



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



**MARCH 2015**

[www.yretired.co.uk](http://www.yretired.co.uk)

**GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT**



**Dear friends and  
colleagues  
greetings**

I am sure all members are aware from experience in working for or serving the YMCA as Laypersons over many years Annual Reports by nature of the occasion can be a little repetitive! That's my excuse anyway for the Y's Retired of the UK has experienced a rather uneventful year other than the points shared below!

You're elected committee has served the managerial needs of the Y's Retired of the UK admirably over the year under review including the major changeover in committee members due to retirement and loss by death. You will join me I am sure in expressing again our deep appreciation to Reg Wake for his outstanding and unstinting service to the 'Y's Retired of the UK' since its formation resulting in the appointment of a fine successor in Vic Hills as Executive Secretary. I am pleased to add that Vic has settled down extremely well following a smooth 'handover' with Reg and can report that Reg will continue as a consultant to the committee holding the 'brief' of overseeing Secours Speciaux and WFYR. It was with deep sadness that we learned of the death of Rev John Knox who served as an exemplary leader with Scottish colleagues and as our 'rep' for Europe with the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees, also as an executive member of the Y's Retired of the UK committee he represented us in attending the WFYR meeting in Estes Park, Colorado USA after which he gave a well prepared report through our Newsletter. Replacing John Knox is Keith Rennie, to be ratified by the Scottish Group at their meeting in May 2015. Keith was a strong member of the British YMCA Urban Group. The new appointments will be ratified and recorded at the pending AGM.

Losses by death - reported during 2014:- Louis Lewis, John Knox, Joe Renshaw, Fred Evans and Joyce Lamb, we record prayerful thoughts for their service to the YMCA and bereaved families.

The Finance Report being prepared by our treasurer Ray Allen together with the Auditor David Bennison will reveal a sound financial year with all budgeted requirements met. I share here that if we are to play our part with the WFYR and be represented at appropriate international events, only held occasionally, (!) we will need to strengthen the Trust Fund. Donations to the 'Y's Retired of the UK' through Ray Allen, marked Trust Fund, will be much appreciated.

The three Reunion Groups South West, Cambridge and Scottish have enjoyed their respective 'gatherings' during the year and report good attendances. If any member would like to arrange such a group say to meet for a lunch in a central location Vic Hills will be pleased to share the names and contact details of retired colleagues living near to your home town who might well be pleased to receive an invitation – no you don't pay for their meals!!!

The Newsletter so ably edited by David Smith is a boon for all our communication needs and many are the compliments received not least to David for this fine publication. Other 'reports' relate to membership and the Scottish Group as referred to above will be reported through the Newsletter. We must also bear in mind that the nature of our respective National Councils in their employment of staff and retirement procedures have changed over the years. The committee will review how the Y's Retired of the UK can benefit through improved negotiation with their respective departments and the welcome we extend to all professional (paid staff) nearing retirement and raising awareness that Lay Persons meeting the membership criteria are equally welcome to join.

President Jim Lamb                      Editor Newsletter David Smith  
Exe Sec Vic Hills                      Scottish affairs Keith Rennie  
Hon Treasurer Ray Allen              Indian affairs Rupert George  
Consultants:- David Miller (Lay), Sam Johnston & Reg Wake

All in all a satisfactory year is recorded with thanks to those who gave their services so freely in 2014!  
Jim Lamb

**PRESIDENT** : Jim Lamb  
31 David Bull Way, Milton, Cambridge CB24 6DP  
T 01223 440228  
E: [j.lamb22@outlook.com](mailto:j.lamb22@outlook.com)

**SECRETARY**: Vic Hills  
5 Kernham Drive, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6GB  
T: 07974 683627  
E: [vic\\_hills@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vic_hills@yahoo.co.uk) (underscore between Vic & Hills)

**TREASURER**: Ray Allen  
13 Hibaldstow Road, Lincoln, Lincolnshire. LN6 3PX  
T: 01522 683920  
E: [rayc.allen@btinternet.com](mailto:rayc.allen@btinternet.com)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**: David H Smith  
Chyreene Warra, Rosehill, Marazion, TR17 0HB  
T 01736 719432  
E: [ses.dhs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ses.dhs@hotmail.co.uk)

**WEBSITE DESIGNER**:- David H Smith  
Website:- [www.yretired.co.uk](http://www.yretired.co.uk)

Dear David,

Thank you for the information on Joe and Louis. Joe had a good long life and was always proud of his YMCA background. In recent times he bent my ear on his life and not least the excitement he experienced on being interviewed by the Local Area BBC channel to share incidents he encountered during his working life - Reg can tell you more if needed.

Louis attended our last Cambridge Reunion (2014) and was pleased to meet retired colleagues and enjoy their company and conversation. He was a reliable member of the YMCA World Urban Network (WUN) and the YMCA British Urban Group attending most meetings of both - I recall he made a fine contribution at a conference of the WUN in Mexico City. His long service as CEO of Hornsey YMCA is legend in YMCA England Local Association history!

Warm regards,

Jim (Lamb)

Dear David,  
So sorry to hear of the passing of Louis and Joe. I first met Joe during my time at National College 1974-76 at Walthamstow. He was at National Council.  
Louis, I met through being in the Metropolitan YMCA Region at Fraternal (remember them?) Louis was Treasurer General of Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary, of which I am a member. He will be sadly missed. I of course, last saw him at the Cambridge Reunion this year. It was lovely to see him again and catch up. So sad to lose two YMCA stalwarts.

Regards

Ray (Allen)

Dear David  
Wendy and I were sad to hear of the death of Louis Lewis. We remember him with affection as a regular at Regional meetings at Dunford as well as on visits to Hornsey, notably on the occasion of the opening of a nursery by the Bishop of London, a typically innovative project which chimed with one of Wendy's passions. He will be greatly missed and be remembered with gratitude by many young and old.  
Regards  
David

Prof David Miller

Dear David  
I have had Barbara Vessey's book reprinted and picked them up from the printers on Thursday 11 December 2014.  
"British Boys for British Farms: The Story of the YMCA Farm Training Scheme".  
The book costs £10 per copy plus postage.

Stephen Milner, 22 Ellerslie Close, Charminster,  
Dorchester DT2 9QQ  
Tel: 01305-266197. Email:  
[stephenmilner222@btinternet.com](mailto:stephenmilner222@btinternet.com)

Dear friends,

I failed to write and thank everyone for their lovely words about dear Janet and to acknowledge the many donations for Parkinsons UK and MSA (Multiple System Atrophy) Trust.



I was able to send almost £700 to Parkinson's and over £1400 to MSA. This was surely a tribute to Janet for her wonderful life, her musical gifts and her courage during the last few years – and especially during the last months. I was not thinking properly at the time and I failed to keep a record of all the donations... for which I apologise.

My thanks also to the many (over 200) who came to Janet's Thanksgiving Service. It was a service full of music, as was very appropriate. If any of you would like a copy of my tribute please email me. One of many things I failed to mention was Janet's commitment to research – she willingly underwent many tests both in Addenbrooks and London to help others in the future.

You will know that life is very different without Janet here and at times very lonely but I am very blessed with many friends, good neighbours, a good church community and especially a wonderful family.

Christmas will be with the family in Norwich – including a football match on Boxing Day!  
Ron (Ingamells)

Dear brother Smith,  
I trust that this Christmas Greetings finds you and your family in good health.

May the light of God's blessings  
shine brightly on you,  
making your  
Christmas happy all through  
and then may you find  
in the coming New Year  
that His blessings still shine  
and His love is still near

MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR  
God bless us all and long live Y's Retired of UK.  
Your Brother Retired

[Jonathan Quayefio-Mexico](#)  
Retired YMCA  
Accra-Ghana.

## Member's correspondence

Thank you David for letting us know about the passing of Joe Renshaw. I will pass the message on. What an altruistic thing to do (to give your body to science). Our friend Sara has done the same. Medical students, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and the like can learn so much. I'll never forget my six weeks experience in the Liverpool university department of anatomy; but for folk like that, our Ruth wouldn't be here today.

She expects to undergo a hip replacement in the New Year, hopefully before the Peninsula is scheduled to close down.

Mervyn will be 87 on Christmas Eve. He is beginning to show signs of wear and tear! However there's plenty of life in him yet!

Have a good Christmas.

Love

Beryl and Mervyn (Moorhead)

### WELCOME TONY GRATTON INTO MEMBERSHIP

We welcome into membership Tony Gratton who many of you will know. Tony has had an interesting career and journey within the YMCA up to his recent retirement.

He started his apprenticeship at the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) in Farnborough, Hampshire at the age of 16 and lived at the YMCA /RAE Hostel. The first wardens there he remembers were Viv Cardel, and Les Yeates, who took over from Viv. They eventually employed Tony as the Assistant Warden at the Hostel in 1972.

Other YMCA appointments were as follows:

1972 - 1974 Assistant Warden at Farnborough YMCA/RAE Hostel. (General Services) for Ministry Of Defence.

1974 - 1977 Warden at Dunston Hall, Dunston, Staffordshire (General Services) for North Staffordshire Polytechnic.

1977 - 1978 left YMCA to set up a french Restaurant with his brother.

1978 - 1980 Warden At Aldershaw Hall (General Services) for Babcocks and Wilcox.

1980 - 1983 Residential Warden At Wimbledon YMCA, London.

1983 - 1988 General Secretary At Grimsby YMCA, Great Grimsby, South Humberside.

1988 - 1992 Housing Support Manager Burton YMCA, Burton Upon Trent, Staffordshire.

1992 - 2000 Housing Director, promoted To CEO At Derby YMCA, Derbyshire.

2000 - 2004 CEO Bedford YMCA, Bedfordshire.

2004 - 2014 Senior Housing Manager At Burton YMCA, Burton Upon Trent, Staffordshire.

2014 Retired and is now working part time for another charity called Betel

## JOE RENSHAW

Joe Renshaw, a long time friend and colleague died on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2014, aged 95 years. For Joe, service with YMCA was a life time commitment, beginning as a youngster in the early years of WW2 with YMCA Special Services involved with the iconic YMCA tea cars and canteens in war time London and further afield.

With war ended, the refurbishment of existing YMCAs and an upsurge of new operations resulting from the 1944 Education Act led to the establishment of an active Supplies Department in which Joe had a leading part.

After several years in post, Joe was sent to Sierra Leone as Fraternal Secretary where he promoted a wide range of youth programmes with emphasis on sports, especially soccer and cricket in which he had personal skills. He became a regular contributor to local radio.

On return to UK, Joe served as General Secretary to Southampton YMCA for a while before returning as Chief of Supplies Department where he continued to serve until retirement. Many friends will recall the duo of Joe and Ronnie Howe as umpires at the traditional north/south cricket matches on the town ground at Skegness during AOS conferences. A prized act!

In later life, Joe was encouraged by BBC to tell his life story which extended to a full CD and even then only in summary! He certainly had a story to tell, reflecting a strong sense of vocation and a life of service for which so many of us have cause for which to be thankful. Well done that man! Reg Wake.

Dear friends

I have just received some two boxes full of archivable documents from the late Ray Onion's son, Christopher and his wife, Rowena. So I get the opportunity to go through the archive material and package up for both Ipswich YMCA and the Birmingham University YMCA archives.

I came across these two articles which clearly identify the sensitivities surrounding females coming into YMCA membership and what they could and couldn't do in 1962. An A to Z Programme shows that under F = Females - *The Ipswich Association has long since acknowledged the ladies in our midst. Girls from 15 can join the Youth Cub. Young ladies from 17 can, by becoming an associate member, enjoy the same facilities as the men-folk, with the obvious exception of rugby or cricket !!*

How things have changed - Or

Dec 10<sup>th</sup> 1956 - **Ipswich Evening Star Newspaper**  
**Headline -**

**Junior Hostess Scheme for G.I.'s at New YMCA Centre.**

Mr Marshall, outlining the Centre's organisation, indicated that one of the highlights would be the junior-hostess scheme.

These junior-hostesses, aged between 18 and 30 and drawn from girls in and around Ipswich, will be 'screened' before being accepted. Once recommended (maybe by the boyfriend) a girl will have to fill in an application form and give three references from responsible local people. And these references will be carefully checked before a membership identification card is issued to her.

Mr Marshall explained that the girls will attend on assigned nights, act as partners in dances, card games, table tennis, take part in panel discussions.

Other women from local organisations such as the Mothers' Union WVS, the Business and Professional Women's Club, plus American women will be in charge of the other hosting responsibilities.

(Well I never - Editor)