



**Y's RETIRED OF THE UK**  
Affiliated to the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees



**JANUARY 2014**

[www.yretired.co.uk](http://www.yretired.co.uk)

**GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT**



**Dear colleagues and friends - greetings**

As you are aware the Y's Retired of the UK is a membership of YMCA Staff and in recent times Lay-Persons as well. We are mainly well past retirement age, recently retired or retired for health reasons. Some of us maintain good health others do not but 'we care for all' – not an assumption but an assurance! We are a unique group!

I wonder how many of us as we grow older in retirement when challenged on matters requiring an adequate answer respond by saying, "Let common sense prevail". More often than not I find myself responding in this manner to an ever increasing number of queries.

It is suggested by some that growing older justifies becoming 'angry old men and women!' partly because present day morals do not measure up to what we were taught in our youth! Our own personal upbringing through childhood, youth and adulthood appeared for us to be the only way. Unfortunately and quite wrongly I would suggest young people of today get the blame for many of the ills of society!

Parenting whether good or bad it can be argued must accept responsibility or is it a larger problem associated with 'society' in general? If so then we too have to accept some responsibility for we are the forerunners of present day 'society'!

Indirectly those of us privileged to be grandparents appreciate the opportunities given to influence a child's future. Not only is this the privilege of parents and grandparents but for the elderly or that less than charitable expression 'pensioners' too! We who have had a 'lifetime' of experiences have an important role in society for the adage is true we are 'not past it', common sense is an attitude derived from a long life!

One such person was our dear friend and colleague Roy Weaver. Together with three colleagues we attended Roy's funeral and learned from the church service and conversation with family and friends of Roy and Rosamund how a common sense attitude

throughout Roy's life contributed to the development of his personality and character.

Those who knew him best and travelled with him through his career in the YMCA remember with sadness but also with happiness the time spent in his company. This Christian gentleman is now at rest following a long illness.

The Appeal for raising funds to support retired colleagues who otherwise due to very low income would not be able to attend the World Fellowship of YMCA Retired Conference at Estes Park YMCA of the Rockies, Colorado USA in 2014 is in its final throes.

Thanks to colleagues who have already made donations to the fund. Those of you wishing to contribute please send donations, cheques made out to 'Y's Retired of the UK' please, to Jim Lamb, 31, David Bull Way, Milton, Cambridge CB24 6DP. The total including Scottish colleagues will be published in the next Newsletter.

I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year.

Jim Lamb

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## Member's correspondence

### YOUR CONTINUED PRAYERS PLEASE

Dear Colleagues - prayers are requested for dear friends and colleagues whose names I bring to your attention - those that are suffering with specific illnesses and ailments. Please also remember in your prayers, their families and carers - **Rodney Stone - Eddy Brady - Colin Mawby - Bob and Barbara Brunswick, Jim Lamb**

Hi David and greetings from sunny Suffolk - well it is at the moment anyway!

First how are you and Sue keeping good health I trust and not eating too many of them there pasties?

Congratulations on your elevation, I hope the string doesn't snap, to the position of Lay Canon. I see from the photo the smile is still the same if not the waist line!! Anne and I keep going though a combination of ME and diabetes causes problems. That's medical ME and not yours truly before any comments.

We have been making use of the motorhome this year with visits to Devon, the lakes, the Malvern's as well as a good three weeks in Belgium and Luxembourg. The Ardennes really are spectacular.

On a wet, very wet day, last week we visited the National Arboretum again. In conversation with a couple of their guides the YMCA came up. It transpires that whilst they have some basic information and knowledge about the Movement, they have absolutely no idea about the Movement's involvement during the wars, or about BBBF.

So the question is how do we get that information to them? I have a contact email address and am more than prepared to either share that or coordinate what info there is.

Do you have any ideas how to proceed? Well with that I will cease these inane ramblings and leave you to your Sunday lunch.

Best wishes Glen (SMITH)

**A LOVELY CONTRIBUTION FROM  
COLIN MAWBY  
(TAP ON THE LINK BELOW)**

**ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT!  
VERY FUNNY! AND CLEVER!**

Prepare to be amazed that - not only can they perform this act, but the fact They even thought of it.....

Check the guy's expression...  
Sound on..

<http://www.wimp.com/brassband/>

Dear David,

I respond to the item asking for stories of ones experience whilst working for the YMCA and I offer the piece below.

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There were many experiences during Walter's time at Wimbledon YM not least, of course, was the opening of the new building by the Queen Mother in 1974 and we stood in line including me making my courtesy! Paul, our son who was 17 at the time was a little surprised when she asked him for the latest Test Match score - fortunately he was able to tell her being a cricket fan himself!

But the event that stood out was in August 1981 when four stocking-masked men broke into our house and we awoke at 2 am to find them around our bed. They demanded the keys to the YM and our car and flashed a knife in front of Walter's face as back up. They then tied us up with Walter's ties (wrists and ankles) and three left and one remained with a hatchet handle. For what seemed like an age the three returned and the one who was guarding us left.

They had gone to the YM and tied up the Night Porter and opened the safe that mostly contained cheques, but there was, of course, some money too. One of the questions they had asked Walter after he told them there was not much money inside the safe was "what about the jewels from the Arabs" so he was able to enlighten them on that one!

They were never caught as far as we ever knew - but to this day it sends a shiver down my spine - brrr!!!

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Hope this will do David. As an anecdote - it was a very hot night and as they had cut our telephone wires Walter walked up the road in his pyjamas to the telephone booth which was probably 150 yards away - neither of us thought of waking up our neighbours to use their phone - must have been the shock! I have often wondered whether anyone saw him - I sat on the stairs waiting for him to return!

Fortunately the police came very quickly.

Kind regards,  
Jean Saunders

Dear David,

Congratulations on your installation as an Honorary Canon of Truro Cathedral. I was installed in 2009 as an Honorary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral which I felt to be a tremendous honour. I had the great privilege to be present at the enthronement of Justin Welby as Archbishop in March 2013 which was a wonderful occasion. I sometimes sit in the Cathedral overawed by God grace and blessings.

My love to you both  
Val (Wallace)

# GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Hi David

Congratulations on becoming a Non Residentiary Canon of Truro Cathedral - well deserved.  
Every blessing in your continuing work with the church.

Thank you once again for an excellent newsletter.  
The BBF reunion brought back boyhood memories of visits to BBF with my father, Arthur Naylor.  
The prayer list and other letters are tinged with sadness as I remember so many of the people in their prime.

Jimmy Remnant's letter reminded me of many happy times with him when he was an outstanding President and of our last meeting some time ago at a scout event. He provides an excellent role model for me now in my YMCA Scotland role.

John Knox does an excellent job of leading Y's Retired in Scotland and it is great to meet regularly with colleagues.

Estes Park in 1981 was my first World Council meeting and I am looking forward to meeting international friends there next year.

With best wishes to Sue  
God bless  
John (Naylor)

Dear Worthy Lay Canon Smith,  
"To God be the glory great things He has done"  
Now hear what some words from Anglican Hymn 355 says:  
"Lord, pour Thy spirit from on high.  
And Thine ordained servants bless;  
Graces and gifts to each supply.  
And clothe Thy priests with righteousness.

With these words, I am inspired to join your many friends and colleagues expressing their JOY of your admission and installation as Non-Residentiary Lay Canon of Truro Cathedral. Yes with God's help you will definitely fulfill your ecumenical duties very successfully.  
On this happy memorable occasion, I wish you and your family a very hearty **CONGRATULATION** with the Lord's blessings.  
With best regards  
Your brother in Christ,  
**Jonathan Quayefio-MEXICO**

**Dearest Jonathan - thank you so much for all this undeserving praise - may God be with you and all your family**



## EGON SLOPIANKA SADLY DIED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2013.

I spoke to Egon on the phone twice on Friday and he was still asking for the latest YMCA news, sharing ideas and enquiring about YMCA friends. Few words cannot adequately express just how much the whole movement owes to him. We must keep his family in our prayers, and not least his sister Marianne Kahn who has been such a support to him in recent weeks.

I shall always remember first meeting with Egon way back in the 1970's and the help he was to me personally in my early days as Secretary of the European Methodist Youth Council as he was to so many others over the years. It was always so special to meet with him and it was good to have such frequent phone conversations over the past few difficult months. His strong faith in God and his quiet Christian assurance that he was in God's hands was so clear as we talked together. He will be greatly missed by so many of us. As Reinhart puts it so well "Egon was a faithful witness of Jesus, and has gone ahead of us. Let us be thankful that we were able to have him as a friend and brother"  
Rev John (Knox)

Dear friends of Europe  
It is with deep feeling that I note the passing of our dear colleague and friend Egon. O wish on my own behalf and that of my friends and colleagues retired in Brazil and Latin America to reach his family our condolences and say that we regret the loss of this great friend. We lived with him many times in our professional lives and later in WFYR which deepened our friendship and then we learned to recognize more profoundly his friend and Christian character. The world of YMCA and WFYR lost a great Leader and God wins another friend in heaven.

Edgar G. Machado

Dear friends,  
The YMCA of Finland shares the message: Egon Slopianka has been a very meaningful person for us.  
He visited more than 10 times in Finland. He encouraged us to internationalize our YMCA work and gave a strong YMCA spirit to us. He had in Finland hundreds of friends and during the week of Prayer we shall have memory service for him in Helsinki.

I personally have had contact with Egon since the beginning of EAY/YE: we met first time in the first GA of EAY. Egon had pan-European ideas and mentioned in every EAY meeting, that the Europe is more than only the Western Europe! His idea fulfilled when eastern European YMCAs rejoined the YMCA - family.

Meaningful European leader has passed away. We miss him and know, that graceful God takes him and keeps him to the day, when we shall meet again.

In Helsinki 28.10.2013  
The YMCA of Finland  
Jaakko Koikkalainen, NGS  
and Egon's truly friends:  
Juha Vuorio, NP The YMCA of Finland  
Wille Riekkinen, Bishop, PNP The YMCA of Finland  
Jari Juhola, LGS Tampere YMCA  
Antti Koponen, LGS Turku YMCA  
Jenni Enqvist, NVP The YMCA of Finland  
Kari Mettovaara, LGS Oulu YMCA  
Heikki Metsälampi, Y's Men Vantaa  
Markku Vilkki, PLGS Lahti YMCA

I have been away in Germany for Egon's funeral. This was a most dignified and fitting event in a small village in north Germany. In attendance were members of the German and Dutch YMCA's, and also two former European secretaries who followed Egon - Doelf Weder, and Johan Eltvik, who is of course new Secretary General of the World Alliance of YMCA's.  
Best wishes - Terry ( Ratcliffe)

### ST IVES CORNWALL 2014

Dates:- 28 April - 2 May 2014

Prices (including Wednesday day trip)

£200.00 - with ensuite

£170.00 - non en-suite (all rooms include washbasin)

All rooms now have a TV.

Deposit of £40 per person by 12 October (cheques made out to Margaret Libby - please)

When booking please indicate the sort of room you would prefer. Treloyhan have kept the price virtually the same as last year but have reserved the superior rooms for their own use.

God bless - Margaret

Please Note :- our change of e-mail address which is now [dandml@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dandml@hotmail.co.uk)

**ROY WEAVER - DIED 27<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013  
CONDOLENCES FROM FRIENDS**



Thank you Dear David.

Mervyn would have loved to go to Roy's funeral but the distance is too daunting in an unfamiliar route at this time of year for him to drive.

We will be sending Rosamund our condolences. Mervyn attended both the funerals for Charlie and his brother and that was such an untimely sadness in both cases. We did have a happier reunion in a hotel in Llandudno where we visited with the Triangle holiday club one year and arranged to meet up.

At times like these we really rejoice in the Lord and his resurrection power don't we? And the dead in Christ shall rise!! With love to you both.

Beryl and Mervyn (Moorehead)

I am saddened by the news David but am unable to undertake the journey to Leigh-on-Sea I'm afraid.  
Yours sincerely Peter (Clarke)

Sad days- Roy was always very kind to me when I was under pressure of time and money with a young family working at Forest road.  
Neil (Sjoberg)

Dear David

I am so sorry to hear of Roy's passing, as I don't have any contact address would you please pass on my deepest sympathy and love to Rosamund and Andrew.

Thank you - love Margaret (Graham)

Dear David

I was really sorry to hear of Roy's passing. He was a great Christian and YMCA colleague.  
John (Naylor)

So sorry to hear of Roy's passing, I worked with Roy for about a year at Lincoln YMCA in 1978/79. He was a really lovely Christian man I learned a lot from him. It was my first job in Hostel work.

May he rest in Peace. Ray (Allen)

We share many happy memories of dear gentle Roy, not least the number of times he left part of his pyjamas behind at homes he stayed in and one memorable time in Slough when we came out of a meeting with a local magistrate and he declared his YMCA Car had been stolen. It had in fact been parked further down the street!  
Bedford YMCA was named Weaver House if I remember correctly! A gentle man of God!  
Graham (Clarke)

Sad day for all of us but thank you for messages.  
God Bless Ron (Ingamells)

Thank you David for sending us the sad news about Roy and Egon. I knew them both well and they will be sadly missed. Our dear Lord has called them to Him - may they rest in Peace.  
Col (Mawby)

Dear David,

Thank you for the information regarding Roy, am much saddened but pleased that I knew him well at one time in my career and retain the happiest of memories of a devoted Christian gentleman. His sincerity in all matters was a blessing to all.

Warm regards, Jim (Lamb)

I am one of many colleagues from the YMCA who would be able to speak today at this service and express appreciation regarding Roy and his outstanding contribution to communities in many areas of the country.

Before moving to the National Council in 1979 in London, Roy held key positions in local Associations - Hornsey, London Central, Rotherham, Cambridge, Cardiff and Lincoln. During this time in all of these appointments, he was very much involved with the local church communities as well as doing an excellent job at the respective locations.

When he eventually moved in 1999? To a position in General Services in the National Council I had the pleasure of working closely with him. I became very much aware of the important job he was doing as well as the efficient approach to his work.

His responsibilities included directing and servicing the running of a large residential buildings for well known organisations such as British Airways

In his last couple of years of his working life, he became an authority in enabling local YMCAs to become Housing Associations. This involved negotiations and dealings with complicated regulations of the Housing Corporation.

His success was outstanding, effective and appreciated. I know off at least one YMCA whose building is named after him and is called Weaver House.

Yes, during his working life he was responsible for creating many buildings of bricks and mortar, but his lasting monument will be the many young people that he helped through turbulent years of adolescence and helped them towards finding fulfilment and maturity in their lives.

Let me speak for a few moments of Roy as I and so many of his colleagues knew him

- He was a deeply committed Christian
- He was a pleasant colleague in so many ways
- He had a good sense of humour
- He had a steely quiet unassuming determination to get jobs done.
- He had a deep faith that never wavered even in times of suffering and family bereavements.
- He had a deep commitment and love for what the YMCA stood for based on the Christian Faith.

Today we mourn his passing but above all we are here to celebrate his successful life and devotion, love and caring.

He was, in my opinion, an unsung hero in the YMCA movement.  
Sam (Johnston)

**Dear colleagues,**

**Please be advised that Mrs Ruth Hammond sadly died on 13/11/2013, formerly CEO of Bury St Edmunds YMCA (now St Edmunds & Waveney YMCA) and is survived by her husband Ian Hammond.**

Dear David,

My grandfather, WGL Meakin, became involved with the YMCA immediately after the First World War and continued to work with them until his death in 1951. His wife was awarded the Order of the Red Triangle in 1944 and his son, Cyril Meakin, & son-in-law, Stan Griffiths, also devoted their life in the service of the YMCA. (My mother was born in a 'hut', probably one of the YMCA ones.)

I live in Harrogate so accordingly, when I saw the memorial in Harrogate Christ Church to Betty Stevenson and also purchased a book about Jessie Millar Wilson, my interest was well and truly piqued. I knew very little about the YMCA despite this close association with my family.

I was asked by the local WEA group if I could do a talk to some members so I did a great deal of research finding passport applications for women who were going to the Western Front and other ephemera.

I downloaded your two documents about "The forgotten Angels" and Betty Stevenson which were of great assistance in my research. The local history group at Harrogate Library are now going to do a special display about our local heroine, Betty Stevenson and I have recommended your excellent article and I will contact Ruth Gilgrist and the NYA for their permission to use that research.

Because of the forthcoming centenary of the Great War I have now been asked to speak for various groups about the YMCA Women's Auxiliary. I do, of course quote my sources and credit your research.

Kind regards,

Sue McGeever

### **Preparations underway for WW1 Centenary commemorations**

In 2014 people across the world will join together to mark the 100 year anniversary since the start of the First World War. As one of the leading organisations offering civilian support to troops and families back home, this is of particular relevance to YMCA.

To mark the efforts and sacrifices of YMCA workers and volunteers as well as enable young people across YMCA to engage in this national event, we have established a brand new [Facebook page](#). The page will feature stories and photos from the YMCA archives as well as updates on any planned activities. Further plans will be shared over the coming months.

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## **Sir George Williams Medal**

The lifetime service of Jim Thomson to the YMCA was recognised with the presentation of the Sir George Williams medal at the YMCA Scotland Annual Business meeting in October 2013.

His work with the YMCA took Jim to many parts of the world, including serving as World Alliance Executive Secretary for Refugees from 1974 to 1980.

In 1980 Jim returned to his homeland of Scotland as National General Secretary and in 1985 he returned to the World Alliance in Geneva to work on a world fundraising campaign "One for the World".

Being presented with the Sir George Williams Medal was a well-deserved recognition by Scotland of his major national and international contribution to the work of the YMCA.

The presentation was made by Aileen Campbell, the Scottish Government Minister for Children and Young People.



*Jim Thomson is congratulated by John Naylor, President of YMCA Scotland and former National General Secretary of YMCA England, on receipt of the Sir George Williams Medal*

*Heartiest congratulations to you Jim. From all your fellow Y' Retired of UK colleagues on receiving this prestigious award*