

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

OCTOBER 2012

www.yretired.co.uk



GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear colleagues and friends - greetings

The last two months of summertime have certainly flown in my household with family guests taking advantage of hospitality freely given! The autumnal tints and falling leaves now beckon me to the garden, but not before I share with you two events highlighted for your interest.

We are all delighted to have been involved at various levels in the initiative taken by Sam Johnston in organising and David Smith arranging for over 60 photographs to be displayed on the Y's Retired of the UK website on the occasion of the unveiling on 11th September 2012 of the YMCA Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. The ceremony involved, and I quote, "A welcome by Ian Green Chief Executive of YMCA England, the service conducted by Rev Ron Ingamells former YMCA England Education Officer, Colin Williams (descendant of Sir George Williams) reading from 'Back Parts of War' and a stirring address by General Lord Dannatt former Head of the Armed Forces", all confirmed the importance of this successful event.

Sam and David - accept our congratulations and thanks for the time and effort voluntarily given. It has proved a most healthy tribute to those who through times of war and peace gave of their service and many their lives. As a UK wide organisation we are pleased to note inscribed on the 'memorial' - England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The second event arose through a spontaneous re-union of seven members of the Y's Retired of the UK socialising over lunch on the 6th September 2012. It so happened that Prof. David Miller, our first lay-member of the Y's Retired, has a daughter who lives in Cambridge - coincidentally so has Reg Wake, both visit regularly! Why not a reunion, wrote David? Result? Seven retirees met for lunch at the Girton Golf Club, Cambridge and enjoyed a most pleasant 'get together'.

Reminiscing was the order of the day! It was agreed that we should meet again in Spring giving opportunity for the eight other retirees who were supportive but could not meet in September the chance to meet with the nucleus group of Maureen & Sam Johnston, Reg Wake, David & Wendy Miller, Jim Lamb and Ray Allen! It must be added that a day or two before had been Reg Wake's 92nd birthday and arranged was the blowing out of one candle with a toast to a wonderful colleague over a suitably sized cake from Marks & Spencers! How about a similar 'get together' in areas around the UK, all that is needed is one person to take the initiative, Reg can

supply the names of retirees in 'your' area should you need such information.

The ongoing appeal is proving quite encouraging. Already £220 has been received purely for Secours Speciaux the fund assisting retired colleagues world-wide suffering through poverty and urgent health needs. Together with other designated SS monies from 2011/12 £995 will be transferred this year from Y's Retired of the UK to the Secours Speciaux Fund. Sincere thanks for this support.

Enjoy the Autumn (Fall!) keep in the best health possible and be friendly toward your neighbours. - Jim Lamb

Pictured on right
Ray Allen
Jim Lamb,
Reg Wake,
Wendy Miller,
David Miller,
Maureen
Johnston,
Sam
Johnston



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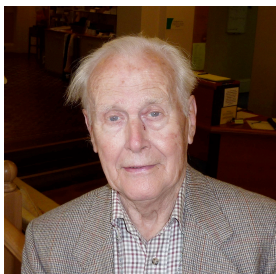
CONTINUE TO REMEMBER PLEASE OUR DEAR COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS WHO ARE IN NEED OF YOUR PRAYERS

Rosamund Weaver Janet Ingamells
Bill Ayers from Bath Eve Lamb
Gareth Williams (Ex APS Treasurer)

If there are others, please let me know.

Dear Colleagues,
Heard by phone that **Norman Littler** passed away on 27th August in Warrington hospital close to his home, after suffering two strokes over a two week period. He leaves his wife Sue, son Nathan and daughter Rachel.

Norman served in Norwich, Croydon, and Crewe YMCA's. Thank you to **John Drake** for conveying this sad news and being with Norman during his last hours. (Editor)



We salute you
Reg on your
92nd birthday

"Well done that
man!!"

Dear friends,

Back in the old homestead and with time to reflect on the happening of yesterday (6th Sept) and which gave so much personal pleasure to share. As ever when YM folk gather, the warmth of friendships plus a little nostalgia and refreshed memories of people, places and events met and enjoyed during our respective journeys in service and importantly, also in retirement all conspire to give pleasure.

Our thanks go to the irrepressible **Sam** for the excellent arrangements made, for the splendid meal, and of course to **Jim** and **David** who picked up and ran with the initial notion of such gathering. The welcomed presence of the ladies added desirable tone!

My one regret is that circumstances prevented an appropriate personal expression of deeply felt appreciation of the (nearly!) surprise marking of my birthday anniversary. What a kind thought. So belatedly, my sincere thanks, even if I really do not need to be reminded of passing years. 'Tis said that time alone is of little consequence but rather how well or otherwise one uses it. For me, the years have brought nothing but deep thankfulness for many blessings received and none more so than in service of Our Lord in and through the world wide movement of YMCAs.

A respected long time colleague, the late **Norman Ingle**, once voiced a conviction that to be part of the fellowship of the Movement of YMCAs world wide is no small thing - and I have reason to believe him right!

With renewed thanks and every good wish.
Sincerely, **Reg Wake**

Dear David,

Thank you for my latest Newsletter and I was interested to read **Stephen Milner's** letter about BBBF.

He has done a remarkable lot of research into BBBF and I have had contact with him many times but one thing he has got wrong is Walter's and my status at Wilderwick. I was Ralph Elsdon's Secretary and Walter came as Assistant Warden. I thought I ought to put the record straight and I know Stephen will not mind me pointing this out!!

Little did I know when I walked up the very long drive to Wilderwick House in May, 1949 how much the YMCA would play in my life and how lucky I was when Walter turned up in August, 1949!!!

Kind regards, - **Jean (Saunders)**

Hi David,

Many thanks for the Y's retired Newsletters.

I have now retired!!! I was 60 a couple of weeks ago (August 2012) and have hung up my pen!!

Did you know that **Ken Allinson** was awarded the MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list (services to young people in N. Yorks); he also gets married on Sept 6th.

Best wishes,

Michael (King) (Many congratulations to our Ken - Ed)

NEW BEGINNINGS FOR FRIENDSHIP - THE ANSWER?

HUGGING

The English are renowned for being reserved and often cold and un-emotional. The Celts meanwhile are more able to show their feelings and embrace their loved ones with enthusiasm and joy.

Perhaps we all ought to adapt the habit of hugging more often!!

Hugging make you feel good

Hugging dispels loneliness

Hugging overcomes fears

Hugging builds self esteem (wow, they actually want to hug me!!)

Hugging slows down ageing

Huggers stay younger longer

Hugging eases tension

Hugging fights insomnia

Hugging keeps arm and shoulder muscles in good condition

Hugging is ecologically sound

Hugging does not upset the environment

Hugging is democratic

Hugging affirms physical well being

Hugging is energy efficient

Hugging saves heat

Hugging is portable

Hugging is free

Anyone is eligible for a hughugging makes impossible days possible and happy days happier
Go on, give those you love and respect a huge hug!!

Thank you -

Anne (Barrett)

Hi Dave,

Maggie & I were privileged and honoured to be present at the unveiling of the YMCA Memorial. After a moving service in the chapel led by **Ron Ingamells** we went to the site of the memorial where General The **Lord Dannatt** dutifully unveiled it.

The General spoke well with passion not only for the work of the YMCA but of his Christian faith. It was a very good occasion much enhanced by very excellent refreshments beforehand.

It was good to meet up with some former colleagues who I haven't seen since being made redundant by Hereford & leaving the service's employment. I must admit I was surprised how little some people have changed in the last 17 years. Tribute must go to **Sam Johnston** for running with the idea of a memorial and getting it under way and to completion. What can we give Sam to do now? Also grateful thanks to National Council who obviously co-operated in the whole event.

I would recommend a visit to the National Arboretum itself, the size of it was a bit of a surprise, hopefully plan it on a dry day as there is no shelter other than the entrance building.

Hope you and Sue are well.

Yours in Christ

Mike (Wilkinson)

Hello David

We had a lovely day at the National Memorial Arboretum at the unveiling of the YMCA Memorial....a good traditional YMCA event....even ending with 'Thine be the Glory'!!!!

Hope you are all well....

Regards.... **Ken (Allinson) MBE**

Dear David

At the dedication last week I met **Jim Jenkinson** from the YMCA England staff and when introduced he said 'Oh Windows into Worship'!!

It is quite overwhelming to think that it has lasted so long – it really needed to have been revised more than once!

Sam and Maureen joined a large congregation at the Buckden Parish Church for my 80th Birthday – I presided and preached. A large cake with Norwich City symbols and an 80 golf flag appeared before the Blessing and everyone joined in Happy Birthday...

It was a wonderful occasion and I am not sure so deserved. We have been here 10 years now and I guess that I have not only helped with services but also raised lots of money for our extension! Friends from my last parish and from the John Clare Society joined us as well as our daughters.

Due to requests I have been persuaded to put my sermon notes into readable form (if I can remember exactly what I said) – I may be presumptuous enough to send a copy!

Ron (Ingamells)

Go for it Ron!!

Dear David

Many thanks for the website link to pictures of the unveiling of the YMCA Memorial at the Arboretum. They are superb, and it is more than fitting that the YMCA is well remembered in such a way in that national place of memory and gratitude. (The pictures of Y's retired members in groups across Britain are slightly more dubious, as there are a number of rogues and vagabonds portrayed - and a decided look of mischief in the eyes of many of those photographed!)

I wanted to especially send my congratulations to you upon the creation of the website. You have done a splendid job and the website is really professional and a great innovation! Well done! (I do hope that Y's Retired will increase your bonus this year to mark your splendid work on our behalf).

Ted (Milburn)

Thanks a lot David The memorial is an outstanding achievement and the photographs a remarkable record of some extraordinary people and unforgettable 'days of Glory' Best Wishes **Derek (Sheppard)**

Hi David

Unfortunately we were unable to present for the ceremony but as we were travelling back from our daughter in Bolton we visited the site and were able to get a sneak preview of the YMCA Memorial. Attached are photos taken on the Monday. Trust you are all OK and many thanks for the work you do with the news letter.

All the best

Glen (Smith)

Dear all,

You may wish to be aware that Sam has just undergone a hip operation - entered hospital last Thursday (27th Sept) and returned home yesterday (Sunday 30th Sept).

Maureen is attempting to keep him in bed. When I asked if she had a good patient I received a somewhat negative reply!!

Warm regards,

Jim (Lamb)



Yes – it was **Roger Hunt** running through the water curtain in the Garden of Surprises in Burghley House!



For some of us it all began at a Conference of the UK retirees in Birmingham in September 2010. Sam Johnston spoke to the small group of retirees from England and Scotland about the National Memorial Arboretum which had been opened in Staffordshire. The Arboretum is a tribute and memorial to the victims of war and also to churches and agencies who had worked to help others in such times of conflict.

He pointed out that despite the incredible work of the YMCA, particularly during the First and Second World Wars as well as in other periods of conflict, the contribution of the YMCA was not represented in the Arboretum. Its wide ranging work in such periods included serving tea to the troops in the frontline trenches, enabling families to visit their injured loved ones, providing rest, refreshment, comfort and recreation in what became well known as "Red Triangle Huts".

The UK retirees group agreed that it was important that something should be done, but what and by whom? We ended up by asking Sam Johnston to use his initiative to see what was possible. Little did some of us realise how quickly he would get things moving. After various inquiries and negotiations he secured agreement for a YMCA memorial to be erected as part of the Arboretum.

The next step was to find ways of raising the £23,000 required to make the project happen. He immediately contacted various individuals including YMCA retirees seeking personal contributions as well as Charitable Trusts, local YMCAs and the National Councils of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

While receiving encouragement and support from various people, he succeeded in raising the money virtually singlehandedly. The memorial in Caithness Slate was designed and created by the Cardozo Kindersley Workshop in Cambridge who encapsulated the essence of the YMCA as a Christian caring organisation. Those who had contributed were invited, together with representatives from the national movements, to a very special day on Tuesday 11 September 2012 for a Commemorative Service and official unveiling at the National Arboretum.



The whole event was hosted by Colin Williams, great-great grandson of the YMCA founder, George Williams. Ninety of us from various parts of the UK were there, joining in lunch before taking part in a fitting and moving Commemorative Service in the Chapel of the Arboretum.

After a welcome by Ian Green, Chief Executive of YMCA England, the service was conducted by the Rev Ron Ingamells, former YMCA England Christian Education Officer.

Colin Williams read an extract from "Back Parts of War" and an address was given by General Lord Richard Dannatt, Constable of the Tower of London, former Head of the Armed Forces and YMCA Parliamentary Patron.

We then progressed to the riverside where the Memorial Stone was unveiled by Lord Dannatt followed by a prayer of blessing by Ron Ingamells. The front of the stone reads:-

"In remembrance of all those who through the YMCA served the armed forces in times of war and peace some of whom gave their lives in the service of others."

Inscribed on the reverse side are the words

"YMCA is an international Christian movement helping people to develop in mind, body and spirit supporting families and strengthening communities welcoming those of all faiths and those of none."

The YMCA of the four nations is deeply indebted to Y's Retired of the UK, to all those who supported this project, but most of all to Sam Johnston, former National Secretary of YMCA England, without whose initiative and hard work this important memorial would not be there.

Be sure to visit it if possible, remembering those from the YMCA who gave such loving Christian service over many years.

John (Knox)



The Reverend Dr Ray Davey

The Bishop of Limerick writes as follows:-

If the church has nothing to say about reconciliation, it has nothing to say.

These are the words of Dr Ray Davey, Presbyterian minister and founder of the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland, who died on 16th April 2012 aged 97. He was deeply committed to the church, but even more to living out the good news of Jesus Christ.

Ray's contribution has been widely recognised by honorary degrees from Queen's University Belfast, the Pontifical college at Maynooth, Ulster University and Union College, Belfast. But his achievement is better illustrated in the words of David Stephens, former Leader of Corrymeela,

"Ray spoke the language of reconciliation and the importance of relationships when this was unfashionable. Today that language is mainstream; it is on the lips of church leaders, politicians and government ministers. This is a mark of Ray's success. He is a prophet of a shared future."

Ray's experiences outside his native Northern Ireland had shaped that distinctive perspective. During the Second World War, while training for the ministry, he volunteered to be a field officer with the YMCA. He was sent to Torbruk, and he set up a community Centre where all people of all religions could find a place of friendship and welcome and a space for worship. When Torbruk fell, he was taken prisoner of war.

In the prison camp, Ray gathered together a group of prisoners who had taken to bed, suffering from severe depression, just to meet together in the evenings. In time, they began to tell one another their life stories. Not only did depression lift: they discovered that a sense of community had bound them together. The members formed a "bed watch" patrolling the POW Camp, to invite others whose lives were in danger to join their group.

Ray named the bombing of Dresden as one of the most influential experiences of his life. He was held prisoner in a castle outside the city, but visited other prisoners of war in the city itself. On one occasion, he pleaded with the guard to allow him to stay on in Dresden a little longer, to complete his visiting list. His guard refused. Eight hours later, Ray watched the city being engulfed in flames as the bombing of Dresden began.

Ray has written "Dresden was something I could never ever forget. It underlined to me the futility of all conflict and when I returned back home after the war, the challenge of trying to say something about conflict stayed with me, especially in my own society, which was so polarised. After the war and marriage in 1946 to Kathleen Burrows, with whom he had three children, Ray became the first Presbyterian Chaplain to Queen's University, Belfast. It was with a group of students that the vision for Corrymeela was formed, as they sensed the need to find a new way of being Church.

He led groups to visit other Christian communities. They found inspiration from the Iona Community in Scotland where George Macleod brought craftsmen and theological students together to rebuild Iona Abbey. He visited Taizé whose worship and spirituality crossed denominational boundaries. In Northern Italy, Waldensian pastor, Tullio Vinay, formed the Agape community which worked to heal the divisions in local communities that had been split apart under the pressure of war. These were the seeds from which Corrymeela grew.

Founded in 1965 with a vision to incarnate the gospel of reconciliation in the social and political context of Northern Ireland, a Corrymeela centre was in place to respond to the needs of displaced families driven from their homes by sectarian violence. Corrymeela developed programmes for churches, families, youth, schools and community groups of all kinds.

The purpose for Ray was "to create a safe space where individuals from diverse backgrounds can come together to share their story, to listen to each other and to be heard by each other. We dreamt of a community where we live together regardless of class, religious opinion, or political conviction."

In the friendships formed through these encounters countless thousands of people's lives have been transformed and a firm foundation for the political peace process was laid at community level.

Corrymeela's work continues to follow its commitment to reconciliation with programmes of work to respond to changing needs.

As the former President of Ireland Mary McAleese has said to Ray, "Over many long and frustrating years, you gentle but insistently offered a vision of a reconciliation that would bring communal peace and partnership. It was not an easy message, for the weight of history was against it and the daily toll of death, injury and destruction kept shattering such fragile trust and hope as there was. Painstakingly, you helped to turn estranged people towards one another. Many of the seeds of the new and happier relationships now developing across communities on our island were sown in the challenging but welcoming space of Corrymeela."

Ray's influence came from his natural warmth and interest in each individual, his openness to learn from others and his belief that the Good News much be incarnated in our time and in our lives. His example remains a challenge to the Church.

Tenth Scottish YMCA retirees meeting



*Back row: John Knox, Tom McPherson, Jeff Fowkes, Ted Milburn, Keith Rennie, Jim Thomson, John Naylor
Front row from left: Tom Lawrie, Walter Crosby, Gilbert Dickson, Bob McConkey*

The tenth meeting of the Scottish retirees was “piggy backed” on the 2012 Annual Business Meeting of YMCA Scotland at a hotel in Perth on 22 September.

Eleven of us met and we were privileged to have with us the outgoing President of YMCA Scotland, Ted Milburn, and the incoming President, John Naylor, who was due to be elected that afternoon at the ABM, both members of the retirees group. Unfortunately it was once again an all-male group!

The morning session provided the usual opportunity for sharing personal news and information about local and national YMCA work in which so many of the group are involved as volunteers. We heard from Ted Milburn about the “Friends of the YMCA” volunteering scheme which he had developed which offered consultation and support to Local Associations from a variety of retired professionals.

The request of the Aberdeen meeting in April to have the opportunity to share information about Secours Speciaux had been agreed by the YMCA Scotland International Committee and Executive. A short presentation would be made by John Knox at the ABM in the afternoon in the hope of encouraging support both by individuals and local associations.

A report was given of the YMCA Memorial Commemorative Service and the unveiling of the YMCA Memorial one week earlier at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. The idea for this had been initially discussed at the UK retirees meeting in Birmingham in September 2010 which had been attended by four members of the Scottish group. It was thanks, however, to the initiative of Sam Johnston from England that this idea resulted in action. Copies of the Order of Service were circulated which included photographs of the Memorial Stone with the engraved words “In remembrance of all those who through the YMCA had served the Armed Forces in times of war and peace some of whom gave their lives in the service of others”.

Before lunch we were joined by Mike Will, Chair of the YMCA Scotland National Council who is also Treasurer of YMCA Europe and an Executive member of the World Alliance. He informed the group of the Sir George Williams Medal, a new Scottish YMCA National Award recognising outstanding service given within the YMCA by individuals. The first three medals were to be awarded in the afternoon at the ABM.

Initial arrangements for the next meeting to be held on Tuesday 23 April 2013 were agreed. The group then joined those attending the YMCA Scotland ABM for lunch and a very informative and encouraging afternoon meeting. It was agreed by the retirees, YMCA Scotland officers and staff that the “piggy backing” experiment had been a very positive experience for all concerned.

John Knox

Dear David,



You will have had a report from John Knox on the recent meeting of the Scottish retired brethren. This took place prior to the AGM of the Scottish National Council and our group was privileged to stay on for the later meeting. John's report tells of the decision of the Scottish YMCA to mark extraordinary service to the Movement by the award of the newly created Sir George Williams Medal. What John's report could not mention is that the first recipient was himself.

The outgoing President of the National Council, Ted Milburn, and the present National Secretary, Peter Clory, spoke of John's outstanding service to the Scottish YMCA throughout his tenure as National Secretary and later, his contribution internationally to the Y's Retired movement and to his continuing involvement at the local association level.

The announcement of the award to John was greeted with a standing ovation demonstrating the very real affection in which he is held. The expression YMCA family was used more than once during the presentation and those present could not have been unaware of the part played by John's wife Patricia in all he was able to achieve.

I know that friends in the wider Movement, retired and otherwise, will share Scotland's pleasure at this well deserved recognition.

Jim Thomson