

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



SEPTEMBER 2010

www.yretired.co.uk

Greetings from our President

**Dear colleagues
and friends of
the Y's Retired of
the UK.**



Greetings to you all whatever condition you find yourselves in as during the summer months you enjoy your lives to the full, each and every day!

I share with you a 'happening' which I hope will never be repeated but which prompts me to recognise how valuable 'life' is in this modern world.

As I write it is the day after my youngest daughter, her husband and my only grandson were involved in a terrible accident on the M6 while travelling on holiday. A lorry clipped their car causing it to spin three times and roll over three times coming to rest on the wheels!

Suffice it to say they came through this horrific experience, mum and dad – with only cuts and bruises and my dear grandson without a mark thanks to being secure in his child's chair!

I do not consider myself as an over-emotional man but admit to a sense of immense relief and yes joy when following an initial 'phone call from my daughter travelling in the ambulance to a subsequent call from the hospital gave me the 'good news' that they had come through the ordeal to the satisfaction of the medical profession! The car was a 'write off' – no other cars were involved.

How valuable each day is, how quietly assured is immortality, then through the media each and every day we learn of catastrophe national and otherwise evident in the flooding of Pakistan and the Cumbria tragedy.

The counterbalance is or can be the strength and depth of the human spirit, to many, faith in their God and for the Christian their understanding of the power of Jesus Christ in their life, for many the support of their loved ones is paramount. **FOOD FOR THOUGHT!**

How good it is to learn that the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees (WFYR) meeting in Hong Kong has proved such a success as reflected in our delegate David Smith's excellent Report – see this Newsletter.

David says there is much that we can share and discuss through the medium of the Newsletter and not least at the Y's Retired of the UK Reunion September 20th to 23rd 2010.

Dependent on vacancies I welcome any late registrations for the Reunion – just 'phone **01223 440228** or email j.lamb22@btinternet.com

An excellent programme is prepared including:-

- a key address from **Ian Green**, a visit to the **YMCA Archives** (a must for any person not just YMCA retirees!)
- an input from **Scottish colleagues**,
- a visit to the new **Birmingham (Erdington) YMCA**
- discussions with **CEOs of Birmingham, Sutton Coldfield, the Regional Secretary and Rev Tony Malcolm.**

There is also a session on the YMCA in times of war. The socialising is of course paramount!

Warm regards to you all

Jim

Just a quick word from the editor thanking you all for allowing me to represent the Y's Retired of the UK. It was a wonderful experience which I thorough enjoyed. Especially being back in HK. I now have many more YMCA international friends

Until we meet againDavid H Smith



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Happy YMCA reunion for **Janet and Norman (Owen)**, **Elaine and Roger (Hunt)** and **Maureen and Sam (Johnston)**. Editor would be very pleased to receive any other photo groupings of Y's Retired colleagues.

Hi
I happened to come across your newsletter via your excellent website about the YMCA horticultural training at Wilderwick House, which pleased me as I haven't seen or heard about this training scheme since I left Wilderwick House after spending 10 weeks there in 1964.

There were two dorms for the horticultural students each holding 4 boys each. We worked and trained in the gardens of a magnificent house, under the eye of two wonderful head gardeners. One whose name I remember was called **Mr Edes**.

The training was mainly of a practical nature with some academic work with **Mr Edes**. After my 10 weeks training the YMCA found me a position working on a fruit farm, where they found me accommodation and checked up on me for about a year. After 18 months of working there I obtained an apprenticeship with Portsmouth Parks Department and then went on to a full time horticultural course. For the following 15 years I was the Assistant Park Superintendent for Taunton in Somerset. During the last 25 years I have built up my own garden centre and nursery in Taunton.

I have spent all my working life in horticulture and it was down to the start and opportunity given to me by those 10 weeks at Wilderwick House all those years ago by the YMCA, after I had left school at 15 from a Secondary Modern School, never getting out of the bottom class

It's funny the detail that comes to mind in writing this. In your last week there you were allowed to choose a hymn for the service on Sunday. Mine was "My eyes have seen the glory".

Regards - **Alan Avery**

THE ITALIAN SECRET TO A LONG MARRIAGE.

At St. Peter's Catholic Church in Toronto, they have weekly husbands' marriage seminars.

At the session last week, the priest asked Giuseppe, who said he was approaching his 50th wedding anniversary, to take a few minutes and share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman all these years.

Giuseppe replied to the assembled husbands, *'Wella, I'va tried to treat her nicea, spenda da money on her, but besta of all is, I tooka her to Italy for the 25th anniversary!'*

The priest responded, *'Giuseppe, you are an amazing inspiration to all the husbands here! Please tell us what you are planning for your wife for your 50th anniversary?'*

Giuseppe proudly replied, *" I gonna go pick her up."*

While on a road trip, an elderly couple stopped at a roadside restaurant for lunch. After finishing their meal, they left the restaurant and resumed their trip.

When leaving, the elderly woman unknowingly left her glasses on the table and she didn't miss them until they had been driving for about forty minutes.

By then, to add to the aggravation, they had travelled quite a distance before they could find a place to turn around, in order to return to the restaurant to retrieve her glasses. All the way back, the elderly husband became the classic grouchy old man.

He fussed and complained and scolded his wife relentlessly during the entire return drive.

The more he chastised her, the more agitated he became. He just wouldn't let up for a single minute.

To her relief, they finally arrived at the restaurant.

As the woman got out of the car, and hurried inside to retrieve her glasses, the old geezer yelled to her, "While you're in there, you might as well get my hat and the credit card."

This coming week is National Senior Mental Health Week. You can do YOUR part by remembering to contact at least one unstable Senior to show you care.

I have done MY part

Thanks again to John Newton for above contributions!!

Morris, an 82 year-old man, went to the doctor to get a physical. A few days later, the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm. A couple of days later, the doctor spoke to Morris and said, 'You're really doing great, aren't you?' Morris replied, 'Just doing what you said, Doc: 'Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.' The doctor said, 'I didn't say that. I said, 'You've got a heart murmur; be careful.'

Hi Dave
Sorry to hear about Bill Leyland my old golfing buddy.

I am accompanying 3 juniors to a county golf match-I will do it in Bill's honour and know he is there.

Please pass my thoughts on to any attending.

Bill taught me to plaster my house wall - he was very practical - he said you should plaster the wall stand back and have a pipe while it went off then step in and smooth it!!

When I was at Skegness with Harry Stevenson, Stan Charlesworth and other disreputable golfers, I remember a sunny day.

The speaker wasn't up to much and Bill stood up and in a stage whisper addressed the golfing gang "This one's not up to much shall we carry on with our meeting?" (Code for "Golf course!") We all crept out into the sunshine and I enjoyed another memorable afternoon in the sunshine with some of the world's greatest characters.

That was the same time they dared me to try and drive the 18th (par 4) green. Much to their delight I pushed it into the car park at about 260yds. There was a clang! and there on the wing of a new Capri(!!) was the unmistakable imprint of a dimpled golf ball.

Harry and Bill were most impressed. I put a note on the windscreen. Nothing happened. Later that week I enquired and was told the wealthy owner of the car was so impressed with the shot and being able to show it to others she rather liked it on her wheel arch!!

Bill was a star and I am glad to have been his friend for a few years

Neil (Sjoberg)

Dear David,

So sorry to hear this news. Bill was a good man who encouraged me greatly in my early years with the YMCA. He embodied the YMCA to so many people.

Best wishes, **David (Bedford)**

Am very sorry to hear of the death of Bill Leyland. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jean and the other members of his family. I am planning to be at the Thanksgiving Service .

Rupert (George)

Have just read Sir Harold Hayward's Obit in the Times. Incidentally it was his ideas that led to the building of The Cresset, long before his involvement in the YMCA.

Regards,

Roger (Hunt)

EXTRACTS OF THE FINAL REPORT FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL BART SHAHA GIVEN AT THE 17TH YMCA WORLD CONFERENCE IN HONG KONG 2010



This Earth is home to over 6.5 billion people and we are so fortunate to be living on such a planet which is so rich in natural resources, biological and cultural diversity. As human beings we are called by God to nurture it, to care for it and cultivate it for the good of everyone.

As human beings we have the responsibility to live in healthy relationships with others who make up the community at large.

The motto of the YMCA that was decided upon at the Paris Meeting of 1855 was from John 17-21 '**That they may all be one**'. Two men, Henry Dunant (who founded the Red Cross after his YMCA involvement) and George Williams (our YMCA Founder), with such distinct purposes (one on justice and human rights; the other on unity) give us courage and inspiration to pursue the mission of the YMCA in progressive and creative ways in spite of the enormous difficulties and challenges we face every day.

Since two-thirds of the world's population live in poverty, it has to be a priority and a concern for us all. As analysts point out, 'There is a direct connection between national security and human insecurity, the gross disparity between military budgets and human need is not only irresponsible, but the justification for this disparity is also ill conceived. The lack of resources and opportunities creates great social instability and it is a fertile ground for desperate people to incite violence if not terrorism'.

We are aware as to how the new global market-place is affecting our lives. It is possible for people to connect with each other more easily; through advanced technology we are able to rapidly communicate our ideas and progress in business and trade. There is no doubt that this process of globalisation has fostered global integration, but it has also isolated vast numbers of people. Obviously multinational corporations as the new economic powers, are driving the process and their wealth is astounding.

Out of the 100 biggest economic entities of the world, 51 are corporations and 49 are countries. Research indicates that at the dawn of the new millennium the sales of the world's top five corporations were bigger than the gross domestic product (GDP) of 182 countries. This huge shift in economic power from nation states to multinational business significantly influences political decisions. Thus, we are living at a time when it is difficult to recognise who will be accountable for the welfare of our planet as a whole. And so we are not clear as to where our global village is going.

It is in response to the call from Jesus Christ himself, who proclaims the Kingdom of God and asks us to work so it be fulfilled, that we are part of the YMCA. Over the decades, YMCA leaders, concerned about clearly pursuing the mission of the YMCA felt the need to continually interpret the Paris Basis.

WOODEN CROSS PRESENTED TO THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN, DON ANDERSON AT THE 4TH WFYR CONFERENCE BY THE NEW CHAIRMAN, JERRY PRADO SHAW ON BEHALF OF THE DELGATES - HONG KONG – JULY 18-25, 2010



The following article composed by Jerry.

“Today we have the privilege to honour our Chairman, Don Anderson, and present our respects and appreciation for his many contributions to the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees.

and travelled long distances to reach their final destination, for we all knew that they were to become part of something special...something greater than what they could accomplish on their own.

With each piece, we assembled this cross to serve as a permanent reminder of our faith and our commitment to remain united and continue working from behind the scenes to support our Fellowship and the YMCA work around the world as one (John 17:21) . The cross was ensemble by an old YMCA retiree from Bolivia.

Don, this is our gift to you. Thanks for your outstanding leadership and for keeping the Fellowship united, strong and relevant.

We looked high and low for a gift that would not only represent the qualities of a leader of your calibre, strength, unity, leadership, and faith (to name a few), but that would also embody the principles and mission of the Fellowship.

Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful...so...we decided to create one instead.

This cross measures 13” 3/16 by 6” 1/8. It is composed of 34 small pieces of different wood species from 15 countries. All he pieces were carefully attached to a central wood piece made from a good old American oak, which keeps them all together.

Each of the 34 small pieces represents the 34 participants of the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees present at this 17th YMCA World Council Meeting. You can guess who the “good old American Oak” represents.

Each little piece is unique, like each of our members present here today. There is no one equal to the other. They came together over a period of three months from Japan, China, Philippines, Germany, Uruguay, Canada, United Kingdom, USA, India, Brazil, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Gambia and Venezuela.

There are 29 different species: Cherry, Manchurian Ash, White Lawaan, Beech, Pine, Coronilla, Ash, Oak, Birdeye, Dark Walnut, Douglas Fir, Hickory, Red Oak, Ebony, Nara, Zebra, Managenial Soft, Teak, Adrihno, Angelina, Eucalyptus, Grapier, Pie, Tuba, Pinups, Minima, Alanta, Dumba and Pardillo.

Some pieces arrived in early April, others just two weeks ago. Some pieces were cut to perfection; others were a bit rougher around the edges. Some came by hand, others by mail. Some changed hands four times, traveling across multiple continents and cities. Some pieces came in a simple envelope, others were meticulously packed in sturdy containers; and in some cases, even had attached, in addition to their regular name, the scientific name, history about the wood and its impact in the history and economy of the country. Yet every piece was selected at origin with great care



JERRY PRADO-SHAW AND DON ANDERSON

The new WYFR Leadership Team are as follows:-

Chairman	Jerry Prado-Shaw
Senior Vice Chair	Hank Bagelman
Treasurer	Dottie Eley
Vice Chair/Africa	James Gomez
Vice Chair/East Asia	Yoshinobu Tanaka
Vice Chair/Europe	John Knox
Vice Chair/Latin Amer,Carib	Jayme Araujo
Vice ChairOceania	David Davis
Vice Chair/South Asia	Egbert Samraj
Vice Chair/Middle East	Ghassan Sayah
Communications	Stew Brown
Bridges –Editors	Len & Joyce Wilson
Secours Speciaux Chair	Bonnie Mairs
Immediate Past Chair	Don Anderson

A little old man shuffled slowly into an ice cream parlour and pulled himself slowly, painfully, up onto a stool. After catching his breath, he ordered a banana split.

The waitress asked kindly, 'Crushed nuts?'

'No,' he replied, 'Arthritis.'

A PERSONAL LIFE STORY BY CHRIS BATTEN



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I suppose that it's Hitler's fault really. After a tranquil birth in north Kent just after "Peace in our Time" Munich, my family decided to escape

from air raids and later doodlebugs to quieter places in central Wales and the village of Bracknell at times during the war. Schooling in south London saw a love of travel enhanced with trips in the Scouts to the World Jamboree in Canada and to the Rhone delta.

National Service led to secondment for 18 months to the Royal West African Frontier Force in Nigeria and the travel bug had really bitten. The subsequent 30 years took me from playing soldiers in the Bush to a career with the United Africa Company (a wholly-owned Unilever subsidiary) where I continued my bush exploits in overseeing the buying of groundnuts and cotton around Kano and in Niger Province. All this idyllic swanning came to an abrupt end when the company decided to concentrate after independence in 1960, on setting up local industries to replace imports and to use its nationwide distribution channels to market these products. Through no fault of my own I found myself in the sales department of the joint venture with Heineken to sell beer to the thirsty community. This continued for 11 years in Sierra Leone and Ghana, before I escaped to a training role developing the local managers of the future.

As is common in many large organizations, it was then decided my expertise in marketing beer in West Africa would be an ideal platform for selling office equipment in the Gulf States. Over a period of 12 years in the Gulf, I also discovered how to operate air-conditioning workshops, sell kitchens and their equipment, run backstreet (but legal) liquor stores, set up van sales of Unilever's consumer detergents and personal products, and deal with Arab government officials.

Just the sort of experience needed for my change of career to lead what had been the General Services Department in the English National Council of YMCAs.

I do believe in divine providence. Settled back home with my family in Sussex, I somewhat inadvertently applied to an advertised post which turned out to be "Principal of Dunford College". My previous experience of the charity sector had been in Freetown, where I had been Hon Treasurer of the Sierra Leone Blind Welfare Society, which ran a local school for the blind. After a preliminary interview, John Naylor instead offered me Projects and Services. My induction to the Movement was conducted mainly by Roy Weaver, who guided me round all the English regions, meeting Regional Secretaries and visiting many local associations ranging from Hinckley in its bus terminus to the mighty London Central. Roy also took

me to the remaining industrial hostels and housing projects, and I found my own way to Fairthorne, Lakeside and Dunford. Along the way I also covered the Armed Forces work in BAOR and Cyprus, Supplies Dept and office services.

The next six years placed firm demands on what I believe are called "transferable skills". Little challenges soon popped up: Dunford lost its IBM clientele and had to prove itself to the wider charity sector and the Movement; Fairthorne ran into a winter income crisis and was only saved by the determination of some of its key managers; BAOR was grossly overstocked with merchandise and had a costly large central team; all scenarios similar to those faced by General Secretaries from time to time. The National Board in general, and the Chairman of the National Finance committee in particular, had to be convinced of the ongoing viability of these activities, and Ken Cordeiro and the lay members of the Activities Group were of great support in ensuring not all was swept away in those difficult days.

Over this period, the Projects and Services Dept restructured. National Day Camps joined from Sam Johnson's dept. On the retirement of Roy Weaver, a new Director of Housing was appointed, reporting directly to the National Secretary. Finally, we agreed that Y Training and Projects and Services should be amalgamated into one team as National Programmes, under Graham Hobbs and it was time for me to bow out of a national role.

I had joined the Board of Hove YMCA, just as the association had appointed David Standing to be General Secretary. David brought a wealth of social work experience with him and the Board were keen to meet more of the needs of the local community. We soon set a housing group to take forward Hove's first venture into providing supported housing for the young homeless, and with funding from the Housing Corporation, set about converting two early 19th century town houses, formerly Winston Churchill's prep school, into bedsits for 16 young people.

Based on the shop opened in George Street for Hove YMCA, Graham Clarke, the Regional Secretary, approached me at this time to open a chain of YMCA shops in the region, and over the subsequent three years a dozen temporary shops were set up in towns from Leatherhead and Chichester in the west to Dover and Ramsgate in the east.

Hove and Hastings YMCAs started to provide training for offenders undergoing community service orders, and a key part of the programme was equipping the offenders with job skills. I was aware of Y Training's NVQ programme and had heard of their work in BAOR centres. They agreed to help me to become an Assessor, and later an Internal Verifier, and by training YMCA staff as assessors we were able to register Hove YMCA as an Accredited Centre for NVQs in Retail and Administration. During this time, I became more involved in regional affairs, and ultimately spent two years working with Geoff Cooper, as South East Regional Chairman.

After moving from Sussex in 2001, I served five years as Y's Retired nominee on the Pension Fund Trustee Board, which covered the period when the scheme was closed to new members and further accrued service frozen.

It was then about time to hang up my boots. At present I am enjoying spending time with my family, especially my two granddaughters who live close by in Henley.

Chris Batten

REPORT FROM THE 4TH WFYR CONFERENCE HELD AT WU KAI SHA, HONG KONG AS PART OF THE 17TH YMCA WORLD CONFERENCE 19TH – 24TH JULY 2010

17TH YMCA WORLD CONFERENCE



4th World WFYR conference became part of the opening and closing ceremonies of the 17th YMCA World Conference, held at Wu Kwai Sha Youth Village, Hong Kong.

Arriving in Hong Kong via Cathy Pacific at 8am on Monday 19th July after an 11 hour flight, it wasn't till 2pm that all members of the British contingent had been allocated their correct rooms and with a quick shower to combat the 97% humidity and a change of clothing, we caught the coach to take us all down to the opening ceremony at The New World Centre, opposite the Salisbury Road YMCA in Tsim Sha Tsui.

The theme of the "Global Village" was prominent, represented as it was by a globe of our planet Earth. The welcome to delegates was made by the dignitaries of World Alliance of YMCAs and those from YMCA Hong Kong. The Chinese Dragon dance of greeting soon followed.

After a youthful display of singing, dancing and acting by enthusiastic Chinese young people, it was time for all to meet one another at the banquet that followed at the Salisbury Road YMCA. And what a banquet it was containing more than ten courses.

OPENING AND ONGOING WORSHIP – every morning, devotions were led by the Music Director of the World Council of Churches, with each of the five sessions involving musicians and their instruments from various nations. It was of the highest standard with an international team leading delegates in songs and praise – the themes reflected the concerns of the Global Village and the need for us as Global Citizens to urgently come to terms with the misuse of our planet through human ignorance.

New elected Officers of the World Alliance of YMCAs for the next four years were:-

New Secretary General – Bart Shaha to Johan Vilhelm Eltvick
Ken Collotton (USA) was elected President,
Fernando Ondarza (Mexico) elected Deputy President
Helen McEwan (New Zealand) was elected Treasurer.

The English delegation apparently had seven votes and voted "en bloc" for three of the candidates elected. The result of this election was great news for the international Movement and will bring renewed leadership to the World Alliance of YMCAs.

4TH WFYR CONFERENCE

It was evident from the start that Don Anderson, our talented Chairman had put a huge amount of time and effort into ensuring this WFYR World Conference would be the great success it was, following the first WFYR conference in 1997 at Blue Ridge, Tennessee, the second was in 2000 at Ester Park, Colorado, and the third was in 2003 on a Caribbean cruise ship.

Many of the 33 delegates from 16 countries in attendance were veterans of previous conferences and a few, like me, first timers.

Don set the scene by saying **“As retirees we have a wonderful advantage. We can concentrate on the fellowship and inspirational aspects vs the leadership and administrative burdens we carried during our careers. In WFYR there are no bosses, no power issues, or onerous burdens. We may discuss some important ideas or issues in our sessions but our aim is to be informal, relaxed, have fun and enjoy one another in Christian fellowship.”** And this is exactly what we did.

Many of the delegates expressed their appreciation to all the generous donors who had contributed to the WFYR Travel Fund, who without this financial support, would not have been able to be present.

Delegates were delighted to receive their "T" shirts and polo shirts, which clearly identified our presence within the umbrella conference and when around the younger international delegates during all meal times and devotions: on the back of our "T" shirt it declared that we were "RETIRED, NOT TIRED."



REPORT FROM THE 4TH WFYR CONFERENCE HELD AT WU KAI SHA, HONG KONG AS PART OF THE 17TH YMCA WORLD CONFERENCE 19TH – 24TH JULY 2010

4TH WFYR CONFERENCE

The first two days were taken up with reports (heavy weather permitting) from delegates representing East Asia, South Asia, Latin America-Caribbean, Europe, Africa, North America and Oceania.

From these reports many ideas and new concepts were shared. Some national groupings were in their infancy, others much more organised and inclusive. The main points that came from all the reports were picked up in on-going discussions were:-

- the need for good clear communication
- the part that the internet and email has made to colleagues worldwide but especially those in Africa that could now receive immediate responses.
- The concept of quality Newsletters being transmitted at very little cost to national memberships was making a difference.
- That WFYR groupings could be more inclusive by inviting support staff and laymen, many of whom had served their YMCA over a number of years, to join that national grouping. The Canadian Movement is a good example of this, having three National groupings split by time zones but totally inclusive of all ex staff and lay people that want to join.

Each affiliated group is autonomous in defining its membership as well as conducting and financing its own affairs.

Yoshinobu Tanaka led the discussion of the retiree role in the YMCA Movement – Our Scottish and English colleagues will be pleased to hear that in some quarters the wisdom, knowledge and assistance of ex professional staff is called upon and used by various national groupings. Equally it was recognised that some younger YMCA professionals would not want their staff or membership to be influenced by retired colleagues. It is a very sensitive area, but can be so beneficial to all parties when managed well.

On our third day, Shui Wing Fung who is still involved in the work of YMCA Hangzhou and my old friend Patrick Chung of the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong, gave us an introduction into the history of the YMCAs of Hong Kong followed by a video showing the immense amount of work undertaken for all age groups in Hong Kong.

We were also joined by Chinese colleagues from Beijing YMCA, Hangzhou YMCA and General Secretary Wu Jianrong of Shanghai YMCA.

The YMCA in Hong Kong was established in 1901 and has now expanded to present day services which include:

5 children and youth centres – 10 integrated services centres – 2 outreach social work teams – 1 school social work team – 3 University Ys – 2 elderly social centres – 1 elderly hostel – 1 social centre for the deaf – 3 hostels

for MR and MI – 2 sheltered workshops – 3 outdoor camps – 2 secondary schools – 1 college of careers – 1 primary school – 3 kindergartens – 2 hotels and 1 Noah's Ark Resort

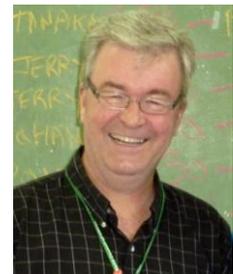


PATRICK CHUNG – DAVID SMITH – SHUI WING FUNG

We had both Bart Shaha and Johan Vilhelm Eltvick visit us and greeting us. Bart will soon become part of the WFYR. He has done so much for the World Alliance of YMCAs during his two terms as Secretary General and now hands the reigns over to Johan from Sweden, well known to many in the UK.



Bart Shaha



Jonah Eltvick

Don completed his Chairmanship by stating,

“WFYR has a bright future as it moves forward with a strong leadership team and three new National organisations in Canada, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Its focus on Secours Speciaux and the unsecured retirement issue are important to the YMCA movement's future. Maintaining the link between organised national groups, as well as scattered and isolated retirees, will continue to be at the core of the WFYR's mission as it builds fellowship and supports the YMCA movement and serves humanity. I thank all of you for your friendship and support over these last four years.”

Don's retiring important points that need our thoughts and action:-

- Find the people out there that used to work for the YMCA and have been abandoned
- Work hard in whatever way you can to enhance the Secour Speciaux fund
- Think of ways in which Secour Speciaux can be promoted at National YMCA level and Local Association level.
- Remember less fortunate retired colleagues through the Global Retirement Initiative (GRI)

GREETINGS FROM THE U.N.



UN Secretary General - Ban Ki Moon

UN Secretary General's message to the 17th World Council of YMCAs

I am pleased to convey greetings to all the participants from across the world who have gathered to further the YMCA's global efforts to promote peace, fellowship and social justice for all people irrespective of race, class, religion, or gender.

Your work strengthens local communities; your outreach to youth and people in poor and underserved communities is invaluable, especially today as governments face fiscal crises and fall short in providing many basic social services.

I also commend your international humanitarian efforts, especially your commitment to the people of Haiti in the aftermath of January's earthquake. Thanks to a tremendous wave of solidarity among your movements and members, you played a timely role in international recovery efforts.

The theme of this year's World Council -- "Global Citizenship for All" -- sends an appropriate message as the United Nations prepares for a Summit on the Millennium Development Goals in September at which we hope to adopt the strongest possible action plan for accelerating progress. I thank the many YMCA movements that are engaged in programme and advocacy work for the MDGs. With just five years until the agreed deadline of 2015, your continued support is crucial.

The United Nations is calling on governments and civil society organizations to mark the observance by involving youth in programmes that redress social injustices.

I congratulate the World Council of YMCAs and send my best wishes for productive deliberations and workshops on HIV/AIDS, climate change and problems facing women and children. May your organizations continue to harness the energy and idealism of youth to create a more just world for many years to come.

Thank you again for your dedication to United Nations ideals and objectives.

SECOURS SPECIAUX NEEDS YOUR HELP



BONNIE MAIRS, CHAIRMAN OF SECOURS SPECIAUX THANKS THE Y's RETIRED OF UK FOR THEIR MOST RECENT CONTRIBUTION

The Secours Speciaux committee, working on your behalf have made it their duty to consult as widely as possible in order to establish how funding could be raised and properly distributed for those who retire from YMCA work with no pension, state or otherwise. Recipients will have served the YMCA for more than 7 years.

Secours Speciaux Fund - for crisis situations

The present funds are raised in order to provide financial support to YMCA staff and dependants in crisis situations. This in itself is truly lifesaving and Bonnie shared some examples with us.

Every day, political unrest, conflict and natural disaster destroy the livelihoods, homes of communities all over the world.

In many areas of the world where the YMCA is active, basic healthcare or medical insurance is not a right for those who have spent many years, or indeed their lives committed to the Movement. In such cases, former YMCA staff may find themselves in need, without sufficient resources to obtain medical treatment. Beneficiaries of the fund have come from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Secours Speciaux Fund - for pension provision

Inequality around our world is not diminishing. There are still many countries in which the YMCA operates where there is virtually no retirement or medical provision.

- What should we or can we do to seriously correct this situation?
- Could we not ask our National YMCA Movements in the developed world to support this element of the fund?
- Should financial support be part of a refundable loan?
- Should individual urban YMCAs adopt a person (s) and their future pension needs?
- Are we not losing bright young YMCA secretaries to NGO's who provide pension facilities, thereby damaging the expansion future of YMCAs in developing countries?

The committee recognise it will take time for resources to grow but the need for this additional fund to start is now.

Many of our colleagues leave the YMCA family after 20-30-40-50 years of services, with no superannuation scheme and no state pension.

Put yourself in this situation at the age of 70? How would you provide for your loved ones without any pension provision, state or otherwise?