



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

MARCH 2017

www.yretired.co.uk



GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Dear friends
and colleagues
greetings**



This letter takes the form of the Annual Report for 2016 of the Y's Retired of the UK prepared for the Annual General Meeting to be held February / March 2017.

ANNUAL REPORT

The period under review 2016 has proved a year in which all the affairs and responsibilities of the committee have been handled with due diligence.

We are fortunate to have an Executive Committee with Consultants who have attended to their respective 'briefs' as outlined below and accordingly their 'Reports' will be published in the next issue of the Newsletter. Included will be the Financial Report indicating a sound state of affairs holding a credit balance in meeting with budgets set and enhanced this year by the increased subscription introduced in January 2016. I take the liberty of thanking them all on your behalf for their dedicated voluntary service.

Loss by death. We all share sadness when losing colleagues who have died, last year: Phil Cheal, Alex Cloke, Joyce Fennemore, Sam Johnston and Peter Robertson. As President, I have on behalf of all members where appropriate written to the 'next of kin' and attended their loved ones funerals. Notes of appreciation have been received.

The four Area Reunion groups have met continuing this fine service always enjoyed - not least I would suggest is the guessing game. "Do you remember so and so!" New area groups are very welcome - if any member would wish to be involved in their area of the UK in organising an annual lunch or 'residential' please contact the Executive Secretary for information! In mentioning 'reunions' I add the deep thanks we owe to Stephen Milner for maintaining links with The British Boys for British Farms Scheme (BBBF) members holding an annual lunch and keeping individual contact. BBBF was started after WW2 and enabled the YMCA to offer training and the placing of young men on farms for work experience at a difficult time in our history - many were employed in farming as a lifelong career.

The Newsletter. The Newsletter continues to be our main means of communication under the skilful editorship of David Smith with Sue his wife the all-important 'wordsmith'. The World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees uses extracts in their Newsletter, Bridges, which is circulated internationally! I have deliberately left a major item to the last! Reg Wake following his retirement from the Executive Committee continued as a Consultant to hold the 'brief' of 'Secours Speciaux' our main Charity and decided it was time to step down as age and common-sense dictated! Mind you he is only in his mid-90s! The World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees in 1994 resolved that support for SS be a priority goal. Reg became a founder member of the SS nuclear group to take the matter further resulting in it being recognised as having a direct relationship with the World Alliance of YMCAs based in Geneva to which the SS Committee is now accountable.

REG PLEASE ACCEPT OUR THANKS AND APPRECIATION FOR A JOB WELL DONE! Note: Reg continues as a Consultant.

Now the problem who to succeed Reg? I am delighted to share that David Smith was nominated unanimously by the Committee and was able to accept an invitation through Bonnie Mairs the Secretary of Secours Speciaux to take Reg Wake's seat on the Secours Speciaux Committee! This appointment will be ratified at our AGM February/March 2017.

Y's Retired of the UK Committee:

President Jim Lamb
Consultants Prof David Miller, Rupert George, Reg Wake
Executive Secretary Vic Hills
Honorary Treasurer Ray Allen
Editor David Smith
Scottish Affairs Keith Rennie

Independent Examiner of the Financial Accounts - David Bennison
Distribution of the Newsletter - ONE YMCA
Pensions Rep' - Rev Ron Ingamells

(We are indebted to both David Bennison and Herts YMCA for the fine services they have rendered free of charge assisting financial outlay and not least to Rev Ron Ingamells in his final year of service to the Pensions Committee AND more importantly to congratulate him on his engagement to Ann a week ago as I write!!).

It has been my privilege to present this Annual Report. I wish all readers the best of health available and that 2017 will be a year of peace and goodwill.

Warm regards,

Jim Lamb
President

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MEMBER CORRESPONDENCE

Dear David,

I imagine that all of us who have served the Movement in one capacity or another have favourite moments. A word of encouragement, often not realised by the speaker, but what you needed to hear when things were going badly. Or the realisation on a face of someone that this good thing is actually taking place.

Last year, I visited the Bangkok YMCAs Happy Home for orphaned children and we all went to a restaurant for lunch. A RESTAURANT !.

To share in the fun of discovering swivel chairs was one thing but never to be forgotten was the expression of the little girl at the end of the table in the photograph.

' Is this really happening to me '

I don't know if anyone else will be similarly affected but every time I look at that child I feel the better for it.

Jim (Thomson)



THANKS TO REG

I had the pleasant opportunity to speak with Rosemary and Arthur Bennett recently – Arthur now in his 95th year is aware that his mobility is reducing (no more driving) and his eyesight is fading. Rosemary too is house bound but both share such a positive outlook on life.

Arthur instructed me to share with the membership his personal gratitude for all the commitment Reg Wake gave to all of us before his fourth retirement, to continue and maintain the continuation of Ys Retired of UK. Arthur hopes as we all do, that Reg is enjoying his rest as well as his pipe!!

Arthur's gratitude is offered by all of us. Arthur now needs a stronger magnifying glass in order to do any reading, but especially the bi - monthly newsletter.

He himself has been a wonderful YMCA servant as has Rosemary and they continue to ask after colleagues and about the present progress of the YMCA and that of APS.

He wishes to be remembered to you all as they regularly look forward to visits from their many grandchildren.

David (Smith)

TRIBUTES TO EGBERT SAMRAJ

I was saddened to hear the news of the passing of Egbert Samraj. He was truly a great man of the world YMCA Movement.

As Secretary of Hyderabad YMCA, Egbert ran Y Care International's very first development project - a computer training programme for young people from all sides of what then was a divided city.

When I visited the project Egbert inspired me with his warmth, wisdom and vision - we travelled throughout India together and he gave me great insights into India as a country and the Indian YMCA as an organisation. We continued our friendship when he became Secretary of the Indian Student Hostel in London and met up many times afterwards when he visited London.

Egbert was a man of great passion and faith. The lives of countless young people have been changed by his dedication to them.

I thank God for Egbert and his family. I feel blessed to have known him.

David Bedford

Director and Chair, YCare International 1984 - 2003
Chair, YMCA England 2005-2008

Dear David,

Thank you for passing on this news; I met Egbert Samraj several times - in Geneva and indeed in India, and I can picture him now.

Clyde (Binfield)

Rupert George write as follows:-

"It is with deep regret and sadness I wish to inform you that Egbert Samraj passed away early on the morning of Tuesday 3rd Jan at Hyderabad, India. His funeral was on the following Thursday 5th January 2017.

May we all uphold Saro, his children, grandchildren and all his family members in our prayers.

Rupert (George)

President Jim writes:-

Dear Rupert,
Many thanks for sharing the sad news of Egbert's 'passing. He was a fine Christian gentleman. I had the pleasure of meeting with him as members of the YMCA World Urban Network and recall his wise counsel and conversation.

Please convey the condolences of the Y's Retired of the UK Committee and members to his relations. Prayerful thoughts.

Warm regards,

Jim (Lamb)

A SECOUR SPECIAUX UPDATE



Don Anderson and Jerry Prado-Shaw
Previous very determined WFYR Chairmen

Since 1974, YMCA leaders around the world have expressed concern about the circumstances in which many YMCA professionals retire. Through the years, the YMCA has lost many of its promising young staff talent, because it has not provided a secure future for the employee and their family.

Those who have served in long YMCA careers without adequate retirement programmes often spent their retirement days in poverty, robbed of human dignity. There is a history of failed efforts by concerned and well-meaning people within the YMCA Movement to impact this situation.

Therefore, during the WFYR Fifth World Conference in conjunction with the 18th World Council Meeting at Estes Park, Colorado (June 29th – July 5th 2014) a WFYR unsecured retirement committee was appointed to continue the quest to promote solutions for the problem and also to develop practical models to tackle the issue through a pilot initiative. Was this just another dream? Is the Global Retirement Initiative a fallacy or it can be a reality?

Let's clarify - that the Global Retirement Initiative was designed as a tool to help retain highly qualified young YMCA staff and to assist them in planning for their retirement. It aims to encourage staff to make the YMCA their career for life. It is also designed to protect the Secours Speciaux Fund which responds to emergencies faced by YMCA staff and retirees.

This initiative was the opportunity to actually create the YMCA's first success through a multi-national collaboration. The concept was immediately initiated under the servant leadership of former WFYR Chair, Don Anderson, with strong support from current WFYR Chair Norris Lineweaver.

After two intensive years of diligent work, we are pleased to witness that the first pilot programme (under the Global Retirement Initiative) is a reality through the committed and assertive participation of the Latin American and Caribbean Alliance of YMCAs in partnership with the Association of YMCA Retirees of USA (AYR) and WFYR.

The first pilot plan will be co-founded by Latin American and Caribbean Alliance of YMCAs, the World Brotherhood Fund (administered by AYR) and the selected young YMCA professional to lead the plan.

This young YMCA professional was chosen from among several applicants through a meticulous and open process led by an integrated Nominations Committee chosen from highly respected YMCA Retirees from that area of the world, with the support and concurrency of the official leadership of the Latin American and Caribbean Alliance of YMCAs.

Thanks to the vision, commitment and perseverance of a dedicated group of YMCA Retirees the Global Retirement Initiative is a reality today, not a paper or fallacy, not a dream. For this we are most grateful.

Nevertheless the overall situation is not resolved. This pilot experience is just the beginning. We suspect that more pilot initiatives will be developed in other regions of the world. There is still much to be done, but with God's grace.

and blessings, we continue to advance this quest for justice and equality for all our fellow YMCA colleagues around the world. We continue firm and faithfully planting the seeds for a more promising future for those younger! Oh yes. "Retired but not tired."

ST IVES – SOUTH WEST Ys RETIRED GET TOGETHER

As I am writing this, the sun is shining reminding me that our Spring trip to Treloyhan will soon be upon us. Thank you all for your deposits. There are 21 of us so that means with our hosts, Ian and Margaret, and of course, local celebrities, David and Sue, our 29 seater coach will again be almost full for our Wednesday trip. It is getting somewhat difficult to find somewhere unusual to go each year. Indeed some of you suggested that we start again and repeat the previous excursions. However, although that may be the case next year we have managed to plan a day - the photos may give you a clue!!



The rest of the programme for the week has been finalised with the exception of devotions which is Mervyn's responsibility.

It happens that we are away from 9 March returning just two days before travelling down to St Ives. This means that final payment to Treloyhan has to be made by the end of February so please send your balance as soon as you can. (Cheques made payable to - Margaret Libby)

Balance due:- En-suite £174 per person,
Non en-suite £144 per person

Looking forward to meeting up
Margaret and David (Libby)

A GROWING DEMAND FOR BEDS MEANS NEW FACILITIES FOR YMCAs



Two YMCAs are making significant steps towards tackling the growing problem of homelessness among local young people by either redeveloping or expanding their current provision.

City YMCA London's Errol Street accommodation is set to be transformed into a new flagship £19million redevelopment, while YMCA Norfolk has kicked off 2017 by cutting the ribbon on a major extension to their community house in King's Lynn.

YMCAs TO SLEEP BENEATH THE STARS FOR YOUNG HOMELESS PEOPLE



YMCAs from all over England are calling on local supporters to join together, brave the night air and sleep rough to help support homeless young people this March.

Fifteen YMCAs from as far afield as Exeter, Somerset Coast, Cambridgeshire and Doncaster are uniting to fundraise during the national YMCA Sleep Easy Week, running from Friday 3 to Friday 10 March.



PHOTO OF THE WEEK: YMCA's shop in Chelmsley Wood captured the attention of passing shoppers by displaying live mannequins in the window for a week, in a bid to help boost donations and increase sales to support YMCA's work. We love this eye-catching idea!

Dear David

"I was sorry to hear of the passing of Peter Robertson, I did not know Peter well, but what we had in common was links with Henley -on-Thames YMCA

During my National Service (23574661 L/Cpl Harper) in the Royal Army Pay Corps, otherwise known as the Civilian Light Infantry, I was considering applying for a place on the YMCA Training Course, and was introduced to Rudolph Consterdine MBE, who was at that time known as the Divisional Secretary for the Home Counties, he was not surprisingly known as 'Con' and Dennis Carnaby will remember him with affection. Con said "I was asked to look after the Home Counties for 6 months, and I'm still here 13 years later, also he would ask "How can you have a Divisional Union?".

He took me to a Henley YMCA AGM and I left the meeting as a 19yr. old voluntary Hon. Sec. which meant either cycling or going by train at the end of my military duties! I recall being told off at a Board Meeting for spending 3/6d to have the windows cleaned! The YMCA was housed in a building opposite the Railway Station, they also had a Sports Field, and I enjoyed playing football and cricket, in one cricket match we played Reading, and in their team was Harry Johnston, who captained Blackpool in the famous Matthews Final in 1953.

The YMCA Chairman was a lovely man Jack Read, who lived in St. Marks Road. Last year I visited the Sports Ground, and scored an imaginary goal, with an imaginary ball!

Kind regards,
Paul (Harper)



RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUALS 2017

Daily pocket prayers for the days between Ascension & Pentecost
[*Praying for Five Friends*](#)

Novel ways to help you pray that people you know might know Jesus
[*Extreme prayer*](#)

Active prayers using social media and photography
[*Prayer during the day*](#)

A guide to praying at different times throughout your day

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE 2017

[*Home Packs*](#)

A Creative resource pack for home use and a resource booklet for prayer and worship

[*The Kingdom Kit*](#)

Praying through creative activities using simple household items
[*Praying for Five Friends*](#)

Novel ways to help you pray that people you know might know Jesus
[*Prayer Games & activities*](#)

Ways to make prayer fun and engaging including prayer walking and safaris, Holiday prayers and prayers for families with additional needs.

[*Extreme prayer*](#)

Active prayers using social media and photography

[*Family prayer stations & other ideas*](#)

Ways to pray together with your family or in your household

The role of the Women's Auxiliary in the YMCA during the First World War has long been overlooked. But it deserves greater recognition, an historian tells Chris Bond.

THE STORY of the YMCA and its female volunteers during the Great War has become little more than a footnote in the retelling of that terrible conflict.

But it is a story that deserves a closer look and is one that featured in a programme of talks - entitled 'Lest we forget' - which examined the impact of the Great War on communities in Yorkshire and was hosted by the National Coal Mining Museum for England, near Wakefield.

Among the speakers was Sue Mc Geever, a social historian who has spent time researching the role of the Women's Auxiliary in the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) during the war.

Within days of the start of the conflict, the YMCA had established 250 recreation centres across the country. Many were set up close to railway stations where men would be passing through, providing cups of tea, sandwiches and a welcome respite from their journey to France and beyond.

With men of military age called into active service it was down to women to step up to the plate, which they did - in their thousands. By the end of 1914 the Women's Auxiliary of the YMCA had been established with 40,000 people answering the call for civilian volunteers to come forward.

YMCA "huts", as they were known, were also set up across the Channel in France, chiefly at ports such as Le Havre and Calais but also close to certain points near the Western Front as the war dragged on.

Mc Geever pointed out that the volunteers didn't have qualifications enabling them to work as nurses and said that this was a way for them to support the troops.

"When the men were away from the front, which they often were, they could go to these huts where could get a drink, write letters and unwind. It was like a home from home for the men," she says.

"They were all volunteers so they didn't get paid. They had to have independent means and they're what you might call 'ladies that lunch' today, though they came from all walks of life."

Among them were inspirational figures like Jessie Millar Wilson, from Otley. "She was a suffragette who felt she was doing her bit for the war effort."

Jessie, who was 44 at the time, travelled to France early in 1915. "She thought she might be away for six months but in the end she stayed six years because there was still a lot of work that needed doing after the war ended."

Another Yorkshire woman who worked for the YMCA in France was Bertha 'Betty' Stevenson. She was born in York and came from a well-off family - her grandfather was an MP - and she was desperate to help.

"She was just 19 years and begged to go to France and her parents eventually let her," says Mc Geever.

She was posted to Etaples as a YMCA driver, responsible for transporting relatives from England visiting the wounded in hospital. However, in May 1918 she was killed during an air raid while helping French refugees.

Betty, who was just 21 when she died, was given a military funeral and posthumously awarded the *Croix tie Guerre avec Palme* by General Petain, for courage and devotion to duty.

Mc Geever believes that the role of women like Betty and Jessie has been unjustly overlooked until now. "Because they were volunteers they have disappeared from history and I think they deserve to be remembered, because every fighting man in the war would have come across the YMCA at some point and been extremely grateful to those women."



Dear David,

I very much appreciate the work you do for Y's Retired of UK, and enjoy reading the newsletter with its colourful photographs.

I'm afraid I am not computer literate, hence the reason for this hand written letter by Dorothy. I enjoy reading the daily Yorkshire Post (although we live in Lincolnshire) and found the enclosed article very interesting.

I thought you might be able to use it part of it in the newsletter, maybe with an amusing title - eg where would we be without these women?

It is good to be reminded of past efforts and worthwhile work of the Women's Auxiliary and the YMCA.

Thankfully the work continues here in Lincoln, still needed very much in today's society.

I keep reasonably well provided I stay within my limitations and remember well your concern and care in the past.

With every good wish

Barry (Ward)