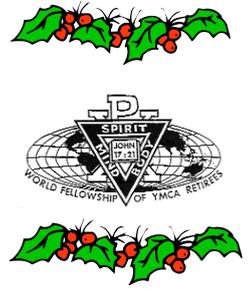




Y's RETIRED OF THE UK
Affiliated to the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees

JANUARY 2011

www.yretired.co.uk



Greetings from our President



**Dear colleagues
and friends - warm
Christmas
Greetings!**

Changing seasons of the year come round all too quickly as retired people appear to recognise before those employed! The period of Advent is with us and Christmas has almost arrived bringing the 'hustle and bustle' of activity related to the season.

Within my family over the years the actual festivity has changed little as traditionally, we all sit round in a circle on Christmas Eve and open our presents, occasionally with much hilarity at the 'joke' gifts nicely packaged are opened to reveal that yet again 'dad' has received a large packet of Bassett's Liquorice Allsorts or whatever! Changes however are round the corner as due to our one and only grandson now three and a half years old who, through reasons of growth and the developing of a lovely personality, brings much joy into our family occasions as he becomes the centre of attraction opening parcels 'before his turn!' Children make a difference in our lifestyles! Indeed the Christ child influenced the whole world whether believers in the Christian Faith or not, such was his influence. Celebrating Christmas as a 'holy day' or holiday reminds us of the advent of the child to be named Jesus Christ, born in a lowly manger, growing up into manhood in circumstance so different from that of life in our modern society yet illustrated so well in the Christmas hymn "Joy to the World the Lord has come!" For many of us Christmas is a time for quiet memories when we recall loved ones who are no longer with us for whatever reason. Some like to spend Christmas quietly perhaps with occasional tears yet balance their thoughts with the purpose of the celebration. There is human sadness as well as joy which is the reality of Christmas for Lent and Easter have yet to come.

**WHATEVER YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, MAY I
WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND
A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**

Reunions

You will have read or heard of the two very successful Reunions held in 2009 and 2010 proving how worthwhile these events are, we hope to continue in succeeding years! As the present Convenor of the Y's Retired of the UK Reunions I share with you my concern at this early stage for the October 3rd to 6th 2011 Reunion. I need to know the approximate number of no less than 10 persons who can attend.

A figure of 'no less than 10' was agreed at the 2011 Reunion to justify the preparation, administration and programming involved. We have a relatively small membership from which to attract participants unlike the AOS/BSA with some 230 Local Association staff together with the four National Council staff with attendance and travel costs underwritten by their respective YMCAs!

Whilst I am prepared to do the necessary work I do need to have a nuclear group on which I can rely on for attendance. Good health and costs are always relevant to retirees. Woodbrooke Conference Centre, Selly Oak, Birmingham are holding to the price as arranged in 2009! – There may be a reduction of £21 this year! Presently a verbal quote of £270 has been given which together with an administration charge of £10 totals £280 all found. This is some £100 cheaper than university and hotel conference facilities in Birmingham. A 'circular' sent early 2009 was responded to by over 40 of you supporting reunions and confirming the best venue central to the UK was Birmingham, this has proved to be the case due to easy road and rail transport.

In light of the above information please email, write or telephone me direct if you intend attending or hope to attend the Reunion scheduled for 3rd to 6th October 2011. I am the first to acknowledge the difficulty in committing oneself so far ahead!

If for genuine financial reasons you cannot attend please advise me in confidence and I will consult the officers regarding the possibility of a bursary. To this end we are building up our resources for the future. Your helpful support would be much appreciated.

Warm regards,

Jim Lamb - President/Convenor - Y's Retired of the UK

Ys RETIRED - SOUTH WEST REUNION (ALL INVITED)

**An invitation to all Ys Retired Secretaries,
spouses and friends to 'come on down' to
Trelohan Manor Hotel, St Ives, Cornwall
from**

Monday 12th April 2011 to Friday 16th April 2011

Half Board - £170 per person.

Have a great 4 days in real comfort.

**To secure your place with a £40 deposit -
contact**

Margaret Libby on – 01752 773040

PRESIDENT : Jim Lamb T 01223 440228 E: j.lamb22@btinternet.com
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OFFICE RELOCATION FOR YMCA ENGLAND

From 1 November 2010, YMCA England / National Council of YMCAs official address will be: 45 Beech Street, London, EC2Y 8AD.

The Chief Executive's Office; Direct Marketing; Grants and Major Donors; Policy, Media and Research, Communications; and the London & East of England Regional Executive Officer, are all now located at Beech Street.

Post sent to our old offices in Parker Street is being redirected. Direct dial numbers are also being redirected for these teams as well.

The main phone number for our Beech Street office is **020 7070 2160** and our fax number is **0845 873 6644**.

I have to apologise, but I gave you a wrong name for one of the photos in the October Newsletter. In the photo taken at Erdington YMCA, I gave the CEO's name as Alan Mason, I don't know where I got that from, but his name is Alan Fraser. So sorry. Is it possible to print an apology in the next edition?

Regards – Ray (Allen)



Concern and surprise has been expressed by a growing number of YMCA supporters that the Movement appears to have no representation at the National Memorial Arboretum, Croxall Road, Alrewas, Staffordshire, DE13 7AR.

This is surprising and disappointing, especially when we all know the amount of involvement the YMCA Movement with our Women's Auxiliaries had in both world wars, and the documentation available for all to acknowledge.

It becomes even more frustrating when other, more obscure voluntary agencies are listed either at the memorial itself, on the memorial website, or both.

This unfortunate omission needs to be put right. It has now been brought to the attention of Sam (Johnston) who, having been made aware, has been collecting the evidence, and has now in turn, brought this sad omission to the attention of the YMCA National Secretary Ian Green.

It's a matter of 'watch this space' as further investigative steps are taken.

Editor.

NORMAN RUDGE – sadly passed away 2nd December. Awaiting funeral arrangements via Norman's son which will be circulated once received. Norman served as General Secretary to Croydon YM. He was well known for his duets with Bob Boyce at AOS. Wife Barbara has just moved to a care home.

Brian Barrett writes

George (Hart) was a good friend of mine. I followed him as assistant to the Resident Secretary at Skegness and his mother lived next to Anne and I. A further eulogy to George will appear in the March 2011 Newsletter.

As we Silver Surfers know, sometimes we have trouble with our computers. I had a problem yesterday, so I called Eric, the 11 year old next door, whose bedroom looks like Mission Control and asked him to come over.

Eric clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem. As he was walking away, I called after him, So, what was wrong?

He replied, "It was an ID ten T" error. I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired,

'An "ID ten T" error? What's that? In case I need to fix it again.' Eric grinned.... 'Haven't you ever heard of an "ID ten T" error before?' 'No, I replied.

'Write it down,' he said, 'and I think you'll figure it out.' So I wrote down:

ID10T
I used to like Eric, the little!!!

YMCA PENSION AND ISSURANCE PLAN

All relevant documents concerning the Plan are now available on the pension scheme website, including the 4th Definitive Trust Deed and Rules. The web address is as follows www.pensions.ymca.org.uk

CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

Should you change your contact address, please notify Isabel Kaye Email: Isabel.kaye@england.ymca.org.uk Tel: 0207 070 3683.

Please note that the Pension Plan is no longer located at Walthamstow and has now moved to: 45 Beech Street, London EC2Y 8AD.

While writing, I still have a stock of BBBF books by Barbara Vessey:

"British Boys for British Farms: The Story of the YMCA's Farm Training Scheme". £5 plus £1 postage. 22 Ellerslie Close, Charminster, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 9QQ. Tel 01305-266197.

Email [stephen @ Milner22600.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:stephen@Milner22600.fsnet.co.uk)
Stephen (Milner)

Enjoy this link and have a very happy Christmas

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE>

from your Y's Retired of UK Executive team



Margery Griffiths

After a short illness Margery died peacefully in Horwich early on Thursday morning.

During her long life, she was much loved and appreciated by her family and the many friends that she and Stan made through the YMCA and their many interests and involvement in the community particularly in Birkenhead.

Margery lived for 50 years in Birkenhead at the YMCA in Whetstone Lane, then at Wharfedale Avenue in Prenton. 6 years ago she moved to a residential home in Stockport near to Mary, where she was very appreciative of all the love and care she received celebrating her 90th birthday last November. In September she moved to a nursing home in Horwich for the last few weeks of her life.

Margery's funeral and thanksgiving service took place on Friday 15th October at St John's church, Heaton Mersey, Stockport.

Birkenhead YMCA has been serving the local community for over 135 years - "Helping to build positive futures and overcome barriers for people of all ages". Stan and Margery contributed greatly to this over the years.

Mum was one of those people who kindled the "life-quality" of faith, hope and love in everyone whose life she touched. She, and Dad, continue to be an example and inspiration to us all.

David, Mary, and Peter

YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO SURE!!!

Dan was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business.

When he found out he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father died, he decided he needed to find a wife with whom to share his fortune.

One evening, at an investment meeting, he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away. "I may look like just an ordinary guy," he said to her, "But in just a few years my father will die and I will inherit £200 million".

"Impressed, the woman asked for his business card and three days later, she became his stepmother.

Women are so much better at financial planning than men.



Amy Collier writes of her husband Bill, information that was not included in the article in the October 2010 - 14th Newsletter.

Bill was born in Gloucester while his mother was staying with Gran Collier. He went to school in Gloucester, but also in Ystradgynlais near Swansea, as he alternated between his grandmother and his parents. He learnt the Welsh language while in Wales.

He formed and ran a youth club at Mayhill near Gloucester and in later life he often returned to take anniversary services.

During the war years Bill ran a Bible study group each Sunday afternoon at RAF Innsworth. He studied and passed the Methodist local preacher's exam and cycled all over Gloucestershire preaching in various churches. After the war Bill graduated at Methodist Theological training college Cliff College.

Whilst in Cardiff as a youth worker for a Temperance Union, running a full-time youth club at Cory Hall, Bill was head hunted by the Welsh YMCA National Council and asked to go to Aberaman near Aberdare, Glamorgan. He rebuilt the building and the seven days a week activities.

Amy joined him in Aberaman when they married. He then transferred to Neath and over six years renovated an old workhouse building and again promoted the YMCA activities.

Bill felt called to work in Brighton and changed a failing holiday centre into regular accommodation to vulnerable men and women against objectors from both inside and outside the YMCA. Brighton now has six purpose built properties housing both men and women, one being called, William Collier House.

He was invited to the Palace to receive his MBE from the Queen accompanied by Amy.

Bill preached in many churches around the Brighton, Hove and Eastbourne area. He enjoyed his membership of Brighton Rotary Club to which he became President and was presented with the Paul Harris Fellowship by the Hove Soiree Rotary Club. He was Master of his Masonic Lodge.

Bill had a good sense of humour and a fondness of sweet things like chocolate and fresh cream doughnuts, but above all else, Bill was a good and loving husband.

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) supporting the British troops during the 1st World War

Within ten days of the declaration of war, the YMCA had established no fewer than 250 recreation centres in the United Kingdom, providing a cup of tea, sandwiches or other refreshments, perhaps some reading materials. Many of these centres were at or near railway stations or other places where large numbers of troops would be passing.

In November 1914, the first YMCA contingent went to France and organised similar centres at Le Havre. Later, they were also in operation at Rouen, Boulogne, Dieppe, Etaples and Calais (the principal army bases), Abbeville, Dunkirk, Abancourt (railway junction), Paris and Marseilles. Eventually there were numerous such centres in each of the places mentioned, and another three hundred along the lines of communication. Vast quantities of refreshments were served out to troops on the move: for example, one centre at a railway siding at Etaples served more than 200,000 cups of cocoa each month.

On 30 June 1915, YMCA received permission to establish a centre within the area of army operations. It opened a centre at Aire, then the location of HQ of First Army. By the end of the year, small centres were in hundreds of places close to the front. As the pictures on this page show, some of these were very close to the firing line, providing a welcome refuge.



A road side canteen provided by the YMCA, near Wytschaete on 11 August 1917.

Although fighting was going on a little to the north in the Third Battle of Ypres, the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge area was at this time relatively quiet.

The men on the left and right are two orderlies and two officers of the Australian Medical Corps. Many such small centres located close to Casualty Clearing Stations and dressing stations were in operation at this time.

The YMCA staff was largely voluntary; mostly female but with some male staff who were over military age or below the medical requirements for active service. It appears that the man standing central, with helmet, in the image above is a YMCA worker. At any time, some 1500 YMCA workers were in France and Flanders alone.

June 1915 saw the YMCA open a hostel in France for the use of relatives, visiting dangerously ill men. A YMCA car met the visitors at the port and took them to see their soldier relative. There were in the region of 100-150 such visitors each day.



Another YMCA canteen, this time a "dug out" under ruined buildings in the shattered town of Ypres in June 1917.

A YMCA triangle sign can be seen on the left, but the entrance is down some steps on the right by the packing cases.

AM I DOWNHEARTED? – NO! - BY SAM JOHNSTON



Of course there are times when I do feel downhearted, for example, when it seems to me the YMCA has lost its Christian emphasis and no longer has the high profile it enjoyed in the past.

Yes the 'C' is still there in the title and expressed through much Christian social work, but I am concerned that much of our reach work differs little from many other secular organisations. This concern has been recently brought home to me in a stronger way as I have read and discussed with others the moving and thrilling accounts of the YMCA during WWI. There was bravery, dedication and suffering, but what stands out like a bright beacon was the fact that at its centre were men and women of deep Christian conviction. It would of course be entirely wrong to suggest there are no such dedicated Christian staff or Christian lay leaders involved in YMCA work today.

After some thought I acknowledge that secular organisations can be just as effective meeting needs as are those organisations with a Christian background. Reluctantly I feel at times that there is more of a Christian attitude expressed in secular pieces of work than in some YMCA programmes.

Perhaps the YMCA has over the last fifty years pursued a path dominated by ways of obtaining financial benefits by involvement in the Youth Service, British Council, Training Schemes, Housing Association, Sports Programmes in preference to a Christian emphasis.

So having stored up this sort of feeling for some time what pleasure it was for me to attend a Ten Sing concert in Cambridge. This was an event attended by 93 young people from European countries and groups from England. They gave a moving performance of dance drama and song – and even some rap – with a clear Christian message. I came away feeling inspired and uplifted and full of enthusiasm and proud to be associated with the YMCA for so many years.



WHY

The Christian emphasis was clear up front. The young people involved obviously had a good relationship with the leaders with whom I know they discussed Christian belief and experience.

Many of the young people involved came from wide and varied backgrounds with none or little connection with established churches.

The concert demonstrated some of the skills that have enabled the YMCA to meet changing social conditions over many years.

The concert reminded me, I suppose, like many reading this, the reason why the YMCA became an important part of our lives.

It was refreshing to see such a group participating in activities like Tensing under the banner of the YMCA.

On leaving the concert, a young parent of one of the Ten Sing group was heard to say, 'That was funky, funny and Christian' – that was good to hear.

Long may Ten Sing continue to survive even though difficult times may lie ahead. I am reminded of what dear old Mervyn Moorhead would often say in his rich Northern Ireland brogue "Let's have a wee word of prayer" and I add 'Don't forget Ten Sing in your prayers'.



Left:- Former head of the British Army, **General Sir Richard Dannatt**, was made president of **YMCA Norfolk** at the AGM on October 18th, taking over from **Richard Jarrold**, with a pledge to **Serve to Lead**.

Richard Jarrold was awarded the highest honour possible from YMCA England, personally presented by its national chief executive **Ian Green** - **The Order of the Red Triangle**.

Richard stood down after 40 years of service to the YMCA, saying: "I care for the YMCA and the people it serves. It has been a privilege."

Former chair, David Ingham, paid tribute to Richard, saying: "Richard has been of immense service to YMCA Norfolk over 40 years. It has been full-on, totally committed service for the whole time, motivated by his personal Christian faith."



(This moving letter from Africa came into my possession last week – It proves the point that as Christians, we may never gain a realisation of the effect we may have on other people's lives. Do check out the website – address at the bottom of the letter and prepare to be amazed - Editor)

My name is Elvida Hildyard. I was born in Tanzania, in North Pare in Kilimanjaro Region. I went to boarding school because we lived in rural Africa. I went to High School, in the capital of Dar es Salaam in 1965/66 and boarded with other girls. There was a couple who worked in Azania High School; they worked for the YMCA. We were very much blessed because, although we did not know many white people, the couple we got to know were Mr Raymond Onions (who was YMCA Training Officer for Tanzania) and Mrs Alice Onions (Head teacher of Bunge Primary School). They became part of our lives. What a marvellous time we had. Alice and Ray spent a lot of time with us.



Scotland YMCA
Retirees Group
Meeting No 6
4TH November 2010

The Scottish YMCA retirees group had their regular six monthly meeting in November at Cumbernauld YMCA. We were delighted that Bob King, a past YMCA Scotland National General Secretary who now lives in Australia, was with us

Information was shared about :-

- the work of Jim Thomson who, with the encouragement of the recent UK Retirees Conference, visited the World Alliance office in Geneva and was given ready access to World Alliance files regarding work with civilian victims of violence at national and international level since 1907. From these, and from his own experience as a past World Alliance Refugee Secretary, he is planning to write a history of this very significant work of the YMCA over many decades of the 20th Century.
- a volunteer scheme to give short-term assistance to local associations is being developed by Ted Milburn. To date 22 offers of assistance from volunteers has been received.
- developing new work in Tollcross and Leith Acorn Centre YMCAs.
- the wide variety of the work of Cumbernauld YMCA which was presented by Eleanor Campbell. She informed us that any new programmes are expected to reflect the 10 standards for YMCA work in "Working towards Excellence."
- the UK retiree's conference held in September in Birmingham, reported by Gilbert Dickson. He said that while it had been an excellent conference and re-union, it was disappointing that only 11 had attended, of whom 4 were from Scotland but that plans are being made for another such UK Conference in October 2011 in Birmingham.
- information from the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees was given by John Knox including a process is under way to identify attainable goals for WFYR and also concern that there is an urgent need to consider the establishing of a Global Retirement Initiative to support retirees with no pension and also to consider carefully the relation between such an initiative and Secours Speciaux.

Bob King, who led the closing prayers, returns to Australia later in November with the good wishes of the Scottish Retirees group.

John Knox

They taught us 'English Country Dancing' and games of 'Lawn Tennis' and volleyball as well as worship times. We all admired them for their kindness towards us. I loved Alice and Ray and I was amazed by their love for us, but I had to leave to go on to Teacher Training College.

I married a teacher called Roy Exley in 1968 in Moshi. Strangely neither of us knew that we had Ray and Alice as mutual friends. Roy was a teacher in the boys school in Tanzania where we lived before moving to Addis Ababa and then to England where baby Eva was born. We went to stay with friends in Ipswich (Ken and Pat Read) who we had met in Moshi. One afternoon, Ken asked Roy to deliver a letter to a large house (the YMCA Regional Office in Park Road) and to Roy's surprise and great happiness, it was the house of Ray and Alice. Roy told them he had married a girl called Elvida, They soon discovered, to their surprise that this Elvida was the same girl they knew from Dar es Salaam High School. What a coincidence!

In 1974 our son David was born in Addis Ababa and Ray and Alice became Godparents. Before we had left England on our travels, Alice had wisely advised us to buy a house for security. With the political upheaval in Ethiopia and the emperor's murder, we returned to England where Alice and Ray looked after us. Roy stayed in Germany for work reasons, however he was very unhappy and could not settle and his unhappiness affected the family. Again, with help from Ray and Alice, we moved to Woolford Halse, Northamptonshire and then onto Aston-le-Walls. This moving and unhappiness caused all members of the family to suffer.

I decided to move to Northampton and from sheltered accommodation for women, applied to do a nursing training course at the School of Nursing. I qualified and became a Hospital Sister. Alice and Ray stayed in contact throughout. I cried on their shoulders and they were such a comfort. They prayed for us and kept us in touch to make sure we were alright.

After some years I met Victor and we have now been married 25 years. We raised and educated the children together in a happy environment, keeping a close connection with Ray and Alice who helped to keep us alive really. They moved to Cornwall and we visited as often as we could. They have been my brother and sister all my life – it was devastating when Alice left us to be with her Lord.

God has had His hands on us. When he gave me Victor, he sent us back to Africa, to my fathers' village and gave us orphans and poor children in the community to help care for. I thank Ray and Alice for their love, for what they have been and for what they have helped our lives to be. We know that Nyotastar Christian Centre would not have come into being if God had not given us Alice and Ray. They cared for our well-being, keeping us healthy and sober – physically and spiritually – so that we were able to go back to Africa and help with the work He has given us to do - Glory to His Name.

Thank you Ray. We give God thanks for Alice's life and may God bless you and give you peace in your life and with your family at this Christmas time.

<http://www.nyotastar.com/projects.aspx>

