

A Bit of CUCEA History

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CUCEA Archivist and Historian

From its inception, Council membership has included a Historian to serve as the Council's institutional memory and recall past actions to inform the Council's present deliberations. We fondly recall **Norah Jones** who initially served CUCEA as its Archivist and then as Historian. Her project as Historian was to write about the first CUCEA meeting to be hosted by a given campus. Sadly, she was able to complete only four campus accounts before her passing in 2010. They include UCB's first meeting on October 29, 1987; UCD's on October 27, 1988; UCI's on April 26, 1990; and UCR's on April 25, 1991. As the current Historian, I plan to complete Norah's project. My first such report is UCSC's first CUCEA meeting held October 25, 1990. This and Norah's reports cited above can be viewed on CUCEA's website.

Norah's first report as Historian is possibly her most notable. It describes the first intercampus meeting of UC emeriti associations that predates CUCEA by several years. It was held at UCLA on April 15, 1981 to discuss mutual concerns and consider the formation of a university-wide organization of emeriti (now CUCEA). This interesting report is like stepping back in time and is reproduced here for the reader's enjoyment.

Historian's Report to CUCEA, April 27, 2006, at UCLA

Norah E. Jones

As CUCEA Historian, I am going to tell you a story -- a story about an event that took place almost exactly twenty-five years ago in this building, just a few feet down the corridor from where we are sitting. The date was April 15, 1981, and the occasion was the very first joint meeting ever held among UC emeriti associations.

But first, some brief background. In the late 1970s and early '80s, the nation, and California with it, had fallen on hard economic times, and there was considerable concern among UC academics about salaries, let alone annuities, keeping up with the cost of living. At UCLA we fortunately had a determined and visionary emerita professor of microbiology, Meridian Ball, who had been our association's president in 1976/77. She saw clearly that a single campus could not seriously influence statewide policy to protect emeriti interests, and so she initiated contacts with emeriti on other campuses, encouraging them to form associations and to join together in statewide cooperation. Under the UCLA association's auspices she and another emeritus, Ralph McKee of biological chemistry, calling themselves "Liaison Representatives to Systemwide Organization," issued an invitation to emeriti from the then-active southern associations at Santa Barbara and Riverside to a luncheon at UCLA on April 15, 1981, at which they had already secured President David Saxon to speak. (They had also hoped to have representatives from Irvine and San Diego where associations had not yet been formed, but neither Stuart Krassner of Irvine nor Allen Lein of San Diego, with whom they corresponded, was able to come or to send a colleague.)

On the day, 122 people were actually present, strongly attracted by the promised presence of David Saxon: 27 came from Santa Barbara, 11 from Riverside, and 84 from UCLA, including Lina Boardman, Eddie Murphy's predecessor -- all reserving lunch for \$6.36. They met at 10:30 in the UCLA Faculty Center's California Room for coffee, a welcome from Vice-Chancellor Harold Horowitz, and

presentations by Theodore Hatlen who led the Santa Barbara contingent, James Early who led the Riverside group, and President Margaret Jones of UCLA who presided. These presentations laid out the concerns for President Saxon, concerns pointed up by a resolution to the Regents which had just been passed by the Riverside association and was now endorsed by Santa Barbara and UCLA as well. This resolution began by expressing appreciation for a 1981 one-time adjustment in annuities, but concluded:

“Pending accurate measures of changes in the living costs of retired individuals and couples, we call upon the Regents to include, in their annual legislative request for funds, the funds needed to make adjustments of UCRS annuities equal to the average range of adjustments provided for UC faculty and staff.”

At 12:15 the assembly moved to the dining room for lunch, where UCLA Chancellor Charles Young, whose schedule kept him from joining them, rushed in and went from table to table shaking hands. At 1:00 p.m. the meeting resumed in the California Room for President Saxon’s informal talk. “The University and its Emeriti,” followed by wide-ranging discussion. The whole occasion was so successful that everyone present expressed a wish to repeat it with enlarged representation.

In writing to thank President Saxon, Margaret Jones said in part: “I can hope that the cordiality and spirit of the group adequately expressed our regard for and our gratitude to you for finding the time to be with us. ... I have been impressed with the *esprit de corps* and the concern the emeriti show for the University. This, I believe, can only be an asset for individual campuses and for the University as a whole.”

N. E. Jones, CUCEA Historian, 2006