

## READ ABOUT THE EXCITING REOPENING OF OUR SCHOOL OF NURSING

as well as an update on  
our Gaza Hospital and  
our 140th anniversary  
celebrations in  
Jerusalem.

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*CEO Update* Snapshot of 2022  
*Patient case study* Bahaa's Story



St John of Jerusalem  
Eye Hospital Group

# JERUSALEM SCENE

Christmas 2022  
Treatment for all regardless of  
ethnicity, religion, or ability to pay



## President Biden Visits the East Jerusalem Hospitals' Network

**D**uring his recent visit to Jerusalem, President Biden visited the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network (EJHN) and was greeted by the six hospitals' Chief Executive Officers.

Dr. Ahmad Ma'ali seized this incredibly unique opportunity to outline the charitable work carried out by the St. John Eye Hospital Group in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. The President was exceedingly impressed to hear that the St. John Eye Hospital was the first ophthalmic hospital established in the Middle East in 1882 and was celebrating 140 years of service this year.

In his speech, President Biden emphasized the role played by the East Jerusalem Hospitals in meeting the healthcare needs of their patients. He fondly spoke about the impact that great healthcare has, both in meeting patients' medical needs along with giving them the drive to recover. He reflected on the care nurses gave his sons after a tragic car accident killed his

wife and daughter, as well as the nine-and-a-half-hour operation which saved his own life many years ago. On this, he applauded the great work of the EJHN saying, "These hospitals are the backbone of the Palestinian healthcare system. People turn to you in their moment of need."

President Biden proudly announced that the United States is pledging \$100 million to support the hospitals in East Jerusalem. This will be a multi-year commitment with respect to both resources and expertise and will mainly cover Palestinian Ministry of Health debts to the six hospitals in East Jerusalem.

President Biden also reiterated that the United States would work with leaders in the region to ensure that the "East Jerusalem Hospitals remain sustainable, remain available and continue to provide high quality care that the Palestinian people deserve."

# CONTENTS

3	<b>CEO UPDATE: SNAPSHOT OF 2022</b>	10	<b>A MINUTE'S SILENCE FOR HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II</b>
4	<b>140TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN JERUSALEM</b>	11	<b>ST JOHN EYE HOSPITAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP WITH UNRWA</b>
5	<b>JCI ACCREDITATION SUCCESS: OUR GOLD STANDARD OF CARE</b>	12	<b>SADEEL'S STORY: PATIENT CASE STUDY</b>
6	<b>BAHAA'S STORY: PATIENT CASE STUDY</b>	13	<b>FUNDRIASING SPOTLIGHT</b>
7	<b>GAZA HOSPITAL UPDATE</b>	14	<b>EVENTS</b>
8	<b>GRAND REOPENING OF THE ST JOHN EYE HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING</b>	15	<b>MERCHANDISE</b>
9	<b>RETINAL SCREENING: THE USE OF TELEMEDICINE TO SAVE LIVES</b>	16	<b>CHRISTMAS CARDS</b>
		17	<b>ORDER FORM</b>
		18	<b>DONATION FORM</b>



**YOUR SUPPORT  
KEEPS OUR VITAL  
SIGHT-SAVING  
SERVICES RUNNING**

# CEO UPDATE: SNAPSHOT OF 2022

DR AHMAD MA'ALI CStJ, PhD, MPH, BSN  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**T**his year we were delighted to celebrate 140 years of charitable eyecare in the Holy Land. We began our celebrations back in June with the launch of our book about the Hospital's history: 'A Beacon of Hope: 140 years of eye care in the Holy Land, 1882-2022', written by Matthew Glozier, Ian Howie-Willis and John Pearn. The Board came to visit the Hospital in September, where we celebrated our charitable work with many of our Great Officers in Jerusalem. Towards the end of October, Sir Andrew Cash, OBE KStJ, David Verity, KStJ, MD, MA, BM BCh, FRCOphth and myself attended the US Priory investiture and 140th anniversary Priory celebrations.

We are pleased that the COVID-19 cases amongst staff have remained low, and we have been able to get back to our normal operational capacity. The Hospital's clinical activities have remained on track this year and we have seen an increase of almost 10% in outpatient numbers. Surgical throughput is similar to last year and expected to rise by 2-5% by the end of the year.

One of our main achievements this year is the opening of our Kufor Aquab Clinic, situated outside the Jerusalem separation wall. At our Kufor Aquab Clinic, we are expecting to treat between 8,000 and 10,000 patients annually; providing primary and secondary care to patients who are unable to access the St John

Eye Hospital in Jerusalem. We are extremely grateful to the US Priory for their generous sponsorship of this project, which has allowed us to spread our services further to those in need.

Thanks to the US Priory's benevolent support, we deployed a second outreach team, outfitted with a new, fully equipped mobile outreach van in October 2022. The primary focus of the team is to screen patients from refugee camps and isolated communities, and we expect our outreach teams to treat 20,000 patients every year.

Due to the high demand for cataract surgery in Gaza, we have increased our surgical throughput by 52% to date and some 2,500 patients will undergo major surgery in Gaza by the end of the year. The US Priory's initiative to fund cataract surgery for 520 patients has played a pivotal role in responding to the increased demand for surgery in Gaza.

Lastly, I'm happy to announce that the Board has discussed and approved the Hospital Group's Strategic Plan for the next three years. This document will soon become public and will be published on our website.

As always, many thanks for your ongoing support for our work.

**140  
YEARS**  
of charitable eyecare  
in the Holy Land

**2,500**  
patients will  
undergo major  
surgery in Gaza by  
the end of the year





*“We are proud to continue building on a rich heritage of 140 years of saving sight.” – Dr. Ahmad Ma’ali*

*Ismat Levin (left), SJEHG Board Member, pictured with Lubna Saheb, SJEHG Communications Officer, at the 140th Anniversary Celebrations in Jerusalem.*

**O**n the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> September, in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem, St John Eye Hospital Group organized a very special dinner at the Muristan Garden to celebrate the Hospital’s 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary, from when it was first established in 1882, based on a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria. This celebration was made even more memorable knowing the significance of its location, on the site of the first Bimaristan<sup>(1)</sup> in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Sir Andrew Cash, OBE, KStJ, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group, hosted this celebratory dinner with more than seventy guests. We had the honour of welcoming to the Muristan Garden: Lord Prior, the Chancellor, the Prior of the US Priory, our Board of Trustees, diplomats, as well as local and international supporters. Together we celebrated 140 years of work by all our staff, partners, volunteers, and supporters across the globe, who have collectively worked to end preventable blindness in the region.

Hearing from many guests about their continuous support for the St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group, CEO Dr. Ahmad Ma’ali also shared his thoughts on St. John Eye Hospital’s work and future direction, in addition to hopes of developing more community connections in the area.

This was a fantastic evening and a great way to conclude another year of providing expert eyecare in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem; treating patients regardless of ethnicity, religion, or ability to pay. Indeed, we are an incredible force when working together; in 2021 we managed to treat over 134,600 patients and perform over 6,500 major surgeries.

Two of our Trustees, Helen Dodds and

Ismat Levin, have shared with us their reflections on their first visit to the Hospital for the St John Eye Hospital Board Meeting and 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations in September. Helen is an international lawyer with over 30 years’ experience in the financial and legal sectors and joined our Board of Trustees in January 2022. Ismat has spent 25 years as General Counsel for commercial, international growth and technology-led industries listed on NASDAQ or in private equity contexts and joined our Board of Trustees in December 2021, chairing the IT and Digital Committee.

Below, Ismat and Helen both share their thoughts on their first experience visiting the Hospital in September.



**Helen Dodds**

“I can truthfully say that my visit to Jerusalem in September, as a member of the Board of SJEHG, was one of the most fascinating I have ever taken. As a first-time visitor I was of course captivated by the Old City of Jerusalem, but even that was diminished beside seeing the hospital itself, as well as two of the Group’s clinics in the West Bank. I felt very privileged to witness the Hospital’s work at first hand and to understand how it fulfils its incredible mission. It was also excellent to share the visit with members of the Order of St John, who have supported the Group so generously, and to hear their impressions. Most of all I was honoured to meet a great many hospital staff, in a range of roles, each making their unique contribution to the cause, and extending the most generous of welcomes and outstanding hospitality to us. I am still talking about the trip and impatient to return.”



**Ismat Levin**

“As a relatively new Trustee, I hoped that the trip would enable me to meet those at the forefront of delivering the vital clinical services, to learn about their challenges and successes and to understand the importance of the work of the Hospital to the mission of the Order.

The trip achieved all these objectives and more. I found the meetings with fellow Trustees and the leadership team to be highly informative, deepening my understanding of the importance of the services to the communities they serve and the history and purpose of the Order. The passion and dedication of all shone through and was infectious. Everyone I met was ambitious for St John to be the best service provider and to ensure we were a sustainable service provider for the next 140 years and more!

The award ceremony for staff, staff barbeque and evening activities were a wonderful way of bringing us all together in an informal way. I gained some appreciation of the practical difficulties faced by staff and patients in their daily lives, which only heightened my admiration for the people involved in delivering such a high quality of service in challenging circumstances.

I know the significant amount of work that goes into planning these events and commend all those involved for their hard work in arranging such an inspiring and informative trip and for their heartfelt commitment and dedication to the work of the Order.”

<sup>(1)</sup> Bimaristan is a hospital in the historic Islamic world.



## Our Gold Standard of Care

The Joint Commission International (JCI) is an American non-profit organisation, which is recognised as a global leader in healthcare accreditation in more than 100 countries. In 2013, our Jerusalem Hospital became the first hospital in East Jerusalem to achieve international accreditation. Nine years later, in June 2022, the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem underwent its fourth JCI inspection, and a subsequent re-accreditation was granted for the next three years. Achieving JCI accreditation shows that the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem has undergone 'a rigorous assessment and met a robust series of qualifications in patient safety and quality of care'.

Furthermore, Dr Ahmad Ma'ali, CEO, emphasized the importance of this achievement in supporting St. John Eye Hospital's mission and strategic goals to firmly place the Hospital in line with the best eye hospitals worldwide. St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital is committed to keeping pace with the dynamics of global health care by providing the best ophthalmic services, creating a culture of safety in addition to empowering the national healthcare systems.

The Joint Commission International Hospital Standards are intended to promote continuous, systematic, and organization-wide improvements in daily performance and in the outcomes of patient care. Inspecting all aspects of the St John Eye Hospital's work, the JCI survey team assessed the Hospital's compliance with a list of criteria ranging from anesthesia and surgical care standards to governance, leadership, and direction. Most importantly, the JCI team graded the Hospital on

"Quality Improvement and Patient Safety" as well as "Patient-Centered-Standards" - passing these criteria indicates to patients that the Hospital has undergone a meticulous performance assessment, demonstrating a high standard of care. The JCI inspectors reviewed a variety of hospital documents, including medical files; quality indicators; infection control programs; quality improvement documentation; HR documents; quality plans; audits on various Hospital activities; risk assessments and strategic plans. This year, against the 1200 JCI Measurable Elements, the St John Eye Hospital achieved an impressive grade of 97% - only 3 JCI measurable elements were not met, and 29 measurable elements were partially not met.

In order to prepare for a JCI inspection, the St John Eye Hospital Quality Department produces a plan to ensure that every JCI aspect is appropriately addressed. The St John Eye Hospital Quality Council, headed by our CEO, Dr Ahmad Ma'ali, meets regularly in order to follow up on the performance and achievements of the Quality Department, regarding JCI survey preparation and the implementation of improvements. All Hospital policies and procedures must meet JCI standards and be distributed across departments to staff throughout the Hospital. The Quality Department monitors the implementation of JCI policies through auditing, setting indicators and ensuring any necessary improvements are made.

We are very proud of the hard work our St John Eye Hospital staff in Jerusalem have put in to ensure such a high pass grade for the JCI Inspection and hope to maintain or even better this at our next inspection in three years' time.

*"This prestigious accreditation is validation of our commitment to the provision of quality care that values patient safety and the continuous improvement of medical performance and ophthalmic care"*

Dr. Ahmad Ma'ali, CEO of St John Eye Hospital.





For children like Bahaa, even the journey to receive healthcare is challenging and one accident can cause so many difficulties.

**A**t the beginning of this year, 11-year-old Bahaa Abu Taimah got a nasty shock when he was accidentally stabbed in his right eye with a pen while drawing pictures with his younger brother. Bahaa's eye bled severely, and he had wounded his cornea.

Bahaa's mother rushed him to the European Hospital in Gaza immediately, where doctors were able to deal with the emergency. Bahaa was referred to St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem for all of his follow-up treatment however, as Bahaa and his family are from the Khan Younis area of Gaza, getting to Jerusalem was a challenge in itself. For Bahaa's first visit to the St John Eye Hospital, the Israeli authorities only allowed Rowaida, Bahaa's grandmother, to join him in leaving Gaza for his treatment. Bahaa wished his parents were also able to go with him, but sadly they were not allowed.

Bahaa and Rowaida had to arrive at the Eriz checkpoint on the northern border of Gaza at 6:00am, to make it in time for Bahaa's appointment in our Jerusalem Hospital for surgery. Unfortunately, when they arrived at the border, the Israeli military requested Bahaa's parents to be present in order for him to pass the checkpoint and enter Jerusalem. Rowaida explained, "We had to wait 3 hours for (Bahaa's) parents, I was worried that they would prevent us from visiting the St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital and Bahaa will lose his sight!"

Rowaida and Bahaa crossed the border at 11:00am, 5 hours after their arrival at the Eriz

checkpoint. When Bahaa and Rowaida eventually made it to the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem, they were very late to Bahaa's appointment, nevertheless the staff at St John Eye Hospital were very understanding and rescheduled Bahaa's surgery. Rowaida said, "the St. John family were very humble, they confirmed that they will help Bahaa restore his clear vision".

At St John Eye Hospital, Bahaa underwent a vitrectomy, which is a type of eye surgery used to treat the retina and vitreous (the vitreous is a gel-like substance which attaches to the retina). St John Eye Hospital surgeons also performed phacoemulsification, or PHACO, which is a common surgical method used in cataract operations.

Although this was a very unfortunate accident, Bahaa was very lucky the eye could be treated properly. Rowaida, Bahaa's grandmother, told us "Bahaa is such an optimistic, happy kid, I think that's partly what helped him push through – his positive attitude".

Now Bahaa's eye has healed, he has promised to pay more attention when playing around: "I will protect my eyes, I want to be always able to see the sea, it is my favorite place, and it will be my future home when I become the best fisherman in Gaza."

For children like Bahaa, even the journey to receive healthcare is challenging and one accident can cause so many difficulties. It's thanks to our donors that we are able to offer our expert eyecare in these deprived areas to people who need it the most.

*"I want to be able to see the sea, it is my favourite place, and it will be my future home when I become the best fisherman in Gaza" - Bahaa Abu Taimah*



## Strength Against Adversity

*“Our staff are pulling together and putting in extra effort to meet the needs of our patients.”*

In August this year, Gaza suffered three days of conflict, leading to 49 fatalities and 300 injuries, in its most serious flare-up since May 2021<sup>(1)</sup>. Luckily, the St John Eye Hospital staff and their families were not harmed, however traffic through the hospital drastically increased and the demand for surgery rocketed. The amount of cataract surgeries performed at our Gaza hospital has doubled over the past three months – a 60% increase in number of surgeries and a 24% increase in number of outpatients seen, compared to the same period in 2021.

Immediately after the ceasefire, work resumed for the staff at the St John Eye Hospital in Gaza and surgical sessions at the hospital increased to twelve per week, including two weekend sessions. To cope with the increase in demand, three nurses and our anaesthetist became full-time, and the Hospital appointed an extra ophthalmologist, with plans to appoint more staff soon. All 43 staff members of the Gaza Hospital have worked incredibly hard to meet the demand; with the help of the medical teams in Jerusalem, who are auditing the outcomes of cataract surgeries to ensure our high standard is upheld. Our staff are pulling together and putting in extra effort to meet the needs of our patients – something which our CEO, Dr Ahmad Ma'ali, and the Senior Management Team are very proud of.

According to the United Nations, the longstanding restrictions on the movement of people into and out of Gaza have undermined the living conditions of

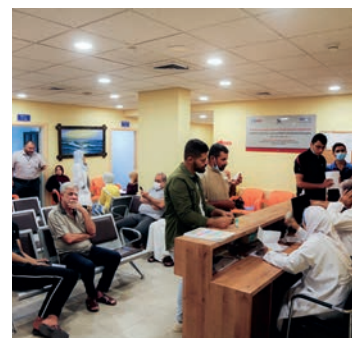
more than 2 million people living in the Gaza Strip<sup>(2)</sup>. These restrictions have also caused difficulties in transporting medical supplies and equipment to the hospital, with delays in receiving disposable items and long waits on maintenance very common.

Currently, there are 550 patients waiting for surgery, most of whom are refugees. The waiting time for cataract surgery is still high due to an increased number of referrals from the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency), who refer many patients to the hospital based on its good reputation. Previously, St John Eye Hospital only received patients from the northern parts of Gaza, however, now we receive patients from throughout the Strip – increasing the demand on our services.

If funds are secured, the waiting time for cataract surgery will be 6-8 weeks. However, if we do not get funding, the waiting time for cataract surgery will increase to 18 months for our patients who are unable to fund their own care – due to the high poverty rate of the region.

We could not do this without the help of our dedicated supporters and hospital staff – we are so grateful for your commitment and generosity towards saving the sight of people across Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. If you would like to support our work, and help lower the waiting time for surgery, you can donate online via our website or by contacting the London Fundraising Office.

*“Currently, there are 550 patients waiting for surgery, most of whom are refugees.”*



<sup>(1)</sup> Source: BBC: Israel-Gaza: Ceasefire holds overnight after days of violence - BBC News

<sup>(2)</sup> Source: United Nations: Movement in and out of Gaza July 2022.pdf



## Of the St John Eye Hospital School of Nursing

**S**t John Eye Hospital reopened its School of Nursing in September this year, after a two-year break (between 2020 and 2021) because of the pandemic. In our 2022 cohort we have eight students, from a variety of universities across the region, who have come to St John Eye Hospital to complete their Postgraduate Diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing, accredited by Al-Quds University, in the West Bank. Our partnership with Al-Quds University ensures that our graduates are formally recognised by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education and therefore, internationally acknowledged. The School of Nursing offers students a scholarship covering their expenses, food, and accommodation – this enables our postgraduate education to be accessible to many students who would otherwise not be able to afford further training.

Launching in 1998, the Specialist Ophthalmic Nursing Programme was designed to provide accredited postgraduate training, with a focus on evidence-based, high-quality care. The purpose of this unique course was to equip nursing graduates with comprehensive knowledge and clinical expertise to meet the ophthalmic needs of patients both in the hospital and community settings. In recent years, the graduates of our Specialist Ophthalmic Nursing Program have become vital as the hospital has been accredited by international quality organisations as an expert provider of charitable eye care. Between 1998 and 2019, over 160 Specialist Ophthalmic Nurses graduated from the St John Eye Hospital School of Nursing, with accredited qualifications from the University of West London (course accreditor 1998-2019).

Since 2007, tight restrictions in movement through Gaza have made it very challenging for nurses to travel from Gaza

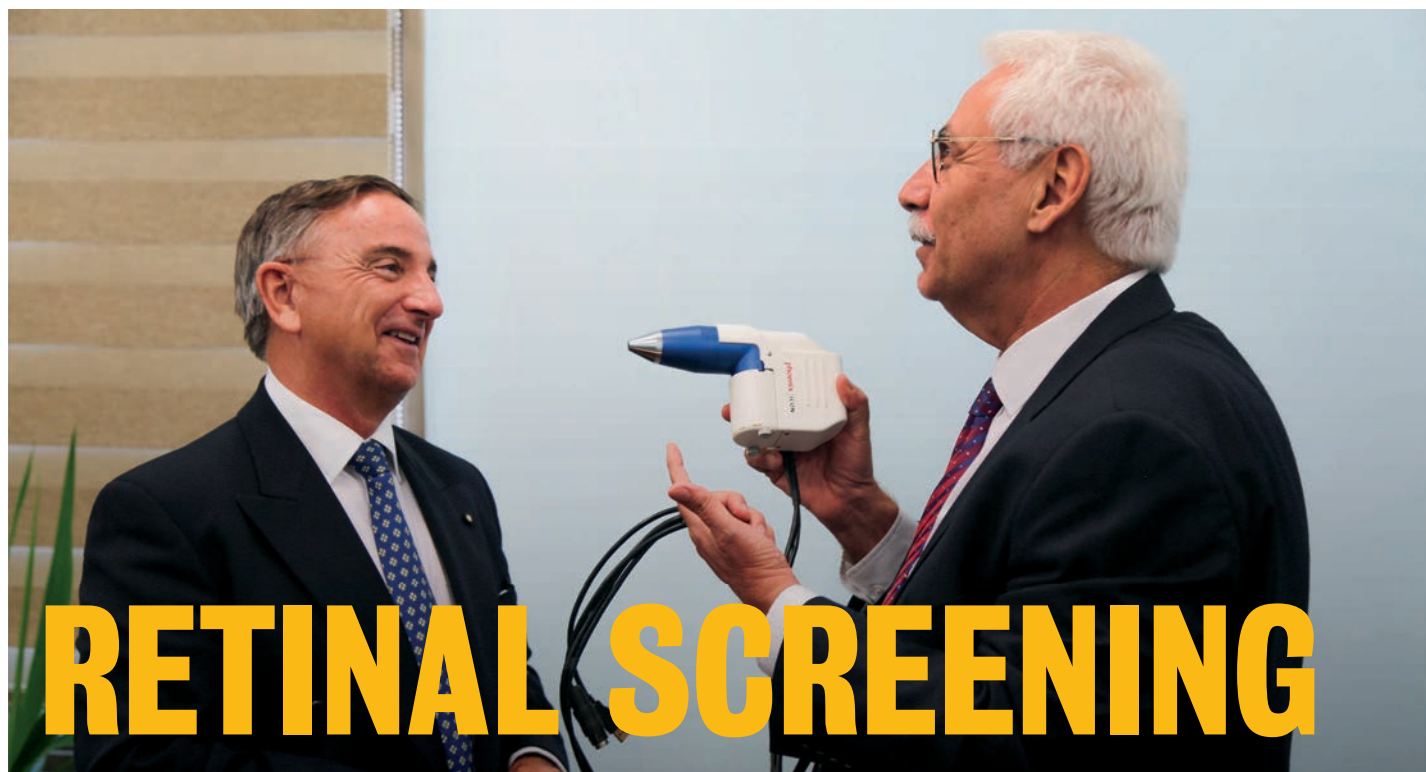
to our Jerusalem Hospital for training. Therefore, in 2013, we launched an in-house Ophthalmic Nursing Assistant Training Course in Gaza, enabling students to access training without making the problematic journey across borders. We have had more than 30 Ophthalmic Nursing Assistants complete our training before working at the St John Eye Hospital in Gaza and for organisations such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

In August this year, 15 students began their Ophthalmic Nursing Assistant Training Course in Gaza and are expected to finish their program in February 2023. While the Ophthalmic Nursing Assistant Course is not affiliated with a university, it remains the only provider of much-needed ophthalmic nursing assistant training in Gaza. This training is separate to our specialist postgraduate training in Jerusalem and is a short course programme provided by St John Eye Hospital.

The shortage of trained ophthalmic nurses in the Middle East makes this training programme all the more imperative. We value the importance of training local nurses to a high standard of specialist care and creating job opportunities for local families. Our graduates play a vital part in the elimination of unnecessary visual impairment in one of the world's most politically unstable regions, suffering from a high prevalence of eye diseases in all age groups. Many graduates stay on working for the St John Eye Hospital Group, while others help bring expert eyecare services to the community.

Building sustainable and qualified ophthalmic nursing teams plays a huge part in our mission to eliminate avoidable blindness in one of the most economically and socially deprived places in the world. If you'd like to support us on our journey, visit our website to donate or contact the London Fundraising Office.





# RETINAL SCREENING

## The Use of Telemedicine to Save Sight

**Mr David H. Verity, KStJ, MD, MA, BM, BCh, FRCOphth**

*Dr. Majed Abu Ramadan (right), an ophthalmic surgeon and St John Eye Hospital Trustee with Nigel Heath (left), Prior of the US Priory, looking at a retinal screening camera.*

In the third trimester of pregnancy, blood vessels in the developing eye are sensitive to the levels of oxygen in the blood stream. However, babies born prematurely often require high levels of supplemental oxygen to survive, and this treatment can have a serious effect on the developing retinal vessels, causing them to proliferate, leading to irreversible sight loss from bleeding, scarring and retinal detachment.

This condition is called retinopathy of prematurity, or ROP, and it affects up to 50% of infants born prematurely before 31 weeks of gestation (a full-term pregnancy has a gestation of 38–42 weeks). Both eyes are usually affected, and about 8% of at-risk infants need treatment to prevent sight loss or even blindness. Such infants therefore require regular and frequent retinal screening to identify potential problems, and guide treatment as required. Early intervention can prevent sight loss and blindness, with treatment including intraocular injections and laser treatment to 'seal' the leaking blood vessels, and, in more severe cases, surgery.

Whereas in the past doctors were required to screen each and every child, often weekly; these days state-of-the-art mobile digital cameras are used to monitor and identify 'at-risk' neonates, saving valuable resources. A trained biomedical technician is able to take high-resolution images of the babies' peripheral retinas (where disease occurs). These images are then transmitted via the internet to a reading centre – here, they can be assessed by a paediatric ophthalmologist, employing the best of telemedicine to provide better healthcare services.

St John Eye Hospital Group screens over 400 babies locally in East Jerusalem (in the Makassed Hospital) and in our partner unit, the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem (run by the Order of Malta). Unfortunately, given the paucity of expert paediatric ophthalmologists, we cannot screen all neonates across the West Bank and Gaza, and this sadly must have an impact on the sight of these young children, even if the exact numbers are not yet known.

The good news is that, thanks to the remarkable generosity of the RTW Foundation, and the Priory of St John in the USA, SJEHG has been given three state-of-the-art Phoenix ICON retinal screening cameras, each costing over \$90,000. In the Middle East, our talented doctors and IT professionals in Jerusalem, Hebron, and Gaza have formed an ROP working group to identify the true extent of the clinical need across the population, and to begin setting up a new service employing these modern cameras.

Thus, SJEHG is developing modern telemedicine ROP screening services to identify at-risk children in Palestinian neonatal ITUs. This will significantly reduce the burden of sight loss, having a major positive impact both on the patients themselves, and their families and communities.

Our thanks again to the generosity of our donors: to our colleagues across the UK who advised at the procurement stages; to the Ophthalmic Association colleagues who wrote the grant application; and to our staff in SJEHG for taking forward this vital initiative which will save the sight of many young children.

For more details, please visit our ROP page [HERE](http://www.soa.global/rop). [www.soa.global/rop](http://www.soa.global/rop)



*Our ROP working group in Jerusalem with one of the Phoenix ICON cameras*



*Our staff screening a neonate in Hebron using one of the new Phoenix ICON retinal screening cameras.*

# A MINUTE'S SILENCE FOR HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II



**S**t John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group is deeply saddened to hear of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and we extend our deepest condolences to the Royal Family. Throughout her reign, the Queen demonstrated extraordinary dedication and steadfast commitment to her charitable duties. Her Majesty became Sovereign Head of the Most Venerable Order of St John upon her accession to the throne in 1952 and has been a great supporter of our work.

The modern Order of St John was constituted in 1888, by Royal Charter from Queen Victoria and the Order of St John itself is a British Royal Order of Chivalry. As Sovereign Head of the Order of St John, HM Queen Elizabeth II honoured individuals for their outstanding achievements, through promoting them within the Order. Since 1952, Her Majesty has approved every recipient invested within the Order of St John.

To mark the centenary of the Order of St John, the late Queen opened the Great St John Party in the Park, in 1987, along with the late HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and Their Royal Highnesses, The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester. The Royals toured the celebrations, which took place at Hyde Park in London and met some of those attending.

Her Majesty visited the Museum of St John on numerous occasions; in 1999, the late Queen unveiled a commemorative plaque for the Nonacentenary (900 years) of the Order of St John. Pictured (right) is the late Queen with her portrait in the Museum of St John, on a visit to St John's Gate in 1968.

Although Her Majesty never actually visited the Hospital in Jerusalem, she was kept apprised of its progress by the Grand Prior and Lord Vestey, while he was chairman. In 2008 just before stepping down as Chairman, Lord Vestey hosted a function at St John's Gate attended by HM The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and TRH's The Duke & Duchess of Gloucester during which they were shown the architect's model of the Hospital in the Sheikh Jarrah District of Jerusalem which had been

prepared in 1986 by the original architect John Simpson.

St John Eye Hospital staff mourned the late Queen and held a minute's silence followed by a short service of prayer in the Hospital's Chapel to pay their respects. Our CEO of St John Eye Hospital Group, Dr. Ahmad Ma'ali CStJ, PhD, MPH, BSN, said it was 'a great honour' to represent the charity at the state funeral of Her Majesty; along with the Lord Prior, Prof. Mark Compton and St John Ambulance volunteer, Nakkita Charag. Dr Ma'ali's story with St John began in 1990, when he joined St John Eye Hospital as a student nurse; ten years later, in the year 2000, Dr Ma'ali was admitted to the Order of St John and further promoted to Commander in 2016.

The Royal Family continues to support the charitable work of the Order of St John and its service organisations, including St John of

Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group. Our thoughts and prayers are with HRH King Charles III and the Royal Family at this time.

Her Majesty's lifetime of service to her people will remain an inspiration to all of us for years to come.



*Visit of HM The Queen to St John's Gate on 28.11.1968 the Queen and Her Portrait\_ Courtesy of the Museum of the Order of St John, London*





# OUR NEW TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

## With UNRWA

**S**t John Eye Hospital Group have launched a new training project in partnership with NGOs from Germany, Australia and Belgium; aiming to address the prevention of avoidable blindness and visual impairments in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. This project has been generously supported by Johanniter International and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (abbreviated as BMZ), which is a cabinet-level ministry of Germany. Johanniter International is a European St John organisation, operating from a head office in Brussels, with a focus on medical services and international aid, among other charitable works. Our Australian partners include both the Australian Government's Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) and the Fred Hollows Foundation (FHF). The FHF works to strengthen healthcare systems to provide sustainable eye care, in line with the global goals of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

In order to ensure the sustainability of primary eyecare services provided by UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) Healthcare Centers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; St John Eye Hospital Group organised an intensive training for over 40 doctors. Dr. Alaa Al-Hanash (an ophthalmologist from St John Eye Hospital) supervised the

trainings in July 2022, which were focused on treating at-risk groups, who lack access to primary eye care services. These vulnerable groups are at a higher risk of reaching irreversible visual impairment if they don't undergo the correct eye treatment, due to having difficulties accessing care.

In the next three years, these UNRWA Healthcare Centres are expecting to screen more than 180,000 patients. Any patients needing treatment will then be referred to St John Eye Hospital and this number is expected to reach over 10,000 through UNRWA referrals alone. There are 24 UNRWA Primary Healthcare Centres in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and St John Eye Hospital Group are training all doctors involved in delivering care at these facilities.

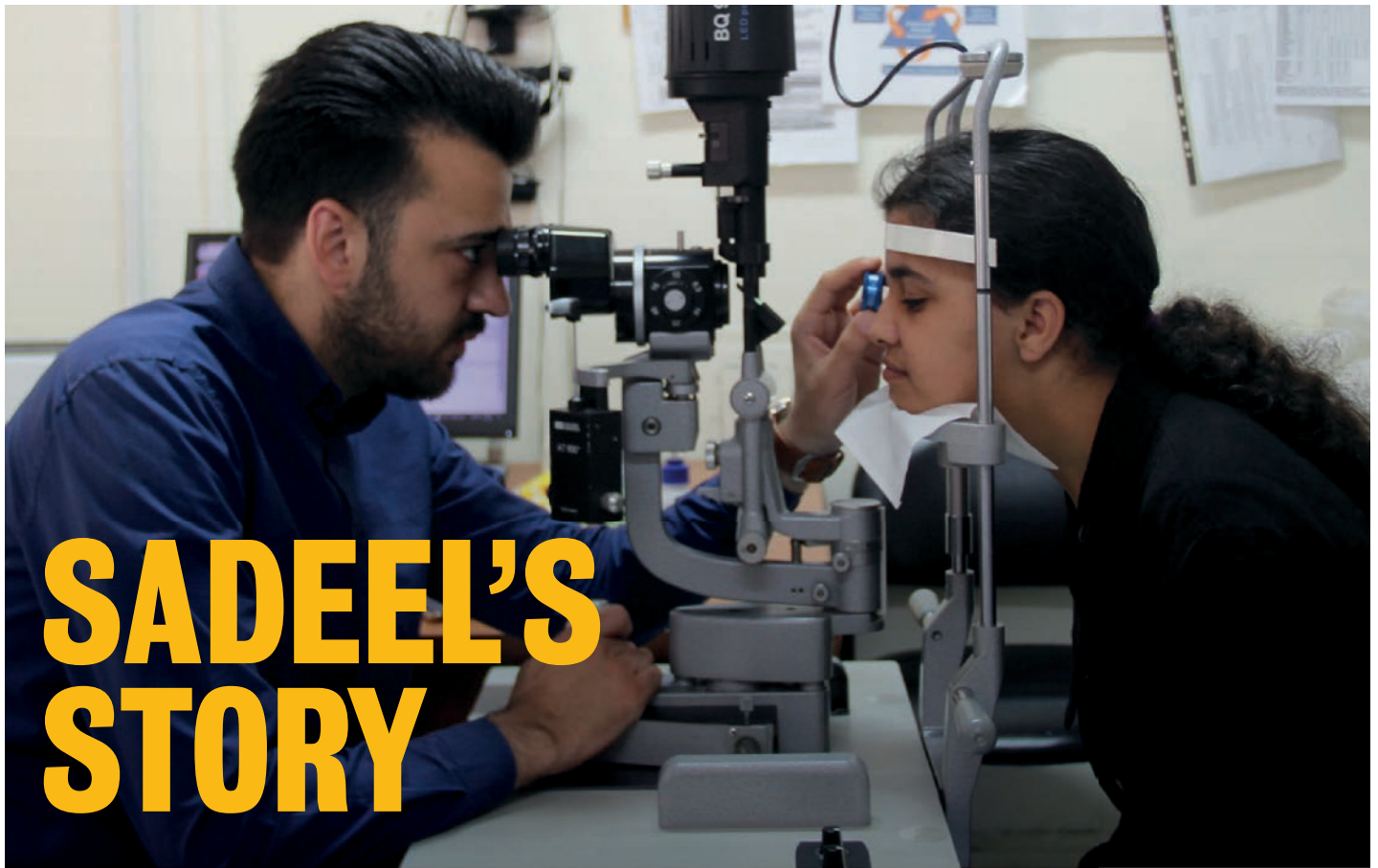
As part of this journey, Nicole Kockman, the Programme Development and Quality Officer from Johanniter International, joined David Dahdal (St John Eye Hospital Director of Development & Grants) to conduct a monitoring visit to Aida Refugee Camp's UNRWA Healthcare Centre in July this year. Aida Refugee Camp is located two kilometers north of the historic centre of Bethlehem and, according to UNRWA, is home to 29,000 registered Palestinian refugees, who live in the camp and surrounding areas. The doctors working at the UNRWA facility in Aida Camp confirmed the significant impact of the Primary Eye Care and Diabetic

Retinopathy Training they received from specialists working for St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group. The early detection of eye diseases such as diabetic retinopathy and cataracts enables us to save the vision of many Palestinian patients, through a proper referral mechanism from the UNRWA Healthcare Centres to one of the St John Eye Hospital facilities across the region.

We aim to continuously contribute to the strengthening of healthcare systems in Palestine, through providing training and assisting with the integration of eyecare into general healthcare services. With the support of our partners and donors, the St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group will continue to develop programs and initiatives in pursuit of our goal to prevent avoidable blindness in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza.







*“Despite all obstacles of issuing a permit to enter Jerusalem and passing the checkpoints; every minute was worth the health of my daughter’s eye”*

— Muhanad, Sadeel's father

**S**adeel was born with cataracts disease - her mother noticed there was a problem when her baby was just four months old, and she became very worried about Sadeel's eyes. Baby Sadeel arrived at St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital in 2009 to have lensectomy surgery in order to remove the cataract-affected lens and implant an intraocular lens or IOL.

In 2022, thirteen years later, Sadeel's lens shifted while she was playing with her sisters, meaning she had to go for urgent eye surgery in one of Ramallah's private clinics. Sadeel's family struggled to pay for this operation, her father, Muhanad, said “it was a big amount of money, I earn 2,000 ILS per month (around £500) I couldn't afford it, I made a lot of arrangements to make the payments work with monthly cheques”.

Sadeel had sutures in her eye for three months as her family could not afford for them to be removed. In this time, at school, Sadeel sat on the backrow of her class and she could not always keep up with what

the teacher wrote on the board because of her blurred vision. Sadeel's mother was anxious, she said, “my daughter couldn't see anything beyond one meter, Sadeel needs to feel confident, she is a very kind girl, but unfortunately she became the victim of bullying at school.”

Sadeel came to the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital for a detailed eye examination - thankfully, the surgery she had in Ramallah was successful and our staff could remove the sutures. Muhanad, Sadeel's father, told us “Every cloud has a silver lining. From the beginning of Sadeel's journey with St. John Eye Hospital, I was delighted and comfortable with the professional eyecare she had. Despite all obstacles of issuing a permit to enter Jerusalem and passing the checkpoints; every minute was worth the health of my daughter's eye.”

Here we are today in 2022 providing the best care we could give to Sadeel, to help her continue her educational journey and encourage her in her dream to be the most talented painter in Ramallah!

## ASSOCIATED EYECARE COSTS:

**£7.00** can fund an initial eye consultation

**£25.00** can buy eye drops (which are typically the main treatment for conditions such as glaucoma)

**£70.00** can treat diabetes-related eye problems

**£250.00** funds cataract treatment for one person or one operation to correct a child's squint

**£500.00** pays for urgent eye surgery.

## SALARY COSTS:

The average cost of a full-time nurse is **£23,000**

# FUNDRAISING SPOTLIGHT

The London Fundraising Team are here to help with any community fundraising, publish Jerusalem Scene and bring in funds for the hospital. We are Charlie (Head of Fundraising), Hyacinth (Finance Officer), Naomi (Fundraising Officer) and Roshi (Communications Officer). We also work with fundraising groups such as the Guild of St John, who put on fundraising events in aid of the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital.

If you would like to get in touch, please email [Info@stjohnseyehospital.org](mailto:Info@stjohnseyehospital.org)

## Relay Pilgrimage for St John Eye Hospital

The Knights Templar are a division of the Free Masons who generously support the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital and have done this for over 100 years. To raise funds and awareness of our sight-saving work, the Knights Templar have undertaken many challenges. Earlier this year, in the lead up to the Great Priory Family Cathedral Service, the Knights of the Vision Beautiful Team completed a Relay Pilgrimage of more than three hundred miles from St Augustine's Cross in the Province of Kent to Wells Cathedral, Somerset. They passed a new 'Preceptor's Baton' (supplied by Humber Regalia) from Knight to Dame to Knight as runners and cyclists took it through the boundaries of the Provincial Pories of Kent, London, Surrey, Middlesex, Oxfordshire, Berks & Bucks, Dorset & Wiltshire, Gloucestershire & Herefordshire and, finally, to Somerset. The pilgrimage was a gruelling task yet undertaken with

enthusiasm, with several members having recently overcome health issues.

On completion of the Relay Pilgrimage, the Team Members joined with their Chaplain, E.Kt. Rev. Niall Johnston, Deputy Great Almoner and Provincial Prelate for London, and were granted the use of the Lady Chapel for a special Pilgrim Prayer Service followed by the blessing of the Baton, which is planned to be shared with a new Preceptory in due course. The Team Captain, Angus, and his wife, Seema, also took the opportunity to renew their marriage vows by the kind assistance of Rev. Niall and in the presence of their teammates.

A further Team Challenge is in the works for the near future, to provide an opportunity for anyone not able to participate in the Relay Pilgrimage to take part in another challenge and the appeal remains open.

If you would be interested in taking part in the Team Challenges, please feel free to contact the Captain via: [Knights.of.the.Vision@gmail.com](mailto:Knights.of.the.Vision@gmail.com)



Angus Rhodes, about to start the pilgrimage from St Augustine's Cross.



**St John Eye  
Hospital  
Group treats  
more than  
**134,000**  
patients and  
performs over  
6,500 surgeries  
every year.**

*Scott Candlish, Angus Rhodes and  
Simon Clark at the end of their  
pilgrimage at Wells Cathedral.*



## Derbyshire White Peaks Challenge Success

On a baking hot day in July 2022, Lincolnshire Knights, E.Kt Keith Appleton and E.Kt David Bird, of the St Paul's Preceptory 466 and Sutcliffe Preceptory 190 respectively, completed the White Peak Challenge Walk in the Derbyshire Peak District, in aid of St John Eye Hospital. The White Peak Challenge is a 26-mile circular walk around the Peak District that has to be completed in less than twelve hours.

Their aim was to raise as much as possible through sponsorship for the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital. Keith and David successfully completed the walk in an impressive 10 hours 7 minutes and raised an amazing total of £1,100 for our cause.



Presentation of the cheque, taken in the Chapter House at Lincoln Cathedral at the Lincolnshire Provincial Priory on 1st October 2022 with: (left to right) Em KT Keith Appleton, Rt Em Kt Malcolm Bilton KCT (Provincial Prior of Lincolnshire) and Em Kt David Bird.

## SJEHG Autumn Concert with London City Brass

On the 2nd November, St John Eye Hospital hosted a fundraising concert in London with London City Brass. London City Brass is a progressive, enthusiastic band, made up from various backgrounds and a wide age range. The band performed two great sets and guests enjoyed tea and coffee in the interval – it was a delightful evening and we're so grateful to everyone who supported this event!



London City Brass performing for us at St James' Church

# EVENTS

## UPCOMING EVENTS



## GIFT OF SIGHT FAIR

**Guild of St John Gift of Sight Fair**  
**Monday 5th December**

**£5 standard entry or £30 VIP ticket (which includes lunch, wine, coffees, VIP lounge)**

The Guild of St John Eye Hospital has been in existence since 1926 and has a distinguished record in the service of the Hospital. Originally set up as a sewing guild for wives of the Order of St John members, so that they too could contribute to the work of St John; the Guild has evolved over the years to become a London-based, mixed volunteer fundraising group for the St John Eye Hospital.

Every year, the Guild runs a Gift of Sight Christmas Fair and this year is no different! The day is set to be full of festivities with over 60 stallholders selling gifts, clothes, jewellery, and food. Additionally, we will also have lunch, mulled wine and hot drinks available! The event will take place at Chelsea Old Town Hall with doors opening from 11am - 8:30pm and entry only £5. All proceeds will go towards the St John Eye Hospital so please come and support the event if you are able to!

If you are unable to attend this event but would like to show support, the Guild are selling St John Christmas crackers via their website at: [www.guildstjohn.com/upcoming-events](http://www.guildstjohn.com/upcoming-events)



# MERCHANDISE

Shop now at [shop.stjohnseyehospital.org](http://shop.stjohnseyehospital.org) or use the order form on page 17.



**Tote bag (black) large**  
£10



**Tote bag (white) small**  
£3.50



**Lapel Pin badge**  
£5



**Battery Charger  
(with all connectors)**  
£10



**Umbrella**  
£18



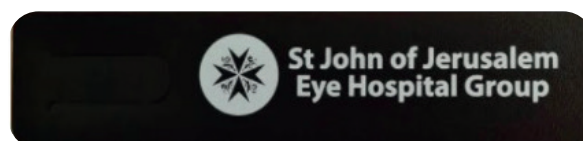
**A5 Notebook**  
£10



**Mobile Outreach Van Model**  
£10



**St John Eye Hospital Silk Tie**  
£25



**Free SJEHG bookmark when you  
spend £50 or more**



**Flash light Pen**  
£5.50



**4GB USB Memory Stick**  
£8



**Tea Towel**  
£5



**'A Beacon of Hope: 140 years of  
eye care in the Holy Land, 1882-  
2022' Paperback**  
£36

# CHRISTMAS CARDS

**£5 FOR  
PACKS  
OF 10**

Shop now at [shop.stjohnneyehospital.org](http://shop.stjohnneyehospital.org) or use the order form on page 17.

If you would like to know the greeting inside each card, please check our website or contact the London Fundraising Office.



Swift card



Santa's Helpers



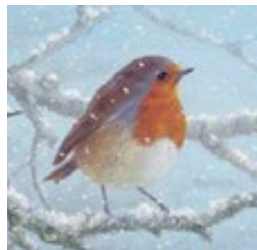
Nativity at Night



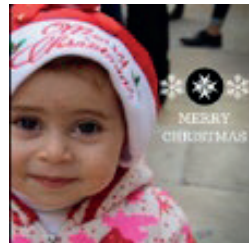
The Adoration



Festive Robins



Robin



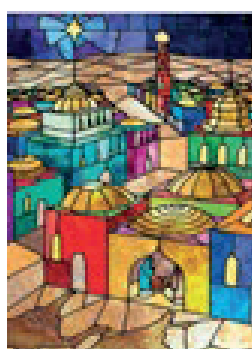
SJEHG Card  
'Merry Christmas'



Lamb of God



Winter Village



Stained Glass Nativity



Bethlehem Evening



SJEHG Card  
'Season's Greetings'



SJEHG card



Mobile outreach card



St John logo



Watercolour of Anemones  
and Holly by Janet Marsh.  
£8.50 (pack of 10)

Item	Cost Per Unit	Number of	Total (£)
<b>Christmas Cards</b>			
*New* Christmas Cards - Festive Robins	£5 pack of 10		
*New* Christmas Cards - Winter Village	£5 pack of 10		
*New* Christmas Cards - Santa's Helpers	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Nativity at night	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - The Adoration	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - 'SJEHG Merry Christmas'	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Robin	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Lamb of God (small)	£3 pack of 5		
Christmas Cards - Stained Glass Nativity	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Bethlehem Evening	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - 'SJEHG Season's Greetings'	£5 pack of 10		
<b>Notecards</b>			
Watercolour of Anemones and Holly by Janet Marsh	£8.50 pack of 10		
Mobile Outreach Van in Snow (blank)	£5 pack of 10		
SJEHG Coat of Arms Card (blank)	£5 pack of 10		
St John Logo Cards (blank)	£5 pack of 10		
Swift Tree Card (blank)	£5 pack of 5		
<b>SJEHG Branded Items</b>			
SJEHG Tie	£25		
Small Tote Bag (White)	£3.50		
Large Tote Bag (Black)	£10		
SJEHG Lapel Pin Badge	£5		
Flashlight Pen	£5.50		
SJEHG Bookmark	£2		
Mobile Outreach Van Model	£10		
SJEHG A5 Notebook	£10		
SJEHG Battery Charger	£10		
SJEHG Umbrella	£18		
SJEHG 4GB USB	£8		
SJEHG Tea Towel	£5		
A Beacon of Hope: 140 years of eye care in the Holy Land, 1882-2022' Paperback	£36		
SJEHG Silk Tie	£25		
		Total	

Please consider adding a small donation to your order to cover the costs of postage.

Please return to: St John Eye Hospital Group, London Office, 4 Charterhouse Mews, London EC1M 6BB

Signed	Title .....	Name .....
	Email .....	
	Address .....	
	Postcode .....	Phone .....

☐ Please tick if you would like to receive information about Legacy or In Memory Giving

☐ Please tick and complete your details if you do not want to receive future issues of Jerusalem Scene

Thank You very much for your support

I will pay by Cheque/Card (delete as applicable)

Cheques to be made payable to 'St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group'

Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/>	Visa <input type="checkbox"/>	Switch/Maestro <input type="checkbox"/>	Valid From <input type="text"/>	Expiry <input type="text"/>
Card No. <input type="text"/>	Issue Number (Switch/Maestro only) <input type="text"/>		Date <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>





**THANK  
YOU**

# TOGETHER WE'RE SAVING SIGHT AND CHANGING LIVES



St John of Jerusalem  
Eye Hospital Group

Make a donation today  
to help thousands of  
people regain their sight.

**1 Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)**

**Address**

**Postcode**

**Tel/Mobile**

**Email**

**2 Gift Aid**

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate.

☐

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years, to St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all of my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

**3 Here is my donation of:** £20 ☐ £80 ☐ £150 ☐ Or my preferred amount of £

I enclose my cheque/postal order payable to St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group  
or please debit my Maestro/MasterCard/Visa (please delete as appropriate)

Maestro only

**Card number**

**Expiry Date**

**Issue Number (Maestro only)**

**Signed**

**Date**

**4 Join us**

Become part of the movement to end preventable blindness.

Would you like to hear from us by email? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Would you like to hear from us by post? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

You can change your mind at any time by contacting us on **0207 253 2582**

**5 Please return this donation form to**

St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group, 4 Charterhouse Mews, London, EC1M 6BB

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Eye Hospital Group**

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