

RMAF

RETIRED MISSIONARY AID FUND



A look at how the RMAF first began, its aims, growth, family and future challenges

Small Beginnings

The period 1815 to 1914 has been described as “the great century of expansion” in the history of missions. In 1914, three visionary servants of God set up the Retired Missionary Aid Fund. They were Mr Arthur Boake of Loughton, Dr. E.B. Roche of Norfolk and Mr. W.T. Bilson of Buckhurst Hill, Essex. Their concern was the lack of provision for elderly missionaries who returned home, often worn out, by long years of devoted service to the Lord. They came back, sometimes unknown, or perhaps forgotten by a fresh generation of believers and this continues to this day.

The Fund and its Aims

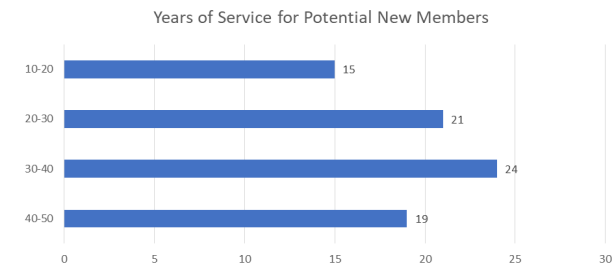
The RMAF is an independent Fund. It has close links with Echoes International, who are represented on the council.

‘The Funds mission today is to assist retired missionaries from Christian Brethren Assemblies to feel part of the family by providing fellowship through visitation and correspondence, financial support, recognition of birthdays and a Christmas gift.’

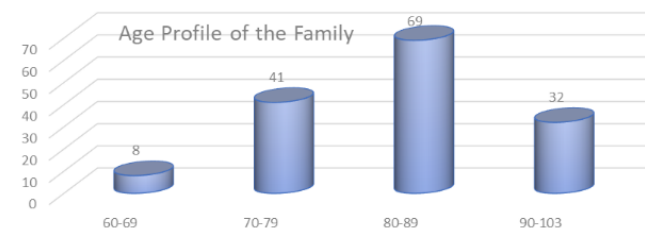
From its inception the main, but not exclusive, aim has been to provide financial support. Not every member of the family needs or receives it. The decision is mutual between the receiver and the giver. A “family spirit” has been fostered between Trustees, Visitors, and members through correspondence, newsletters, and personal contact. The Trustees and Visitors of the the Fund take the opportunity to visit and keep in touch, where possible, with those in their locality. A birthday card and gift which takes the form of a gift card enabling personal choice along with a Christmas hamper or further gift card have also been very welcome for remembrance and fellowship.

A Growing Family

A review of the Echoes International Daily Prayer Guide (DPG) shows that there is a significant number of long serving missionaries in the pipeline. Of these, along with other independent missionaries many have served the Lord faithfully for many years. This identifies the challenge facing the RMAF to offer them support at the time of their future retirement.



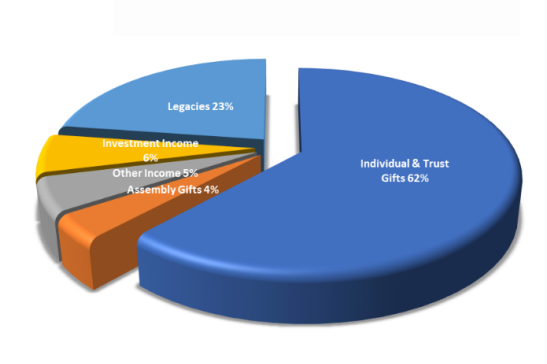
Retired missionaries are a hardy group and in line with the national trend life expectancy is increasing which all adds to the future demands on the Fund.



How is the Fund Supported?

The RMAF does not solicit funds but looks to the Lord for the support it passes on. The analysis shows the percentage values of the sources of income in 2022. The Fund pays tribute to the various groups which have sustained this level of giving. It can be seen that a significant proportion of the Funds income has come from two main sources: legacies and support from Trusts.

The level of support from church fellowships and individuals, whilst much appreciated, falls far short of that required to maintain the level of support at present passed on to the "family" 'This highlights the challenge the Fund faces in meeting its aims in the future.



Keeping in touch with the Family

A "Prayer and Newsletter" is published quarterly and sent to Brethren church fellowships in the UK along with individual supporters in the UK and overseas. The aim is to inform and assist in daily prayer support for the family members.

Looking Ahead

Over time, the Fund has had to adapt to changing circumstances and continues to do so. The challenge for the future to the upcoming generations of believers is to continue to generously provide the support to retired missionaries which had been previously provided by the commending believers. The size of the family will remain at a significant number for the foreseeable future thus the Trustees are looking to the Lord to provide them with the necessary resources to meet the Funds aspirations. The founder Trustees of the Fund rose to a need and a challenge, and current Trustees will need God given wisdom to adapt and change as circumstances demand. Prayer and support are vital.

The future will bring challenges on a number of fronts. State benefits may not be so generous, the outlook on legacies is changing, the support base is declining. Set against these issues the size of the family will remain at a significant level for a number of years to come. The challenge will be for an upcoming generation of believers to support retired missionaries as generously as the generation that commended them to the work.

Our values remain the same as they have been over years:-

- Giving help in time of need.
- Caring for retired missionaries.
- Creating a family spirit in retirement.
- Fellowship through correspondence, newsletter and visitation.

It will be obvious to all our readers that God has richly blessed and expanded the work for the RMAF. But He still looks for some effort on the part of His people, through whom, over the past 100 years, He has brought relief to His retired servants. Comments are often received from members of the family that the gift came at just the right time to meet a need.

"Ebenezer, Hitherto has the Lord helped us"

1 Samuel ch7v12.

The faithfulness of God has always been sufficient. In the knowledge of the past is the encouragement of the future.

Providing care and fellowship for Christian Brethren commended missionaries in their later years.

RETIREd MISSIONARY AID FUND

Registered Charity (211454)

www.rmaf.co.uk