Acquired in 1997 as a records transfer from MWIA
Access: Unrestricted
The Medical Women’s International Association funded the processing of these papers.
INTRODUCTION

8.6 linear feet
approximately 68 hours of audio tape
1970-[1990-1996]

The Medical Women’s International Association (MWIA) is the oldest international medical association in the world. This collection of their records was donated in 1997 by the MWIA’s authoritative office in Cologne, Germany, as part of an ongoing transfer of records to The Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine. Previous transfers were made in 1986 and 1990, as accession #271.

The bulk of the materials cover the period 1992 – 1996, with many documents from the late 1980s and a few items from the 1970s. The collection includes correspondence, meeting agendas and minutes, membership information, reports and financial records, all documenting the daily business and activities of MWIA.

There are no restrictions on this collection.

Processed by M. Graham, August 2000
BACKGROUND

History

The Medical Women’s International Association (MWIA) is the oldest international medical association in the world. It was founded in October 1919 by a group of medical women recognizing the importance of cooperative efforts on matters of national and international health.

This idea grew from a dinner held in New York City on October 21, 1919 in honor of women physicians and surgeons returning from serving at the American Women’s Hospital #1 in France, where they had worked under the direction of the Reconstruction Committee of the Medical Women’s National Association. The dinner was an opportunity for the doctors to meet with other women physicians who were in New York attending the International Conference of Women Physicians sponsored by The Young Women’s Christian Association.

The delegates from the International Conference of Women Physicians were impressed by the achievements of the American women. It was immediately suggested that an International Organization be formed to facilitate an international exchange of ideas and unite their efforts in work for the benefit of mankind.

Following the dinner, a committee of twelve was elected and a provisional constitution was adopted. The aims of the Association were to create a link between international medical women, afford them means of communication with each other and offer opportunities to meet regularly to discuss questions relating to general health and well being. Dr. Esther P. Lovejoy, U.S.A. was elected as the first MWIA President. Three Vice-Presidents, a treasurer, a recording secretary, and a corresponding secretary were also elected. Woman doctors from 16 nations became the first members of MWIA.

While it was intended that MWIA be a federation of associations, in 1919 there existed only two national associations of medical women, the Medical Women’s Federation in Great Britain and the Medical Women’s National Association (later to become the American Women’s Medical Association) in the United States. Hence the MWIA was organized initially as a society of individuals with membership open to any woman qualified to practice in the place she lived and irrespective of race, religion or political opinion.

Eventually, MWIA membership required membership in a member’s national associations if one existed; individual membership was permitted only when a national association did not exist and MWIA encouraged individuals in those countries to organize and form an association.

In 1922 a Constitutive Assembly of the International Association met in Geneva. The Constitution and Regulations were discussed and adopted and a number of papers were presented. Over 80 medical women from 14 countries attended. It was the first of the meetings to then be offered every two to three years and to eventually be called “Congresses”.

The International Congresses were and continue to be a focal point of MWIA activities. The location of the scientific meeting rotates, giving attendees the opportunity to observe circumstances and conditions around the world. Ideas are exchanged through the presentation of papers and visits.
to local health care facilities. The General Assemblies decide upon administrative policy. Resolutions expressing the concerns of the members are submitted to the General Assembly for approval. Publications summarizing the meetings were first titled the Medical Women’s International Journal and later became Congress Reports.

By 1937 MWIA had 3,936 members representing national associations in 25 countries and numerous individual members. The 1937 meeting in Edinburgh was the last before WWII. During and after the war the American Women’s Hospital Branch of the American Women’s Medical Association supported emergency medical work during and after the war through the British Medical Women’s Federation, the French Medical Women’s Association and several other national associations affiliated with MWIA.

Post-war meetings showed the effect of the war. Only eleven countries were represented in London in 1946. Several pre-war officers had died and members in some countries had lost their lives because of the war. Membership reflected a greater number of young women than before the war.¹ At the first post-war Congress in 1947 in Amsterdam, the meetings and discussions focused on the effect of the war and the medical woman’s role in the reconstruction of the world. Attendees confirmed that as women physicians they must be qualified in their profession but also participate effectively in activities intent on social and moral betterment of society.

Membership in MWIA grew steadily. From close to 8000 members in 1953 the organization expanded to 11,000 members in 37 countries in 1976. Today, MWIA is a parent organization, whose 20,000 members represent 70 countries in all five continents.

**Organizational Structure**

The legal Head Office of the Association is in Geneva, Switzerland and the Association is incorporated under Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code. Membership dues, honorary service and membership donations support the activities of the Association. The Administrative Headquarters coordinates the activities of the Member National Associations and Individual Members. Initially, the headquarters moved to the location of each newly elected president. Eventually, permanent offices were established, first in Geneva, then Vienna and finally in Cologne.

Delegates of the membership elect an Executive Committee to facilitate the affairs of the Association between the meetings of the General Assembly. While the structure of the organization has fluctuated, the present Executive Committee positions are: President, Immediate Past President, President-elect, Treasurer, Secretary General and Vice Presidents (regional leaders). Executive Committee meetings are held annually, or as needed.

Standing and Ad Hoc Committees advise the Executive Committee on business, social and medical issues. They also provide ideas and stimulus for activities in the future, be it topics for discussion, future projects, or active participation with organizations sharing areas of common interest.

Since the early 1950s, MWIA has been involved with the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). Today the Association maintains official working relations with the World Health Organization (W.H.O.), Category II Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and is involved in the Immunization Programs of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). MWIA is represented in all three of the United Nation Centers, New York and Geneva by Permanent Representatives. As a founding member, the Association is actively involved with the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS).

Throughout its history, MWIA has offered various types of financial support to its members. Presently, the Association sponsors a Scholarship program for postgraduate education.

**Mission**

The aims and objectives of the Association were re-confirmed and newly stated in 1966 and remain the basis for the work of the Medical Women’s International Association:

1. To stimulate, encourage and promote entry of women into the medical and allied sciences throughout the world; search for ways to solve problems of medical women with small children
2. Provide opportunities for medical women to meet and discuss problems of mutual interest, particularly where they, as women and physicians, can make a unique contribution to the community.
3. Foster friendship and understanding among medical women throughout the world without regard to race, religion, or political views; affiliation is open to all medical women licensed to practice in their country.
4. Overcome any remaining discrimination between men and women physicians concerning remuneration and pursuit of their careers.
   A. Aid medical women, particularly in developing countries, to obtain fellowships or scholarships for study abroad, and grants for travel to attend scientific assemblies.
   B. To provide hospitality to medical women visitors from other countries and to provide them with information and advice concerning current programs of medical institutions.
   C. To afford medical women the opportunity to work on common problems together and gain the cooperation of medical women in matters of international health.
   D. To encourage medical women to form National Associations where none exist, and where the numbers warrant this.

The consistent theme in the work of the MWIA has been the status of women and conditions for women and children throughout the world – physically, mentally, socially and emotionally – with the understanding that all topics addressed be of international relevance. Issues raised and pursued included the role business and professional women were playing in improvement of conditions for the housewife; anemia in women; pathology and hygiene of housework; parent education and the medical practitioner; maternal morbidity; the adolescent; the “old woman”; AIDS, trafficking of women and children; female genital mutilation; preventive aspects of chronic disease; violence against women; the incidence of cancer in women and women’s health in a changing world.
In the past decade, MWIA has worked as an advocate for women and children’s health through representation at international meetings, by offering workshops at World Conferences, lobbying government officials and issuing written statements. Recent leadership sees these activities as evidence of MWIA’s potential to impact women’s perspectives at the policy level and that the power of MWIA is in collectively offering their expertise as physicians to those seeking it.

Historical material compiled from the Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine accessions #271, and #1997.X.8.

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2 Dr. Dorothy Ward, President’s Address, Report on the XXIII Congress, p.44 – 46. 1995
3 Dr. Florence Mangyu, email letter to Dr. Gunilla Kleivarda, November 22 1995
Leadership represented in the collection

The collection covers two distinct but not self-contained periods of leadership. The timing of this transfer of material is not connected to any specific MWIA event or timetable. The officer terms covered by the material are 1992 – 1995 and 1995 – 1998.

**Officers 1992 – 1995**

President: Dorothy Ward  
Immediate Past President: Il Ok Choo  
President-Elect: Florence W. Manguyu  
Treasurer: Lila Stein-Kroser  
Secretary General: Carolyn Motzel  
Vice Presidents:  
- Northern Europe: Catrin Williams, UK  
- Central Europe: Gertrud Zickgraf, Germany  
- Southern Europe: Elvira Galluzzi Camozzi  
- North America: Anne Barlow, USA  
- Latin America: Ingrid Slowing de Miro, Guatemala  
- Near East & Africa: Hanna-Reeve Sanders, South Africa  
- Central Asia: Sampong Raksasook, Thailand  
- Western Pacific: Fe Canlas Dizon, Philippines  
Procedure Advisor: Katherine Fussell, UK  
Committee Chairs:  
- Finance: Hanna-Reeve Sanders, South Africa  
- Ethics & Resolutions: Patricia Scrivenor, Australia  
- Scientific & Research: Riet Ansink Schipper, Netherlands

**Officers 1995 – 1998**

President: Florence Manguyu  
Immediate Past President: Dorothy Ward  
President-Elect: Lila Stein-Kroser  
Treasurer: Hanna-Reeve Sanders  
Secretary General: Carolyn Motzel  
Vice Presidents:  
- Northern Europe: Anna-Maija Seppäläinen, Finland  
- Central Europe: Gertrud Zickgraf, Germany  
- Southern Europe: Christine Pouliart, Belgium  
- North America: Jean Swenerton, Canada  
- Latin America: Rebeca Kuniyoshi, Peru  
- Near East & Africa: Mervat El Rafie, Egypt  
- Central Asia: Tulsi Basu, India  
- Western Pacific: Yoko Hashimoto, Japan  
Procedure Advisor: Catrin Williams, UK  
Committee Chairs:  
- Finance: Satty Gill Keswani, USA  
- Ethics & Resolutions: Afua A.J. Hesse, Ghana
Regions (as of June 2000)

Northern Europe
  Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom
Central Europe
  Austria, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Switzerland
Southern Europe
  Belgium, France, Israel, Italy
North America
  Canada, United States of America
Latin America
  Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru
Near East and Africa
  Benin, Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia
Central Asia
  India, Thailand
Western Pacific
  Australia, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Philippines, Taiwan ROC

Individual members in: Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Bulgaria, Burundi, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Estonia, Ethiopia, Guinea, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Tonga, Tunisia, Venezuela, Yugoslavia
RECORDS OF THE MWIA
SCOPE AND CONTENT

The MWIA 1997 Donation constitutes the records of the MWIA Secretariat spanning 1992 – 1996. The MWIA Secretariat is the Association Headquarters, the location from which the Secretary General and her administrative support coordinate and facilitate Association business. While the bulk of the records cover the period 1992 – 1996 many documents are from the late 1980s and a few items from the 1970s. The collection includes correspondence, meeting agendas and minutes, financial records, and audio recordings, all documenting the daily business and activities of MWIA and reflecting the Association leadership and membership.

It should be noted that this is a records transfer, a portion of the MWIA records, and that this collection is deeply rooted in Accession #271, the MWIA records from 1919 - 1990. There are gaps within the period covered because of files that are still in use by the Secretariat and there are materials that will be best understood in the context of Accession #271. Because of the international nature, many records are decentralized and not present in this collection but remaining with the officers creating them; for example, many financial records are not represented because they are housed with the papers of Lila S. Kroser, MWIA Treasurer for eight years.

The majority of the materials are in English, the official language of MWIA during this period. The occasional document in another language, most frequently German, is usually accompanied by a translation.

As an international organization, much of the business between meetings is discussed via correspondence, by mail, fax and more recently, electronic mail. Thus, correspondence files exist within almost every series and are the heart of the collection. Along with the business conducted via correspondence, many opinions, views and comments on concerns of MWIA members are expressed and the evolution of the organization documented. Business and views of the MWIA leadership are documented in Series I, Executive Committee, broken into sub-series defined by officer positions. The focus and directions of the Association are detailed in Presidents’ correspondence, with the agenda of the reigning President apparent. Only two years of Executive Committee minutes are present, 1994 and 1995.

The activities of the organization are documented in Series IV, Committees and Series VI, Congress Reports and Brochures. Perspectives on the issues of greatest concern are reflected in correspondence, issue papers, meeting agendas and meeting publications. These documents describe both international health issues and concerns of specific countries, providing a picture of the status of women and of women’s health in many different locales.

Formal communication takes the form of Officer Letters, Circular Letters and the occasional Newsletter. Officer letters are generated by the Secretariat and function as a conduit for information needed by all officers. Circular Letters were distributed to all members -- they are referred to in other letters but there are no files of them in the collection; either they are housed at the Secretariat and/or they were discontinued. Documentation of the Newsletter is confined to 1990 to 1992 and
again, was either discontinued or is still in Cologne. No actual copies of the Newsletter exist in this collection. There are versions of the Young Forum Newsletter in Series IV, Committees.

Congress documentation is intermittent; the Congress Brochures provide regional reports, summarize the Meetings and recapitulate the scientific papers. Each brochure lists the conference topic as well as general Association information. Resolution drafts and changes are made in the exchange of Officer Letters (Series I). Further files concerning Congress affairs, the choice of papers and speakers are presumably still at the MWIA Secretariat.

Financial records can be found in Series III, Financial and in Series IV, Finance Committee. Again, these records are sporadic. Budgets, some bank statements and some audits are included and there is ample documentation of the status of membership dues. Annual financial reports are included in the Executive Meeting minutes. Additional financial material covering this period is in Accession #271.

A sense of individual physicians in and from smaller, less developed countries is found in the sub-series individual member dues in Series V, Membership. Also in Series V, the involvement, activities, financial concerns and primary issues of National Organizations are detailed in the sub-series National Associations and National Association Dues.

Daily business is recorded in Series II, Tageskopien, or “Record of the Day” which contains copies of each day’s correspondence. While some of the documents are unique much of this materials is also followed elsewhere.

Series VII, Audiotapes, contains audio recordings of Executive Meetings, General Assemblies and Congresses.

Major issues addressed by MWIA during this period are: maternal and child wealth; female genital mutilation (FGM); trafficking and prostitution of children; new genetics; family planning; human rights and equality of rights for women; the Beijing World Conference on Women.
SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

SERIES I  EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee series is composed of minutes, agendas, correspondence, reports and statements documenting the business of the Association. There is a heavy emphasis on correspondence, due to the geographical distribution of the MWIA leadership. Series I is broken into nine sub-series consisting of the Executive Meeting, individual officer positions and Officer letters.

The sub-series Executive Meetings includes financials, budgets, summary materials, the evolution of decisions, reports on international relationships and national and regional reports.

The files of the President and President-elect cover a wide range of issues including leadership, structure and position of the organization and the relationship of MWIA with other organizations. Dorothy Ward’s material comments on WHO representation, her opinion that MWIA has gained respect and their image improved and includes information on evolution of the document “Planning a Congress”.

Florence Manguyu’s correspondence is quite substantive regarding the organization and international health issues and heavy on communication with and about African national associations. There is a single folder of staff and officer CVs. In general, Manguyu’s materials offer a good overview of the organization during this period.

The Past Presidents’ files primarily contain updates sent from the Secretariat to all past presidents. The more recent Past President files show a greater degree of activity and involvement. By their nature, files of the Immediate-Past President are the most active and similar in content to the President files.

The Treasurer sub-series documents the work of two Treasurers, Hannah-Reeve Sanders and Lila S. Kroser, with the bulk of the materials under Kroser. Reports and financials, although chronologically inconsistent, give an overview of the operating expenses, revenues and bookkeeping methods. Correspondence files contain extensive data about the financial management and concerns of the organization and include annual budgets, audit copies and expense tracking. These documents, again, are inconsistent chronologically. Dr. Sanders’ materials contain many handwritten notes and all the files cover the functioning of the organization in general, beyond the financial workings.

Note: Hannah-Reeve Sanders held several positions: Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair for the term 1995 – 1998; Vice President of the Near East and Africa Region from 1992 – 1995. Her correspondence can be found in the related files (sub-series Treasurer, Vice-President, Finance Committee).

Vice Presidents represent their region on the Executive Committee and are represent MWIA at various international meetings. The VP sub-series is composed of correspondence with the Secretariat, national representatives, and others; reports from NGO meetings, regional reports,
agendas for congresses, conferences, comments; and reports on issues related to the MWIA governance and issue and position papers.

Three International Representatives represent MWIA to NGOs and the World Health Organization (WHO). The correspondence, reports and statements of one International Representative, Vibeke Jorgenson, document opinions and points of view on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), STDs, MWIA’s relationship with WHO, reproductive health, new genetics, nutrition, violence, quality of care and the 1995 Beijing Conference. Dr. Jorgenson’s interest in women’s reproductive rights as a reflection on the status of women as a whole is shown in her extensive communication on FGM and involvement in projects in Sierra Leone and with Planned Parenthood South Africa. As Jorgenson was president of the Danish Women’s Medical Association her files also contain reports on the Nordic Forum.

SERIES 2 SECRETARIAT

The series has two sub-series, Tageskopien and Correspondence.

Tageskopien means “record of the day” and is just that: chronologically filed copies of all correspondence sent from the Secretariat, the MWIA office in Cologne, to MWIA officers, members and outside parties. The correspondence is primarily from Carolyn Moetzel, Secretary-General and Dagmar Waberczak, Executive Secretary. Much of this material will also be found elsewhere in the collection (i.e. under recipients).

The sub-series Correspondence contains miscellaneous materials received by and sent from the Secretariat including organization and membership information financial requests, questionnaires and meeting venue information. There are letters here describing circumstances in underdeveloped countries that will not be found elsewhere in the collection.

SERIES 3 FINANCIAL

This series is relatively small, composed of intermittent bank records and financial statements. The Banque Scandinave en Suisse records are fairly consistent. More financial records will be found in the files of the Finance Committee and the fullest and regular summaries are in the Executive Committee meeting minutes and in Congress Reports. It is probable that many of the financial records are in the papers of Lila S. Kroser, MWIA Treasurer from 1989 to 1995.

SERIES 4 COMMITTEES

This series is comprised of the records and correspondence of the three standing committees, Finance, Ethics and Resolutions and Scientific and Research, and of the Young Forum and the Newsletter.

Finance Committee files are sporadic records consisting of budgets, reports, expenses and statements from various years as well as guidelines for administering the Scholarship Loan. Greater continuity is seen in the correspondence files which include communication with committee members, with the MWIA membership regarding dues and membership requests for financial support. The concerns of
the committee chairwomen go beyond the financial to addressing the goals, leadership and structure of the Association in general.

The Ethics and Resolutions Committee is responsible for MWIA’s positions and policies on ethical concepts and practices and to receive all resolutions, constitutional or scientific (other than those concerning membership dues). Files include drafts, comments and final resolutions, reports and statements made by chairs and members of committee, and correspondence of the chairs. Correspondence is to and from the Secretariat, between other committee members and with regional and national representatives regarding their organization’s resolutions and the evolution of MWIA resolutions. Congress Reports list all resolutions passed that year. Reference is made on 27 June 1995 to a cross reference of MWIA resolutions from 1929-1992. Resolutions considered at the XXI Congress (1989) included: policy re organ transplant, communication skills, traditional practices (e.g. FGM), cancer in women and future Congress topics. The issues at the XXIII Congress (1995) included infant mortality, children’s nutrition, neglect and abuse, young persons’ rights, equality of women, malaria, TB, FGM, body search, human rights for women, gene therapy, genetic diagnosis, substance abuse education, physician/medical disclosure, individual and community health, gender difference in medical care, family planning and abortion, child prostitution, health education, pre-natal sex determination, anemia in pregnancy, physician retirement age and post-partum depression.

In the files of the Scientific and Research Committee correspondence, reports, minutes and proposals reflect the projects initiated by MWIA and the functioning of the Committee. Projects considered include funds for contraceptive supplies in St. Petersburg, a training for sexuality education in South Africa and a long-term project with Planned Parenthood South Africa. Many other issues, including Congress topics and speakers, are addressed and discussed in the correspondence of the Chairwomen, Riet Ansink Schipper and ‘Peju Olukoya. Dr. Ansink-Schipper’s correspondence is heavy with the affairs of the XXIII Congress.

The Young Forum organizes MWIA members under the age of 40 with the objective of encouraging their participation in and assimilation into MWIA. The files of the group are primarily comprised of correspondence between the Young Forum chairperson and the MWIA officers. A folder of the history and policies describe the relationship and role of the Young Forum within MWIA. The level of activity of the Young Forum appears to vary: the correspondence of chairperson Dr. Caspar (1995-1997) is the most active file; there are a few copies of a sporadically produced newsletter; and a few projects supported by the Young Forum are detailed.

The files of the MWIA Newsletter cover only the period 1990 to 1992 and contain correspondence pertaining to the production and content of the newsletter, which was produced irregularly. No copies of the newsletter were included in this records transfer.

SERIES 5 Membership

This series is divided into three sub-series: National Association Dues, National Associations and Individual Member Dues.

National Association Dues are the records of the dues owed and paid by the national associations. The files are organized by country within regions and include correspondence (between the
associations and the Secretariat and/or Treasurer Lila Kroser), dues summaries, receipts and copies of bank statements.

The files of the National Associations sub-series cover all correspondence between the National Associations. The level of documentation varies with each country but may include reports, resolutions, newsletters, position papers, membership lists, travel logistics, association difficulties and some financial records. The papers of the German Association, Deutscher Ärztinnenbund, are in German; all others are English.

The sub-series Individual Member Dues documents the dues owed and paid by those members from countries that do not have a national association. Files are alphabetical by individuals’ names and include membership application, often including CVs, correspondence, dues invoices and receipt for payment. Some of the files provide a picture of the circumstances women physicians work under in different parts of the world.

SERIES 6 Congress Reports and Brochures

Congresses are held every two to three years and include a Scientific program and the General Assembly, a membership meeting covering the business of the Association. The Reports and Brochures are published as a summary of the Congress and of MWIA activity.

SERIES 7 Audio Tapes

There are 158 audio tapes grouped into three sub-series: Executive Meetings and General Assemblies, Congresses and Miscellaneous. The tapes are direct recordings of the meetings and conferences, with one exception, a recording of the Hymn to Hygeia. Of the 158 tapes, 20 are ¼” reel-to-reel tapes and the rest are cassettes. While not all tapes have been listened to, a wide range of audio quality was found on those which were played, some having been recorded professionally and others not. Where tape speed is known it is noted on the container list and on the tape itself.

The minimal existing documentation is in Box #20, folder #15. Some tapes have notes on the cassette boxes. The best reference source for the tapes is the minutes and general documentation of the meetings and conferences; few of the minutes are in this collection although some will be found in the MWIA Accession #271. Within the MWIA 1997 Donation, the minutes that exist are summarized in Series #1, Administration, in the sub-series Executive Meetings and Officer Letters. Congress Reports are in Series #6 and some Congress documentation can be found in Series #4.