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How ASPA Came About

The year was 1966. I was retired from the Air Force, had completed my actuarial studies and formed my own consultant business. I discovered that there were several requirements to become a member of the Society of Actuaries that were not necessary to become a pension actuary. And I felt that there were others out there who were confronting the same problem.

So. I thought it would be a good idea to have a Society for pension actuaries. I named my new society 'American Society of Pension Actuaries' and incorporated. I then designed a question whose correct answer would be the qualification to become a member. I submitted this question to both Prentice Hall and Commerce Clearing House for publication, not knowing if I would hear from anybody. Much to my surprise I had a number of immediate responses from all over the country. One applicant wired an answer with instructions to wire him back, collect, if he qualified, as he would be waiting to order new stationary.

One of the earliest applicants was James F. Kirkpatrick who of course had no problem in answering the question correctly. I had sent notices to all members of the date and place for the

first meeting of the society. It was in my office in Forth Worth, Texas and the only one who showed up was Kirk. So that was our first board meeting. I was elected President and another applicant, Carl Duncan of San Antonio was appointed Vice President.

Both Carl and I remained in those positions for the first five years.

Kirk was working for Bill Hand at the time, who was extremely generous in allowing us to use his employees and equipment for ASPA purposes.

The majority of my time was occupied during those first years, with grading papers and enrolling qualified members. I was greatly pleased when IRS accepted membership in ASPA as qualification for a pension actuary--and it wasn't long before our numbers had outgrown my office and we had our annual meeting in Fort Worth's Hotel Texas.

I think the rest is history.