



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

MARCH 2010

www.yretired.co.uk



Greetings from our President



I offer you all warm greetings as the cold and wet weather draws to a close. Snowdrops daffodils green shoots and buds announce the coming of 'Spring' and new life in nature encourages all gardeners to look forward to back breaking experiences again!

By way of this communication I share with you information on two important points before generalising. First on your behalf I offer sincere thanks to your committee where the executive members have been most active in ensuring good practice is followed in the management of Y's Retired of the UK affairs.

Our new treasurer Ray Allen has worked very hard in producing most acceptable financial accounts for the year ended December 31st 2009 following the opening of the new account with the balance from the old account transferred following the death of Geoffrey Harris. Geoffrey's fine service was recorded in a previous Newsletter. With the more modern banking system enabling the use of Bank Standing Orders we have broken new ground in the payment of subscriptions and donations to Secours Speciaux our YMCA charity for retired colleagues worldwide experiencing difficult circumstances. The evident success of SO's is already acknowledged this January and 2010 will reveal the establishing of a firm foundation on which we can develop.

The second point is the fact that we have in the past through the good offices of Reg Wake established fine relationships with the World Federation of YMCA Retirees.

I am happy to report that this is further enhanced in that David Smith will be attending a rare WFYR Conference representing the Y's Retired of the UK to be held this year in Hong Kong from 19th to 23rd July 2010. There will be a Report from David on this important event attendance at which is seen as important in widening our scope internationally learning of other nations groups related to 'retirees'.

It is significant that the WFYR officers have applauded our Newsletter with its' service to retirees and include excerpts in their publication 'Bridges'.

How good it is to share arrangements for the **2010 Reunion** of the Y's Retired of the UK are now well in hand to be held again in the fine facilities of 'Woodbrooke', Quaker Study Centre, Selly Oak, Birmingham from 3pm 20th Sept to 11am 23rd Sept 2010. Woodbrooke have kept their costs to £299, the 2009 level. **Your applications for attendance should be in before April 10th 2010.** Another application form is attached. Early application helps greatly in my administration for as you know 'retirees' do not have secretaries to do their work!!

Finally! From time to time one hears of retired colleagues suffering from many illnesses, such may be shared by a brief note to David Smith who at his discretion as Editor entries may be recorded in the Newsletter, Reg Wake continues in his capacity as Executive Secretary to receive information of colleagues who have died.

Your Executive have agreed that Christian based articles are welcomed for inclusion in the Newsletter, be warned however that the Editor has the last word! - Such power!
Keep well and in good spirits.

Jim Lamb

YMCA ARCHIVES – DAY SCHOOL

In collaboration with YMCA England and Special Collections, University of Birmingham, a Day School entitled *Service and Sacrifice: A Commemoration of YMCA Work in the Great War* will be held on Saturday 6th March 2010 at the University of Birmingham, chaired by Professor Clyde Binfield (Chair of the YMCA Archives Group).

The day school surveys and examines the YMCA's wartime efforts in relation to its wider context with particular reference to Barclay Baron, a senior YMCA worker in the bases and with the armies of the British Expeditionary Force.

Cost for the day is £15.00 to YMCA members. There will also be an opportunity to visit the YMCA Archive, which has recently been moved to a new building. See further information on page eight and booking form attached.

The Back Parts of War – the YMCA Memoirs and Letters of Barclay Baron 1915-1919

This hardback publication of Barclay Baron's memoirs will be available to purchase at the Day School for the special price of £20 to YMCA members (information attached).

Any queries, please contact
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Queen honours ex-YMCA Norfolk chief with MBE



Former **YMCA Norfolk** chief executive, **John Drake**, has received an MBE for services to young people in **Norwich** and **Norfolk** in the **Queen's New Year's** honours list, announced today (December 31).

The honour follows his retirement earlier this summer after 30 years service with the Christian charity. He also served as **Sheriff of Norwich** in 2006

A delighted John said: "I am surprised to put it mildly. But this is not about me but about the incredible staff team, trustees and volunteers who have made YMCA Norfolk what it is today."

"I feel humbled and a bit of a fraud really, because I had the best job in the world and I got paid for doing it. It was a privilege to lead YMCA Norfolk."

"One of the satisfactions is that not only has the work of the YMCA been recognised but it also shows that Christian service is still valued by government."

Current YMCA Norfolk chief executive, **Tim Sweeting**, said: "We at YMCA Norfolk are so pleased to see that John's amazing contribution has been recognised in this way, it is thoroughly deserved."

MBEs are awarded to individuals for achievement or service in and to the community of a responsible kind which is outstanding in its field, or for very local 'hands-on' service which stands out as an example to others.

Dear Jim and Thomson's family,

We organized the memorial service for Mrs. Mary Thomson on Friday evening Dec 4, 2009. There were about 40 in attendance – children and staff at Happy Home, here in Thailand and some members from the church.

Please find herewith some photos when we did the memorial services that night. If you need any assistance please let me know.

Respectively yours,

Sunan Adulyachart & Suwan Limsumphan

As previously reported, Mary died on 28th November last. Married to Jim for 66 years, Clearly a lady of stamina, observing that a major part of Jim's service took them to Kenya and later postings to World Alliance involving Jim in extensive world wide travel in the interests of refugees, and for Mary long periods of separation, making a home wherever they found themselves.

Mary had a great capacity for caring, friendship and in the way of life shared with Jim, was herself much travelled, becoming known and warmly respected throughout the global YMCA fraternity. A quietly resource person with wide ranging interests and a mischievous sense of humour coupled with Scottish forthrightness, endearing her to all who met her.

With Jim's retirement in '86, he and Mary became participants in Y's Retired gatherings and in the WFYR conferences of 1997 and 2000 held in USA. It was on such occasions that Mary endeared herself to other wives in attendance with the warmth of her friendship. Memories are of their animated conversations and much laughter while the men folk attended to business.

A lovely and lovable lady who it has been a privilege to know.

Reg Wake.

Dear John,

I have just received the information that you have been awarded the MBE for service to 'youth' and hasten by means of this lowly communication system (e.mail) to convey very sincere congratulations on behalf of the Committee and members of Y's Retired of the UK and personally on this fully justified recognition.

To retire with the knowledge that a life's service to young people has been noted at national level is indeed an achievement fully supported by all colleagues who know of your fine service through the YMCA Movement.

Thank goodness this is not an obituary but the beginning of service somehow somewhere for the benefit of others in well deserved retirement!!!

Delighted for both you and your wife at this time.

Warm regards,

Jim

President - Ys Retired of the UK

CIRCULATION LIST OF MEMBERS OF Ys RETIRED OF UK

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Surname	First	Title
AKRILL	K	Mrs
ALLEN	David	Mr
ALLEN	Ray	Mr
AMES	M.	Ms
ANDERSON	Don	Mr
ANGUS	Jean	Mrs
BARRATT	Brian	Mr
BATES	W	Mr
BATTEN	Chris	Mr
BELLOTTI	David	Mr
BENNETT	Arthur	Mr
BOYCE	Bob	Mr
BOYLE	Ron	Mr
BRADY	Eddie	Mr
BROOKES	Peter	Mr
BRUNSWICK	Robert	Mr
CARNABY	Denis	Mr
CARROLL	Ernie	Mr
CASWELL	Bert	Mr
CHAPMAN	Richard	Mr
CHEAL	Philip	Mr
CHICK	Alan	Mr
CHRISTIAN	Chandu	Mr
CLARK	K	Mrs
CLARKE	Graham	Revd
CLIFTON	S J	Mr
CLOKE	Alex	Mr
COLLIER	Bill	Mr
DALDRY	Fred	Mr
DERRY	Colin	Mr
DICKSON	Gilbert	Mr
DRAKE, MBE	John	Mr
DURBIDGE	T	Mr
EDGAR	Margaret	Mrs
ELEY	Dotty	Miss
ELLIS	O	Mrs
EVANS, MBE	Glyn	Mr
EVENDEN	L	Mrs
EWING	Ted	Mr
FINCH	R	Miss
FINNEMORE	Joyce	Mrs
FISCHER	Winifred	Dr
FORDE	B	Mr
FOSTER	D	Mr
FOWKES	Jeff	Mr
GEORGE	Rupert	Mr
GLANVILL	Philip	Mr
GOODALL	Beryl	Mrs
GRAHAM	Margaret	Mrs
GREY	Margaret	Mrs
GRIFFITHS	David	Mr
GRIFFITHS	Margery	Mrs
HAIG	Andrew	Mr

HARPER	Paul	Mr
HART	George	Mr
HAWORTH	Pat	Mrs
HAZARD	Margaret	Miss
HAZELTON	Gladys	Miss
HEATH	Phil	Mr
HEUBECK	D	Miss
HODGSON	Eric	Mr
HOGGARD	Joan	Mrs
HOPKINS	Janet	Mrs
HOUGHTON	A	Mr
HOWELL	R J	Mrs
HUNT	Roger	Mr
INGAMELLS	Ron	Revd
INGLE	Dorothy	Mrs
JARMAN	Mary	Mrs
JENKINS	D	Mrs
JOHNSTON, OBE	Sam	Mr
KENT	B	Mrs
KING	Mike	Mr
KNOX	John	Revd
LAMB	Joyce	Miss
LAMB	Jim	Mr
LANE	Ron	Mr
LARMOUR	Sam	Mr.
LAURIE	Tom	Mr
LEWTHWAITE	T	Mrs
LEYLAND, MBE	Bill	Mr
LIBBY	Dave	Mr
LOVE	Cyril	Mr.
LOVELESS	Robert	Mr
MACDONALD	Barbara	Mrs
MALCOLM	Tony	Revd
MANNING	Grace	Mrs
MARTIN	Dick	Mr
MAWBY	Colin	Mr
Mc AULEY	Colin	Revd
Mc CONKEY	Robert	Mr
Mc GINTY	Mary	Ms
MEAKIN	F	Mrs
MILBURN, CBE	Ted	Prof.
MILES	Tony	Mr
MILLER	B	Mr
MILNER	Stephen	Mr
MITCHELL	Dennis	Mr
MOOREHEAD	Mervyn	Mr
MORGAN	T	Mr
MYLES	David	Mr.
NAYLOR, OBE, MA	John	Mr
NEWTON	John	Mr
NIXON	Brian	Mr
O'MELIA	John	Mr
ONIONS	Ray	Mr
OWEN	Norman	Mr
PAGE	Stuart	Mr
PARFITT	Peter	Mr

PEARS	Brian	Mr
PEEBLES	M	Mrs
PENDLE	David	Mr
POWELL	Margaret	Mrs
RENNIE	Keith	Mr
RENSHAW	Joe	Mr
REYNOLDS	George	Mr
RIDSDALE	Brian	Mr
ROBINS	Hilary	Miss
ROWCLIFFE	Brian	Mr
ROWE	C	Mr
RUDGE	Norman	Mr
RUDLAND	R	Mrs
RUTTER	B	Mrs
SARGISON	Bill	Mr
SAUNDERS	Jean	Mrs
SHEPPARD	Derek	Mr
SIMS	Rita	
SJOBERG	Neil	Mr
SLOPIANKA	Egon	Mr
SMITH	David	Mr
STONE	Rodney	Mr
STOREY	R	Mr
SWAN	Archie	Mr
TEMPLAR	B	Mr
THOMAS	P	Mr
THOMAS	Y	Mr
THOMPSON	A	Mrs
THOMSON	Jim	Mr
TRANTER	Joan	Mrs
TURNER	E	Miss
URQUART	R A	Mr
WAKE, MBE	Reg	Mr
WARD	Barry	Mr
WEAVER	Roy	Mr
WICKENS, OBE	Gordon	Mr
WILLCOX, MBE	Des	Mr
WILKINSON	Mike	Mr
WILSON	Jim	Mr
WILSON	Len	Mr
WOODYATT-DAVIES	J P	Mrs
YEATES	Les	Mr
YOUNG	Bob	Mr

Dear colleagues,
On the left are the names of all the members of Ys Retired of UK that we sent bi-monthly newsletters to, either through the post or by email.

There might well be colleagues that you know of, that you worked with, that served the YMCA for a number of years, that would like to be in membership and receive the bi-monthly newsletter and have notice of Ys Retired Group Gatherings as and when they take place, but, for whatever reason, have never been invited.

The Officers are keen to put that right and therefore ask you to carefully go through the list.

If there are people that you know of and have the details of, that you think might wish to receive the newsletter, and/or be in membership then please pass their details onto Reg Wake at his address below.
Thank you in advance.

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Letter to Ex National Treasurer Peter Clarke sent to editor
by Colin Mawby



Dear Peter,
Ten days on from my previous e-newsletter, I am writing to you with the latest news of MAF's involvement right at the heart of the relief effort. We are assisting in three main areas:

Flying

We have begun flying supplies and aid workers to areas outside Port-au-Prince. The return flights have evacuated stranded people back to the capital for onward travel out of the country. A new Kodiak 100 aircraft, ultimately destined for our operation in Papua but diverted to help out in the crisis, has now joined our three Cessna aircraft already flying in Haiti. The Kodiak is the 'next-generation bush plane' and is made for such a time as this. It will greatly expand our ability to take aid quickly to where it is most needed.

Logistics

Our team is co-ordinating the arrival, storage and distribution of relief supplies, such as food, water, medical supplies, tarpaulins and water purification systems, through our hangar at Port-au-Prince Airport. With our knowledge of the country, the culture and the language, this service is invaluable to relief organisations.

Karen H Carr, Director of Community Coalition for Haiti, acknowledges, 'For the Haitians who are suffering and those bringing help, hearing the MAF flights overhead gives us more reason to believe that things will recover here and that more help is on the way.'

Logistics and co-ordination we are providing is crucial to saving lives, especially in these early days following the earthquake and later as rebuilding begins.

Communications

We have set up a critically important satellite communications system, allowing us and at least 16 other aid agencies to collaborate effectively in bringing relief supplies to the people of Haiti – including Operation Blessing, World Relief, World Concern, Food for the Hungry and Medical Teams International. Our team urges us all to 'never stop praying'. Please pray particularly for:

- Operational safety in the crisis
- Security, as desperate Haitians try to find food and water
- Our Haitian staff, particularly remembering the family of 24-year-old Daniel who is still unaccounted for
- Strength for our whole team and those of other organisations we are serving as, together, we help bring relief to destitute people.

Thank you so much for your prayers at this critical time.

Ruth Whitaker
Chief Executive MAF UK

MESSAGE FROM OUR TREASURER

I have just been adding up and with the amount of money I received before the end of the year plus the amount of standing orders and the collection at the conference. The amount raised for Secours Speciaux is £836.25.

The number of members to date that have paid is 60.

NEWS AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Glad to hear from our Treasurer **Ray Allen** that treatment he is undertaking is proving most beneficial.

Also a quick message from **Bill Sargison** who recently had to cancel his post Christmas European holiday through heart related problems. The doctor sadly insisted that he should not fly, but I'm pleased to say plans are afoot to rectify this.

The following questions were set in last year's GCSE examination in Swindon, Wiltshire These are genuine answers (from 16 year olds)

Q. Name the four seasons?

A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar

Q. Explain one of the processes by which water can be made safe to drink?

A. Filtration makes water safe to drink because it removes large pollutants like grit, sand, dead sheep and canoeists

Q. How is dew formed?

A. The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire

Q. What causes the tides in the oceans?

A. The tides are a fight between the earth and the moon. All water tends to flow towards the moon, because there is no water on the moon, and nature abhors a vacuum. I forget where the sun joins the fight

Q. What guarantees may a mortgage company insist on?

A. If you are buying a house they will insist that you are well endowed

Q. In a democratic society, how important are elections?

A. Very important. Sex can only happen when a male gets an election

Q. What are steroids?

A. Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs (Shoot yourself now, there is little hope)

MORE IN MAY 2010 – IF YOU CAN BEAR IT - EDITOR

Haiti update from Y Care International

Thank you to all those who have contributed to Y Care International's emergency appeal for Haiti.

On Sunday, the Dominican Republic YMCA delivered a truck load of supplies, including food, first aid kits and toiletries to families in need, with Haiti YMCA helping to oversee the distribution. They are planning a further convoy as soon as possible, including tents, food and other vital relief items.

An update can be read on the [Y Care International website](#)

Elementary – my dear Johnson



In December 2009 I received an interesting letter from Mike Reburn, Board Member of Plymouth YMCA and a Trustee of the South West YMCA Trust Fund, of which I am privileged to be Secretary.

Mike had mentioned to me that he now had proof that Boris Johnson, present flamboyant Mayor of London, is the grandson of a great, great, great grandfather, George Williams, founder of the YMCA. Could this be true and how does one prove such a strong statement?

From the extracts of the book "Stanley I Presume," written by Stanley Johnson (born Penzance 1940), who is Boris Johnson's father, there are a few brief references of Boris and his connection to a George Williams, which becomes established by Stanley Johnson's referral to his maternal side of the Family Tree.

In 2008 Boris was the subject of the BBC's Genealogical Programme "Who do you think you Are?" The BBC researchers found that Boris and his dad are directly descended from King George II (1683-1760) of England. Therefore the researchers didn't concentrate on the maternal line other than to show that it was Stanley Johnson's mother who established the royal connection, so the George Williams relationship did not come out.

So where are we when trying to establish the relationship of Boris Johnson to George Williams? In the book "Stanley I Presume," towards the end of page 4, Stanley Johnson refers to Amos Williams being Stanley Johnson's grandfather and father to George Williams.

"Amos is buried in Dulverton churchyard, as are other members of the Williams family. But one of Amos's sons, George Williams, left his father's Exmoor farm to seek his fortune in London. In this he was successful, being apprenticed to a draper and in due course marrying the boss's daughter. George Williams went on to found the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), received a knighthood from Queen Victoria and the Freedom of the City of London from the Mayor and Aldermen (how ironic - Ed).

He died in 1905, enjoyed (if that is the right word) a well-attended funeral and is buried in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral. The family prospered.

George Williams' grandson, Stanley, (my grandfather) was sent to Harrow where – according to my mother – he held the record unchallenged for a considerable period, for the longest throw of a cricket ball. He then went to Lincoln College Oxford, where he did not excel academically."

Under the photo of George Williams it quotes that he, George, was Stanley Johnson's mother's great grandfather. So combining all this information leads us to the revelation that Sir George Williams, founder of the YMCA is Boris Johnson's great, great, great, grandfather and that Colin Williams is the cousin of Boris' father, Stanley.

YMCA Manifesto 2010

YMCA England has since received a number of positive responses from YMCA chief executives and trustees attending the House of Commons event of Wednesday 20th January 2010. (further article on next page)

These included:

- 'This is the best YMCA event I've been to in 22 years.'
- 'This is the first time I have fully grasped how inspiring the wider YMCA movement is. I am proud to be a small part.'
- 'I can see there is a real groundswell of something happening in the Movement.'

Over the next few months YMCA England will be working with YMCAs to create a series of local launches. These will be further opportunities to build a positive relationship with prospective MPs as we approach the forthcoming General Election (expected on 6 May).

MORE TERRIBLE SAYINGS

Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat.

Alex Levine

My luck is so bad that if I bought a cemetery, people would stop dying.

Rodney Dangerfield

Money can't buy you happiness. But it does bring you a more pleasant form of misery.

Spike Milligan

Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was *SHUT UP*.

Joe Namath

I don't feel old. I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap.

Bob Hope

I never drink water because of the disgusting things that fish do in it.

W. C. Fields

Extracts from the National Women's Auxiliary archives which have recently put together and are available on the Ys Retired of UK website www.yretired.co.uk

"In 1924 upon the initiative of **Princess Helena Victoria** the Welsh NWA was formed to further the needs of the YMCA in Wales and raise enthusiasm amongst Welsh ladies. It was agreed that better monitoring for the NWA of the South Wales could be achieved from a base in Wales rather than in London.

There were various activities organised for the members including sports and lectures, there was a choir of 30 and a troop which gave concerts from time to time. 35 women ran the club very successfully.



The **Princess Mary Louise** (Helena Victoria's sister, pictured left) had visited Liverpool, Southport, Newcastle, Whitley Bay, South Shields and Darlington raising £3981.

The Auxiliary was still growing with several new WA's being formed in the provinces.

March 18th 1925 H.R.H Princess Helena Victoria called upon Mr Lockhampton of the Migration Department. He outlined the Inter Church Nomination Scheme in which he requested the cooperation of women.

Under the scheme, places in the dominion for young women to occupy positions as domestic helpers, probationers in hospitals, nursemaids, were coming particularly from Australia. The Department needed help in requisitioning more women, therefore asked for the NWA to make the scheme wider known and to forward likely names.

In the review of 1925 it could be seen that the work of the NWA was proceeding well. **Princess Helena Victoria** continued her visitations around the country, visiting Stafford, Wolverhampton, Hanley, Kidsgrove, Newcastle (Staffs), Cardiff, Worthing, Hove, Brighton, Wellington, Shrewsbury, St Albans, Aldershot, Rugeley and Hertford. raising £8,179 for the YMCA. In Wales the boys clubs continued to flourish, a typical one being in Aberaman, South Wales which had a membership of 265 of which 200 were under the age of 20.

Miss Hope Wadsworth put the following resolution before the meeting.

"The committee of the Northampton Branch of the NWA view with apprehension the immigration of so many of the physically most fit of the population of Great Britain to the Dominions. They requested that the committee of the NWA consider very seriously what will be the effecting years to come, of helping the best to leave this country and thereby lowering the physical standard in England"

The general feeling of the meeting was in favour of cooperating with the Migration Department. Her Highness asked the meeting to signify by show of hands whether the NWA should cooperate in the work and the result was practically unanimous.

Lady Gisborough talked about a new scheme called "Empire Community Settlement" which was to help people with small fixed incomes that have children to educate. A suggested place for resettlement is Grahamstown, South Africa, where there is a University. The Government have promised to give support to the scheme.

YMCA 2010 Manifesto receives all-party praise at Parliament

On Wednesday 20 January, over sixty people gathered in the Dining Room in the Houses of Parliament for the launch of the YMCA General Election 2010 manifesto.

The manifesto, developed in consultation with YMCAs throughout England, urges the government to help make a positive difference to young people's lives by empowering them through the right skills and education, supporting families, providing suitable accommodation and promoting physical activity.

The event provided an opportunity for those in a local YMCA to meet with their MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs), including two ministers and several shadow ministers and spokespeople.

Dawn Butler MP, Minister for Youth Citizenship, described the work of the YMCA as 'absolutely invaluable.' She continued, promising that, 'We're going to be working quite effectively together to make sure that we can deliver a lot what you are asking for in your manifesto.'

Giving a response to the manifesto on behalf of the Liberal Democrats, **Norman Lamb MP** paid particular attention to the section on physical activity - active for life.

'Congratulations to the YMCA for publishing a really valuable document, which contributes to the debate and pushes all political parties in the right direction, on some absolutely key areas.'

Natascha Engel MP, YMCA Parliamentary Ambassador and Chair of the APPG on Youth Affairs, praised our work, 'Without the YMCA, the All Party Parliamentary Group wouldn't exist and I think that the profile of young people wouldn't (therefore) be as high in Parliament.'

Responding particularly to the section on supporting families, Natascha said 'the ideas in the manifesto about providing more support for family mediation are so important. ...until we go into households and into families and identify what support people need, we're not going to get anywhere. And that is the work that the YMCA is really leading on.'

Before he officially launched the manifesto, our Parliamentary Ambassador, **Stewart Jackson MP**, gave a response on behalf of the Conservative Party. Stewart praised, '...the massive impact on the quality of life of young people that YMCAs have locally.'

Launching the manifesto, Stewart described it as '...an extremely well-argued, tight, cogent, manifesto.'

It's not a wish list which cannot be achieved, but something for us to consider as politicians.'



A matter of life and death?

Those of us who profess to be Christians and try to live a Christian life are no more exempt from the joys and sorrows of life than besets the whole human race whether Christian, Jew, Hindu, Moslem or of other Faiths and of none!

This came home to me quite forcibly on events around my father's death some years ago when following a meeting with my two brothers in his home to arrange his funeral I returned to my own home. I switched on the television to receive the news, it told yet again a story of Ethiopia and the Tigre Province of that great continent of Africa where thousands were starving to death. Via a satellite there was beamed into my own home horrific pictures of the dead, the dying and those clinging on to life with scant expectancy. There were many families shown in the film taken by the television crews, - broken families, a child suckling at its' mothers breast but there was no milk, another of an old man waiting with great dignity to die – indeed the majesty of those people shone through their heartache and sorrow.

My father had enjoyed a long and satisfying life (mother had died some years earlier), his funeral was simple and dignified. His friends and relations were there surrounded by hundreds of flowers which due to it being wintertime had been nurtured in some greenhouse providing the warmth and water sufficient to make them truly beautiful as they graced the event signalling his final parting from this life.

That old Ethiopian, probably younger than my father but looking my father's age died too. There were no beautiful flowers at his 'funeral', no beautiful chapel, no beautiful organ music playing in the background, no singing of meaningful hymns just the remnants of his family, fellow sufferers numbering but three or four. There were a few others who paid their last respects in that barren waterless desert where dust filled the air as scantily dressed bony men carried the shrouded body to a rough burial place followed by wailing women which is their custom.

A man like my father born probably of loving parents but whose life ended so differently. My father died after his natural life-span not hungry but well looked after, well fed, well clothed! Our Ethiopian 'friend' died bereft of all earthly possessions but the loose cloth protecting his emaciated body without food – without medical care.

I believe the God we love was present at both their deaths. I believe the spirit of both those men almost as it were from different cultures have risen to be where none of us have been before. **One thing I feel certain about – they are at peace!** Some will say "Yes but one is with God and one is not for one was a Christian and one was not!" I can but respond by way of reply "Yes but the God of the whole universe is a God of love and he loved both those men equally".

Jim Lamb

YOUNG YMCA SECRETARIES STARTING OUT FROM COLLEGE IN 1958



The above group photograph may be of particular interest to some Ys Retired Members, especially **Jim Lamb**. Taken at Kingsgate College, Broadstairs, in May 1958. A pre-accreditation gathering for young YMCA Secretaries. I wish I could put more names to faces. Perhaps others can help. Best wishes. **Roy Weaver**.

Back Row: ? - ? – **Roy Weaver** – Hornsey, London Central, Rotherham, Cambridge, Cardiff, Lincoln, General Services – **Stafford Simmonds** – West Bromwich Methodist Minister, **Clifford Scaipe**, South Shields, MAYC Rotherham. **Phil Manning** Wales, The Valleys, South Shields, Penzance. **Ron Boyle** Whitehaven, Kitkwe Canada. ?? **Booth**, BBBF East Grinstead. **David Tandy** – Second Row: **Graham Smith**, **Roy Holgate**, **Wilcox?** – **Peter Littleton** – Port Talbot, Norwich, Stoke on Trent. **Bob Fielden** – Huddersfield, Hereford, Vicar in Lincolnshire. ? - ? – **Ken Balchin** – **Derek Makins** - ? - ? - ? – **Jim Lamb**- Stockwell, Sheffield, Wellington, Leeds, Lincoln, Milton Keynes, Newcastle.

Front Row: **David Gunn** – Reg Sec Met, **Chick Thompson** – Nat Council Physical Dir, Atlantic College. **Mac Bain** – Comm Serv Dept. **Canon Ted Patey** – Dean of Liverpool - ? **Robins**, Principal of Kingsgate- **Harry Smith** – Gen Sec London Central – **Walter Waterworth** – Personnel Sec. **Peter Roberts** – Assist London Central – Gen Sec Hereford. **Brian Perry** – Assist Hornsey – Gen Sec Whitehaven, emigrated to New Zealand.

PRESIDENT : Jim Lamb T 01223 440228 E: j.lamb22@btinternet.com

The heroes' heroes Alan Wilkinson on an unsung war service



Sunday Evening Services: Sacred Music and Pictures", says the poster: Barclay Baron (centre) with Oliver McCowen (left) and Harry Holmes, outside Cologne Central YMCA in 1919. From the book reviewed below, a photo from the YMCA Archives at the University of Birmingham

***The Back Parts of War: The YMCA memoirs and letters of Barclay Baron 1915-1919* - Michael Snape, editor The Boydell Press £60, (978-1-84383-519-6) Church Times Bookshop £54**

DR MICHAEL SNAPE, lecturer in history at Birmingham University, has recently produced an impressive body of work: *The Redcoat and Religion* (2005), *God and the British Soldier* (2005), *The Royal Army Chaplains' Department, 1796-1953* (2008). In these, he has provided a much more positive evaluation of the part that British religion played in wartime than was once the case.

In his latest book, he rightly contends that there is "an emerging consensus on the role of the churches in the First World War. Pilloried by Christian pacifists in the interwar and Cold War periods, the conduct of the British Churches in the First World War has long been associated with the image of bellicose bishops, compromised clergy, and ineffectual chaplains. . ."

The first part of his latest book tells the fascinating story of the heroic work of the YMCA during the First World War. The second part gathers material written by Barclay Baron. When he was 13, he and his Quaker family were baptised in the Church of England. Going up to Oxford in 1902, he became a Christian Socialist through Scott Holland and the Christian Social Union. This led him to work for a Bermondsey settlement.

When war broke out, he attempted to enlist, but was turned down on medical grounds. Instead, he worked in a leading capacity with the YMCA in France. His settlement work was an excellent preparation. After the war he became a key figure in Toc H.

The significance of the work of the YMCA for the Army during the First World War has been overlooked. Yet, largely owing to the YMCA, the British Army was in better shape than the armies of other nations. It conveyed to all the care of the nation, and, for some, the care of Christ. Soldiers thought YMCA stood for "You Make Christianity Attractive". At one time, it had 1750 workers in France alone.

Some centres were so close to the line that a German advance would capture them. Others were based in ports, where helpers would care for medical staff and patients as they arrived on hospital trains and awaited embarkation. Some Anglicans were initially suspicious of inter denominational YMCA religion, but one Mirfield Father, working as a chaplain, was happy to live in a YMCA hut. Some conservative Evangelicals, however, felt it had betrayed its Evangelical origins.

Once again, Snape enables us to look at the First World War with fresh eyes. The evocative illustrations enhance this fine and important book.

'Copy' via Sam Johnston



Some of you may well remember Lars Rooth from European Conferences who has now retired from the Swedish YMCA - As you can see from the picture he had much work to do over the Christmas period. Lars gave small presents to thousands of kids during the four weeks before Christmas.

INTER COM SYSTEM

While every effort is made to keep the system in working order, there seem to be occasional instances in which the message is not getting through. "The chain is as strong as its weakest link" and it is vital that all listed link people play their part.

If you are one such link person but for any reason feel unable to continue as such, please tell Colin Mawby who will make any necessary adjustments to the published contact chain.

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