



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



Greetings from your President

Dear Colleagues,
Communication is an important part of our lives. Not least is this the case with all members of the Y's Retired of the UK and thanks to David's attention to the circulation of the Newsletter, our main means of contact with colleagues at home, living overseas and members of the Association of Professional Secretaries.

Recently we have established links with the Regional and National Staff of the UK through which members may receive information relevant to their Region.

It is our duty to remember those of the Y's Retired who have died recently and here record with sadness the passing of Rod Cullum (late CEO London Central YMCA) at the early age of 67.

His service at St Michael and All Angels Church, Blackheath drew a full church, his brother-in-law, David Shepperson and daughter, Samantha spoke with 'feeling' – 'warts and all' of a man who inspired others through his direct leadership. Many were his attributes and here I direct you to the fine obituary within this Newsletter.

The 'Gathering' Re-union is well under way with some 15 participants registered well before the 'deadline' set of 5th April (written 22nd March!).

Should you have missed the 5th April 'deadline' do not hesitate to 'phone 01223 440228 or email j.lamb22@btinternet.com to secure a place. We would wish to have as many members and spouses/partners as possible present.

For some of you the dates 3pm 21st to 11am 24th September 2009 offered and secured at the excellent facilities in Woodbrook College, Selly Oak, Birmingham clashed with other commitments – sorry about this but to secure accommodation on such good terms had to be a priority.

The terms are £129 cheaper than the nearest other quote! Terms - £291 plus £8 meeting cost = £299 – deposit £75 with the application, balance to be paid by 1st August 2009.

I mentioned communication. Through the organisation of the Re-union I have had many comments from renewed contacts not least a 50 minute telephone conversation! To have this emphasised in September is now an occasion keenly anticipated!

MAY 2009

To all colleagues experiencing illness at this time 'prayerful thoughts' and together with those in good health and those new to the Y's Retired of the UK very warm and sincere good wishes.

Thank you for your continued support.

Jim

FAREWELL AND A BIG THANK YOU

To Dionne Ible who has been responsible for printing and sending out the Newsletters from Herts YMCA, whilst Kerrie Ephgrave has been on maternity leave. Congratulations to Kerrie on the birth of her baby girl and welcome back to the workplace.

David H Smith - Editor

THE NEWLY ELECTED PENSIONS REP



Louis Lewis JP, BSc, FRICS, MCIH.

I am delighted to be able to report that Louis Lewis was duly elected onto the YMCA Pensions Committee and will be representing all members participating in the Plan.

Louis has been CEO of Hornsey YMCA for 26 years and a beneficiary of pension fund for the last 10 years.

We wish him well as he fulfils his role alongside other pension committee members as they deliberate over the very difficult financial circumstances which continue to surround our economy. Our grateful thanks for Adrian Sharpe who was willing to have his name put forward.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Many Ys Retired in UK colleagues ask when their membership fee is due and how much it is and where it should be sent?

Well, the membership is due 1st April each year and I will remind folks through the newsletter.

The amount is a minimum of £5. Any extra is put towards Secours Speciaux who assist ex YMCA secretaries in developing countries who have no pensions.

It should be sent to the Secretary, Reg Wake at; 8 Chaffers Mead, Ashted, KT21 1NG – Tel: 01372 275402 Email: regwake@aol.com

**PRESIDENT : Jim Lamb T 01223 440228 E:j.lamb22@btinternet.com
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FROM HERE TO ETERNITY – by Brian Barratt



When I retired in 1992, I had already been diagnosed as a Class 2 Diabetic a High Blood Pressure sufferer at the Whittington Hospital in North London. In 1994, Anne and I moved to Snettisham in West Norfolk.

After having my right eye 'zapped' by a laser in a vain effort to heal a haemorrhage, I jollied on until 2002 when I suffered a stroke. "This was the end of the line" I thought.

My mobility was almost zero, and horror upon horror I couldn't take the dog for his daily hour long exploration on the beach. There was no treatment available so I resigned myself to a life of idleness and sitting about in a chair all day.

My diabetes kept me company and the appropriate medication was changed from pills to insulin twice a day. This didn't bother me as I had long suspected that I had started to rattle. The blood pressure was kept reasonably under control, although there were a few scares. The same applied to the diabetes (a later computer generated graph revealed results resembling the 'Alps').

In 2005, a friend tipped me off that too little exercise might be responsible for my malaise, and suggested I go to a local gym at Hunstanton four miles up the road. Having made an appointment to meet a 'fitness consultant' and the friend, who also took recreational exercise there, drove me to 'meet my fate' and introduced me. That day, life began to change for the better!

After obtaining the required letter of referral from my GP, I attended my first session at Oasis. This was merely an introduction to the equipment in the gym (which looked pretty formidable) and an assessment of my medical condition.

A couple of weekly hour long sessions later, the Fitness Consultant said that she wanted me in the swimming pool for ten week long intensive 'Water aerobics'. Although I protested that I couldn't swim, she had me walking the length of the pool and back and coping with the exercises, which were pretty much the same as the ones I later did in the Gym. Well, they actually expanded and exercised every muscle in my body.

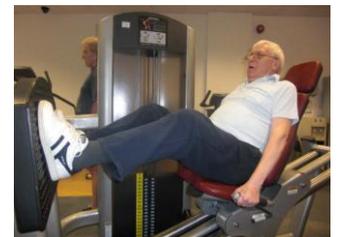
Nearly four years later I still do the exercises, but in a new gym, which replaced the original, and with the same 'fitness' consultant.

The results have been phenomenal. My diabetes graph shows an almost straight line and my blood pressure is stable. My mobility is still a problem, but then, short of a brain transplant, it always will be.

I shall continue to go to Oasis and would you believe, I actually enjoy the exercise. I didn't believe that exercise could do so much good and I urge anyone who needs to improve their life-style to visit their local Gym.

My usual fitness consultant informed me last Tuesday following my weekly work-out, that as she is now 31 she is leaving at the end of the month to begin a more ordered life with regular hours. Her replacement was on hand and "shadowed" me: that is escorting me to each machine to ensure that I completed all exercises.

She managed this despite having a broken leg (sustained whilst playing football for a local team) by dashing about the Gym wearing two plaster casts and balancing on shiny new crutches. Plucky girl!



BRITISH BOYS FOR BRITISH FARMS

As mentioned in the March 2009 Newsletter a book was written on BBBF by Barbara Vessey. She has a few copies of the book for sale at £5.00 which includes p&p.

Please write to:- **Barbara Vessey**
Westholme, Ffrydd Road,
Knighton, Powys LD7 1DE

tel: 01547 529400
barbaravessey@lineone.net

Y's Retired of the UK STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 1st January – 31st December 2008

INCOME	EXPENDITURE
Balance b/fwd. 2,883. 83	Secretarial Expenses
Member Subs. 496. 00	30.608 17. 00
Vol. Contribs. SS 95. 00	31.12.08 34. 27
Halifax A/c. Interest 83. 13	Treasurer Postage 6. 75
	Editor:
	Adobe software 103. 40
	Expenses 25. 00
	Committee Travel 125. 40
	WFYR Contribution 118. 00
	Secours Speciaux 195. 00
	Halifax I.Tax. 16. 68
	641. 50
	Bal. c/fwd. 2,916. 46
3,557. 96	3,557. 96

(Geoffrey Harris) Hon. Treasurer
 Thank you Mr Treasurer, for all you do for us - editor

British Boys for British Farms (BBBF).

One of our parishioners, David Bucham, who very recently retired and moved to Blandford, was trained through BBBF. Until his retirement he worked on farms in the Piddlehinton / Piddletrenhide villages, near Dorchester.

I would very much like to see a copy: "BBBF" by Barbara Vessey, and I know David would like to read it as well.

I will ask David about his time in BBBF and where he trained. He might write a short article, though he is very quiet and rather shy, I will ask him.

Who is our best contact on BBBF these days? Anything in the YMCA Archives at Birmingham University?

Stephen Milner
Charminster, Dorchester



Pictures kindly shared
by Peter Dawson

THE BOTTLE OF WINE



For all of us who are married, were married, wish you were married, or wish you weren't married. This is something to smile about the next time you see a bottle of wine:

Sally was driving home from one of her business trips in Northern Arizona when she saw an elderly Navajo woman walking on the side of the road.

As the trip was a long and quiet one, she stopped the car and asked the Navajo woman if she would like a ride.

With a silent nod of thanks, the woman got into the car.

Resuming the journey, Sally tried in vain to make a bit of small talk with the Navajo woman. The old woman just sat silently looking intently at everything she saw, studying every little detail, until she noticed a brown bag on the seat next to Sally.

"What's in the bag?" asked the old woman.

Sally looked down at the brown bag and said, "It's a bottle of wine. I got it for my husband."

The Navajo woman was silent for another moment or two.

Then speaking with the quiet wisdom of an elder, she said:

"Good trade....."

Sent in by Peter Brookes

Dear Editor,
My apologies for troubling you but having just read the article in Y's Retired newsletter (found by searching BBBF on the net), I couldn't let the opportunity pass by without me commenting.

In March 1962 I went to North Cadbury Court for eight weeks, before being "posted" to a farm near Bridgewater, Somerset. I visited this farm last summer - it is still there but greatly changed now.

I still have my copy of the New Testament presented to me on leaving North Cadbury Court, signed by the Asst. Warden, Mr Davies, seven members of staff from the farm I trained on and twenty nine of my fellow trainees - listed by dormitories.

I also have a couple of photos taken with me driving a tractor, feeding the pigs on the training farm I was attached to.

I have a copy of Barbara Vessey's book British Boys for British Farms which I picked up in a shop in South Wales a few years ago. It brought back fond memories of my short time at North Cadbury Court.

The pictures were taken circa April 1962 whilst I was attached to Manor Farm, Woolston (Near North Cadbury Court) which was farmed by a Mr. G. B. Amor. I stayed with the pig section virtually all my time there. I believe the farm was owned/governed by Showerings Holdings (Babysham drinks). I stayed in farming until 1968. I left to join the Police as a dog handler. I'm now retired.

As an aside, I had NEVER driven before the photo was taken, but was instructed to "keep going in circles" if I should get into any trouble, someone would catch up and take over. The photos were taken for some sort of publicity but I never found out where or why. Those were the days. If you think this will be of interest to your readers then feel free to share it with them.

**Best wishes
Peter Dawson**

Thanks for your contribution - Ed

Former Central YMCA Chief Executive and fitness pioneer Rodney Cullum sadly passed away on 26th February, aged 67, following a short illness.



Rodney, who headed up the world's founding YMCA from 1992 until 2004 is remembered fondly by friends and colleagues across the YMCA movement and wider fitness industry as a determined and passionate man.

He was a fierce ambassador for the crucial role physical education plays in society and of Central YMCA in particular.

An exceptional sportsman, as a young man Rodney rejected a career in professional football despite representing England as an under 18 international, choosing instead to follow his lifelong ambition of becoming a teacher. After his early career as a PE and history teacher, Rodney joined Central YMCA in 1973 as Physical Education Director at a pivotal time in the history of the organisation. In 1970 the original YMCA building on the Tottenham Court Road site in Central London had been pulled down, to be reopened in the Autumn of 1976; Rodney quickly set to work with his dedicated team to develop a radical and innovative fitness programme.

Alongside his second wife, Lesley Mowbray, who sadly died from breast cancer in 1997, Rodney developed a new training system and accompanying book based on the physiology of exercise and the principle of exercise to music.

Current Chief Executive, Rosi Prescott paid tribute to her predecessor, saying: "Rodney made a unique contribution not only to Central YMCA but to the worldwide movement itself. He was an exceptional character – with vision and immense integrity. He will be remembered as a pivotal figure in the annals of our history and his impact will continue to shape our future direction. I will miss his wisdom and compassion immensely."

Trustees recall that Rodney's early ideas seemed quite alien to them, but soon he was proven right as what became most special was not the amazing new Central YMCA building, but the revolutionary new programmes that were going on within.

Central YMCA Board Member David Bennison said: "Making people more fulfilled was Central YMCA's mission and this is absolutely what Rodney did. Right up to the moment of retirement Rodney was a key member of the core team at Central YMCA; indeed a great deal of what makes up the organisation we are today stems from a collective core of achievement, of which Rodney was truly at the centre and in many ways was the engine of."

During the early nineties Central YMCA faced a deep financial crisis and the threat of closure. Current Central YMCA trustee Tony Griffiths recalled how Rodney's integrity and commitment impressed him greatly. He said: "I was a Club member at the time and we set up a series of committees to help save the club from the very real prospect of closure; it was through this that I met Rodney who by that time was Chief Executive. He was a brilliant negotiator and a tough cookie, but very fair and always retained a twinkle in his eye and a sense of humour which was vital to the situation.

"He was an inspirational and very special man who was always willing to listen to our ideas and impressed me greatly with the way he was able to get the best out of people and the best results out of a situation."

Rodney also ensured that Central YMCA nurtured its emerging Training and Development ambitions, to become rapidly one of the UK's leading exercise instructor training and qualification organisations.

Robin Gargrave, Executive Director YMCA Fitness Industry Training, said: "In the early 80s when the practitioners and leaders of the embryonic fitness industry were hostile to the very notion of qualified fitness instructors, Rodney had the courage and foresight to invest in the development of the UK's first exercise to music qualification. It is his lasting legacy that makes it unthinkable today for an employer to use an unqualified fitness instructor."

Colleagues from the wider YMCA family and the fitness industry have also joined in sharing their memories and deep sorrow at the passing of such a larger than life character.

Ian Green, Acting National Secretary of YMCA England, added: "Being CEO of Central YMCA - the World's founding YMCA - brings with it a level of responsibility from which Rodney never shirked. He was an immensely influential figure within the YMCA movement both nationally and internationally and would always roll up his sleeves when appropriate. I recall we sat together on the Board of the Islington YMCA when it was a very small organisation and I am sure if it had not been for his tenacity in the face of local opposition the facility would have been closed down.

"On a personal level we have been very good friends for over 20 years; he was such a larger than life figure and anyone who met Rodney would never forget him – he will be sadly and greatly missed."

Chris Rouse, Chairman of the Board at Central YMCA, summed up the tributes, saying: "The YMCA and Central in particular, owe Rodney an enormous debt of gratitude, not just for our very survival, but for the fantastic team he recruited, which still remains the core of our senior team.

Our thoughts are with his family, of whom he was immensely proud; we are fortunate and grateful for having shared in his life."