



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



SEASONS GREETINGS FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM



**Merry Christmas and
 Happy New Year
 from the President**

JANUARY 2009



Dear Colleagues,

Christmas and New Year greetings! The timeless message foretold by the Prophets and described by the Gospel writers prepared us for the 'holy-day' with our family and friends not just for the joys of the present but bringing happy memories of the past with loved ones now passed on but well remembered, there will be both tears and laughter for such is our humanity. Yet another year is dawning for each one of us and by no means least the Y's Retired of the UK.

The impetus and encouragement enjoyed with the development of Y's Retired continues and has been most rewarding, indicative of the Christian 'ethos' enjoyed and continued through our individual YMCA experience. We all have past experiences worthy of sharing but there are also new experiences gained and being gained through our retirement which given the opportunity are just as valuable to share. I hear from time to time of the hobbies, pastimes and service rendered to the local community through skills developed throughout our working lives and ask our Editor David if he can find space for occasional input from members in future Newsletters. This would not detract from 'personal profiles' already in hand.

Occasionally we meet people who have reason to be thankful for their experience of the YMCA, one such is John Smith (well retired) who just after the second-world war experienced the YMCA British Boys for British Farms Scheme. Quite by coincidence we were talking together and when I shared working for the YMCA his eyes lit up and for some thirty minutes I listened with interest to 'his story', of how the 'scheme' had changed his life! We now have a friendship too!

Recently I bounced off Peter Brookes the 'idea' of a Y's Retired of the UK 'gathering' asking him to discreetly check with his close colleagues what they thought to such an event. I immediately received three enthusiastic calls of support and with the help of the committee the feasibility of planning such an event, say central to the UK, sometime in the future materialised! David Smith drew my attention to a 'get together' 30th March to 3rd April 2009 in St Ives to which an invitation has been extended by our colleagues in the South, see notice in this issue of the Newsletter. It might well be the forerunner to a larger event. To 'test the water' please complete the enclosed form and return as directed.

Ownership of the Y's Retired of the UK is in your hands. Articles for the Newsletter should be sent direct to the Editor, any questions to be raised with the committee send to our Executive Secretary Reg Wake.

Sincere warm regards to you all.

Jim



IMPORTANT MESSAGE ! - Y'S RETIRED INTER-COM -

WILL YOU HELP, PLEASE?

To enable the Inter-Com to operate effectively, all who have joined Y's Retired are asked to keep a 'weather eye' on past colleagues, their wellbeing or otherwise, and to pass any information gleaned to Executive Secretary, **Reg Wake**: telephone 01372 275402; writing - 8 Chaffers Mead, Ashted, KT21 1NG; email: regwake@aol.com

The effectiveness of the system depends heavily upon the immediacy of the information received by Reg and it is only by this means that members can be told in good time of what has/is happening to old friends.

ARE YOU REGISTERED?

As you may know by now, future contact through the Inter-Com will be made by telephone or email. Many who have joined Y's Retired are not on the Inter-Com and although you receive the Newsletter – by 'Snail' or 'E' mail - you do not receive any further contact. Your Committee invite – urge might be a better word - **all** Y's Retired friends to **register** so that they can learn when an old colleague passes on and, when

appropriate, can attend their funeral. It is possible that other matters will be communicated through the Inter-Com in future.

REGISTRATION IS SIMPLE:

Let Col Mawby have your **name** by phone - 0151 342 2937 in writing - 9 Farr Hall Drive, Wirral CH60 4SF Or email - col@mawby.net

THANK YOU!

**Ys RETIRED SOUTH WEST REUNION
 (ALL INVITED)**

An invitation to all Ys Retired Secretaries and friends to 'come on down' to

Treloyhan Manor Hotel, St Ives, Cornwall from Monday 30th March 09 to Friday 3rd April 09

Half Board - £160 per person.

To secure your place - contact Margaret Libby on – 01752 773040

**PRESIDENT : Jim Lamb T 01223 440228 E: j.lamb22@btinternet.com
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A Day in the life of a Street Pastor!



David Libby, Ray Onions, Hillary Robins, Margaret Libby, Mervyn and Beryl Moorehead, Mary Jarman, Joyce Finnemore, Sarah Wood and Sue Smith.

Yesterday, October 29th saw a group of the South West 'Y' retirees seated in the basement lounge of the Methodist Central Hall, Plymouth, where we were shown on a PowerPoint presentation the current work undertaken by the Street pastors, an energetic bunch ranging in age from young adult to feisty senior citizens.!

They are to be found patrolling the city streets in pairs and sometimes as a foursome, (if they need to call on backup support) during the hours, when most pubs and clubs are discharging the revellers on to the streets.

The presentation showed the work done in Aberdeen, but in Plymouth the work covers the boundaries of the inner city and further afield to the outskirts of Plymstock which is near the home of the speaker, the Reverend Stu Clarke from Hooe.

He is known affectionately as Stu from Hooe, and he brought a nice young lady youth trainee from Oregon. with him .He has a son who is training in youth work in Marjon, (the college of St Mark and St John here in Plymouth).

The Rev Stu has a 'day' job as Baptist Minister, but heads up the team of this enterprising pastoral work, done in the dead of night, when the rest of us are peacefully sleeping.

We thought him a dynamic speaker and an exceptional man, and his concern and love for young people can only be an extension of his deep love for the Lord. They are called, not to judge or to proselytise but to care, in practical ways.

In their provisions are to be found flip flop shoes and metallic wind cheating blankets, as under the influence of alcohol the young people are exposed to hypothermia, emerging inadequately clad from the warmth of close contact and the fog of the clubs into the bitter night air, stiletto heels are discarded and many young women would walk barefoot on city pavements litter strewn with the detritus of broken glass.

Whether they are propping up someone who is paralytic, or trying to sober up someone who has violently discharged the contents of his, or her stomach by administering sips of bottled water, or praying beneath a city bus shelter with some of the city derelicts awaiting the soup run, they must avert many potential tragedies lurking in the wings.

One young man, totally dysfunctional had to have his position adjusted so that he was propped up against the wall behind and not semi recumbent in the taxi lane, without means of visibility. His step father was telephoned and the pastors awaited until he arrived an hour later, to take him home to safety.

I remember years ago reading a book titled 'God in the Slums,' by a journalist, the late Hugh Redwood, but Stu from Hooe could write a book entitled 'God in the Streets', I am sure, as he shared a powerful encounter which thrilled him to the core, and from which he has never recovered, in that God met with them, just like that!.

Underneath the bus shelter near the police station in Charles Cross, he was asked by four homeless vagrants - would he pray? He agreed on one condition, that they all hold hands. Imagine that! Four adults holding hands in a circle, in a bus shelter in Plymouth in the early hours of the morning! He himself was unaware as he prayed, but the effect was electric according to the woman who was holding his hand.

Some of us who have encountered The Holy Spirit in this way know what she means. I don't recall him saying they ended up felled to the pavement, but if they had it would certainly have been better than the legless experience induced by drugs or alcohol.

It costs £300 to train up a Street Pastor, and they come from all walks of life. We know of a Street Pastor who is a fellow Gideon who is a Financial Advisor, and another who is a Chartered Surveyor, (in the Southport branch)

There are some intrepid ladies on the team, one person is blind, but teams up with his wife, who leads him around, and whilst they are out on the streets there is a prayer team back at base, as a valuable 'back up' source.

Indeed Stu was quick to point out that they wouldn't agree to go without this. The communication is constant, by mobile phone. They could not enter dark alleys without that knowledge that there was somebody in the background upholding them.

The police find them a valuable resource and in parts of cities where Street Pastors have been introduced and operate, the crime rate has been drastically cut.

Stu from Hooe had us enthralled by his talk and certainly not a few warm memories were rekindled of our own work with young people through service in the Young Men's Christian Association.

Beryl Moorhead

THE Y's FAMILY NEWS AND VIEWS

From Rev Ron Ingamells

Thanks for doing this Newsletter. Although my time with the Y was *comparatively* small it is good to keep in touch with so many old friends – and young ones like yourself!

Sam & Maureen (Johnston)

called in the other day and it was good to see them. If you ever travel North or South along the A1 please call!

I am fairly busy with services in local churches and still managing golf at Brocket Golf club.

From Bonnie Mairs

Thank you for your newsletter. You do a great job of publicizing Secours Speciaux. I enjoyed reading about some people I used to work with, **including Sam Larmour and John Naylor**. Sam and I organized exchanges of youth groups when he was in Scotland. John and I served together on the International Camping Roundtable, also dealing with exchanges of young people. That's how I got to **know Reg Wake (and Ron Harkness and Ron Mason and Bob Metcalf from Lakeside** - no longer with us). They were associated with camping/ international work. Best wishes to you. Bonnie.

From Joan Tranter (at first!!)

Eureka - have found NL by circuitous route - no paper clip on my screen and not much help, either. I haven't had time to read it all yet because it's **so lengthy**. My computer tells me that ink cartridge is low!

(and later!!)

Congratulations. Your November NL both interesting and informative. It is good to know that by embracing IT the Newsletter is reaching the people who most need help and support. I have fond memories of **Arthur Bennett** whose birthday is the same date as mine and with whom I shared a little joke about brown envelopes. His comments on modern day China reflected the views that most of us share - too powerful by far and growing. With all good wishes and love to you both.



GEORGE GRAHAM

George started his work for the Lord as a Baptist Ministry in Scotland followed by a period of time as a Church of Scotland minister.

George came into YMCA service first at Bonskeid House, Pitlochry. This was soon followed by his service with the **YMCA General Services Department**. From 1983 up to 1990 he was in charge of the Ministry of Defence hostel at Chislehurst, Kent.

After his retirement, he was frequently willing to help the **Central Region** Secretary who at that time was **David Smith**, filling gaps and giving invaluable service for quite long periods of time at such places as Nottingham, Derby, Northampton and Bedford. Unbeknown to many colleagues, during his employment at Chislehurst **George** found the time to serve as the Minister of the **United Reform Church at Lewisham**, and this he continued to do for a number of years up to and after his retirement.

Even during the early years of his illness, he travelled from Milton Keynes to Lewisham to conduct services there. The church appreciated his ministry so much that they arranged transport from Euston station on every occasion. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife **Margaret** who recently retired from YMCA service as **Housing Officer at Milton Keynes YMCA**, and to his family. Obituary by **from Roy Weaver and Editor, David**.

Just reading the latest Ys Retired newsletter (Although I have brewed a far weightier article) reading of **Roy Weaver** reminded me of a tale suitable for the Christmas newsletter.

I was working for "Youth at Work2" from Forest Road around 1980 under my favourite boss-still the best boss I ever had (that's **Reg** of course) when a change of policy meant I had to buy my own work car. Roy was selling his work car (a Daytona yellow mark III Cortina) on behalf of the YMCA. I paid £700 and gained one of the most comfortable and reliable cars I have ever had.

Being the proud father of two very young sons I had to remove the back seat to install a pair of car seats. Behind the rear seat I found a very expensive padded (still wrapped) red overall.

I assumed Roy had left it there and took it into work. "My goodness" said Roy "You flatter me thinking I would own an overall - I don't know one end of a screwdriver from another." Well then I said, "Who had the car before you?" "I collected it straight from Fords at Dagenham" said Roy!

So one has the lovely picture of the Dagenham worker having squirreled away a firm's overall sneaking out into a field of 50,000 Daytona yellow Cortina's trying to remember in which one he had hidden an overall!

The overall fitted perfectly (and still does - but seems to have shrunk a bit round the tummy) and serves me to this day. It has helped me on many jobs all of them of worthy nature but mainly while planting the 50,000 trees and digging slopes that make up the golf course!

(Have told many of Roy's famous words when I am wearing it).

Neil and Gaye Sjoberg

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Norman Owen Janet Hopkins
Andy Winter David Pendle



Joe Connelly and Emeritus Professor Ted Milburn

Scottish YMCA retirees meeting

The second meeting of YMCA retirees living in Scotland was hosted by YMCA Glasgow in their offices on Thursday 6 November. As at the first meeting held last May, there was a lot of reminiscing, laughter and catching up to do. Joining us that day was a retiree now living in Belfast, but who had worked for YMCA Scotland for several years. He hopes to be with us for future meetings.

We clashed with a Westminster by-election and two of our number were absent as they were electioneering that day. But more of the conversation, two days after the exciting USA Presidential election, was about the USA than about Westminster!

It was encouraging just before lunch to hear from the new **YMCA Glasgow Chief Executive, Joe Connelly**. He spoke to us about the wide variety of work in which they are involved but also emphasised the intention of becoming much more involved in work at local community level.

When the group was asked if they wanted to meet again it seemed that everyone assumed and agreed with enthusiasm that we should continue to meet a couple of times per year. It was decided that Leith Acorn Centre YMCA in Edinburgh should be the next venue in April 2009

John Knox 17.11.08

Attendees were:-

Gilbert Dickson, Andrew Haig, Ted Milburn, Keith Rennie, Bob McConkey from Ireland.

Apologies were from:

John Naylor, Jim Thomson, Moira Aitken, May Campbell, Jim Cooper, Bill Harte, Fiona Purdon.

ALEX CLOKE writes to Reg:- I have been spending time refurbishing St Martins church centre which had fallen into decline with congregations not getting on. I have just appointed a new Director to take the work forward. Last week I was preaching at Leatherhead Methodists and supporting various clergy by way of mentoring. I remember back in 1983 when **Rodney Stone** said it was a job I could do, now I am one. That's life and I'm glad I learnt so much from the Y that I can now pass on. God bless you dear friend - I have just written to **Margaret Graham** about dear George who worked for me during my time in General Services. So keep on in there and let's go on long enough to be a problem to our grandchildren!!!

LOST, BUT NOW FOUND Reg takes 'time out' to successfully 'hunt down' Trevor Durbridge who writes:-

..... a new housing development with a similar name called 'Poplars' sprung up not so far away, about seven years ago, and mail is often misdirected, even when the address is correct!

So **Reg** there could be a number of reasons why I have received but few of the missives that have, apparently, been sent over the years!

I am still active as I approach my 78th year, playing golf about three times per week, weather and wonky knees permitting. Sadly my golf handicap has increased to 12 and I don't see any prospect of it improving!

I still play in my indoor bowls club competitive side, where I have served as Company Secretary, Membership Secretary, Honorary Treasurer for the last fifteen years and member of the Council of Management for a similar period! I am also serving as club President from 2005 to 2009.

This year I am also serving as President of the Devon Indoor Bowls Association which takes me all over the County and the adjoining Counties of Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Avon, Somerset, Wiltshire and Dorset. I have indicated my wish to retire from all my sundry duties, as from December 2009 as I feel that it is time for others to step in.

I am and will probably remain the webmaster of our club website which can be located at www.torbaybowls.co.uk/ -and- www.torbaybowls.150m.com/

In addition I also have my own narrative poetry web site which I add to from time to time, as the fancy takes me! Please convey my best wishes to all those with whom I came into contact during my period of service with the YMCA – particularly **Bill Sargison, Des Wilcox, Paul Harper** and their respective wives.

As the pressure eases off, on retirement from my voluntary duties, I hope to be in more regular contact. Thank you personally for taking so much trouble to ascertain my state of health and whereabouts.

Yours sincerely, **Trevor Durbridge.**

POEM FOR ALL 'OLDER PEOPLE'

A row of bottles on my shelf
Caused me to analyse myself.
One yellow pill I have to pop
Goes to my heart so it won't stop.
A little white one that I take
Goes to my hands so they won't shake.
The blue ones that I use a lot
Tell me I'm happy when I'm not.

The purple pill goes to my brain
And tells me that I have no pain.
The capsules tell me not to wheeze
Or cough or choke or even sneeze.
The red one, very big and bright
Prevent my leg cramps in the night.

Such an array of brilliant pills
Helping to cure all kinds of ills.
But what I'd really like to know.....
Is what tells each one where to go!