

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear colleagues and friends,

My report for the period under review 2010 comes earlier than usual as the Annual Meeting (Business Meeting) was held in the past two years at the very successful Reunions held in September. Our year ending 31st December gives opportunity for a more prompt report to the membership and 'readers' of the Newsletter in the absence of a Reunion in 2011.

I look back not just for the one year but first to remind you of the healthy development emanating from the renewal of the Y's Retired of the UK some three years ago leading into 2010 with creative energy following the formation of a new committee. This has been realised through establishing procedures of good practice in all aspects of the Y's Retired of the UK. Here I refer to the advent of a new format **Newsletter** built on the previous editors (Reg Wake) fine publications followed by David Smith's undoubted skills in the production of a Newsletter in colour using modern computerised techniques. It has been applauded not just by our members but by the Executive staff of the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees with some articles being recorded in their publication 'Bridges' circulated worldwide! The Newsletter has always been our main means of communication and now augers well for future development as with our website now well established.

An important issue very much in the mind of your committee in 2010/2011 is that of **Membership**. In terms of membership numbers the committee have accepted the fact that to build on the healthy progress established we must increase our membership. To this end we invite all our readers who qualify for membership yet have not taken it out to join! The membership sub' is only £5.00 annually with voluntary contributions to our YMCA Charity 'Secours Speciaux', a fund assisting retired colleagues whose income is often well below any acceptable poverty line and strive to make ends meet often without YMCA nor their country's pensions. I would also draw your attention to our Editor's article in the March Newsletter on the question of lay-members of the YMCA who served the YMCA in any capacity for say over seven years to be invited to join. We ask you to make a positive response on this issue as it affects our present structure.

A highlight of the year has been the second of our two **Reunions** in September held at Woodbrooke, the Quaker Study Centre, Selly Oak, Birmingham. As John Knox has already included a report of the event in a previous Newsletter suffice it for me to share that it was of the best in terms of collegiality. It is a shame that due to the low response following the request in the last Newsletter we could not justify holding the event in 2011. However ongoing partly as a result of the 2010 Reunion is the excellent piece of research Jim Thomson commenced in the autumn, (interim article in this Newsletter), and Sam Johnston's continuing input both relating to the YMCA in times of war for it is an amazing story.

No longer can we say our Treasurer Ray Allen is new to the job! His baptism in all matters of **Y's Retired of the UK finances** is over and the production of properly audited accounts (thanks also to our lay-friend David Bennison) is a revelation of how the funds of the Y's Retired of the UK is in the most healthy state for some years. This of course is partly due to the introduction of Standing Orders – 2010 being the first full year of payment for subs' and donations by way of SOs to our own Charity Secours Speciaux. We have introduced a Discretionary Fund into the accounts making a subvention of £250 annually as from 2011. It was started and supported by an anonymous donation of £550 from a member in 2009. The purpose of the Fund is to support member's attendances at international 'retiree' events such as the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees (WFYR). We invite additional donations to augment this Fund.

We were all delighted to be represented in July 2010 at the **World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees** held in conjunction with the YMCA World Council in Hong Kong. Our representative David Smith returned full of the 'joys of life' to excite us all with his reports in the Newsletter and at the 2010 Reunion. He played his part in the programme assuring all present that the Y's Retired of the UK was in good heart, the applause which followed David's contribution I heard from other delegates was very high indeed!

It will be a surprise to some but not to others to learn that we have a **Constitution** prepared and adopted at Dunford September 1986 – the early days of the Y's Retired. Though legal it does not meet reality as experienced over the years by our long serving Executive Secretary Reg Wake. Thankfully any 'constitution' can be considered to be guidelines for good practice not least on the occasions that 'Election of Officers' is referenced! Your committee looked objectively at the 'constitution' in both 2010 & 2011, appreciated and understood that through the years no volunteers had come forward for election to the committee and to take on 'officer roles'! Consequently were it not for the devotion of our Secretary Reg Wake, late colleagues Geoffrey Peters and Geoffrey Harris the Y's Retired of the UK would have ceased to function! I have referred to this matter earlier in my report of the subsequent action. In the circumstances commonsense has prevailed and agreed by your committee to maintain the 'status quo' into 2011.

Thanks! This is an opportune moment for me to express on your behalf sincere thanks to all the committee members, seven in total – four executives and three in a consultative role. From my position as President I can confirm you have a hard working committee who have diligently attended to all the affairs of the Y's Retired of the UK. Mind you we have been ever thankful for the advent of email as the best means of intercommunication, telephone and post are close seconds!

I am pleased to report a successful year in the life of the Y's Retired of the UK and thank all who have in any way made it possible.

Jim Lamb

President - May 2011

Appendix – Paper 'A' of Annual Meeting



Dear David

Going through some books, I came across Dr William Barclay's article published in the British Weekly in 1961, "The Celestial Errand Boy." It speaks for itself. A tribute to Basil Oliver, who, long passed normal retirement worked for the National Council and who lived in London Central. It will bring back memories to those who knew him; Reg Wake, Derek Shepherd, Brian Rowcliffe, Mrs Rita Simms and probably the YMCA students who were on the 1960-61 Training Course.

It was Harry Stevenson and I who found Basil unconscious on the floor and who afterwards broke into the National Council Offices, to ascertain details of his next of kin. To us he was known as the "soft shoe shuffler," due to the plimsolls that he always wore. In those days, London Central exhibited a spirit that displayed its true Christian character.

Moving on, I thank you for your contribution from E Stanley Jones book. "Christ of Every Road." In my younger days I read nearly all of his publications. It is very sad to learn of the way that the YWCA has gone! No longer a Christian Movement, it has clearly gone astray.

One must ask how has this come about? What has happened to certain local Associations who in the past gave evidence of following clear Christian objectives? Have they succumbed or withdrawn from the organisation (I nearly used the word Movement – but it cannot be called that).

There is a lesson from which the YMCA must learn. There are some Associations that bear the name of Christian, but barely reflect its purpose and mission; there are others, thank God, who realise that without Christ at the centre of their life and work, they have no raison d'etre.

Many Christians will have written off the YWCA and some will have reason to treat the YMCA in a similar manner, especially when local Associations have little or no affiliation with them in their Mission and purpose.

Our Editor, rightly states that we live in dangerous times, we must be aware that the wolves that have devoured the Young Women's Christian Association are prevented from doing the same to its one time counterpart, the Young Men's Christian Association.

As ever Roy (Weaver)

see page three of this Newsletter.

Dear David,
What a lovely place you have retired to. I regret on a daily basis having had to move up here – to second-hand air and among retirees in a M & Stone home, who are only interested in themselves.

Having read your item in the latest 'issue', I was reminded of something that happened to me many years ago whilst at Sheffield, use it if you like

A young Indian resident came to me one night and said, 'I bet I've been to more churches than YOU ever have.' I asked, 'Why, etc?' and he said, all the Christians I've met seem to have something special and I want it. So far only my appetite has been whetted in the different denominations I've been to.'

Some months later, after having been away on a course, he came to me again and said, 'I've been to MORE churches, but all I have discovered, is what is a Christian'. He said, 'It is a man dressed and about to go to church when he is told our toilet is blocked and he rolled up his sleeves and put his arm down and unblocked it. I said that in MY country, it would have had to wait until someone came to work next day and pondered on why he had done such an unpleasant job. The only conclusion I could reach is that he is a Christian and his faith made him put his own needs last'.

We kept in touch for a while after he returned to India and one day he wrote, 'I have joined the Church of South India, for in spite of much poverty they seem happy. I am beginning to find a light at the end of my search, but am what they call a pilgrim, but a happier one'.

Just occasionally, I'm able to feel useful, these days. For instance, I was fortunate to have a hip operation in a private hospital (under the NHS).

All the rooms had 'Mr., Mrs., Miss' on doors except mine which was labelled 'RON'. Staff visited me often and I was told, 'We like coming in to see you, because you ask us how WE are – don't moan and groan like so many'. I had three of the nurses talk about their problems, to me (one about family wanting to arrange a marriage) and didn't tell them what to do, but used the ploy of saying, 'I know someone in similar circumstances, and they

One Physio has repaid me by finding me a (free) carer, for six weeks (my wife has very short-term memory loss) and I've managed to find funds to pay her to come in occasionally. She's a fantastic young woman, for whom the title of carer is not enough.

Do hope you and yours are well,
Best wishes.
(Ron Lane – lastly at Croydon)
5 Knights Court,
550 Kenilworth Rd.,
Balsall Common,
Coventry
CV7 7DQ

If you had entered the London Central YMCA at my elbow on a certain November day, you would have seen facing you a notice saying that Basil Oliver had died, and that his funeral was to be on the date given, and that during the next week there was to be a memorial service. You would naturally have deduced that Basil Oliver was a very famous man and a very important person, since his death was to be marked with such tokens of affection and respect.

In one sense you would have been right, and in another you would have been wrong. Everyone who knows about London Central YMCA certainly knew Basil Oliver, but I don't suppose anyone outside had ever heard of him. I am sure that his Master Jesus Christ knew him very well.

Basil Oliver was eighty-five years of age when he died, and if you liked, you could have described him as the oldest office-boy in London. Many years ago he lost his wife, and he came to London from the north. More than thirty years ago he came to stay in London Central YMCA and since then he had never stayed anywhere else. When he stopped work, he made himself so generally useful about the place that a job was found for him. He collected the letters, went for the stamps, ran general errands, and did all kinds of odd jobs.

It was Basil who went and bought the Sunday newspapers for the other members of staff every Sunday morning. It was Basil who presided behind the tea and coffee in the lounge on a Sunday afternoon. You couldn't be about the place for a couple of days without seeing him, cheerful, smiling, padding about in the rubber-soled canvas shoes he always wore without an overcoat summer or winter, always stepping quickly about, kindly, ready to help anyone, and breathing goodwill.

He wasn't ill for long. For a week or two he was clearly failing; then one Sunday afternoon when he did not come down to serve in the buffet as usual, they went up to his room to see what keeping him, and they found him unconscious on the floor. He died the next morning.

It is only now that we are discovering half the things that Basil Oliver did. Now we know that he directed boys about London, that he met them off trains, that he was ready with practical help when practical help was needed, that he did good for years without letting his right hand know what his left hand was doing; that, being dead, he yet speaks; that his works follows him.

Basil was a supremely happy man – you had only to look at him to know that. He was a supremely useful man – you had only to see him on his man self-appointed chores to see that. He did not make a parade of his religion – but the rector of the famous parish church of St Giles was proud to officiate at the funeral of one who never missed a service in his church. He was a supremely kind man – although he was not a rich man, and died with hardly a couple of pounds in his possession.

You see, the trouble of writing about Basil Oliver is that all the things he did were little things, that is, as the world sees them – but little things which mean so much. He is a brilliant example of a man who found both joy for himself and love from others by simply doing the little things that came to his hand in the place where life had set him.

He might have been a lonely man, but he had thousands of friends. He might have been an unhappy man, but he radiated happiness in helping others in simple ordinary ways.

Basil Oliver would have been shocked at the comparison, but I cannot help thinking of the conversation of two working-men heard on a London bus when the Rev. Dick Sheppard died. 'So poor Dick Sheppard's dead,' the one said to the other, and the other replied: 'None of your poor Dick Sheppard here. God will be right glad to have him.'

Those of us to whom London Central has become a home from home throughout the years, will not forget the little old man whom everybody knew, and who was never happy unless he was doing something for some one, who in the evenings used to sit in the lounge, a friend to all. And I am sure that his Master said to him when he arrived in heaven – still, I am sure, looking for something to do –

'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your Master.'

If there is a job for a kind of celestial errand boy in heaven, Basil Oliver has it now! And he would rather it was that way, for a crown and a throne would only embarrass him.

(Submitted by Roy Weaver)

THOUGHTS & PRAYERS FOR THE JAPANESE YMCA

Many thanks for keeping me in touch with what clearly is a horrendous and catastrophic situation. One cannot help but admire the stoicism demonstrated by the people of Japan in coping with the devastation.

Best regards David, **Roger (Hunt)**

Hi Dave,

The devastation we saw on television was beyond horrifying, what must it have been like (and still) to be there!! As an ex boater, just watching what the water did to the houses and boats was awful. **Vic (Hills)**

Can you please pass on Halton YMCA's most sincere condolences to the Japanese Movement as we are all shocked as well as saddened to hear the tragic news coming out of Japan over the weekend. Please keep me up to date with any other news from the Japanese Movement and we will all be thinking of our colleagues in Japan and praying for them in these most tragic and terrible times.

Take care, very best wishes – **John (Mackie)** Halton YMCA

Y's Retired of UK ANNUAL MEETING – MARCH 2011 - MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS/OFFICERS

Jim Lamb (President) Reg Wake (Secretary) Ray Allen (Treasurer) David H Smith (Editor) Colin Mawby, Rupert George, Sam Johnston

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Business meeting held at Woodbrooke College on 23rd September 2010 having been circulated, were received.

MATTERS ARISING

(Minute 4 Transfer of funds to Secours Speciaux at £763.25 was confirmed. (not £673.25 as Minuted on account of subvention from general funds (£1000) omitted from initial statement).

- (minute 5) The recommended increase in annual subvention from general funds from £100 to £200 in favour of Secours Speciaux was confirmed with effect in financial year ending 2010.
- (minute 6) As requested, officers approved an annual subvention from general funds of £250 in favour of the Discretionary Fund with effect in financial year ending 2010.
- (minute 7) Reported that officers had deferred the requested contact with Dr Clyde Binfield on the basis that Jim Thomson had subsequently arranged to visit the World Alliance of YMCAs Archives to research the subject "The Work of the YMCA with Civilians in Times of Disaster and Conflict". Noted that an intermediate report has been published in the March 2011 Newsletter.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Had been circulated and was warmly received. To form the cover page of the May issue of the Newsletter. A copy of the report to be attached to the minutes.

Append – paper 'A'

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

An audited statement had been circulated and was received. Noted that closing credit balance amounted to £4643.97 comprising General Fund £2491.72, pending transfer to Secours Speciaux of £1582.25 and Discretionary Fund of £570. A copy of the statement to be attached to the minutes.

Append – paper 'B'

Treasurer had expressed particular appreciation of the voluntary service of David Bennison as Auditor and this was warmly endorsed. Payment of membership subscriptions and donations to Secours Speciaux by Bankers Order had been beneficial and more general usage of such arrangements was strongly recommended.

MEMBERSHIP

Register as at September 2010	145 (plus spouses)	Losses by death as at March 2011	5
New Entrants as at March 2011	1	Total as at March 2011	141 (plus spouses)

Note: Numbers include 16 widows previously included as 'spouses' now registered in own right for Newsletter mailing.

Arising from Canadian input at WFYR Conference, David H Smith had proposed consideration of invitations to membership being extended to qualified lay leadership. A paper sounding membership opinion had been published in the Newsletter and the matter to be considered in the light of responses.

Append – paper 'C'

CONSTITUTION

Copies of the Constitution had been circulated. Although formulated circa 1985/86 and with the exception of the clause dealing with cyclical change and election of officers, the document was seen to be substantially valid. Further review suggested requisite changes in the titles of National Council of YMCAs Departments and of the Association of Professional Staff APS.

Append – paper 'D'

The issue of cyclical change and election of officers was reviewed. The provision had proved to be impracticable in the absence of candidates willing to stand for office. In the interests of continuity, members in office had continued to serve beyond their initial term, or in the happy circumstances of current holders, had volunteered to serve. It was accepted that current circumstances made strict observance of the constitutional provision impracticable and that the status quo should continue for the foreseeable future.

WFYR MATTERS

David H Smith had been able to represent Y's Retired at the WFYR Conference in Hong Kong and his report was received for attachment to the minutes

(Sept 2010 Newsletter)

Append – paper 'E'

For report purposes, liberty was taken to divide two strands in Y's Retirement involvement with WFYR viz:

- Promotion of the worldwide fellowship of YMCA Retirees - paper for attachment to the minutes **Append – paper 'F'**
- Support and involvement with Secours Speciaux for which programmed WFYR is accountable to the World Alliance through a widely representative ad hoc committee. See Secours Speciaux report.

SECOURS SPECIAUX

As reported at minute 5 (statement of accounts) member donations and subventions amounted to £1582.25 being £783.25 in year 2009 and £799 in year 2010. An earlier problem in arrangement of transfer of funds to Secours Speciaux committee held in Hong Kong in July 2010 to be reflected in a position paper to be attached to the minutes.

Append – paper 'G'

Y's RETIRED OF UK BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - A report was received from David H Smith, Editor of the Newsletters and was attached to the minutes.

Append – paper 'H'

SECRETARY – REG WAKE



Y's Retired of the UK Treasurer's Report for Year ending 2010

I have been Treasurer for nearly two years now, and after getting the accounts for 2009 sorted out we are now on an even keel. I have enlisted the help of David Bennison who has been kind enough to examine both 2009 and 2010 accounts and produce balance sheets.

In 2010 there were 67 members who paid their subscriptions and 44 of those were by Standing Order. Donations to Secours Speciaux have been good and I shall be transferring £1582.25 to their account - plus £200 subvention from general funds, as agreed at the AGM in September 2010. In total £1782.25 will be transferred to the Secours Speciaux account.

The Conference in September had a balance of £28 and along with a collection of £130, was donated to Secours Speciaux. This is included in the total to be transferred.

Our subvention of £100 to the World Fellowship of Y's Retired continues.

May I remind members who have not paid their subscriptions yet, and also thank everyone for their support for me as a 'new boy'.

The bank balance is reasonably healthy, and with the possibility of having Lay Membership, this will improve, and could help us to top up the discretionary fund.

Ray Allen

Hon. Treasurer - March 2011

Append 'B' of Annual Meeting

Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2010

	2010 £	2009 £
Receipts		
Member Subscriptions	340.00	245.00
Donations	0.00	0.00
Donations (TrustFund)	20.00	550.00
Secours Spéciaux	819.00	663.25
Bank Interest	0.00	56.90
Total	1,179.00	1,515.15
Payments		
Grants	1,000.00	0.00
Secours Spéciaux	0.00	0.00
Trust Fund Payments	0.00	0.00
Secretary Expenses	0.00	57.87
Administration	334.85	202.94
Total	1334.85	260.81
Surplus for the Year	-155.85	1,254.34
Balances		
Balance at 1 January 10	4799.82	3,545.38
Surplus for the Year	-155.85	1,254.34
Balance at 31 Dec 10	4,643.97	4,799.72
<i>represented by:</i>		
Bank Balance	4,643.97	4,799.82
Cash in Hand	0.00	0.00
Total assets	4,643.97	4,799.82
<i>held as Funds</i>		
General	2491.72	3486.57
Secours Spéciaux	1582.25	763.25
Discretionary Trust Fund	570.00	
Total Funds	4,643.97	4,799.82

Ray Allen
Hon Treasurer

I certify that I have examined these accounts and the associated financial records.

In my opinion, the accounts are an accurate record of the financial transactions of Y's Retired in the UK during 2010, and of its balances on 31st December 2010.

David Bennison
11 March 2011

Further to the above report I want to explain one or two things that may not seem too clear in the format of this particular Balance Sheet.

The grant that was paid was towards a member's expenses to attend the WFYR Conference in Hong Kong last year. It was agreed that £500 would come from the General Fund and the same amount from the Trust Fund. I omitted to transfer the £500 from the Trust Fund, so it is appearing to have more in it than it does. I also omitted to take £250 from the General Fund and place into the Trust Fund. It was agreed at the AGM September 2010, to transfer this amount each year to build up the Trust Fund. The amount in the Trust Fund for the purpose of this Balance Sheet should be £320.

Similarly, I omitted to transfer the £200 from the General Fund to the Secours Speciaux Fund, this was also agreed at the AGM. This should read £1782.25. The General Fund should now read £2541.72.

The administration costs include expenses to the Secretary and the Editor, and also our subvention of £100 to the World Fellowship of Y's Retired.

I will be looking at changing the format of the Balance Sheet for the end of 2011 accounts, so that it becomes easier to read. Please accept my apologies for any confusion. **Ray Allen (Treasurer)**

As you can see from the accounts of last year (2010) only 67 members paid their subs (44 through Standing Orders) just less than half the membership! Let us sincerely hope 2011 gives a higher figure. I will attach a Standing Order form to this email so that those who have a forgetful nature, can use the Standing Order which once established, will send in the membership dues automatically (£5 membership plus £5 Secours Speciaux) £10 per annum. (Editor)

WIDENING OUR MEMBERSHIP

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, they 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)

Append – paper 'C'

CONSTITUTION AND BYELAWS

Any member wishing to be sent a copy of the present Constitution and Byelaws please don't hesitate to contact the Secretary, Reg Wake, who will arrange for a copy to be sent to you by email.

Append – paper 'D'

EDITOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE AGM REPORTS

It was on Friday 8th February 2008 that I first wrote to Reg after reading in the previous December newsletter of the possible demise of Y's Retired. Little did I know that just under three years later, I would be invited to represent Y's Retired of UK and attend the 4th World Conference of WFYR in Hong Kong, a place that gave me so many happy memories during my YMCA career.

I was grateful that Rev John Knox was unable to attend as coincidentally he was busy conducting his Son's wedding up in Scotland, so I grabbed the opportunity with both hands and one good leg. Meeting 34 Y's Retired colleagues from 15 countries spread across the four continents was just wonderfully rich and rewarding, especially being able to regularly worship together.

My report to them was similar to this one, as it emphasised the value of electronic communication, a media that has brought us all together and continues to do so. The power of email, face-book, blogging, twitter, etc has been proven over recent middle eastern events.

It presented to our very own Y's Retired an opportunity to share information, jokes, articles, eulogies of great colleagues and characters, both staff and lay and continues to give us all the opportunity to keep in touch with old friends and acquaintances.

Where has the last three years gone – the near completion of 18 bi – monthly newsletters is around the corner and it seems like only yesterday that I started.

I must pay thanks to Jim for his regular President's slot which he always completes in very good time, only his picture has recently changed from one some 15 years ago, but if I hadn't told you, you would not have known.

Thanks to Reg who kindly and gently set me on the right path, ensuring that the 'grist' was evident in all newsletters; he knows so many and is inspirational on facts and figures.

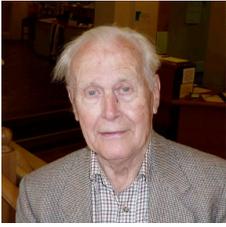
And thanks to my own personal "wordsmith" Sue, who scans every edition to ensure it reads well and makes sense.

Thanks also to those of you who have kindly emailed or written back to me letting me know that you are enjoying the content and find it stimulating.

But we should all be grateful and offer our thanks to Herts YMCA, the CEO Robin Webb, and his staff member Lorraine Stocken without whom the printed version would not be distributed, and because Herts YMCA kindly do this as their donation to us, the Officers are able to send more monies to Secours Speciaux year on year.

Now, "Back To The Future." **David H Smith EDITOR**

Append – paper 'H'



Our letterheads and newsletters carry the strap line 'Affiliated to the World Fellowship of Retirees' but it seems possible that not all members will be aware of that Organisation's origins, purpose and achievements. The following overview may be of interest.

Historical:

Back in 1937, the then International Association of Retired Directors (IARD) became an international small organisation when Canada joined with chapters of IARD. At a later stage, Canada's entry led to a change of title to NAFYR (North American Fellowship of YMCA Retirees). It was not until circa 1991/1994 that contact was again made with YMCA Retirees in other countries. Six countries became involved - Australia, England (UK), India, Japan, Sri Lanka, Uruguay with at least another ten countries showing interest. As a result of enthusiasm raised, fifteen delegates and spouses attended the IARD triennial conference of 1994 held in Canada. The event culminated in the foundation of WFYR with Ys Retired of the UK as a founder member. The prime objective was taken to be development of contacts at international level, to communicate, to share and support one another. (Of possible interest, the UK delegation comprised Jim Thomson, Reg Wake, the late Will Steele and Geoffrey Palmer with Dr Clyde Binfield attending as a guest speaker).

Development:

WFYR gatherings were held as an element in succeeding triennial conferences of NAFYR. The number of retirees of retiree organisations expanded in global spread and in numerical strength. Organisational infrastructure developed with the appointment of Vice Chairs responsible for promotion of WFYR objectives and importantly as correspondence with the WFYR Journal 'Bridges'. Areas represented came to included: Africa, South Asia, Latin America/Caribbean, North America, East Asia, Europe and Oceania. John Knox (Scotland) succeeded Egon Slopianka as Link for Europe.

The elected Chair/President of NAFYR, served for a three year term as Chair of WFYR. Without exception Chairmen have provided dynamic leadership, responsible for innovation in organisational terms and in particular for positive relationships with the World Council of YMCAs. This had importance in furthering the concerns of retirees.

Not without significance, a key issue of the foundation meeting Agenda was that of unsecured retirement, the substantial number of national movements with no or inadequate pension provisions for their staff, and the consequent financial hardship encountered especially in emergencies of for example, as essential medical treatments. The issue has been and continues to be the subject of special studies and representations but to date without resolution. In such light, WFYR has adopted the promotion of support for Secours Speciaux and information in this connection is the subject of a separate report.

During years of full-time YMCA service, the majority of us have found satisfaction and challenge in our awareness of belonging to a world-wide movement. WFYR exists in order that fellowship and sense of shared purpose enjoyed while in service need not and should not be lost with retirement.

Reg Wake

Append – paper 'F'

Those of us now 'long in the tooth' may recall that appeals for financial support of SS featured in BSA/AOS Conferences back in the 1950s. Although the cause has long been familiar its origins and subsequent developments are perhaps less well known. Herewith, some background as of possible interest.

Historical:

In the 1950s, YMCAs in Eastern Europe were forced to close in the wake of communist regimes. Many staff and volunteers were left with little or no means to meet pressing needs and SS was initiated by Anna Limbert, the wife of the then Secretary General of the World Alliance. Subsequently, the World Alliance decided to lend more active support to the initiative while retaining the voluntary nature and scope of the programme. Until the 1980s, the fund was exclusively supportive of YMCA persons in Eastern Europe but in 1983 concern extended to hardships suffered by a growing number of YMCA staff in other parts of the world who retired without or at best minimal pension benefit. While the initial SS concept of responses to 'emergency' cases continued, NAFYR established a 'Staff Security Fund' expressly to meet urgent needs arising from unsecured retirement. A decision was taken in 1998 to combine the two funds and SS/SS came into being. For many years the SS/SS fund was substantially supported by YMCA retirees in the USA and Canada with contributions also from Germany, the UK and several other countries. In 1997 SS/SS was designated a priority by WFYR and its regional affiliates, including the Ys Retired of the UK.

Developments:

An ad hoc committee expanded to be widely geographically representative linked with WFYR and responsible to the World Alliance for promotion and detailed administration of the programme. Criteria and mechanisms for identifying cases of hardship and the screening of applications were refined. Residential meetings have coincided with World Alliance Executive Meetings with business at other times conducted by teleconference and/or email.

Through time, a number of studies and representations by WFYR and others have emphasised the basic problem of unsecured retirement and having investigated ways and mean of encouraging National Movements without pension plans to initiate same or to generate capital for the assistance of staff who experience hardship on retirement or redundancy. While the World Alliance has been sympathetic the problem remains unresolved.

Applications for assistance under 'emergency' type cases continue to be received, mainly from retirees in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. More recent trends, possibly reflecting global economies, show an increase in hardship cases arising from unsecured retirement and redundancies. This development had major exposure at the WFYR/SS Meeting of July 2010 in Hong Kong, at which David H Smith represented me as your SS representative.

The absence of a 'global retirement initiative' being accepted, was proposed as first step to split the current SS with 70% for the current focus of emergencies and 30% for retirement requests. Setting percentages would protect the traditional focus on emergencies, 30% for retirement cases would be a firewall; once spent the 70% could not be invaded, The proposal was warmly supported and referred to other committee members for comment. Also at the meetings, a concern was expressed about transparencies and accountability. It was accepted that while committee members received data covering income and expenditure and the nature of applications and grants made, such information was not always widely available to all sponsoring bodies. The SS Committee Chairperson, Bonnie Mairs, had undertaken to examine ways and means for the wider promulgation of relevant data.

In-house:

While by no means complacent our Officers share a sense of satisfaction in the support given to Secours Speciaux by Ys Retired members to whom great thanks are due. Payment of membership subscriptions by bank standing order, with 50% allocated to SS has proved beneficial. As reported elsewhere the Officers had felt justified in making the uplift of the annual subvention on general funds from £100 to £200 as strongly supported by participants in the 2010 Reunion. Please see statement of accounts for 2010 for performance figures.

Reg Wake 2011

Append – paper 'G'



His love of Warwickshire County Cricket Club remained with him throughout his life.

His father, a great influence, taught him to play the piano. He found he had a natural gift at being able to listen to a piece of music and then to play it. Music was a great love in his life. He took training for his fine voice and became an active member of Birmingham Forward Operatic Company, for many years participating in concerts and pantomimes. He joined many church choirs throughout his life.

The Second World War was a big influence in Norman's life and unfortunately he lost many friends. He enlisted in the Royal Corps of signals in 1942 and became a wireless operator, promoted to Lance Corporal. He saw service with the First Army campaign through North Africa, and took part in the Anzio Landing in Italy.

He left the Army with the rank of Sergeant. Subsequently he always kept faith with his fellow veterans, attending First Army reunions, becoming chairman of the Lincoln branch. As lay chaplain he was honoured to dedicate a First Army Memorial Stone and a First Army Standard at the National Arboretum near Lichfield.

Returning home after the war, he married Barbara on October 19th 1946. They both worked for many years at Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds in Birmingham. They also acquired numerous sweet and grocery shops in the area.

Michael arrived in 1956 and Tony followed in 1958.

Norman continued his education, passing his Chartered Institute of Secretary exams in 1956 and taking many courses with the Open University.

He was one of the first graduates to be awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974.

Norman leaves their two sons, Michael and Tony, daughter in law Christine, grandchildren Luke, Naomi, Kevin, Daniel and Joseph, and great grandson Toby.

In this year the family moved to Cottingham, Leicestershire when Norman took up a post in the Shoe and Allied Trades Research Association. He looked however for a more vocational career and found it in the YMCA.

In 1978 he and Barbara moved to Croydon to manage the largest residential YMCA in the country. It was a demanding but rewarding job for them both. Their work was greatly appreciated and Norman was appointed to the National Board.

In retirement he continued his association and was for a while on the YMCA Board in Lincoln. Norman and Barbara then lived in nearby Bardney, having retired to Lincolnshire from Eastbourne in 1985.

The Church was central in Norman's life. He became a Reader in 1963, and was chairman of his deanery synod in 1975. He was much in demand as a Reader until his retirement from the office in 2002, but both he and Barbara were always active volunteers, helping out for example with 'Meals on Wheels', newspaper reading for the blind, and visiting patients in hospital.

But undoubtedly their greatest achievement was the setting up and management of the Edward King Institute for Ministry Development in 1987. This became a very busy national voluntary organization, running consultations all over the country. When its work with clergy and laity was absorbed into official church programmes, the institute closed down, giving a substantial sum to the newly founded Lincoln School of Theology. For his outstanding service Norman was awarded the Cross of St Augustine.

Barbara was Norman's best friend as well as ever-loving wife for 64 years – they had just celebrated their wedding anniversary in the nursing home that has cared for them since July. Barbara has always been at Norman's side, and so she remained until he died, peacefully in his sleep.

Two Irishmen were standing at the base of a flagpole, looking up.

A blonde walks by and asked them what they were doing. Paddy replied, 'We're supposed to be finding the height of this flagpole but we don't have a ladder.'

The blonde took out an adjustable spanner from her bag, loosened a few bolts and laid the flagpole down. She got a tape measure out of her pocket, took a few measurements and announced that it was 18 feet 6 inches.

Then, she walked off.

Mick said to Paddy, 'Isn't that just like a blonde! We need the height, and she gives us the length!