

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

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

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



## Dear friends and colleagues. Greetings

Through this issue of the Newsletter I wish to draw attention to miscellaneous issues needing airing as relating to the Y's Retired of the UK!

Following over 10 plus years of the publishing of the Newsletter I have contributed over 70 issues of the President's Letter first with Reg Wake as Editor and David Smith his successor. Over this period of time expressions of appreciation have been many for the Newsletter as it serves an important service as the main means of communication with the membership.

However! There has been over the years a dearth of personal contributions from the membership despite invitations from both Editor and President for articles.

It appears that members are happy to receive this valuable communication in its present format but not forthcoming with contributions of articles or letters which enhance the opportunity afforded to broaden its scope with member's contributions! Action!!

At the risk of ex-communication I suggest that one of the more important contributions are 'personal profiles' sharing your experiences post retirement.

For instance what kind of social life do you pursue?

Did full-time paid or voluntary service with a Christian Movement influence your life now?

Do we give service in the local community?

Having shared these points I also recall colleagues who on retirement shared with me their pleasure on retirement and leaving behind the YMCA as a release from a lifetime career!

Another case – the wife of one of our revered colleagues on his death destroyed everything relating to the YMCA – a YMCA widow?

I turn to emphasising the value of Area Reunions and the unique experience of meeting up with colleagues. See in this issue the Cambridge Reunion July report and the re-union of the South.

Should there be any colleague wishing to start a 'Reunion' in their area of the UK bearing in mind present areas covered are Scotland, Cambridge, South East and South West England, then contact Vic Hills who will furnish the names and addresses of retirees in your area. This is not an onerous task as arranging such an event needs only 2/3 persons, a restaurant and preferably an email address or telephone!

Turning to other important information. The 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the YMCA will be celebrated world-wide but centred in London from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

Information is forthcoming commencing with reference included in this issue in the Reports from John Naylor and Jim Thomson on the World Council of YMCAs four yearly meeting and the WFYR conference held recently in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

I close on an important matter, the health and death of retired colleagues. If and when you know of health needs of retired colleagues or their demise please notify David Smith in order that prompt dissemination of such news can be circulated promptly to all members.

Continue to love and live fruitful lives!

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)

**SCOTLAND Y'S RETIRED REP:-** Keith Rennie  
78 Dundee Rd, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 1DW  
T: 01382 774092  
E: [keith@beechhedges.com](mailto:keith@beechhedges.com)

## MEMBERSHIP CORRESPONDENCE

### NEWS OF SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT

To share my three-month health (Post Op) visit to Papworth today (25<sup>th</sup> June) was most positive and treatment successful. At least the X-Ray of my lungs told the truth, for there was a bit missing! I am in very good health and progress is maintained. Prostate Cancer continues with the treatment and likewise to the doctor's satisfaction as previously reported.

Best of all I can do some gardening in a more positive manner than a little weeding - I asked the doctor if that meant digging? The answer was in the affirmative! I then confessed to having already done so!! My sins were forgiven!

Trust you are all well and express my sincere thanks for the fine support you have given me during the last three months, it has been of the best!

Much love, **Jim (Lamb)**

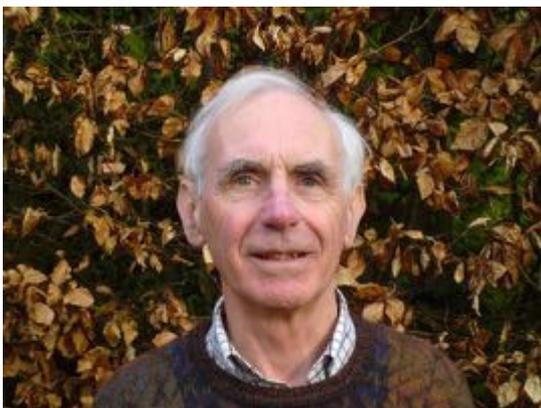
### NEW MEMBERS

We welcome into membership **Phil Martin** who has recently joined Y's Retired of UK from his YMCA involvement in the Metropolitan Area.

In addition, Phil is the Secretary for the YMCA Metropolitan Regional Trust Fund and is keen to attract and appoint new trustees.

Therefore, Phil asks through the Newsletter if there maybe Y's retired members who have a previous connection with YMCAs in the Metropolitan Region – i.e. David Bennison, Ray Allen etc. – To contact him via this email address - [philmartin@talk21.com](mailto:philmartin@talk21.com) if they are interested in considering becoming Trustees of the Metropolitan Regional Trust Fund.

We also welcome **Reverend Chris Poulard**. Revd Chris has held such positions as:-



National Council Treasurer 2000-2008  
YMCA Pension Trustees 2000- 2011  
Vice President National Council 2008 to date  
Vice President Romford YMCA 2004 – 2010  
Vice President YMCA Essex 2013 – to date

And still they come – welcome to **Robert Lovelace**



### WELCOME TO NEIL SHERRINGHAM

Through recent contact with our Secretary, Vic Hills, we are very pleased to welcome Neil Sherringham to the membership of Y' Retired of UK.

Neil's first involvement with the YMCA started in 1996 when he held the post with YMCA England of Regional HR Officer of the YMCA Metropolitan Region.

Other YMCA Appointments included Acting Regional Secretary of the Metropolitan Region, Kingston and Wimbledon YMCAs.

Neil retains his involvement with the YMCA as he is currently a Board Member YMCA George Williams College and a Trustee of YMCA Metropolitan Region Trust Fund.

### Southern Y's Retired Group



Stephen and Hannah Milner, Linda Voysey, Blair Crawford, Brian Rowcliffe, Mary and Viv Hills

June 19th saw the second re-union dinner of the Southern Y's Retired Group. Although we were few in numbers the Miramar Hotel in Bournemouth put on a splendid meal for our enjoyment. Being a small group gave all of us the opportunity to join in lively and enjoyable conversation.

We agreed to meet again in the last few weeks of June 2019 so watch this space for the actual day and date being confirmed.

**Blair Crawford**

**Report of the Cambridge Reunion Annual  
Lunch held 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at the Girton Golf  
Club Restaurant, Girton, Cambridge**

As always meeting up with retired colleagues and lay persons from the YMCA albeit only for lunch is one of the pleasures for existence!

There were seventeen present. Attending for the first time Graham Clarke must have wondered what hit him! Beautiful countryside, excellent facilities, a mixed menu, a speaker following the successful introduction last year and by no means least a free car park!

Above the animated chatter and 'memory' games there was an undeniable spirit of unenforced 'togetherness' peculiar to our YMCA 'gatherings'. Natural humour from a smile to a roar of laughter and serious conversation is best summed up by one colleague, "Just to say thank you very much ... for making yesterdays 'bun fight' so successful. It was as usual a thoroughly enjoyable and uplifting occasion – a sentiment with which I'm sure all those present would agree."

This socialising event was much enhanced by our speaker, John Drake who gave an excellent relaxed talk on the general theme of the life of the YMCA in Jerusalem and surrounding towns alerting us from his experience of both happy and sad events.

Honorary Treasurer Ray Allen retiring after ten years of service was applauded and Secretary Vic Hills updated the meeting on YMCA affairs not least the upcoming 175 years celebrations 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019 – details yet to be publicised.

A satisfying day for all.

**Jim Lamb - Organiser!**

**YMCA LAKESIDE FEATURED ON  
BBC - SONGS OF PRAISE**

Dear David.

Thanks for the timely mail you had sent in. Luckily it did not clash with any sporting event!

Both Beulah and I enjoyed watching the programme. It brought back memories of the time spent in the Lake District many years back!

Best wishes. – **Rupert (George)**

Hi David

Thank you for your message re Songs of Praise. It did reach us in time and created some nostalgia!

Best wishes

**Chandu (Christian)**

Just back from Milan and just on to Iceland...but thank you for the alert; it will probably have to be catch-up because our TV has turned suddenly temperamental in all our absences and will only let us catch up.

With best greetings, **Clyde (Binfield)**

Will look my return from Ireland David- thanks for the info.  
**Stan (Wojcik)**

Thanks David, the F1 finishes in time! -. HAMILTON 2nd!!!  
**Jim (Lamb)**

Thank you David, for alerting us. It was lovely programme!

Best regards

**David (Miller)**



Jane Wake, Tony Miles, Reg Wake, Graham Clarke, Mary Hills, Chandu Christian, Elaine Hunt, David Bedford, Jim Lamb, Jenny Miles, Ron Ingamells, John Drake, Barbara Drake, Vic Hills, Ray Allen.

## YMCA 175 – EARLY INFORMATION



"Towards the end of June, YMCA Europe hosted a briefing session for YMCAs in England and Wales on the global event that will take place to commemorate our 175th anniversary, from 4 to 8 August 2019.

Since then the event has been showcased at YMCA's World Council, in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and a number of stakeholder meetings held there for regional movements and with National General Secretaries.

'YMCA175' is global event, organised by YMCA Europe, hosted by YMCA England & Wales, and partnered with the World Alliance of YMCAs and Y-USA. It aims to bring together 5,000 young leaders from 100 countries, and six continents.

"YMCA175 will intentionally engage thousands of young leaders in a new level of global learning, sharing and collaboration on transformational approaches and programs that address key issues impacting young people: education, civic engagement, economic opportunity, health equity and wellbeing, peace, social inclusion and the health of our planet. It is an innovative platform to showcase, replicate and launch transformational youth-led initiatives."

Registration will open in late August, and in a similar style to World Council, there will be a National Coordinator put in place who will approve delegates, consisting of young leaders, staff and volunteers onto our National Delegation. More information regarding this will follow in due course.

**This event will be open to YMCA young leaders, staff, volunteers, retirees and other YMCA networks and partner organisations.**

There event will also present many sponsorship and exhibition opportunities for companies and organisations. With such a large display of our global impact, the significant international representation, and historical significance of the event, if you think there is a pre-existing relationship you think could be leveraged to support YMCA175, please get in touch.

**You can learn more and sign up to regular alerts from YMCA175 by going to [www.ymca175.com](http://www.ymca175.com).** "

Mike Bromfield  
Event Manager - YMCA175  
[www.ymca175.com](http://www.ymca175.com)

## SECOURS SPECIAUX

Information reported at the SS meeting held in Chiang Mai, Thailand on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July where the main focus was on the financial challenge and outreach was as follows:-

### 1. Financial -

Between the years 2014-17, 18 grants were made totalling 118,958 SF to persons in 10 countries

2014 - 2 people      2015 - 4 people.      2016 – 5 people

2017 – 7 people

During that same period, 90,724 SF only was raised, which is 28,000 SF less than was spent.

As at 12-07-17 the fund balance is 303,702 SF. The fund is approaching the minimum balance of 250,000 SF. Which is the amount the Secretary General has asked us to maintain in case of a catastrophic emergency.

How do we reverse this negative trend?

### 2. Outreach

Though the number of grant requests has increased, are all those in need being reached? Example: In the time I have chaired the committee, we have received only 2 requests from support staff. How do we reach more people?

For your information, the fund assisted 18 people during 2014 - 17 from 10 countries:

#### Africa

Ghana – 4, Liberia – 1, Nigeria – 1, Zambia - 1

#### Asia

Bangladesh – 1, India – 4, Philippines – 2, Sri Lanka - 2

#### Latin America

Chile – 1, Venezuela – 1

### Chairman of Secours Speciaux - Bonnie Mairs

Dear David,

Just a preliminary note about the **Bangkok YMCAs Centre for the Protection of the Child** which John Naylor and I visited on Saturday last.

The first thing I have to say is that I imagined that the location, Phayao, was a village based on the size of the lettering on the map. It is not. It is quite a city and the Centre is located in a quiet but almost urban setting.

We spent about 4/5 hours there including a wonderful lunch prepared by the children themselves (under expert supervision of course). The buildings are excellent - two at least being gifted by the Government of Japan. There are 37 children there, all being at some risk of sex trafficking.

They produced and acted out a 'morality play' for us. This showed the methods used by the traffickers and was altogether simple but effective. It was done in Thai style with much drum banging.

We did not see any retirees but whether this was because of the week - end or of a sense of delicacy I do not know.

Most importantly Phayao is not a one off but is regarded as a pilot for other regions.

**Jim (Thomson)**

## MEMBERSHIP CORRESPONDENCE

Good morning David,  
Thank you for your email and the link to the newsletters, I am back in touch now. Not that I was ever deeply involved outside of Lakeside National Centre, but even if most of the names in the newsletter are not known to me, I feel I should continue to show an interest in a Movement which occupied half my working life and gave me some important and very precious experiences.

Of the names I recognised, I remember the visits to Lakeside of John Naylor, Chris Batten (sad to hear that news) and especially Graeme Angus who had a regional role at the time and whom I found to be generous and warm in sharing his wisdom as I found my way in a completely new life and working situation.

I wonder if you saw Songs of Praise last Sunday the 7<sup>th</sup>? It was billed in the TV listing which I use as going to Cumbria to discover the origins of the YMCA! The true story came out in the programme, must have been an editorial error.

It was good to see the place still thriving, the interview with the Senior sailing instructor who "always has an open line to God every day" was inspiring. A trick was missed by showing the carved cross in the outdoor chapel but not telling the story of its origin – an atheist seasonal staff member who stimulated intense discussion among his colleagues but by the end of his term he had been carving the cross in order to leave it as a permanent feature. A pity they never showed the beautiful lake-side chapel with its praying-hands window overlooking the water.

My eighteen years there, from 1970 until I retired in 1998, comprised two learning curves – the teamwork/personal development skills which I learnt and used at Lakeside, and my training and licensing as Reader in the Anglican church.

I was able to dovetail both those aspects within the diocesan lay training team, taking courses out to the churches to "prepare God's people for works of service" Ephesians 4.12. I am eternally grateful to YMCA and the Anglican Church for those experiences in my development.

Thank you to you, Vic and Ray for re-establishing my YMCA contacts. To all who administer Ys Retired, thanks.  
All good wishes, in Him

**Brian (Ridsdale)**

### PASSING OF FRIENDS

Rachel Mason (nee Reed) contacted me to say that very sadly her mother Gardinal Lush (nee Reed) died on Friday 15 June and that the Funeral was held at Castle Cary Methodist Church on Monday 25 June 2018.

Gardinal was a BBBF Secretary at the Ham Green Hostel at Pill, near Bristol; on closure moved to North Cadbury Court where she met and married the local butcher Ted Lush.

Gardinal and Ted had managed to attend two BBBF Reunions at North Cadbury in 2014 and 2017.

The email address for Rachel Mason is: [rachelkmasonconsultancy@gmail.com](mailto:rachelkmasonconsultancy@gmail.com)

With best wishes - **Stephen and Hanna Milner**

### DOREEN BATES – RIP

We learnt just recently that the wife of Bill Bates, Doreen Bates, passed away in March 2018. Bill was YMCA Community Worker at Nottingham YMCA during the years that Arthur Bennett was CEO.

## John Naylor kindly offered the followingly submission to Jim Lamb, our President, from the WFYR 2018 World Conference in Chiang Mai Thailand

Dear Jim,

WFYR meeting in Chiang Mai was constructive, interesting and inspiring. I am confining this email to 3 WFYR action points which are:

#### 1. **175 Celebrations in London 4-8 August 2019**

Kerry Reilly invited all retirees to the event and offered space for either something separate or linking with the main event.

As a minimum, it would be an opportunity for a UK meeting. More ambitiously it could be a European Retirees event.

If it was a European event, then an open invitation could be offered round the globe. WFYR hope this is something your committee would consider.

#### 2. **Secours Speciaux**

WFYR are targeting to double the income over the next four years, as part of our concern for colleagues in real need. Again, your committee could consider how more can be raised.

#### 3. **Pensions**

Paul Smillie is completing a questionnaire about our pension provision. The aim is to identify retired colleagues most in need and then find ways to improve their lot.

In the UK this is not a major issue when compared with others. However, completing the questionnaire means WFYR has a good overview.

WFYR, in effect US retirees, will probably roll it out on a case by case basis. A more comprehensive approach is not regarded as realistic as circumstances vary so much from country to country and individual to individual.

When combined with better Secours Speciaux provision, this will mean that fellow retirees have made some real strides in alleviating the dire circumstances in which great YMCA servants find themselves on retirement.

I have copied Keith Rennie to ensure the Secours Speciaux action is shared by Scottish colleagues and to see, if you felt a 175 retirees UK/European dimension should be developed, who might attend from Scotland.

With best wishes  
**John (Naylor)**

## A PRAYER FOR TODAY AND EVERYDAY

"Dear Lord, help me remember what a difference it makes when I make time with You a priority in my morning. Awaken me in body, mind and spirit each day with a desire to meet with You and to hear You speak words of affirmation, assurance and wisdom over my heart as I prepare to go into my day.  
In Jesus' Name, Amen."

**It's raining hard – not in New Zealand. In Berkshire - I am tempted to run out and dance in it – it's the first we have had since forever... Mary and Vic Hills holiday log continues**

On the ferry crossing from North to South Island through the Cook Strait the sky was light grey precipitating a light mizzle. South of Blenheim in the coach on highway 1; (only recently re-opened following the devastation of the earthquake in December 2016), we experienced the only rain of our travels in New Zealand. Miles of the highway were still only compressed hard core, the rail line was being re-instated and re-routed. The quake had raised the sea-bed by several metres. "Old" containers were utilised as retaining walls to prevent further landslides. Most of the single lane - one way working - "signallers" were young people, with broad smiles as they waved us through in their waterproofs. We learned that the University in Christchurch had substantially expanded its building surveying and architect faculty since the 2010 & 2011 quakes.

*"A silver lining" for some .....*



The tour of Christchurch and later riding the tram around the inner city revealed the extent of the building damage. It had been believed that repairing the damage to the original Cathedral was too great to afford.



The lack of protection and exposure to the weather and birds etc had caused further damage to what appeared to be a "derelict" building. However, a provisional schedule to begin work in the mid/late 2020's was mentioned. You probably know through the news of the temporary Cardboard Cathedral.

The Tranz Alpine rail journey from East to West coast provided numerous photo opportunities from the open-air viewing platforms – though a bit draughty... At Alfred's pass it was "hop off the train and back on the coach" to Franz Joseph Glacier to enjoy one of the highlights of our NZ journey - a helicopter ride on to the glacier.

The coach journey to Queenstown was illuminated by the blast in a jet boat up the Haas river – one of our travelling companions celebrating her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday couldn't get enough of the high-speed pirouettes. It was too noisy to talk, but thumbs up indicated all was being enjoyed.



Queenstown the adventure capital, has more than enough to keep 70 plus year olds interested and busy for longer than the two days we had. Our choice of the 4\*4 bumping around narrow winding ravine tracks (labelled as streets/roads on the map!) exploring some of Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings backdrops was bruising, nail biting and revealing.

The gold panning was a cooling light relief as we watched white river rafters embark on their "ride" and later their progress from our view point high up the canyon. Sky ride, steam boat trip, fabulous BBQ, a sheep farming display were less energetic diversions.

On the way to Milford Sound the short stop provided a photo-opportunity at Mirror Lake.

The down side of the unusual continuous dry weather was that only a few permanent waterfalls provided the captain the opportunity to nose the bows into the spray.



Travelling around the Southern plains through Te Anau, Dunedin via Moeraki Boulders – (a chance to test the sea temperature and our balance) brought us to The Edmond Hillary Centre. The large patio window of the hotel room looked directly up to Mount Cook on a clear afternoon.

The following day after a 30 minute trek we were in a MAC boat on Lake Tasman discussing the colours of the glacier and its age, the milky water of the lake, the structure of the ice berg crystals as we tried to pull pieces off and pass them round...

A coffee stop visit to Church of the Good Shepherd on Lake Tekapo before crossing the Canterbury Plains – counting sheep - not sleeping - on to Christchurch and a last night dinner. When we were sitting in the hotel lobby in Singapore waiting to go to the air- port to Auckland, we got talking to a traveller who was on the way to England having just done the same tour as us, but starting with South Island.



His comment to us was "I think you are doing it the better way round, leaving the best to last". We are sure the weather smiled on us; spending much of the time in shorts was a blessing. The winter clothes we had been warned to take – stayed in the cases...



*It was our first guided tour. Once we got into the swing of the early starts – bags often by the door for collection before or by 6.0am we got into the routine. The tour; (stressed by our fabulous guide Jan' right at the start - NOT a holiday but a tour!) – was fabulous. We saw so much, but there was so much we didn't see. Would we go back – we may see you there!*





**World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees Sixth  
World Conference, July 8<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup>  
Chiang Mai, Thailand.**

It now seems impossible to consider the WFYR Conference as being detached from the World Council. For the retirees to be surrounded by enthusiastic young people dedicated to the future of our Movement and to experience in turn the genuine affection for those who had earlier served was real and pervasive.

We were welcome to attend any Council session when we were not meeting. One such session, which was of particular interest to the writer, was the unanimous passing of a German resolution related to refugees and migrants which will form part of the Council report being dealt with by John Naylor.

The first WFYR session largely dealt with introductions, fraternal greetings and what lay ahead. The second was for many a very personal time when we remembered, with affection and gratitude, those of our number who had died during the past four years. Rodney Stone and John Knox were among this number and in their memory a rose was given and received by someone from their National Movement

The following afternoon was devoted to the topic of Peace and Reconciliation. A panel consisting of the United States Consul General with special responsibilities for refugees, Ghassan Sayyah National Secretary of Lebanon who has worked for fifty years with vast inflows of refugees to his country, Yukio Myazaki from Japan, first Director of World Alliance Services to Refugees in Vietnam and myself as World Alliance Secretary for Refugees.

Yukio and I were in Vietnam at the time of the fall of Saigon, the end of the Vietnam war and subsequent opening of negotiations with senior officers of the North Vietnamese Army for the continuation of YMCA relief work.

There then followed a Session on Christian Practices in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in which each participant was given a survey to complete and analyse in accordance with a following discussion. This was based on what is known as the James Paradox (James 2: 14-18) and relates to a showing of both faith and deeds.

On behalf of our Editor, David Smith, I attended a meeting of the Secours Speciaux (SS) Committee. The importance of this programme was emphasized by the attendance of the Secretary General. This was not a genial meeting although it is clear that SS is a good and attractive project.

Figures are in Swiss Francs. Over the four year period there were eighteen beneficiaries to a total of Ch.F 118,958 while income stood at CH.f 90,724. Questions were asked related to bank interest not being recorded (retained by the World Alliance as payment for administration) and to communication with Areas and National Movements which ought to lead to a greatly enhanced income. There is also the matter of a minimum of CH.f 250,000 being a necessary minimum figure retained by the World Alliance for emergencies. The closing balance was CH.f303,702.

In a later report to the full meeting of WFYS, great emphasis was laid on the need for communication to be enhanced and Phil Dwyer, the new President, called for a commitment from attendees that their National Movement double their contributions in the next quadrennium. On behalf of United Kingdom retirees, Margery Naylor presented the retiring President with a crystal bowl.

One afternoon, was set aside for excursions. I chose a Centre for the Elderly where I failed in both paper decorations and rose bouquets made from palm leaves but excelled at exotic dancing.

**Jim Thomson.**

## 19<sup>th</sup> YMCA World Council Chiang Mai 2018

Every World Council is inspiring, and Chiang Mai did not disappoint. More young people than ever before gave the conference great energy. 1300 delegates from 70 countries vividly illustrated the YMCA as massive international Movement.

For me the highlights included:

- the Steve Clay led morning devotions – truly international, very accessible yet thought provoking. Ask Steve for the cards issued each day as a basis for your own devotions.
- the key note speech by Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, the journey of an unwanted 8<sup>th</sup> child of a single mother to civil rights lawyer in South Africa to Secretary General of World YWCA and the implications for the priorities of organisations like the YMCA. It ended with a rendering of 'How Great thou art' with everyone joining in, an unforgettable uplifting experience.
- the many conversations over coffee and at meals with old friends and new, young and old.

Peter Posner as President handled the business superbly. A new strategy was approved. A new President, Secretary General and Treasurer were elected/appointed. The outgoing officers were thanked appropriately. Peter's dignity and generosity shone.

The speech of the new Secretary General Carlos Sanchez, from Togo, had echoes of Nyaradzayi's keynote. While empowering young people will continue to be a focus, it is likely to be shaped by his experience of poverty from one of the poorest countries in the world.

Two significant motions were passed. The most sensitive was on 'safe space', focusing on equalities including gay issues. This is very difficult for church based organisations in some countries particularly in parts of Africa, so there was no compulsion in the motion.



Past WFYR Presidents



The most important, for our delegation, was the approval of a German motion confirming refugee work as a priority and the need for World Alliance resources for it. Jim Thomson has pressed this case for years, so it was moving to see Jim's reaction of joy and incredulity when the motion was passed unanimously.

Jim presented the last copy of his book on the history of World Alliance refugee work to the German YMCA (see picture above) in gratitude.

WFYR scheduling meant I was able to attend most of the WFYR conference.

Jim in his article has stressed the importance of our support for Secours Speciaux. This fund is for emergencies, often arising from the lack of a pension. After many years of trying unsuccessfully to construct a world-wide pension scheme, the approach has been changed to generate pensions for individuals. The first such plan has been implemented for a Mexican colleague. The hope is that more such plans can be developed.

**Finally, we looked forward to 2019 and the 175 celebrations in London. The hope, expressed in two presentations to WFYR, is that retirees will feature so that this international event is multigenerational. Already Vic Hills of Ys Retired is liaising with Mike Bromfield, the event Manager and with Kerry Reilly the overall co-ordinator.**

**Put 4-8 August 2019 in your diary. It should be fun!**

**John Naylor 02-08-18**



Above: Jim Thomson and Yukio Myazaki  
Below: Margery Naylor presenting glass bowl to the new President. Phil Dwyer

