



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

MARCH 2019

www.yretired.co.uk



Dear friends and colleagues. Greetings

We are well into the New Year after an eventful 2018! I bid you all a warm welcome with the hope that the future will determine world peace and concord. Yes, we are the same people who have lived through 'experiences' of another year and now retain them with the same fervour as we have retained them from birth and continue to learn from. Let common sense prevail in all affairs where as individuals we have the opportunities to influence for good in local and national affairs. Recent and ongoing Political governmental activity has proved a shameful period in our history for varied reasons. There is no need for me to enlarge as the 'media' has excelled in what is best and worst in journalism! Politicians? Well?

I do not need to remind members and friends of past events for our ages as 'Retirees' speak of everything that life and the world can throw at us in a constantly changing world. Noting the average age of retirement say 63/65 years we appreciate that the majority of our present membership is in the 75 to 80 plus is realistic! Common to us all is overhearing colleagues saying "We have seen it all!" Now is the time to use our accumulated skills in serving others in local communities where volunteers are always required and welcomed.

It is a lasting memory of sitting on my mother's bed as she was reaching her final hour and I share with you her last words to me using a name only she used often. "Jimmy, what has it all been about?" She was referring to life. There was no rancour in her voice – simply an old lady who had led a good life raising her three sons of which I was the youngest. I promise you I am being objective not emotional it being an event common to all who are born of woman!

Coming into my mind as I write this letter are some memories uppermost – just three. The Boy Scouts motto, 'Be Prepared', the Rotary motto 'Service above self' and the YMCA, 'That they all may be one'. Three wise statements when placed in time and place are applicable to all walks of life, educational, academic, social etc., for through the years we become who we are with life skills to share in the local community, in society giving back that which we have learned as related to experience. Certainly, being inactive contributes to loneliness a problem in our 'present day' society whatever walk of life followed.

Turning to a new concept of our membership through the Y's Retired of the UK of the World Fellowship of YMCA Retirees (WFYR) we are to be invited to provide in the different National Retirees Groups, persons who would be interested as Ambassadors welcoming Retired colleagues from other countries visiting say the UK.

The idea is to meet for coffee or a meal, possible accommodation with travelling colleagues from other countries. This is not an onerous task but fruitful in creating friendships. Suffice it to share that I had the privilege recently of sharing a day in Cambridge with two retired colleagues from New York, Ralph and Eleanor Christian. It proved a most happy occasion and created an ongoing friendship. I am aware that some of us have done this spontaneously with overseas colleagues. Information from the WFYR will be published in future issues of Bridges which is electronically sent out by David Smith.

A reminder to all that Membership Fees are due as at 1st January 2019 whether by Standing Orders or direct payment to the Treasurer Ray Allen. The fees include a 25% donation to Secours Speciaux our main charity providing support for less fortunate colleagues experiencing poverty and ill-health world-wide. Also, the AGM will be held during February and March when the Annual Report and related reports are collated and published.

Finally! I have to inform all members that our Treasurer Ray Allen will be retiring from the position as at the AGM following ten years of devoted and efficient service. His successor I am delighted to report will be Andrew Jenkins who retired as Chief Executive of the Cardiff YMCA in 2018. It is a further pleasure to share that Andrew is Welsh meaning for the first time Wales will be represented on the Executive Committee of the Y's Retired of the UK! The appointment will be ratified at the AGM.

Keep as well as you are able and in good spirits

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MEMBERS CORRESPONDENCE

Hi David,
Thank you as ever for your newsletter. Last week I was privileged to walk alone through the British War Cemetery over-looking Jerusalem.

We, the British and the Commonwealth, lost over 17000 in that campaign. I found the grave of the young lad from our parish, laid my cross and poppies and felt humbled and insignificant amidst so many.
Does any of our fellowship know of the YMCA war work in that campaign? The only one I know is the famous Oswald Chambers.
Thank you.
John (DRAKE)



Hello David,
Apropos replacement of moving parts.

When I saw the Consultant last month and meekly suggested that the most recent X Ray showed that my twenty year old replacement right knee was down to the bone, he came close to suggesting that I practice hopping.

Three weeks later, no doubt fearing that he had been a mite brusque, he wrote asking if I would attend his Orthopaedic clinic for three hours on a certain date. Whilst there, I was to be prodded about by apprentice doctors. I went, was invited to lie down trouser less and for three hours relays of young hopefuls of both sexes bent and twisted the limb as though its owner was absent. Meantime the Consultant varied his expression between an indulgent smile and a sharp intake of breath.

After three hours, he floated off with his clip board leaving me with the words, "Well done Jim, see you next year" Crawler!!

All was not lost. Once I had my trousers on, I was visited by a nice lady who gave me an envelope with a thank you card and an Amazon voucher for ten pounds.

My knee has been much better since.

Kindest regards.

Jim (Thomson)

Meantime practice hopping. You never know.

Dear David

Just welcomed Stewart McCrae as a new Ys Retired of UK member his contact details and involvement are below. David I have requested he sends me a photo - which when he does I will copy to you for the next news with his public welcome to Y's Retired.

Address: 17, Woodburn Way, Balloch, Cumbernauld G68 9BJ. Stewart who is 73 retired in 2012 and is married to Eleanor Campbell.
Contact details: stewart047@hotmail.com

Stewart was a YMCA member from January 1958 and a Board Member at Kirkcaldy YMCA from 1961 to 1972. He was first employed with the Scottish National Council of YMCAs at Bonskeid and then Lindsay House from 1974-75.
Then in 1975 Stewart was appointed General Secretary /Executive Director at Cumbernauld YMCA-YWCA. In 2009 Stewart stepped down and Eleanor Campbell took over as CEO.

He held appointments and responsibilities within AOS/APS Office/International – and was a Scottish National Council Executive member several times.
Various roles within APS Committee including Treasurer, plus a Y Care International Board Member. Stewart is still involved as volunteer in Cumbernauld YMCA!

Info via Vic (Hills)

Dear David,
Thank you for the last Ys retired newsletter, I so enjoy catching up with all the news from so many past colleagues. I feel privileged to be included as a lay person.

My love to Nurse Susan, from Nurse Val. Norman has had both hips replaced so I understand the essential role she is playing in getting you mobile again. Do take things at a gentle pace, although frustrating, it is worth it in the end.

Blessings to you both and thank you for all your commitment to the newsletter.

Much Love - **Val (Wallis)**

It's been a difficult year for both of us in terms of our health; we have an ongoing need for local doctors, chemists and hospitals, not to forget the dentists and opticians.

At the moment we're both waiting for test results and Bert has been waiting for a consultant appointment at the local hospital for almost two months. Having said that, we are both in good form and mobile – as long as we take our tablets and insulins etc.

Jess and Bert (Caswell)

God of mercy and love let us serve you in our world

*Loving Lord let us not stand aside and tolerate
lack of basic human resources,
dehumanising practices,
or the use of violence to disempower your people.*

*Give us strength to act and challenge hatred,
and instead bring your justice and mercy.
In your name we humbly ask that we may be a channel for your
peace and love.
Amen.*

MEMBER CORRESPONDENCE

Hello David,

thank you for another excellent Newsletter you have prepared. However, I was shocked 😲 to learn that you have had to suffer a physical operation and that you were not able to get to Thailand. I do hope that you are now recovering. You are remarkable in continuing all the task you undertake with no doubt help from Susan.

Thank you also for sending me a copy of Bridges. However, I do receive a copy directly.

At 90, I'm not getting about much, just occasionally when one of the children 🧒 take us for a drive. Twin Great granddaughters have arrived prematurely in Sweden but are doing well.

We now have five Great Grandchildren! Regrettably my memory is not as well as it was! Ah well, can't complain?

Bet joins me in sending you both very good wishes
Colin (Mawby)



Photo taken 02-05-2007

Dear David and Sue,

Hope the recuperation is up to speed and the patient is doing what the nurse requires. Despite the lack of communication, you are often in our thoughts and (daughter) Angela has kept us informed about South West Trust Fund.

Very sad to hear about Mike Reburn but very many happy memories over many years.

We are both in reasonable health as anno domini catches up on us. We avoid too much travelling these days although we may well have to get down to Plymouth shortly. Laura (Sarge's eldest) has just taken a teaching job in September and with Sam her boyfriend and have purchased a house which she expects to move in next month. I am sure we will get an invite which we may find hard to resist.

Miriam still offers her help at the Cheltenham hospital and I continue to do what I can with Sarge (Paul) and his property development. Getting more difficult as each year passes but it keeps me active.

We are both still very heavily involved in Church. Yet again without a vicar, the last one has just retired to Spain age 55yrs.

Never mind, Advent on Sunday, a time of preparation, one of my favourite seasons.

Take care and love from us both

Bill and Miriam (Sargison)

THE REBURN'S

Dear David

With regard to the passing of Mike Reburn (mid November 2018) it may be of use for a Y's Retired Bulletin to reflect on the Reburn's family and their influence on the YMCA.



Mike's father, for many years was a leading figure at the Devonport YMCA, until the building was bombed in 1941. Frank, the father, had a lasting influence on the two boys in particular.

They were constantly a thorn in his side - very often being thrown out on a Friday evening and returning the following day with remorse.

Their names - **Wally Blair & Harry Smith** (of London Central YMCA fame). I guess that between them, Mike and his Dad clocked up something like 140/150 years of YMCA service - not bad going!

Best wishes – **Des (Willcox)**

GOOD NEWS FROM PRESIDENT JIM

My doctor gave me a good report this morning following a positive X Ray. I challenged her to look me in my eyes and say "you are normal" - she obliged!! Even endured my 5th major three monthly injection for the prostate cancer which continues 'ad nauseum'! January will see my final check-up following the twelve month period allowed after major lung surgery - through a CT Scan. **Jim (Lamb)**

Dear David

We were so glad your op went well. Such a relief isn't it to have a workable hip joint?

My knees appear to be unreliable. Something so funny happened. I lost two indispensable filters from my Dyson, which I'd washed and left on the window sill to dry. The gale force winds came and consequently when I went to look they had disappeared. Bright idea!, methinks. I'll get up on an armchair in the bedroom and peer through Merv's binoculars to see if they have blown over the fence.

Getting up, no problem, but I lost my balance, my knee gave way...the result I am solidly wedged sideways with my knee bent and my leg underneath me and could I get up? No way. So, another bright idea, Perhaps I can lunge forward? second thoughts,...if I do that I'll end up on my nose with the chair on top like a tortoise.

Begin to panic, if I'm here all day what happens if my leg goes to sleep?.

So I think, I'd better pray about the fix I'm in!

At that moment the Lord sends Phillip through the front door. Two tugs later I am propelled with rocket force across the bed. The moral of the tale is as the song says, **'I need YOU how I need you - every hour of everyday!**

God's blessing on you. - **Beryl and Mervyn (Moorehead)**

Secours Speciaux – February 2019 Ys Retired

Phil Dwyer, recently elected Chairman of WFYR (World Federation of YMCA Retirees) is passionately committed to increasing the giving to Secours Speciaux – his target is to double donations over the next four years. More importantly it will ensure many more of our colleagues will benefit from SS support.

He has begun by setting us all a good example, energetically raising money in the USA. He is also working on widening understanding of our many colleagues facing poverty, often because of their commitment to the YMCA.

I have been welcomed by Phil and the SS Committee, invited to be part of the WFYR monthly telephone conference (where SS is only one agenda item) and been impressed by the work being done on improving communications, increasing funding, growing grants and streamlining administration.

UK support is much appreciated as the letter below, from the SS Chairman Bonnie Mairs, shows.

I will keep you updated on developments and hope over the coming months you can think how you to increase your giving.

Dear friends

On behalf of all the recipients of Secours Speciaux grants, I am writing to thank the UK retirees both for their past support and the recent grant of £815.21. Please pass my thanks to your members.

In 2018, the Fund supported 8 people, including 2 over 90 who will now receive support for the rest of their lives. One worked over 40 years but retired before his country had a pension fund. The other is a victim of his country's hyperinflation that has eaten up his pension. These grants will lift them out of poverty and allow them to live their last year's in relative comfort.

A 2018 annual report will be sent once the World Alliance of YMCAs year end audit is completed. Again, many thanks for your continued support of your fellow Y staff and retirees worldwide.

*Sincerely,
Bonnie Mairs, Committee Chair*

John Naylor
21st January 2019

God of mercy and love let us serve you in our world
We pray for those who have no peace -

*for those who are troubled and torn apart by lack of self-esteem
for those who torment and victimise the vulnerable.*

*We pray for men and women affected by violence in the home
and for those who live by violence.*

*We pray for those who are trafficked
and for those who organise and profit from selling other
humans.*

*May they learn of your love and somehow come to newness of
life
even in the midst of despair. Amen*

Below are just a few short snippets from Christmas Newsletters which are sent by YMCA friends.



From Vic and Mary Hills Christmas newsletter - always packed with many annual family occasions

August – on the night of our actual anniversary we were in Gatwick airport waiting to fly out to Rethymnon in Crete with Tim, Carol, Chloe & Ethan. Mark & Sarah were in Crete near Hersonissos (the same resort as we all stayed at last year); about 100km away from us.

We drove to meet them and had a fabulous time all together with Kerry (and her family); Mark & Sarah's YM friend (who just happened to be in the same resort). A fun day in a water park and in the evening 14 of us ate together. The following day Mark & Sarah drove to us and we had the most ginormous Pizza's we've ever seen. They were good. Plenty in the doggy bags. Despite both being good swimmers, it took Chloe & Ethan a while to get used to the ebb & flow of the sea and its saltiness. We saw some fabulous sunsets, but shortly afterwards the beach was closed to protect hatching turtles. Beth didn't join us on holiday she was travelling Europe via Inter-rail exploring capitals and site-seeing with a university friend. We emailed and exchanged photos and news with her almost daily.



Stewart McCrae

Hi Vic, I've attached a recent photograph of me with medals received from British Masters X-country Championships (M70-75 age group). This was at the British & Irish X-country Championships at Swansea on 17 November. The race was for all women age groups (from 35+ now and 65+ males) it's 4 to each 5yr age group with three to count.

Unfortunately, we had no reserves and one late call off. Our first man took bronze and I finished in 6th place giving us possible silver but certainly bronze for the team all being well.

We just needed our only other runner to do what he was able to do but it was not to be; he lasted maybe 150m and went down with a hamstring problem 😞 Never mind I managed last year's bronze.

Always good to get reports as to what members get up to!!



Ann Heath and Mary McGinty recently went skiing together to France. It was Ann's first skiing holiday for 18 years but she hadn't forgotten how to speed down the slopes.

Mary's first skiing trip was with Phil, Ann and a YMCA group including Andy & Sue Winter and Camilla Bohm in 1987.

Mary and Ann worked together around 1983, whilst Phil was at Totterdown YMCA, when Ann tutored on British Rail Youth Training Scheme courses in Bristol for YMCA Youth at Work Service and as old friends, we enjoyed this holiday together!

From Jim Lamb



This picture was sent to Jim Lamb by his daughter Susan, from her recent holiday to Vietnam! She says, "Thought I'd send this picture I took from a toilet stop on the way back from a trip to the Mekong Delta."

The YMCA gets everywhere! BUT a place called 'Ba Lamb' is a bit too much!

Dear friends,
We have been busy with the local church. During this year Stephen with nine others from different parishes undertook and recently completed a Lay Pastoral Assistants Course (LPA) at Cerne Abbas led by Rev Jonathan Still our Rural Dean and others. The Commissioning Service will be conducted by Bishop Karen of Sherborne at Cerne Abbas Church on Sunday 20 January 2019. This will allow Stephen to officially make home and hospital visits on behalf of our Parish Churches. Stephen is already a Chalice Assistant and our Vicar Rev Mark Phillips is applying to the Bishop for him to be given an extension to take Home Communion Services.

On Saturday 20 June 2018 Salisbury Cathedral School Association held its Reunion together with Parents, Teachers and Friends of the School to celebrate 800 years of the foundation of the Bishop's Palace which has been home to the School since 1947. There were talks and exhibits on the history of the Palace culminating in a Special Evensong in the Cathedral. The SCSA Reunion will be held on Saturday 15 June 2019.

The 5th Reunion of the YMCA British Boys for British Farms Training Scheme which run from 1932 to 1968 was held Tuesday 31 July 2018 at Askham Bryan Agricultural College, York. We also enjoyed a visit to Harlow Carr RHS Garden near Harrogate.



From Stephen and Hanna Milner

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=12&v=wVCHh26RXkU

Sir George Williams words spoken at the Paris Conference 1905 and 50 years after the Paris Basis was written. As we approach our 175th anniversary, let us continue the work of Sir George Williams.

EARLY NOTICE OF BBBF REUNION

6th BBBF Reunion Wednesday 5 June 2019.

The 6th BBBF Reunion will be held at Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park on Wednesday 5 June 2019. Adam is hoping to see us during the day.

Further details from stephenmilner222@btinternet.com or telephone 01305 -266187. Adam Henson and the BBC Countryfile team filmed the first BBBF Reunion in May 2014 which was shown a month later. We are looking forward to the visit.

Stephen and Hanna Milner

MORE SNIPPETS FROM SHARED CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTERS

On 16th May, Janet's birthday, Norman went out for his daily ride whilst Janet was at the gym, both of them looking forward to all the celebrations later in the day. Unfortunately, he was on a narrow road doing fifteen miles an hour, when two cars passed him forcing his bike onto a crumbling surface and into a gully, where it was impossible to extricate himself. He fell heavily into the road, with his bike on top of him and his cycle shoes still in the pedal cleats.

He fell on his right hip, where he had an artificial hip – very painful!! He got up as quickly as he could to avoid oncoming traffic and climbed back on to his bike and slowly rode home. However, it was subsequently discovered that he had broken his pelvis in several places, and he finally ended up in Southmead Trauma hospital in Bristol.

A few days later he underwent a five and a half hour operation when the surgical team repaired his pelvis with lots of metal and numerous screws and fitted a replacement hip joint. The very next day he was standing and able to walk with crutches. A week later he left and began six months recovery.

Janet is now the Secretary to the Church and they are both heavily involved with the activities and redevelopment. She is also volunteering with Age UK and is involved with a Mental Health training programme. Norman is the Chairman of the Trowbridge Health Centre (33,000 patients) Patients Participation Group. He is a member of the Keevil Fun Committee and the Drama Group. He will be wearing his 'dress' as a Server in several church services during the month.

Norman and Janet (Owen)



Geoff writes - For me, I decided (encouraged by my family) to take up a new activity so I bought a Kayak. As a result, I've had a great summer on the sea paddling up and down the coast. Fraiser joined me sometimes and enjoyed it so much that he's going to buy one next year.

Meanwhile on the activity front, I'm still enjoying playing bowls (as you do when you get a bit older) and waling every week with a men's walking group that I run (just as much about coffee and chat as walking if I am honest).

Add to that volunteering with our local Foodbank on the committee of Christian Schools Workers Hastings and organising a monthly men's breakfast from church. Another new venture was to join the Chaplaincy team at our local hospital. I go in visiting patients once a week and although it can be quite demanding it is rewarding.

Plus a number of other things which keep me really active and busy although I wouldn't want it any other way.



Jan writes - Crowhurst Christian Healing Centre where I am actively involved has been celebrating 90 years of Christ's Healing (1928 – 2018).

Many special events have taken place, many of which I have been privileged to be part of. Then for me a special highlight, was to stay at CCHC for our Healing Conference at the end of October where we thought about the Transformative Presence of Jesus.

Topics included - 'Spiritual oppression and mental health; childhood trauma; Forgiveness; Chronic Fatigue Syndrome; and 'Praying for those with deteriorating Medical Conditions'.

The speakers were Paul Worthley, Steve Gendall, Shakil Malik, Suzanne Owen, Gareth Tuckwell and John Ryeland. The Conference was to equip us to be more confident as we journey with people – extremely inspiring and challenging! So as always, such a joy and privilege to be part of the ministry team at CCHC!

And then as if I couldn't have asked for my year to be any more awesome, on the 6th November I received an email from 'Onwards and Upwards' publishers, offering to publish my autobiography, 'This Spacious Place'! The book will retail at £7.99 and sometime in the New Year I will be a published author! All profits from the sale of my book to go to CCHC – and I will sign your copies! Very excited!

Geoff and Jan (Cooper)

God of mercy and love let us serve you in our world

*We pray for countries where justice seems far away,
where human rights are ignored.*

*Let us remind those in power that prisoners are not
forgotten.*

*We pray that the dignity of life is respected
and remember those who have lost that dignity
through age or infirmity or neglect.
We pray for situations*

*where the sex of a baby may lead to abandonment,
where women are not offered the same opportunities,
or are actively demeaned or mutilated.*

*May we act to challenge injustice
and seek to affirm your love for all humankind.*

Amen