The Changing Role of Emeritus Professors

By Kristin Sterling

Growing numbers of retired university professors are becoming active in professional and social fellowships on campuses across the country. The trend also is beginning to take root on Columbia’s Morningside and Health Sciences campuses.

The Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE), a leader in the movement simply by the desire to socialize in urban centers, and to serve as administrators eager to remain senior professors, researchers and administrators who share the common experience of extensive careers in education and wish to pursue intellectual interests or render further service to the University community. An AROHE office has been established in Faculty House, financed by member dues since the fellowship has not yet been afforded University financial support. AROHE is cooperating closely with the board of advisors at Faculty House in efforts to rejuvenate the facility as a hub of intellectual activity and faculty fellowship. As the University administration considers plans to renovate Faculty House, the board is calling attention to the report by President Nicholas Murray Butler to the trustees in 1921, which stated, “It may be doubted whether any building that the University could add to those now existing will mean more or render greater service than will the Faculty House. Under urban conditions, it is essential that a great body of scholars having diverse intellectual interests be held together not only in their official relationships, but in a social unity that will both increase their satisfactions and add to their influence in the community, whether as individuals or as a group. All this the Faculty House will do and more. It is as much a part of the equipment for the work of the University as is a library or laboratory.”

By Seymour Topping

A ROHE drew inspiration initially from the University of Southern California, where its emeritus center is now in its 26th year. The center puts its emphasis on sponsoring on-campus and community-based lectures by retired professors, mentoring students and arranging foun-