

Editorial

This Centenary Year was meant to be a year full of celebrations and special events. In fact it has also become a very eventful year. Many of us are still energized by the wonderful memories of the 6/7 January Conference in Rome, the San Francisco Centenary Refresher, the Open Forum and AGM in Amsterdam in April. Unfortunately, we are also saddened by the sudden loss of our friend Mary Hayes. Such an unexpected tragedy came at a time of great changes and challenges for our association. Fortunately, Mary's leadership had prepared AMI to face this challenge of recharging and taking resolute control of the future.

As you know, Lynne Lawrence, director of training at the Maria Montessori Institute, London, has accepted to take on the responsibilities of General Secretary, with the additional support of Hilla Patell. She is working very closely with the secretariat in Amsterdam. You will find a brief introduction to Lynne on page 4.

There are many new exciting developments, as you will see from the articles and announcements in this issue - they present challenges and opportunities galore. The strategic planning process requested by our board last April is underway now and should be concluded by next April. We are confident that with the firm commitment of our constituents the new projects and initiatives will become successful.

I want to express my gratitude to all those who are and will be willing to contribute to this exciting development of our association.



André Roberfroid
President

100 Steps

'A 100 steps for Montessori' is a sponsored walk to raise awareness of Montessori during the Centenary year. If lots of children from around the world participate, perhaps their little footsteps will be able to walk the equivalent of all the way around the equator!

The walk can be done anytime during the Centenary year – anywhere you decide – on the way to school – in the park or even on the beach! Anyone can take part – even adults if they want to – the aim is just to get as many people as possible walking for Montessori.

You can sign up to take part by visiting the Centenary website: www.montessoricentenary.org.

To inspire you, read about some of the steps already taken.



This banner was designed by one of the parents at the Casa Montessori, Austin, Texas.

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More than 150,000 steps in... Pakistan

On March 27, Montessori schools were invited to take part in the 100 steps for Montessori. Children collected at the mausoleum of the founder of the nation, which has huge gardens. They walked from one gate to the other and then into the gardens holding placards saying 100 STEPS FOR MONTESSORI. Even though they were to walk 100 steps, they were so excited that they walked almost 500 steps. Sixteen Montessori Schools with over 300 children participated in the walk. Children were later given refreshments and Certificates of Achievement.

Pakistan Montessori Association

attend Montessori casas like ours. Casa is a small centre, 3 primary classes totalling 90 children. At the end of the trail, the 10 pots held a total of USD 139 – 13,900 steps. The proceeds will be sent to AMI for upcoming special projects. A small beginning, but good things grow and grow!

Providing opportunities such as this for parents and children plant the seeds for going out into the world, giving of ourselves, thinking of others, getting involved, spreading the word about the new child. Isn't that what Maria Montessori would have wanted us to do?

Charlene Trochta

Exactly 13,900 steps in... Austin

What fun. Go for a walk around 10 stations – 10 steps – 20 steps. At each station sits a small clay pot into which each child (and even some parents and siblings) can carefully count and drop in 10 pennies. Then, off to the next station 1 step / 2 steps / 3 steps and so on. By the 10th station, every child has counted and deposited 100 pennies. This describes a new walkathon held June 23 at Casa Montessori in Austin, Texas. A “bank” located to the side of the parent-designed banner allowed children to exchange USD 1 for 100 pennies; some returned to repeat the process several times. Familiar? Of course, they had done this with the golden beads many times.

A new tradition had begun during our Casa’s annual end-of-year picnic. The 100 steps idea was introduced at the AMI Open Forum in Amsterdam in April. Casa’s staff, parents and children quickly bought into the spirit of walking a 100 steps trail. Their 100 pennies would symbolically support children around the world who are not yet able to



Highlights AGM April 14, 2007

As in previous years, the characteristic meeting room of Amsterdam's Art Deco style Grootte Club building was filled to capacity when AMI members gathered for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Many had already participated actively in the Open Forum meetings organized in the few days prior. That opportunity for additional 'room for exchange and brainstorming' contributed to lively and fruitful discussions.

The chairs of the five AMI board committees reported briefly on the main activities and initiatives developed during 2006. You will find more in-depth background articles on many of the highlights elsewhere in this issue.

Scientific Pedagogy Committee (SPC)

Annette Haines described how the Pedagogical Committee (PC) had been absorbed into the SPC. Meetings of the traditional PC and SPC are now being held jointly. Annette explained how a research poll had been initiated, projected at Primary Trainers, relating to sensorial materials, and the age levels of children working with them. Other points of interest were: exploration of a draft core knowledge course (in conjunction with Human Resources), investigation into the possibility of creating a Montessori University qualification, and scientific research & publishing.

AMI had recently started a project to gradually build up a database that would include the names, diploma numbers and contact details for all AMI graduates.

The 0-6 course in Japan deserved a special mention: the integrated 0-3 and 3-6 was the first of its kind and the pilot project would be evaluated later in the year.

Human Resources

Lynne Lawrence reported that in order to improve relationships with the affiliates a questionnaire had been sent out, requesting basic information that will help provide a clearer picture of their various activities. The outcomes of this questionnaire will be assessed jointly with the Membership & Partnership Committee.

The committee had revitalized the advisory committee, now Advisory Council. The following people are available for consultation on special issues: Helen Brophy, Elizabeth Hall, Barry Hilson, John O'Halloran, Orcillia Oppenheimer, Hilla Patell, and Charlene Trochta.

The Training Group had explored new and additional ways to refine the Training of Trainers Programme, studying different formats in a bid to be able to accommodate and facilitate more trainees into the programme. At present 32 candidates were undergoing the programme, and when these come out of training, their numbers will help solidify the AMI trainers' base. Current applications also looked sound.

Communications

Alexander Henny reported on the many activities undertaken within the framework of the Centenary celebrations, with special attention to the launch of the year in Rome. Initiatives that would benefit affiliates included the development of a Centenary website, media guidelines, a uniform conference and PowerPoint package. Alexander especially thanked Megan Tyne and her team for all the extra Centenary work.

With the introduction of the bulletin, our journal *Communications* had been changed to provide a platform for scholarly articles solely, both from Montessori and non-Montessori fields. Preparations for future publications from the Maria Montessori Archives were ongoing and a number of titles were being planned.

Membership and Partnership

Steve Huffman informed the meeting of the development of a membership drive: "Let's Grow – A Campaign for Montessori Worldwide Child Advocacy."

The affiliates had been provided with a detailed list of questions to help them keep track of all the specific Centenary initiatives and projects, and had been asked to report back to AMI by the end of 2007.

AMI had signed up to the International Coalition for the UN Decade for Non-Violence and Peace for Children of the World. The UN and Unesco continue to be organizations where our partnerships are of significance.

Finances

To allow the other committees to budget for their activities and plan, realize and implement their objectives, the finance committee keeps a close watch on the viability of initiatives started. Furthermore, the Finance Committee looks at ways to improve fund-raising, etc. A full report on the association's accounts is included in the annual financial report prepared by Deloitte & Touche, and available on request from the secretariat.

Elections

The following members were reappointed for a new term of office: Silvia C. Dubovoy, Mary Hayes (†), Salma Imtiaz, Monte Kenison, Lynne Lawrence and Molly O'Shaughnessy. Christian Schjetnan was appointed to fill the vacancy left by Eduardo Cuevas, who had completed one term of office.

The vacancy on the board created with the death of Mary Hayes will be filled in March 2008.

By-Laws

A number of adjustments to the AMI by-laws were adopted by the AGM. If you wish to receive a copy of the newly updated by-laws, please contact: info@montessori-ami.org.



Open Forum

The eight draft goals formulated by the participants of the Open Forum were summarized and discussed. For full information on synopsis, action plans, etc. see the Open Forum article on page 5 and visit our website: www.montessori-ami.org/openforum, where you can find all the pertinent details.

100 Steps

This campaign was starting to take off and the AGM was encouraged to keep on promoting the “100 Steps for Montessori.”

Full Report

A full report on this meeting is available from the AMI Secretariat.

Please drop us a line at info@montessori-ami.org.

Next AGM

The next AGM will be held on Saturday March 29, 2008.

New Appointments

Lynne Lawrence General Secretary ‘ad interim’



Lynne Lawrence has taken on the responsibilities of AMI’s General Secretary since May. The board is extremely glad and grateful that she was prepared to do this on top of her ‘day-time’ job as director of training at the Maria Montessori Institute, London.

Lynne is working very closely with the AMI secretariat in Amsterdam, and together ongoing work is dealt with and new projects are being started and developed. Lynne brings a wealth of professional and international experience to the job, and is committed to the work and ideals of AMI.

She trained with Hilla Patell, in 1974 and has since worked in and run Montessori Children’s Houses for children aged 2.5-6 in England and promoted the establishment of an elementary school. Lynne also worked with Muriel Dwyer on the “Help the Children” project in Kenya between 1978 and 1985, and continues to liaise with the projects in both Kenya and Tanzania.

Since 1990 Lynne has been director of training of the 3-6 AMI Course at the Maria Montessori Training Organisation, now known as the Maria Montessori Institute.

She was a member of the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee set up by AMI, and of its successor the Organizational and Development Planning Committee. Until May 2007 she was chair of the Human Resources Committee of the AMI board, a position that owing to her new responsibilities is now filled by Judi Orion.

Lynne is married and has two sons, who both attended Montessori schools.

Meet new board member Christian Schjetnan

Christian Schjetnan (Mexico, 1943) is a certified public accountant by the National Autonomous University of Mexico and holds a management degree. Christian has many years of experience in business management, especially in the financial field during the last 23 years. He was a member of the board of directors of many Mexican companies and institutions, and of international companies doing business in Mexico.

His Montessori involvement goes back to 1972 when he became a board member of the AMI training centre in Mexico, with Cato Hanrath. In that year he also founded a Montessori school (toddlers, casa and elementary) in Mexico City, with his wife Teresa. He was president of the 23rd International Montessori Congress held in Cancun in 1999 and was also President of the twelve Mexican Montessori Congresses held in that country. At present, he is president of the board of the training centre in Mexico. He will bring his valuable financial and business expertise to the AMI board, in particular to the Membership and Partnership Committee.



Other changes...

Judi Orion, member of the Human Resources Committee, has now succeeded Lynne Lawrence as chair of that committee. A new co-opted member to HRC is Allyn Travis, AMI director of training of the training centre in Milwaukee and chair of AMI/USA.

Janet McDonell has been appointed coordinator/chair for the Training Group.

AMI Open Forum

During the period of the 2007 Annual General Meeting of the AMI in Amsterdam, an exciting and unprecedented event took place. At the initiative of the Human Resources Committee of the AMI board, the affiliated societies, training centres, Advisory Council members, material manufacturers, board members, schools, teachers, and parents were all invited to attend a three-day Open Forum. First the participants were updated on AMI's overall strategic plan and Centenary activities, and then they were asked to brainstorm the following five questions:

- 1 If there were no boundaries or restrictions, where would we want the Montessori movement to be in 10 years' time? What are our aspirations and dreams? What will the Montessori movement look like? What will its impact be?
- 2 What are the challenges and obstacles facing the Montessori movement?
- 3 What is AMI's role in leading the Montessori movement?
- 4 What capacity, services, capabilities and resources will we need to carry out our leadership role and achieve the goals we envisage?
- 5 How can we maximize the contribution of the various stakeholders and what steps can we take to harness the individual efforts of all those working for the Montessori movement?

Based on these discussions, the group worked on the two main tasks of the Forum: (1) to draft ten-year Goals; and (2) to develop an Action Plan. Eight draft Goals and preliminary Action Plans emerged from the meeting and were presented to the AGM.

We want to thank the participants of the Open Forum because these Goals and Action Plans will now become a part of the AMI strategic planning process and will enable the organization to move forward into the next century in an effective way, so as to Champion the Cause of All



Open Forum, Amsterdam

Children. A professional planning consultant will be engaged to facilitate the development of the Strategic Plan devised by the participants of the Open Forum and the members of the Organizational Development Planning Committee (ODPC). The final wording of the Association's strategic Goals and Actions will emerge from this process.

Open Forum participants had planned to hold a second Open Forum in Amsterdam, in November 2007. However, to allow adequate time for the above process, a series of Open Forum meetings will now be held around the world culminating in Open Forum II to be held in March 2008, which will coincide once again with the Annual General Meeting. Currently countries participating are China, India and the USA. To facilitate this process material from the Open Forums will be available and downloadable from AMI's website at the following address:

www.montessori-ami.org/openforum. We therefore encourage you to organize local Open Forums in your own communities and to give us feedback via the website. All input will become part of the strategic planning process and will be passed on to the professional consultant employed by the AMI. Open Forum II will then be able to focus on how we can all best work together to fulfil Montessori's mission, namely, 'to place all the children in our world at the centre of society and to assist them in becoming the transforming elements leading to a harmonious and peaceful humanity.' All our collaborative work will help 'organize and mobilize the Montessori movement to this end.'

➤ 100 Steps



100 Steps in London, UK

NEWS FROM THE TRAINING GROUP

3-6 Seminar Format

The Training of Trainers Programme is a challenging experience, providing participants with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Montessori ideas and principles and develop the skills to pass the knowledge gained to future generations of Montessori teachers.

At Primary level, AMI has introduced an innovative format to the Training of Trainers Programme – the Seminar Format. This format is divided into three phases during which the trainer-in-training attends five seminars, participates in two full AMI training courses and completes certain written assignments.

During Phases One and Two, the trainer-in-training attends the five seminars and follows the practical aspects of the Training Programme at an AMI training centre.

Phase Three involves independent work on the part of the trainer-in-training on research papers and assignments.

The seminars are being held in Amsterdam, Netherlands in February/March and October/November of 2008 and 2009, concluding with the fifth seminar in February/March 2010.

Are you an AMI Primary (3-6) diploma holder with five years teaching experience who would like to participate in this innovative training format? The AMI Training Group invites you to send your resume by e-mail to: info@montessori-ami.org. More detailed information on the outline of the Seminar Format, dates, etc. can be had on request to:

info@montessori-ami.org or by writing to Association Montessori Internationale, Koninginneweg 161, 1075 CN Amsterdam, Netherlands.

A limited number of places is available

Hildegard Solzbacher: Goodbye & Au Revoir

After a stint of thirty years on the Sponsoring Committee, Hildegard Solzbacher retired. Janet McDonell presented her with some gifts as a token of appreciation and spoke the following words: ‘Your thirty years of dedicated service is deeply appreciated. Your wisdom, gentle guidance and unflinching support have touched the lives of almost all AMI Trainers worldwide. Many have worked directly under your supervision in the Training of Trainers Programme. Those of us who had this wonderful opportunity gathered for a group photograph in Rome, as we joyfully celebrated the Montessori Centenary. We bound our personal words of gratitude to you in this book. I share a few of these words: “Thank you for being...gentle and genteel, courteous and courageous, ardent and adamant, loyal and loving.” “You are the trunk –we are the branches. The foliage will be the children.”

Over the years, you have assisted AMI in the development and on-going assessment of a programme that prepares trainers to pass on Maria Montessori’s ideas, so that children throughout the world might achieve their potential.

Certainly, hundreds of Montessorians wish you well and look forward to the delight of seeing you soon. Thank you, Hildegard.’

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Hildegard with the trainers she trained. From left to right: Marja-Leena Tyrvaiven, Ulla Wikefeldt, Hildegard, Lakshmi Krishnakumar, Rita Zener, Joen Bettman, Eduardo Cuevas, Janet McDonell, Barbro Stenlund, and Molly O’Shaughnessy.

Let's Grow

A campaign for Montessori worldwide child advocacy

Please join AMI members from around the world in celebrating the Centenary in a tangible way. Every AMI member is asked to recruit at least one new member in 2007. Consider a teacher, an assistant, a parent, a former student, an administrator, a board member or any other person interested in Montessori. The goal is to double our worldwide membership! This goal is achievable if each of us does our part.

We can each advocate for the mission and vision of AMI being a recognized worldwide movement whose mission is to promote and propagate Dr. Montessori's scientific pedagogy. The main purpose is to realize Dr. Montessori's ultimate aim: to place all children in our world at the centre of society and to assist them in becoming the transforming element leading to a harmonious and peaceful humanity. Please consult the Centenary website, www.montessoricentenary.org for more information



about our commitment to participate, to promote, to create and to reform in this celebratory year.

Joining is easy. Simply refer people to the website, montessori-ami.org, click on "Members" and follow the prompts. Alternatively, email the head office at info@montessori-ami.org or, in the USA, the branch office at ami-usa@montessori-ami.org.

Demonstrate your commitment to AMI. Celebrate the Centenary by recruiting at least one new member and helping them to complete the membership process. Each of us can do this! Thank you.

The Membership and Partnership Committee

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Globetrotting Trainers: Zarin Malva lectures in Argentina

Montessori interest in South America continues to grow and the grounds keep being fertilized: last year Rita Zener lectured in Peru (bulletin 1/2006); this year Argentina invited AMI director of training Zarin Malva. Zarin 'heads' the RTI Montessori Training Course in Mumbai, India. She gave a series of lectures in Buenos Aires. Here follows her brief report.

On June 7, I arrived in Buenos Aires, invited by Fundación Argentina Maria Montessori (FAMM) to celebrate with them the Montessori Centenary. FAMM is a foundation created by a group of professionals whose objectives could be summarized in two main points: to make an important contribution to Argentinian education by disseminating Maria Montessori's philosophy and pedagogy and to create a teacher training centre accredited by AMI.

During my visit I lectured at three prestigious universities: the first one was IAE, the Business School of Universidad Austral, Universidad Católica Argentina (UCA) and Universidad Austral. The lectures were centred on analyzing the potential of our children, the roots of self-discipline and responsibility, the role of both parents and teachers for the development of the child. The audience showed great interest and there were many questions and extended talks.

I also lectured to a group of around thirty enthusiastic catechists of the Good Shepherd who follow Montessori pedagogy and to a group run by FAMM who weekly meet to study Montessori theory in depth.



Photo courtesy of Alejandro Sioli

I should not forget to mention a well-attended conference (around 80 people) at Maria Santissima de la Luz Catholic church and the parents of two Montessori primary schools in this country: Olivos Montessori School and Jardín de Infantes Montessori de Lujan.

Having emphasized the importance of serious training along AMI standards, I encourage AMI Montessori trainers to help FAMM build their training centre as I truly believe there is great potential and conditions are ripe.

I would like to thank FAMM for their hospitality and well thought-out agenda that even included a singing party, time for a visit to the Delta and my trip to the Iguazu waterfalls. I look forward to seeing all my Argentinian friends in India at the next Montessori congress!

Montessori Parents

Introduction

Returning from the Centenary event in Switzerland, Lynne Lawrence reported, 'Whilst I was in Zurich I was able to speak to a significant proportion of the audience who were parents. They had questions and queries regarding Montessori that they were unsure about and I suggested that they write to the Bulletin, as we were trying to expand the section for parents. The response was amazing! Parents came up to me after the talk and shook my hand - thanking AMI for beginning to provide something for parents.'

This is our second issue of "Montessori Parents" – a section dedicated to you, the parent of a child in Montessori education. We want this section to be informative, supportive and an inspirational resource for you as a parent, but require your contributions to help us make this possible. Please don't hesitate to send your comments, questions and contributions to Charlotte Elliott via email: cmelliott@planet.nl.

Our first parent contribution is from Elizabeth Kretsch, an American mother living in the Netherlands. Elizabeth gives us a personal description of how a Montessori education affected her life and family.

Charlotte Elliott

What I love about Montessori

I am truly a Montessori parent with three daughters (aged 14, 14 and 11) who began their education in Montessori schools. Over the years, they attended four different Montessori schools, as we are an internationally mobile family. We still, today, focus our learning at home and in the world with a Montessori perspective. My daughters currently attend a mainstream international school in the Netherlands, but their education remains a part of our family life.

I chose Montessori for my daughters from the beginning. When placed on bed rest for my first pregnancy, I was free to read and research parenting, the baby years, toddlers, child-raising techniques, etc. I read anything to pass the endless hours of the day, waiting for the healthy arrival of our children! In that time, I fell in love with the Montessori ideas for guiding children through life; a learning exchange between child and parent with structure. I believed in a whole child approach to learning and loved the interaction with the world and environment that Montessori presented.

What I didn't know was how beneficial a Montessori education would be in shaping their individual identities. My eldest daughters are identical twins. From the start, the world viewed these blonde, curly-haired, identical children with fascination and curiosity. They were the centre of attention just by walking into the room. They were the twins. As parents, we tried to erase the twin

stereotypes about these two, creative individuals, but they were embraced as a unit by the world around them. When they began Montessori school, they started in a small classroom with ten children. Montessori offers a wonderful environment where the teachers emphasize the individual needs and learning paths for each child. One day, I remember my daughters telling me about "their" story during the group lesson. As it was winter, the teacher had discussed snowflakes with the class. Many snowflakes look alike but no two are the same. This was my daughters' story for many years. They were two unique snowflakes!

Montessori schools also emphasize learning when the child's interest in a subject is at its height. The environment allowed my daughters to be individuals in the classroom, learning and creating at their own pace when they wanted to explore a specific area. They were presented with different works at different times and pursued separate topics throughout their class time. This helped them to shape themselves as individuals and allowed them to be independent, self-confident learners. As identical twins, I think independent and separate were important to emphasize.

One of my favourite quotes from a Montessori school about the teacher/student relationship is, 'A teacher observes each child like a scientist and provides him with the appropriate lessons as he is ready.' What a beautiful way to guide the individual. As a result, my eldest daughters differ significantly in their tastes, interests and learning styles.

Recently, I attended a teacher/parent meeting at our current, non-Montessorian secondary school. This year, the twins shared a class together and after five months in the same classroom, their teacher asked me, 'How do you tell them apart?' He could only see them and their work as being identical.

The world continues to see them as twins, but I will always thank those Montessori teachers that helped them develop as individuals – not to mention, as unique snowflakes!

Elizabeth Kretsch

Question and Answer

Question:

What should my two-and-a-half year-old daughter be able to do by herself?

Answer:

A child's abilities at any age depend very much on the individual child, the adults caring for her and the environment that she is raised in. To better understand how these components interrelate, we will answer this question over the next few issues.

It is important to remember that every child develops her own capabilities in her own time. There is a great deal of variation in the age at which different children achieve the same skill and there is no set schedule that can be used as a "checklist". But there are developmental trends that can be helpful in guiding the adult's effort to ensure the healthy development of their child.

At 2.5 years, a child's vocabulary varies from 50-200 words; she can ask questions beginning with what or who, form short sentences, use the pronouns I, me, you and we and express her emotions. She enjoys picture books and having stories read to her, she can sing and chant favourite rhymes. As her strength and coordination grows, she can push, pull, run, kick, hop, jump with both feet off the ground and climb. She can use the toilet with minimal assistance and eat skilfully with a spoon and fork. A child of this age seeks meaningful activity and loves helping with real tasks in the family.

At this time, the child's cry of, 'Help me to do it by myself!' becomes unmistakable as the child tries to respond to her inner desire for more independence.

Many of the tantrums seen at this age are caused by the sheer frustration at being unable to develop this independence. In a Montessori environment, either at home or at school, emphasis is therefore placed on understanding the individual child's developmental needs and aiding her natural desire to gain independence.

With this kind of aid children are capable of many more activities than most people expect. By the age of 2.5 years, she could be washing, dressing and feeding herself, assisting in other daily household activities such as washing-up, food preparation, dusting, sweeping, or tidying-up¹. But this can only be accomplished by the child if the adult in charge of her understands her developmental needs and organizes the environment to suit these needs.

In the next issue of the Bulletin, we will take a closer look at the developmental needs of the child and how the adult can aid this development.

Charlotte Elliott

¹ Lillard, P. and L. Jessen, *Montessori from the Start – The Child at Home, from Birth to Age Three*, New York, Shocken Books, 2003 (ISBN 0-8052-1112-8)

STUDENT CORNER

Marit Ingrid Sivertsen is a student on the 3-6 summer course in San Diego. Below she shares some impressions of her first summer.

As I sat in class today, I looked around at all the wonderful people who were in that room from so many faraway places: Taiwan, Argentina, Mexico, Canada, Boston, New York, Arizona, Puerto Rico, Texas, Philadelphia, San Francisco, New Mexico, Los Angeles, and Vancouver and I thought how we have all grown to care for each other and watch out for each other. We have been working together now for five weeks (which doesn't seem very long), but these faces and kind words and gestures have impacted my life forever. Part of me doesn't want it to end and perhaps we all are on a journey where our paths will keep touching, crossing and meshing with one another. I feel it is the beginning of some dear new friendships and the stories I've already heard in deep conversations are touchstones to lasting connections that will grow deep in my heart and stay with me always. I also can't help but wonder how lovely it is that all of us, from so many different backgrounds, religions, cultures and countries, are here getting along

and all care and want the same – a better world and hope to become a real dream come true for all the future generations to fare better than we could have ever imagined! What a delight it has been to share this experience with all these kind souls! Perhaps, this is the first exercise, the first layer, the first base of an infinite dimension of love, grace and brilliance that will polish the human path – our humanity and our planet.

NEWS FROM THE TRAINING CENTRES

New! Birth to Six

The very first AMI Birth to Six course finished on 31 August 2007 with a lovely graduation ceremony in the historic Nara Hotel, Nara, Japan. Twenty students completed the course, held in Unazuki in the Toyama prefecture. A brand new diploma –a Birth to Six Diploma– was awarded to the graduates.



This course will be evaluated at the meeting of the AMI Scientific Pedagogy Committee in November. After a few changes are made a second course is being planned in 2010-2011, also in Japan. The course takes 18 months for completion. This includes all the materials of both sub-planes, plus observation and student teaching at both the 0-3 and the 3-6 levels.

The work level was heavy (like an elementary course); eleven albums were made by students; exams were like elementary course exams (3 days for the written exams, 3 hours for orals); however, the students were very appreciative of the opportunity to have both levels of training and to see the transition between the two.

Pakistan

The MTTCP successfully completed the 39th Teacher's Training Course. The external examiner was Rukmini Ramachandran from Chennai, India.



This course was a pilot project course, given to determine the advisability of combining the 0-3 and 3-6 levels of training as a training option. Just as the 6-12 level of training encompasses the entire second plane of development, so too the Birth to Six course encompasses the two sub-planes of the first plane of development. The transition between the two sub-planes was seen as a smooth one, moving from the infant community environment to that of the primary class.

There was a complete separation of environments during training to emphasize that the child under 2.5 needs her own environment and somewhere between 2.5 and 3 years the child has outgrown the infant community and is ready for the primary classroom. As presentations in practical life were given the students could easily move from environment to environment for the various materials. Other curriculum areas were presented in the particular environments.

Mountain View

Having to say goodbye to students inspires some to bouts of poetry. Debbie Kenison paid tribute to the 2007 students in delightful light verse from which we quote:

Ayhan, Jenny, Karla, Sharlene, Pasqua, Reena, Amy, Sofia, Ellie, Sonal, Sree, Betty, Wellington, Elizabeth, Tina, Paola, Ana and Mina

Today, as true AMI Montessorians, they graduate.

Ready to go out into the world, leaving [us] to commiserate.

> 100 Steps



Mexico

The Archives

The organization and description of the Montessori archives is ongoing; we are progressing steadily. Regularly we receive new material from sources nearby or far away. Something we are most grateful for and everything is most welcome indeed!

On this occasion, we would like to especially thank Dr Robert C. Petersen of Sydney. He sent us something unique: copies of the English transcript of the First International Training Course that Maria Montessori gave, in Rome, 1913. Although we had copies in our archives,

we found that this new set was more complete, and thus of great value to us. Thank you so much!

Dr Petersen has great interest in Montessori and has published an article on Montessori in Australia, which was published in *Communications* in 1973. At present it can be read online at: aaaa.net.au/history/1973.htm.

If ever you get an opportunity of 'clearing out your aunt's attic', and find Montessori papers, please think of AMI. We are endeavouring to build up as comprehensive an archive as possible, and every little snippet, photograph or note could be interesting.

Centenary Celebrations

Pakistan

Pakistan Montessori Association (PMA) started the centennial celebrations on January 7, 2007 with the unveiling of Maria Montessori's portrait at Jamshed Memorial Hall where the first PMA course was held in 1949. The ceremony was attended by Montessorians and guests.

A funfair at the Clifton Campus grounds has been planned for mid-November and participation and support from all Montessorians is expected, especially from the school owners.

Sri Lanka

The Good Shepherd Montessori Training Centre in Sri Lanka had their Commemorative Centenary Celebrations on 26/27 January. They started with a Thanksgiving Mass by the Apostolic Nuncio in Sri Lanka, His Excellency Archbishop Mario Zenari amidst a large gathering of Sisters, Montessorians and well wishers.

There was also an exhibition that the students had organized themselves. It was declared open by His Excellency Pio Mariani, the Italian Ambassador. There was a large crowd to see the exhibits, and the course assistants and the students explained the principles of the Montessori Method to the general public who visited the exhibition.

The "Children at Work" was another part of our Exhibition held at the St. Bridget's Montessori House of Children. This gave non-Montessorians an opportunity to see the difference between other pre-school and the Montessori Method applied to little Children.



Switzerland

On March 23 and 24 the French section of the Association Montessori (de Suisse) organized a conference in Geneva. Our Swiss 'correspondent' Elisabeth Houweling has prepared a detailed and comprehensive report, which can be read in full on the Centenary website: www.montessoricentenary.org. Below, to whet your appetite, we are reproducing some of the highlights.

André Roberfroid, AMI's president, passionately restated that more less wealthy children need to benefit from Montessori education, all over the world, since this was Maria Montessori's intention. 'A challenge is waiting for us.' At the same time he emphasized the importance of retaining excellent training standards and the need to do research work. Our challenge represents engagement, and an extraordinary ambition.

Philip O'Brien, General Director from UNICEF spoke about "Education, a lifeline for development." He explained that UNICEF's message is important, especially in the field of education all over the world.

Lynne Lawrence's talk centred on the obstacles we need to remove during child development, and how the adult must change his behaviour and have faith in the self-constructive powers of childhood.

Professor Jean-Philippe Assal talked about "Maria Montessori d'origine médicale: regard clinique d'un médecin." In his psychiatric work Professor Assal implemented Maria Montessori's principles and wanted to create ateliers for his patients in order to observe and not to judge them. In establishing this there had been resistance from the nursing staff, but he had discovered that the patients' problems were more pedagogical than medical.

Dr Silvana Montanaro from Rome spoke about "The extraordinary development of the human being from conception to 3 years of age." She stated that all children are different and each one requires attention. At any age Montessori education follows the children and encourages them "to do things by themselves."



➤ Centenary Celebrations

Luciano Mazzetti's main focus was on Maria Montessori's science. He voyaged from Plato to Pestalozzi, Rousseau, Anna Freud and Erikson. He shared his thoughts on the Montessori motto "Help me to do it by myself."

Patricia Spinelli from Paris talked about creativity in Montessori pedagogy: impression and expression. She discussed the book *Cheminevements Cohésion* and showed interesting slides of pictures, paintings and drawings done by children aged three till six. The children express themselves by means of drawing and music. This is part of "education for life." It develops the aesthetical side and the intelligence of the child.

Roger Durand spoke about Henry Dunant, who defended family and children's rights. Dunant fought for "the rights of the child" within the Red Cross. Likewise within the Green Cross he defended women and their families. He considered women as the centre of their families and society, and if the family is to thrive and do well, women need to be educated. This was in 1896, when women needed their husband's authorization in order to obtain an education.

There were presentations on fascinating educational projects, e.g., "Danse Habile" about talented and handicapped people that create a Montessori space. In 2008 a dance festival will be organized. We saw a film from Madras in which mentally retarded children were educated.



The children of the Montessori school of Vevey gave a delightful performance of the *Chorale des Enfants*.

Béatrice Missant was the final speaker and talked about her work in France, about implementing Montessori in the public school, both at the Casa and elementary levels. During these successful days it became clear that, ideally, we all need to apply the encouraging information we heard to our daily lives – in order to help the child in each and every way, all over the world.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETIES

Activity Reports

Most societies make their yearly activity reports available for distribution at the AGM, and we are again happy that so many did. Topics covered included news on activities, initiatives, the planning and organization of Centenary events, and much more.

If you would like to read up on what the various societies do, please go to www.montessori-ami.org and click the section societies, where the full versions of the activity reports can be read and/or downloaded.

AMI-Elementary Alumni Association

The recent EAA Summer Conference – held at a retreat centre overlooking the serene Inland Passage waterway and majestic mountains near Juneau, Alaska – was a resounding success with 45 members attending packed sessions on haiku, math, and glacial geology. Following day trips to Mendenhall and Sawyer's glaciers, visits to Juneau museums, a dance performance by local tribal children, a storytelling session with a tribe member, and sharing sessions among members, stones remembering Mary Hayes and Maria Montessori wound their way to the centre of a labyrinth on our final evening together.

Next summer's Annual Conference will be held at Camp Medomak near Washington, Maine, July 23-30, 2008, with Audrey Newton of Massachusetts as our onsite coordinator. Fibre arts (weaving, dyeing, etc.) and handwork will be included among other topics.

The 2008 AMI/EAA Refresher Course will be held in Atlanta, February 15-19, with Ann Dunne of Ireland as the elementary presenter. Her topic will cover Cosmic Education and the Great Lessons, focusing on parallel lessons in all subject areas.

EAA accepts members worldwide and from all AMI elementary training courses. Our Internet discussion group, EAA Talk, provides a forum for members and elementary trainers to give and receive mutual support. Visit our website at www.ami-eaa.org for more information.

Refreshers & Conferences 2007/2008

October 18-21

Minneapolis, MN

“The Montessori Revolution: One Hundred Years Back to the Future”

www.montessori-namta.org for more detailed information

October 26

Chiaravalle, Italy

Study Conference

“Maria Montessori. Design at the service of education”

International study conference honouring the Centenary of the first Children’s House in San Lorenzo, Rome.

Organization: Fondazione Chiaravalle Montessori

info@mariamontessori.it

www.mariamontessori.it

October 27

Karachi, Pakistan

A seminar, with in the periphery an exhibition of photographs, organized by the Montessori Teachers Training Centre, Karachi. This event is open to all. Especially parents and all those working with children are welcome.

mttc@cyber.net.pk

October 28-31

Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China

China Montessori Centenary Conference

Also see the back page of this issue

Registration and info: www.montessori-ami.org

November 9-11

Ottawa, Canada

The Canadian National Centenary Conference

The lectures and overall theme of this conference will celebrate this Centenary by looking ahead constructively to the next 100 years and how Montessorians can continue to champion the cause of all children.

Speakers include Kay Baker, Eduardo Cuevas, Sandra Giralto, Annette Haines, Alfie Kohn, Lynne Lawrence, André Roberfroid and Rita Schaefer Zener.

January 9-11, 2008

Nara, Japan

Conference: 101 years of Montessori

Venue: Public Hall situated in Nara Deer Park (the same venue as the 1991 International Montessori Congress)

www.mon101.com/en

January 31-February 3, 2008

Austin, TX

“Montessori and Special Needs”

www.montessori-namta.org for more detailed information

February 15-19, 2008

Atlanta, GA

The AMI-USA and AMI/EAA Joint Refresher Course.

A-I Mary Teresa Vidales: “Language as an Aid to Life: Joining the Multicultural World”

Primary-Joen Bettmann: “Passion and Pedagogy: Falling in Love Again”

Elementary-Ann Dunne: “Cosmic Education and the Acquisition of Culture”

Administrative and Assistants Workshops

www.montessori-ami.org

More information from:

www.ami/usa.org.

www.ami-eea.org

March 6-9, 2008

Portland, OR

“Psychological Roots of the Montessori Disciplines”

www.montessori-namta.org for more detailed information

PROCEEDINGS CENTENARY

CONFERENCE ROME 6/7 JANUARY

The proceedings of this conference are now available in English, and can be bought at the price of Euro 15. This excludes shipping costs. For orders and payment instructions, please contact info@montessori.it

REMEMBERING...

Mary Hayes

The family of Mary Hayes would like to thank sincerely all who telephoned, sent cards, letters, tributes, flowers and all those who came from far and wide to attend Mary's funeral.

A special mass was offered on September 29, in Dublin.

Commemorative bulletin

A special commemorative bulletin for Mary Hayes was issued in July. As this was only distributed in electronic form via email, we regret that not all our members may have received it. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact publications@montessori-ami.org.

Memorial contributions

In honour of Mary Hayes a special Fund has been created. Contributions will benefit the training college in Dublin – where Mary spent over twenty years, and where her heritage is still felt. AMI training was very dear to her heart, and by making a donation, however small, you can share her hope and vision. For procedures please contact: secretariat@montessori-ami.org or montessori@amiusa.org (for donations from USA only).

Cato Hanrath Proost (Nan)

Nan Hanrath is a name with a long tradition in Montessori, not only because she was born in the same year as the first Casa dei Bambini. Montessori-trained in the Netherlands, Nan moved to Mexico late in her professional life, starting a new and long career. In 1971 she opened the AMI Montessori training institute in Mexico City, and headed this centre until 1985. In her last years, Nan continued to encourage and help young parents as well as faithful Montessori teachers who kept in contact with her.

With the introduction of the Pedagogical Committee in 1972, Mario Montessori invited Nan Hanrath to become a member. She served on this committee until 1982. She was also a member of the AMI Executive Committee, from 1967 to 1979. Nan peacefully passed away 28 March 2007, in the Mexico she loved, at the age of 99.

The following memory is shared by her former student Olga Dantus

'A Teacher is not Formed but Transformed'.
Maria Montessori in *The Secret of Childhood*

Cato Hanrath, Nan to some of us, came to Mexico to "shake" the world of education and with it many of us too. I met her in 1971 when she was interviewing students for the first AMI Montessori course in Mexico. Many of us thought that Montessori was a method that would simply change our teaching in the classroom. The great surprise was that what we changed was our way of life, our way of looking at the child. We changed our relationship with the younger generations. Nan changed our vision of what education should be, the role of the school and of course the role of the adult as an educator.

During her wonderful group dynamics sessions, there was never an agenda or expected outcome; we always started with a long silence as if nobody knew what to talk about or where to start, several hours later we couldn't stop talking or quieting our minds that once again were moved. She stretched our thoughts around each word uttered.

We learned from her that even after 90 you could keep on transforming your being in the search for consciousness; she taught that just by being herself. She only stopped educating the day she died.

When she passed away, she said goodbye in her own way, in peace, everything arranged by her beforehand. In a true Montessori tradition she could reach the child within each one of us and follow it. Thank you Nan.

Maria Reed (1915-2007)

A local school administrator recently described Montessori programmes in Phoenix, Arizona as "Strong and Silent". How apt that this description also clearly fits the work and style of Arizona's Montessori pioneer Maria Reed who passed on recently at 92 after a valiant fifteen year struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

Maria Reed's pioneering efforts had incredible breadth and depth. She gave Arizona its first primary Montessori school, empowered and developed leaders for the many programmes and carried her mentor's message to the inner city. She also brought both AMI Montessori teacher training and Catechesis programmes to Arizona. With her husband Dr Wally Reed she endowed a private foundation to support deserving children, teachers and parents in their search for excellence in early childhood education. A gentle self-effacing woman, she was full of unobtrusive good deeds. She did not carry her missionary zeal on her sleeve and was unfailingly courteous and respectful of contrary views.

She will continue to be honoured and remembered with gratitude by generations yet to come.

Nimal Vaz
Montessori Education Center of Arizona

Remembering Arifa Saifee

Montessori in Pakistan has suffered a severe blow with the sad and sudden demise of Mrs Arifa Saifee, one of our faculty members, on 24 June 2007.

She did her primary training with Margaret Stephenson in Washington and established one of the very early Montessori Houses of Children in Karachi, Pakistan. She remained a profound influence of Montessori philosophy on children, her students and colleagues all her life.

She will be missed with great affection and regard by all who knew her.

Montessori Teachers Training Centre
Karachi, Pakistan

Promoting a Culture of Peace

...We no longer depend directly upon nature, but on all that man produces in different parts of the world and is put at the disposal of all through mutual exchange... All that we study today depends upon some individual discovery no matter how great or how small. New generations must feel the pride and privilege of belonging to humanity... The morsel of bread, the handful of rice, the dress, the house, the road, the means of transportation, everything was given to us by men... The alphabet, writing, mathematics, printing, and everything that forms the means of our culture are due to a series of efforts of individuals whose names in most cases are forgotten. It is to man, always to man that is due all that comes to enrich the mind and to facilitate life. From this education must arise the persuasion that mutual help among men is the most direct form of universal defense... Human society must reach a level of average welfare where the necessities of life can be satisfied for all people.¹

Promoting a culture of peace is key to Montessori education. Since 1907, families have discovered peaceful environments where children can develop harmoniously. Montessori dialogued unceasingly with those working for peace through education, trying to convince them to begin with the young child. AMI has renewed efforts to foster partnerships with the UN and international organizations that promote peace, education and development.

On May 31, 2007 the UN declared October 2 the Annual Day of Non-Violence. Over 110 countries supported the resolution. Some voices wonder why we need another UN day, as September 21 is already the Annual UN Peace Day. The daily news provides one clue. October 2 was chosen to honour Gandhi, who devoted his life to promote peace and justice through non-violent actions. Montessori held firmly that children's moral development grows through thought linked to action. This Centenary year is a special time to collaborate with other organizations in specific activities linking education and peace.

AMI recently joined the International Coalition for the UN Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). Numerous Nobel Peace Prize Awardees, including Desmond Tutu and Federico Mayor, are honorary members. It held two Peace Salons at the Museum of Science and Industry in June 2004 and 2006. (See AMI Bulletin 2/2006, p. 19)

The International Coalition is also organizing a major international campaign to promote a *Proposal for an International Declaration on Children's Right to Violence-Free Education and to Peace and Non-Violence Education*. After several years' work, a French text exists, with versions in English and Spanish. The *Proposal* will be presented at the 2008 Annual Unesco General Conference for a vote. It needs wide circulation to garner massive support, especially now. The international NGO community is sharing the message with its members and organizing outreach activities.

The Montessori Centenary Declaration now exists in 38 languages. The AMI Centenary "Call to Action" encouraged members to make suggestions for action. (www.montessoricentenary.org). AMI members are encouraged to support the *Proposal for an International Declaration on Children's Right to Violence-Free Education and to Peace and Non-Violence Education*.

Many additional versions, including indigenous languages, are needed. Members who translated the Montessori Centenary Declaration and others are welcome to help. If people can read the *Proposal* in their own language, the campaign's impact will be heightened before the October 2008 vote.

Montessorians can contribute significantly to this immense effort to help all children gain access to an education worthy of its name. We all know that creating a culture of peace will require hard work over many more decades. Peace, as Montessori wrote extensively in the 1930s, is not the absence of war and conflict. It is a non-violent way of living and working together for the common good. Promoting non-violence with people worldwide, even in countries torn by strife and conflict – and helping children work on these tasks – is a 'Great Work', one worthy of heightened efforts during the Montessori Centenary.

In April, Montessorians from Canada, France, Mexico, U.S. and U.K. agreed to support this effort. Others are also welcome. For *Proposal* & more information, see: <http://www.nvpdecade.org>. Contact: info@montessori-ami.org or vsbarres@aol.com.

Victoria Barres

1 Maria Montessori, "Man's place in the Cosmos: Cosmic Education", *Child, Society and the World*, p. 112-113, Clio Publications, Oxford, 1989 (Lecture, India, 1946)

Come to China in October

International Montessori Centenary Conference
Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, 28-30 October 2007

AMI is privileged to co-host this conference with the Zhejiang Provincial Government. The conference theme is drawn from a Confucian phrase 'The Adult and Child Grow Together.'

AMI speakers include: Eduardo Cuevas, Silvia C. Dubovoy, Cheryl Ferreira, Annette Haines, Shannon Helfrich, David Kahn, Monte Kenison, Amy Kirkham, Lynne Lawrence, Jean Miller, Molly O'Shaughnessy, Judi Orion, Mary Raudonis Loew and André Roberfroid. In addition Chinese university lecturers will address Montessori topics. An AMI Open Forum will also be held on 31 October 2007.

Nearly all AMI trainers and board members will be in China as part of the official delegation. Please join them to help support the development of AMI in China.

In addition, you will be able to enjoy Chinese hospitality, culture and the beautiful natural environments of one of China's top ten tourist destinations.

Registration and info: www.montessori-ami.org

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AMI Head Office

Koninginneweg 161
1075 CN Amsterdam
Netherlands
Tel: (31) (20) 679 89 32
Fax: (31) (20) 676 73 41
e-mail: info@montessori-ami.org
website: www.montessori-ami.org

AMI Branch Office

AMI-USA
410 Alexander Street
Rochester, NY 14607-1028, USA
Phone: (1) (585) 461-5920
Fax: (1) (585) 461-0075
E-mail: ami-usa@montessori-ami.org

AMI is an:

- NGO represented at the United Nations (since 1985)
- NGO in operational relations with UNESCO (since 1962)

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The AMI Bulletin contains information and articles written for and by our members.

The contents do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AMI.

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Editorial Board Emily Green, Takako Fukatsu, Virginia McHugh Goodwin, Alexander Henny, Lynne Lawrence, Lynn Teale & Megan Tyne. Parent Section: Charlotte Elliott

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