

REPORT OF ALL PAN AMERICAN ROUND TABLE
GOOD WILL TOUR OF SOUTH AMERICA

Made from October 26 to December 1st, 1955

Mrs. L. G. Waltrip, Director General

The long anticipated dream of the members of the Pan American Round Tables to make an official all Pan American Round Table Good Will Tour of South and Central America became a reality October 27, 1955, when 35 women from the United States set flight by PAA from Houston, Texas, to round the Southern Continent, visiting Port-au-Prince, Caracas, Rio, Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, Lima, Panama City, San Salvador, Guatemala City, and Mexico City. Not one knew what extravaganzas might be in store for her. It was indeed a fabulous and rewarding trip. It was fantastic in its conception and incredible in its realization.

We traveled in DC6's and DC7's, the President's Special from Caracas to Rio, the VARIG in Brazil, the Panagra from Buenos Aires to Panama, and then the PAA. This great Airline made the vast circuit of South America - some 15,000 miles - without a quiver. We did not experience the slightest shakeup on the whole trip. We encountered no storm, nor anything to disturb our exciting trip through the stratosphere over the clouds. It was a dream come true. We crossed the Equator, the Amazon, and the inimitable Andes, and spanned the Carribean and touched the Atlantic and the Pacific. The peaks of the Andes are topped only by the Himalayas. The Jungfrau and Mont Blanc are only foot hills in comparison to the majestic peaks of the snow capped Andes. Yet we flew over these peaks at a height of 25,000 ft., in a plane pressurized at 5,000 ft., as if we were held in the air by some invisible wand from Heaven. In reality, we were and all of us realized it.

To lay the foundation for your understanding and for your edification, I feel I should tell you the object or purpose of the Pan American Round Table Movement. It was founded in 1916 in San Antonio, Texas, by Mrs. Florence Terry Griswold. The purpose is to promote mutual knowledge, understanding, and friendship among the women of the Americas, and to further all movements leading to a higher civilization, especially those pertaining to the women and children of the Americas. This Movement is of Ambassadorial stature, and I say that with the humblest reservations. Through this Movement, I believe that the women who actually realize its significance and scope serve as a connecting link between the authorities and the people of the Americas. They serve to form Public Opinion, the greatest force in the world today.

Aside from holding the Fifth Biennial Convention in Porto Alegre, Brazil, the tour was made to visit the Round Tables in all the cities through which we passed where there were Round Tables. Out of the 17 cities where we stopped, there were 11 Round Tables. We visited in 11 countries of Central and South America and stopped in 17 cities on the tour.

After dropping down in New Orleans and Havana, the first adventure we were to encounter was Port-au-Prince, Haiti, or Ichi, as the Brazilians call it. We were lodged in the "El Rancho" Hotel, a tropical Paradise, but up the mountain far enough to insure comfortable temperature. The last morning I went out early to look at the garden, the swimming pool, the flowers, the fruit trees, exciting vistas of Petionville, for there we were. I thought to myself, we cannot find a more exotic place than this on the whole trip and I wanted an imprint of it on my memory. We did, however, find many more just as exciting as the rare and romantic adventures we were enjoying. Our Ambassador, Mr. Roy Tasco Davis, called on us and visited with us an hour. He gave us the history of Haiti from the French Occupation through Christopher on down. He invited us to tea at the Embassy the next day and we had a most enjoyable time. Missour Paul Eugene Magliore is President of Haiti. He was elected in 1950 and will serve until May 15, 1957.

In the election of January 9, 1955, women voted for the first time. If time permitted, I should like to tell you more about Haiti, such as: The language is French; the every day language, Creole; the religion, Catholic; the population 3,500,000, and the literature, poetry.

The view of the harbor from the Embassy was spectacular, as Haiti has one of the most beautiful harbors in the world.

From this exotic Isle, we flew to Caracas stopping off for 20 minutes in Curacao, an Isle in the Carribean. Caracas is the most modern and stimulating entrance or doorway to South America. Panels of exquisite masonry took one under mountains to a city of 700,000 inhabitants and magnificent structures. Hills and mountains are actually removed before one's very eyes, and homes, apartments, business houses and universities line the horizon. The University there is more fascinating and modern than Mexico City. The auditorium is built on the plan of the United Nations hall. They have a time piece patterned after an Hour Glass on the campus of the University.

The Tamanao Hotel is dramatic. Our room faced the garden and swimming pool. The Expressway led up to the Hotel for 12 or 15 miles as if we were going to run in the front door, lights on each side, six lanes, then curved around to a parking area behind the Hotel. Silencio is the name. They do not sound the Klaxon on the cars there.

On October 31st, our party held a service in the Pantheon, the burial place of Simon Bolivar, and placed a wreath on his tomb. I said something pertinent to the occasion and to him as a hero and the author of Pan Americanism in America when he called the Conference in 1826. It was a very solemn and dignified service. After looking through that magnificent Pantheon, which was as large as McFarlin Auditorium, with its sculpture and murals that are equal to any in the capitals of Europe, we were taken by Senora Alicia Lenalde de Baan Vandenburg, a descendant of Simon Bolivar, to his home and church. I have the book that was given as a souvenir to the 10th Pan American Conference members held in Caracas in April 1954. The book gives in story and picture all the important periods of Bolivar's life.

Mrs. Fletcher Warren, the Ambassador's wife, gave us a most sumptuous tea in the Embassy on Sunday afternoon. The table was laden with all kinds of delicacies, there was a wonderful program of singing and dancing, showing the native influence, and altogether a fine congenial time. You see, Mrs. Warren is from Yoakum, Texas, and the Ambassador is from Wolf City. The view at night from the portico of the Embassy is breathtaking. The trees take on the atmosphere of Christmas trees with the lights shining through them, and the Tamanao Hotel across the city on a hill of equal height looks as if the two edifices were back drops for the city's Theater. It was a veritable fairyland. While in Caracas we visited the American Embassy, the President's Palace, the Casa Natal of Simon Bolivar, the Pantheon, his burial place, the University, the Circulo Militar, the Country Club, a home and a tour of the city.

At 8:40 o'clock at night on Monday, 35 weary women (for we took up another in Caracas) boarded the luxurious PAA's President's Special for a 2800 mile night non-stop flight, the pilot said the longest non-stop flight in the world, for the International Airport of Rio de Janeiro. We made the trip in record time. We saw the Amazon, crossed the Equator, but did not see it, of course. However, for having accomplished that feat each received her certificate of Jupiter Rex. At around 11:00 o'clock we reached the City of Kings and were lodged in the famous Copacabana Palace Hotel with its gorgeous splendor of 27 years, located on the beach of that name. Sugar Loaf Mountain, rearing its precipitous head out of the sea was the first to greet us upon arrival. Later we took the cable car trip to the top and viewed the city and bay that lay before us. Another day we motored up the Tijuca Forest, climbing 2400 feet above sea level on narrow roads with hairpin curves, heavy with natural growth, to the statue of Christ, known as Christ of the Corcovado. The statue is very simple in construction. We will always remember the face lines. The view at night is majestic, with the lights all around the Christ. The City is a beautiful sight night or day. One does not have to climb to see beauty, as each trip to various parts has its own charm.

We visited a Naval School located on Baia de Guanabaca, the most perfect location for a school of its kind. We toured the large roomy building and the officers were untiring in their efforts for our pleasure. After a delicious buffet supper, we stood at the parade ground with its gorgeous scenic background to watch the evening ceremony of lowering the colors. They were on an erected ships mast. The young men were simply dressed in white shirts and trousers, no caps. The band played and the cadets sang both verses of the national anthem as the flag came slowly down. They folded it reverently and after the dismissal order marched away for their recreation hour.

We visited the President's Palace, but as he had been ill for some time he could not receive us. Andre Mesquita, Chief of Protocol of the Presidency, took his place, and Mrs. D'Arcy M. Cashin of Houston, Director of the U.S. P.A.R.T. Organization, presented Senor Mesquita a beautiful silk indoor American flag, explaining the significance of its colors, which he graciously accepted for the President, who was President Cafe at that time. (The next week Senor Ramos, cousin of the Director of the Round Table in Brazil, was made provisional President.)

The Palace includes the President's home, rooms of State, and executive offices. One could write a book on the furnishings: the painted ceilings, gorgeous mirrors, magnificent chandeliers, carved doors, bronze stairway and many many other lovely things of old regime splendor.

Senora Maria Ramos, Director of the Round Table of Rio, entertained us lavishly in her luxurious apartment on Copacabana Beach, the Woman's Club gave the group a gorgeous tea, and Mrs. James C. Dunn, the Ambassador's wife, entertained us with a very bountiful tea in the lovely Embassy. She was a very charming hostess. Besides laying a White Rose on the tomb of Princess Isabel, daughter of Dom Pedro II, who renounced the crown to work for the freedom of the slaves, we visited the President's Palace, the Guanabaca Palace which was once the residence of the Kings of Brazil and Princess Isabel; the Petropolis with its Quitandinha Hotel, decorated by Dorothy Draper of New York fame, and having a 20 foot bird cage, two swimming pools made

after the Roman style, theater, suite for the president, and Origin of the Samba and Terceopopolis nearby. This took a whole day and could have taken a week for thorough enjoyment. The last Emperor of Brazil was Dom Pedro II. We had dinner one evening in the home of Doctor Hildegarda Stoltz.

From Rio we dropped down to Sao Paulo for two days and nights, the Chicago of the South. The Fico-deResistance in Sao Paulo was the fabulous tea at the home of Senora Joaquin Estevo at her Hacienda. Her estate is on a 50 acre plot with swimming pool, guest house, gardens, servants, establishments and every thing to make it a very luxurious estate.

With this most pleasant taste in our mouths we left Sao Paulo for other unexplored fields. We arrived at the air port of our convention city at night fall on the 8th of November, 1955. Here the red carpet was really rolled out for us. We were met at the Air Port by a battallion: the Round Table of Porto Alegre, the American Consul, Charles C. Carson, newspaper photographers, the Prefect of the city with the Golden Key to place in our hands, and other distinguished civic authorities. I did not have time to take care of my luggage. The ceremony at the air port lasted about 30 minutes, welcoming us, taking pictures, presenting the key to the city, etc. I have neglected to mention the gorgeous flowers with which we were loaded at every port, and in Porto Alegre we had more than we could carry, and even a bunch of cotton roses. I brought two home to keep and show to my friends, the others I gave to the maid at the Umbu Hotel who was so very kind to us.

Before going to the Umbu Hotel I had to do the official visiting for the group. This is absolutely necessary in a Latin City before any public gathering or Convention can be held. Mrs. Chaves and Senora Acidalia Comozato, Director of the Table in Porto Alegre, and Senora Maria Ramos, Third Associate Director of the Alliance visited the Governor Ildo Meneghetti's office and residence, the President of the Legislative Assembly, the Mayor's Office, (only they call it the Prefect's Office), the Secretary of State, the House of Representatives, the Rector of the State University, the Pontifical Rector of the Catholic University which is the headquarters for the Round Table of Porto Alegre, Brazil. We inaugurated Hilda Goltz's Exposition of Ceramic. Hilda is a member of Maria Ramos' Table in Rio. Then we returned to the Umbu Hotel with blistered feet, having walked on those cobblestones for two or three hours, and needing a bath very much. I began making preparations for the Executive Board dinner and meeting afterwards. Luckily it was to be in the Hotel.

On November 8, 1955, at 7:30 o'clock, in one of the beautiful dining rooms of the Umbu Hotel, the Executive Board of the Alliance of Pan American Round Tables met at a dinner session. The Governor of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, Senor Ildo Meneghetti, honored the Board with the dinner. Greetings and welcome were extended by the Director General, and the theme of the Convention revealed, "Women Have a Place in the Cohesion of Ideals of the Americas".

The following morning at 10 o'clock on the 9th of November, the solemn opening of the Fifth Alliance Convention took place in the Great Hall of the School of Medicine of the State University. This was a very impressive occasion. The Colors were brought forth and placed to music. Table members from Texas, Rio, Porto Alegre, Lima, etc. served as escorts for the Color Bearers. This made a most imposing ceremony.

Senora Mario Ramos opened the Convention with the Theme, "The Blessings that America Offers its People". Then we were welcomed by a representative of the President, who was President Cafe Filhu at the time. By the end of the Convention, the second cousin of Maria Ramos was made Provisional President to serve until the inauguration in January.

Then we were welcomed by the Representative of the Governor of the State of Rio Grande do Sul. Dr. Pedro Tamen, who is a General in the army, represented the President, and Adail Morais represented the Governor Ildo Meneghetti of Rio Grande do Sul. He was his Secretary. Then the Prefect, who is our Mayor, welcomed us to the city.

I responded, eulogizing Brazil and the Round Table Movement and making a wish that Conventions like these would serve to strengthen our ties of friendship and create peaceful horizons for the Americas until all the world would have to say, "America is Indivisible, America is but One".

Then we read President Eisenhower's telegram to the President of the Republic of Brazil; Mrs. Eisenhower's message after the President's illness, the letter of Governor Shivers to the Representative of the Governor, and we presented the Certificate of a Distinguished Good Neighbor sent by our Good Neighbor Commission to the Governor. Mrs. Claude Westerfeld presented in a few well chosen words a Texas Flag to the Governor.

The Director General then introduced all officers of the Convention and distinguished guests among the group from the United States and the Latin delegates from Chile, Peru, San Salvador, Uruguay, Brazil and Mexico. It was a very imposing and impressive opening of the Fifth Convention of the Alliance of Pan American Round

Tables. The most rewarding compliment I received was given me by our visitor in Porto Alegre, Mr. Charles C. Carson, who told Mrs. Albert R. Davis, "Mrs. Waltrip is an asset to her country." This was a compliment to be coveted.

The morning session over, we went to the Commercial Palace for luncheon. This luncheon was given as a courtesy of the PAA. Every luncheon or banquet was sponsored by some club or civic institution of the city. This showed complete cooperation of the whole city.

Reports of all officers were given that afternoon. This will appear in the minutes. That night a Banquet in honor of the Convention was given by the Rotary Club. This was held in the Crystal Room of a private club, and the setting was luxurious. Imagine my surprise when I entered the Great Salon and found a newspaper with my picture on the front at every place setting. There must have been 300 or 400 there, or may be 500. I just happened to dress for the occasion. That was one difficulty with the language situation. We did not know at all times what really was or would be expected to us. When I got there I was very glad I had happened to dress correctly for the occasion. I had to respond in Spanish to an introduction over a public address system something like a lectern in a church some 20 feet away from where I was sitting. This was a great occasion for all of us, we met Dr. Betts of Little S.M.U. and other members of our group took part in presenting flags to the local Rotary Club.

Thursday, November 10th we met again at 9:30 in the School of Medicine and continued our reports. We let our Latin Tables report first and what time there was left the U.S. Tables consumed. We held session until 5:00 then went to the hotel and dressed for the Silver Tea at the Governor's Mansion and the evening. This was very gratifyingly colorful, picturesque, and delightful. The ladies of Porto Alegre were dressed most elegantly in large becoming hats, soft dresses and fine wraps. The way the ladies planned and carried out the program was a joy. There was almost too much for the time we had. We almost felt we were in the presence of royalty when we went to the Asociacion Leopoldina Juvenil and watched some beautiful girls in classic ballet as we were served hors d'oeuvres at tables along the dance floor. That night we finished the day by attending the San Pedro Theater for an exhibition featuring Turkish costumes and dances.

Friday was the closing day of the Convention. We had resolutions read and accepted, such as Montevideo's more moral and spiritual qualities in our work, Chile's desire to change their text books that deal with hatred for other American Countries, Peru's hope for Peace, and others which the Minutes will carry.

We presented Charters to 17 new Round Tables and gave them the charge of loyalty and understanding. At noon we were driven out to a park that had been recently dedicated to the Americas. We took part in the dedication of a tree planted for Brazil. We hope to have the Alliance of P.A.R.T. send a tree that will be representative of the whole United States and have it planted for our Round Tables here. Other countries will take part in this undertaking. Then we went out to a private club and enjoyed beef cooked a la Schish ka bob. We went back to the meeting and concluded the Convention with the election of officers.

The next morning we visited Little S.M.U. and finished up the little things of the Convention to find that Brazil had had a revolution! We had been so highly entertained that we were not ready for anything so serious. However, we breathed a sigh of relief when we found we could charter a plane for Montevideo, for you see all planes from the north had been grounded on account of the revolution. We were three hours late reaching Montevideo, a bustling city with clean streets and an appearance of progressiveness. That did not chill our reception, however. We were met at the air port with that same enthusiasm that had been felt in all the other Latin cities and with warmth and friendliness. The Round Table headed by Senora Maria Faget met us and conducted us to our Hotel Victoria Plaza only to let us be assigned rooms. We were then conducted to a very distinguished club for a program of music and dances. A noted musician played beautiful classical music and then the young people danced our folk dances for us. All were very cleverly done. After the program we had a feast of refreshments. We closed by singing "God Bless America."

While in Montevideo, we had an audience with the President, who in reality in one of nine Presidents, the one receiving the most votes serves as president of the group. Uruguay is probably the most democratic government in the world. We visited the Market, a Wine Cellar, a Gaucho Ranch, a Rose Garden out of this world, the slums which are not, but clean attractive cottages, with flowers in the gardens, the noted restaurants, the Chateaubriand for example, the beaches and the fur shops and August Wild's for beautiful stones.

Then our time of departure was at hand. Buenos Aires lay just across the La Platte River, which is called Plate River in English, as it looked so much like a plate to the explorers. I might digress to tell you that Rio de Janeiro means the River of January, as the explorers believed the bay they entered was a river and they named it after the month they discovered it. Buenos Aires means good air, and the air is very refreshing.

The air port in Buenos Aires is at least 30 miles from the city. The only word one could use for the roads in Argentina is magnificent. All their roads were equal to our Expressway, winding over, under, out and in, lined with beautiful trees, flowers, fruits, and grasses. We were lodged in the Grand Plaza Hotel which carried the air of an European Hotel, large, grand, beautifully decorated and sophisticated. This city is known as the Paris of the South. We toured the city, visited the President's Palace, the Casa Rosada. There we viewed the display of Juan and Evita Peron's belongings. This was a propaganda program to show the people that these dictators were not the shirtless one's. The placards read: "The price of these hats would have paid the hospital bill for 5,000 workers." It is a very hospitable city. We enjoyed a beautiful tea at the American Embassy with Ambassador and Mrs. Albert Nufer. Regretfully we left the beautiful Tigre Rio, the well cared for parks all through the city, the fabulous Opera House and many other interests too numerous to mention.

Our next adventure was the high flight of 3 hours over the Andes. This was looked forward to with much anticipation and speculation, as we had heard many things about this trip. The PANAGRA flew 25,000 feet high, but was pressurized for 5,000 feet, so we did not notice the height. It was a very dramatic crossing. The lovely plains of farm homes and ranches leading one on unsuspectingly until he comes directly and abruptly to the majestic Andes with their snow capped peaks holding rigidly to the tradition of the Cordilleras, as inimitable, unsurpassable, and matchless. All of us ran to the windows to see the "Christ of the Andes", if possible. We were told by the Captain how difficult it would be, for by comparison the statue is only a doll compared to the mountains. The Captain circled the location to give us a second chance. The atmosphere was perfect. I looked down once when our plane seemed to be in an inclosure of mountains and felt as if we were suspended in mid air by some invisible wand. Unfortunately, we did not get to see the statue.

After crossing the Andes, the down flight to Santiago de Chile was a precipitous anti climax except for the lakes and unusual stretch of the city below us. We stopped at the Carrera, a beautiful hotel. Our room faced the plaza where one could view each morning and evening the raising and lowering of the flag of Chile. Here the shoppers had a change of menu. In Caracas they bought gold, in Brazil semi-precious stones, in Argentina they reveled in leather, and in Chile they bought copper - beautiful copper trimmed in silver.

We visited Vina del Mar, the vineyard by the sea, with its elegant Casino, the home where the President spends the week ends, the Miramar Hotel overlooking the Pacific where we enjoyed lunch, the Beach that rivals the Riviera, and on the way back to the city through Valparaiso, a trip of over 100 miles through the country, where we saw the fields and country life. Here we saw a FUNDO or farm, a HUASO or cowboy, and the products in their fields. We enjoyed the Santiago Opera House with its charming National Ballet for 15 cents of our money, and the Piece de resistance in Chile was a luncheon in an exclusive girl's school with typical Chilean luncheon and dancing. Mrs. Ada E. F. Crew, an English woman, has established a wonderful school there something like Hockaday School, and invited us out for lunch. She was a friend of one of our members.

We were loathe to leave Chile but we must go on to Lima. This was Sunday, November 20th, and a perfect day for flight. We flew this spectacular height of 23 or 25,000 feet for at least half of the distance of Lima, Peru. Then we steered out over the Pacific. The sun was lowering in the west, the Pacific was peaceful, true to tradition, the plane was clean and beautifully appointed, the dinner was delightful, and I felt as if I were half way to Heaven. I looked out toward the West and the sun was picturesque, setting in the middle of the Pacific with just enough clouds to make it ethereal like. I saw the Pacific like moulten sapphire, with dented facets deep enough to make it sparkle brilliantly. I wished for everyone I knew to enjoy a view like that. Then we were in Lima.

In Lima, Round Table members met us, and gave us the program of entertainment and we were off to the Bolivar Hotel. The next day we toured San Marcos University, the oldest of the New World, the Pachacamac ruins, the Museum in connection with it, which is a store house of information about the ancient history of Peru. We gasped at the beauty of the President's Palace with its murals, the carved wood, the hand-tooled leather chairs, and the portraits and story of "Perri Chuli". We enjoyed a reception in the home of the Director, Senora Elisa Rossell, and a garden party and supper in the home of Senora Lercari. Both homes were beautifully appointed. We visited the Embassy, the Cultural Institute, our own government maintains this, and a Home of Expectant Mothers. No one could put in words the splendor of Lima.

Too soon it came time to leave Lima for Panama City, a very modern and industrial city intermingled with the old of Panama's first establishments. The inhabitants were much as they were in Haiti, colored but using the French language. It gave them a distinction to have this mixture. We saw the Canal, a ship go through the locks, Colon, and the forest or wilderness between Panama City and Colon. It takes 8 hours for a ship to pass the locks and costs \$5,000.00 more or less.

Thanksgiving found us in San Salvador and the noblest thing the San Salvadorians had done was to inaugurate Thanksgiving Day in their Country. Senora Amalia Escobar, one of our party, gave us a Thanksgiving dinner at the Country Club. We visited a school for girls and had a lovely party at the Embassy with Mr. and Mrs. Mann. The next day we visited a coffee plantation, Lake Llopango, a beautiful home for lunch, and we heard the story of the Rock and the Church. We loved San Salvador and were sorry to leave this delightful spot.

This Sunday found us in Chi-chi-castenango. One who has not seen Guatemala and the Guatemaltecos, Antigua, Lake Atitlan, have something rich in store for them. One could dwell long on this beautiful country, and its people.

Next we come to Mexico. The flight from Guatemala City to Mexico City is always dramatic and one of amazement, for one flies so close, it seems, to Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl that he could reach out his hand, and smooth their brows. Mexico is always interesting to visit. We spent one day going to Cuernavaca and Tasco. Silver is so abundant there that almost everything is made of it. We visited the American Embassy and had pictures made with Ambassador Francis White, and were briefed in our work there by Dr. Haden of the Embassy; enjoyed a Tea at the Cultural Institute, again the work of our Government. There was a luncheon in a private home in our honor and a tea, and always we did not have enough time to make preparations for the entertainment that was given us.

The flight home was thrilling for we had been away five weeks and that was a long time for some of us. We looked forward with joy at the privilege of putting our feet up and relaxing in our own Casas.

However, more and more can I see the necessity of our American States coming together on a single plane and firmer foundation for the good of all of us and the preservation of our Freedoms, our Liberties, our Democratic Institutions, and even our Civilization. We must promote Good Will in our Americas, not by buying it, but by living it, and expressing it through organizations like the Pan American Round Tables.

Thus ends the first and most incomparable all Pan American Round Table Good Will Tour of South and Central America.

Dixie E. Waltrip, (Mrs. L. G.)
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Director General - Alliance.