



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

MARCH 2011

www.yretired.co.uk



Greetings from our President



**Dear colleagues
and friends,**

The contents of my letter cover two main areas relevant to the Y's Retired of the UK; one very much in vogue at the present time and the second regarding the 2011 Reunion.

There is little doubt that readers of the Y's Retired of the UK Newsletter will have noticed more references made to the Christian Faith in recent issues. Articles have related as appropriate to Christian festivals such as Christmas but in a more overt way to the 'C' in the YMCA. I share that the latter has been a main issue throughout my 43 years of active YMCA service and in retirement as like many of you we have spoken at various meetings in churches, Rotary Clubs, schools, and secular groups and can testify that often the question raised has been, "**Where is the 'C' in the YMCA?**"

It is not without significance that the English **YWCA** is changing its name to **Platform 51**, that some years ago now the Church of England Children's Society dropped the Church of England in its title! That the Marriage Guidance Council (founded in 1938 by a clergyman Rev Herbert Gray on a Christian basis related to divorce) changed to Relate, that the Education Act of 1944 launched an emphasis on Religious Education in Schools through RE classes and prayers at Morning Assemblies, now few schools observe such lessons or Assembly prayers. Is this the right approach in modern day society? Has Christianity in general lost its way?

Has the YMCA lost the right to call itself a Christian Movement and should it be re-titled the Young Men's Association which is a misnomer in itself with our strong female membership/users?

In light of the above how refreshing it was for those of our membership who attended the Reunions of 2009 & 2010 to hear the CEOs of Birmingham and Sutton Coldfield YMCAs together with the Regional Secretary stressing the Christian emphasis of their valuable work, local and regional!

Our Editor (David) would be pleased to have letters from you in relation to the above paragraph in which briefly you too can express opinions on the issue of the **C** in the **YMCA** preferably by email 'attachment'.

Reunion 2011

I have somewhat reluctantly to share there were insufficient numbers responding to the January Newsletter request for a viable number, consequently your Executive agreed not to hold the event this year. The response did not justify the preparation and programming work entailed in continuing the very successful Reunions of 2009 & 2010.

All aspects were considered not least the cost of travel which added some £100 to total costs by many individuals and despite the fact that the venue charged £100 less than other conference centres in Birmingham!

I highly commend the Y's Retired South West Reunion for those retired colleagues living in the area and beyond. I understand there are vacancies for the next Reunion to be held 12th to 16th April 2011 - enquiries direct to Margaret Libby 01752 773040.

With warm regards,
Jim Lamb

Ys RETIRED - SOUTH WEST REUNION (ALL INVITED)

**An invitation to all Ys Retired Secretaries,
spouses and friends to 'come on down' to
Trelohan Manor Hotel, St Ives, Cornwall
from**

Monday 12th April to Friday 16th April 2011

Half Board - £180 per person.

Have a great 4 days in real comfort.

**To secure your place with a £40 deposit -
contact**

**Margaret Libby on – 01752 773040
now**

**There is still room for you to come to St Ives
and enjoy the fresh seaside air – real Cornish
pasties and proper cream teas, plus the
company of comrades and friends. You won't
regret it!!**

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PRESIDENT OF CHELMSFORD YMCA AWARDED WITH YMCA'S HIGHEST HONOUR

Lady Georgina Dixon-Smith, President of Chelmsford YMCA and long-standing volunteer and supporter of the YMCA, has been awarded the Gold Order of the Red Triangle at Chelmsford YMCA's Annual General Meeting on Monday 13th December.

The Gold Order of the Red Triangle is the highest award available in the YMCA in England, and it is only available for volunteers who have completed at least 20 years' service in a regional or national role.

Lady Dixon-Smith's involvement with the YMCA commenced over 30 years ago when she joined the Essex Friends of the YMCA. This fundraising group focused their attention on raising funds for YMCAs operating within the county of Essex.

For over twenty years Lady Dixon-Smith was Chairman of the Essex Friends, and during her period of office almost £1 million was raised to support the work of the YMCA in the county. In addition, funds were raised to support the work of Y Care International and YMCAs in the developing world.

On a wider level, Lady Dixon-Smith served for over 20 years as Vice President of the Metropolitan Region of YMCAs, as President of Southend-on-Sea YMCA and as President of Earls Court YMCA.

In 2007, Chelmsford YMCA asked Lady Dixon-Smith whether she would become the President of Chelmsford YMCA, a job she has diligently undertaken since then. The Friends of Essex YMCAs has now come to an end, but Lady Dixon-Smith has maintained her keen support of the YMCA through Chelmsford YMCA.

The Award was presented by Chris Poulard, the Vice President of YMCA England, on behalf of the National Council.

PASSING OF MARGARET CHORLEY

John Chorley, son of Ewart and Margaret Chorley, contacted me on 20th December to let me know that his mother died on Monday evening 20 December 2010.

The Funeral Service was held in January at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Fareham, near Portsmouth by the Reverend Tom Kennar who was General Secretary of the Portsmouth YMCA in the 1990's, followed by a Woodland Burial the same day.

John Chorley's address is: 31-35 High Street, Fordington, Dorchester DT1 1LB.

Email: john.chorley2@btinternet.com

Read the eulogy given by John Chorley on page 8.

Stephen Milner

MOVE FROM LLANDUDNO FOR THE WEAVERS

Returning to pastures known are Rosamunde and Roy Weaver, back to Leigh-on-sea, which brings them closer geographical to their son Andrew and his family. They rejoice in the fact that they were not part of a chain which has made the transition quick and trouble free.

News from Dr Winfried Fischer

Reg writes that Winfried has been a Ys Retired member for as long as he can remember and has regularly kept in touch. He was a staff member at Castle Mainau and was a particular buddy of Geoffrey Palmer and they co-ordinated visits to London by parties of German YMCA Secretaries. Winfried is also a member of the German Retirees and of the German YMCA in London. He was awarded the German medal of merit for his remarkable life of service to the YMCA.

Winfried writes,

"Enclosed my contribution to the membership fees and to Secours Speciaux which I support also through the Ys Retired of Germany.

I am still interested in your publication in spite of the fact that more and more of my friends in the Mainau time are no longer alive. Now also Bill Leyland a decade long friend whom I met many times in London passed away.

When I celebrated this year my 80th birthday and was decorated shortly afterwards by the President of the German Republic with the "Bundesverdienstkreuz" (federal medal of merit) my life long engagement in international understanding was mentioned apart from work in the social field.

I have many reasons to be grateful for an interesting life full of good and sometimes difficult experiences like all YMCA people.

With great interest I have read Bernd Hilderbrants 'It Can Be! 150 years of German YMCA in London.'

Greetings to you and the rest of the Executive."

Yours sincerely – Winfried Fischer.

OUR WEBSITE!!

Do you know that **Ys Retired of the U.K.** has a Website - www.yretired.co.uk ?

The esteemed Editor of our Newsletter, David Smith – no doubt with help from the indefatigable Sue – also runs our Website and spends a lot of time so doing.

The Index will give you some idea of the amount of work that is involved:

- Home and events 2011
- President's Message
- Newsletters Archive
- Reunions
- WFYR
- YMCA Pensions Information
- APS news
- YMCA England News
- YMCA Women's Auxiliary
- WA photo album
- Contact us
- Prayer Requests

It would seem that for some reason I am the only Member whose photo will appear in the shortly to be created 'Rogues Gallery'. Why not send your photo to David with the date you joined Ys Retired. We can then look up old friends and possibly make contact again. And I don't want to be there on my own!

Go on, look it up - and in the modern idiom ENJOY !

Col (Mawby) January 2011

What's the perspective from where you stand?

“When a Christian Movement loses that driving force and passes into being vaguely religious, it is doomed to sterility.”



My Rural Dean, Reverend Howard Peskett, who knew I had been involved for a lifetime's work within the YMCA, kindly shared with me the content of a book he had been reading, whilst seeking personal inspiration.

The book was called, 'The Christ of every Road' by E Stanley Jones printed by Hodder and Sturghton 1930. I desperately do not want to take the essence of what Stanley Jones was trying to say from page 223 of his book out of context, but stay with me, read on and remember the date it was written.

“When Jesus brought his cleansing, then and then only did my heart learn its song. I once said to a Hindu audience that when I found Jesus I arose from my knees and felt as though I could put my arms around the world and share this with them. They applauded. Of course they did, for we are made for this and recognise our life when we see it.

“You Christians have something I haven't – joy,” said a Brahmo Samajist preacher. He had beautiful precepts in his religion, but no Pentecost. Hence the Brahmo Samaj movement, lacking the vital Divine Spark, has passed into high-minded religious respectability, but with an undertone of unsatisfied wistful yearning running through it.

Modern Christianity, whenever it lacks that Divine Spark, has run into the same gentility and that same sterility. The prayer of the man at the close of the service unconsciously illustrates our attitudes: “O God, if any spark of Divine grace has been kindled in this meeting, water that spark.” We have thrown the cold water of rationalism upon our gospel until the Divine glow has turned to ashes.

“I want to see you Christians mad after Jesus,” said a Hindu to me one day. After Pentecost these men were “mad” after Jesus. We are only mildly interested in him. They were Christian. We are religious.

It is wonderful to be Christian. But it is not wonderful to be merely religious. The world is filled with religion – it lacks being Christian. I saw in London the original document that formed the basis of the organisation of the YMCA. When the little group headed by George Williams drew up the document they first wrote at the top “Young Men's Religious Association,” but they drew a line through the word “Religious,” and above it wrote “Christian.” That was one of the most decisive lines ever drawn in human history. They decided that their movement would not be vaguely religious, but definitely Christian. That has been the driving power force of the YMCA.

It was founded in the passion to lead young men into definite relationship to Jesus Christ. When it loses that and passes into being vaguely religious, it is doomed to sterility.

It is a great, decisive day in any man's life when he decides no longer to be merely religious, but to be definitely Christian. That decision will lead him face to face with Pentecost, for you cannot be a Christian in any real sense unless you have in some real way experienced the power of the Spirit.

“Christianity is at the parting of the ways. It is now at the point of decision where it must decide in a larger way to be definitely Christian or vaguely religious. In the East and West the demand is that we draw a line through the word “Christian,” and put in “Religious.” This is in the supposed interest of universality. In reality it leads to “a mush of amiability.” You cannot be more universal by being less Christian. Whenever you strike a truly Christian note you strike a universal note. If we want universality then back to Pentecost! For here the universal Christ becomes universal in experience and this experience breaks into universal forms.

And let's not forget the Young Men's Christian Association and its motto of John 17 v 21 “That they all may be one, that the world may believe”.

The Movement's purpose is clear, unlike the baubles featuring the ‘Village People’ as a YMCA National Christmas card.

We live in dangerous times when it is slowly becoming harder to state – “I am a Christian believer” in England.

Just as our churches and Christian Movements and organisations are under constant pressure from those who have been brought up only knowing a secular society in Great Britain, which includes our faithless political leaders, so is the challenge of “Christ made man” coming to bear witness to all of us who dare to call ourselves “Christian.”

**Editor –
David H Smith**



CHRIS JONES (Herrington Burn)

I'm not sure if the grapevine news will have reached you but I write to let you know that Chris Jones (Herrington Burn YMCA) died a couple of weeks ago and his funeral was today. (7th February 2011)

I had been visiting Chris for a long time and he declined rapidly since Christmas. Sadly, no one from YMCA region attended the service; a bit of a reflection I think.

Michael King

PLATFORM 51 – previously known as the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA)

Brand report: YWCA England becomes Platform 51

By John Plummer, Third Sector



Platform 51's new logo



previous logo

The charity explains why it dropped the YWCA initials after more than 150 years and an expert assesses the new brand.

The Young Women's Christian Association was founded in 1855. It changed its name to YWCA England and Wales in 2002 and this month it unveiled a radical new identity - Platform 51. It was a big decision to drop the YWCA initials after more than 150 years. In other ways, however, the charity found it easy.

Kate Rayner, the head of marketing at Platform 51, says the old name gave people two false impressions - that the charity was still a Christian organisation, and that it worked only with young women.

"As the name has been around for a long time, it was a big decision," says Rayner. "But we'd had to keep explaining that we didn't just work with young women and Christians."

A name change had been mooted for some time, but the decision was made earlier this year after the charity used perception testing, which revealed poor public awareness of the old name. Few people had heard of it and those that had thought it was stuffy and old-fashioned. People also confused it with the YMCA.

The charity hired the third sector consultancy nfpSynergy and asked designer Nick Darke to come up with new names and identities. Darke began with a list of 60 names, which was whittled down to a few. Platform 51 was chosen because 51 per cent of the population is female and the word 'platform' conveys how the charity speaks up for women and gives them practical support.

One of the main concerns about the new name was that it didn't immediately explain what the charity does: so to make it a bit clearer, the strapline "girls and women at heart" was added.

The new colour palette uses a lot of pink, which generated debate - some groups, such as Pink Stinks, a social enterprise that campaigns against gender stereotyping, think that pink is already overused in the representation of women. "We did bear this in mind," says Rayner. "But the feedback we got was positive, especially when combined with the purple and green."

The new brand went live at the start of December and is being phased in gradually at a total cost of £60,000. Rayner says it should make it easier to attract funders and appeal to service users.

EXPERT VIEW - Graeme Cook, Designer, Figtree

This is a missed opportunity to make the role of this charity and its audience more relevant and obvious. The name is confusing: even if it is inspired by the fact that 51 percent of the population are women, it still sounds like a property development.

The strapline should be more descriptive because it is such an abstract name. I still have to work too hard to figure out the charity's purpose in the world.

Given that this charity is concerned with making female voices heard, it is somewhat surprising that more was not done to develop a more distinctive language and an individual tone of voice.

The unclear name, the weak use of language, uninteresting photography and a rather brash colour palette all condemn this rebrand to future indifference from those asked to interact with it.

Score Creativity: 2 Delivery: 2 4 out of 10



When I set out to put more than forty years of work of the former World Alliance Committee for Refugees and Migrants (later Refugees and Rehabilitation) into one single dossier, I knew that this would be something of an adventure.

Thanks to the kindness of Bart Shaha, former Secretary General of the World Alliance and to Claud-Alain Danthe, Archivist at the Alliance's office in Geneva, I was given access to material which put the YMCA at the heart of concern for the uprooted long in advance of the formation of a formal committee.

Immediately following the first world war, hundreds of thousands of impoverished and displaced Europeans left their homelands for a new life in the USA, UK or Latin America. They moved to the ports of embarkation by the most primitive means of transport and at each border or rail station they were met by the YMCA.

They were given food, advice and protected from avaricious and bullying officials by both professional and volunteer YMCA personnel. When they reached their country of asylum, they were once more assisted by National and local YMCAs in family re-unification, onward transit to their final destination and advice on housing and employment. And there exists documentary evidence detailing such work.

Now this would be quite a revelation if it stood alone but a most telling fact is that this enormous task was based upon what had been done by YMCAs across Europe and the USA in 1902 with hundreds of thousands of Russian Jews who had fled the murderous pogroms in Russia. This was coordinated by the World Committee of the YMCA (later the World Alliance of YMCAs) and was less than 50 years after Henri Dunant, a member of the Geneva YMCA and of the World Committee, published his famous report which led to the formation of the International Red Cross.

The end of the second world in Europe saw some 20,000,000 refugees and displaced persons scattered throughout the continent. The day following the formal end of the war, two World Alliance representatives left the UK for an extended fact finding trip and on that same day, a member of the World YWCA crossed from Switzerland into Germany to map out work for our sister organization.

What followed were programmes of assistance by the YMCA/YWCA working together which today beggar belief. It encompassed Germany, Austria, Trieste, France, Belgium and England.

The year 1947 saw the first armed conflict in what had been Palestine and the establishment of the State of Israel. Thousands of Palestinians were displaced and the YMCAs of Lebanon and Egypt were early at work. So too was the YMCA of Jordan – born in a tent in the desert near Jericho – and led by the indomitable Labib Nasir.

It became clear that the World Alliance needed a specialized committee to deal with an ever increasing work load and in June 1954 the Standing Committee for work with Refugees and Migrants was born. It served refugees and displaced people on every continent and in its time was described more than once as the conscience of the Movement in international affairs.

The documentation relating to the work of the Committee stands some two metres high. To reduce this to a single dossier may take some time.

Jim (Thomson)

One of the ideas shared at the WFYR in Hong Kong, which was also raised through my report back to the membership through the September 2010 edition of the Newsletter, was the subject of widening our membership base.

The idea was first put to good use in Canada where there exists three main Y's Retired Chapters split by time zones. They realised that their membership was static or falling, plus there were requests from 'long standing lay people' (this doesn't mean lay people standing for a long time – it means people who have given many years of valuable volunteer time) for the extension of the important work of the YMCA.

I need not tell you that many have given a lifetime of service to the Movement and when they stand down from office, often very sadly have little or no contact with the Association they have assisted and served.

Therefore the Canadians agreed that they would invite and welcome into membership lay people who had served for a minimum of seven years in any local Association setting.

With this in mind, the subject was raised at the recent Y's Retired of UK Reunion in Birmingham and at that meeting, it was agreed to ask you, the membership, to give a view.

Therefore, I would suggest that if you feel strongly about this matter and are opposed to such a suggestion, you kindly write or email the President at the following address, with your thoughts.

It would be advantageous if you could respond to President Jim by 21st March 2011.

Many thanks
David H Smith-Editor

(Mr Jim Lamb
31 David Bull Way, Milton
Cambridge, CB24 6DP
01223 440228)

FOUR THINGS YOU PROBABLY NEVER KNEW YOUR MOBILE PHONE COULD DO !!!

There are a few things that can be done in times of grave emergencies. Your mobile phone can actually be a life saver or an emergency tool for survival. Check out the things that you can do with it:

FIRST - Emergency

The Emergency Number worldwide for all Mobile Phones is 112. If you find yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an emergency, dial 112 and your mobile will search any existing network in your area to establish the emergency number for you, and interestingly this number 112 can be dialled even if the keypad is locked. This works on all phones worldwide and is free. [It is the equivalent of 000.](#)

SECOND - Have you locked your keys in the car?

Does your car have remote keyless entry? This may come in handy someday. Good reason to own a cell phone:

If you lock your keys in the car and the spare keys are at home, call someone at home on their mobile phone from your cell phone.

Hold your cell phone about a foot from your car door and have the person at your home press the unlock button, holding it near the mobile phone on their end. Your car will unlock. Saves someone from having to drive your keys to you. Distance is no object. You could be [thousands](#) of miles away, and if you can reach someone who has the other 'remote' for your car, you can unlock the doors (or the trunk).

Editor's Note: I didn't believe this when I heard about it! I rang my daughter in Sydney from Perth when we went on holiday. She had the spare car key. We tried it out and it unlocked our car over a mobile phone!

THIRD - Hidden Battery Power

To activate, press the keys *3370# (remember the asterisk). Do this when the phone is almost dead. Your mobile will restart in a special way with this new reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery life. This reserve will get re charged when you charge your mobile next time. This secret is in the fine print in most phone manuals. Most people however skip this information without realising.

FOURTH - How to disable a STOLEN mobile phone?

To check your Mobile phone's serial number, key in the following digits on your phone: * # 0 6 # [Ensure you put an asterisk BEFORE the #06# sequence.](#) A 15 digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe. If your phone [ever](#) get stolen, you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will then be able to block your handset so even if the thief changes the SIM card, your phone will be totally useless. You probably won't get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't use/sell it either. If everybody done this, there would be no point in people stealing mobile phones.

This secret is also in the fine print of most mobile phone manuals. It was created for the very purpose of trying to prevent phones from being stolen.

Also -ATM PIN Numb Reversal - Good to Know !!

If you should ever be forced by a robber to withdraw money from an ATM machine, you can notify the police by entering your PIN # in reverse. For example, if your pin number is 1234, then you would put in 4321. The ATM system recognizes that your PIN number is backwards from the ATM card you placed in the machine. The machine will still give you the money you requested, but unknown to the robber, the police will be immediately dispatched to the location.

All ATM's carry this emergency sequencer by law.

This information was recently broadcast on by Crime Stoppers however it is seldom used because people just don't know about it.

This is the kind of information people don't mind receiving, so pass it on to your family and friends

Proposed cuts to the National Health Service.

The British Medical Association has consulted widely on the new Prime Minister David Cameron's health care proposals.

The Allergists voted to scratch it, but the Dermatologists advised not to make any rash moves.

The Gastroenterologists had a sort of a gut feeling about it, but the neurologists thought the Administration had a lot of nerve.

The Obstetricians felt they were all labouring under a misconception.

Ophthalmologists considered the idea short-sighted.

Pathologists yelled, "Over my dead body!" while the Paediatricians said, "Oh, Grow up!"

The Psychiatrists thought the whole idea was madness, while the Radiologists could see right through it.

The Surgeons were fed up with the cuts and decided to wash their hands of the whole thing. The ENT specialists didn't swallow it, and just wouldn't hear of it.

The Pharmacologists thought it was a bitter pill to swallow, and the Plastic Surgeons said, "This puts a whole new face on the matter...."

The Podiatrists thought it was a step forward, but the Urologists were pissed off at the whole idea.

The Anaesthetists thought the whole idea was a gas, but the Cardiologists didn't have the heart to say no.

The Dentists are fed up to the back teeth with politicians. In the end, the Proctologists won out, leaving the entire decision up to the idiots in London.

Thanks Peter (Brookes) appropriately expressive!!

CHRIS JONES
MR YMCA OF HERRINGTON BURN

Chris was one of the larger than life figures that I met when I moved to the North East to become the Regional Secretary for the North East, Yorkshire and North East Lincolnshire regions, in 1989.

As General Secretary (he never aspired to be a Chief Executive!!) of Herrington Burn YMCA he ran a bustling and eclectic association in one of the more disadvantaged communities in the Sunderland area. It was an association that provided a plethora of activities and opportunities for the whole community, including a restaurant outside which people queued daily for their lunches; and it was good, home cooking.

The Association also offered training opportunities for young people providing them with skills that would help them to secure employment, and he worked closely with the local secondary schools, providing alternative education opportunities to those for whom 'normal' schooling was not appropriate. I remember visiting Herrington Burn one day and a very proud Chris showed me a letter addressed to 'The Headmaster, Herrington Burn YMCA'.

Apart from running this busy centre, Chris was also committed to outdoor education and, at its peak, the Association had centres including Otterburn Hall in Northumberland, Tavool House on the island of Mull and Weardale House in County Durham. These centres provided access to the outdoors for hundreds of young people over the years, from all parts of the country. The annual 'holiday' to Mull was a highlight of the calendar for the Association when Chris and his 'team' would decamp for a fortnight to Tavool House and this would be Chris' holiday.

When Chris left the YMCA he continued his career in community development. He became the landlord of the Rookhope Inn, a pub in the heart of this tiny community in Weardale, which became a centre for the residents, as well as a welcome resting place for those participating in the coast to coast cycle ride. Latterly, he had been developing a similar project in Stanhope, which is where he went to live.

Chris' health began to deteriorate about 18 months ago and he spent long periods in hospital undergoing treatment. Although physically inactive he maintained his interests in the various projects in which he was involved from his hospital bed.

Sadly Chris died in mid January and a service of celebration and thanksgiving for his life took place at St. Oswald's Church, Shiney Row on Monday 7th February conducted by the Parish Priest and by one of the former Brothers of Alnmouth Priory, now a Parish Priest in Grimethorpe, Yorkshire.

A packed Church, full of people whom Chris had supported over the years, particularly young people, gave thanks for his life, his work and his contribution to so many projects aimed at improving lives.

Of all the things that Chris will be remembered for: his big heart, his sense of humour, his compassion, his passion for young people, his generosity, the greatest will be his commitment to support, encourage and work with young people, many of whom suffered significant disadvantages. He had time for people and he had the knack of being able to get the best out of them.

Chris will be sadly missed, a big man and good friend to many.

Michael (King)

Thank you Mike, for being in attendance on behalf of the YMCA. Editor

Liverpudlians – we love you (The last one is funny...)

A Primary Teacher explains to her class that she is a Liverpool fan.

She asks her students to raise their hands if they too are Liverpool fans. Everyone in the class raises their hand except one little girl. The teacher looks at the girl with surprise and says, 'Mary, why didn't you raise your hand?'

'Because I'm not a Liverpool fan,' she replied.

The teacher, still shocked, asked, 'Well, if you are not a Liverpool fan, then who are you a fan of?' 'I am a Man United fan, and proud of it,' Mary replied.

The teacher could not believe her ears. 'Mary, why, pray tell, why are you a Man United fan?' 'Because my mum is a Man United fan, and my dad is a Man United fan, so I'm a Man United fan too!' 'Well,' said the teacher in an obviously annoyed tone, 'that is no reason for you to be a Man United fan.

You don't have to be just like your parents all of the time... What if your mum was a prostitute and your dad was a drug addict, what would you be then?'

'Then,' Mary smiled, 'I'd be a Liverpool fan.

An Australian, an Irishman and a Scouser are in a bar.

They're staring at another man sitting on his own at a table in the corner. He's so familiar, and not recognizing him is driving them mad. They stare and stare, until suddenly the Irishman twigs: 'My God, it's Jesus!'

Sure enough, it is Jesus, nursing a pint. Thrilled, they send him over a pint of Guinness, a pint of Fosters and a pint of bitter. Jesus accepts the drinks, smiles over at the three men, and drinks the pints slowly, one after another. After he's finished the drinks, Jesus approaches the trio. He reaches for the hand of the Irishman and shakes it, thanking him for the Guinness. When he lets go, the Irishman gives a cry of amazement: 'My God! The arthritis I've had for 30 years is gone. It's a miracle!' Jesus then shakes the Aussie's hand, thanking him for the lager. As he lets go, the man's eyes widen in shock. 'Strewth mate, the bad back I've had all my life is completely gone! It's A Miracle.'

Jesus then approaches the Scouser who says, 'Back off, mate, I'm on disability benefit.

A scouser walked into the local job centre, marched straight up to the Counter and said 'Hi, I'm looking for a job'. The man behind the counter replied 'Your timing is amazing.'

We've just got one in from a very wealthy man who wants a chauffeur/bodyguard for his nymphomaniac twin daughters. You'll have to drive around in a big black Mercedes and wear the uniform provided. The hours are a bit long but the meals are provided. You also have to escort the young ladies on their overseas holidays. The Salary package is £200,000 a year'.

The Scouser said 'you're bullsh*tting me!'

The man behind the counter said 'Well you started it!'

Police cordoned off Liverpool City Centre this morning when a suspicious object was discovered in a car. It later turned out to be a Tax Disc.

Thank you to the reprobate that sent these in....!!

MARGARET CHORLEY - EULOGY

Margaret Chorley was born Margaret Costello on 28th December 1913, in the village of Ballinahown near Athlone, Southern Ireland. She was the youngest of 7, had 5 brothers and a sister. The home was a small Lodge, which was part of an estate on which her father worked. Being a free spirit, Margaret decided to come to England in the early thirties, to see what fortune would bring. A fortune-teller had told her she would eventually live in a house with many windows – remember this for later! In the period before the war, she had numerous jobs, mostly waitressing or bar work.

Luckily for Margaret, her elder sister Maura came to England, initially to try to persuade her to return to Ireland, but Maura married and settled here and provided the voice of reason for her younger and more naive sister. When war came to Britain, she volunteered for the Fire Service. They taught her to drive and she spent most of the war driving petrol tankers around the outskirts of London to keep the fire engines going.

Unfortunately, towards the end of the war, coming home very tired one evening, she refused to get out of bed and go to the air raid shelter during a V1 raid. A V1 landed on the opposite side of the street to her flat and she was trapped under rubble for some hours. Although miraculously uninjured, she did suffer from the effects of shock, which sadly put an end to her tanker driving.

After a period of convalescence to help her recover from this ordeal, she was given the job of driving senior military officers to different locations around London. This proved disastrous, owing to her total lack of direction. She would get completely lost, and the police would have to escort her to her destination and then back to base. After a very short time, her chauffeuring career came to an end!

When the war was over, and having fully recovered, she joined the support services organised by the YMCA and YWCA providing welfare services to the troops stationed out in Germany and Austria. Initially stationed in Hamburg and at various other bases around Germany, she once again took on the role of lorry driving. This time it was YMCA Canteen wagons - providing tea and buns to the troops.

It was in Germany that she first met her husband Ewart Chorley. Ewart was the senior YMCA officer for her district and he was called out to settle a dispute between Margaret and some of the girls with which she was billeted. Margaret was a lady of high moral standards and she did not approve of some of the antics of her companions and she wasn't afraid to tell them so.

Ewart came in to sort things out, met Margaret, fell in love with her and they were married in 1949. In 1951 they were working in Austria and it was during this year their son, John was born. In 1953, the family moved back to England with Ewart taking on a YMCA regional job based in Newcastle. In 1956 Ewart took the job as the General Secretary of the YMCA in Portsmouth and the family moved there later that year.

Now we return to the fortune-teller's prophecy that she would live in a house with many windows. The family moved into a large flat situated within the YMCA building in Old Portsmouth. The building had over 100 rooms; each with a window - probably not the type of house that Margaret had imagined, but at least the prophecy came true! Her time at the YMCA was mostly spent as a housewife, but on many occasions during staff shortages or sudden emergencies, she would take on the job of House Keeper or Cleaning Staff Manager for the YMCA and generally helped to keep the place running.

She would also have to play the part of hostess to the YMCA hierarchy at formal luncheons, which she hated doing, but always provided an excellent meal.

When Ewart retired in 1974 they moved into a house in Langstone Road on the eastern side of Portsmouth. Even though retired, Ewart took on the role of stand-in General Secretary. This involved him travelling to numerous locations for periods ranging from two weeks to several months and Margaret would accompany him on many of these trips, visiting: Stockwell, Waltham Forest, Bayswater and the German YMCA, all in London, and further afield: Bath, Coventry, Bournemouth, Windsor, Birmingham, Teeside and even back to Portsmouth for five weeks.

After Ewart's death in 1998, the house started to get too much for Margaret and she was eventually persuaded to move to a retirement flat in Fareham in 2001. She lived there until a bad fall in 2008 necessitated the move to the Red House Care Home, again in Fareham. There she lived in reasonable contentment until another bad fall, and resulting complications led to her death on 20th December 2010, one week short of her 97th birthday.

Margaret had been a free spirit all her life and liked nothing better than to go walking on her own through the countryside and even up mountains when in Austria, without any real concept of danger. On numerous occasions after Ewart's death, I would 'phone her at around 9.30 pm only for there to be no reply. When there was still no answer past 10 pm, I would start getting my coat on to drive over to her to see what was happening. Usually, on the last attempt she would answer the 'phone and say, "I just popped out for a walk". She was still doing this at the age of 90 plus!

There was also the compulsory 'cup of tea'. When anyone called to see her, regardless of whether they actually wanted one or whether she was supposed to be somewhere at a certain time, you had to accept a cup of tea.

Her time keeping, or rather lack of it, was also legendary with many embarrassing moments of late arrivals and missed appointments to her credit. Her only wish when asked what type of funeral she would like was to say "Oh just bury me under a tree somewhere". This is why she is to be buried on the South Downs at the Natural Burial Site near East Meon and why family members and friends are dressed for a walk in the country today.

The Chorleys with the Youngs

