County, Wisconsin; fall color tours; South Bend, Indiana, Notre Dame Tour, North Indiana Center for History; several trips to Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids, Michigan; ballets and operas; historical church tours; mystery trips; Netherlands (10-day tour) in 2000; Springfield, Illinois (Lincoln trip); overnight to Interlochen; Shippshewana, Indiana; tour of Ottawa County parks; Mississippi River cruise (4 days); Morton Arboretum tour; and an Upper Peninsula trip (3 days)

HASP offered its first "Take a Grandchild" trip in August 2012 to the Great Lakes Naval memorial and museum in Muskegon, along with a kite building and demonstration and a visit to the US Coast Guard Station. This event was very well received, and it was exciting to see this inter-generational emphasis.

There is always an emphasis on learning, even for HASP trips. For example, if HASP is planning to see a play or an opera, there is often a course prior to the event for people to register for and learn more about the production before the trip, which really enriches their experience. HASP's annual "Spring Fling" is purely a social mixer for members, and is generally held in April or May.



The *HASP Review* preserves the legacy of HASP members.

Communications

This arm of HASP was originally the bulletin/publicity committee. The two-fold agenda of this committee was to convey to the college and the community information about the various activities of HASP and to produce the *HASP Review*. Its name was changed to communications committee in 1995. Committee reports reflect that, as early as 1994, publicity was not a top priority for HASP; the organization was growing just fine without it! In fact, for most of its life, HASP has not drawn much attention to itself in this way due to the challenges faced over the years in terms of space due to rapid growth in membership, even without advertising.

The process of members seeking out and mentoring new members has worked well enough to grow the academy.

The first issue of the *HASP Review* was published in 1992, under the direction of editor Trudy Vander Hill and the mentorship of Bill Bloemendaal. It was a smaller format than the current publication. Laura Ver Plank in the first article of the first issue set the tone for all future issues with "Please Don't Tell Me What Your Painting Says." In other words, art is in the eye of the beholder—words of wisdom for all who would follow.

The last page of that first issue was a profile of HASP and contained an appeal for the funding

of future issues. For some time there was a three-dollar fee per issue, but HASP now provides one copy to each member household.

And now, in the first quarter century of HASP, the academy will soon have its twenty-second consecutive issue of this anthology preserving and sharing the musings, poetry, and artwork of a multi-talented membership. In the course of over twenty years, this publication has been supported by more than three executive directors (including leadership before the position existed), seventy editors, twenty artists, two hundred writers and poets, and more than a few readers interested in the greater HASP community.

Special thanks to Mary Porter, who served as art editor for the *HASP Review* (2001-12), and to Jack Hyde, who served as communications chair (2004-10) and continues as editor. It is the vision of the *HASP Review* to continue to preserve the legacy of HASP members through its developing archive and to promote the goals of lifelong learning and sharing.¹⁷

Budget and Finances

In the first year as an organization, dues were \$25. Vern Boersma, treasurer, reported at the annual meeting at the first anniversary luncheon, that there was a cash balance of \$688 and that, at the close of the year (June 30, 1989) following payment of current outstanding bills, there would be a balance of approximately \$250. There were modest costs that first year, primarily related to production of the HASP bulletin and copying and mailing. Office space, staff (John Hollenbach and his initial working committee), and several hours of secretarial support were gifted to HASP by the college.

Now in its twenty-fifth year, HASP still runs on a fiscal-year budget from July 1 to June 30, just as Hope College does, but the annual dues are now \$100 per member, and the annual operating budget to date is \$81,000. Annual dues and course fees are the primary sources of income. HASP pays all its own expenses, from paper to mailing costs to equipment to staff to cookies and coffee and more. HASP is fortunate to have access to many beneficial in-kind college services (e.g., assistance from CIT, campus safety, physical plant, etc.) as well as college discounts on supplies and copying costs through those departments. HASP would have to require a significantly more expensive membership fee to be a stand-alone organization. HASP pays rent to Hope College through a lease agreement for its current space, which is supported by a 4.5 percent draw from its endowment fund. Approximately 42 percent of the current operating budget supports two part-time staff and payroll taxes and expenses. The remainder of the budget supports the operation and services to members. The budget is overseen by the HASP treasurer and voted upon annually by the board of directors. HASP also undergoes a yearly audit.

Increases in membership dues are discussed in the *Membership* section. Each increase in dues has been directly related to an increased expense due to either a change in office or meeting space or staffing to support the growth of the academy. In the course of HASP history, however, there have been several other fund-raising efforts. In 1998, on its ten-year anniversary, HASP president James Townsend sent a letter to the membership inviting them to contribute to a “John Hollenbach Memorial Scholarship Fund” that was being set up to recognize the unique and indispensable role Hollenbach played in the formation and building of this organization. This scholarship still exists under his name.

In November of 1996, past president Jerome Counihan and William Sikkell agreed to chair a



Dr. Hollenbach in “retirement”
at his HASP desk.

¹⁷ Jack Hyde, “*HASP Review* History” (March 2013).

HASP facilities fund campaign with the goal of a half-million dollars. This capital campaign was launched in September of 1997, with a pledge period of three years. By January 1998, board reports show that pledges were reported at \$184,000. This money was invested into an endowment fund with Hope College and has since supported HASP lease agreements, first with a 5.5 percent and now a 4.5 percent draw on the interest. This allows HASP to have only an \$8,000 line-item expense out of the current annual operating budget for its Eighth Street office and classroom space.



Audrey Bloemendaal, Winnie Hollenbach, and Louis DiGuseppe

Board minutes indicate that member Bill Bloemendaal first suggested a HASP scholarship in 1993. The subject was raised again in 2002 by member Louis DiGuseppe, and this dream became a reality during his presidency in 2003. HASP members voted to approve this scholarship at the June 2003 annual meeting, fully funded at \$25,000. The criteria for the HASP scholarship as determined by HASP and guidelines of Hope College are as follows:

Established by the membership of the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals to provide scholarships to students with financial need and demonstrating potential for academic excellence. Student recipients must be entering their junior year. The scholarship may be renewed for an additional year contingent upon maintaining high academic achievement.

Since its inception in 2003, there have been six recipients. The first award was in the 2003-4 academic year, and it is a living legacy of HASP's commitment to Hope College and to education.

Office and Classroom Space

HASP's first "home" was a temporary office for Dr. Hollenbach in the basement of Voorhees Hall. By the fall of 1988, Dr. Hollenbach relocated to a tiny office with no windows on the second floor of the new admissions building. In August of 1989, the HASP office moved to the former Sligh Co. office building on East Eleventh Street. HASP had two rooms and shared a conference room with Hope's placement office for the next five years.

By September of 1994, HASP had a new three-year lease agreement with Hope College for space on the lower level at 100 East Eighth Street. Here HASP had sole use of three rooms and shared use of an open area and workshop/kitchenette. It was in this year that dues were raised to \$90 to support



Sligh building, first location of HASP office

the rent the organization was paying. This lease was negotiated again in 1996 and continued with the use of an additional classroom in the downstairs for a sum of \$5,400 per year, plus the normal endowment return. The HASP office was relocated to suite 120 of the 100 East Eighth Street building in December of 1997. In 2000 a new lease confirming space in suite 270 on the second floor of 100 East Eighth Street was signed for the same cost of \$5,400 per year, plus the 5.5 percent draw of interest from the capital campaign. The next rent increase went up to \$6,000 from the operating budget for six-plus years. For the 2012-13 year, the annual budget includes an \$8,000 per year rental, with a 4.5 percent

draw from HASP's endowment fund. This contract is good through 2015.

Suite 270 has served the organization well, although there have been times when HASP has desired additional classroom space. The classroom has capacity for approximately eighty people, a conference room comfortable for committee meetings and small group discussion, a library/kitchenette space, and a shared office for the executive director and administrative assistant (again, an office space with no window!).

Ideally HASP would love to have a street-level office and classroom space adjacent to adequate parking, but does that really even exist anymore on Hope's campus? Overall, prime space on Eighth Street in downtown Holland for the academy's contracted rate is quite reasonable and very opportune.

Personnel

Dr. Hollenbach served as both the first president and the first executive secretary/director (these titles were quite interchangeable) of the academy. Hope College provided an equipped office, the use of campus facilities for meetings, and the services of a secretary, primarily Judy Brake, one of the staff of the college president's office. John worked these first two years with her assistance, which was from four- to five hundred hours of secretarial work underwritten by the college.¹⁸

As executive secretary/director, John worked in the office fairly regularly; he handled correspondence and arrangements for meetings, prepared and mailed a monthly news bulletin, sent invitations to prospective members, prepared descriptive materials, established files, and held conferences with various faculty and staff members soliciting their suggestions and requests for using HASP members to enrich the educational programs of the college. In its second year, Dr. Hollenbach began frequently stating the need for the academy to hire its own office support and not rely on the college.

In June of 1991, membership dues were raised to \$50 to support a paid staff position. Dr. Hollenbach "retired" as the executive secretary/director and was recognized for his service by the membership at that meeting. Executive secretary Evie Smallegan was hired and began July first with a stipend of \$3,000. Evie was one of HASP's first female members and had served as a non-voting secretary of the first appointed board of the academy. This is the story that floats among the historical figures of HASP:

One evening in 1987, a just-retired Zeeland High English teacher, Evie Smallegan, was giving a book report in the Zeeland library and noticed both John Hollenbach and his wife, Winnie, in the audience. She wondered what prompted their interest in the book she was presenting, since it was nothing she figured would interest them. After the presentation, they approached her and admitted that their main reason for coming was "that John needed women." Evie replied that this was the first time she had heard of a man bringing his wife along, while looking for another woman. They explained that John needed women in his newly organized learning in retirement group, and she would be an ideal member. Evie accepted the challenge and became his secretary and administrator, as well as a recruiter of more women. This is how the charter group acquired seven women by charter time in May 1988.¹⁹



Jan VerHelst (*left*), associate director and Evie Smallegan, executive director

¹⁸ John Hollenbach, executive director, "Interim Report on HASP for the Executive Committee" (March 8, 1989).

¹⁹ Vern Boersma, *Planting HASP Seeds* (September 2013).

By June of 1993, the board had approved the request for additional part-time secretarial staff, and Jan Ver Helst was appointed office assistant that fall. The academy was also still receiving from five to eight hours a week of secretarial support paid by the college, in addition to HASP paying Evie and Jan's salaries. The following summer Evie was involved in a serious car accident and was out of the HASP office for approximately six months. Jan Ver Helst managed the office with volunteer assistance, and upon Evie's return, their titles were changed to executive director and associate director to more adequately recognize their shared duties.

Evie was John Hollenbach's "right hand" and a very effective director, despite the many interruptions she experienced with members hanging around her office full of ideas in those early years. She brought many of John's ideas to full fruition when the organization was growing rapidly. Evie was known to give John a hard time about his green metal typewriter, which he carried with him each time the HASP office moved—far better than a computer in John's opinion. The following is an excerpt from a speech given by Evie in 1994 and summarizes well her thoughts about the responsibilities of HASP membership:

Our classes are taught and run by our members. Our monthly program leaders are not always HASP members—but primarily so. To join is to contract to be a doer, a planner, or a leader—not simply a recipient. We learn and work together.

Evie Smallegan informed the board of her intention to resign in early October 1996, after playing a vital role in the development and success of the academy.

On October 9, 1996, the executive committee met at the Holland Country Club for a meeting and lunch. The committee discussed Evie's resignation and met that same day with her possible replacement, Diana Marsilje. The executive committee was most favorably impressed with Diana and her qualifications. They determined to bring to the board of directors the recommendation that Diana's name be submitted as the person to be named next executive director of HASP, and the decision was unanimous. The HASP board of directors met on October 15, 1996; the motion was carried with a unanimous vote, and Diana was signing board of director meeting minutes by December.²⁰



Diana Marsilje, executive director, 1996-2007

Two years later, the board reluctantly accepted the resignation of Jan Ver Helst as associate director in November of 1998. The decision was made that the office would work with additional volunteer help. Board minutes mention multiple times over the next several years that the personnel committee was discussing and monitoring the need for additional staff as the academy grew in members and programs. A long-range planning committee was named in January 2006, and their report was given at the June 2006 annual meeting. By January of 2007, a hiring procedure for the position of HASP executive director had been approved, with the recommendation for additional part-time staff.

In March of 2007, Diana Marsilje resigned. The hearing loop system in the HASP classroom had been dedicated in Diana's honor already in June of 2002, in recognition of her efforts toward the growth and welfare of the academy. Diana really brought HASP into the computer age during her tenure and was a champion of the autonomy and financial security of the organization. At the May 2007 monthly program meeting, the membership recognized her, and the board of directors gave her an honorary lifetime HASP membership.

Following the announcement of Diana's resignation, the personnel committee recommended a part-time salaried position, from twenty to twenty-

²⁰ Evie Smallegan, "Minutes of HASP Executive Committee Meeting" (October 9, 1996).

five hours per week, with flexibility within the thirteen hundred hours per year. Consideration of additional support would occur after a new executive director was in place. A search committee was formed, chaired by vice president Rita Snow, and Kimberly Mendels was named executive director, beginning May of 2007.

As the programs and administrative duties and particularly the need for more afternoon curriculum courses continued to grow, the executive board began to discuss options for additional staff in early 2010. A part-time assistant would be far more affordable than a full-time position, which would require higher costs for employee benefits. The executive committee approved a proposal for a part-time administrative assistant to the executive director in March of 2010. The committee developed a position description, and the job was posted late that summer with assistance from the college's human resources office. Amy Berarducci was appointed by the personnel committee for hire as administrative assistant for an hourly position, from ten to twelve hours a week, forty weeks per year, beginning October 1, 2010.

Committed volunteers continue to assist with office duties. Ruth and Lois Kronemeyer have faithfully mailed the monthly bulletin for more years than can be counted, and Mary deForest took over for Ruth Kronemeyer two years ago to keep the records of courses and special events that HASP has offered. Several others help cover the office and assist with classroom audio/visual support.



Ruth Kronemeyer (*left*), Amy Berarducci (*center*),
and Lois Kronemeyer



Kim Mendels (*left*), executive director
Amy Berarducci, administrative assistant

A Personal Note

As I did the research for this paper, I found it most enlightening and a comfort to discover that over these first twenty-five years, we have struggled with many of the same challenges as the previous HASP leadership. We are in good company with John Hollenbach, previous boards, and our former executive directors with our “growing pains.” The following challenges and questions come up consistently: size of membership (to cap or not to cap); ways for people to get to know each other; the requirements of membership; how to better involve “marginal members”; place, size, and convenience of meeting space; office space and personnel; defining our relationship with Hope College; increasing the awareness and

commitment of members to our service arm; struggles with curriculum offerings, the number and format of courses and member leadership of them; and fees for membership dues and courses, all reminiscent of years past.

In the conclusion of a paper Dr. Hollenbach presented at a meeting of the Association for Continuing Education (ACHE) at Eastern Michigan University in April, 1994, he wrote:

Preserving the sense of responsibility by every member is one of the constant challenges of HASP as an organization. Members must understand that to join is to contract to be a doer, a planner, a volunteer in service, on occasion a leader or facilitator rather than simply a recipient. This is a learning *community*. We must work at promoting this sense in a variety of ways: periodic questionnaires asking members to evaluate, suggest changes, and volunteer; an annual business meeting to discuss programs of the past, plans for the future, and changes in ways of operating; keeping the focus of the six standing committees and soliciting members to become involved in these committees; encouraging active involvement by members of a study group; sharing the leadership of an individual session of a course or even selecting topics to be pursued or books to be studied; maintaining a monthly program for ALL members with a coffee hour to promote friendship; orientation sessions for new members to become better acquainted with the goals of the Academy.²¹

I hope we’re doing that, but there is always room for improvement. I was reminded through my research that in order to truly make good and informed decisions going forward, we need to be well informed about our *past*. We cannot forget who we are and what we were intended for, no matter how big and busy we become. Lifelong learning and service should always be our main emphasis. Those who led before us had valuable ideas and made some important decisions that we should honor. Certainly some things will need to change in terms of the way we deliver services and communicate with our membership. And with those occasional changes toward efficiency and around process, we must not forget the *relationships* that are involved and how important those are to the value of our life together in HASP.

In terms of scholarship, we should not expect ourselves to be “experts” in order to be willing to lead or coordinate a course about something we love or are interested in learning more about. It was John Hollenbach who said, “HASP programs should foster good listening, learning, reading, sharing, and the pleasure of discussion.” We don’t need to be an expert, just inquisitive enough to research a

²¹ John Hollenbach, “Hope College’s Institute for Learning in Retirement,” presentation at meeting of the Association for Continuing Education (ACHE), Eastern Michigan University (April 28, 1994).

little and want to learn more. I am most pleased when I am working in my office and can overhear small group discussions from the classroom or conference room on a topic, book, or movie. Most of the time when people come to my office door beaming about how much they enjoyed a course, it is because of the discussion and exchange of ideas that have occurred and perhaps a new friend they just made. There is so much to learn from each other and from our own life experiences, stories, and questions. I imagine Dr. Hollenbach smiles upon this.

Twenty-five years . . . that's a long story, of which I am only a very small part. The notes and memos of Evie Smallegan, Jan Ver Helst, and Diana Marsilje to Dr. Hollenbach, Hope College presidents and other college staff, and former boards resonated with me as I went through the correspondence files in the Joint Archives. Some of these contained concerns, frustrations tempered with recommendations, or decisions and ideas coming from ad hoc committees or task forces for the academy.

The executive director can be a complicated position. We are surrounded by bright, determined, accomplished, thoughtful, and at times intimidating people. There is a time to lead and inform and a time to sit quietly, listen, and follow the directives of those who have been elected, even if you have your doubts. HASP was designed to be a *peer-led* organization and should be led by our members' ideas and initiatives. It is my hope that this publication will both inspire and inform those ideas and initiatives. The design of our board of directors as outlined in our constitution and bylaws was set up intentionally for this very purpose. We must accept change and problems as challenges and opportunities, and not lose heart. With all the joys and really only occasional struggles we encounter, in the end, we are surrounded by incredible, inspired, brilliant, and passionate people—what else could you ask for in retirement?

Appendix

Signatures of HASP Charter Members, 1988

H O P E A C A D E M Y O F S E N I O R P R O F E S S I O N A L S

CHARTER MEMBERSHIP ROLL

At this founding meeting of the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals, held on the thirty-first day of May, 1988, in the Maas Center, Hope College, I declare my intention to be an active charter member of the Academy and hereby affix my signature to the charter membership roll.

Paul G. FRIED
J. J. Forman,immer
Bruce A. Stewart
Bernard Meunier
William B. Winter
Ternon W. Roelofs
H. Arendskant
Marion de Velder
Robert J. Brown
Henry Toog
Robert A. Vanderham
John J. Sjiddens
Dantana Hollerman
Bernard Donnelly
Richard Ocker
J. Van Hactone
J. E. Coenhen
Margaret D. Van Wyke
Bernadine O'Malley
Alton E. McFarland
Tom Arena
Edwin Katering
Evelyn J. Mallegan

M. Eugene Osterhaven
 John Jacobson (ex officio)
 Carmie Stehler
 Jacob Englund (ex officio)
 Fred. Zander
 Donald E. McCoy
 Roy J. Hubner
 Charles J. Neys
 Willie C. V. Nelson
 Gordon Van Wagon
 Bertie Manair
 John W. Wollenbach
 Henry Lee Hoar
 Robert D. Bonstgen
 Harry F. Jones
~~Frank J. Brown~~
 Harold A. Galenhardt
 H. Lubbers
~~A. J. H. H. H. H.~~
 John Nag
 Bill Valley
 Rodney Schroeder
 Philip A. Fredrickson
 Paul E. Holkeboer
 Eleanor deKruif
 Harvey Staal



25 Years HASP History