

Archives Committee Report for Council and General Assembly

From Marion Siegman, Archivist

Upon his retirement, Paul DeWeer asked me whether I was interested in assuming the duties of Archivist for the IUPS, and I gladly agreed. This appointment was subsequently approved by Council. Paul delivered several boxes of papers belonging to the Society to me shortly thereafter. After making contact with The American Philosophical Society and registering with them, I brought all of the material for storage in their facility. I was able to see the storage site and learned that only a fraction of the many boxes of records had been archived, or even opened.

Some months later, at the request of Dr. Boron I retrieved some documents related to the tax-exempt status of the IUPS. In the course of searching for these documents, I found some fascinating letters written by Professor AV Hill to colleagues about the rise of Hitler/Nazi-ism in the years just prior to the start of WW2. It soon became clear that the collection of papers was far more interesting than simple accounts of previous congresses.

As an addict to the history of science, it occurred to me that the archives are likely a treasure trove that should not be confined to the air-conditioned basement of the APS, but rather should be made available to the scientific community and world at large. I am enthusiastic about organizing the collection into a living history of the scientists whose work we all learned from, centering on the characters themselves and the history of the world in their time. Depending on your preference, it could be assembled into a book or collection to be displayed electronically on line. This would be done on my own time with no cost to the IUPS. However, I need your blessing and authorization to have access to the archives.

The APS is located in the historic district of Philadelphia, a brisk walk from my home and laboratory.

Best,