Tribute to Walt Hearn

By Vicki Best

I had the privilege of attending Walter Hearn’s memorial service on Sunday, April 23, at 2:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley. It was a joy and honor to be there with Ginny, Walt’s wife, and Christine, Walt’s daughter, as well as his family and many friends, both personally and on behalf of the ASA.

Here is the tribute that I presented at the memorial service on that very special day.

Walt Hearn had a very long-standing relationship with the American Scientific Affiliation; he was a faithful, committed and active member and donor for 66 years.

I had the opportunity to first meet Walt and his lovely wife Ginny two years ago when Randy Isaac, ASA Executive Director Emeritus, and I had the pleasure of attending a special gathering of several faithful ASA members including the Swearengens, the Olsons and the Irvines at the Hearn’s home (called the Troll House) in Berkeley. It was a wonderful afternoon of fellowshipping, catching up on life, reminiscing about past ASA experiences, and discussing the current ASA initiatives and news. As the unknown newcomer, I immediately felt warmly welcomed and included and thought to myself, “If these people are any indication of what ASA members are like, this is an organization that I want to be involved with and where I’d like to invest my time.” It was a memorable day that will forever be etched in my mind.

In the wake of that first meeting, I have since visited them in their home several times and have communicated regularly with Walt via email. He and Ginny are salt-of-the-earth kind of people, blessed with the gift of hospitality, encouragement and engagement—knowing how to engage people in the ASA and Christian community—which is a rare gift. In addition, Walt is witty, insightful, and respectful and a glorious eccentric whom I’ve thoroughly enjoyed getting to know. He has provided me with large measures of encouragement as I have fairly quickly taken on more responsibility and gotten engaged on a deeper level with the ASA.

I’ll never forget another visit to the Troll House when Walt and Ginny took me to downtown Berkeley to pick up burritos for lunch. We hopped into his 1977 Toyota Corolla and he adeptly navigated the Berkeley hills with a stick shift like it was second nature. He was 90 years young, and it was very impressive to me. We then proceeded to enjoy lunch in their kitchen as they took the time to get to know me and I learned of their professional and personal backgrounds including their extensive ASA involvement.

It was a deep honor to have Walt, escorted by his daughter Christine, with us this past summer at our 75th anniversary annual meeting at Azusa Pacific University. Traveling to southern California from Berkeley at the age of 90 years old was no small thing particularly in light of the fact that he was recovering from a recent battle with cancer. In fact, Ginny sent me an email a few weeks before the annual meeting saying she was worried about his stamina and energy level. I assured her that I (and the other ASA staff members) would take good care of him. In addition to giving his personal testimony at the anniversary dinner, he participated in the VIP (40+ year members) panel and was honored at a special symposium and in the Festschrift issue of God and Nature.

I had the honor of introducing Walt at the anniversary dinner and part of my introduction included the following:

Last January, while visiting Colorado State University, I came across a unique plaque on the wall in the student union that had the word ‘stalwart’ written on it along with the definition. And the definition of stalwart is this: ‘A loyal, reliable, and hardworking supporter or participant of an organization or team.’

And the synonyms of stalwart listed in the dictionary are the following: staunch, loyal, faithful, committed, devoted, dedicated, dependable, reliable, steady, constant, trusty, hardworking, steadfast, redoubtable, unwavering.

I immediately thought of Walt Hearn when I saw that plaque and took a photo of it and later sent it to him. Walt and Ginny Hearn (you see, they are a package deal and a true team) emulate the true meaning of stalwart. And you have been an ASA stalwart for 65 or more years and for that, we are truly grateful.

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Walt then came up on stage to share his ASA personal testimony and the first words out of his mouth were “What kind of a wart did she just call me?” His uncanny sense of humor sent the whole audience into laughter and that was how he launched into his story.

In the wake of the APU meeting, we were also blessed to have both Ginny and Walt in attendance at our third 75th anniversary celebration here at this church back in November. The dessert reception was another special evening and the room was filled with ASA members from around the Bay area. In fact, Walt introduced me on this night, and I walked them to their door at the Troll House after the event to say goodbye. I will never forget that evening as it was the last time that I saw him.

But one of the things I will remember the most about Walt was his wonderful gift of encouragement. Over the last few years as I’ve communicated with him regularly, he provided generous accolades, votes of confidence and positive words of support—customarily with humor incorporated in—to me and to my colleagues in the ASA home office. He routinely called us the Topsfield Toilers! We could always count on a warm and welcoming note to the whole staff that would accompany his faithful quarterly donation check.

The last communication we received from him was on January 12, 2017, in the wake of the staff Christmas photo/card that we had sent to the ASA members. In his lengthy and thoughtful email, he went person by person down the list, in his intelligent, witty way and cleverly provided words of wisdom, advice and encouragement to each and every one of us. It was Hannah the Ace, Vicki the Best, Leslie the Boss, Sharon the Mysterious One, Jack the Ripper, Randy the Tall One and Lyn the Guardian of the English Language. His notes were always so clever, humorous, positive, inspirational, encouraging and brilliantly written and I always looked forward to and sincerely appreciated them.

Walt’s long-time, faithful service to the ASA included 25 years as editor of our newsletter; author of the book, Being a Christian in Science; regular contributor to God and Nature magazine; and an ambassador for the ASA and introducing many to the ASA. In addition, he attended many ASA annual meetings, encouraged everyone he met and mentored countless ASA members over the years. As I travel on behalf of ASA around the US, I can’t tell you the number of people that tell me they know Walt Hearn and the impact he had on their lives. He was a real legend in ASA circles!

On behalf of the ASA, we are truly grateful for his many contributions over many years. Walt gave of his time, talent and treasure to the ASA for six and a half decades, nearly as long as the organization has been in existence. His steadfast faithfulness, loyal dedication, unique gift of encouragement and hospitality and unwavering Christ like character were a witness to many people and have been a real inspiration to me.

Walt was an amazing man, lived an incredible life, and had a remarkable testimony. He went home to be with His Lord and Savior on April 11, 2017, and I’m confident that when God welcomed him into His loving arms, His first words were, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

It was an absolutely beautiful service celebrating Walt’s outstanding life. There was a reception after the service and I met and interacted with many of Walt and Ginny’s friends including about 10–12 ASA members. From there, I was invited back to Ginny’s house for a small, intimate gathering of close friends which was very special.

It meant the world to Ginny and Christine that I came, both personally and in representation of the ASA. It was an amazing day and I’m just grateful to God that He orchestrated the many details (I frantically arrived at the church at exactly 2:32 p.m. after a long and delayed trip from Boston!) to make it all possible.

With your support, we’ve met with 11 local chapters in 6 states and 2 provinces, and spoken to 6 churches in 3 states, as well as 9 schools or universities in 7 states. In addition, I’ve spoken at 5 conferences in 3 states and 1 province, and done 8 television and/or radio interviews. Whew—that was a lot of traveling, and a lot of talking!

Perhaps more importantly, as part of our Local Chapters Campaign, we’ve started 5 new chapters scattered across the country in Arizona, Texas, and Massachusetts, and revived another (in Houston). We’ve gotten serious inquiries about starting half a dozen or more additional chapters in northern Colorado, California, Vermont/New Hampshire, Ohio, Missouri and Arkansas. So if you’re in one of these locations, stay tuned for more details coming soon!

In other big news, our Annual Meeting in Golden, Colorado, is just around the corner (July 28–31), and we already have nearly 200 registrants. If you haven’t registered yet, please do so soon at this link, and help us exceed last year’s record of 290 attendees. It promises to be a great meeting, with many inspirational keynotes, presentations, and field trips.

That’s it for now; enjoy the newsletter! I hope to see you somewhere, sometime soon, and if not before, in Golden at the Annual Meeting!

With gratitude, Leslie
ASA Presence at the AAAS Conference in Boston
By Vicki Best

It was a great delight to be part of ASA’s presence at the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) annual meeting in Boston. For several years, we have shared a booth with the Ecumenical Roundtable on Science, Technology, and the Church. Partnering with these like-minded organizations has proven to be a wonderful witness opportunity at this prominent conference that brings together thousands of leading scientists, engineers, educators, policymakers, and journalists from around the world to discuss recent developments in science and technology. Assisting at the booth were ASA members Vicki Best, Hannah Eagleson, Robert Keefer, Charlie Reece, and Craig Story.

In addition, several ASA members attended the annual DoSER (Dialogue on Science, Ethics and Religion) reception. Afterwards 16 ASA members, representing DoSER, Gordon College, Wheaton College, John Templeton Foundation, and InterVarsity’s Emerging Scholars Network, met for dinner at Legal Sea Foods in Boston. What a joy it was to sit around a table and connect with each other!

Finally, we had the opportunity to attend a session titled “The Paris Agreement and Leveraging Religious Support for Climate Policy,” organized by ASA member David Buller, formerly of AAAS DoSER. The moderator was ASA member Jennifer Wiseman of AAAS DoSER and the discussant was ASA member Katharine Hayhoe of Texas Tech University. It was a stimulating and thought-provoking session that was followed by a question-and-answer time.

Trip to the Lone Star State Was a Big Success!
By Vicki Best

Leslie and I had a very successful two-week trip to Texas in late March and early April. Here are a few of the major highlights:

1. Biologos Conference—The two of us were delighted to attend the 2017 BioLogos Conference: Christ and Creation held in Houston, March 29–31. There were more than 50 ASA members in attendance including BioLogos President Deb Haarsma and BioLogos Founder Francis Collins. It was a terrific opportunity to build friendships and worship God as we explored the harmony between modern science and biblical faith. We were able to interact with many attendees from around the globe throughout the conference and at the ASA booth in the exhibit hall. In addition, we hosted an ASA dinner at the Yard House where more than 36 ASA members and their friends and colleagues joined us. It was wonderful to fellowship with old friends and meet new ones!

2. Houston Chapter Meeting—While in Houston, we met with the ASA Houston chapter at Vineyard Christian Fellowship Church. Under the leadership of longtime ASA member Scott Robinson, we strategized ways to revitalize this once active chapter. Present at the meeting with us were DC chapter members Mike Beidler and Walter Rogero, who offered support and encouragement by sharing ways that their section was functioning. With some new ASA members in the Houston area and a re-energized focus, we are confident this chapter will get off to a new start in the coming days!

3. Christian Leadership Alliance Conference—From Houston, Leslie and I flew to Dallas for the Christian Leadership Alliance Outcomes Conference on April 3–7. Attending excellent plenary sessions and focused workshops, we met and interacted with Christ-honoring leaders of faith-based organizations from around the globe. It was a productive time of professional development, Christian community, thought leadership and spiritual refreshment.

4. Baylor Campus Chapter Meeting—While in Dallas, we drove down to Baylor University to meet with the new campus ASA chapter. After dining with several ASA members, we gathered in the state-of-the-art Baylor Sciences Building for a chapter meeting. Several long-standing and new ASA members were in attendance, and it was a fruitful and encouraging time of discussing the past, present, and future of the ASA. We are delighted that the new Baylor chapter is off to an exciting start!
ASA: How did you first find out about ASA, and how did you start working with the organization?

Sharon: I was introduced to the ASA about 2½ years ago by Vicki Best, who asked me to meet with her and Randy Isaac to talk about creating a mentoring-type program for ASA members. Over the next six months, I met with Vicki, Randy, and the Executive Council and the result was the launch of the ASA Nexus Forum at the 2015 Annual Meeting. I continued to work as the moderator of Nexus over the following year, and enjoyed seeing ASA members engage in dialogue around topics of personal and professional development for Christians in science. In the Spring of 2016, I began working on new projects with ASA, including the STEAM Grant proposal (which was funded for our Local Chapters Campaign), the creation of a Local Chapters Handbook, and the migration of the Nexus Forum to Facebook. I attended the 2016 ASA Annual Meeting at Azusa Pacific University to help with administrative tasks and to run the conference bookstore. I loved meeting so many ASA members and celebrating the 75th anniversary! In December of 2016, I started working part-time as the Membership and Outreach Manager, and I am delighted to be working in the office and engaging more in the mission of the ASA.

ASA: What does your role involve?

Sharon: I am working primarily with our membership database, called YourMembership, and assisting members and local chapters with event registrations, membership renewals, and profile updates. I am also responsible for coordinating the quarterly Newsletter and monthly NewsNote content and distribution. I am continuing to work on special projects such as grant proposals, the Nexus Forum, and an update to our website. Welcoming new members, and managing membership renewals and Annual Meeting registrations has kept me very busy!

ASA: What are you especially looking forward to in the year ahead with ASA?

Sharon: I enjoy working with organizational systems, so I’m always looking for ways to streamline processes and find efficiencies in the way we do things, so I hope to be helpful in that regard. I also love interacting with members and look forward to getting to know many more in the days and weeks ahead, especially at the Annual Meeting. I am excited about the Local Chapters Campaign and the opportunity it will provide ASA members to engage at the local level. It will also introduce more people to the ASA and extend the science and faith conversation to more college campuses and church contexts. Leslie and Vicki have been making great progress and I look forward to seeing it develop!

ASA: What is one thing you wish more people knew about ASA?

Sharon: As a nonscientist, I have come to appreciate how important the science and faith conversation is to the church in general. I admit it was intimidating to talk with super-smart scientists about faith! But I realized at last summer’s Annual Meeting that ASA members are people who desire to faithfully pursue Christ in the work God has called them to (and they are super-smart!). I think the church needs to know more about the mission and work of the ASA so that different perspectives on science and faith can be better understood and discussed within the community of faith. Hearing ASA members talk about their work in science has also enlightened my understanding of God’s creation in wonderful ways, and I want more people to hear about it too!

ASA: Tell us a little bit about the rest of your life: family, church, what you do in your free time.

Sharon: My husband, Chris, and I have been married for 28 years and have two children. Christopher is 22 and graduated from Gordon College in 2016. He is pursuing Japanese language study and plans to work as an English teacher in Japan. Emma will be 21 in a few weeks and is finishing her junior year at Gordon where she is a Music Education major concentrating in voice.

My professional background is in student development and education administration. I worked at Gordon College for 9 years as a Resident Director and Director of Housing. I then became the Dean of Students at Covenant Christian Academy, a private K–12 Christian school where I worked for 10 years in various roles. Currently, in addition to my work with ASA, I have a private education consulting business in which I work with high school students and their parents in the college search process, tutor students in study and organizational skills, and provide career coaching for college students and adults.

I did my graduate studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and during that time developed a passion for nurturing faith development through mentoring. This has included the creation of mentoring programs, workshop presentations, and personal mentoring relationships.

I am very involved as a member of the First Congregational Church in Hamilton, MA, where I currently serve on the Elder Board, Women’s Ministry Leadership Team, and the Children’s Sermon Team. In my free time, I love to read and always have a crochet project or two in process. My favorite places are Laconia, NH, Camden, ME, and Newport, RI, where my husband and I try to get to as often as possible. Chris and I are both native New Englanders and love this beautiful place we live.
Members in Glory

Kenneth B. Hoover
(1911–2014) Biologist

Kenneth B. Hoover passed away on November 3, 2014, at the age of 103 at Messiah Village in Upper Allen Township. He was born in Abilene, Kansas, on September 6, 1911.

Considered to be too frail for a life of farming, Hoover turned to education. He attended Messiah College from 1930–1933, earned his AB at John Fletcher College in Iowa, in 1934, his MS at Kansas State University in 1941, and his PhD in ecology at Pennsylvania State University in 1952. In 1936 he began his teaching career at Jabbok Bible School in Oklahoma as Instructor in science and mathematics. In 1942, Messiah College appointed him as Instructor in Biology. Five years later he became chairman of the college’s Division of Social Sciences. In 1977 he was named Professor Emeritus of Biology.

Hoover was a highly respected and greatly loved college professor. His well-prepared class presentations were laced with humor and interesting stories. He took a keen interest in students, who regarded him as a mentor. He followed many of his students after their graduation from Messiah College. Several of his students he encouraged to do post-graduate work and later arranged for them to join the college faculty. Younger faculty also saw him as a mentor as well as a father figure. Both former students of the college and faculty members have referred to him as a true servant leader.

His hobbies included hiking and bird watching. Especially young people enjoyed walking with him in rural areas, learning about birds and plants. He and the late Clifford Jones spent many hours together, binoculars in hand, enjoying their common interest in birds.*

Ken joined the ASA in 1962 and in 1978 he was elected emeritus by the council, reflecting his emeritus status at Messiah. This gave him lifetime membership in the ASA.

*From Conklin Funeral Home

Walter R. Hearn
(1926–2017) Biochemist

Walter Russell Hearn died on April 11, 2017, at the age of 91. He was born in Houston, Texas, on February 1, 1926.

Walt grew up in Houston and majored in chemistry at Rice University. He received a PhD in biochemistry at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1951. After doing research for a year at Yale Medical School and for three years at Baylor College of Medicine, he spent 17 years on the biochemistry faculty at Iowa State University until 1971. His research interests included peptide chemistry, hypothalamic hormones, and bacterial pigment biosynthesis.

For five years Walt was a Visiting Biologist to Colleges for the American Institute of Biological Sciences. He is a Fellow and Life Member of AAAS and an Emeritus member of the American Chemical Society. In 1972 he switched professions and moved to Berkeley to do free-lance editorial work with his wife Virginia. They have edited periodicals to do freelance editorial work with his wife Virginia. They have edited periodicals for over 40 years. Walt was once “poetry editor” for the Berkeley publication Radix, for which Ginny has been copy editor for over 40 years. Walt was once “poetry rejection editor” for Radix magazine. Walt and Ginny have strong IVCF backgrounds, helping to launch New College for Advanced Christian Studies in the 1980s, and are members of Berkeley’s First Presbyterian Church.*

Ronald L. Numbers wrote in The Creationists (1992), “As one of the first biochemists to play an active role in the ASA, Hearn felt a God-given responsibility to inform members about the growing importance [in the 1950s] of biochemistry in theories of evolution ... Because of his outspokenness, he often found himself at the center of controversy with the ASA, but because of his unfailingly sweet temper, he seldom made enemies.”

“Everybody in the ‘science-faith game’ has a history,” Hearn wrote in a 2014 essay. “As a minor-league player recalling many seasons, what ‘strikes’ me is the number of ‘big-leaguers’ I’ve actually known.” He proceeded to relate his encounters with such figures as Harry Rimmer, Henry Morris, Ronald L. Numbers, John C. Greene, John Polkinghorne, Duane Gish, Francis Collins, Phillip Johnson, Michael Denton, Forrest Mims, Robert Russell, Ian Barbour, and NCSE’s Eugenie C. Scott.**

Walt was one of the most active and prolific advocates for the ASA, urging everyone he knew to consider joining the organization that meant so much to him. ASA members came to know him through his 25 years of insightful and witty comments in the newsletter and his ubiquitous presence at the annual meetings. He was a major factor in helping Emily Ruppel found the God & Nature online magazine, serving as a regular contributor and advisor. He provided two years of postings to be published in forthcoming issues. Walt not only ministered to people through writings and personal interactions but also by example. He made the transition to a basic lifestyle that emphasized thrift and ecological sustainability and giving to others. His famous talks on “dumpster diving” opened many eyes to the waste that permeates our society.

The ASA was shaped in many ways by Walt and he will be sorely missed until we all warmly greet him again in glory.

*God and Nature **NCSE
Two ASA Events in Florida

by Leslie Wickman

Vicki and I, together with Executive Council President Lynn Billman, had a wonderful trip to Florida, March 20–22. I had been invited to speak at First Presbyterian Church in Bonita Springs as part of the Bonita Christian Forum series, so we welcomed the opportunity to spread the word about the ASA, and generated quite a lot of interest among the 1,000+ people in attendance at the event.

Later in the week the three of us met with other Florida ASA members for a tour of the nonprofit ECHO Small Farm Resource Center for sustainable, mission-minded agriculture with director, co-founder, and ASA member Martin Price. Afterward we all had a memorable dinner meeting at Martin and his wife Bonnie’s house, and enjoyed their backyard bayou complete with turtles, several very entertaining alligators, and many varieties of fish. We’re hoping that these meetings may lead to the formation of a new local chapter in Florida sometime soon.
Executive Council Meets in Topsfield

The ASA Executive Council traveled from around the US and Canada to convene the weekend of April 21–23 for the annual fiscal year-end meeting at ASA headquarters in Topsfield, MA.

In addition to reviewing the accomplishments of the last fiscal year, we looked forward to the exciting endeavors on the horizon for the upcoming year. Among the important topics of discussion were reviewing the fiscal year 2018 budget, finalizing the long-term strategic plan, discussing constitution and by-law revisions, and charting the course for future sustainability for the ASA.

It was a fruitful time of engaging together as a leadership team, upholding the organization in prayer, and looking expectantly to God for His continued faithfulness to the ASA.

CSCA Happenings

by Mark McEwan

Building on the momentum from 2016’s national lecture tour on “Quantum Physics & Christianity” with Arnold Sikkema (video forthcoming: csca.ca/youtube), the Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation continues to develop our three-year Local Chapters Project, funded by Templeton World Charity Foundation, Inc. This year began with our busiest semester to-date. By the end of June, we will have held nearly thirty events: at least one at each of our eleven chapters across the nation.

This includes a number of “mini-tours” between our local chapters: Dennis Venema visited Calgary and Edmonton in February, and Chris Barrigar will speak at all four of our Ontario chapters in June—finishing with a fifth talk in Montréal, his own chapter. We have now formed the planning committee for next year’s CSCA conference (Trinity Western University, May 11–14, 2018), which aims to bolster science-faith interaction in Canada (csca.ca/may2018).

Boston Chapter Event

Boston Chapter members and guests gathered at Grace Chapel in Lexington on Friday, April 21. The ASA Executive Council members shared about their experience with the ASA. Stephen Moshier, incoming ASA President and Professor of Geology at Wheaton College, made a fascinating presentation on the ancient geographic setting of the Exodus. It was great to have so many Boston area members join us, including a contingent from the recently formed Gordon College Student Chapter!
For more information and to register, go to https://asa3.site-ym.com/event/2017AnnualMeeting#