



## Renze L. Hoeksema

September 13, 1919 - April 14, 2014

Renze Lyle Hoeksema, Sr. died peacefully in his sleep on Monday, April 14, 2014, in Hospice House of Holland from complications of Parkinson's disease. He was 94 years old.

Renze was born in Grandville, Michigan, on September 13, 1919. A World War II veteran, he joined the United States Army on February 27, 1941. He served in the Pacific theater as an intelligence officer attached to the headquarters of General Douglas MacArthur. He met his Australian wife of 65 years, Marjorie Coombes, in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, where she was employed as support staff for the US Fifth Air Force Command. They married on March 21, 1945. After the war, he earned a BA in history from Hope College in Holland, Michigan, and a PhD in political science from Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Renze spent 20 years as a Foreign Service officer with the US State Department on assignments in Washington DC, the Philippines, Pakistan, Iran, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. For his service, Renze received honors including the Bronze Star, the Legion of Merit, the National Medal of Merit and awards from the governments of the Philippines and South Vietnam.

After his State Department service, Renze joined the Hope College faculty in 1971 as a Professor of Political Science. He taught courses about the US

national government, international law, and the politics of Southeast Asia, the Middle East, the Far East and the Soviet Union, as well as courses about the Holocaust and about race and ethnic relations in the US. While at Hope, he enjoyed each opportunity to direct the Washington (DC) Honors Semester, Washington May Term and the Model United Nations. He was a consultant for the 1979 peace talks between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Jimmy Carter. In 1998, the Hope College Alumni Association honored Renze with a Distinguished Alumni Award.

Education was Renze's passion. After his retirement from Hope College in 1986, he helped to found the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals (HASP) in 1988 and was an active HASP instructor. In this capacity, he taught at Hope College, Calvin College, Davenport College, Aquinas College and Grand Valley State University. He was also active in the Holland Rotary Club, serving in a number of positions, including its Presidency, and for several years with the Rotary International Youth Exchange program.

Renze was preceded in death by his wife, Marjorie (nee Coombes) Hoeksema, his father and mother, Clarence and Lily (nee DeWindt) Hoeksema, his brothers Frederick and James Hoeksema and his sisters Gertrude Van Polen and Gladys Timmer and his daughter-in-law Susan Nolen-Hoeksema. .

Renze is survived by his three children, Richard Nolen-Hoeksema of Bethany, Connecticut, and Houston, Texas; Renze Hoeksema, Jr., and wife, Kristin, of Canton, Michigan; and Margot Wynveen and husband, Barry, of Chatham-Kent, Ontario, Canada; his six grandchildren, Bryan, Katie, Leigh, Leslie, Michael and Renée; and his sister-in-law, Emma Hoeksema of Jenison, Michigan.

Renze will be missed. He lived a full and amazing life. He would regale his family and students with stories about his adventures. He had a great passion for teaching and learning.

A memorial service for Renze will be held Friday, April 25, 2014, at 11:00 am at the Langeland-Sterenbergh Funeral Home, 315 E 16th Street, Holland, Michigan. Burial will be in Dutton Cemetery. Visitation will be one hour before the service.

Contributions in Renze's memory may be made to "The Renze Lyle Hoeksema Prize in Political Science" at Hope College, Department of Political Science, PO Box 9000, Holland, Michigan 49422. The prize was established to award a junior majoring in political science who best demonstrates excellence in the classroom, interest in political science and promise of a useful career in public service.

The family would like to express their thanks to Home Care by Resthaven and Hospice House of Holland for the special care they provided to Renze. [www.langelandsterenbergh.com](http://www.langelandsterenbergh.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ *Renze L. Hoeksema*

August 31, 2022 at 01:26 PM



“ *Rich, and Renze and Margo too, so sorry to hear of your father's passing. My mom mailed me a copy of the obituary. I remember your dad as a very nice and intelligent man.*

*Rich, we have lost track of each other over the years, but I'd love to catch up. Gracie's and my thoughts and prayers are with all of you.*

*John Huitsing*

John Huitsing - Joplin, MO - Friend of Rich - April 26, 2014 at 12:00 AM



“ *When I first arrived at Hope College in the fall of 1972 at the age of 25 I was pretty sure I knew my mind on the Vietnam War and politics in general -- then I encountered Renze. Those were spirited conversations and it allowed me to see what experience and passion could do to educate and illuminate alternative perspectives. Renze's passionate commitment was tempered and held with Marge's compassion and the 2 of them had a stunning and powerfully positive effect on Hope College and the Holland community. I grieve with friends and family that I will not see the 2 of them again. But I am also grateful that we walked this earth together.*

Jane Dickie - Saugatuck, MI - Friend and colleague - April 23, 2014 at 12:00 AM

JF

“ *Margot and Pastor Barry and family. Our thought and prayers are with you during your time of loss. May the Lord comfort you and keep you all in His hands in your time of need.*

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**Joyce and John Geene - Blenheim, Ontario, Canada - Friends** - April 22, 2014 at 12:00 AM

SD

“ *In 1973 both Renze and Marjorie welcomed me into their home and family. Over the years since, they have remained a special part of my life and thoughts. My thoughts now are with Richard, Renze and Margot and their families. It is ANZAC day here on the 25th, an appropriate day for Renze's Passing. My love. Sharyn Carew(Llaw)*

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**Sharyn Carew - Auckland, new zealand - Australian exchange daughter** - April 21, 2014 at 12:00 AM

PC

“ *To the children of Renze, I have fond memories of all of you at Holland Christian High school and send my Christian sympathy.Mr. Mulder*

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**paul Mulder - New Era, MI - Principal at Holland Christian** - April 19, 2014 at 12:00 AM

AF

“ To: Richard, Renze Jr and Margot and their families.

*In memory of a lifetime friendship between your parents and mine (Effie and Fred Holt).*

*Many happy and sad times were shared together over the years.*

*Our prayers and thoughts are with you all at this time.*

*Ann and Chris Nash*

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**Ann Nash - Perth, Western Australia - Friend - April 18, 2014 at 12:00 AM**

DN

“ Dear Hoeksema Family, may our Lord comfort you in your grief. I remember Dr. Hoeksema as jovial, an earnest Christian family man, gifted, humble and fair minded professor, great story teller, and graciously hospitable. It was a privilege to be acquainted with him and his family.

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**Donald White - Marion, NY - April 18, 2014 at 12:00 AM**

MS

“ Please accept my deepest and heartfelt condolence.  
*I was a political science major student taking Dr. Hoeksema's class of American foreign policy in South East Asia and that of Middle East in 1974 And 1975. The Christmas dinner with Dr. Hoeksema's family and the review Of the class at his office are my good memories at Hope. Dr. Hoeksema is the always in my heart.*

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**MASATOSHI ISHIOKA - Hirosaki, Aomori-pref. Japan - Dr. Hoeksema's student - April 18, 2014 at 12:00 AM**

JS

“ Dear members of Dr. Hoeksema's family,

*Please accept my heartfelt condolences. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers.*

*I was a student in Dr. Hoeksema's May Term (1983) Senior Seminar class on the Holocaust. The seminar topic was particularly timely given that I was scheduled to depart soon thereafter for study abroad in Germany. Despite the passage of nearly 31 years, my memories of the class are still vivid. One aspect that stands out is the passion Dr. Hoeksema brought to his teaching and the high standards to which we were held. Over the three-week period we read more books (10) than in any of my full-semester courses up to that point; yet no one complained! We wrote numerous short responses and concluded the course with a 25-page paper. One would assume that students would have grumbled about the work load; however, that wasn't the case. We eagerly shared our thoughts, questions and concerns in class each day. Our assigned readings included first-hand accounts of Holocaust survivors, and Dr. Hoeksema brought in film footage, photos, and artifacts. However, most stirring was the visit to class one day by a Holocaust survivor. The discussion we had with her is one that I will never forget! In response to what I experienced throughout the Dr. Hoeksema's seminar, I enrolled in a World War II history course at the German university and also visited the Dachau concentration camp. In short, Dr. Hoeksema's course engaged my mind and spirit, and continues to impact me to this day. I am sincerely grateful for the lasting gifts he shared with us.*

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**Janet Mielke Pinkham - Holland, MI - Former Student** - April 15, 2014 at 12:00 AM