

September 2019

BRIDGES

PUBLISHED BY THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF YMCA RETIREES

The Birth of a Publication

Below is the first page of the first WFYR newsletter
printed 25 years ago



Vol. I No. 1

December 1994

TO YMCA RETIREES:

Season's greetings! This is the first of what is planned to be a quarterly newsletter for the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees (WFYR). That this initial issue comes at the most joyous glorious time of the year particularly symbolic for it is indeed a time for new beginnings. We, who found our life's work in the Young Men's Christian Association, can now be bound together on a global basis through membership in the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees.

While this new organization's membership and resources are limited at this time we believe there is considerable potential for growth in the years ahead. As YMCA retirees around the world, who have had common experiences during their working years and maintain a dedication to the purpose and spirit of the YMCA, bind themselves together in a supportive, caring fellowship, good things are bound to result - both individually and collectively.

We invite each of you to help spread the word about WFYR to YMCA retirees everywhere. One of the goals, in this first triennium, is to bring retirees from at least four countries, not now involved, into this new fellowship. This objective is at the top of the priority list.

Please accept my most sincere wish for a blessed holiday season and a prosperous and healthy New Year for you and your family. Let us all remember that:

In Christ there is no East is
or West,
In Him no South or North
But one great fellowship of
love,
Throughout the whole wide
earth.

William A. McAllister (USA)
Chairman, WFYR

NEW BEGINNINGS

As we mark the birth of WFYR, Christmastime and its celebration of the birth of the Christ child take on an expanded meaning. That this new beginning should occur during the celebrations marking the 150th year of the YMCA's founding, makes it doubly significant.

Representatives of YMCA retirees from eight countries, plus two observers from as many other countries, met as a "leadership group" on 27 September 1994 in Geneva Park, Canada and formally organized the WFYR. For over a year, under guidance of John O'Melia, correspondence
(continued)



BRIDGES



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(If we missed your group or erred, please let us know.)

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITORS

Regular readers of *Bridges* will take one look at the cover of this edition and think they have entered a time warp. This is a special edition intended to be distributed at the YMCA alumni (USA) gathering to be held in late September. Your editors believe it will be of interest and useful to other Y retiree groups seeking to recruit new members, develop support for *Secours Speciaux* and indicate an interest in becoming a YMCA Ambassador in their part of the world.

Our Chairman, **Phil Dwyer**, has selected topics and information points that need to be highlighted, and your editors are including accounts of members and activities of Y retiree groups. Photos from last year's WFYR meeting in Chiang Mai provide glimpses of our leaders attending that important event.

Please take time to enjoy the highlights of the career and accomplishments of **Bonnie Mairs**. Bonnie, WYFR's champion for Secours, was recently honored by being inducted into the YUSA Hall of Fame. Her career long dedication to international service and exchange student work was noted among her achievements.

This edition contains news of Founder's Day in London and an invitation to AGAPE 2020 to be held in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

The entire world is saddened by the continuing rise in hate crimes and countries moving away from cooperative agreements. Our retired friends in Germany wish to note that their country was saved from complete disaster by the actions of the US and its allies at the conclusion of WWII.

Your editors hope that this special edition will be shared with other retirees. Additional copies have been ordered and as usual *Bridges* can be electronically delivered to any and all Y retirees. The YMCAalumni.org website maintains the current edition of *Bridges* on its site.

Len continues his fascination and admiration for the life and service of Sir John R. Mott and encourages readers to contribute stories of Mott from their own country.

Thank you for your continued support of *Bridges*.

Len and Joyce Wilson

Please send photos or articles to Len Wilson:

1101 Washington Avenue, #307

Philadelphia, PA 19147, or

len.wilson@comcast.net



WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

Founder's Day

by Rupert George

A celebration service to mark the 175th Anniversary of the founding of the YMCA was held at St. Martin in the Fields, London at 2:30 pm on June 6, 2019. The church was packed with "YMCA people" young and old from across the world. It was a jubilant occasion.



While **Rev Richard Carter** an Associate Vicar of St. Martins presided, **Dr John Sentamu**, Archbishop of York and President of the National Council of YMCAs delivered a fitting message. St. Martin's Voices and the YMCA Gospel Choir provided joyous music of contrasting style! Several YMCA leaders past and present including **Carlos Madjri Savee**, Secretary General, World Alliance of YMCAs, **Bart Shaha**, **Juan Simoes Igleias**, Secretary General, YMCA Europe, **Denise Hatton**, National Secretary, YMCA England and Wales, Youth Ambassadors, young people and a few more had specific roles in the service. All those present joined in the hymns.



A few representing the IFYR [UK Chapter] and our Indian Movement too were there on the historic occasion.

Latin America and Caribbean YMCA Retired Secretaries Association

The city of São Paulo, Brazil, was chosen to hold the traditional "Agape 2020." an activity that happens every two years, organized and planned by the Retired Secretaries of the YMCAs of Latin America and the Caribbean from 12 to 15 August, 2020.



Reservations at the hotel have already been made. The Hotel is very well located, near the headquarters of YMCA São Paulo and has excellent, affordable facilities, Hotel Novotel São Jaragua Conventions.

Agape 2020 aims to bring together retired colleagues from the

Latin American and Caribbean areas, including their spouses and those currently living in other latitudes.

Agape 2020 will be a unique and wonderful experience to share, enjoy, remember and inspire, building new "bridges" of friendship.

Germany Thanks the USA and Britain for the Air Bridge

by Klaus Jürgen Diehl

In May 2019, the people in Germany commemorated the 70th anniversary of the end of the Berlin air bridge. From June 1948 until May 1949, 2.2 million persons in West-Berlin were totally supplied by planes of USA and Great Britain, after the Soviet Union had suddenly closed all transport routes from West-Germany to Berlin. The Communists hoped that the allied troops would leave Berlin and that they could gain power over the whole city of Berlin. But then American and British pilots started the airlift and provided the people of West-Berlin with food, medicine and energy like hard coal, petrol and oil. Even after the war, Great Britain rationed grain (never rationed during wartime) so that they could supply it to West-Berlin. What a great sign of generosity! During 11 months planes landed every three minutes in West-Berlin. In total the American and British pilots carried out 277,569 flights and brought 2,1 million tons freight in the isolated city, among them 485,00 tons of food. Thirty-one Americans and forty British lost their lives during the air bridge. The airlift became famous for the so-called *Rosinenbomber* (candy bomber), from which the pilots threw candy, chewing gum and chocolate to the children before landing on the ground.

As the country which during the Nazi times brought so much death and suffering over the world, we Germans cannot give thanks enough to the victorious powers of the USA and Great Britain. What a blessing that the President of the USA at that time acted upon humanitarian principles. Otherwise we probably would have lost our freedom in Germany forever.



The "Candy Bombers" during the airlift were eagerly awaited by the kids in West-Berlin, building new bridges of friendship.



WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

World Fellowship of YMCAs Retirees



Our Mission

Build and maintain fellowship among YMCA retirees around the world both as individuals and organized retirees groups. Additionally, WFYR provides a continued connection and an avenue for retirees to use their knowledge, commitment and experience to benefit the YMCA movement and humanity.

Brief History : The World Fellowship of YMCAs Retirees (“WFYR”) was founded in 1994 when representatives from 10 national movements came together at Geneva Park in Canada. The gathering had the aim of creating structured opportunities for YMCA retirees to widen and deepen their international relationship, to bring together the various Retiree organizations, to be a means of communication and mutual support, and to expand retiree organizations where none existed. We operate under Guidelines established by mandate of the Strategic Planning Gathering in San Diego, CA in September, 13 – 16, 2011. John O’Melia was the consultant and was a vital advisor to all chairpersons in the initial period. The Chairs have been: William McAllister (’94 – ’97), Prescott Johnson (’97 – ’03), Adrian Moody (’03 – ’06), Don Anderson (’07 – ’10), Jerry Prado Shaw (’10 – ’14) and Norris Lineweaver (’14 – 18). The prior five world WFYR Conferences were held in Geneva Park, Ontario, Canada (1994), Blue Ridge Assembly, North Carolina, USA, (1997) YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colorado,



WFYR Chairs, past and present, from left: Prescott Johnson, Don Anderson, Phil Dwyer (newly elected chair), Norris Lineweaver, and Jerry Prado Shaw

USA, (2000), Caribbean Cruise (2003), Porto Alegre, Brazil (2007), Hong Kong (2010), Estes Park, Colorado, USA (2014) and Chiang Mai, Thailand (2018) We meet every four years in conjunction with the World Council in July.



The entire WFYR delegation to the World Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The walls of the meeting room were lined with flags of member delegates.

2018 – 2022 Goals: We reaffirm our:
Foundational goal of building and maintaining fellowship among YMCA retirees.
Commitment to *Secours Speciaux* as our charity of choice and double the amount of money raised.
Commitment to serve as an advocate to the YMCA movement on the issue of unsecured retirement with particular focus on South Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean by expanding the number of Global Retirement Initiatives.
Support of the YMCA World Alliance and the newly elected Secretary General of WAY, Carlos Sanvee.

LEADERSHIP 2018 – 2022

- Chair Philip Dwyer, USA
- Vice Chair, Africa – Francis Asiema
- Vice Chair, Canada – Rich Bailey
- Vice Chair, East Asia – Kohei Yamada
- Vice Chair, Europe – Albrecht Kaul
- Vice Chair Latin America & Caribbean – Roberto Uria
- Vice Chair, Middle East – Ghassan Sayah
- Vice Chair, Oceania – John Bindon
- Vice Chair, South Asia – Thomas Thomas
- Communications – Ken White, USA



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Bridges Editors, Len & Joyce Wilson, USA
Global retirement Initiative, Don Anderson, USA
Secours Speciaux Fund, Bonnie Mairs, USA
Immediate Past Chair, Norris Lineweaver, USA

Chairs of Organized National Groups

Australia – John Bindon; Bangedesh – Sudip Arinda; Brazil – Jayne Araujor; Canada – Franco Savoia; Chile – Eduardo Clavero; Colombia – Rose Mary Becerra; Germany – Albrecht Kaul; Hong Kong – K. F. Lau; India – Thomas Thomas; Japan – Sogo Hoshino; Korea – Kwang Jin Rhim; Nigeria – Cornelius Olaomo; Peru – Carlos Quinteros; Philippines – Cris Caparoso; Swedan – Anita Anderson; Taiwan – Kevin Liu; United Kingdom – Jim Lamb; Uruguay – Julio Cesar; USA – Dale Packer

YMCA Ambassador Project

At last year’s WFYR gathering in Chiang Mai, it was unanimously accepted to adopt a worldwide fellowship program that reflected the fellowship and hospitality of WFYR members. The program was introduced as **YMCA Ambassadors** All those present indicated they would be willing to be available in their country.

The program aims to recruit Y retirees around the world that will be available for a short meeting with other Y retirees visiting for the first time in their part of the world. Bridges has already reported on an initial visit by an American couple visiting London that met Jim Lamb and received a personal tour of some YMCAs as well as special sites in the area.

Jim, like many Y retirees, went to special efforts for his WFYR friends, but the program only calls for a short meeting, perhaps a lunch, and some valuable tips on what to see and best ways to travel.

WFYR will be attempting to recruit Ambassadors at the YMCA Alumni reunion scheduled in Louisville, KY this coming September. It is hoped that Y retirees will be willing to host travelers in their part of the states. Several retirees in the US have already indicated a willingness to serve as Ambassadors. The program fits well with the goals of YMCA alumni to offer opportunities for its members to **Connect, Travel, and Serve.**

If readers of Bridges are interested in becoming YMCA



Jim Lamb, with Ronnie and Ralph Christian at the American War Memorial in Cambridge

Ambassadors, please indicate your decision on the special line provided on the last page of this issue and return to Ken White. You may also indicate your decision by sending an Email directly to Ken White at

wfyrmembership@gmail.com .

Bridges will continue to keep you informed as the program grows and we look forward to providing accounts and photos of WFYR hospitality worldwide.

Secours Speciaux

The Need: Some YMCA colleagues retire with inadequate or no pension at all, especially in Africa, Latin America/Caribbean and South Asia. There are complex reasons for this. Care of the elderly falls on their adult children and extended family. As retirees age and health begins to fail, an emergency medical treatment is more than what the family can possibly afford. Being forced to trade off provision for basic needs of food and shelter for medical care only leads to more health complications and chronic disease.

Why Should We Care?: We never say you should. What we discover more often is that colleagues are simply not aware of the need and the opportunity to support a program with a legacy that goes back more than 65 years. When the case is made of the need for emergency medical and end of life issues, YMCA colleagues around the world demonstrate how much they do in fact care and generously support Secours Speciaux through personal charitable giving.

The Program: Upon application and presentation of substantiated need to the Secours Speciaux Fund administered by the World Alliance of YMCAs in Geneva, Switzerland, an emergency medical assistance grant is approved for funds transmitted directly to the YMCA colleague’s family of care givers. The application is reviewed by the National YMCA General Secretary and associated region office for recommendation of approval.

The Fund: Annual campaigns to solicit charitable giving of generous individuals are conducted by national YMCA movements and retiree fellowships. Proceeds of campaigns are transmitted to the Secours Speciaux Fund of the World Alliance of YMCAs in Geneva. During 2014 – 2018, these efforts raised 90,000 chf involving 11 donor nations. The goal for 2018-2022 is to raise 180,000 chf. Towards this effort, the USA is planning to increase its average 5,500 chf to 20,000 chf per year.



WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR *(continued from page 5)*

Global Retirement Initiative

There is a known global pension crisis documented by the World Bank, difficult perhaps for citizens of western nations, to totally comprehend. Even if a local YMCA in developing regions desired to implement a pension plan, long-term security of the fund is at risk. Extended families do the best they can to take care of their elderly, and they do so under very difficult and challenging circumstances. Taking care to cover routine daily sustenance is one thing, but as aging progresses, emergency medical and end of life issues may be more than they can handle even under the best of circumstances.

Our fellow colleagues in many regions around the world find themselves in these conditions. They served to advance the mission of the YMCA in local communities where they were needed the most. Where they were needed the most do not necessarily give them access to secure long-term financial security

in the form of government guaranteed pension plans we have come to know and depend on in our western societies.

The Global Retirement Initiative (GRI) was created to provide a secure pension program for YMCA directors who retired without pension, with a focus on Latin America and the Caribbean (LACA), South Asia and Africa.

Existing GRI Pilot agreements and Plans

LACA: Our first GRI pilot program was established in Latin America.

South Asia: We are currently working with the YMCA movement in Sri Lanka to help them establish a pilot agreement.

Africa: This will be our third GRI pilot. We need help from YMCAs who have an affinity and a program partnership, to help move this along.

IFYR

By Swaraj Sicar, Secretary Treasurer

JFYR

Japan Fellowship of YMCA Retirees

Best wishes for a successful annual meeting to our friends in Japan

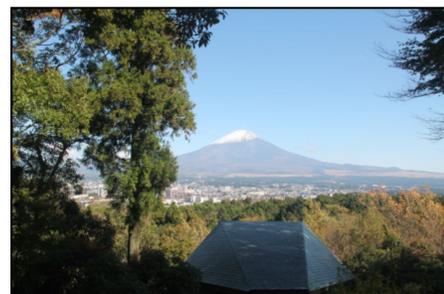
The next edition of *Bridges* will feature reports and photos from the JFYR General Assembly meeting in early September at the Tozanso, near beautiful Mt. Fuji. Y retirees from Japan will have an opportunity to meet with delegates to the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs prior to their own annual meeting. Special arrangements and fees were established for Y retirees from other countries. The meeting will be productive and enjoyable. Everyone will have a spectacular view of Mt. Fuji from the YMCA chapel of Tozanso. Soon readers of *Bridges* will enjoy photos from participating retirees.



Group photo taken at the 24th Annual India Fellowship of YMCA Retirees Conference

The 24th Annual India Fellowship of YMCA Retirees Conference was held in Salem Tamil Nadu South India from 11th to 13th July 2019.

Next year The IFYR will celebrate its Silver Jubilee. Preparation and planning have begun to celebrate this in a befitting manner. We will invite representatives from our neighboring countries' Retired YMCA Secretaries Associations, and WFYR members are welcome.



Mt. Fuji, Japan



WORLD FELLOWSHIP AFFILIATE NEWS

JOHN R. MOTT

"One of the most nobly useful men in the world."

President Woodrow Wilson

The YMCA Hall of Fame provides background on Mott's 27-year tenure with the YMCA. Mott led the YMCA's expansive movement in World War I and the campaigns raised \$250 million for YMCA programs supporting troops in the U.S. and overseas. Mott authored 16 books, visited over 83 nations, and received honorary degrees from 14 countries, including the distinguished Service Medal from the United States. He received six honorary degrees from universities around the world and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his life-long humanitarian efforts in 1946.

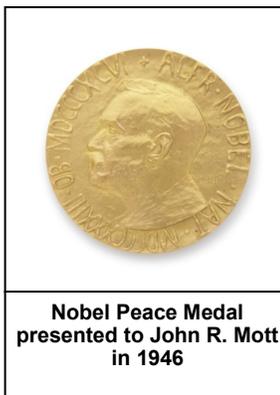


**John R. Mott
1865-1955**

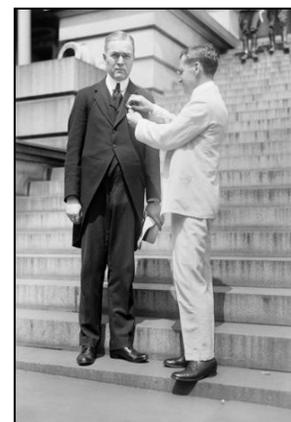
- 1912- Third World Tour
- 1917 – Appointed by Woodrow Wilson on Root Mission to Moscow and Mexican-American Joint Committee
- 1928 – International Missionary Conference at Jerusalem, Fourth World Tour ending in 1929
- 1945 – Received the Prince Carl Prize
- 1951 – Centennial International convention of YMCAs of the United States and Canada as renowned leader and honored statesman of the Young Mens Christian Association

Significant Dates in the Life and Career of a World Citizen:

- 1895 – Vadstena, Swede, a founder of the World's Student Christian Federation, General Secretary until 1920, Chairman until 1927, Honorary Chairman 1927 -1955. First World Tour
- 1901 – Second World Tour — Associate General Secretary for Foreign Work International Committee until 1915



**Nobel Peace Medal
presented to John R. Mott
in 1946**



**Receiving Nobel Peace
Prize in 1946**

Alice "Bonnie" Mairs

Inducted in: 2019

YMCA of Greater New York

During her 36-year career with the YMCA, Alice "Bonnie" Mairs advanced the national and global mission and profile of the Y. Her passion and commitment to international educational exchange were unwavering. Among her many accomplishments, Bonnie brought the world to camp. She expanded the European-based International Camp Counselor Program (ICCP) to include camps based throughout the United States, and opened the ICCP to include participation of counselors from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. In related efforts, she created ICCP Abroad, which sends young Americans to serve in overseas Y camps, and the Summer Work/Travel Program, which places international young adults in support positions in summer camps and YMCAs. She also expanded the YMCA presence at the United Nations by linking YMCA and U.N. leaders on issues of common interest. She ended her Y career in 2006 after serving for 15 years as the executive director of the International Branch YMCA for the YMCA of Greater New York. Bonnie served twice as the McBurney-Morse chair of the Y Alumni. Since retirement, Bonnie serves as chair of the Secours Speciaux, the World Alliance of YMCAs' emergency fund, which raises money and provide grants to international retirees facing personal crises, such as medical issues or insufficient retirement funds.



BRIDGES
September 2019



C/O Ken White
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USA

Printing and distribution support for BRIDGES is provided by the YMCA of Greater Philadelphia
sending a message of "Brotherly Love" to YMCA retirees around the world.



BRIDGES IS FOR ALL WHO WISH TO RECEIVE IT

All who would like to receive BRIDGES will be able to, without a "subscription" fee. However many retirees from countries all around the world have sent a USD subscription remittance to support WFYR. Any who wish to make such a contribution may use this remittance form. Check should be made payable to: YMCA Alumni

I would be willing to become a YMCA Ambassador.*

TO: WFYR Communications Chair: Ken White, 46 Squirrel Road, Doylestown, PA 18901, USA. "I wish to provide support for WFYR at USD \$7 per year, or \$18 per three years. Extra contribution to WFYR \$ _____ I want to RECEIVE each issue of BRIDGES, but I am not able to help financially at this time. _____

(please PRINT clearly)

Send *Bridges* via my e-mail address _____

NAME: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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