



Proceedings of the St John Ambulance Australia Historical Society 2001–2002

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The St John
Ambulance Australia
Historical Society

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<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
The Society's <i>Proceedings</i> : an introduction to the first edition	1
Distribution of the <i>Proceedings</i>	3
The Society's constitution	3
Benefits of Historical Society membership	3
States' and Territories' archival and library programs	4
• A history of the Order of St John in Victoria, 1883–1986	4
• St John Ambulance Australia (New South Wales) archives and library	4
Brisbane meeting of the Priory History Group, 20 June 2001	5
Seminar of the Priory History Group, 2001	5
• The St John Ambulance Australia national heritage collection (by Jackie Bettington)	5
• The Territory Way: A work-in-progress report on the history of St John in the Northern Territory (by Bill Wilson)	9
• Snakebite, Strychnine and St John: the evolution of pre-hospital care for snakebite victims (by John Pearn)	11
• Zam-Buk and the Zambuks: Brand names and nicknames and their place in St John Ambulance history (by Ian Howie-Willis)	14
The Society's inaugural Annual General Meeting, and historical seminar, June 2002	20
Launch of <i>The Zambuks</i>	20
Membership	20

The Society's *Proceedings*: an introduction to the first edition

The St John Ambulance Australia Historical Society came into formal existence on 21 June 2001, when the Australian Executive of St John

Ambulance Australia approved its draft constitution.

The Society has developed from the History Group of the Australian Priory of the Order of St John, an informal body convened by the Priory Librarian, Dr Brian Fotheringham in June 1999.

This followed the closure in 1998 of the previous Priory Library Committee, which Dr Fotheringham chaired. The Library Committee had been in existence for 58 years, since the formation in 1941 of the Order's Commandery of the Commonwealth of Australia (Exclusive of Western Australia), which in 1946 was upgraded to become the Priory of Australia. The committee, which was responsible for the Priory's heritage collection, was abolished during the Priory restructure of 1997–98.

Heritage issues are important to the Order in Australia, for the following reasons:

- a) The St John historical legacy in this country is relatively long, extending back 121 years to the first public class in the St John method of first aid, taught at the Eveleigh railway workshops in Sydney in 1881.
- b) The Order itself has always valued its supposedly ancient lineage. Though this dates back only to 1831, and the attempted revival of the long defunct English *Langue* of the ancient Knights Hospitaller, members of the Order have always felt an exceptionally strong emotional bond with the original mediaeval Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem founded by the Blessed Gerard in the years before 1099 and instituted in 1113 by Pope Paschal II.
- c) Even though the Order's new (1998) international Grand Council, has declared that the Order is not the same institution as the mediaeval Order, the Hospitallers' centuries in the Holy Land and later Rhodes and Malta are integral to St John Ambulance lore — nothing less than the organisation's creation myth.
- d) Members of the St John youth movement, the Operations Branch Cadets, are taught the history of the Order. Those wishing to gain its highest award, the Grand Prior's Badge, must gain the 'Knowledge of the Order' proficiency badge.

With the Library Committee abolished, and none of the remaining Priory committees specifically responsible for the Order's historical legacy in Australia, Dr Fotheringham convened the Priory History Group rather than see St John Ambulance Australia left with no internal mechanism for serving the heritage function. The History Group formed during the Priory conference in Perth in June 1999, and announced its presence by conducting a historical seminar. Buoyed by the success of its Perth meeting, the Group held two further meetings and seminars during the two subsequent conferences, in Adelaide in 2000 and in Brisbane in 2001. The Adelaide meeting voted to form a Historical Society and delegated the task of preparing a constitution to a five-member committee, consisting of Beth Dawson, Edith Khangure and Betty Stirton, with Brian

Fotheringham as chair and Ian Howie-Willis as secretary. The draft constitution they produced was endorsed by the Brisbane meeting and two days

later approved by the Priory's Australian Executive. With the Executive's approval of the constitution on 21 June 2001, the Society formally came into being.

The History Group's Brisbane 2001 meeting authorised the five-member constitution drafting

committee to continue as the interim management committee of the Historical Society, and to co-opt other members so that all eight States/Territories would be represented. The result is a very large committee, but one that effectively represents the broad interests of all States and Territories.

The management committee now consists of the following members: Jackie Bettington (Qld), John Blackstock (Vic), Alan Bromwich (NT), Peter Burke (Vic), James Byrne (Tas), Richard Caesar-Thwaytes (ACT), Charles Campbell (ACT), Barbara Davis (Vic), Beth Dawson (Qld), Brian Fotheringham (SA), Len Fiori (Priory Headquarters), Reginald Graham (Tas), Alan Hills (SA), Ian Howie-Willis (ACT), Ian Kaye-Eddie (WA), Edith Khangure (WA), John McLaren (ACT), Patricia McQuillen (NT), Loredana Napoli (NSW), John Pearn (Qld), Fay Reeve (Tas), Raymond Schilling (SA), Betty Stirton (NSW), Michael Tyquin (NSW) and Kevin Young (WA). Office bearers are Dr Fotheringham (chair), Dr Howie-Willis (secretary), Mr Byrne (treasurer) and Mr McLaren (membership secretary).

This management committee will remain an interim body until the Society's inaugural Annual General Meeting in Sydney on 20 June 2002. The Society will then elect office bearers and a committee.

The management committee was most fortunate in September 2001 when the Chancellor of the Australian Priory, Professor Villis Marshall, accepted the committee's invitation to become the Society's patron. Few servants of the Order in its 121 years in Australia have given it service as distinguished as Professor Marshall's. A keen student of history himself, he will help provide the guidance the Society needs in its formative years.

As with other national organisations of its kind, the Society is hampered by Australia's 'tyranny of distance', which prevents both the Society and its management committee from meeting at any time other than during the annual Priory conferences. The management committee has endeavoured to overcome this obstacle by keeping in touch with its members through regular two-monthly circulars, and also via a range of electronic communications.

The management committee is confident that the Society will overcome Australia's vast distances and widely dispersed population to become a body that will prove useful in the wider life of St John Ambulance Australia. The St John heritage in Australia is long, rich and diverse. The Society is dedicated to preserving it, and to helping all St John members appreciate its value.

Distribution of the *Proceedings*

The Society's principal publication is its *Proceedings*. It will appear annually and will aim

to cover the Society's important developments and events. In addition it will publish papers and/or extracts of papers delivered to the Society's annual history seminars. It will be distributed free to financial members of the Society. Non-members and unfinancial members may obtain copies from the Society's secretary, whose address is given at the top of page 1. The price will possibly vary from year to year, and will be adjusted to the cost of production and postage.

The Society's constitution

The approval of the Society's constitution by the Australian Executive of St John Ambulance Australia on 21 June 2001 was, as noted above, the event bringing the Society into formal existence.

The constitution is a seven-page document. It is too long to reproduce here, but the section dealing with the Society's 'purposes and objects' should be noted. They are spelt out in Section 4, which requires the Society to:

- 1 promote and encourage the discussion, study, research and writing of the history of St John Ambulance Australia and the Order of St John;
- 2 perform an educational function by enhancing and disseminating knowledge of St John history among people affiliated with St John Ambulance Australia and the wider general public;
- 3 complement and support the work of the parallel State/Territory St John Ambulance history and heritage societies and encourage their formation;
- 4 encourage and assist people undertaking research into aspects of St John history;
- 5 support the activities of St John Ambulance Australia with the provision of appropriate historical materials, information and advice when appropriate;
- 6 seek the support of St John management at national, State/Territory, regional and local levels to place high value on heritage matters, particularly in relation to library, archives and museum repositories; and, by so doing, promote interest in and knowledge of St John
- 7 encourage the development of a systematic approach to the preservation, cataloguing and display of items of St John heritage value;
- 8 work effectively to conserve the historical record as it relates to St John in appropriate archival and museological 'keeping places';
- 9 provide a national forum for the reporting and discussion of research into St John history, such forum taking various appropriate forms such as the

regular meetings during Priory conferences, other meetings, seminars and symposia, and newsletters and/or journals;

- 10 raise awareness of St John history by fostering an enhanced appreciation of the St John heritage among members of the various branches of St John Ambulance Australia and the Order and the general public;
- 11 liaise productively with other St John Ambulance and Order of St John history groups beyond Australia, for example the St John Historical Society in the United Kingdom, and with overseas St John historians.

Copies of the constitution may be obtained from the Society's secretary. (See address at the top of page 1.) The price is \$3, including postage.

Benefits of Historical Society membership

Members may wonder what benefits there are in belonging to an Historical Society that meets only once annually and produces only an annual journal. As one St John worker has asked, 'What value is there in the Society's \$5 membership fee? What benefits do members get for their \$5 investment?' A good question, which hopefully the following points answer.

- The membership fee, which has deliberately been set low so as not to prove a barrier to aspiring members, entitles those who pay it to free receipt of this journal, i.e. the annual *Proceedings of the St John Ambulance Australia Historical Society*.
- Financial members may vote at the Society's annual general meetings and thus help determine the direction the Society will take.
- Membership of the Society is likely to assist members wishing to conduct historical research in the State/Territory and national archival repositories of St John Ambulance Australia. It is likely to enhance a member's bona fides as a serious student of St John history.
- The greatest benefit of membership, however, is that the accumulated membership fees simply make the Society possible. Without the income flowing from membership subscriptions, there could be no Historical Society; with the subscriptions there is a Society committed to fulfilling the 11 objectives specified in the constitution (see above). Having a Society with even a minimal \$5 membership fee is infinitely better than having no Society at all. From

the many comments the Society's management committee has received, it is obvious that members are delighted that after 60 years of there being a national federal St John organisation the initiative has at last been taken to form a national St John historical society.

States' and Territories' archival and library programs

Representatives from two States, New South Wales and Victoria, presented written reports on the development of their States' archival repositories to the June 2001 meeting of the Priory History Group in Brisbane. John Blackstock of Victoria presented a report on behalf of Amelia ('Millie') Field about the difficulties she has experienced in bringing the Victorian archives and history project to fruition. Betty Stirton presented a report on behalf of Loredana Napoli, the archivist and librarian in New South Wales.

The two statements that now follow are edited extracts from their reports.

A HISTORY OF THE ORDER OF ST JOHN IN VICTORIA, 1883–1986

A suggestion was made that I try to convey to you something of the frustrations, delays and disappointments which have occurred over many years concerning the publication of a History of the Order of St John in Victoria. Most of you would have heard of this book on several occasions and, I am sure, wondered whether or not such a book did in fact exist. As it was not possible for me to attend this Priory meeting, Mr Jack Blackstock kindly agreed to read this report to you. Briefly, this is the story to date.

Dr Peter Bush, then Commissioner for Victoria, was the driving force behind the project. The history and preservation of records were matters close to his heart. As chapters took shape in the History they were sent to him to read and edit. The first rough draft of the manuscript was almost finished when, in 1986, Dr Bush returned to England. This was devastating to me, but at least before leaving Australia, Dr Bush brought the proposed publication of a History to the attention of members of Council and left with them his copy of the work to date. I was not made aware of the reaction of Council members to Dr Bush's actions or whether they were interested in continuing with this project.

Several years passed and still no contact was made or instructions received from Council until Mr Ken Swanson was appointed CEO for St John in Victoria. He became very interested in the History and also in the archival files and systems which I had set up at my home. He again brought these matters to the attention of members of the St John Council for Victoria and the response was favourable. Finance no doubt played a large part in influencing decisions made by Council, but I was not contacted regarding the future of an historical publication.

In June 1995, under its Landcare and Environmental Action Project (LEAP), the Commonwealth Government funded 13 long-term unemployed young people and 2 supervisors to work at St John Headquarters for a period of six months. They were really let loose without direct supervision or guidance to deal with records of an organisation about which they knew very little. So far as

their work on the History was concerned the result was disastrous and had to be scrapped.

Although Sister Monica Green kept me informed as to what was happening, no official contact was made and, to the best of my knowledge, the History would never see daylight. It was a surprise and pleasure to me a year or so later when Mr Peter Burke volunteered to tackle computerising the manuscript. However, this proved a long drawn but effort as many demands were made on his time and the computer was not always available for his use.

This dismal report is presented to inform you of the many frustrations and disappointments which have occurred and the reason why this publication has taken so long to produce. Hopefully, with the support of the present CEO, Ms. Sue Hatch, it will not be too far into the future before the History of the Order of St John in Victoria is available for all to read.

Thank you for your attention and to Mr Blackstock for his help in this matter.

Amelia F. Field, DStJ

ST JOHN AMBULANCE AUSTRALIA (NEW SOUTH WALES) ARCHIVES AND LIBRARY

Archives are an important part of our history. Archival material is different from that of a library as the items stored reflect the history of an organisation. The collection was started in 1983 to celebrate the centenary of St John in Australia. The collection then consisted of memorabilia from past and present members. Since 1992 the archives housing the records of all Branches of St John have been stored in archival quality boxes resting on metal shelving at the St John Archives at Marrickville. The library opened in 1999 at St John House. The library holds copies of current brochures as well as books, journals, audio visual material, programs and reference materials for all Branches of St John. Since the library has had access to the Internet locating texts and making purchases on line has assisted staff and members.

As the NSW written, printed and recorded history holdings grow and change in character so has the challenge to ensure effective access to them as they deteriorate through age and use.

During the year 2000 the original hand-written minute books dating from 1890 and records books containing the names of candidates for First Aid and -Home Nursing courses were re-bound. The decision to re-bind was based on the quality of the original paper and the style of handwriting. From the electronic era more than 30,000 pages of minutes have been copied onto acid free paper making a total of 52 volumes of hand-written and electronic records bound. With correct handling and storage, these records have a life span of 150 years.

Towards the end of 2000 a grant was received from the NSW Centenary of Federation for the microfilming of records. Early this year a reader-scanner was delivered to Archives. This is compatible with all microfilm formats plus advanced digital scanning. The records from the

Olympic and Paralympic Games will be the first major item to be microfilmed.

In preparation for the centenary of the Operations Branch and the Glebe Division a day was organised for retired members of Glebe Division. To facilitate their memories, we researched and prepared items from the Division such as minute books, photos, clippings from magazine articles, training manuals and annual returns. A brochure was also prepared for members to take as a souvenir. The day involved tape and video recordings of their memories. This generated a lot of interest from the members and their families and as a result we now have a complete uniform with the metal numerals No. 1, which indicated Glebe as the first Division in Australia.

Each year we receive uniforms, medals, photos, texts etc. from families of deceased members. As well we also receive items not necessarily historic but interesting. Among items recently received was a dance card from the first Ball held by St John in 1901. The pencil writing inside the card is very pale but indicates that Miss Mullins (daughter of the first Chief Commissioner in Australia, Dr George Lane Mullins) had three dances with Mr Macdonald. Mr Macdonald was a member of Glebe Division.

Loredana Napoli is our Archivist and Librarian. For further information about the Archives and Library in NSW, please contact Miss Loredana Napoli, St John House, 6 Hunt St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010; phones (02) 9212 1088 or (02) 9559 6132; fax (02) 9559 6196; email Library@stjohnnswcom.au

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Brisbane meeting of the Priory History Group, 20 June 2001

As noted earlier in these *Proceedings*, the Priory History Group (which has meanwhile become the St John Ambulance Australia Historical Society) conducted its third annual meeting in Brisbane in June 2001. The meeting was immediately followed by the Group's annual seminar, which is described in the next section.

The meeting, in the Cairns Room of the Sheraton Hotel, Turbot Street, Brisbane, was chaired by the History Group convenor, Dr Brian Fotheringham. After greeting the 70 people who attended, Dr Fotheringham explained that when the Australian Executive of St John Ambulance Australia approved the draft constitution, the History Group would be the Historical Society.

At Dr Fotheringham's request, the secretary, Dr Ian Howie-Willis, then reported on the work of the five-member constitution drafting committee over the past year. The draft constitution was then tabled for discussion. After the secretary outlined the structure and aims of the draft constitution, the meeting endorsed it unanimously. Dr Fotheringham then explained that the draft constitution provided

for the drafting committee to continue in existence as the Historical Society's management committee until the first annual general meeting of the Society in Sydney in June 2002. He suggested that the present meeting authorise the interim committee to co-opt members from the States/Territories not yet represented on the committee to make this body truly representative. The meeting unanimously endorsed this suggestion.

At this point the meeting adjourned for morning tea, which was followed by the historical seminar outlined in the next section.

Seminar of the Priory History Group, 2001

As noted above, the Priory History Group conducted its third historical seminar in Brisbane in June 2000. Four papers were on the program. Dr Edith Khangure chaired the first seminar session, when Ms Jackie Bettington delivered the paper 'The St John Ambulance Australia National Heritage Collection'; and Mr Alan Bromwich read the paper 'The Territory Way: A work-in-progress report on the official history of St John in the Northern Territory' on behalf of its author, Dr Bill Wilson. Mrs Betty Stirton chaired the second session, during which Professor John Pearn presented the paper 'Snakebite, Strychnine and St John: The evolution of pre-hospital care for snakebite victims in Australia' and Dr Ian Howie-Willis delivered the paper 'Zam-Buk and the Zambuks: Brand names and nicknames, and their place in St John history'.

In the sections that now follow, edited excerpts of these papers appear.

THE ST JOHN AMBULANCE AUSTRALIA NATIONAL HERITAGE COLLECTION

by Jackie Bettington (Queensland State Archives; formerly archivist to St John Ambulance Australia [New South Wales])

The focus of this presentation will be on the archival aspects of the St John Heritage Collection.

The value of a Priory Archives has been well documented in the minutes of the Priory Library Committee since 1970 when at a meeting on 19 June it

was resolved that:

A room was urgently needed for Archives....The post of Librarian needs the assistance of a person who could take care of the Library and Archives to be sorted. The need for an officer in Canberra responsible to the Librarian could perhaps be a possibility if we could secure in the services of trained Archivist....It was suggested that we recommend to St John Councils in all States that they appoint a suitable person to care for records in their own State also to gather material to be

forwarded to the Priory Headquarters Library...It was resolved "that this library committee requests Priory Council to appoint an assistant Librarian who is resident in Canberra to supervise the sorting and cataloguing of the Library and Archival material at Priory Headquarters....

Historical work undertaken by Ian Howie-Willis, Priory Historian, has highlighted the need to formally establish an archival program at Priory Headquarters.

At present Priory Headquarters has a small library and museum collection that has largely evolved from donations made by the St John community. Over the years an archival collection consisting primarily of files, photographs and publicity material has also accumulated and is currently stored in boxes and open shelving in the former Acton Football Club building behind (and now an annexe of) the headquarters building.

St John Ambulance Australia has now taken the positive steps to formally establish an archival collection. As a professional archivist and former Archivist for St John Ambulance Australia, NSW, I provided assistance with establishing appropriate archival controls and storage for the collection.

The Heritage Collection

St John Ambulance Australia Heritage Collection comprises of three broad types of materials, each serving a different purpose but combined record the history of St John for present and future members and their families to enjoy and better understand St John in Australia.

Archives

The archival material consists of records and documents generated and kept by St John during the course of its business activities. It includes primary evidence of the business activities of St John through files, minutes, photographs, manuscripts of publications, training videos, membership records, press clippings, advertisements etc. .

Library Materials

The library collection consists of published texts made available to members and the public and includes first aid manuals, magazines, training videos, and published reference material.

Museum Objects

The museum collection includes trophies, shields, uniforms, badges, medals, first aid equipment, manikins and artistic works.

The division of these types of materials into separate categories is more important from a management perspective, as each require different preservation and cataloguing processes. However, what is of greater importance is the value of these materials and how they interconnect to form the documented heritage of St John.

Archives and the Information Age

Archives are records that have been created, received or accumulated by an individual or an

organisation in the course of business and preserved because of their continuing value.

In the context of the information age it is important to understand exactly what archives are. Information is a dynamic and ever expanding concept that includes data and systems in all forms. Contemporary business pressures, the advent of computers and the Internet have transformed the way organisations do business. Organisations need to be flexible, do more with fewer resources and respond quickly to new opportunities or challenges. The rapid pace of change in the contemporary environment leaves little time for recording decisions or justifying courses of action.

However, all organisations are required to be accountable. In the case of St John it is accountable to many including its members, its clients, government, the law and the wider community.

Evidence of past actions is the basis of accountability. Evidence is captured in records. Records represent information resources that capture evidence of actions, decisions and processes that would otherwise be forgotten or distorted over time. Records are a sub-set of information.

For records to retain their evidential value and attributes they need to be preserved and managed. These attributes include the context of the information recorded i.e. who was involved, in what capacity were they authorised to act and how does this document fit into the bigger picture.

Research currently being undertaken by the Queensland Government shows that inadequate record-keeping significantly increases the risk of legal liability. Within all tiers of government in Australia, for example, record-keeping has resulted in the need to settle many legal disputes out of court at a cost of billions of dollars simply because the relevant records were not captured, kept, managed or accessible.

Records may be retained for many reasons, for example:

- as a source of business information;
- as a basis for decision-making;
- as a record of policy or precedent;
- as corporate memory;
- for accountability and auditing purposes;
- as evidence of legal rights and obligations;
- to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements;
- for research; and
- cultural heritage.

Electronically generated records present particular challenges for their management. The development of strategies and procedures to ensure the effective and responsible use of information resources (including records) is a key issue in terms of accountability and coping with the explosion in the volume of information and the ever-increasing rate of technological change.

Of particular concern is the capacity to create, control, modify, store and provide access to reliable, accurate and authentic electronic records over time.

Furthermore, even where electronic records are stored on media which have a long life expectancy, it is extremely likely that the technical know-how to operate the software and hardware will be forgotten and the technology needed to access the media will be obsolete long before the storage media starts to deteriorate.

Although the challenges of the Information Age are complex and daunting, there are many great opportunities that can be pursued. In relation to archival management, the sharing of technical archival information via the Internet has markedly improved the quality of archival programs. The development of sophisticated but simple archival and record-keeping applications has allowed organisations to control and access their records more effectively and thereby gain greater value from their records than has previously been the case.

Only a small portion of records, however, are of continuing value. Records identified as having continuing value are archives and include membership records and minute books. Archives usually comprise of 2% to 5% of the records generated by an organisation.

Establishing an Archival Program

As records are increasingly being created and stored electronically, the scope of archival management programs must incorporate the challenges and opportunities of the broader information, communications and business environments.

There are four main approaches to establishing an archival program. The difference between each approach is based on the role and perspective of the archival program within the organisation.

(i) Information Management Approach

The information management approach regards archives as a component of the broader business information management strategy and infrastructure. It encompasses a hierarchical framework consisting of policies, standards, guidelines and procedures for managing an organisation's information resources. This approach explicitly regards information (including archives and records) as business assets.

A simple information management methodology used is shown below.

- Identify all information resources.
- Ensure the information quality (i.e. is the information reliable and accurate).
- Share the information (development knowledge

management systems of which record-keeping systems are included).

- Plan for change (i.e. plan and prepare for technological, organisational and environmental changes).

- Preserve your valuable records – appraise or evaluate information to identify data and records of enduring value; establish long term management of the relevant data and records (e.g. migration strategies and the use of metadata); and provide access to data and records.

The information management approach has gained wider acceptance in recent years as a result of the exponential growth of web-based information resources and the increasing volume of information systems (current and obsolete) in organisations. At present governments in Australia and internationally are developing whole-of-government information management strategies and information architectures. Similarly, large private sector organisations are developing similar enterprise-wide strategies and architectures.

(ii) Life-cycle Approach

This is the traditional approach which regards records management and archival management as two distinct activities that occur at different points in the life span of a record. The first activity is the records management role which is responsible for the creation, maintenance and accessibility of current records (records that are considered part of current business activities). When current records cease to be part of current business activities then a decision needs to be made about the retention of these records. It is at this point that the archivist becomes involved and appraises the records to establish whether they are of temporary or continuing value.

Although the most widespread approach to record-keeping, the life-cycle approach is cumbersome and labour intensive that and usually results in backlogs of records to be appraised and accessioned into the archives. The life-cycle approach reflects the management of paper-based records and due to the time lag between creation and appraisal for retention or disposal does not provide an effective strategy for dealing with electronic records. By the time the archivist appraises the records, the technology used to access the records is usually redundant or the knowledge and skill to use the technology to access the records is long forgotten.

(iii) Continuum Approach

The continuum approach views record-keeping in a holistic sense. In contrast to the life-cycle approach, the traditional dichotomy between current record-keeping and archives is blurred. The continuum model for record-keeping was developed in response to the challenge of managing with electronic records. According to the continuum approach records of enduring or continuing value need to be identified at the point of creation or earlier during the design of a system, to ensure that they are captured and managed so that their evidential attributes are preserved.

(iv) Heritage Approach

Archives form part of a community's cultural heritage. Archives have synergistic relationships with other forms of evidence of the past and current human activity such

as oral traditions, artefacts, the natural environment and built heritage. This approach regards archives within the broader cultural perspective and explicitly attempts to establish links between the different components of a community's cultural heritage.

The establishment of an Archives, Museum and Library for the purposes of preserving a community's history is an example of the heritage approach. This was the approach adopted for the Priory Archives Project.

Scope of Priory Archives

The relative strengths and weaknesses of the approaches outlined above were discussed at the Priory Archives meeting held in Canberra on 16 December 1999. At this meeting, it was indicated that the heritage approach was preferred due to resource constraints and the need to establish control over the current archival material to assist the Priory Historian. Further decisions will need to be made in relation to the scope of the collection e.g. will the focus be in-house records of the business or collections sourced from private donors or a combination of both (as is the case for the Archives of St John Ambulance Australia (NSW)).

Issues

During a brief survey of the current archival collection on 16 December 1999 the following observations were made and issues identified:

- The collection held at the former Acton Football Club has been basically sorted and identified.
- Records and artefacts off-site need to be identified, sorted and recorded.
- Further arrangement and description of all archival material is required.
- The establishment of an easily maintained and accessible set of archives documentation is necessary. This could be undertaken using a manual or electronic system.
- The scope of the archival collection needs to be determined.
- The role of the archives within Priory will determine the ongoing commitment to staff and resources.
- The relationship and boundaries of the Priory Archives in relation to the various State Archives/Libraries need to be determined and mutual agreement established.
- The development of appropriate storage facilities in the short term and longer term needs to be undertaken as soon as possible.

The Priory Archives Project

As a result of the meeting in December 1999, the Priory Archives Project was established. The project is still in progress.

The Objectives of the Priory Archives project are:

- To advise on archival policy, including access, collection development, appraisal and disposal of records, security, storage and staffing of the archives.

- To arrange and describe the existing collection and develop a set of finding aids to facilitate access to the current holdings.
- To develop a phased archival program which is flexible and will allow the development of the Priory Archives at a pace suitable to the resources available.

Survey and Document

A survey of archival, library and museum holdings was undertaken on site 17/8/2000 - 18/8/2000. The value of donated materials was identified as primarily historical and informational. However, the correspondence and working files had evidential, administrative, and in some cases, financial value.

The survey identified the location, provenance and series of items. Inventories of items were listed for most of the collection. Heritage Documentation Management System (HDMS) was acquired free-of-charge, installed and loaded onto the stand alone PC located in the archival storage area. Data from the library and museum database were merged into HDMS to facilitate more efficient management of the heritage resources of St John.

At the completion of this task, instructions, HDMS User Guide and set of reports were printed and handed over to National Head Office staff.

Appraise and develop disposal schedules

The legal and regulatory framework within which St John operates was researched and analysed.

A specific disposal schedule for records was developed and submitted to National Head Office staff for feedback.

Storage and Systems

This has been drafted by awaiting feedback from disposal process before finalising these two reports.

Summary of Tasks

a) Completed Tasks

- Survey and document collection
- Establish control and access system
- Appraise of archival collection
- Develop disposal schedule for heritage collection
- Develop disposal schedule for current records.

b) Tasks in progress

Advise on:

- ⇒ records system
- ⇒ collection storage.

Conclusion

Archives are important because they are the:

- memory of St John; and

- evidence of the work of St John.

The technological and business challenges of the Information Age render contemporary organisations, including St John, at risk of **corporate** and **cultural amnesia** and increased **legal liability**.

In closing I would like to leave you with the following questions for your consideration and action.

1. What sources will future St John historians and members use to research and understand St John in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries ?
2. Will it be possible in future decades to access and read the sources now being accessed ?
3. Will the current period be lamented as the black hole in the history of St John record keeping?

Useful References

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THE TERRITORY WAY: A WORK-IN-PROGRESS REPORT ON THE HISTORY OF ST JOHN IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

by Dr Bill Wilson (commissioned historian, Northern Territory University, Darwin)

Thank you for the opportunity to present this paper to you today. I am sorry that I cannot be here in person but I know that Alan Bromwich will deliver this paper for me in his usual competent fashion, far better, perhaps, than I could have done. Although Alan is presenting the paper, the thoughts, sentiments and views are mine alone and Alan should not necessarily be expected either to endorse or support my comments.

This paper details the progress being made towards a history of the St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory. It is, of necessity, brief because the data collection is not yet complete and only a small portion of the document has been written. The paper outlines the initial ideas, the problems encountered and solutions proposed, together with a view as to the probable format of the finished product.

I should perhaps start by introducing myself. I am a former senior police officer who, on retirement, returned to university to complete an honours degree in history and subsequently undertook a doctorate. I completed the latter qualification late in 2000. My previous historical interests have been Northern Territory history, especially the Northern Territory Police and the history of the Northern Territory bureaucracy. In mid-2000 I was invited to write the history of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory. This part time project is to be completed over some 18 months.

As with all history I spent some considerable time considering the material that might be available, the gaps that might exist, how I would fill them and the probable structure of the finished product. After this initial review, I proposed to the general manager of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory that the document should be in the order of 25,000 to 30,000 words with a thematic structure. This structure was proposed because it would concentrate the research into key areas, bring out the critical points in the organisation's development and make the book more interesting to a wider audience. In other words, I concluded early on that a full organisational history would not be appropriate.

One of the major reasons that led me away from a full organisational history was that previous experience with Territory history suggested that there would be large gaps in the available material. Using archival material has proved extraordinarily difficult in the past. Many of the original documents maintained by organisations in the Northern Territory have not survived. In some instances,

where records do exist there are large gaps in the historical record. In the case of the Northern Territory Police, for example, in 1952 a researcher trying to locate documents about the history of the force history wrote that the correspondence was 'scattered and in some instances non-existent' (SRSA, Research Note 456. Prepared 6 May 1952, The Genesis of the Police Force in the Northern Territory).

The absence of the various documents is not sinister; it is probable that the passage of time and the climate, including the cyclone of 1974, are responsible for some of the records being missing. The fragmentation is compounded because the Northern Territory and its organisations were controlled from outside the Territory before 1978. There are records in Adelaide, Canberra and Darwin. Thus, a complete record was unlikely to be available.

With the general manager's support for this structure, a draft format emerged. The proposed chapters were to be, one, the place of the Northern Territory St John Ambulance in the national and international scene; two, the origins of ambulances and St John in the Northern Territory; three, St John in the Northern Territory 1977 to 1990 and four, St John in the Northern Territory 1990 to 2000.

I set about locating the material and to my horror discovered that the dearth of material was even worse than I had anticipated. However, after assistance from staff in Adelaide I located some notes about the Territory organisation. This proved a starting point and was most useful. A browse through the Commonwealth Department of Health files at the National Archives in Canberra was even more successful. A file, previously unopened, exists which relates a tragic tale and refers to the first real attempt to establish St John in the Northern Territory.

Because I find this story so interesting let me share it with you. In April 1928 a scandal erupted after a man was badly burnt in Katherine 200 miles south of Darwin. He was transferred by rail (which in those days was a long, rough journey) to Darwin for treatment:

No proper arrangements for his conveyance were made. Instead of being placed in an ambulance wagon he was put on a crude mattress (sic) in a carriage, exposed to intolerable jolts so noticeable on a journey on our toy railway, suffering intolerable pain. On arrival at Darwin he was met by a constable driving a bone-shaking, half-bred species of automobile-truck (a credit to our police force) (Northern Standard, 1 May 1928).

On being asked to climb into the truck the patient refused and 'chartered an up-to-date hire car to take him to hospital, where he remained in great pain' (Northern Standard 1 May 1928). Because these were work related injuries, the case received a great deal of attention.

The question of an ambulance for Darwin was raised in the Town Council, the only forum with local political representation. A sports day was called for to fund the purchase of an ambulance. The editor of the *Northern Standard* suggested that it was the duty of the Darwin population to support the meeting and argued that 'should the ambulance be established; a branch of the St.

Johns [sic] or some other ambulance society would be formed' (Northern Standard, 11 May 1928). The Federal Government soon announced that they would provide an ambulance for Darwin and the proposed St John involvement lapsed.

After 1953, when St John Ambulance was established in Darwin, there are a few records which detail the activities of the organisation until 1966, when, fortunately, South Australian St John Annual Reports make reference to the Northern Territory situation. A Department of Health file which deals with the problems of that Department providing Darwin's sole ambulance in the 1950s and 1960s appears to contain some material which will usefully fit into the Territory's St John history.

An insight into official, Government, thinking of the early 1970s is graphically highlighted when a meeting called to discuss the hand-over of ambulance services in Darwin spent considerable time debating a 'use of siren policy' rather than the more important matter of the transfer of responsibility. I mention such issues, not to make light of St John history, nor indeed to show officials in a bad light. Instead, I am demonstrating how the history of an organisation such as St John can be used to highlight social history of the period it covers. All of us have I believe, a responsibility to fit St John history into the wider fabric of society, in part the use of social history in this way reveals more graphically the valuable role St John has played over the years.

From 1975 onwards, when the Territory St John Ambulance became its own entity there are more detailed records available, still not enough for a serious history to be compiled. I have attempted to fill the gaps with oral histories but even these do not complete the picture.

One interesting story which has emerged is that in the remote mining town of Nhulunbuy the Production Sedan Car Club from the local speedway, assisted with the opening of a bank account for St John in 1981, making the initial donation of \$60. This connection with sport is also found in the early years in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Another interesting snippet of information that was mentioned in an oral history was the first use of helicopters to evacuate seriously ill and injured patients in the region around Alice Springs. Started in 1981, the service was designed to overcome the remoteness of the region and save ambulances travelling long distances. The devastation caused, deaths and injuries incurred when a road train was driven into the Ayers Rock Motel also came out in the same oral history. Oral history is such a valuable tool to the historian, particularly when writing about recent history. I wonder why we do not use it more.

If this report sounds pessimistic, it is not meant to be so. Certainly, it has been difficult to locate much material on aspects of the organisation's history. I do not need to explain to the present audience, however, that this is often the case with history and the historian is always frustrated that 'that one document which would complete the jigsaw is missing'. Despite this, a reasonably complete picture of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory is emerging. I have found the search

fascinating, unearthing small pieces of information about an organisation about which I knew little before I started writing this history.

I have been impressed by the magnificent work, which St John staff and volunteers have given to the community. Above all else, the thing that stands out in my research has been the people. The work carried out at the height of Cyclone Tracy for example, was exemplary. That is what the finished product will now reflect, the people and their work, for without the individuals; there would be no St John.

Have I changed my mind about the way the document will appear? Yes, to some degree. It has become obvious that to follow the original structure would lead to an unbalanced work, with short chapters on the early organisation and much longer ones on the more recent past. Equally important is the small potential readership in the Northern Territory and a book has to have wider appeal. Not only will this ensure that production costs are covered, it will inform more people of the work of St John in the Territory. Accordingly, each chapter will be somewhat shorter and be written in a narrative style to give it maximum appeal. Therefore, the content will not change much nor will the thematic structure, just the format, and the writing style.

If I might be so bold, I make a plea to you, one that can be made to many organisations. Please retain your heritage, ensure that records are being kept now so that historians in the future will be able to easily locate the material and write a concise, comprehensive history. I urge you all to encourage a sensible archival policy be established to help this happen.

Finally, I have enjoyed my work on this project, I have learnt much about wonderful people who have served their community well, many of them unrecognised. It has been a magnificent effort by so many Territorians who have served their fellows the true Territory Way.

Snakebite, Strychnine and St John: The Evolution of Pre-hospital Care for Snakebite Victims

by Major General John Pearn AM, KStJ, RFD (President, St John Ambulance Australia [Queensland] and member of the National Medical Standards Committee of St John Ambulance Australia)

Snakebite and its treatment have always been an important part of first aid. Snakes kill an average of three victims in Australia each year; and bite another 3,000, six hundred of whom require antivenom. Worldwide, more than 100,000 die each year from snake envenomation, including 30,000 in India alone.

Following suspected or confirmed snakebite, the correct application of best-practice first aid techniques will save lives¹, hasten convalescence and reduce long-term morbidity². In Australia, where snakebite deaths occur exclusively following envenomation by elapid snakes (principally brown snakes, taipans and tiger snakes) such correct first aid measures centre on the compression bandage-immobilisation technique^{1,3}.

First Aid, a profession in its own right⁴, is a dynamic discipline. It changes and evolves as new research and discoveries point the way to improved best-practice in the pre-hospital domain. Thus has it been with the development of improved field techniques to help the victims of snakebite. An appreciation of this evolution affords a perspective for those who teach, learn and practise these techniques today.

Snakebite — Management by the Aboriginal Peoples

Contemporary oral history of surviving Aboriginal lore affords a glimpse of the medical practices of the world's oldest and longest-surviving culture. The management of snakebite, like so many other health practices, of the Aboriginal Peoples...

Seemed primitive to the [first colonial] settlers, but it is now known that their life-style in relation to their environment was of high order, and their treatment of the sick more advanced...[in many ways] than eighteenth century [European] practice⁵.

Aboriginal men, women and children had contact with venomous snakes in their daily lives, as did the early settlers, not infrequently to their cost.

In both societies, a plethora of procedures, preparations and potions were used to deal with the problem of snakebite, always something of a cause célèbre⁶ — not only to the victim but to the family and society group in which such occurred.

There have existed more than 600 language groups of the Aboriginal peoples. Such different societies differed (and continue to be distinct today) not only in their skin colouring and body form, but also in their professional and cultural practices. There thus existed many different approaches to snakebite management among the Torres Strait Islander peoples. In Tasmania, in 1864, it was reported that, following snakebite, cutting of the bite site and forced exercise was the treatment used by local Aboriginal men and women⁷. On Cape York, by contrast, the skin area of the bite site was cut with a stone and the victim was made to sit in water⁸. In the Broome region of Western Australia, the roots and tissues of the plant *Capparis lasiantha* was soaked in water and the liquid applied to the bitten area⁹. The details of more than 25 different Aboriginal treatments are known¹⁰.

Snakebite Management — Ancient Egypt

Records from the Edwin Smith Papyrus, the Ebers Papyrus and the Brooklyn Museum Papyri reveal much about the extensive first aid and medical management of snakebite in ancient Egypt. The herpetological references in the Ebers Papyrus are essentially confined to methods for preventing a snake leaving its hole.

The Brooklyn Museum Papyri contain a number of specific treatments, five in all, for the management of the snake-bitten. These include (a) the application of salt, exploiting its osmotic effect; (b) the application of a bandage to the bitten limb; (c) incision or excision of the wound at the bite site; (d) the use of onions, particularly used with incantations to the Egyptian deities of Ra, Horus and Serqet; and (e) fumigation of the patient¹¹.

The importance of snakes, snakebite and management of the envenomed is attested to by the widespread use of the snake symbol in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Greek and Roman Practices

There existed, from early Roman times, three all-purpose drugs which were used, *inter alia* to treat snakebite. These drugs comprised Hiera Picra (the 'sacred Holy Powder' or the 'Holy Bitter')¹²; aloes, particularly those collected from the island of Socotra¹³; and Theriaca, from which the English word 'treacle' is derived¹². Hiera Picra consists of 'aloes, 100 drachms, mastic, saffron, Indian nard, carbobalsam and asarum, of each one ounce, mixed together'¹². Theriaca was a particular remedy against poisons and the bites of venomous animals, especially snakes. The name 'theriaca' was originally derived from a treatise written by Nicander of Colophon, physician to Attalus, King of Bythnia, in the second century B.C. His book, entitled *Theriaca*, dealt with bites of venomous animals and antidotes to counteract their effects. The recipe for theriaca itself contained boiled vipers mixed with an array of up to fifty herbs including wild thyme, aniseed, valerian root and parsley. This use, of 'like curing like', was the basis for many of the origins of herbal remedies.

The official pharmacopoeia in Germany included theriaca, with vipers, until 1812; whilst the French did not delete it from their national *Pharmacopoeia* until after 1884¹⁴.

Sanskrit and Hindu Medicine

Records of the management of snakebite occur in the *Rig Veda*, which dates from 1200 B.C.E. Its medical teachings predate Hippocratic and Galenic medicine; and its influence remains great in medical practice in many parts of the Indian subcontinent today. The great Sanskrit physician, Sushruta, taught that emergency first aid for cobra bites to the feet required application of an '...arishta, a strip of cloth tied four fingers above the ankle, very tightly...and sprinkled cold water over the victim's face, to counteract the heat of the poison'¹⁵.

The necessity for speed in the first aid treatment of snakebite was well appreciated in ancient Sanskrit medicine, and the local priest-doctor would act 'as fast as a man grabs a metal tool that has dropped in deep water'¹⁵. It was written that the ligature, the arishta, 'is, to poison, what embankment is to the water'. No ligature, however, was effective unless its action was accompanied by the chanting of the proper mantras, the sacred formulas. These had been learnt by the local doctors during periods of purification. The translation of one such, used in first aid management for perhaps more than a millennium, in what is present-day India and Pakistan was:

*I have gone about the race of snakes
As the sun about the sky
As night about living creatures
Other than the swan
Thereby do I ward off your poison.'*¹⁵

Following the application of a ligature and the chanting of a mantra, the doctor would stuff his mouth

with a piece of linen and begin sucking at the bite site. Then:

*'Next, with a dramatic gesture, while the victim was held, the surgeon plunged his knife between the marks of the two fangs, for he had learned that 'even as a tree does not grow when its roots are cut asunder, poison does not grow if an incision be made on the puncture'. Then he would take forceps, pick a blazing coal from the cooking fire, and quickly press it onto the wound'*¹⁵.

In the case of adults envenomed by cobras and other venomous snakes, blood letting was also practised. Later, surviving victims would be treated with a special 'agada' or antipoison plaster. An infusion of herbs, made with 'water blackened with the earth of an anthill' was also used. In ancient India, a special concoction of *Rauwolfia serpentina* was used. It is believed by some¹⁵ that this was another example of the 'doctrine of similarities' as the root of this plant was believed to be 'used against snakebite because it looks like a snake, hence its name *serpentina*'¹⁵.

Eighteenth Century Indian Practices.

The British colonies in India were the source of further study of venomous snakes and of the snake-bitten. In particular, Scottish surgeons recorded the Indian management of snakebite and with their great tradition of research and scholarship, wrote these out. It was from the ancient Indian teachings that the first aid management of snakebite developed over the ensuing two centuries. In his 'History of the Indian Medical Service' (1600-1913), Dr D.G. Crawford¹⁶ has written of the remarkable contributions of the British Army surgeons; and particularly of their first hand accounts of the various forms of snakebite and of the Indian methods of their treatment¹⁷.

Such was the problem of snakebite in India, that by the 1860s, it was reported in *The Times*, of London, that 'The Indian Government had offered a large reward for discovery of an antidote'¹⁸.

AUSTRALIA — FIRST AID FOR SNAKEBITE

The history of the evolution of first aid management of snakebite in Australia has been one of wild experiment, dogma, the perseveration of fixed beliefs and, ultimately, from 1979 the era of evidence-based medicine.

The Colonial Era

Australian colonists 'inherited' the British Indian Medical Service treatment of snakebite, in turn derivative from ancient Sanskrit and Indian practices. The method utilised, essentially, the application of a tourniquet with subsequent scarification and suction.

By the 1860s, paralysed victims, following the bite by Australian snakes, were subjected also to electric shocks. Galvanism had been discovered by the Italian Professor of Obstetrics, Professor Luigi Galvani, in 1791 when he had shown that the muscles of frogs could be made to contract by the application of an electric current¹⁹.

A newspaper report of 1869 described the case of a Melbourne man who, after impaling his finger on the

fang of a dead snake:

*Became very drowsy and proceeded to lie down informing, however, one of his mates as to what had occurred. The latter immediately set about procuring medical assistance, but by the time it arrived, the man was comatose, and his lower extremities paralysed. Galvanism and the other usual remedies were applied, but without effect, the poison having obtained too strong a hold of the system' (Newspaper Report, *The Times*, 1869¹⁸).*

Intense interest and eventual controversy gripped the Australian medical establishment in the period 1869–75 with the strong advocacy of Professor Halford, of Melbourne, for his use of intravenous ammonia in the treatment of snakebite. George Britton Halford (1824–1910) was the foundation Professor of Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology at the newly established (1862) Medical School at the University of Melbourne²⁰. He came to Australia with the recommendation of two great scholars, Sir James Paget and Sir Richard Owen (of the British Museum); but his researches [in Australia] damaged rather than added to his record²⁰. He rejected the teachings of Charles Darwin; and was involved in controversial and perhaps inappropriate procedures relating to the body parts of an executed prisoner²¹.

Halford suffered from the fixed delusion that an injection of ammonia would save snakebite victims. Halford had observed what he supposed were changes in the red blood cells of the victims of snakebite; and believed that these changes were reversed by the application of ammonia. The technique of intravenous injecting of drugs had been discovered only recently; and Halford believed that he had discovered 'the universal antidote for snakebite'. This met with great debate, scepticism and eventually ridicule and battle lines were drawn up in the 'Letters to the Editor' columns of the *Australasian Medical Gazette* and *The Lancet*²². On April 29th, 1871, it was reported that:

Professor Halford complained to the Melbourne Argus that his specific [ammonia cure for snakebite] has not met the enthusiastic approval of The Lancet, and urges on his medical brethren the duty of injecting the veins of victims to snakebite even larger doses of liquid ammonia than he has hitherto prescribed. We adhere, however, to our opinion that Professor Halford's induction is not so scientifically complete as to warrant implicit confidence in his practice — an opinion, moreover corroborated by Professor Fayrer, of Calcutta, who, with every motive to receive Dr Halford's specific favourably, cannot persuade himself to adopt it, or recommend its author to the Indian Government as a discoverer of a remedy which is as greatly desiderated in that peninsula as in Australia itself...There is an old principal of 'what is sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose', injected ammonia should be as efficacious for the snake-bitten Hindoo as for the snake-bitten Australian. But such is not the case²².

Halford's treatment was particularly ridiculed by the pre-eminent medical scientist and researcher of the late nineteenth century, Dr Thomas Lane Bancroft, of Brisbane.

Another adherent of intravenous therapy, Dr Mueller of Yackandandah, of Victoria, advocated the specific injection of strychnine, as a snakebite cure in 1890²³. This therapy attracted many adherents, including members of the North Queensland Medical Society, a body which flourished based in Townsville in the period 1889 to 1891. Two north Queensland doctors, Dr Forbes and Dr Clatworthy, reported successful cases following the intravenous injection of strychnine in the management of their patients. Not surprisingly, the technique was soon discredited²⁵.

A feature, of nineteenth century snakebite management in Australia, was the small 'snakebite outfit' developed and promoted by Mr. Brunton, a pharmaceutical chemist and wholesaler of pharmaceutical requisites. He widely promoted the 'Brunton Snakebite Kit', a small pencil-sized column of wood, with wooden screw-out ends. The wooden cap at one end screwed out to reveal a small steel lancet blade for scarification of the snakebite site. The other end unscrewed to reveal a repository of Condy's Crystals, which could then be sprinkled in the wound, to help neutralise the venom.

The Modern Era

The modern era of snakebite management centres about two developments. The first of these was the development of antivenom, in 1931. The second was the development, by Dr Struan Sutherland based at the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories in Melbourne, of the compression bandage-immobilisation technique for the treatment of elapid snakebite in Australia.

In 1931, Dr Tisdall and Dr Sewell treated a case of tiger snakebite with specific antivenom²⁶. This occurred some 40 years after Pasteur's pioneering discovery of immunotherapy, and essentially remains the mainstay of management of the snake-bitten today²⁷.

Using monkeys as the experimental animal, and using an exquisitely sensitive measure to assay concentrations of venoms in the serum, Struan Sutherland demonstrated that venom could be held at the bite site, as effective first aid management, if a compressive bandage was applied to the limb, instead of a tourniquet. Furthermore, he showed that splinting alone also reduced the effect of the 'muscle pump' on the passage of lymph and venom-carrying lymph, proximally from the bite site²⁸. The efficacy of this method was first demonstrated in humans by the author and a herpetologist colleague (Mr Neil Charles), who applied the new technique following an accidental bite by a common brown snake (*Pseudonaja textilis*)²⁹. In this human 'experiment' the venom was held at the bite site for approximately two hours, without proximal 'centripetal' movement²⁹. This remains the standard first aid treatment today.

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ZAM-BUK AND THE ZAMBUKS: BRAND NAMES AND NICKNAMES AND THEIR PLACE IN ST JOHN AMBULANCE HISTORY

by Ian Howie-Willis (Priory Historian, St John Ambulance Australia)

1. Introduction: some current opinion on St John brand names

This is a paper about brand names and nicknames, specifically of the brand name of a popular ointment and a nickname once applied to members of the St John Ambulance Brigade in Australia. Brand names and logos are a matter of some concern around St John Ambulance Australia at present. There is opinion that we have too

many, and that this creates confusion in the minds of the public. One estimate is that through its publications, stationery and uniforms, St John Ambulance Australia employs no fewer than 163 separate logos and trade names.

Having so many emblems, the marketing experts tell us, is a disadvantage. Thus, it 'fragments' the St John image, causing confusion among members of the public. It prevents the organisation from achieving the high degree of public recognition that might otherwise be possible. It plays into the hands of commercial competitors who have better 'brand integrity'. It accentuates the split objectives we have in being both a charity and a revenue-raising business. It makes recruiting and retaining volunteers more difficult. It creates duplication and adds to costs.

Identifying a problem is one thing; doing something about it another. So what should we do? Do we opt for one logo and one brand name alone — for instance the roundel for the logo and 'St John Ambulance Australia' for the brand name without references to subsets like 'Training Branch', 'Operations Branch', 'Community Care' etc? If so, the problem then is that the name doesn't accurately reflect St John's 'core business': except in the Northern Territory and Western Australia

the organisation runs no ambulances. If 'ambulance' is a difficulty, then perhaps the brand name should be something like 'St John First Aid Australia'. You'll

probably all have your own views here, and I guess their strength is directly proportional to the number of years you've been in St John.

Given such strong opinion, changing an organisational brand name is a matter fraught with difficulty, as we can appreciate if we consider the history of names in St John Ambulance in Australia. If we look at that history we soon see there are various ways of classifying the St John names. The basic types are the official and unofficial — what we're formally called in law and what we're known as more informally. St John has two official names. The first of these is 'the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'; and because that's so cumbersome in 1987 the Priory adopted the more user-friendly 'public name' of 'St John Ambulance Australia' for everyday use. Regarding the unofficial names, it's difficult to say how many of these there are because they're often colloquial or abbreviations, and they change over time. It's this latter group, the unofficial names, and particularly the nicknames, that are the focus of the rest of this paper.

2. Changes in nomenclature

Until recent decades the fraction of our organisation now known as the St John Ambulance Australia Operations Branch suffered no nomenclatural uncertainty. For the 88 years from its inception in Sydney in 1901 until the Priory restructure in 1987 it was called the St John Ambulance Brigade — as it still is in the 46 countries beyond Australia where it is active. As the Brigade it had no identity crisis. Its brand name was secure and enjoyed a high degree of public recognition in

the hundreds of towns and cities where it maintained Divisions, or local units. The badge of the Order, always in black and white, was synonymous with the name St John Ambulance Brigade and with the black and white uniform that Brigade members wore.

However, while the brand name and logo were well known there were various nicknames that have also enjoyed currency during the Brigade's/Operation Branch's century in Australia. Some have been names the public applied to them; others were names they used themselves. Probably the most ubiquitous has been plain 'St John's Ambulance', with an extra 'apostrophe-s' mistakenly added after 'John'. Others less common include 'the St Johnnies' and 'St Jacks'. The term used in London in the early years of the St John Ambulance Brigade in the late 1880s, 'the body snatchers', did not migrate to Australia with the organisation in the early 1900s. Another which, much later, also failed to catch on popularly was 'the Dads' Army of ambulance work' — a reference to a popular British television comedy of the 1970s that dealt with the farcical misadventures of the aged, inept members of local militia units in wartime Britain. It was the term scornfully applied to the Brigade in South Australia by the partisan John Cornwall, Minister for Health in the State Labor government in the mid-1980s, who was sympathetic to the ultimately successful campaign of the ambulance officer unionists to oust St John from the State ambulance service. Sadly, the one place where the 'Dads' Army' tag survived was in the self-perceptions of the first aid volunteers themselves. As the senior State and national staff of St John Ambulance Australia pondered the challenges facing the organisation in the early years of the 2000s, an abiding theme was the need to attract and retain youthful members. 'We must present a young vital image; we can't afford the public to see us as Dad's Army,' the members of the key forums pleaded to each other.

'Ops Branch' was another name used internally after 1987, when the name 'Operations Branch of St John Ambulance Australia' replaced the less cumbersome 'St John Ambulance Brigade'. A term introduced by the Chief Commissioner of the day, a former major-general in the regular army, it was one borrowed from military jargon. It never really caught on. Older, pre-1987 members in 2001 were still referring to themselves as 'the Brigade', a word affectionately remembered. Post-1987 the general membership soon abbreviated the first word to 'Ops.' Their new shoulder flash simply bore the Maltese cross and the words 'St John Ambulance Australia'. It made no reference to which of the three main branches of St John Ambulance Australia — Community Care, Operations or Training — the volunteer represented. The organisation in at least two States eventually stopped using the official 'Operations Branch' label altogether because it did not convey any meaning to the general public. Instead they adopted the informal descriptor 'St John First Aid Volunteers', which did.

General dissatisfaction with 'Operations Branch' eventually surfaced at the national Operations Branch conference in Adelaide in 2000, in a motion to abandon

the term in favour of something more descriptive. 'St John First Aid Volunteers' was the leading contender.

The matter was shelved, however, when the Operations Branch national leadership heeded 'grass-roots' opinion that despite the unpopularity of 'Operations Branch' the general membership was tired of all the name changing. One change did, however, emerge from the conference. This followed agreement to abandon the term 'District' in favour of 'State/Territory' when referring to the eight major Operations Branch territorial groupings. Thus, after 99 years there would no longer be District Commissioners, District Superintendents, District Officers (Cadets), meetings of District staff or District first aid competitions. Instead the term 'State/Territory' would prefix such positions and activities.

3. Dictionary definitions

Perhaps the most distinctive of all the nicknames ever used for St John in Australia was 'the Zambuks'. The *Macquarie Dictionary* (1981) has this definition: 'zambuck, noun, colloquial, a St John Ambulance man (from *Zambuck*, tradename of ointment in a black and white container, calling to mind the black and white uniform worn by St John Ambulance men.' The *Australian National Dictionary* (1988) describes the word as follows: 'Zambuk; also zambuck, the proprietary name of an antiseptic ointment, a member of the St John's [sic.] Ambulance Brigade, especially such a person in attendance at a sporting event.' Giving examples of the way the word has been used the latter dictionary went on to quote *The Bulletin* magazine for 6 March 1984, which carried this titbit: 'If you don't know what a Zambuck is, it's someone in the black and white uniform of the St John Ambulance Brigade doing honorary duty at a sports arena ready to dash on to the field with everything from liniment to stretcher.' Taken together, the dictionaries give a proximate account of how the word arose, and why it was used for Brigade members. 'Zam-Buk' (two hyphenated words) is indeed the name of a popular antiseptic ointment. It was also a common item in Brigade first aid kits once; and, like the Brigade uniform, its lid was black and white.

The dictionaries could also have pointed out that, contrary to the Afrikaans sound of the word, the name of the ointment wasn't derived from some species of black and white South African antelope; nor does it seem to have a connection with the Zambesi River, Africa's fourth largest, or Zambia, the African nation occupying the Zambesi basin. The emblem appearing on the lid of 'Zam-Buk' tins was a zebra not an antelope. In one of those inspired twists in the growth of vernacular Australian English, it was probably football crowds who first applied the brand name to the men (and women) of the Brigade. Football spectators had come to associate together the ointment in the first aid kits, the brand name, the zebra emblem and the black and white Brigade uniform.



Illustration (previous column): the lid of an early tin of 'Zam-Buk', minus the zebra logo

'Zambuk' is the only reference to either the Order of St John or St John Ambulance Australia in Australia's lexicographical dictionaries. Apart from 'Zambuk', St John doesn't rate a mention in either the *Macquarie* or the *Australian National Dictionary*. Red Cross fares better, with a longish, 9-line entry in the *Macquarie*. Neither St John Ambulance nor the Red Cross is mentioned in the most prestigious Australian historical dictionary — *The Oxford Companion to Australian History* (1998) — but St John Ambulance (though not Red Cross) has an entry in the earlier (1987) *Australians: A Historical Dictionary*, which is Volume 8 in the 12-volume *Australians* series produced for the Bicentenary. (I was the author of that entry and also the Volume 8 assistant editor, and was therefore able to insist that it be included.)

4. An affectionate or derogatory nickname?

I first came across the 'Zambuk' nickname almost 21 years ago — in the minutes of a special Chapter meeting of the Priory in Canberra in December 1980, called to consider the effects for St John of the \$14 million tax avoidance scandal in which the Victorian St John branch had become entangled in 1977. Chairing the special Chapter meeting was one of the last acts as Chancellor of the late Sir George Stening. Stening, second Priory Chancellor, held the position for 20 years — the longest period so far of any of the six distinguished men who've occupied it. He was truly one that towered above his St John contemporaries. Members of the Order who attended the meeting may recall Stening's speech. Quivering with hurt, disappointment and indignation, he spoke as follows:

Our honour has been damaged [by the tax avoidance scheme] and steps are necessary to restore our standing in the community. St John has enjoyed a position in the community of service to man, voluntary in nature and honest and cheerful in its manner of doing duty....It has the respect and good humoured benevolence of the man in the street. It is referred to, almost lovingly, as the Zambuks in uniform....St John is a household word....Our image was respectable, honourable and worthy of membership....We will have to work for a long time to lift up our...standing in society again. There must be no possibility of any act...done by any St John member being labelled snide or open to criticism.

Not knowing what Stening had meant by 'Zambuks', I made inquiries. After a few questions here and there I quickly found out. Fairly soon, too, I had a picture of an old 'Zam-Buk' tin — one with a zebra motif — that I discovered in a history of Australian brand names and

logos in my school library. (Unfortunately I can't locate it and cannot therefore reproduce it here.)

As a nickname 'Zambuk' was probably better known in some Australian States than others. Brigade veterans from New South Wales seem to be most familiar with it, from which we might infer that it originated there. Those in most other States know of it even if they themselves can't recall having been called 'Zambuks' personally. In only one State, South Australia, do they claim not to know it. One of my respected South Australian informants, a 60-year veteran, had heard it but thought it was derogatory. That might have been the case in South Australia if the name was ever widely known there, but it certainly wasn't true for New South Wales, where the veterans, like George Stening, remember it being used 'almost lovingly'. The affection is evident in the following poem, 'Zambuks', by one G. Pratt. It appeared in the June 1952 edition of *The Crusader*, the journal of the New South Wales Brigade District. Who G. Pratt was and how he or she came to be writing in praise of Brigade members are now forgotten. No other record of her/him exists in St John archives but the verses he/she has left behind have only positive connotations:

'ZAMBUK'

*Why do they call him 'Zambuk,'
This chap in black and white?
He'll treat a case of drowning,
Or dress a cut so slight.
His value is enormous
At Holiday Resorts;
At Beaches, Races, Football,
And every kind of Sports.
At many public functions
And every sports event
He's there to treat a fracture
Or straighten up the bent.
This 'Johnny' is no 'sissy'—
And don't think him a slouch
Whene'er you see him stooping
In St John's familiar crouch.
He's treating some poor fellow
Who didn't have the sense
To look before he leaped .
When jumping o'er a fence.
A patient with a broken limb,
Or bruised and bleeding hand
Knows and trusts the First Aid Man-
The chap with white hat-band.
Remember, when you need him,
When you are out of luck,
That he will freely help you.
His name? Ah, yes.....'Zambuk'.*

(by G. Pratt, *The Crusader* vol. 6 no. 6, June 1952)

And if you need further proof that 'Zambuk' was a name commanding respect, consider one particular practice of Brigade members in Sydney's industrial west in years gone by. According to the late Ben Symons, who spent many years with the Western Suburbs Division, Brigade members used to paint the word 'Zambuk' in large letters on the lids of the portable polished wooden cases containing their first aid kits. This was insurance

against their kits being stolen while their backs were turned. On the scale of deeds to which no principled thief would stoop, nicking a box marked 'Zambuk' rated alongside mugging a nun or stealing from a blind man's begging bowl.

5. 'Zam-Buk' the product

'Zam-Buk' might have vanished from Brigade first aid kits but is still readily available in Australian pharmacies. These days it comes in a tube in a packet rather than a tin; it retails at \$7.35; the packaging colours are green, white and red rather than black and white. The zebra emblem is now absent.

The directions for use describe it as a 'herbal balm' — a 'soothing, healing and antiseptic balm for treatment of minor wounds, chapped hands, insect bites and muscular pains'. Each gram contains 50 milligrams of eucalyptus oil, 25 of colophony 18 of camphor, 6 of sassafras oil and 5 of thyme oil. In Australia its manufacturer and distributor is Key Pharmaceuticals of Sydney, who make it under licence from the multinational pharmaceutical company, Roche, which acquired the rights to it from Fisons, the British pharmaceutical firm that first began making it in 1899. 'Zam-Buk' even has a website, <www.zambuk.co.za/zambuk.htm>, reproducing testimonies to its curative powers from satisfied users.

6. Internet references

Anyone searching the Internet for information about the herbal balm will find hundreds of other 'Zam-Buk' references beyond the product website. It occurs in various lists of medical products; it's mentioned in government inquiries into the pharmaceutical industry; and analyses of its contents are set out in the findings of various consumer 'watchdog' bodies. The name also crops up in lists of advertised 'collectibles'. It appears that collectors who specialise in old tins are happy to pay well for 'Zam-Buk' tins either full or empty. The going rate is \$US9.99 (\$A18.85) for an empty one. Net 'surfers' will soon discover other 'Zambuk' references. The word appears in a collection of bawdy jokes as the last line of an 'A to Z' rhyming list of ribald definitions. (Those of you who savour 'rugby' ditties will find it at website <<http://www.jokes-funnies.com/sexjokes/abcs.shtml>>.)

Zambuk is also a town situated at 10° North 11° East. It's in Gombe, one of the 30 states making up the federation of Nigeria. (In September 2000 the state experienced communal violence that left 10 people dead after disputes between Muslim and Christian citizens over the introduction of the *shariat* or Islamic law.) Zambuk is a surname of at least one person in the USA for in 1974 a person called U.Y. Zambuk submitted a Master of Science thesis to the New Mexico State University on the topic 'The germination responses of three semi-desert grasses to temperature, moisture and depth of planting'. In 1996 Volume 15 of a French journal of linguistics, *Linguistique Africaine*, included an article by a scholar called Monaster Ramer with the obscure title 'The unreality of morphophemes in Zambuk Tera sound change' — from which we might conclude that Zambuk is also one among Africa's many hundreds of languages

and dialects. And finally there is, or rather was, an intriguing email address, <zambuk@rocketmail.com>, which might have offered help in discovering the origin of 'Zambuk'. Attempts to contact the site occupant have proved fruitless, however: messages sent to the address are promptly 'returned to sender' with the explanation 'Your message could not be delivered. This account has been discontinued'.

In addition to all these, 'Zambuk' the nickname appears in various Australian and New Zealand websites. Several in New Zealand claim the nickname as their own, a term that 'Kiwis' use for the first aiders at their rugby matches. I argue below that a New Zealand origin for the word is unlikely. As with so many other Australian slang words — 'cobber', 'digger', 'dinkum' etc — our trans-Tasman cousins seem to think they were the inventors. By the way, we ANZAC partners might not be the only people who've called their first aiders 'Zambuks'. Beth Dawson assures me that the nickname was also used in England for Brigade members. If that's true then neither Australians nor New Zealanders can claim proprietary rights to the word.

Two recent Australian references to the nickname are at the websites of the Australian Republican Movement (ARM) and 'Oz' (a site promoting tourism to Australia). The former (<<http://www.republic.org.au/info/speeches/hughes1.htm>>) reproduces the speech that Robert Hughes, the art critic, historian and republican, made in the Melbourne Town Hall on 2 July 1997 at the ARM's Victorian campaign launch. In characteristically rotund style, he argued that Australians had outgrown their earlier need for the monarchy:

Australian attitudes towards the monarchy [have changed]. The magic cord frayed out and snapped some time ago. We no longer faint in front of the Town Hall and have to be carried away by the Zambuks when the Queen grants us the royal epiphany.

It was but a brief reference — a 'throw-away' line by an eminent critic and prose master — but regardless of whether Hughes had his finger accurately on the national pulse he was wrong in one important respect. This, of course, is that the need for St John Ambulance first aiders at public events remains as strong now as during the royal tour of 1954.

The 'Oz' website (<<http://www.effect.net.au/lukastan/oz/mainmenu.htm>>) aims to explain Australia to potential tourists from overseas. It does so in jocular, matey, 'ockerish' manner. It includes 'Zambuks' in the opening statement of its main menu:

Oz is a collection of pages here to tell you everything about Australia, from 'Aerial Pingpong' to 'Zambuks' and all the culture, habits, heritage and traditions in between.

Readers prepared to spend the next half hour trawling through the material under each of the 22 subject headings under the main menu will find no further references to 'Zambuck'. The above sentence is all there is. (I've complained to the web-master about this, and he promises to rectify his omission.)

7. What does 'Zam-Buk' mean?

Unfortunately, none of this brings us any closer to the derivation and original meaning of the two syllables making up the trade name of 'Zam-Buk' ointment. Sadly, we must conclude that these are no longer known.

Illustration (next column): a World War I era Australian advertisement for 'Zam-Buk' reproduced in Sarah Overton (ed.), The Australian Country Diary 1996 (Simon & Schuster Australia, East Roseville, NSW, 1995). The commercial artist has wrongly identified the Zambuk as a Red Cross not a St John Ambulance Brigade first aider.



Key Pharmaceuticals and Roche were interested to learn that Brigade members in Australia were once called Zambuks, but not much help in solving the problem of its derivation. Key Pharmaceuticals can produce a couple of ancient advertisements for 'Zam-Buk', one from circa World War I, another from World War II, but that's all the historical information it has.

A search of old newspaper files in the Australian National Library indicates that 'Zam-Buk' was widely advertised in both the Australian and UK press at least until the mid-1940s. [A sample of six newspaper advertisements for 'Zam-Buk' was displayed on an overhead projector slide at this point of the paper.] The mode for all of them is the personal testimonies of people who've experienced near-miraculous healing after trying the ointment as a last resort. My favourite is the endorsement by the legendary escapologist, Harry Houdini. Houdini said he'd used ointments, salves and liniments of every kind in his 16 years of extricating himself from handcuffs and manacles on stage. None had 'ever given such remarkable relief as Zam-Buk', which he began using after 'my engagement at the Palace Theatre [when] my wrists were badly lacerated from the handcuffs locked on them'.

Advertisements like these might interest students of advertising history but shed no light on the origin of the trade name. Roche's 'Zam-Buk' website contains some information about how the trade name arose, but this is almost certainly wrong. 'The word Zam-Buk,' the website asserts, 'originated in New Zealand and was used to describe someone who administered first aid to wounded sportsmen;' then says that "a 'Zambuck' was a member of the Order of St John, which was established at the time of Crusades to care for the injured.' Perhaps the

advertising copy writer responsible for this furphy had heard of the *Australian National Dictionary* and *Macquarie* definitions and then confused the two ANZAC partners. It is, however, most unlikely that the trade name arose in either New Zealand or Australia. 'Zam-Buk' went on the market in 1899, at which time the Brigade had no Divisions in Australia yet, only two in New Zealand (both in Dunedin in the far south) and was still in its infancy in Britain. First came the ointment with the odd name, we may safely surmise, then came the nickname for the first aiders using it. Moreover, if the trade name was of New Zealand origin, why did Fisons choose one that presumably had connections with Dunedin, which was then the most remote St John outpost in the world?

We'll probably never know the answers to questions like this. The ancient history of the product name seems to have been lost to the corporate memory of the pharmaceutical firms that have manufactured 'Zam-Buk'. Following the franchising deals to which the ointment has been subject in recent decades, no one has clues to points like these: (a) which pharmacist (or was it a doctor, a herbalist or an untutored backyard concocter of potions?) invented the ointment; (b) when, where and why; (c) how he/she devised the formula; (d) whether or not the formula has changed over the past century and if so how; (e) where the ointment was first marketed; (f) what logo appeared on the first batch of tins (or were they jars?); (g) what the two words 'Zam-Buk' mean; (h) what language (if any) were they borrowed from or were they just 'nonsense' words; and (i) why these two particular unusual syllables were chosen as the brand name. Knowledge of such basic detail seems to have vanished.

The 'Zambuk' nickname, too, has disappeared from popular usage. By 2000 only the older Operations Branch members — those with membership dating back to the early 1970s — could remember it. Meanwhile new descriptors had arisen. Among these was 'the Magpies' — another reference to the black and white uniform, and also perhaps to Ops. Branch members' eagerness to swoop upon accident victims to offer first aid. Indeed one of the titles suggested for the Brigade/Operations Branch centenary history I'm currently writing was 'The Magpies: 100 Years of the St John Ambulance Volunteers in Australia'. This might have been appropriate, but there are other, better-known 'Magpies' garbed in black and white — most notably the Collingwood team in the Australian Football League, until recent times formidable opponents for any other pitched against them.

8. A national competition to select a book title

And that now brings me to the matter of the title we'll use for the centenary history. To choose one I conducted a national competition among Ops. Branch members during the second half of last year. I was never particularly happy with the working title I adopted as the project went through its preliminary phases 3½ years ago. This was *Serving Australians 1902–2002* [main title]: *A century of the St John Ambulance Brigade & Operations Branch of St John Ambulance Australia* [sub-title]. It was OK as a working title to get our members thinking about what their history was about but it was too

dreary and long for the published title. I've always thought it more appropriate for our members to suggest the title and was confident that if given the opportunity they'd suggest something worthwhile. Hence my national 'Select the Book Title' competition launched during last year's Priory conference in Adelaide.

The competition was widely publicised in each State/Territory, thanks to the co-operation of the CEO's and my project panel of State/Territory liaison officers. It got only a fair response — a total of 72 entries from 24 respondents in all States/Territories except Tasmania. Several of these, however, did come near my own preferred title. Most of the entries were fairly predictable and mundane, for instance *A Century of Service: St John Ambulance Operations Branch Helping Australians, 1902–2002*; the inevitable (and historically inaccurate) *Modern St John Crusaders*; and *In the Company of Saints 1902–2002: St John Ambulance Caring for the People of Australia across a Century* etc etc etc. (My own particular favourite is *Oops! Now it's Ops. Branch: From Brigade to Operations Branch*. I love it but I suspect the woman who contributed it was pulling my leg.)

If the samples I've just listed were unsuitable — too long, too wrong or too like a sacred song — what are the hallmarks of a good title for a Brigade/Ops. Branch history? From my perspective such a title should be:

- unique to the institution being commemorated.
- catchy and interest-rousing
- a bit quirky and off-beat, and
- a summary of the book's content and theme.

As one of the State/Territory project liaison officers, Betty Stirton, has said, a good title is 'one that says "Pick me up and read me!"'

9. An announcement — the competition winners

Something like my own preferred title was suggested by three contestants in the 'Select the Book Title' competition. I now wish to re-announce what Lynne Allen-Brown, our Chief Commissioner, has already announced at this week's Ops. Branch Standing Committee meeting. This is the good news that, with the help of Mark Christie (Divisional Officer, Universities Division, South Australia), Eddie Furnell (Superintendent, Central Coast Division, New South Wales) and John Ward (District Officer [Communications], New South Wales), the book will have the following main title and sub-title:

THE ZAMBUKS

*The uniformed first aid volunteers of
St John Ambulance Australia, 1901–2002*

Mark, Eddie and John are not here today, but give them a round of applause *in absentia* !

As well as a title, we also need a frontispiece verse to set the tone of the book. I have two that I intend to use. The first is the jingle by the present Chancellor and former Chief Commissioner, Villis Marshall, sung and danced to at the 'Growing St John' seminar at last year's Priory conference in Adelaide. For those who didn't sing or dance, it went like this:

We are St John

*We are St John, we are the force;
We are the carers, we are the source.*

The second was suggested to me by Lesley King, Ops. Branch Deputy Commissioner in the Northern Territory, who has found this beautiful verse by John Masefield, poet laureate in the UK 1930–67. Masefield wrote it in praise of nurses but, slightly adapted (by swapping ‘voluntarily’ for ‘nurse’ in the second line), it fits our Ops. Branch volunteers as well. It goes like this:

*All honour doctors.
Let us honour those who voluntarily tend the injured
where no doctor goes.
And what a joy, through them, to re-survey
That narrow, sweet, now half-forgotten way
Of selfless service as a way to live
Based not on what they gain, but what they give.*

Thank you, Lesley, for this contribution to the centenary history! Anyone who has ever been a St John volunteer will recognise within it something of what inspired them to soldier on in the St John cause.

10. In conclusion

And now, to conclude, let's reconsider the *Zambuks*. It was a name that Brigade members accepted with pride during the six or more decades in which it enjoyed popular currency. It was then a badge of honour not just an alphabetical entry in the dictionaries of Australian slang. It's a term that's hard to beat — whether as a nickname for our first aid volunteers, as a brand name for the organisation they represent or as a title for their centenary history. I hope you like it as much as I do!

AGM and annual seminar, 2002

The inaugural annual general meeting of the Society will take place at 8.45 a.m. on Thursday 20 June 2002 at the Marriott Hotel, Sydney, venue of the Priory Conference 2002. The AGM will be immediately followed by the Society's annual historical seminar. Five papers are on the seminar program, as follows

- (a) the Society Patron, Professor Willis Marshall, will present his reflections on his 42-year St John career
- (b) the Society President, Dr Brian Fotheringham, will present a paper on St John's Wort, the Order's floral emblem
- (c) Ms Patricia McQuillen, a Territory Officer of the Operations Branch in the Northern Territory, will deliver a paper on the history of St John in Alice Springs
- (d) Mr Raymond Schilling, a retired District Officer of the Brigade in South Australia and formerly the Country Superintendent of the South Australian St John Ambulance Service,

will present a paper on the 44-year St John involvement in the South Australian ambulance service

- (e) Dr Ian Howie-Willis, the Priory Historian, will deliver a paper on researching and writing the Brigade/Operations Branch centenary history, *The Zambuks*, which will be launched the evening before the seminar, on Wednesday 19 June 2002.
- (f) In addition, there will be a “pre-launch launching” of Dr Bill Wilson's commissioned history of St John in the Northern Territory, which will be formally launched in Darwin later.

Launch of *The Zambuks*

As noted above, this book, the official centenary history of the St John Ambulance Brigade and Operations Branch in Australia, will be launched on the evening of Wednesday 19 June 2002. The venue is the foyer of the Commonwealth Bank, Martin Place, Sydney, and the launch will occur during the Priory Conference reception.

Membership

As this edition of the *Proceedings* goes to press, membership of the Society stands at 120.

The membership year 2002–03 begins on 21 June 2002. A membership renewal form is enclosed. Please complete this and return it with the \$5 subscription to the membership secretary, whose address is given on the form.

The Society's management committee is interested in hearing the reactions of members to the aims and work of the Society.

In addition, we would like to know how our Society members respond to this the first edition of the *Proceedings*. If you have any helpful comments on how to make the Society function better for its members, and how to make the *Proceedings* a more attractive, useful journal, we would be pleased to hear from you.

The contact details of the Society's interim secretary and the editor of the *Proceedings* (who happen to be one and the same person) are set out at the head of page 1 above.



St John

**The St John Ambulance Australia
Historical Society**

