



## President's ponderings

While we were on holiday in the Yorkshire Dales recently, we came across How Stean Gorge in Nidderdale which was cleverly promoting gentle but challenging Adventure Activities for families ...but certainly not as arduous as those many of us remember from trips to Lakeside or Fairthorne Manor!!

One of the activities is a short abseil of 15 Meters (about 50ft in old money) from a road bridge down to the gorge floor which was being 'enjoyed' by a family as we crossed the bridge.

Half of the family had already descended to the bottom and it was now the turn of a girl who was about eight years old. The expression on her face was one of abject FEAR!

The shouts of encouragement from her older siblings below were not doing the business! The shouts from her mother from the gorge were not helping either. Dad, of course was willing her on from behind to take the step over the edge, telling her 'I'm right behind you'. Still the little girl didn't move. At this point I was quite prepared to see her step away and unbuckle her harness!

But then the Instructor just said something quietly in her ear and went with her to the edge. The family went quiet.

Slowly the girl stepped out and was let down into the gorge. As she reached the bottom her face was a delight, she was beaming with that sense of achievement that she had overcome her fear and had made it to the bottom!!!

She then looked up at her father as he stood ready to step off the bridge and shouted 'Come on Daddy, don't be scared!'

It was a heart-warming moment that reminded me of similar occasions of standing with young people on the rocks at Lakeside or on the tower at Fairthorne and seeing similar personal triumphs occurring!

But the striking thing in what we saw in Yorkshire that day was how that it was not the noise and exuberance of the family that got the girl down but the quiet reassurance of the instructor.

I guess that we have all had experiences of 'The still small voice' speaking to us, quietly encouraging us amidst the clamour and noise of the world around us shouting at us and telling us what to do. We may even have been that small voice of calm to others.

Now we should take time to reflect with thanksgiving on those times when we have experienced and benefitted from hearing the 'Still small voice of calm' and be willing to keep listening for it!

Equally we should remember with humility the part we may have played in conveying that voice to others and the difference it has made!!!

Stay well!

**Graham**

### **A brief information report from Ghassan Sayah,**

#### **Beirut, Lebanon**

*I am pleased to let you know that I just talked with our good friend Ghassan Sayah, he asks me to convey his greetings to you and other good friends from the Ys Retired of UK and WFYR. He is in good spirits and ready to confront further challenges that may arise in the region.*

#### **Here is a short message from Lebanon YMCA after the tragic catastrophic explosive event:**

*All staff and volunteers are safe. No one was physically hurt. Damage in the YMCA office and the warehouse are limited.*

*YMCA staff and volunteers continue to collaborate with WHO and the European Union funding in catering the Medici vines for the chronically ill needy patients.*

*As you may know the Lebanon YMCA is the primary organization in the country that distributed free medicines to low income people through a very well-run network of over 150 dispensaries around the country.*

*Kindly consider sharing this information as you feel appropriate.*

**Warmly, Jerry - [jerrypradoshaw@hotmail.com](mailto:jerrypradoshaw@hotmail.com)**

## Members Correspondence

Sad to read about Ted Ewing.  
We exchanged Christmas cards every year.  
He was a great friend of my parents, so I knew him before I joined YMCA staff.  
We always got on well. He was a great support, a thoroughly nice man and a great human being.  
**John (Naylor)**

Dear David,  
Like many colleagues I am grateful for the sterling work you do with the Newsletter and there was much in the current edition to catch my eye. I was impressed by the Good Friday Breakfast from Neath and the reminder of Len Jenkins who was Gen. Sec. during my six and a half years at Aberaman YMCA. Andy Jenkins was only a lad at the time and too young to be treasurer of Y's Retired.

I was sorry to learn of the passing of Ted Ewing who played a large part in my YMCA training, which allowed me to be called an alumni. I have never suffered from this complaint before and can only hope that regular exercise will effect a cure.

Other alumni not mentioned included Bill Sargison, Hans Wirz, and Allen Isaac. Others have preceded Ted to that London Central in the sky.

Best wishes to you and Sue (who had the temerity to call me old blue eyes on one occasion).

**Peter (Brookes)**  
(PLEASE NOTE THE LETTER "E" IN THE NAME. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT).

### TED EWING

I enjoyed twenty seven wonderful years "man and boy" in the service of the YMCA in the UK. During that time, I met and interacted with people who left an indelible mark upon me – Ted Ewing was one of those people.

Ted did not overly inspire one with words and often times his 'quirky' mannerisms could be distracting. I well recall numerous occasions, the 'student body' gathered in the Caldecott Room at London Central, being challenged to "hold it together" due to some odd body language or vocal sound effects Ted engendered during class. Ted would have made the ideal subject as a caricature for a cartoonist!

Such memories are fun, but they don't produce what I may best describe as a "heart-smile" whenever he comes to mind. I am unable to elucidate why Ted had this effect on me (and I suspect many, many others). I know he was much appreciated at Finsbury Park, and at the YMCA National College and certainly at Romford YMCA where I succeeded him. But to me he was always "a bit special". He always, and without fail, would greet and welcome me most warmly. He was unequivocal in his desire to help and support. And he was kind. He most often seemed happy although at times he could become somewhat frustrated when he wasn't able to make his clarinet sound like Benny Goodman's!

Then there was the time Ted and I were paddling a two-man canoe on the River Hamble.....but that's another story.

I do believe I loved the man.

"Thank you, Ted".

**Denis (Carnaby)** Salem, Oregon USA.

I refer in particular to the loss of Ted Ewing. Whilst acknowledging the very fine service Ted rendered to the YMCA Movement locally and internationally I have reason to personally share my gratitude to him in opening a young YMCA Secretary's eyes through an inspiring talk he gave at a YMCA 'Gathering'.

His 'talk' was basically on the name of the country of GHANA where he served part of his career. He based his words on the initial letters God Has A New Africa (Ghana). It was inspiring to a young YMCA Secretary and no doubt part of my introduction to 'International YMCA Work' practiced during my career. That I recall the occasion after very many years in itself is a tribute to Ted. We give thanks for a life well lived.

Warm regards, **Jim (Lamb)**

I was saddened to hear of the passing away of Ted Ewing. I was in his Class of 63/64. Ted was a very caring person and never seemed to be annoyed by some of our pranks. On one occasion when we were doing a test and were asked to keep silent Ted came in with a very old typewriter and started banging the keys.

The late Wilby Beaumont in his own humorous way said to Ted "Would you mind we are in a period of silence." For those who knew Wilby could imagine the uproar that followed. Ted in his usual humble way apologised and took the offending article away and didn't hold this against us as, we passed out of the YMCA College successfully. He was a very special person.

**Bob (McConkey)**

Thank you David. Although our paths hardly ever crossed, I do remember the first occasion on which Ted and I met was at London Central one day in late September 1967!! He certainly made it to a ripe old age. Well done Ted!

Regards, **Roger (Hunt)**

Dear David,  
I only had the privilege of meeting Ted Ewing on three occasions.  
However in my London Central days I did spend a considerable amount of time with Charles Nunn. Often Charles would reflect on the genius and far sighted vision of Ted.  
Charles spoke quietly about Ted's regular visits to the Palace to be the inspiration behind the Duke of Edinburgh's successful awards scheme.

Or Ted's concept of another palace but this time to honour the King of Kings. The "new" London Central was born of Ted's vision for a place where the whole person could be ministered unto. Thus, originally it was designed to ensure that any and ALL YMCA members could have access to the greatest combination of arts, theatre and dance facilities.

Somewhat out of place in our gleaming new building of 1976 tucked away in the art room was a large cherished wooden table. My boss, Leslie Adams, respectfully pointed out that it was William Barclay's writing table.

**John (Drake)**



## TED EWING

General Secretary  
Finsbury Park  
YMCA

YMCA, Accra  
Ghana

Dartford YMCA  
General Secretary -  
worked on  
establishing the  
Duke of Edinburgh  
Award Scheme

YMCA Training  
College

London Central  
YMCA - was very  
proud particularly of  
counselling service

Many colleagues have shared their pleasure of having known or worked alongside Ted. It is evident that Ted was well respected by so many of his colleagues that he had enjoyed a working relationship with

He engaged with many friends in his retirement. Life was to be lived and Ted fulfilled that requirement.

### **Activities undertaken during retirement (it was a long one!)**

During retirement – Ted spent time on Iona and was regularly involved with the Iona Community where Ted helped build the youth centre.

He continued to play his clarinet until March 2020

He developed his IT skills - a keen internet purchaser !

Ted was an eager fisherman – he went fishing with his son Neil even until the last year of his life.

Ted loved music, especially jazz and enjoyed going to Jazz concerts regularly in Faversham and Canterbury.

He continued to use public transport (never drove in UK) and lived a completely independent life up until March 2020.

Subscriber to Guardian Weekly.

He was a keen cake maker and had his own home grown recipe book.

Ted gained his radio ham licence at 88 and communicated all over the world using initially voice and then morse code. Worked on developing his morse code daily and had friends he met through morse code sailing over from Belgium to meet him in Dover !

Ted always maintained his sense of humour until the end of his life - he was very popular with the nursing staff!

At this time of Covid 19 when funeral details are controlled and those able to attend are very limited, Fiona and Neil kindly share with us all the reading they offered at the short service which, for them, represents and reflects Ted's work and things which were important to him.

Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end.

There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours, days.

All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten, will pass to someone else.

Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance.

It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed.

Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies will finally disappear.

So, too, your hopes, ambitions, plans, and to-do lists will expire.

The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade away.

It won't matter where you came from, or on what side of the tracks you lived.

At the end, whether you were beautiful or brilliant, male or female, even your skin colour won't matter.

So what will matter? How will the value of your days be measured?

What will matter is not what you bought, but what you built; not what you got, but what you gave.

What will matter is not your success, but your significance.

What will matter is not what you learned, but what you taught.

What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage or sacrifice that enriched, empowered or encouraged others.

What will matter is not your competence, but your character.

What will matter is not how many people you knew, but how many will feel a lasting loss when you're gone.

What will matter is not your memories, but the memories that live in those who loved you.

Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident.

It's not a matter of circumstance but of choice.

### **Choose to live a life that matters.**

It would appear that from all the years Ted spent on this earth he certainly chose to live a life that mattered.

### **Rest in peace – Ted Ewing.**

Hi David

Seeing Hilary' Robbins' memories of Anje at Winchester YMCA in the July 2020 Newsletter, prompted my memories of Hilary!

For a number of years, the South and South East Regional Office was based in Winchester YMCA. I remember that often on Friday afternoons Hilary would set off to see her parents in Devon. But as she was a single woman having to navigate the moors she went well prepared in case of a break down with ..... a mobile phone!

This I remember consisted of two units- a battery which was the size of a bag of shopping and a hand-set which was as large as a Margaret Thatcher handbag.

This was at the cutting edge of technology and it only enabled contact with the AA. I have wondered if it ever was used in earnest!! Who needs 5G !!!??

### **Graham (Clarke)**

Dear Friends,

We would like to thank the UK YMCA Retiree Executive and membership for their generous donation toward the Secours Speciaux Fund of CHF 8178.10. For your information we have so far made 71 special grants during the Covid 19 crisis as well as ongoing emergency assistance to retirees.

Please find attached our receipt.

Kind regards,

**Suzanne Watson**

**Finance & Administration Manager – Geneva, Switzerland**

### **Highlights from Quarterly WFYR Leadership Team Meeting on 10 June 2020**

#### **Secours Speciaux**

82 retirees have now received \$500 support during the coronavirus crisis.

Secours Speciaux has contributed \$100,000 to the staff element of the Solidarity Fund (see below).

#### **Solidarity Fund**

Approximately \$305,000 has been allocated to 19 National Movements, saving 220 jobs.

The Movements are – Belarus, Cambodia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, East Jerusalem, Ethiopia, Honduras, Liberia, Madagascar, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Togo, Zimbabwe.

A second cycle of applications is now under way.

#### **Global Retirement Initiative**

Updates were given on initiatives to establish pensions for colleagues in Brazil, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone and Kenya.

#### **World Council Aarhus, Denmark July 2022**

Planning will begin this autumn for the retiree part of the conference and the travel fund.

The business is conducted very effectively under the able leadership of Phil Dwyer.

**John Naylor, observer WFYR Committee**  
**13/6/20**

Dear David & Sue

Do hope you and your family are keeping clear of the dreaded virus! Liz and I are fine; we go for a daily walk, Liz a long one, me a short one, sometimes we meet en-route!!

Thank you for letting us know of the passing of Ted Ewing. We were so privileged to have him looking after us on the 1960-61 Training Course for YMCA Secretaries. Every morning after prayers at 9.15am, we would have 90 minutes of physical education, during which Ted would encourage us by shouting Roo! Roo! Roo!

If I am correct prior to the Course, Ted was what was known as a Fraternal Secretary in Ghana. Revd. Sandy Fraser, Overseas Secretary at National Council described Ted as "Christ striding through Ghana."

We shall miss his Christmas card, even if we could never read his hand-writing!

I used to visit Ted when he was at Romford, following my late boss Harry Stevenson, I always came away full of joy and laughter. Ted was a humble, caring, wonderful, inspiring example to us all.

With kind regards

### **Paul (Harper)**

Dear David & Sue,

I hope that you are holding up well during the lockdown especially as you must be more vigilant than the rest of us mortals. Janet and I are fine and glad that we can socialise at last. We do not think that anyone in Keevil has succumbed to the virus.

John Drake phoned us last week and gave the news that Ted Ewing had died. He asked if we had any stories about his time during his YMCA career. Well, I have one that you may like to include with his obituary in Ys-Retired.

Ted was a Fraternal Secretary sent to Ghana by the British National Council and I followed him in that role some years later. One of the National Board of the Ghana YMCAs regaled the following amusing happening during Ted's time. Ted lived in a bungalow in a compound near to the centre of Accra and there were always people passing.

One night a Ghanaian heard a terrible noise coming from the bungalow and thinking that someone might be in trouble entered the compound to investigate. Whilst looking through a window he saw Ted attempting to play a saxophone. The night watchman who was armed with a bow and arrow espied the intruder and thought that he was up to no good! Rather than tackle the man, he fired an arrow into the poor man's backside! The man had to go to hospital, still with the arrow embedded in his backside, then Ted and the watchman had a difficult time explaining to the police the reason for the assault. The Board Member who told me the story could not hold back his laughter as Ted became quite famous for his terrible performances on his saxophone.

Ted was a unique YMCA Secretary, much loved by those he worked with and I am sure you will receive more tales of his exploits.

**Kind regards, Norman (OWEN)**

**As featured in the July 2020 Newsletter  
The Phayao Centre**

I had the privilege of visiting Phayao with Jim Thomson, just before the World Council in Chiang Mai. It was a long drive and a long day but worth it – a very positive and inspirational place.

**John (Naylor)**

Dear David,  
Thank you for your most kind letter.  
Perhaps it would be helpful to say something about 'The Trust' and Walter Crosby's involvement.

Since 1980, until it was formally wound up about three years ago, I took on the task of hounding family members. It was a charity managed by Walter Crosby. Walter not only did all the administration but was a substantial personal donor. I still hound the family and I do know that Walter continues his support. He is our very well regarded 'outsider'.

We began in 1979 and at that time assisted in Kenya where Roderick went to school and in the Bangladesh village where the accident that cost him his life happened. Since Roderick worked with The Bangkok YMCAs refugee programme we felt that Thailand was where he belonged and his grave is there. Next to the Churchyard was an excellent school and in cooperation with the staff we met the cost of school fees for promising but poor pupils.

That went on for years until school fees in Thailand were abolished. At that time the Bangkok YMCA were creating what became 'The Happy Home' for AIDS orphaned children and we switched our support there. Years later, that Home was taken over as part of a Government plan and we switched again to support Phayao - incidentally, some of the children from The Happy Home went to Phayao. So, although the Centre there has existed for 27 years, we have been involved for only about 5 years.

It follows that we have been working with the Bangkok YMCA for 40 years and the friendships built over these years have been an enormous consolation to our now much expanded family. In particular, Suwan Limphumsandeng (I love that surname) who has been the driving force behind The Happy Home and the Phayao Centre.

David, I have taxed your patience but you now know the background to our involvement. Stay well and thank you for the good work done by Sue and yourself.

**Jim (Thomson)**

Just heard from my Ruth. She is in better spirits and tells me, "I am down for the chop today!"

A highly skilled surgeon is going to 'pin and plate the lower distal fracture of the femur, not the hip replacement as thought. Please join with us in our prayer that all will go well. Thank you

**Beryl and Mervyn (Moorehead)**  
26-07-20

**(printing and distribution of BRIDGES is provided by the Greater Philadelphia YMCA sending a message of "brotherly love" to YMCA retirees around the world)**

All our members, who receive the bi-monthly Y's Retired of UK Newsletter through the post and don't receive BRIDGES but would like to receive a copy of BRIDGES through the post, should please send me (David H Smith) their name and address and he will pass on your requested – for BRIDGES is for all who wish to receive it.

Should you wish to contribute towards the postage of BRIDGES to colleagues throughout the world, please send any contribution to – Ken White, 46 Squirrel Road, Doylestown, PA 18901, USA.

BRIDGES is sent out to all members who have email addresses when it is produced each quarter and is on the website [www.yretired.co.uk](http://www.yretired.co.uk) under the heading – BRIDGES.

Dear David,  
One day in the 1980s I drove to Dame Vera Lynn's home in Sussex to pick her up to take her to a YMCA event involving WW2 veterans. When I arrived, her drive was full of police cars. It turned out that her home had just been burgled and, in the circumstances, I rather naively suggested that she might want to cancel her appearance. To this day I remember her face when she turned to me and said: "Do you think that after all these years I am going to let my boys down?". What a wonderful person! She went on to be one of the figureheads of the YMCA's first Legacy Campaign which raised £ millions over the years.

**David (Bedford)**

At Ys Retired Scotland meeting on Monday 18th May, our first using Zoom, Kerry Reilly YMCA Scotland CEO spoke on the state of the YMCA Nation. While it focused on Scotland, she also discussed the way in which the four nations were co-operating during these unprecedented times. She set it in the context of the World YMCA and the positive response and action by the World Alliance.

Everyone enjoyed the meeting so much that yesterday, Thursday 25th June, Ys Retired in Scotland had a Zoom coffee morning for a sociable chat. It was so enjoyable another will be held in early August!

With best wishes  
**John (Naylor)**

Sending best wishes to all on the above list (even those I do not know!), together with the hope that you are all, in National Service parlance, in "good order and military discipline!"

Now 82 myself, but mainly perpendicular, and managing (with some difficulty) to keep out of the pubs of Paisley!

Best regards, **Ted (Milburn)**  
*Formerly Huddersfield YMCA, Marmion Centre Hove YMCA, Sussex,, YMCA Commission London, ex-President YMCA Scotland, 5th Morpeth Boy Scouts! Honorary Lifetime member of the YMCA (Scotland). (Up to date in the paying of subs!!)*

## 'WELLCOME' NEWS ABOUT THE ARCHIVES OF THE FUTURE

Contact message through Graham.

I'm writing to let you know that we were successful in our funding bid to the Wellcome Trust. We have been awarded £236,339 for our project "Healthy Minds and Active Bodies": the promotion of health and wellbeing by UK youth movements'.

We plan to start the project by mid-2021, focusing on fully cataloguing the YMCA and YHA archives held at the Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham. I'd be happy to get in touch again, nearer the time, to provide further details.

Finally, thank you very much for your support – this will have gone a long way to helping us secure this funding!

Best wishes,

**Mark Eccleston** | Archivist and Project Manager  
Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham,  
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Dear David,

Here is some good news, perhaps especially relevant to all Y's Retired since each one is a living archive...You might want to publicise it among your members.

One of our less trumpeted success stories has been the decision to place the National YMCA Archives with the University of Birmingham's Edward Cadbury Research Library. For some years now there has been a productive collaboration, which has included occasional seminars, day conferences, and lectures.

The collection has become widely known and our Archive Group, linking the Library and the YMCA, and meeting twice a year, has fostered this ongoing interest. Mark Easton, who represents the Edward Cadbury Library on the Group has recently secured a grant of £236,339 from the Wellcome Trust.

This is a fine tribute to his ability to make the right case and a fine tribute to the value of the archive. And what will that money do? It will fund a two-year project, "Healthy Minds and Active Bodies: the promotion of health and wellbeing by UK youth movements". It is based on two of the Library's notable collections, the YMCA and the Youth Hostels' Association Archives. We, of course, stress until we are blue in the face that a YMCA is not a YHA, but what an academic would call "interdisciplinary value" will be immediately apparent.

The outcome will be two fully searchable electronic catalogues, revealing even more fully the research potential of these two significant collections. It follows a project cataloguing the Save the Children Archive, also funded by Wellcome.

Could there be a better example of that rare thing - joined-up thinking?

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

## EXPANSION PLANS AT PLYMOUTH YMCA

The YMCA has secured a £450,000 investment to launch a major redevelopment of its Plymouth sports centre and create a Tron-style alternate reality fitness suite.

The charity will use the cash to install an immersive spin studio at its building, where people will be able to ride spin exercise bikes while watching images on a cinematic curved screen.

With an advanced audio system incorporated too, in a suite provided by top sports equipment brand Les Mills, it is all designed to provide users with an "exhilarating immersive experience", likened to the virtual world of the Tron sci-fi movies, while burning calories.



**A Les Mills immersive spin studio similar to the one planned for the YMCA's Honicknowle facility**

The first phase of the overall redevelopment of what was previously called the Kitto Centre would also see a high-spec gym installed in a newly kitted-out fitness suite. This will improve the workouts of the centre's 1,000-plus members and enable the YMCA to grow its successful cardiac rehabilitation services and health provision for vulnerable groups.

The development is set to be only the first phase of a wider regeneration project at the centre with the aim of tackling health inequalities in Plymouth. The initial phase of the "bold regeneration" of the Honicknowle Lane facility, built in 1974, also includes refurbished changing rooms. The project has been made possible with a £450,000 investment, mostly a grant, from Postcode Innovation Trust, thanks to funding raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery, and social impact investors Resonance. It comes as the YMCA centre has been closed for more than months due to the ongoing nationwide restrictions for gyms and leisure centres as part of the coronavirus lockdown.

Tom Lavis, director of business development at YMCA Plymouth, said: "We are extremely excited to have been given the green light for this much needed regeneration of our centre - especially at a time when good news can feel in short supply. Importantly, this isn't a bid or an ambition, but a development project we're actually ready to begin building."

"We're very grateful that players of People's Postcode Lottery and Resonance have backed us, and both share our vision to tackle local health inequalities, by providing high-quality and importantly affordable provision at our facility.

"This development will be a major boost to our community, particularly in expanding our work for disadvantaged groups and people with cardiac conditions."

Mr Lavis said the YMCA has further, ambitious, plans, which will be announced soon, and said: "We're much more than just a sport or leisure centre. As an independent charity here in Plymouth, we exist to support young people and our community's health, education and family needs."

"For example, many people are surprised to learn that we train over 180 young people here each week at our Discovery College.

"As well as this, we support hundreds of local families through our disability sessions, play activities and more.

"We have bold plans, and this is just a first step. We look forward to announcing more in the near future."



CEO Dave Ball introduces new “move on” modular flats for YMCA Thames Valley with another 9 arriving early August



## How our lives have changed thanks to Covid 19

Half of us are going to come out of this coronavirus quarantine as amazing cooks. The other half will come out with a drinking problem.

I used to spin that toilet paper like I was on Wheel of Fortune. Now I turn it like I'm cracking a safe.

I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator. Still haven't decided where to go for Easter ----- the Living Room or the Bedroom

PS: every few days, try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pyjamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.

Home schooling is going well. 2 students suspended for fighting and 1 teacher fired for drinking on the job.

I don't think anyone expected that when we changed the clocks we'd go from Standard Time to the Twilight Zone. This morning I saw a neighbour talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came into my house, told my dog..... we laughed a lot.

Quarantine Day 5: Went to this restaurant called THE KITCHEN. You have to gather all the ingredients and make your own meal. I have no clue how this place is still in business.

My body has absorbed so much soap and disinfectant lately that when I pee it cleans the toilet.

I'm so excited --- it's time to take out the garbage. What should I wear?

I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to Puerto Backyarda. I'm getting tired of Los Livingroom.

Classified Ad: Single man with toilet paper seeks woman with hand sanitizer for good clean fun.

Day 6 of Home schooling: My child just said "I hope I don't have the same teacher next year".... I'm offended.

If you can start the day without caffeine,

If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,

If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,

If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,

If you can understand when your loved ones Are too busy to give you any time,

If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,

If you can conquer tension without medical help,

If you can relax without alcohol,

If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,



Then You Are Probably The Family Dog!

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## GOODBYE 12 CLOS BELMONT

Dear YMCA Leaders and Members,

This week the World YMCA turns yet another significant page in our history. We shall be relocating our offices from 12 Clos Belmont to a new building in Vernier near the airport in Geneva!



Our headquarters since 1878	
1878 - 1886:	Grand'Rue 23, Geneva, Switzerland
1886 - 1894:	2, Place du Port, Geneva, Switzerland
1894-1930:	3, Rue du Général Dufour, Geneva, Switzerland
1930-1936:	2, Rue Montchoisy, Geneva, Switzerland
1936-1937:	1, Promenade du Pin, Geneva, Switzerland
1937-1942:	52, Rue des Pâquis, Geneva, Switzerland
1942-1995:	37, Quai-Wilson, Geneva, Switzerland
1995-2020:	12, Clos-Belmont, Geneva, Switzerland
2020 -	5 Chemin Mouille-Galant, Vernier Geneva, Switzerland

The World Alliance of YMCAs (Wold YMCA) has been headquartered in Geneva since 1878. In 1995 we moved to a beautiful villa located on 12 Clos Belmont in Geneva and designed in 1898 by Robert Percy, a London based architect. The then called John R. Mott House, is a Victorian style building, and was at one point used by Melrose Pension. Previously, (1934 until his death in 1937) Pierre de Coubertin the founder of the modern Olympic games lived intermittently in the villa. For these and many other reasons, the John R Mott House building is listed by the Geneva Canton authorities as a historical model of Victorian architecture, and as such, no modifications are permitted to its façade. The YMCA is blessed to have added to the history of this beautiful and Historical villa.

During our 25 years at 12 Clos Belmont, we have made many precious memories: not only has it hosted 5 Secretary Generals including myself, but also a historic Executive Committee meeting in June 1997. The planning and implementation of the organisational review 1999-2000, the inception and many meetings of the Global Staff Team, the design and roll out of our Movement Strengthening and Youth Empowerment Strategies, initiation of our Change model "Space Transformation and impact" to name but a few memories.

You will agree with me that emotionally and image wise, it is indeed difficult to depart from a building as prestigious as 12 Clos Belmont full of all the memories we have made together as a movement. Yet, it is sobering to realise that our headquarters is after all a space, a space where we uphold the values and ideals of what we stand for. What is even more sobering, and comforting is that we, and not the physical building, are the movement and that besides the many memories we have built at 12 Clos Belmont, our mission counts much more than the physical facility. I am convinced that the times we live in now, the world that continues to unfold before us (even more so now in the wake of the COVID 19 pandemic), the



imperative to project ourselves and our mission into the future are key ingredients as we together build fresh memories in our new address in the years to come.



Per the decision of the JR Mott foundation (the legal entity that owns the building) and endorsed by the Executive Committee of the World YMCA, we sold 12 Clos Belmont. In replacement, The John R Mott foundation purchased a 5-storey building located at 5 Chemin de Mouille-Galand, Vernier. The World YMCA will occupy the attic (5th Floor). Other floors will be rented out with the aim of generating revenue. We hope to finalise the move in August this year. In the meantime, the pilgrimage continues; we are the people, we embody the mission, let's keep it alive and remain faithful to the vision and the ideals of our founders and those who have preceded us.

...goodbye 12 Clos Belmont, welcome 5 Chemin de Mouille-Galand, long live the YMCA!

Yours respectfully Carlos Madjri Sanvee