

HISTORY of CCR (Compiled, edited and submitted by R. Zigli)

The Center for Creative Retirement grew out of the College of Charleston's efforts to affiliate with the Elderhostel Institute. The first workshop to prepare an outline for that affiliation was conducted on April 30, 1990. This resulted in a visit by the director of the Elderhostel Institute Network in 1991 in an apparent meeting with the then director of the Office of Professional and Community Services of the College of Charleston. In October of 1992 an informational workshop at the University of South Carolina, Beaufort was conducted by the director of the Elderhostel Institute Network. By December of that year John McConnell had been designated as the contact person for the official application for affiliation. At this point, focus by John McConnell and others began to shift from the Elderhostel affiliation to a Creative Retirement Center.

(Source: Sharryn Clark)

On August 16, 1993, an organizational meeting for the formation of a Creative Retirement Center was held in North Charleston. John McConnell was the formation leader and was joined by 67 retired people from the Charleston Area. They came in response to an invitation from the College of Charleston. The agenda, was to discuss the formulation of plans for a local "Creative Retirement Center" based on the Elderhostel model of continuous learning for senior citizens. Of the 67 attending, 28 men and women volunteered to become a steering committee to address the dual tasks of creating programs and increasing membership. The first `class' met on October 1993. Attendance was low for that first meeting, but participation steadily improved for the 9 classes held in winter/spring semester. At the September 21, 1994 meeting "Rules and Procedures" were adopted and the group was officially named the "Center for Creative Retirement". By the first January meeting in 1995, officers and directors had been elected, committees organized, chairpersons named and membership defined. In 1995, Claire Robinson, was hired to direct the College's Elderhostel Programs, also allocated some of her time to work with the CCR programs.

(Sources: Claire Robinson and Sharryn Clark)

Since its inception, many individuals have volunteered to serve in a variety of ways. Some in elected positions, others on numerous committees, and still others performing a myriad of tasks all to keep CCR viable. The list of all those individuals is formidable and beyond the capability of this abbreviated history. The following individuals, however, who have served as its presidents could be constructed from the records and are listed below.

CCR Past Presidents

John W. McConnell Jr. (1922-2008) 1994-1996

Laura Singer (1916- 1997) 1996-1997

Jean Hayden (1926-2002) 1997-1999

Robert Stancik 1999-2000

Gail Schulz 2000-2002

Nora McMorrow 2002-2003

Emy Swan 2003-2005

Sharryn Clark 2005-2007

Ron Zigli 2007 -2008

Malcolm Hale 2008- 2010

Pat Gander 2010 - 2012

David Barnard 2012 -2014

Sandy Lopez 2014-2015

(sources: Various membership directories, Clare Robinson and Sharryn Clark)