

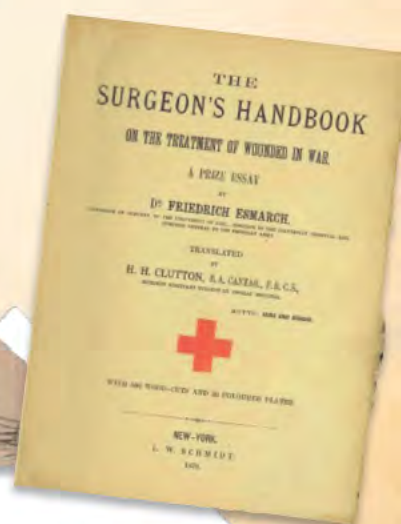


# St John History



THE JOURNAL OF THE ST JOHN AMBULANCE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

VOLUME 13, 2013





'Preserving and promoting  
the St John heritage'

*St John History* is the annual journal of the Historical Society, and is provided gratis to all financial members of the Society.

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# St John History

Proceedings of the St John Ambulance  
Historical Society of Australia  
Volume 13, 2013

Editor: Ian Howie-Willis (Historical Advisor), St John Ambulance Australia)

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## Introduction

### **St John History: about Volume 13, 2013**

*St John History* is the annual journal of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia. This edition, Volume 13, follows on from Volume 12, the special edition distributed in December 2012.

Whereas Volume 12, 2012 included the papers delivered at the Historical Society's International Symposium on 19 May 2012, this present volume, Volume 13, 2013, publishes the papers delivered at the domestic seminar the following day, 20 May 2012. It also contains the reports of the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society tabled at the Society's Annual General Meeting, which immediately followed the International Symposium on 19 May.

The domestic seminar on 20 May was the customary annual presentation of historical research papers by the Society's Australian members. It was the fourteenth consecutive seminar since the series began in Perth in 1999. The seminar was organised by the Historical Society's Secretary, Mr James Cheshire MStJ, with his usual flair and attention to detail. In planning and conducting the seminar, he was supported by the Society's President, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ, and Deputy Secretary, Dr Edith Khangure CStJ. Dr Mawdsley introduced and concluded the seminar, while Dr Khangure chaired both seminar sessions.

The seminar's keynote paper, delivered by Dr David Fahey, was the first of nine on the program, where he spoke of Friedrich von Eschmarch and his contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management. Fahey's paper was followed by Dr Franklin Bridgewater KStJ with his fascinating paper titled *'The Most Venerable Order' or 'The Most Vulnerable Order' of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem?*; Mr Gary Harris OStJ talked about member quotas in *Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective*; Professor John Pearn KStJ and Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ reflected on the influential *Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his 'Little Black Book'*; Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ reminded us about *James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia*; Mr Trevor Mayhew KStJ gave an interesting talk on the *Medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John: A short history*; Dr Brian Fotheringham KStJ introduced *Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'*; Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ, looked at the *Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance*; and finally Mr James Cheshire MStJ closed with *'To Arms!' The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia*.

As usual, State and Territory historical society reports were tabled on 19 May 2012, and they are reflected here.

I trust that readers of this edition of the journal will agree with me that, like all its preceding twelve companion volumes, Volume 13 presents a kaleidoscopic but comprehensive view of the many activities being undertaken in Australia to 'Preserve and Promote the St John Heritage', as the Historical Society's motto says. Such activities are many and varied and probably will occur wherever there are 'St Johnnies' who appreciate what a great historical force for good St John Ambulance has been in Australia since arriving here 130 years ago.

On behalf of the Executive and members of the Historical Society, I express our gratitude to the Chancellor of the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, Dr Neil Conn GCStJ, who gives the Society much encouragement. Dr Conn appreciates the imperative of the Society's motto, 'Preserving and Promoting the St John Heritage', and that in turn helps us ensure that we can achieve our objectives. In this connection I also thank Mr Peter LeCornu OStJ, the Priory Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of St John Ambulance Australia. Mr LeCornu's generous support of the Society, both moral and material, is a key factor in the Society's continuing success. More particularly, it makes possible the publication and distribution of this journal.



Ian Howie-Willis  
Editor, February 2013



## Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management.

### David Fahey OStJ

*Dr David Fahey is a specialist anaesthetist working at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney. He is also the State Medical Officer for St John in NSW. Dr Fahey joined St John in 1983 as a 13-year-old Cadet in Goulburn Division, and during his 28 years of membership he has held Divisional, Regional and State positions in both NSW and Queensland. After training as a nurse, he moved to Queensland in 1999 to study medicine, and then undertake postgraduate specialist training in anaesthesia. In 2009 he spent six months working with the CareFlight rescue helicopter in Brisbane, and acquired an additional qualification in aeromedical retrieval. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Dr Fahey's sixth consecutive presentation to an Historical Society seminar.*



This paper describes the life and work of Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), an innovative German military and academic surgeon. Esmarch was able to channel his intense dislike of war in a pragmatic way, towards improving the standard of medical care which was provided to injured soldiers. In its most basic form, Esmarch saw the need for on the spot help—not from doctors, but from the soldiers themselves. To this end, Esmarch devised the triangular bandage, issued it to all troops, and trained them to use it for haemorrhage control and basic splinting. This was the origin of recognisable ‘first aid’ in the sense of an organised series of drills. Esmarch’s teachings subsequently formed the basis of the first aid training which was extended to any member of the public, under the banner of the Order of St John in England.

### Life and civilian work

Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch was born on 9 January 1823 in Tönning, a small town in northern Germany. He was the son of a well-respected surgeon of the district, and even as a small boy, Esmarch accompanied his father on rounds. This early exposure to medical practise inspired Esmarch to follow in his father’s footsteps, and he gained entry to the medical school at the University of Kiel in 1843 (in spite of his less than exemplary performance at school).

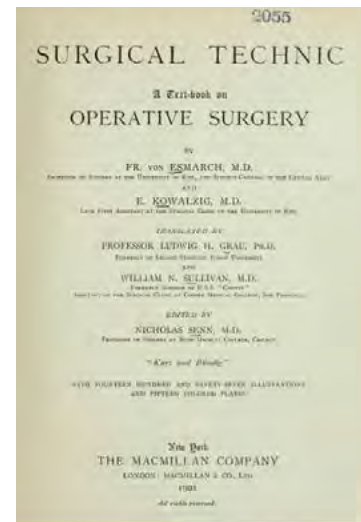
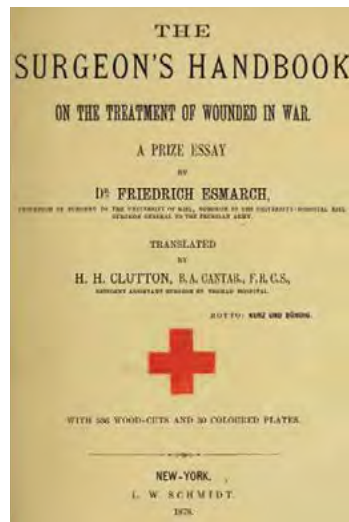
Following graduation in 1848, Esmarch’s career progressed rapidly. He began working as an assistant to Professor von Langenbeck, at the Kiel Hospital, and in 1867, Esmarch was elevated to the position of Professor and Chair of Surgery. Esmarch was committed to teaching—not only of medical students, but also of his peers in the form of postgraduate education. He insisted upon accurate documentation on patient charts, and used the data collected as the basis for scientific research.

Esmarch’s colleagues praised him as being a genius, with the ability to see underlying relationships in apparently simple processes, and to evaluate their importance. He wrote extensively on a range of novel topics, including the debridement of gunshot wounds (rather than amputation) (1851); cryotherapy to reduce inflammation (1862); and limb exsanguination



*The young Dr Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), a pioneering military and academic surgeon.*

to allow bloodless surgery (1877). His greatest works include *The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War* (1878), and *Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery* (1901). These substantial volumes are comprehensively illustrated, and provide sound anatomical explanations of the operations described. Many of Esmarch's works were translated into several languages (including English), and were utilised throughout Europe and the United States. During his many decades of practice, Esmarch performed over 20,000 major operations. He continued in active surgical practice until his retirement at the age of 76. Despite his technical and academic prowess, he was not arrogant. Esmarch was loved by his patients, and it is said that he had a gentle way with small children.



*The title pages of Esmarch's two great books: The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War and Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery.*

Esmarch was married in 1854, to the daughter of a senior colleague. The marriage was apparently happy, and produced a son, Edwin Esmarch, who later became a bacteriologist and Professor of Hygiene at the University of Gottingen. Tragically, Esmarch's first wife died on 30 May 1870 after a severe chronic illness. In 1872, he married his second wife, the Princess Caroline Christiane Auguste Emilie Henriette Elisabeth of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg (1833–1917), commonly known as the Princess Henriette, an aunt of the wife of the German Emperor Wilhelm II. The marriage was controversial within royal circles, but Princess Henriette was content to live in a modest home near the hospital, and she supported Esmarch in his endeavours.

Outside of medical work, Esmarch was apparently a capable sportsman, mountaineer and hunter. He enjoyed the company of small groups, and was an entertaining story teller.

Emperor Wilhelm II elevated Esmarch to the nobility in 1887. This permitted him to use the title 'Excellency', and use the prefix 'von' in front of his surname. Nine years later, His Excellency Professor von Esmarch died of pneumonia, on 23 February 1908.



*Esmarch and his second wife, the Princess Henriette, after his ennoblement in 1887.*

## Military surgeon

Esmarch lived at a time when Germany was repeatedly involved in military conflicts. Immediately after his medical graduation, war broke out between Denmark and Germany, and Esmarch began his career as a military surgeon. While tending to the wounded during the Battle of Bau, he was captured and taken prisoner, but was eventually released following an exchange with a Danish doctor.

During the wars of 1848 and 1850, Esmarch gained further experience in field hospitals, working alongside his mentors, Professors Langenbeck and Stromeyer. During this time, Esmarch pioneered a new approach to the treatment of gunshot wounds of the limbs. Rather than amputation of the entire limb, Esmarch favoured local debridement. Later, this conservative approach was used together with Lister's 'antiseptic' method of using a carbolic acid spray during surgery.

Esmarch recognised the importance of controlling haemorrhage, and he described numerous methods of applying pressure to the major arteries. He devised tourniquets with effective tightening screws that could be rapidly applied to a damaged limb. Esmarch's textbook *The Surgeon's Handbook of the Treatment of Wounded in War* describes in detail the method of exposing and ligating the arteries of the upper and lower limbs.

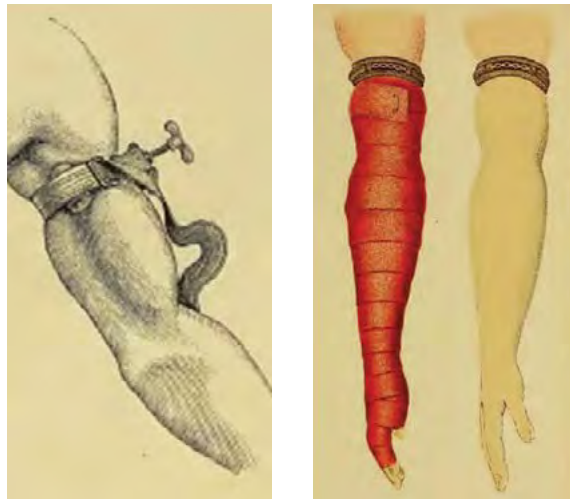
Perhaps Esmarch is best remembered for his technique of 'bloodless surgery', utilising a rubber bandage which is still used today, and still bears his name. This technique was developed during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, and was formally published in 1873. A 5-centimetre rubber bandage is tightly applied to the limb, starting at the fingers or toes. This squeezes capillary and venous blood out of the limb, prior to the application of an arterial tourniquet. In this way, the surgical field is rendered 'bloodless', and the volume of blood contained in the limb is not wasted.

Esmarch is known to have experimented with blood transfusion, and he invented a variety of transfusion equipment and techniques. Esmarch makes no mention of how frequently he performed transfusions or the outcome for the patients. His success must have been limited, given that the concept of blood groups was not known until 1901.

Esmarch displayed deep concern for wounded soldiers. At that time, conditions on the battlefield were appalling, and injured soldiers received inadequate treatment—a situation which had not changed for centuries. During the Franco-Prussian War, Esmarch served as a senior surgeon and public health officer, supervising the military hospitals near Berlin. In this position, he collaborated with the great pathologist Rudolph Virchow, to develop a hygienic pavilion-style hospital system for the battlefield, modelled on the system which had been used during the American Civil War. Further, he implemented ambulance wagons, mobile pharmacies, and soup kitchens, to provide wounded men with effective care. He made use of railways to transport both patients and supplies.

Esmarch's battlefield experience convinced him of the need for a system to enable the most effective use of scarce medical resources. The introduction of 'triage' was unprecedented at a time when treatment was provided based on military rank, rather than severity of injury.

In 1871, aged 48, Esmarch became Surgeon-General of the German army. In this position he was able to exert an even greater influence, to continue modernising and shaping military medical care.



Illustrations for the 'bloodless surgery' techniques from Esmarch's textbook on the treatment of the wounded in war, showing the tourniquet with tightening screw and the rubber bandage with tourniquet.



## First aid

Esmarch's sense of humanity, and his abhorrence of war, led him to develop a revolutionary, pragmatic approach to pre-hospital care on the battlefield. Rather than leaving an injured man to wait for hours for treatment to be provided by a doctor, Esmarch's idea was to train the soldiers to deliver basic initial care to each other. Here, Esmarch emphasised haemorrhage control; experience had taught him that many soldiers needlessly bled to death from badly shattered limbs. Of course, this idea was met with opposition from the medical establishment, which felt that it was inappropriate to teach medical skills to ordinary laymen. Esmarch refuted this brilliantly, as evidenced by the following quote from 'First Aid to the Injured' (1882):

Though I have invited you here to teach you how to render the first aid to the injured, I do not in the least aim at rendering a doctor's services unnecessary; on the contrary, I hope to convince you how important the immediate help of a doctor is in most cases. What I wish to do is enable you to give the right kind of aid before the doctor arrives—without which, irreparable injury might be done, and perhaps even a valuable life be lost.



*Esmarch as a German Army surgeon.*

Esmarch popularised the triangular bandage, as an ideal 'universal' bandage and dressing. He conceived no less than 32 methods of applying it to the body, and produced bandages with printed illustrations to show the soldiers how it could be used. The initial illustrations were criticised as being too morbid, because they depicted realistic battle scenes. Therefore, subsequent editions of the bandage were printed with less confronting images. These techniques were described by Esmarch in a pamphlet titled 'The First Dressing on the Battlefield' (1869). Today, we continue to use the triangular bandage in exactly the same ways that were described by Esmarch almost 150 years ago. Indeed, the triangular bandage is still frequently referred to as the 'Esmarch bandage'.

When appointed as Surgeon-General, Esmarch ordered that every German soldier would carry a first aid pack. This consisted of a triangular bandage, two antiseptic muslin compresses, and a gauze bandage. Today, soldiers continue to carry emergency dressings on their person.



*Two early versions of Esmarch's famous triangular bandage, each printed with illustrations for its application.*



It is not surprising that the influence of Esmarch's teachings extended beyond Germany. Colonel Francis Duncan was a career officer in the British army. Duncan was a devout Presbyterian, who strongly believed in a humanitarian approach to providing battlefield medical care. Duncan was appointed to Woolwich in 1875, where he met Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd. Shepherd was aware of Esmarch's teachings, and he saw the value of providing the same training to British soldiers. Duncan provided Shepherd with the backing he needed to develop a series of lectures on a range of first aid topics. Indeed, it was Shepherd who first used the term 'first aid to the injured'.

Both Duncan and Shepherd saw the value of teaching first aid to ordinary civilians, as well as soldiers. The need for first aid skills existed largely due to the serious injuries which were commonplace amidst the industrial revolution. At that time, the (revived) Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem existed as a potentially useful charitable organisation, but without specific purpose. Shepherd was able to influence the Order to adopt first aid as its major charitable focus. Under the banner of the Order of St John, Shepherd began running first aid classes in Woolwich in 1878, with practical assistance from Duncan. Many of Esmarch's techniques were taught in these classes, especially the uses of the triangular bandage. Tragically, Peter Shepherd was killed only one year later, but fortunately his first aid manual was revised and promulgated by Dr (later Sir) James Cantlie.

Esmarch heard about the good works being done by the Order of St John, and he visited London in 1881 to view the first aid training being conducted. On returning home, Esmarch gave some lectures to prominent laymen in Kiel, and was overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response. This prompted him to found the Samaritan Movement in Germany, so that first aid could be taught to civilians from all walks of life. To facilitate this training, Esmarch wrote a textbook *First Aid to the Injured: Six Ambulance Lectures* in 1882, along similar lines to the book already written by Shepherd.

Esmarch's interests extended into civilian disaster medicine, and he recognised that technological progress such as railways would result in serious accidents. He therefore proposed algorithms for the deployment of medical resources. He organised for medical equipment to be strategically placed at specific intersections or railway junctions, for rapid transport to disaster scenes.

## Airway management

The introduction of ether in 1846 and chloroform in 1847 ushered in a new era of surgery. However, these agents also brought with them a poorly understood danger—death from hypoxia due to upper airway obstruction.

Esmarch was probably the first to recognise that upper airway obstruction was caused by the tongue and epiglottis, and that this obstruction could be relieved by forward displacement of the mandible:

In [deep anaesthesia], the tongue may fall back against the posterior wall of the pharynx in consequence of the relaxation of all muscles connected with it, and the entry of air into the trachea prevented... Under these circumstances the respiration is snoring and difficult, the colour of the face blue, the blood very dark, and the pulse weak and irregular. As soon as an accident of this kind takes place the chloroform apparatus must be at once removed, and an attempt made to restore the halting respiration... In asphyxia the mouth should be at once opened, and the lower jaw raised with both hands, the index fingers of each being applied behind the ascending ramus, so that the lower range of teeth projects beyond the upper [subluxation]. By this manoeuvre, the hyoid bone, the root of the tongue, and the epiglottis are drawn forwards, and the entrance to the larynx rendered free.

*The Surgeon's Handbook on Treatment of Wounded in War* (1878).

This procedure is still used today as one of the most important methods of opening the airway, and is a basic skill that must be mastered by every anaesthetist. It is commonly known as jaw thrust, although it was historically known as 'Esmarch's manoeuvre'. Unfortunately, St John Ambulance has consistently omitted jaw thrust from its first aid curriculum, with one exception—the manual published in 1980.

'Pushing forward the lower jaw for threatening asphyxia in chloroform narcosis.' An illustration of Esmarch's manoeuvre from his first aid manual, the instructions reading:

14. In asphyxia the mouth should be opened, and the lower jaw raised with both hands, the index fingers of each being applied behind the ascending ramus, so that the lower range of teeth projects beyond the upper (partial dislocation) (fig. 242)



Esmarch also advocated the use of tongue holding forceps to grasp the tongue and pull it forward if jaw thrust was felt to be inadequate. One can only grimace at the thought of the injuries to tongues caused by these forceps! For some strange reason, the idea of pulling the tongue out of the mouth became part of our early first aid doctrine (not with the aid of forceps, but using a handkerchief held in the fingers), while Esmarch's manoeuvre was never mentioned. It is such a shame that jaw thrust was not adopted by St John, right from the start in 1878.

In a lecture given by Esmarch in 1899, he left the following testimony of his humanistic attitude and goals:

... perhaps later generations will assess these efforts made in an attempt to change the miserable conditions on the battlefield as one of the most commendable acts of the outgoing 19th century.

Esmarch's self-assessment is accurate, but completely inadequate. His legacy continues throughout the world in the form of first aid—essential life-saving skills which have been learned by millions.

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# ‘The Most Venerable Order’ or ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem?

## Franklin Bridgewater KStJ

*Dr Franklin Bridgewater is a retired surgeon who lives in Adelaide. In retirement he has undertaken several overseas tours of duty as an officer in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps. He is a St John veteran, with many years of experience in senior management and leadership positions at the State and national level. A former Chief Medical Officer on the National Headquarters Staff of the St John First Aid Services Branch, he is also a former St John Ambulance Commissioner for South Australia. He is the current Director of Ceremonies for the Priory in Australia. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Dr Bridgewater’s first presentation to an Historical Society seminar.*



What’s in a name? That which we call a rose  
by any other name would smell as sweet.

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 1–2.

A confusingly large number of organisations include the phrase ‘Order of St John’, with or without ‘of Jerusalem’, in their titles.<sup>1</sup> Many make unjustified claims to an historical connection to the movement known as the Crusades, from its birth in the 11th century to its decline in the 14th century.<sup>2</sup>

## Early history of the ‘Order of St John’<sup>3</sup>

The Blessed Gerard, probably a Catholic oblate (committed but not under vows), founded a religious community in the 11th century to provide hospice and hospital care for pilgrims and crusaders in and en route to the Holy Land. In 1113, Pope Paschal II approved the establishment of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem with Gerard as its first provost.<sup>2</sup> Within a couple of decades, the members of the Order were also known as ‘Knights Hospitaller’ as they took on a military as well as charitable function. With time, the Order became a rich, powerful military force. The Saracens forced the Order out of the Holy Land in 1291, and it then established its headquarters successively in Cyprus, Rhodes and Malta. The English *Langue* or branch of the Order continued to function until the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII in 1540. Finally, the Order lost its standing as a military power when it capitulated to Napoleon in 1798. He expelled it from Malta.<sup>3</sup> After the expulsion it continued as a sovereign, albeit domain-less, charitable institution.

## Present day ‘Orders of St John’

The present day Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta is the direct descendant of the founding Order. It remains a lay religious Order of Roman Catholic ethos and Rome, Italy, is now its base. It re-established its English Priory in 1993. It has recognised international status as a sovereign body, with diplomatic representatives in many countries and delegates to major intergovernmental organisations.<sup>4</sup>



*Arms of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, the Catholic order whose title is often abbreviated to ‘Sovereign Military Order of Malta’.*

## The concordant Orders of St John<sup>5</sup>

There are only five 'Orders of St John' which are directly descended from the original 11th century Order, and/or are established under Royal Charter, or similarly recognised by an appropriate authority. They are:

1. The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (short title: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta; SMOM), and the four members of The Alliance of Orders of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem<sup>6,7</sup> viz.
2. The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem (short title: The Order of St John; OStJ)
3. Die Balley Brandenburg des ritterlichen Ordens St Johannis vom Spital zu Jerusalem (short title: The Johanniterorden)
4. Johanniterorden i Sverige (a Swedish Royal Order)
5. Johanniter Orde in Nederland (a Dutch Royal Order).

In 1963, a concordat was signed by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and The Order of St John.<sup>6</sup> In 1987, these five orders published a joint declaration.<sup>8</sup> These agreements provide the basis for mutual recognition and acceptance of each Order's historical basis, humanitarian aims and founding authority. The declaration states, 'They are the only Orders of St John which may legitimately use that name'.

## The non-concordant 'Orders of St John'<sup>9,10</sup>

Many of the orders not recognised by the five signatories of the joint statement have their roots in an American organisation called the 'The Knights Hospitallers of the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem' (established/revived late 1800s or early 1900s). This Order has been variously called 'the American Order', 'The Ecumenical Order' and 'the Shickshinny Order'.<sup>1</sup> It had its headquarters in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, in the 1930s and 1940s. Its offshoots are 'Shickshinny Orders'. Several have enrolled members of the European nobility. For example, ex-King Peter of Yugoslavia was closely associated with the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller. Some have engaged to a limited extent in charitable work, though in the main their activities have been only ceremonial and fraternal.



*Emblem of a non-concordant or self-styled 'Order of St John', the 'Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller of Florida'. This is one of various similar 'orders' claiming links with the late ex-King Peter II of Yugoslavia. An off-shoot of this group of 'Orders' is active in Australia, where it has influence among some politicians. Its functions are mainly ceremonial and fraternal rather than charitable.*

## The legitimacy of 'Orders of St John'<sup>1</sup>

In 2006 Hoegen Dijkhof submitted a doctoral thesis through the Faculty of Theology to Leiden University in The Netherlands on 'The legitimacy of Orders of St John'. While not all-encompassing, this is a scholarly, detailed, critical and iconoclastic dissertation on the significant Orders.

## The 'Most Venerable Order' correctly known as 'The Order of St John'

### Historical origin, development and present function

In the 1820s and 1830s interested parties made serious attempts to revive the long defunct English Grand Priory of The Sovereign Military Order of Malta. The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Order refused to provide it with legitimacy. In response to this repudiation, the British body made a unilateral declaration that it was to be the sovereign Order of St John in the United Kingdom, under the title 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of St John of Jerusalem: Anglia'.<sup>3</sup>

Between the 1840s and 1880s the organisation grew and attracted royal favour and support. For a period it adopted the name 'Order of Saint John of Jerusalem in England'. The group's leaders recognised the need for a potent and attractive *raison d'être*. It decided on prehospital emergency care and transport. It acquired ambulances and set up an Ambulance Department in 1875 and two years later the St John Ambulance Association, a first aid teaching branch. By 1882 there were 130 centres throughout Britain teaching railwaymen and colliers the basics of first aid. It founded a hospice and ophthalmic dispensary in Jerusalem, near the Jaffa Gate. (Mt Scopus, northeast of the Old City, is the present site for The St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital.) It created the St John Ambulance Brigade in 1887 to provide a volunteer, uniformed corps, trained in first aid delivery.<sup>3</sup>

With a proven capacity in both delivery of and training in first aid, and effective service to the community, Queen Victoria granted it her Royal Charter, which established it as 'The Grand Priory of the Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem in England' on 14 May 1888. It was now a legitimate royal order of chivalry with a royal charter in its own right, but of Anglican persuasion.<sup>3</sup> There were further name changes:

- in 1926, with a new Royal Charter from King George V—'the Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'
- in 1955, with a new Royal Charter from Queen Elisabeth II—'the Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'. 'The Order of St John' was established as the abbreviated name
- in 1974, with a Supplemental Royal Charter from Queen Elisabeth II—'The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem'. The previously shortened form remained unaltered and has gained popular currency.<sup>11</sup>

Presently The Order of St John is a royal order of chivalry of ecumenical Christian ethos, governed by a Grand Council, functioning as a major international charity and carrying on a wide range of caring activities. It continues to deliver its services through The St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital and The St John Ambulance Foundation. The latter foundation exists to provide aid worldwide. The Foundation's activities include: first aid delivery and training; ambulance services; sea, cliff and mountain rescue services; training and development of young people and home-based care and care homes for the elderly.

Specialised care activities have also been developed. These include HIV/AIDS services, a kidney dialysis service and a specialised dental service for children with disabilities. There are some 250,000 St John Ambulance volunteers.<sup>12</sup>

As a Non-Government Organisation (NGO), it has had Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 1999.<sup>12</sup>

### **Activity in United States of America (USA)<sup>13</sup>**

In the 1950s a group of Americans, aware of the work of The (Most Venerable) Order of St John around the world, sought to establish a functional relationship with that body. This resulted in the formation in 1957 of The American Society of The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem. Active regional groups developed around the country. Nearly 40 years later, on 11 May 1996, His Royal Highness (HRH) Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, the Grand Prior of The Order of St John, officiated at the establishment of The Priory in the United States of America of The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem. It then became one of the eight international Priories of The Order.<sup>13</sup>

From its inception, the major work of The Priory in the USA has been to raise financial support for the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital<sup>14</sup> and its outreach programs in the Holy Land. It has provided support to the areas affected by the tsunami in Asia in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and more recently the cholera epidemic in Zimbabwe in 2008 and 2009.<sup>14</sup>



## ‘The most vulnerable Order’

### Historical usage of phrase

As it was the Royal Charter of Queen Elisabeth II in 1955<sup>11</sup> that introduced the phrase ‘The Most Venerable Order’, it is only after this date, therefore, that the use of the phrase ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ may be validly considered.

### 1984

*Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*<sup>15</sup> was a Canadian parody on publications such as *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage* produced by one ‘Charlie Farquharson’, also known as Don Harron.<sup>16</sup> This may have been the first occasion on which ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ appeared in this context. *Debunk's Illustrated Guide* refers to The Order of St John as ‘the Most Vulnerable Order of St John's Ambivalence’. It not only parodied ‘The Venerable Order’ but also the prestigious Canadian ‘Order of Military Merit’<sup>17</sup> being deliberately renamed the ‘Order of Millinery Merit’. In addition it linked ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ to ‘St John's Ambivalence’.

### 1994

In 1994, Dr Donald Trunkey published an article in the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons* focusing on the wounds sustained by Admiral Nelson of the Royal Navy.<sup>18</sup> In considering the naval battle at Aboukir Bay, 1–3 August 1798, he stated that one of the French vessels sunk by Nelson carried ‘ingots of gold and treasures of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem [sic]—the second instance of ‘Vulnerable’ replacing ‘Venerable’ in the Order's title, not only confused the Most Venerable Order with the earlier Knights of Malta but getting ‘venerable’ wrong. By now the Order was becoming vulnerable to such ‘mondegreens’.



First use of the term ‘Most Vulnerable Order’ from *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, a spoof on *Debrett's Peerage*, the ‘Who's Who’ of the British aristocracy.

### 2006

The phrase was next used by Dr LN Sisulu, Minister of Housing, Cabinet of South Africa, in a speech at the launch of the N2 Gateway, Cape Town, South Africa, in 2006.<sup>19</sup> On that occasion, she stated that:

It is also with a great deal of gratitude that we accept our new partner, the Priory for South Africa of the Order of St John, under the leadership of the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Bishop Mvume Dandala. The Most Vulnerable Order is bringing in health facilities and services to the partnership. [sic]

Without doubt, this refers to The Most Venerable Order of St John.

In the same year, and also on the African continent Uganda,<sup>20</sup> was the occasion of the admission of a Kampala businessman as an Honorary Officer within The Most Venerable Order of St John. This was in the presence of Rear-Admiral Andrew Gough, the Secretary-General for The Order of St John. The news reporter stated: ‘Queen Elisabeth II founded St John Ambulance in 1930. The Queen is also the sovereign head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem’. [sic]

What Andrew Gough made of all this is unknown, but we can imagine that he would have been surprised to learn that the Queen had established St John Ambulance in 1930, when she was only four years old!

## 2007

The feast day for St John the Baptist is 24 June. It is a focal point in the calendar for The Order of St John. A news report of a celebratory church service in Suva, Fiji, detailed a comment by the visiting Deputy Lord Prior of The Order, Sir John Strachan, 'St John, which is the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, had a unique combination of features[sic]'.<sup>21</sup>

## 2009

The Order of St John achieves its aims through a number of functioning arms. Members of those arms come from all socio-economic groups and a range of professions. Exceptional commitment and achievement can result in admission to membership of The Order itself. In 2009 The Order of St John honored a radiographer in the Royal Navy in this way. The Society of Radiographers reported his admission:

as a Serving Brother to the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (more commonly known as the Order of St John).[sic]<sup>22</sup>

I would presume that reports originating from sources closely related to St John would not use this erroneous term. This is demonstrably not so. In the same year, on 15 September, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, the Grand Prior of The Order of St John, joined supporters and members of St John Ambulance at the opening of a memorial garden to commemorate all those who had faithfully served the organisation over its long history.<sup>23</sup>

This evoked the following response on a site associated with former and current members of St John Ambulance in Staffordshire, UK: '... all proud to serve the most vulnerable order of st john ambulance[sic]'.<sup>24</sup>

Did the Grand Prior ever read this? If so, we must hope that he or one of his underlings gave the St John organisation in Staffordshire a pep talk on the correct name of the Order they represent!



*The memorial garden in Staffordshire, England, commemorating St John Ambulance members' service to the community. To their shame, their website proclaimed that they were proud to represent the 'Most Vulnerable Order'.*

## 2010

Likewise, a long and creditable association does not prevent its use. After an association of 35 years, a Serving Brother within the Order in Kenya states in his curriculum vitae:

... during the investiture held for the admission and promotion of members into the most vulnerable order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem ... at State House, Nairobi. [sic]<sup>25</sup>

Late in 2010, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, presented the insignia of a Member of The Order of St John to a Divisional Superintendent of St John Ambulance from south England. In reporting the upcoming event, the local newspaper stated, 'The Queen, Sovereign Head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, has sanctioned the admittance of...[sic]'.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, a number of ambulance services back in Oklahoma, USA, have taken up the report, including the erroneous title.<sup>27,28</sup>

'The Most Vulnerable Order' is an example of a 'mondegreen' which is the mishearing or misinterpretation of a phrase due to near homophony in a way that gives it a new meaning (e.g. typically a standardised phrase such as a line in a poem or a lyric in a song).<sup>29</sup> For example, Pink Floyd's 'no dark sarcasm in the classroom' becomes 'no ducks or hazards in the classroom'. The term 'mondegreen' itself comes from a mishearing of a line in a Scottish ballad, 'The Bonny Earl o' Murray'. The original line was '... they hae slain the Earl o' Murray, and laid him on the green'—this was interpreted as: '... Earl o' Murray and Lady Mondegreen'.

*The Arms of the University of Nairobi, Kenya, where one of the professors of medicine stated in his CV in 2010 that he was a member of the Most 'Vulnerable' Order of St John—a 35-year St John Ambulance veteran, he should have known better. His one excuse for such an error would have been that, speaking English as a second or even third language, he had been confused by two similar-sounding multisyllabic words.*



### **Deliberate construction**

It is only the usage of the term by Harron, in *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, which I consider deliberate. He clearly recognised the nature of the title and chose to substitute words of similar sounding but different meaning for the purpose of parody. He created a mondegreen.

### **Inadvertent corruption**

All other occasions are the result of inadvertent corruption by the user. The corruption from 'venerable' to 'vulnerable' seems more than a typing error. It probably reflects both factors of mishearing and imputation. The pronunciation of 'venerable' (ve-nĕrăb'l) with an unaccustomed accent, and being a word which is itself uncommon, could reasonably be heard as 'vulnerable' (vu-lnĕrăb'l).<sup>30</sup> Allied to this is a general recognition that the role of this Order of St John is fundamentally philanthropic with delivery of a range of services to a group of people, which is indeed 'vulnerable'.

Trunkey<sup>18</sup> in using the title 'the Most Vulnerable Order' imputed its existence more than 150 years before its reality as 'The Most Venerable Order' in 1955. On 16 June 1798, Napoleon's fleet had departed Malta's Valetta Harbor with the treasure of The Holy Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem and of the Sepulchre of Christ [pers. comm. Howie-Willis, 23 Nov. 2009]. This was the treasure lost in Aboukir Bay. With the passage of time, that Order has become the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.<sup>4</sup> The source of Trunkey's information is now speculative [pers. comm. Trunkey, 9 Sept. 2010]. There is nevertheless an element of truth in describing that order as 'vulnerable'. Napoleon had demonstrated it to be such.

Of the remaining seven occasions, four involve media coverage by personnel for whom English may have been a second language. In this setting, mispronunciation, mishearing and misunderstanding may all have played a role. Failure to pronounce the first vowels of 'venerable' produces the word 'vunnrable' and a slight further corruption leads to 'vulnerable'. The use of the phrase in these settings is probably neither intentional nor malicious but rather would seem to have arisen from the confusion by a non-native English speaker between two uncommon, multisyllabic, homophonic words. In the Fijian setting, it is unlikely that the Deputy Lord Prior of The Order would have personally used the reported phrase.

The remaining three reports originate from areas where English is the native tongue. It is true that in areas there are strong local accents. These, on occasion, make dialectal speech almost unintelligible even to a fluent English speaker. The Midlands of England, including Staffordshire, is one such area. Ignorance of the existence of 'venerable' combined with a knowledge of The Order of St John's work to the disadvantaged would then lead to the use of 'vulnerable'.

To end this discussion on a cautionary note, we can reflect that even computer software utilities capable of checking spelling are unable to detect a mondegreen by virtue of its nature.



The Most Venerable Order of The Hospital of St John of Jerusalem can trace its origin to early in the 19th century. Queen Victoria of Great Britain established it as a royal order of chivalry later that century, in 1888. The Order acquired its present title in 1974 under a Supplemental Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth II.

A mondegreen, 'The Most Vulnerable Order of St John's Ambivalence', appeared ten years later on the North American continent. Elements of the mondegreen have subsequently been used in the USA, on the African continent, in Fiji, in Great Britain (the home of The Order) and, most recently, once again in the USA.

The Order of St John created its eighth and most recent priory, The Priory in the USA, in 1996. This priory has primarily focused its support on the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem. The Priory in the USA, although the youngest of the Priories within The Order of St John, has played a critical role in allowing the St John Eye Hospital to continue its unique and vital ophthalmological services.

In conclusion, it is intriguing that a Royal Order of Chivalry of the United Kingdom, a relic from the Victorian era and reflecting an ethos of the era of the Crusades, remains relevant even today to the USA and other areas in the world.

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# Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective

## Gary Harris OStJ

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When Pope Paschall II issued the Papal Bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis* approving the foundation of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in February 1113, he was formalising the work of a monastic community that had Amalfi's sponsorship, which had cared for the sick and injured pilgrims to Jerusalem about 1023.

As with any organisation, the Order needed a structure. The membership gradings were simple. Knights were of noble birth and could prove their noble bearing for at least the previous 100 years. Chaplains tended the religious needs of the Order's members. And Serving Brothers were the monks who attended to the physical needs of the Knights and Chaplains.

Like all organisations, the Order grew and evolved. And evolve it did. After some four centuries headquartered in the Holy Land, then on Cyprus and later Rhodes, the Order moved to Malta in 1530. There it became the Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Malta and was widely known by that name for the next 268 years (and beyond), until Napoleon Bonaparte expelled the Order from Malta in 1798. Meanwhile, the Order in England had continued until 1540, when it was dissolved by an Act of Parliament under King Henry VIII, restored in 1557 by Queen Mary I, then finally dissolved for the last time in 1559 by Queen Elisabeth I.

## Ranks and grades of knighthoods

Knights of Justice, or 'professed' knights, were persons who were entitled to be Knights because of their noble birth. They took religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and formed what amounted to a separate caste within the wider Order. Knights of Obedience made a promise, rather than a vow, of obedience, again having noble bearing of 100 years. Knights of Honour and Devotion and Knights of Grace and Devotion required less noble lineage than the higher grades of knights. Knights of Magistral Grace were appointed by the Grand Master in recognition of their contribution to the Order and were not required to prove noble descent. In the modern era, the strict rules relating to proof of noble lineage were dropped during the 1990s, mainly because of the rarity of noble persons willing to take holy orders as professed knights.

Within each class of knights there were ranks or grades of knighthoods ranging from Bailiff Grand Cross, through Knight Grand Cross, Knight Commander, Knight Officer and down to plain Knight. And so there were 20 to 25 gradations of knights.

As well as the knights there was a separate group of 'donats', who had been awarded membership in the Order because of significant acts of generosity to it. The Donats or donors were considered to be in the 'of Justice' class but were not Knights.



*A Chaplain (left), Knight (centre) and Serving Brother (right) of the ancient Order of St John.*

## Sovereignty

The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John called 'of Jerusalem', called 'of Rhodes' and called 'of Malta' is currently the official name of the continuing Order, but in all there has been a total of 16 variations of the name, much as our Most Venerable Order has several names in popular if informal use. The most commonly used is probably 'the Sovereign Military Order of Malta', often abbreviated to the simple acronym 'SMOM'.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta is technically a sovereign state under today's international law, by virtue of having ruled Malta for 268 years from 1530 to 1798, when the Order surrendered the islands to Napoleon. During those 268 years the Order was indeed sovereign in that it independently ruled its own territories according to its own law. It continues as a 'sovereign' order in that it has never surrendered its right to independent statehood. It emphasises its sovereign credentials by retaining the words 'Sovereign' and 'Malta' in its name.

Although SMOM has been permanently headquartered in Rome since 1834, nowadays in two embassies, by agreement with the government of Malta the Order has a 99-year holding over the Fort St Angelo in Valetta. The obstacle to its universal recognition as a sovereign state is that, apart from its embassies in Rome and abroad, it has no territory.

As an 'entity', however, like the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Olympic Committee and others, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta enjoys permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly and on various UN committees.

## The revived *langue* of England

After the Napoleonic Wars, a Capitular Commission of the Order, made up of the *langues* (tongues) of France, Auvergne and Provence had as one of its main aims the securing of an island so that the Order could resume its effective sovereignty over land and people, as it had done in Rhodes and Malta. In furthering this cause, the Commission deemed it important to enlist the aid of England and so attempted to restore the English *langue*, which had effectively disappeared some 260 years earlier during the reign of Elizabeth I. A Prior was appointed temporarily, the general aim being to raise funds in Britain, use unemployed British soldiers and cheap war surpluses to lay claim to an island territory. When this did not come to pass, the revived *langue* in England simmered along, recruiting nobility and others over the next 50 or so years. It was envisaged that the *langue* would eventually be re-admitted into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.



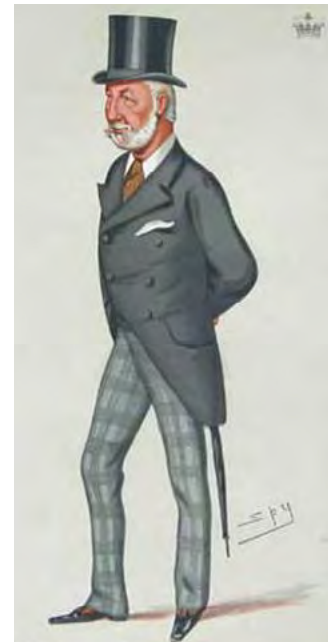
The revival of the English *langue* was intended to be a British Roman Catholic order with provision for Protestant members. When inclusion into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta was requested, the Church in Rome had reasserted its authority over the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and, being Catholic, could not countenance the admission of what would be, effectively, a Protestant branch into what remained of a Catholic religious order.

A second attempt by the revived *langue* in 1858 for inclusion in the Sovereign Military Order again ran up against this stumbling block. The religious argument prevailed and Rome declined to recognise that the English *langue* had been legitimately revived at all. With this rebuff the English *langue* renamed itself 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Anglia' and proceeded to seek its own destinies as a separate order independent of both SMOM and the Catholic Church. Over the next three decades, the revived *langue* evolved fairly rapidly, soon becoming a British Royal Order of Chivalry by virtue of a Royal Charter granted by Queen Victoria in 1888. Whatever it might have been previously, in 1888 it assumed the status and prestige of being an official Order of St John in its own right.



*The arms of the Reverend Sir Robert Peat, Grand Prior 1831–1837 of the 'revived' Langue of England of the Order of St John.*

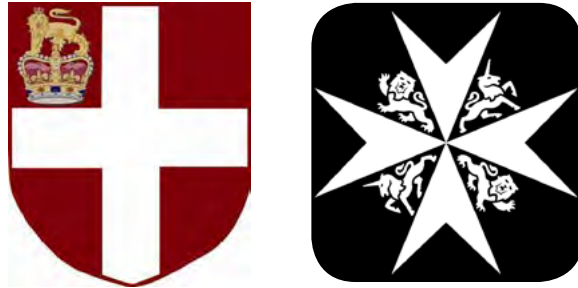
*A cartoon by Sir Leslie Ward, depicting William Drogo Montague (1823–1890), the 7th Duke of Manchester, published in Vanity Fair in December 1878. The duke was Grand Prior from 1863 until 1888, when Queen Victoria granted it her Royal Charter.*



When the Order was re-established in England, the Maltese Cross was embellished with a unicorn passant and a lion passant guardant (which the French call a leopard in this configuration) in the alternate angles of the Cross. This was apparently in imitation of the Italian tongue's cross which had fleur de lys in the angles. The beasts were discontinued in 1871 but were restored by the Royal Charter of 1888.

Since then the Order has used the two emblems of the ancient Order: the white 'Latin' cross ('square' cross or 'crux immissa') on a scarlet field of the patron saint, John the Baptist, and the eight-pointed 'Maltese', 'Amalfitan' or 'St John' cross: with and without the 'Queen's beasts', the royal lion and unicorn. Interestingly, the beasts at times have been both included with, and omitted, from the angles of both crosses in several permutations of the Coat of Arms.

In 1871, well before the Royal Charter, 'Ladies of Justice/Grace' were included in the grades of membership of the revived English Order. The title was later changed to 'Dames of Justice/Grace'. Donats were not admitted to the revived Order, but wore a demicross, having donated one pound or more to the Order.



*The present two emblems of the Order—the Arms (left) and the Badge (right). Displayed on the Arms are a white Crux Immissa on a red field with the Royal lion surmounting a crown in the top left quarter. The Badge displays a white Maltese cross with the Royal Beasts alternating at the cross's four main angles.*



*The Order's emblems have varied over time. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Royal Beasts were displayed at the angles of the Crux Immissa, as here. Later they were displayed only on Badge of the Order within the four central angles of the Maltese cross.*

## St John Ambulance

In 1877 the Order's 'Ambulance Department' established the St John Ambulance Association, the proliferating regional 'Centres' of which provided for the teaching of first aid initially to miners and railwaymen but soon to members of the general public in sex-segregated classes. In 1882 a hospice and ophthalmic dispensary was established in Jerusalem. In 1887 the St John Ambulance Brigade followed, forming a disciplined, uniformed first aid field force for duty at public events. The good works of these practically-oriented branches of the Order persuaded Queen Victoria to grant it the Royal Charter already noted.

## Some renaming

Under the Charter, the Order was renamed the Grand Priory of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England. At this time 'Commanders' of the Order were the heads of 'Commanderies' or regional branches of the Order. The Commanders relinquished their titles after serving their five-year term of office. They were selected from the ranks of 'Chevaliers' (Knights) of Justice or Grace, Chaplains or Esquires.

The Order also embraced 'Honorary Associates', who, being of Christian faith, devoted their energies to the objects of the Order or were distinguished in philanthropy but were not members of the Order. The grade of Honorary Associate was created on St John Day, 1869. The Associates, not being members, were persons who took an active part in the establishment and development of the modern Hospitaller work.

From 1906 to 1955 each Bailiff Grand Cross and Knight of Justice could appoint a 'personal esquire', who was admitted to the Order as an Officer Brother.

The year 1926 saw the simplification of the gradings. 'Ladies' were now called 'Dames'. The renaming continued with 'Order' becoming 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'.

Bailiff and Dame Grand Cross and Knight and Dame of Justice and Grace became equivalent to the Ancient Knight.

Dame Grand Cross was created allowing women to be elevated to the highest grade.

The grades of Commander, Officer and Serving Brother/Sister became equivalent to what the 'Serving Brothers' of the ancient Order had been; that is not Knights, but nevertheless members of the Order. Honorary Associates were offered the grade of Officer, or if they preferred, Serving Brother/Sister (presumably dependent on their desire to pay the oblations if they took up the Officer grading). The grade of 'Associate' of 1888 was discontinued; however, the use of the term has continued, the grouping as we understand it today being for non-Christian citizens of Commonwealth countries.

In 1936 the 'Justice' and 'Grace' gradings were amalgamated, the intention being to bring these gradings into line with other British royal orders of chivalry; however, the listings and insignia for each group remained separate and distinct until very recently. The gradings of 1936 continued till 1970, when 'Esquires' were added as the lowest of six grades of the Order.



*'Of Justice' or 'Of Grace'? Among other distinctions, Knights and Dames of Justice wear mantles bearing the Badge of the Order with gold Royal Beasts; Knights and Dames of Grace wear a Badge with white Royal Beasts.*

In the revised Charter issued by Queen Elizabeth II in 1955 the term 'Most' was included in the Order's title, which accordingly became 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem'. In the Supplemental Royal Charter of 1974 the name was amended to what it is today, The Grand Priory of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem. The reforms and restructuring of the Order during the late 1990s instituted the formation of an international Grand Council of the Order in place of the previous Chapter General.

The year 2008 saw the renaming of the fifth grade of membership of the Order. Grade 5 members, the Serving Brothers and Sisters, were redesignated as 'Members'; and the gender-specific names of Grade 3 and Grade 4 members—'Commander Brothers/Sisters' and 'Officer Brothers/Sisters'—became simply generic 'Commanders' and 'Officers', again in line with the other British orders of chivalry.

## Some membership statistics

I will conclude this brief survey of changes in the membership structures and nomenclature of the Most Venerable Order of St John by making the point that admissions into and promotions within the Order are conferred for sustained outstanding service to the Order and its Branches. They are not granted for mere longevity of service; nor can they be purchased or gained through paying the high entry fees required elsewhere in other orders.

If admissions and promotions must be earned through conspicuous service, how many people benefit? I will cite some statistics to show that membership of the Order remains a comparatively rare honour. I will use the example of my home State, Victoria, to illustrate this fact.

Since 1896, the Order of St John in Victoria has had only 1067 admissions to its ranks, an average of approximately nine annually out of the many thousands who have worked for the St John Ambulance branches. About 600 of those admitted subsequently received no promotion within the Order. The rest, some 360 or about a third of those admitted, received promotions within the Order. These promotees

shared a total of 535 promotions, that is, an average of fewer than five promotions annually; and of course many promotees were promoted more than once. Typically, someone admitted as a Member (Grade 5) and subsequently promoted to Knight/Dame (Grade 2) will have been promoted three times: to Officer (Grade 4) then to Commander (Grade 3) and finally to Knight/Dame. The following table summarises the situation.

**Promotions within the Order of St John in Victoria, 1896–2012**

Promotions	Number	Total years' service	Average years' service
Esquire to Member	1	6	6.0
Member to Officer	315	2779	8.8
Officer to Commander	146	1195	8.2
Commander to Knight/Dame	71	575	8.1
Knight/Dame to Bailiff/Dame Grand Cross	2	36	18.0
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>4591</b>	<b>8.6</b>

These figures are of 'mainstream' promotions only, not taking into account the extreme instances of the promotion from Esquire to Member, and Knight to Bailiff Grand Cross and those that have skipped grades. Surprisingly, the average time in years between promotions from Member to Officer, Officer to Commander and Commander to Dame or Knight, are within a narrow range of years, being 8.8, 8.2 and 8.1 years respectively. This is significant because these averages do not take into account the individual circumstances of each Member. The spread of these averages could be a variation on the 'wisdom of the crowd'. (I shall let my readers research that phenomenon for themselves.)

Putting these instructive averages together, and assuming 15 years' service before admission to the Order, we can conclude that a newly admitted member Grade 5 Member of the Order who aspires to Grade 2 membership could expect on average, promotion to Officer in about nine years, to Commander in a further eight years and to Knight/Dame another eight years after that. In other words, he/she might anticipate a total of about 40 years' continual service between affiliating with a St John branch and promotion to Grade 2 membership. If joining as a young adult, promotion to Knight or Dame at the age of about 60 years would therefore be the most likely reality. A target worth aspiring to, perhaps?



# Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his ‘Little Black Book’

## John Pearn KStJ and Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

**John Pearn** is a Professor Emeritus of Paediatrics at the Royal Children’s Hospital campus of the University of Queensland. A retired major-general, he is also a former Surgeon General to the Australian Defence Force. Professor Pearn is a former Director of Training for St John Ambulance Australia and the co-author of the centenary history of St John in Queensland, *First in First Aid: A history of St John Ambulance in Queensland*. He is the current Priory Librarian of St John Ambulance Australia. An eminent medical scientist and professionally qualified historian, he is greatly in demand as a lecturer at national and overseas medical symposia.



**Ian Howie-Willis** is a professional historian. He joined St John 33 years ago, recruited to produce the centenary history, *A Century for Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia 1883–1983*. Since then he has produced six other St John histories either alone or with co-authors. He was Priory Librarian 2003–2012 and was the foundation Secretary of the Historical Society. He is currently the Society’s Editor and also the historical adviser to the Office of the Priory of St John Ambulance Australia. Professor Pearn and Dr Howie-Willis are frequent contributors of articles to this journal.



Until 1878, the teaching of resuscitation and first aid skills to members of the civilian lay public was a novel concept. What today is taken for granted—the teaching of the drills and skills of best-practice emergency response to injury and acute illness—resulted from the vision of several military surgeons. They invented the profession of prehospital care as this discipline exists today.

The pivot among these doctors was Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), a Scot serving in the Army Medical Department at the Woolwich Garrison in London. In 1878, Peter Shepherd compiled a handwritten manuscript which he called *Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. This book evolved as a manuscript, written over several months, as the public first aid classes which he taught in Woolwich progressed. In the following year (1879) Shepherd was killed in the massacre of the British Military Force at the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879. Prior to his death, his ‘Aids’ were published in London, in absentia, as his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. Issued in December 1878, it was covered in black leatherette with a simple silver Maltese cross on the cover. Shepherd never saw this bound volume, but it is not an exaggeration to say that this ‘Little Black Book’ was in many ways to change the world.

That ‘Little Black Book’ contained the doctrine of what we now call ‘First Aid’. The concept of teaching first aid drills and skills to everyone was a startling innovation. It was nevertheless the catalyst which led to the development of the ambulance and paramedic professions, of many rescue and retrieval organisations and of the now universal desideratum of ‘First Aid for All’. Subsequent editions of Shepherd’s manual collectively became the world’s best-seller after the Bible. Its influence, both in the technical sense of the promotion of techniques of first aid and also in its pioneering advocacy for the broader ethos of bystander prehospital care, cannot be overstated.



Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), author of the initial St John Ambulance first aid manual.

## Bystander care before Peter Shepherd

The application of woundworts to cuts and abrasions is older than recorded history. Bandaging skills for wounds sustained in battle were documented on Grecian pottery from circa 500 BC, by the enigmatic vase painter, Sosias. The 'Good Samaritan' ethic of succour and efficiency in bandaging, dates from the bronze age in the Middle East, and is immortalised in the Gospel of St Luke (10:30). The Dutch were the first in 1767 to institute a society for the rescue and resuscitation of the apparently drowned, the *Maatschappij tot Redding van Drenkelingen*. Drowning was a confronting cause of death in the canals of Holland's cities and towns. In Britain, The Royal Humane Society, founded in 1774, followed this example and did much to promote the attempted resuscitation of the apparently drowned.

Various resuscitation methods were introduced from the middle of the 19th century. These were principally aimed at educating doctors, nurses and apothecaries. Early and occasionally successful techniques tried to simulate breathing by alternately inflating and deflating the lungs. Henry Robert Silvester (1829–1908), an English physician, developed his 'physiological method of resuscitation' in 1861, in which the unconscious person was placed on their back and the arms were alternately raised above the head and then lowered onto the chest. This was adopted as the preferred method by the Royal Humane Society and promoted in Britain and throughout the Colonies.

It was not until the late 1860s however, that the Prussian military surgeon, Johannes Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908) first used the term *Erste Hilfe* (German: 'First Aid') and taught soldiers that they could help their wounded comrades on the battlefield by carrying a triangular bandage and using a standard set of bandaging and splinting skills.

In civilian life, literate adults could buy a family medical guide. In Australia, in many outback homesteads, a domestic medical guide was the only book which the family possessed. One of the first outback manuals, *A Family Medical Guide*, written specifically for Australian conditions, was published in 1870 by Dr George Fullerton, the first President of the Medical Board of Queensland. It contained advice about home care for victims of trauma or illness.

In British outposts, including the Australian colonies, drownings, horseriding injuries, gunshot wounds, emergency childbirth and snakebite were common occurrences. All called for help from bystanders or family members or even self-help by the victims themselves. A widely dispersed population, long distances to medical help, extremes of heat and cold, and a high risk of trauma—all produced a hostile environment for the sick and injured and a great need for first aid.

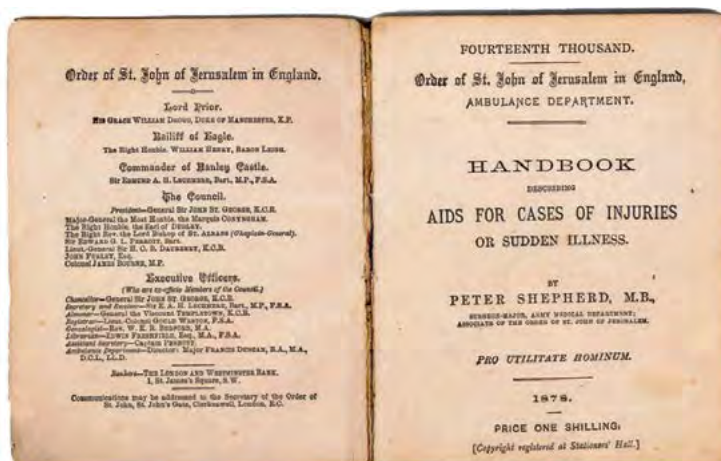
This then was the background which in 1877 engendered the formation of the St John Ambulance Association in London and the radical concept which followed: that of teaching and vigorously promoting a set of safe basic drills and skills embodying the best-practice of the day and which a bystander could perform.

## Shepherd's Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness

The St John Ambulance Association was established on 1 July 1877, the result of co-operative advocacy by senior officers of the British Army and the Order of St John. Following the establishment of the Association and under its aegis, three doctors—Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Surgeon-Major Francis Falwasser and a civilian doctor, Dr Coleman—planned the initial public classes in what was soon called 'First Aid'. Hitherto this had been the exclusive doctrine of military medical orderlies and stretcher-bearers.



*Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book': the 1878 edition, the first of 40 editions, hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies, 1878–1958.*



The twin title pages of Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book'. The verso page sets out the Order's leadership positions. The recto page bears the title of the book, 'Handbook describing aids for cases of injuries or sudden illnesses'.

In January 1878, Peter Shepherd and Dr Coleman taught the inaugural First Aid class in the hall of the church school beside the Presbyterian Church at Woolwich in London. The course in first aid was taught from hand-written notes prepared by Shepherd. The details of the syllabus were published on 2 March 1878, in the *Kentish Independent*, the local newspaper.

Shepherd formalised his teaching notes in October 1878, probably days before he embarked with Lord Chelmsford's Contingent to confront the Zulus in South Africa. It was a busy time for Shepherd, appointed as the Senior Medical Officer to a contingent of over 4000 men. The Force was hurriedly preparing for its operational deployment. Before departing, Shepherd had printed and distributed to all the troops in the contingent a *Pocket Aide Memoire*, that is a single card of first aid instructions in an envelope.

On 30 October 1878, in his 'Introduction' to the notes for his proposed 'Handbook', Shepherd wrote that 'the careful work which I should like to have bestowed [in finalising the first aid manuscript] has been rendered impossible by the exigencies of the Service requiring me to proceed on foreign service'. Nevertheless, he found time to 'hurriedly arrange the following Manual for the use of the Metropolitan Police and the other Ambulance Classes now organised by the Order of St John in all parts of England'.

Shepherd left his hand-written manuscript with a colleague with instructions that it be published. This was a young fellow Scot, Dr (later Sir) James Cantlie, who would later become the author of all six major revisions of the 'Little Black Book' between 1901 and 1928. Cantlie would also later become Britain's leading authority on tropical diseases.

It was either whilst Shepherd was at sea en route for South Africa, or after his arrival and during his overland march to Pietermaritzburg that his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness* was published in London.

Sir James Cantlie (1851–1926), the Scottish physician and surgeon, who took over the authorship and editorship of the 'Little Black Book' in 1901 and then produced the 1901, 1904, 1908, 1917, 1919 and 1928 editions.



## Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879)

Peter Shepherd was born on 9 January 1842 at his father's farm, 'Craigmill', in the hamlet of Leochel-Cushnie, a village in Donside in Aberdeenshire. His father, also Peter Shepherd, was a farmer. Shepherd Snr and his wife, Mary Anne (*née* Dewar) had three boys and a girl. Peter Jnr was the second son.<sup>19</sup> In that era first sons stayed on the farm, and second and subsequent sons either joined the army or were ordained as ministers in the Church.

As a boy, Peter Shepherd worked on his family's farm. He was educated at schools in Aberdeen and won a bursary for further study. With additional financial support of family and friends—to whom he repaid their contributions after his graduation—he matriculated and studied medicine at Marischal College at the University of Aberdeen. In the fourth year of his course he won the prize for Medical Jurisprudence.

Peter Shepherd graduated in 1864 and immediately joined the Army Medical Department. After initial training at the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley near Southampton, he was commissioned with the rank of Assistant Surgeon and posted to Grahamstown in South Africa with the 99th (Lanarkshire) Regiment of Foot. After several years service in South Africa, he was posted to Ireland and then to Bengal in 1873. In 1874 he returned to England as Medical Officer to the Woolwich Garrison where, after 12 years service, he was promoted to surgeon-major in 1876. It was as Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd that his significance as the principal founder of the discipline of first aid is remembered. Tragically, he was killed in the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879, one of 1329 members of the British contingent who died in the disastrous opening battle of the Anglo–Zulu War.

### The battle of Isandlwana

Briefly, what happened was that two columns of Lord Chelmsford's force, about 1700 troops, had marched north-east into Zululand in present-day Natal Province. They camped at the foot of a prominent hill, Mount Isandlwana, where 15,000 warriors of an *impi* (i.e. army) of the Zulu chieftain, Cetshwayo, descended upon them from the heights of a nearby plateau, surrounded them and massacred them. Though they fought bravely, they were completely overwhelmed. Only about 400 or fewer than a quarter of their number survived, mainly by escaping to Rorke's Drift, a camp 14 kilometres to the rear, which was attacked next day but survived the Zulu onslaught. The Zulus lost 1000 at Isandlwana.

Peter Shepherd is thought to have been killed when struck by a thrown *assegai* (broad-bladed spear) while trying to move a wagonload of the wounded back to Rorke's Drift. His grave is unmarked

*The Zulu warriors' view of the plain before Mt Isandlwana as they began their charge on the 24th Regiment.*



*The Isandlwana battlefield, the Nqutu area, with memorials marking the graves of the identified dead. Peter Shepherd's grave is unidentified and unmarked.*





but is thought to be within 20 metres of the grave of George MacLeroy, the soldier he was treating when killed, whose grave is marked. Memorials to him, however, were later placed in the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley and in the churchyard of his family church at Leochel-Cushnie. In addition, the Shepherd Memorial Medal for Surgery was instituted in 1879 at his *alma mater*, the University of Aberdeen.

A bronze memorial plaque to Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd may be found in the former Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire. The inscription reads:

In memory of Peter Shepherd MB, University of Aberdeen, Surgeon-Major, Her Majesty's Army, born at Leochel-Cushnie, Aberdeenshire, 25 August 1841, who sacrificed his own life at the Battle of Isandhlwane, Zululand, 22 January 1879, in the endeavour to save the life of a wounded comrade. Erected by his brother officers and friends.

## The 'Little Black Book'

The St John Ambulance Association, in collaboration with the Army Medical Department, had initially intended that the teaching of first aid to civilians would provide: 'a civilian reserve for the Army Medical Department ... to train men and women for the benefit of the sick and wounded'. However, within months of the commencement of the first civilian courses at Woolwich, the value of first aid skills that could be used in the normal daily life of the civilian population had become obvious. These evolving concepts were accompanied by increasing zeal throughout British society. Within the first year of the Woolwich civilian classes, 40,000 copies of the 'Little Black Book' had been sold. The book carried the quaint disclaimer that the St John Ambulance Association course did not qualify members of the public to practise surgery!

By the end of June 1878, at least, 1100 people had been taught St John-approved first aid skills. By July 1878, provincial centres at Worcester, Malvern, Chesterfield, Southport, and Clay Cross (Derbyshire) had established first aid classes. The enthusiasm in provincial centres knew no bounds. One Scottish observer noted that the St John Ambulance movement had 'something of the contagiousness of the Salvation Army'. Further editions of the 'Little Black Book' had to be published to keep up with the demand: in 1881, 1885 and 1887. Eventually 40 major revised editions were published over the 80 years 1878–1958, encompassing hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies.

Women in particular enthusiastically espoused the idea of general public first aid training. Initially classes were segregated by sex. In 1885 'Ladies' First Aid Classes' were being held at the Mansion House in central London for the benefit of women employed in offices and businesses in the City and Port of London under the auspices of the Lady Mayoress of London.

By the end of 1887, St John first aid classes were being taught to the general public in Malta (1882), Cannes, Melbourne (1883), Bermuda, the Bahamas, Bombay, Gibraltar, Hong Kong (1884), New Zealand (1885), Singapore, South Africa (Kimberley in 1885), and Borneo (1887). Within a century of Shepherd's earliest class in Woolwich, millions of people of all ages and from all walks of life had bought a copy of the 'Little Black Book' for their instruction in the rudiments of first aid.

## Aftermath

Shepherd's vision led to the establishment of many first aid organisations. Von Esmarch himself, the first to use the term 'first aid' in the military context, began teaching civilians in Germany. He established the civilian Samaritan Society in Germany in 1888. By 1898, the sixth edition of Esmarch's *First Aid to the Injured* was also published in English in London.

The first civilian ambulance service in Australia and New Zealand was established in Brisbane in 1892. The [Brisbane] City Ambulance Transport Brigade was formed in response to a perceived lack of appropriate civilian emergency treatment for a horseman who had sustained a broken leg in a trotting event at the Brisbane Exhibition in August 1892. The Brigade's members were trained in first aid by St John.

Other States quickly followed; Sydney had developed its professional civilian ambulance service by 1894, and by the first decades of the twentieth century all capital cities were served by fully trained, salaried ambulance officers. However, in many parts of rural Australia still at the end of the twentieth century the civilian ambulance officers, although professionally trained, still remained volunteers in uniform, trained with the latter-day doctrine of the manual *Australian First Aid*, the direct lineal descendant of the original 'Little Black Book'.

Shepherd's vision and his 'Little Black Book' did more than establish a new discipline within the field of the health sciences. Shepherd himself would never know it, because he died so soon by a Zulu *assegai*, but his first aid manual would be the catalyst for a movement which today brings skilled help to millions—help administered by bystanders who have most often learnt first aid to fulfil their community obligations.

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# James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia

## J Allan Mawdsley KStJ

*Dr Mawdsley is the President of the Historical Society. A retired psychiatrist who lives in Melbourne, he has spent 64 years continuously in St John, having first joined as an 11-year-old Cadet in the Malvern division in 1949. In the intervening years he has held almost every position available to a St John volunteer in Victoria. He is a former Victorian Commissioner and has been a long-serving member of his State St John Council, of which he was a member for 37 years. He is also the current Secretary of the Victorian branch of the Historical Society, which runs a first rate St John museum at Williamstown. An accomplished medical historian, Dr Mawdsley is the author of three books of St John history and he edited the official history of the Order in Victoria, the late Millie Field's The Order of St John in Victoria: Our First 100 Years. He is a frequent contributor of articles to this journal.*



Dr James Edward Neild, founder of St John Ambulance in Australia, has been the subject of previous presentations and one might well ask, 'Why give another paper on a subject that has already been done? Is there some value to be added?'

Neild has certainly received ample attention from historians in recent decades. As well as being publicly enshrined in Volume 5 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, he was the subject of Harold Love's entertaining book, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso*, in 1989. Various St John Ambulance historians have also tackled him. Important profiles of Neild appear in papers by Sir William Johnston (St John Ambulance Brigade Chief Commissioner) and the late Miss Amelia ('Millie') Field (historian of St John in Victoria) and in the first centenary history produced by Dr Ian Howie-Willis for St John. There have also been mentions of Dr Neild in the Medical History Museum's celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Melbourne University medical school.

Despite such coverage of Neild's life and work, perhaps the time has come to reconsider him. Hence this present article, which offers a new synthesis although it relies heavily on these earlier secondary sources. The seminar presentation on which this article is based also used PowerPoint technology to display images of Neild that past presenters would not have been able to show and to which they probably lacked access. A further reason for considering Dr Neild again is that the seminar in question, the Historical Society's fourteenth, coincided with the second meeting in Australia of the Grand Council of the Order of St John. The occasion was therefore one when it seemed appropriate to revisit the origins of St John Ambulance in Australia.

## St John Ambulance reaches the Australian colonies

The founding of St John Ambulance Association in 1877 and the publication of Peter Shepherd's textbook in the next year led to a rapid uptake of first aid training in England, followed soon afterwards throughout the colonies of the British Empire. Dr Ian Howie-Willis explained this process in his 1983 centenary history, *A Century For Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia, 1883–1983*:

Quite a few Australians would have been familiar with the work of St John Ambulance before the establishment of a St John centre in Australia. In three Australian colonies at least it seems that first



*Dr James Edward Neild (1824–1906), 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. This portrait is on display at the offices of St John Ambulance Victoria.*

aid training using the Association's course might have occurred well before any local branch of the Association formed.

The first person known to have attempted St John Ambulance-type training was Dr Robert Robertson, a private practitioner in St Kilda. Robertson gave four public lectures on military first aid in Melbourne between March 1880 and February 1881. He conducted these principally for members of the St Kilda Volunteer Artillery, of which he was then surgeon, but he also allowed the public to attend.

Robertson wished his lectures to bear the imprimatur of the St John Ambulance Association, for on 11th October 1880 he wrote to the Lord Prior of the British Order of St John, the 7th Duke of Manchester, who was then in Sydney. The Duke replied to the effect that he himself could not help much because he knew little about first aid, but suggested that Robertson mention his name in approaching the Association in London. What emerged from Robertson's efforts was not a local Branch of the St John Ambulance Association but the Victorian Militia Ambulance Corps.

Robertson's was not the only positive contact Australian medicos made with St John's Gate in the very early 1880s. Almost a decade before the official foundation of a New South Wales Centre, Dr Samuel T Knaggs of Newcastle obtained permission from St John's Gate in 1881 to train railwaymen according to the Association's methods.

The early classes Knaggs and others ran in Sydney and Newcastle would have been what St John's Gate called 'detached' classes, that is, instruction of groups organized by various interested individuals in areas where no formal Association Centre existed. The Association sponsored much teaching like that, in Britain, in the colonies and in other places.

Although individual doctors like Robertson and Knaggs were keen to see the St John Ambulance Association established in Australia there was no formal Centre until one was formed in Melbourne in June 1883. The initiative came from a leading member of the Melbourne medical fraternity, a Yorkshireman called James Edward Neild.



*Dr Samuel T Knaggs (1824–1906), who should share with Dr Neild the title 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. While Neild was largely responsible for establishing the Victorian St John Centre in 1883, Knaggs had organised and taught the first public St John first aid course in Sydney in 1881.*

## JE Neild's early years

Neild's interesting life story goes some way towards explaining why his promotion of St John Ambulance was more successful than that of his predecessors. James Edward Neild was born at Doncaster, Yorkshire, England, in 1824, one of several children of James Neild and his wife, Sarah Bilton, daughter of a Yorkshire land-owner.

Neild Snr was in training for the Anglican ministry when he became inspired by a Wesleyan Methodist preacher and changed direction to become a school-teacher and lay preacher. He later worked as a book-keeper and Brewer's clerk. It is clear that the family had a strong ethical and humanitarian ethos.

In his younger years, Neild attended an unusual private school run by an educational reformer, Richard Hiley, in Leeds. This was clearly the stimulus for his love of writing. He began writing for publication from the age of 13 years.

## Medical education and early years in practice

When he was 18, Neild began his career in medicine. This took the form, in 1842, of an apprenticeship to his uncle, Edwin Harrison, a leading medical practitioner in Sheffield. Medical education in England at that time was still conducted on a basis not very different from that of the skilled trades, until reforms more than a decade later. Five years later Neild enrolled in medicine at University College, London, where Joseph Lister was a fellow student. He qualified as a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1848.



The young Dr Neild showed evidence of a wide range of interests and became active in the political movements of the day. He advocated repeal of the Corn Laws, which kept prices artificially high for the benefit of land-owners and detriment of the poor, and he strongly supported the demands of the Chartist leaders for democratic voting reforms. He was the only student of University College who refused to be enrolled as a special constable when the Chartist agitations occurred.

Neild later became resident apothecary to the Rochdale Dispensary for the years 1851 to 1853. The dispensary had first opened for the relief of the sick poor in 1832. The Infirmary building was located at the back of the Rochdale Workhouse, a much more salubrious building. There was evidently more money available for employing the poor than for looking after their health. The post of resident apothecary became known as Resident Medical Officer somewhere about this time. In addition to compounding and dispensing medicines, Neild vaccinated the children of the poor every Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock, provided that the parents paid a shilling deposit, to be returned when the child was brought back for inspection of the result.



*The Rochdale Dispensary, Lancashire, c. 1890. Dr Neild was the resident apothecary, 1851–1853.*

Through his insistence on introducing anaesthetics and other innovations, Neild came into conflict with the authorities and resigned; but that his services were appreciated was shown by the presentation to him of a valuable case of instruments. This was inscribed: '*Presented by the Governors of the Rochdale General Dispensary to Mr James Edward Neild, for the zealous and faithful performance of his duties as house surgeon during a period of three years*'. A certificate 'expressive of the confidence and approval of the medical staff' was also given to him.

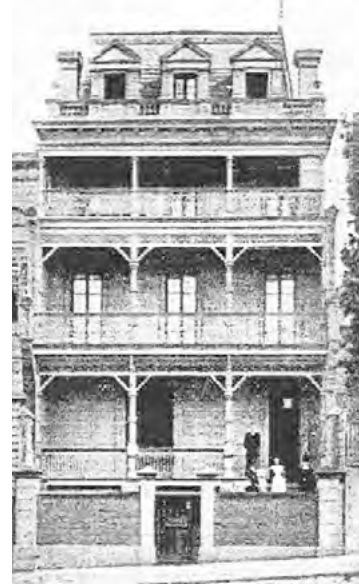
## To Australia

On leaving Rochdale, Neild sailed for Australia. At the height of the gold rush he tried his hand on the diggings near Castlemaine in the central Victoria goldfields but was unsuccessful and the call of medicine soon prevailed. He worked for Mr Daniel Rutter Long as a druggist in Long's pharmacy in Bourke Street, Melbourne, but also took care to have his name included in the medical practitioners' register in 1855. In 1857 Neild married Susannah Long, his boss's daughter.

Dr Neild and his new wife set up house at 165 Collins Street East, naming their residence 'New House'. It was a two-storeyed white stone house with an arched doorway and long, narrow windows. This house was later sold as the site of 'Lister House', well-known for the rooms of medical specialists. The Neilds later moved around the corner to 21 Spring Street, opposite Treasury Gardens, naming their new home 'Bilton House' after Neild's mother. This was to remain their home until his death in 1906. In all, they had eleven children, nine of whom survived their father.



*Susannah Long, who married her father's employee, Dr James E Neild, in 1857.*



*The Neild family's second home in Melbourne, 'Bilton House' at 21 Spring Street, a very prestigious address.*

## Literary and theatrical endeavours

Outside medicine Neild had broad interests. He wrote literary pieces for the newspapers of the day. He was a founding member and subsequently president of the Shakespearean Society, was a frequent attender of theatre performances, and in later years held regular Sunday afternoon gatherings for theatrical aficionados at his home.

Under various noms de plume, including 'Jaques', Neild was the drama and music critic of the *Argus* for many years. He is said to have been one of the founders of *Melbourne Punch* and a close associate of the local literary luminaries, Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall. A further claim is that he 'discovered' the operatic diva Nellie Melba and encouraged her to give priority to her singing over her piano playing.

As theatrical critic of *My Note Book*, writing under the name 'Christopher Sly', Neild's comments so enraged a magician whose performance was adversely reviewed that Neild was subjected to verbal abuse in the theatre and newspaper commentary including a satirical cartoon. However, in general his contributions were so well appreciated that near the end of his career in 1890 a public concert was held at the Melbourne Town Hall and he was given a public testimonial at the Princess Theatre presided over by his friend, the actor and impresario. George Coppin.



*Dr JE Neild as 'Jaques', the theatre critic of the Melbourne Argus.*

*The attack on 'Christopher Sly' (a nom de plume of Dr JE Neild) by a magician he had criticised in a review, was the subject of this contemporary newspaper cartoon. The caption reads 'Cutting up the Critic, or what the Theatrical knights-errant would do to Christopher Sly if they could'.*



## Medical politics

Neild also began a long association with the the University of Melbourne medical school, which opened in 1862. Within the next two years Neild took the higher degree of Doctor of Medicine (Melbourne) by examination. Shortly afterwards, in 1865, he was appointed lecturer in Forensic Medicine by the University of Melbourne and was thus an original member of the university medical school staff. He held this position for forty years until 1904, a short time before his death in 1906. He was also appointed City Coroner, and thus became closely associated with many criminal inquiries.

Dr Neild was a leading member of the Medical Society of Victoria, to which he was admitted in 1861. He was appointed Librarian in 1863, Vice-President in 1867 and President in 1868. He was again Librarian from 1870 to 1874, and in 1875 became Honorary Secretary. Concurrently he was also Honorary Librarian of the Royal Society of Victoria for more than 20 years, and successfully nominated his daughter, Helen (known in the family as 'Nellie'), a zoologist, to become its first female member. He was an honorary physician to the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum and helped found the Medical Benevolent Association. He was an assistant honorary medical officer at the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals.

Neild was appointed editor of the *Australian Medical Journal* from 1862, only six years after its commencement. Three years later a testimonial on vellum, signed by 27 eminent fellow practitioners, was presented to Neild as an appreciation of services rendered to the *Australian Medical Journal* and to the medical profession. Adding considerable weight to their expression of good will was a gift of fifty sovereigns.

Holding the two positions of Honorary Secretary of the Medical Society of Victoria and editor of its journal, Neild was able to exert strong influence on government medical policy. There were eager and dominant personalities taking part in medical politics at that time, and they did not always agree with Dr Neild, particularly with his virulent attacks on what he regarded as quackery. He was also in conflict with some of his colleagues over the failure to elect Dr Louis Henry to membership of the Medical Society of Victoria, which he saw as arising from an anti-Semitic bias. As a consequence Neild resigned from both posts in 1879.



*The medical academic: Dr JE Neild MD, lecturer in forensic medicine at the University of Melbourne, 1865–1904.*

Coincidentally as this was happening, Neild became one of the founders of the Victorian Branch of the British Medical Association, initially intended to foster connection with British authorities but which now became an alternative medico-political forum. In time it was to eclipse the Victorian Medical Society and eventually become the Australian Medical Association. The first meeting was held in Neild's house, and he was elected President in 1882. Dr Louis Henry became the Honorary Secretary. This ensured that Neild remained at the forefront of medical politics of the time.



*Dr James Edward Neild (seated) and Dr Louis Henry.*

## St John Ambulance Founding Father

Turning now to Neild's link with St John Ambulance, I quote again from Howie-Willis:

At the end of 1881 Neild received a letter from Francis Duncan, the Director of the St John Ambulance Association at St John's Gate, saying that he had been given Neild's name as one of a number of Melbourne medicos who might volunteer to examine first aid classes. It was the sort of letter that might have been sent to numerous other doctors. Neild apparently answered it affirmatively, for on 20th February 1882, Sir Herbert Perrott, the General Secretary in London, wrote to thank him for 'the friendly spirit' of his offer to help. Perrott also mentioned that Dr Samuel T Knaggs had recently left London for Newcastle with information on how to go about setting up Association classes 'in different parts of the Colony'. He said that as soon as he had heard from Knaggs he would contact Neild further.

Over a year later, at the end of 1882, and still with no further word from St John's Gate, Neild discussed the matter with Robertson. Then in June 1883 Neild and Dr Richard Warren of Brighton wrote a circular announcing their intention of forming a Melbourne branch of the Association. They sent out over 400 copies of this to the leading citizens—the editors of the eight newspapers, professors, judges, parliamentarians, public servants, city councillors, businessmen, the clergy, and 84 medicos. Neild apparently did not inform Robertson of his intention of issuing the circular, because the latter wrote expressing his surprise at not being consulted but undertaking to co-operate despite that slight.

Neild and Warren received only about thirty replies to their circular. Undiscouraged, they arranged a meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall under the chairmanship of Mr George Coppin, MLA (actor 'Coppin the Great', theatrical manager and entrepreneur, banker and social reformer). This meeting duly took place. During the proceedings Professor Henry Martyn Andrew successfully moved a resolution that 'it is desirable that there should be established in Victoria a branch of the St John Ambulance Association'. Mr Ephraim Zox, MLA (retail trader, philanthropist, campaigner for friendly societies, leading member of the Athenaeum Club and president of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation) then moved that a provisional committee should be formed to draw up rules for the proposed Centre. This consisted of the Mayor, Judges TS Cope and F Quinlan, the parliamentarians Coppin and Zox, two professors (including Andrew), eight medicos (including Neild, Warren and Robertson), the Reverend DJ Hamer, and seven others including the noted architect Lloyd Tayler (who later became Chairman), with Warren as secretary and Zox treasurer.

The provisional committee met a week later at the Royal Society of Victoria and, after completing the draft rules, called a public meeting in the Athenaeum Hall, Collins Street on Tuesday 26 June 1883, to adopt the rules and appoint a permanent council. At the public meeting under the chairmanship of Judge Quinlan, Warren read a letter from Sir Edmund Lechmere, the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Association in London, authorizing the formation of a Victorian Centre of the Association. Neild then moved the adoption of the draft rules. A fourteen-member Council was appointed to govern the Centre.

The public meeting also resolved to approach Sir William Clarke Bt, to accept the position of Association President. Clarke was among Victoria's leading citizens: a major landowner, leading philanthropist, agricultural 'improver', Freemason, sportsman and Member of the Legislative Council.



He was also an honorary Doctor of Laws of Cambridge University and one of the first Australians to be created baronet. Clarke agreed to become President and held the position for fifteen years, until his death in 1897. His widow, Lady Janet Clarke, had already become a great benefactor of St John Ambulance. Among others, she donated money to permit the purchase of the six Ashford Litters (St John-marketed stretchers mounted on light cartwheels) from which Melbourne's ambulance service developed.

The Order of St John in Australia regards the meeting in the Athenaeum Hall on 26 June 1883 as the foundation date of St John Ambulance in Australia. The first meeting of the new Council took place in Neild's rooms nine days later. In October that year, Warren as Secretary read a letter from St John's Gate expressing the pleasure of the Central Council at seeing the first Australian Centre successfully established. Over the next decade other Centres followed in the other colonies, all these except for the Tasmania Centre independent of the Victorian Centre.

Neild remained a member of the St John Council in Victoria for 23 years until the year of his death. In 1895 he was enrolled as an Associate of the Order of St John, a grade equivalent to 'Member' in today's terminology. He died on 17 August 1906 and is buried in a grave with his wife, Susannah and daughter, Helen, at the Melbourne General Cemetery. Sadly, the grave is unmarked and in a poor state of repair. Perhaps this recollection of his great contribution to our nation might be a timely opportunity for a more fitting memorial. A project for our Historical Society, perhaps?



*Sir William Clarke Bt. (1831–1897), inaugural president of the St John Ambulance Association Centre in Melbourne.*



*The unmarked Neild family grave in the Melbourne General Cemetery, Carlton, in disrepair and much in need of tender-loving care.*

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# A short history of the medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John

## Trevor Mayhew KStJ

*Trevor Mayhew joined St John as a Cadet in 1953. He was awarded his Grand Prior's Badge in 1958 and since then has held various appointments, including Divisional and Corps Superintendent and State Staff Officer. He is a former State Operations Officer and currently is State Ceremonial Officer. He served in the Reserve Forces 1959–1973, in both the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, holding appointments such as Acting Wardmaster, Foreman of Signals and Squadron Sergeant Major. In civilian life, he retired in 2007 from WorkCover NSW as a Technical Specialist (Occupational Hygienist) Working Environment. His professional qualifications include a Graduate Diploma in Safety Science and a Master's degree in Occupational Health and Safety. His wife, Jean Mayhew OStJ, served for 36 years in St John and their eldest daughter, Michele Mayhew OStJ, is the New South Wales State Nursing Officer. In 2011 Mr Mayhew was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his St John work. The seminar paper on which this article is based was the second that he has presented to the Historical Society's seminar series.*



This historical outline of the medals issued by the Most Venerable Order of St John is just that: an outline. There is insufficient space to permit a detailed account of the minutiae of all the medals—and all their variations—ever issued by the Order. This article therefore covers its topic by selecting the more important and more common among the range of medals as well as several representative examples of the rest.

## Meaning and origin of medals

The classification and description of medals is a subset of numismatics, which is the systematic study of coins, commercial tokens, medals and medallions. This specialised branch of numismatics may be conveniently understood according to these three statements, cited from *Wikipedia*:

**Definition:** A medal, or medallion, is generally a circular object that has been sculpted, molded, cast, struck, stamped, or some way rendered with an insignia, portrait, or other artistic rendering. A medal may be awarded to a person or organisation as a form of recognition for athletic, military, scientific, academic, or various other achievements. Other medals are issued to celebrate particular events deemed worthy of commemoration.

**Etymology:** First attested in English in 1578, the word 'medal' is derived from the Middle French 'médaille', itself from Italian 'medaglia', and ultimately from the post-classical Latin 'medalia', meaning a coin worth half a denarius.

**History:** The first known instance of a medal being awarded comes from the Romano–Jewish historian Josephus who, writing in the first century AD, wrote of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) awarding a gold button to the High Priest Jonathan who led the Hebrews in aid of Alexander the Great.

## Symbolism in medals

While all medals are intended either to reward the individuals receiving them, or to remind them of an event being commemorated, many medals also have symbolic connotations. That is, they are often emblematic of certain values which the organisation issuing them seeks to promote.

A ready example here is the eight-pointed St John or 'Maltese' Cross embellished with the Queen's Beasts (lions and unicorns) worn by those who have been admitted into membership of the Most Venerable Order of St John. The Order teaches that the four main arms of the cross represent the four Christian virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, and the eight points represent

the eight Beatitudes proclaimed by Christ during his famous 'Sermon on the Mount' ('Blessed are the merciful', 'Blessed are the peacemakers', etc. from Matthew 5: 3–12).

St John Ambulance has taken the symbolism of the St John Cross further by applying secular meanings to the eight points. Thus, the eight points have become a mnemonic for summarizing the qualities of a good first aider, who is ideally: observant, tactful, resourceful, dexterous, explicit, discriminating, persevering and sympathetic.

## St John medals

Turning now to the medals awarded by the Most Venerable Order, we will begin with the earliest and rarest, the Lifesaving Medal.

### The Lifesaving Medal of The Order of St John

The Order of St John first instituted an award for lifesaving nearly 140 years ago in 1874. The St John Lifesaving Medal is awarded to those individuals who, in a conspicuous act of gallantry, have endangered their own lives in saving or attempting to save the life of some other person or persons. The medal is bestowed upon these courageous individuals by the Grand Prior, currently on the recommendation of the Grand Council of the Order.

The Lifesaving Medal of the Order may be awarded in gold, silver or bronze according to the circumstances of the incident, the measure of courage displayed, the degree of resourcefulness used, the administration of first aid and the extent to which the individual's own life was at risk during the incident. Other factors, such as fire, heights or weather conditions where significant hazards exist, assist in determining the level of the award granted.

The awarding of a St John Lifesaving Medal of the Order is rare at any level, but extremely rare at the gold level. Submissions proposing the award are today put forward to the Grand Council from all Pories of St John and are reviewed to determine eligibility in accordance with international regulations.

The first of the medals was awarded in 1875. The recipients were two colliers, Elijah Hallam and Frederick Vickers, who on 6 September that year, at imminent risk of their own lives, rescued six of their fellow workmen suspended in a broken cage halfway down the shaft of the Albert Colliery in Lancashire, England. They received the medal in silver.

Other medals were awarded in the decades that followed. One worthy of comment was the medal in silver presented to Captain Barry Hartwell (1880–1914) of the 2nd Battalion of the 8th Gurkha Rifles, who received the medal at the age of 25 in 1905 for 'saving life' during an earthquake at Dharamsala, India, in 1905. Unfortunately, Hartwell was subsequently killed in action early in World War I.

A mass awarding of the Lifesaving Medal occurred following the rescue effort at a mine disaster at the Hulton Colliery, West Houghton, Lancashire. On 21 Dec 1910, 344 men and boys of the 898 working in the mine at the time lost their lives as a result of a huge underground explosion. This was the third largest mining disaster in British history. The explosion at 7.50 in the morning could be heard and felt miles away. The cage down to the mine was broken in the blast and Alfred Tongue, the general manager of the colliery, gave instructions for it to be repaired. In the meantime he took charge of rescue operations, ensuring that workers in the other seams were brought safely to the surface. For his efforts in organising and leading the rescue effort, Tongue received no fewer than three awards: the Lifesaving Medal of the Order of St John in silver, the Bolton and District Humane Society Medal and the Edward Medal, a civilian gallantry award for lifesaving in mines and quarries which ranks with the George Cross and is now only awarded posthumously. Twenty other rescuers received the St John Lifesaving Medal in bronze.



*The original Lifesaving Medal of the Order: obverse (left) and reverse faces. The medal is suspended from a black ribbon mounted on a metal frame representing a first aider's stretcher.*

In 1907 the Order introduced the gold version, which was authorised in 1907. Originally the ribbon was plain watered black silk but in 1950 a new ribbon in black and white longitudinal stripes was authorised. This was later modified to include a thin scarlet band at the outer edges. In 1963, a bar to the medal was instituted to recognise further acts of bravery. The bar has only ever been awarded twice in gold.

Awards of the Lifesaving Medal are still made, though unfortunately not in recent decades in Australia, where the Priory has tended to the view that eligible candidates should receive the official Australian bravery awards instead.

One of the most recent recipients of the medal in gold was a St John Ambulance Cadet, 17-year-old Paul Swift, who rescued a woman and her small child from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Blackburn, Lancashire, in 2003. Despite a strong current caused by a draining lock on the canal, he jumped into the canal and rescued the child first. After bringing her to the bank, he returned to fetch the mother. With mother and daughter safely on the riverbank, he checked their breathing and placed them in the recovery position.



*Paul Swift, the Cadet awarded the St John Lifesaving Medal in gold in 2003.*

### The Service Medal of St John

The first mention of the Service Medal is found in St John Ambulance Brigade General Regulations for 1895 where paragraph 11 announced that:

Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to authorise the issue of Service Medals to reward Distinguished Services and to encourage efficiency and long service in the various Departments of the Order. Members of the Brigade who have performed distinguished services, or have served honourably and efficiently for a period of not less than fifteen consecutive years, will be eligible for this medal.

(The 15-year qualification period was subsequently amended to 12 years.)

The Service Medal is suspended from a satin ribbon in alternating longitudinal parallel broad bands of black and white (three black, two white). The obverse (front) face of the Service Medal displays the right profile of the head and shoulders of Queen Victoria. It is the only medal to retain the head of Queen Victoria on a current issue. In a circlet around the circumference of the obverse face is the abbreviated Latin inscription:

VICTORIA + D + G + BRITT + REG + F + D + IND + IMP

*(Victoria Deo Gratia Britannia Regina Fidei Defensor India Imperatrix Magnus Prioratus Ordinis Hospitalis Sancti Johannis Jerusalem in Anglia)*

Victoria by the grace of God Queen of [Great] Britain, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India.

The complex reverse face of the medal displays the Royal Arms at the centre, above it the Imperial Crown, to its left the Arms of the Order, to its right the Arms of the Prince of Wales as Grand Prior and below it the crest of the Prince of Wales. The four outer devices are separated by a sprig of St John's Wort, the Order's floral emblem. Around the circumference is the Latin inscription:

*MAGNUS PRIORATUS ORDINIS HOSPITALIS SANCTI-JOHANNIS JERUSALEM IN ANGLIA*

Grand Priory of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England



*The Service Medal of the Order: obverse (above) and reverse faces.*



Periods of efficient service longer than the initial 12 (previously 15) years are indicated by a series of bars, crosses and a laurel leaf added, as follows:

- 17 years: 1 silver bar or cross
- 22 years: 2 silver bars or crosses
- 27 years: 3 silver bars or crosses
- 32 years: 1 gilt bar or cross (all silver crosses are removed at this stage)
- 37 years: 2 gilt bars or crosses
- 42 years: 3 gilt bars or crosses
- 47 years: 4 gilt bars or crosses
- 52 years: 1 gilt laurel leaf (all gilt bars are removed at this stage).

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medal of 1897**

This was a medal issued in 1897 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne, the 'diamond jubilee' of her reign. It is a circular bronze medal with claw and ribbon bar suspension. The obverse face displays the veiled head of Queen Victoria facing left. It is dated 1897. Only 910 St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medals were awarded. There were five different versions: for the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance, the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and of course the St John Ambulance Brigade.

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1902**

This was a medal issued to commemorate the coronation in 1902 of King Edward VII who succeeded his mother, Queen Victoria, to the throne on her death in 1901. As Prince of Wales, King Edward had served as Grand Prior of the Order, 1888–1901. The distribution of the Coronation Medal was similar to that of the Jubilee Medal of 1897, with 912 of the medals issued.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade medals commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897 (left), King Edward VII's coronation in 1902 (centre), and King George V's coronation in 1911 (right).*

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1911**

A similar coronation medal to that issued in 1902 was distributed in celebration of the coronation of King George V in 1911. Like his father, Edward VII, George V had served as Grand Prior of the Order, his period in office being 1901–1910. It is estimated that approximately 3000 medals were issued to St John Ambulance Brigade to commemorate George V's coronation. In addition to these, the medal was distributed to the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance and the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and St John Ambulance Brigade. Other medals of similar type were provided for the County and Borough Police, the Scottish Police, the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Royal Parks workers and the St Andrew's Ambulance Corps (in Scotland).

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Medal for South Africa**

The Order issued this medal mainly to members of the St John Ambulance Brigade who served in the South African or Boer War of 1898–1902. The Brigade in England sent various of its members to join the British Army contingent in South Africa 1899–1902. They served as orderlies and ancillaries with Army Medical Corps units and with a separate St John Ambulance Brigade Field Hospital.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade Boer War Medal presented in 1902 to Brigade members who had served in the St John units sent to South Africa: the obverse (left) and reverse faces.*

Over 1800 of the medals were issued, some being awarded to those who had organised or assisted in the deployment of the Brigade members sent to the war. No fewer than 60 Brigade members died in the war, most the victims of typhoid fever.

### **The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal**

The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve (RNASBR) was a medical ancillary force staffed by volunteers of the St John Ambulance Brigade. Formed in 1910, its purpose was to support the work of the Royal Navy's medical units. The RNASBR uniform consisted of a navy blue single-breasted jacket with a stand-up collar with five buttons bearing the St John's cross. On the right sleeve, they wore a badge with the words 'St John Ambulance Brigade RN Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserves'. The RNASBR was initially formed to maintain an acceptable wartime ratio between medically trained personnel and seaman. The medal was awarded for 12 years service with the RNASBR, with war service counting as double that rate; that is, one year of wartime service counting as the equivalent of two non-wartime years. The RNASBR continued in existence through World Wars I and II; it was disbanded in 1949.



*The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Two series of the medal were awarded: left is the obverse of the series of 1919 to 1943; right is the reverse of the 1943 to 1949 series.*

### **The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-Year Service Badge**

This was a service badge worn above the medal ribbons on the right breast of the St John Ambulance Brigade uniform by eligible members who had served with the Voluntary Aid Detachments.

The Voluntary Aid Detachments, commonly known by their acronym VADs, were a quasi-military medical voluntary (i.e. non-salaried) ancillary service established prior to World War I in Britain. The idea of the VADs was soon adopted by the military authorities in Britain's overseas dominions. In Australia the VAD scheme was run by a structure of national and State committees with representation drawn from the armed services, Red Cross and St John Ambulance. On duty VAD members wore a Red Cross uniform. They received their instruction in first aid and home nursing from the St John Ambulance Association. They were organised into local units similar to the local divisions of the St John Ambulance Brigade. In many cases whole Brigade divisions registered as VAD units.

During World War I many VAD members drove military ambulances. During World War II the VAD members were given more medical training, but they were not fully qualified nurses. In 1942 the Army medical authorities established their own fulltime ancillary medical force, the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWS). The AAMWS recruited many female VAD members, who accordingly became eligible for the award of military medals. The VAD members who remained in their VAD units were nevertheless in demand. They worked mainly as aides in the military hospitals, convalescent homes, on hospital ships and in the blood banks. VAD members who served in the two World Wars received badges to commemorate their wartime service; however, to receive the VAD 12-year service award required them to remain a member for a period substantially longer than either of the world wars.



*The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-year Service Badge;*

### **The St John Ambulance Association Medallion**

In 1879, two years after its foundation, St John Ambulance Association introduced a medallion to award those who had passed three annual examinations. At least two of the examinations had to be in First Aid to the Injured but the third could be in either Home Nursing or Home Hygiene. The medallion number and name of the recipient were engraved on the plain reverse. A 'label' could then be earned by a medallion holder for each successful reexamination at intervals of not less than 12 months after the third examination for the medallion. In 1916 pendants were introduced to indicate a reexamination in a subject

other than First Aid, that is Home Nursing and Home Hygiene. The small 20-millimetre pendants took the form of a quatrefoil edged with a twisted rope design having a small rectangular box in the middle bearing the initial letters of the specialist qualification.

In time, people who undertook annual reexaminations over many years would accumulate many labels and pendants. Some people linked these together in chains from which they would suspend their original medallions. Eventually some such chains were so long they could be worn around the neck. The practice of awarding medallions, labels and pendants continued for over a century, into the mid-1980s.



*The St John Ambulance Association medallion, to which successive 'labels' could be attached forming a chain.*

### **Other St John Ambulance medals, coins and medallions**

A number of national St John Ambulance organisations have issued their own commemorative medals and medallions. In addition the currency-issuing agencies in some nations have produced special coins to help celebrate the achievement of milestone anniversaries by their national St John branches. In this section of the article we will consider a representative sampling, beginning with the Order of St John '900th Year' commemorative medallion.

### **Service Medal of St John Ambulance Ireland**

In the Republic of Ireland, the St John Ambulance Brigade is an independent charitable voluntary organisation. For historical and constitutional reasons it is not a full member association of the Most Venerable Order of St John and the international St John Ambulance movement, but is classed instead as an 'associated body' of the Order.

The Brigade uniform in the Republic is nearly identical to the English uniform, although there are some differences. Instead of wearing distinctive county emblems as in England, Irish Brigade members wear a Brigade emblem consisting of the eight-pointed St John Cross with green shamrocks replacing the lions and unicorns between the four arms of the cross. This emblem is worn under the shoulder flash but is not received until the member has two years' service.

The Brigade in Ireland also awards its own Service Medal. Instituted in 1945, this is awarded in silver for 15 years' service and in silver-gilt for 50 years' service.



*The Service Medal of the St John Ambulance Brigade of Ireland.*

### **St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea Golden Jubilee Medal and commemorative 50-toea coin**

St John Ambulance in Papua New Guinea, Australia's nearest neighbour and former territory, was an import from Australia during the 1960s. In 2007, the St John Council of Papua New Guinea issued a commemorative medal to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of a formal St John organisation there.



*The St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea 50th anniversary commemorative medal.*



The government of Papua New Guinea also marked this anniversary by minting a commemorative 50-toea coin (roughly equivalent to the Australian 50-cent coin) bearing the St John name and badge on the reverse face.

### **Order of St John, 900th Year Commemorative Medallion**

In 1999, the year of the 900th anniversary of the capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the Most Venerable Order of St John produced and marketed a commemorative medallion. Both faces of the medallion carried the promotional slogan: '900 Years of Caring'. This was perhaps misleading because the event being commemorated was not the 900th centenary of the foundation of the Blessed Gerard's original hospice for pilgrims from which the ancient Order of St John had developed; nor was it the nonacentenary of the establishment of the ancient Order. The former event took place about the year 1980; the latter is being celebrated in 2013.



*The Order of St John '900 Years of Caring' medallion of 1999. Obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) faces.*

### **St John Ambulance Malaysia 100th Anniversary Medallion**

St John Ambulance in Malaysia celebrated its centenary in 2008. To commemorate this event, the St John Council for Malaysia published a sumptuous centenary history. The council also issued an impressive commemorative medallion in gilt alloy to celebrate the centenary.



*The St John Ambulance Malaysia centenary medallion of 2008; the obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces of the medallion.*

### **St John Ambulance Association Singapore Service Award**

As in Malaysia, St John Ambulance in Singapore has a long history, though not quite as long as its near neighbour on the opposite shore of the narrow Strait of Johore. St John in Singapore dates its origin to 1935, when a Dr JS Webster OStJ, a radiologist at the Singapore General Hospital, organised first aid lectures with the help of a few public-spirited friends and fellow doctors. By September 1938 sufficient numbers of first aiders had been trained to form the first local uniformed division of the St John Ambulance Brigade.



*The Singapore St John Ambulance Association Service Award; obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces.*



In October 1969, a Sub-Centre of the St John Ambulance Association (now called Training Branch in Australia) was formed in the industrialised area of Singapore. With the Brigade, the Sub-Centre gave lectures in First Aid and Home Nursing to many factory workers. It is now known as Jurong Centre.

The St John Ambulance Association in Singapore began issuing its own Service Medal in 1980. Minted in bronze and suspended from a ribbon of five alternating vertical bands of black and green, the medal displays the Badge of the Order on the obverse face with the second of the Order's mottoes, 'For The Service Of Mankind', around the rim.

### **Malta District of the St John Ambulance Brigade Golden Jubilee Medal**

Outside of the United Kingdom, St John Ambulance in Malta has the longest history of any St John branch. A Centre of the St John Ambulance Association was established there in 1882, a year before a similar Centre opened in Melbourne in 1883.

In Malta St John Ambulance is a voluntary organisation, an autonomous overseas branch of the Most Venerable Order governed by its own national St John Council. The Council is chaired by the Chief Justice of Malta, Professor JJ Cremona. (The Patron of St John Ambulance in Malta is the President of the Republic of Malta, His Excellency Dr George Abela.) Under the Council, St John Ambulance operates through three branches: the Training Association, First Aid and Nursing and the Rescue Corps.

The St John Ambulance Brigade District in Malta was one of the earliest established outside of the United Kingdom. Founded in 1909, it predated all the Australian State Brigade Districts except for New South Wales (1902) and Western Australia (1904). To celebrate its 50th anniversary, the Brigade in Malta issued a Golden Jubilee commemorative medal in 1959. The obverse face shows first aiders attending to a patient; the reverse face displays a crown above the St John Cross Badge of the Order.



*Right: the St John Ambulance Brigade Malta District golden jubilee medallion. (Obverse at left and reverse at right in each case.)*

The medals, coins, medallions and badges of the Most Venerable Order and its associated St John Ambulance organisations have multiplied to the extent that they now comprise a specialised branch of numismatics. Beginning with just the Lifesaving Medal in 1874 and the Service Medal in 1895, they have proliferated as a range of commemorative medals were added to the range. As more international St John branches began forming, they in turn eventually issued their own service medals and commemorative medallions. In some instances they also persuaded their national governments to issue commemorative coins to celebrate their milestone anniversaries.

As well as being highly 'collectible', and therefore comprising prized exhibits in St John museums, these exemplars of the numismatic craft are of interest to St John historians. First, they are inherently worthy of study because of their own innate beauty of design and manufacture. Second, they tell us much about the historical growth and development of the Order. Finally, these items remind us that 125 years after Queen Victoria granted our Royal Charter, the Order has transcended the circumstances of its foundation in 1831 to become a great worldwide family of charitable institutions, agencies and individuals dedicated to 'The Service Of Mankind'. I trust that the foregoing brief survey of the Order's medals has established these points in the minds of my readers.

# Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'

## Brian Fotheringham KStJ

*Dr Brian Fotheringham is the founder and foundation President of the Historical Society. He is also the founder of the Society's State branch in South Australia, which preceded the national society by several years. Previously he was the 14th St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia and then served a record period of 13 years as the eighth Priory Librarian. He joined St John 53 years ago as a 'Probationary Surgeon' within the South Australian St John Ambulance organisation. His late father, Dr Jim Fotheringham MC, was also a St John Commissioner in South Australia. In his professional life, Dr Fotheringham Jnr spent most of career as a senior medical administrator at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal.*



In the little museum in Adelaide, South Australia, that is dedicated to collecting, preserving and displaying items relating to St John Ambulance, there is a curious inclusion known as the 'Pipe of Peace'. Perhaps it should not be there as its use, as far as I know, was never condoned by St John. It does however serve as an interesting conversation piece with some likenesses and links to the history of St John, and possibly also a lesson or even a warning for St John. It is also a story that crosses international boundaries, appropriate for a time such as this when the Grand Council of St John is meeting here in Australia.



*The 'Pipe of Peace'—an inhaler invented by Sir Hiram Maxim.*

## Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim

The 'Pipe of Peace' was invented by Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim (1840–1916). Hiram was born in Sangerville, Maine, USA, on 5 February 1840. Curiously, Sangerville is directly west of another place in Maine called St John. Hiram was the son of a farmer and when aged 14 was apprenticed to a carriage maker. His hobby was inventing things and this later became his life's work. He invented lots of things. He was 26 years old when he took out his first patent—for a hair curling iron. In the next half century he took out 271 American and British patents. No easy feat! They included gas generators, carburettors, steam traps, meters, pumps, chandeliers, heaters, batteries, regulators, dynamos, solvent recovery processes, riveting devices and stone cutting implements. And that is just a few of the American patents.

The British ones covered processes for the separation of metals, pipe and tube manufacture, the production of vacuums, devices to measure wind velocity and others to stop ships from rolling, wheels for railway carriages, shafts for screw propellers, shoe heel protectors, pneumatic tyres, coffee substitutes and fire extinguishers.

His electrical pressure regulator was displayed at the Paris Exhibition of 1881 and earned for him the decoration of Legion of Honour. Hiram went to Paris to collect this honour, but this may not have been his real reason for leaving America. In 1876 he had married Jane Budden in Boston. They had three children. In 1878 he married Helen Leighton in New York. In 1880 he married Sarah Haynes, also in New York. Jane divorced him *after* he had married Helen. Sarah divorced him as she, for a time, was just one of *three* current wives. Hiram never went back to America.



*Sir Hiram Maxim (1840-1916) wears his accumulation of awards.*

Hiram's inventions were not always successful. In England he designed and built a huge two-propeller steam-driven aeroplane. It was tested on rails with an extra restraining rail preventing the plane from lifting off more than a few inches. The restraining rail broke. Hiram did not venture further in the field of aviation.



*Hiram Maxim at the controls of a famous but impractical invention—his steam-powered, rail-mounted biplane made of tubular steel and canvas biplane in 1894. It 'flew' for about 200 metres during a trial in 1895 but then broke an axle and was so seriously damaged that Maxim abandoned the project.*

## A very famous invention

One Maxim invention in particular was a huge success. It was developed in 1884 by Hiram who by this time was living in London. Although he was born in America, Hiram later became a British citizen. The year 1884 was an interesting time for St John. The St John Ambulance Association in England was just seven years old, the St John Ophthalmic Hospital was just two years old and the St John Ambulance Brigade was still three years away from being formed. Hiram's 1884 invention was so noisy that he issued warning notices to people in the area when he tested it. That area was Clerkenwell.

The site of the tests, on the corner of Hatten Garden and Clerkenwell Road, is marked now by one of those ubiquitous British blue plaques. The plaque is no more than 500 metres from St John's Gate purchased for St John by Sir Edmund Lechmere in 1873. Hiram's noisy tests may well have been heard at the Gate. The warnings were not without reason; Sir Hiram himself became deaf from the noise he created. The invention was described as the first (satisfactory) fully automatic machine gun. The Maxim gun consisted of a single barrel and made use of the recoil to eject spent cartridges and to reload the firing chamber. It could fire about 1000 rounds a minute, equivalent to about 30 rounds of the rifles of the day. The Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, was greatly impressed by the gun and it was adopted by the British Army in 1889 and by the Royal Navy in 1892.

In the Matabele War of 1893, fifty British infantrymen with four Maxim guns defended themselves against 5000 warriors and killed 3000 of them. As Hiliare Belloc (1870–1953), famously the author of *Cautionary Tales for Children*, wrote:

Whatever happens, we have got  
the Maxim gun, and they have not.

However it was not long hence that the armies of USA, Russia, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, Italy, Serbia and Finland soon all acquired the Maxim gun.

Hiram was knighted in 1901 by King Edward VII who by then was the Sovereign Head of the Order of St John, having previously been the Grand Prior.



*Sir Hiram Maxim demonstrates his famous machine gun.*

## The development of the 'Pipe of Peace'

When Sir Hiram, at the age of 60, began suffering severe attacks of bronchitis he consulted his family physician and several other doctors. He tried hot springs in France and the treatment system at Vos's Inhalatorium in Nice. That Inhalatorium was the only treatment that gave him significant relief.

Sir Hiram bought some glass tubing and made some simple inhalers for himself. He found them more effective than those of Mr Vos. He gave them to a few people who gave glowing reports of their usefulness. He then made 200 and gave them away. Thereafter sale of the inhalers was placed in the hands of John Morgan Richards and Sons Ltd, of 46 Holborn Viaduct, London. Hundreds of thousands were sold through this one agency.



*Maxim's 'Pipe of Peace' or bronchial inhaler, with its glass tubing and menthol-soaked gauze.*

Actually, two slightly different inhalers were marketed for Sir Hiram Maxim by John Morgan Richards and Sons. They were the Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace. The Inhaler was meant as a pocket appliance to be brought into play at the first sign of bronchial or similar trouble. It was comprised of a glass tube containing gauze material already soaked in menthol. By breathing through the tube, air could be drawn through the menthol-soaked gauze and delivered to the back of the patient's throat. Indents were provided in the tubing into which the patient's teeth could sink so that the device extended for 5.5 cms into the mouth. If the dose of menthol seemed too great, Sir Hiram instructed patients not to close their lips tightly around the tubing, but to allow air in alongside the tubing as well as through it.

The larger inhaler was known as the Pipe of Peace. The principle of direct inhalation was the same as with the Maxim Inhaler, but a compound essence of pine was used instead of menthol. The essence of pine was extracted from pine needles. You will recall that Hiram was born in Maine, USA. Pine trees grew in abundance in Maine and are featured on Maine's Coat of Arms. The pine essence is so highly volatile that the warmth of hands holding the bowl of the Pipe of Peace provided sufficient heat to give healing fumes in the inhalation. Pine needles were said to contain a principle fatal to germs 'which although unidentified are known to be the direct cause of bronchitis and bronchial irritation'.

Inhaling pine essence often caused coughing. To avoid this complication Sir Hiram devised a secret formula by adding small quantities of the essences of Wintergreen and Sweet Birch to the pine essence. This combined product was marketed under the name of 'Dirigo', from the Latin which means 'I guide' or 'I direct'. Sir Hiram's Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler were designed to guide or direct the curative vapours straight to the throat. It is no coincidence that the term 'Dirigo' is the one word motto on the Coat of Arms of the State of Maine.

The Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace were described as being of great service to clergymen, vocalists, actors and public speakers. The package deal of the Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler together with bottles of Dirigo and menthol crystals could be obtained for 15 shillings and six pence and only from John Morgan Richards and Sons. It came in a plain strong cardboard box and postage was included in the price.



## Instructive parallels

There is a certain parallel here between Sir Hiram and the Order of St John. Both had a military bent. The Hospitallers as far back as the twelfth century, when Raymond Du Puy became Master of the Order, were a well-equipped and feared fighting force. Hiram's Machine Gun, likewise was a significantly feared military piece of equipment—it killed far more of the enemy than all the Hospitallers ever did.

The parallels go further than that, however. Both Hiram and St John volunteers worked in London, and more precisely, in Clerkenwell. And then both Sir Hiram and the Order turned to peaceful pursuits. Sir Hiram invented his 'Pipe of Peace' and St John dedicated itself to the relief of suffering. The warning for St John is that Sir Hiram is remembered more for his machine gun than for his inhalers. We should take note!

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# Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance

## Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

*As noted above in the introduction to the article on Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Dr Howie-Willis is a Canberra-based professional historian. His most recent book, A Medical Emergency (Blue Sky Publishing, 2012), is a biography of the inaugural St John Ambulance Chief Commissioner in Australia, Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston. He is currently researching a history of the Australian Army's experience of malaria.*



From its inception in Australia in 1902 the St John Ambulance Brigade (later called 'Operations Branch' and later still 'First Aid Services') has had close and continuing ties with the Australian Army Medical Services. This article aims to present an overview of the many links between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. It is, however, such a vast topic, I could not hope to cover it comprehensively in the 15 minutes available for the seminar paper from which it grew. What therefore follows is the barest summary and leaves the way open to other researchers who might wish to pursue the topic further.

I propose to deal with the topic biographically by alluding to some of the leading St John figures who have held office in both St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. Before doing that, however, I must explain what the Army Medical Services are. Briefly, and depending on what war or period of peace is under consideration, the Army Medical Services have comprised the following military formations:

- the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, extant from 1902 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, extant from 1903 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps, extant from 1943 until the present
- the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS), extant from 1942 until 1951, the AAMWS having been a wartime outgrowth of ...
- the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs), extant from 1909 until post-World War II, the VADs having been a uniformed, quasi-military ancillary medical service not within the Army but operating under military control and using personnel drawn mainly from Red Cross and St John Ambulance.



*The formations which have historically comprised the Australian Army Medical Services: (L–R) the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps and the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS).*

My argument is that at all stages of Australian history since Federation in 1901 a close and continuing connection between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services (AMS) has existed. The link is informal and personal, consisting of a high degree of cross-membership rather than through any structural bonds. The link works to the great advantage of both organisations because St John

personnel comprise a pool of professionally trained, highly motivated and skilled first aiders on which the AMS may draw; conversely, St John has been able to secure professional expertise from the AMS plus potential leaders with experience of emergency medicine under the most trying conditions of all—on the battlefield and under fire.

## Origins of the St John Ambulance Army Medical Services link

As originally conceived in 1887 and continuing into the early post-World War II years, the role of the St John Ambulance Brigade was twofold. First, the Brigade was a disciplined, uniformed civilian organisation undertaking first aid duties at public events. Second, the Brigade was also available when required to be a military medical reserve force in times of war.

The ancillary military purpose was set out in the Brigade's first set of General Regulations, issued in April 1889. The third of four 'objects' or aims was 'to enrol a highly trained body of civilians as supplement to Army Medical Department for service at home and abroad'. It was in fulfillment of this objective that the Brigade in Britain sent contingents of first aiders to the Boer or South African War of 1898–1902.

## A personal approach

I cannot possibly include here all the very many distinguished St John people with Army Medical Service experience, so what I plan to do is divide the past 136 years since the foundation of St John Ambulance into seven major eras or phases of history and then discuss the AMS–St John link through reference to several representative personages from each era. I have no time to give even the shortest of biographical profiles of each of the twenty characters I will use to demonstrate the strength of the link. Instead I will simply comment briefly on their significance.

## First era: pre–1900

### Not Australian St John history but relevant to its subsequent development.

- Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879): career Army medical officer, teacher of the inaugural St John first aid class and author of the first St John first aid manual.
- Surgeon-General William George Nicholas Manley VC (1831–1901): career Army medical officer, a co-founder of St John Ambulance and possibly the person who developed the St John two-wheeled stretcher or litter, the original 'St John ambulance' which gives us our name.
- Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC (1831–1901).



*Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC, 1831–1901.*

## Second era: 1900 to World War I

### The period of the foundation of the St John Ambulance Brigade in Australia.

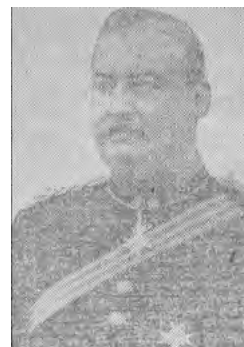
- Dr George Thomas Lane Mullins (1862–1918): the first effective St John Commissioner in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel during World War I.
- Dr Reuter Emrich Roth (1858–1924): the first District Surgeon in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel with service experience in the South African and First World Wars.
- Dr George F McWilliams (1865–1907): a Medical Corp lieutenant-colonel who had seen active service in the Boer War, he had taught the first public first aid class in Western Australia in 1892 and in 1904 became the inaugural St John Ambulance Commissioner there.



*Dr Reuter E Roth  
(1858–1924)*



*Dr George F McWilliams  
(1865–1907)*



*Dr George T Lane  
Mullins (1862–1918).*

### Third era: World War I

**The period when St John Ambulance demonstrated its usefulness as an AMS ancillary.**

- Sir Neville Reginald Howse VC (1863–1930): a VC and KStJ who led the AMS units in the 1st AIF then served as post-war AMS head, 1921–1925.
- Sir Hugh Raymond Guy Poate (1884–1961): the record-holding NSW St John Ambulance Commissioner and inaugural Chancellor of Priory; a lieutenant-colonel with active service at Gallipoli in World War I then a RAAF Group Captain in World War II.



*Sir Neville R Howse VC  
(1863–1930)*



*Sir Hugh RG Poate  
(1884–1961)*

### Fourth era: inter-war years

**The period when the AMS leadership fully recognised the potential of St John Ambulance as ancillary support for the Army.**

- Major-General Rupert Major Downes (1885–1945): his 24 years as Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner is the Australian record; he was a World War I colonel with active service on Gallipoli and in Palestine in World War I; then led the AMS into World War II.
- Dr John R Donaldson (1895–1985): he was a captain with overseas service in World War I; he was commandant of VADs in Western Australia during 1930s and was a lieutenant-colonel during World War II; he served as WA St John Ambulance Commissioner 1939–1961 then as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia, 1959–1969.



*Major-General Rupert M  
Downes (1885–1945)*



*Dr John R Donaldson  
(1895–1985)*



## Fifth era (Part I): World War II (Army Medical Corps)

### The 'golden age' of the AMS–St John link.

- Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston (1888–1960): he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia then inaugural Chief Commissioner for Australia 1946–1956; he had active service at Gallipoli and on the Western Front in World War I; he led the AMS in the Middle East in World War II and then from 1942 led the AMS in Australia for the remainder of the war during the Island campaigns, when it reached its maximum strength of 32,000 personnel.
- Brigadier Sir William Wallace Stewart Johnston (1887–1962): he saw active service on the Western Front in World War I; he was deputy head of the AMS at the outbreak of World War II; he then saw much active service in Palestine, Greece and the Island campaigns as a brigadier; he was Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner 1951–1956 then Chief Commissioner 1957–1962.
- Major-General Sir Frank Kingsley Norris (1893–1984): he saw active service on Gallipoli in World War I and in World War II in the Syrian and Island campaigns; he succeeded Burston as head of the AMS in 1948 and held the position until 1955, leading the AMS during the Korean War of the early 1950s; he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1956–1959 and was then Chief Commissioner 1962–1969.



(L–R) Major-General Sir S Roy Burston (1898–1960), Sir William WS Johnston (1884–1962) and Major-General Sir F Kingsley Norris (1893–1984).

## Fifth era (Part 2): World War II (VADs and AAMWS)

### The period when St John-trained VADs proved so effective that the Army assimilated them as a new formation, the AAMWS.

- Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976): she joined a VAD unit early in World War II and rose rapidly to become VAD State secretary for Queensland; she was then recruited to become inaugural St John Ambulance Brigade District Superintendent in Queensland in 1950 then, after serving 19 years, became national Chief Superintendent Nursing 1969–1976.
- Amelia ('Millie') Field (1917–2007): after learning first aid, she joined the pre-war South Melbourne VAD unit; she transferred into the AAMWS in 1942; taught first aid for St John Ambulance post-war; and late in life she wrote and published the Victorian St John Ambulance centenary history.



Mrs Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976), left; and Miss Millie Field (1917–2007).

## Sixth era: early post-war decades

**The period when, under the direction of former senior AMS officers who had been wartime commanders, the St John Ambulance Brigade reached its historic maximum strength.**

- Sir George Grafton Lees Stening (1904–1996): he was a colonel who saw active service at Tobruk and then commanded the Concord Military Hospital in Sydney; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in New South Wales 1945–1951; Sir Hugh Poate's protégé, he succeeded him as Priory Chancellor in 1961 and then held the position for a record 21 years.
- Brigadier Alec Letts Dawkins (1905–1975): reached the rank of brigadier in World War II after active service in the Middle East and the Island campaigns; St John Ambulance Commissioner in Western Australia 1961–66 then served as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia 1969–1973.
- Colonel Charles Douglas Donald (1910–1979): saw active service in World War II, in which he served as a major; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1959–66 and then Chief Commissioner 1969–1979.



*(L–R) Brigadier Alec L. Dawkins (1905–1975) , Colonel Sir George GL Stening (1904–1996) and Colonel C Douglas Donald (1910–1979).*

## Seventh era: recent times

**A competitive period during which St John had to fend off competitors to retain pre-eminence in the field of first aid delivery.**

- Ms Lynne Spencer (formerly Allen-Brown, 1946– ): a career nursing administrator and a captain in the Royal Australian Nursing Corps; St John Ambulance District Superintendent in New South Wales from 1990, then Chief Superintendent from 1993 and then became our first (and so far only) female Chief Commissioner in 1999.
- Major-General David Rossi (1945– ): career Army medical officer; saw active service in Vietnam; Director-General of Army Health Services 1990–1992 then Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1992–1996; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland then Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory 2002–2005.
- Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ): career Army medical officer but now the Director (Professor) of the Centre for Military and Veterans' Health at the University of Queensland; saw active service in Vietnam and Rwanda; St John Ambulance Director of Training 2002–2011.
- Major-General John Hemsley Pearn (1940– ): active service in Papua New Guinea, Vietnam and Rwanda; Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1998–2001; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland; he was St John Ambulance Director of Training 1990–1999; and from May 2012 has been the Priory Librarian, the tenth to hold the position since it was established in 1942.

This brisk canter through 136 years of St John history has passed more figures than it has stopped to consider. Those left out of my survey include significant personalities like Lieutenant-Colonel George Horne (inaugural St John Commissioner in Victoria); Sir Kenneth Fraser (inaugural Commissioner in



(L–R) Major-General David Rossi (1945– ), Major-General John H Pearn (1940– ), Ms Lynne Allen-Brown (1946– ) and Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ).

Queensland) and his successor Colonel Murray Elliott (a subsequent Priory Librarian, the seventh); Colonel Alex Christie (inaugural Chief Superintendent); Drs Noel Colyer and Alan King (Commissioners in Western Australia); Dr James Fotheringham MC (Commissioner in South Australia); Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon Young (Commissioner in New South Wales then Chief Commissioner); Major-General Colin Gurner (inaugural Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory); Dr Vlas Efsthatis (Commissioner and then St John Council Chair in Queensland); Dr Franklin Bridgewater (a St John Chief Professional Officer; then Commissioner in South Australia and now the Priory Director of Ceremonies); Lieutenant-Colonel Geoffrey Newman-Martin (former Commissioner in the ACT); Professor Peter Leggatt (James Cook University); Colonel Jeffrey Rosenfeld (former Commissioner in Victoria); Michael Campion (current Hospitaller of our Priory) and Major Michael Tyquin (the historian of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps). Nor does my survey include any of the many hundreds of other ranks: the privates and non-commissioned officers who, like two current Historical Society members, Vince Little and Trevor Mayhew, gave the best years of their lives to both St John and the Army Medical Services.

I apologise to them all for my sin of omission but plead that this is only a preliminary survey and hopefully other historians will continue where I've left off. Meanwhile, I hope that the foregoing article has demonstrated the point that there is a continuing close but informal link between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services through particular individuals who have worked in both.

For St John Ambulance at least, the connection has been greatly advantageous. It has brought into the organisation people of great talent and with skills immediately applicable in the health and caring causes which St John serves. Their knowledge, discipline, application, steadfastness, sense of community service and leadership skills have had a hugely beneficial impact on St John Ambulance. Long may St John continue to attract people like them!

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# ‘To Arms!’ The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia

## James Cheshire MStJ

*Mr James Cheshire is the Secretary of the Historical Society. As such he organised the annual gathering of the Society in Sydney in May 2012, which generated the seminar papers from which the articles in Volumes 12 and 13 of this journal have been developed. Mr Cheshire is a member of the Australian Federal Police, in which he is a Federal Agent in Crime Operations in Melbourne. He is also studying law part-time. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal. He is married to Cherie, who has been a St John member for many years and has made a significant contribution to the development of the St John Cadet movement both in Victoria and nationally.*



During a visit to the Australian Office of St John Ambulance Australia some months ago, I took the opportunity to examine a fine framed document displayed within the museum display cabinets. It depicts the Banner of the Priory in Australia and is endorsed ‘Henry’. It was from this and strengthened by a discussion with the then Priory Librarian, Ian Howie-Willis, that I embarked on an effort to find the ‘grant of arms’ for the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem; that is, the official certificate authorising the Priory to display a heraldic device.

Had anyone seen a vellum parchment? Was there a seal-laden relic supporting the grand table in the board room? After realising that the answers to all such questions were probably in the negative, I set off on a research trek which found me causing more problems than I have so far solved.

In telling the story of my quest, I acknowledge and thank the outstanding assistance I have received in the production of this paper from Major William Hunt, the Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and also the Genealogist of the Order of St John.



*Major William G Hunt CStJ, Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and Genealogist of the Most Venerable Order of St John.*

## The arms and banner of the Order

The arms of the Most Venerable Order are the base for all of the arms of the Priorities and Commanderies within the Order. We have all seen the Order’s arms before and are familiar with them as the base for the arms of the other national associations of St John.

The arms are simply described in heraldic terms as being ‘Gules (red) a cross argent (silver), in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign’s Crest’. A very basic yet unmistakable design! In laypersons’ words, we could add that the arms consist of the square white cross on red field of our patron Saint, St John the Baptist, with the royal crown and lion in the top left section. The arms are referred to in the Royal Charters and Statutes (2004), and the St John (Order) Regulations 2003 in the following terms:





*The painting of the Standard (banner) of the Priory in Australia, framed and on display in the Chancellor's Priory Heritage Collection in Canberra; and Lieutenant-Colonel Owen Beresford Williams MC, KStJ (1885–1963), the Victorian member of the Order who brought the Standard to Australia.*

## **Royal Charters and Statutes of the Order (2004)**

### **Part Four — Arms, Insignia, etc.**

#### **Statute 44. Arms of the Order**

The Arms of the Order shall be: Gules [red] a cross argent [silver], in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign's Crest and they shall be depicted and used in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

#### **Statute 46. Great Banner of the Order**

The Great Banner of the Order shall bear the Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 and it shall be designed and flown in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

## **The St John (Order) Regulations 2003**

### **Regulation 34. Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order**

Appendix I shall have effect for the purposes of Statutes 44, 45 and 46, under which provision may be made in respect of the Arms, the Badge and the Great Banner of the Order.

### **Appendix I Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order (Regulation 34)**

#### **1 Arms of the Order**

- (i) The following illustrates the ARMS of the Order as laid down in Statute 44, viz. Gules, a Cross Argent, in the first quarter a representation of Her Majesty's Crest.
- (ii) How Used

The Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 shall be used as laid down in Statute 46 (Great Banner of the Order) and Statute 49 (Armorial Bearings). They may also be used in any property, flag, parchment, paper, publication, or other article belonging to, used by, or issued by the Headquarters of the Order or Headquarters of Establishments of the Order, or otherwise as authorised by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council. Any other use of the Arms of the Order is prohibited.



*The Great Banner of the Order  
which displays the Order's Arms.*

## Authority to grant arms

The authority to grant armorial bearings or coats of arms is a regal *sui generis* right as the *fons honorum*. In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland it is the sole prerogative of the monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, so to do.

This power has been delegated by the Crown, however. The English Kings of Arms are appointed by the Sovereign by Letters Patent, which authorise them, inter alia, to grant on behalf of the Crown:

to eminent men Letters Patent of Arms and Crests jointly ... or alone at the will and pleasure of the Earl Marshal of England according to the ordinances and statutes from time to time issued.

The jurisdiction of the English Kings of Arms is generally considered to extend to all subjects of the Crown worldwide, with the exception of 'domiciled Scotsmen living in Scotland' and 'domiciled Canadians living in Canada', which have their own heraldic authorities.

The earliest surviving grant of Arms is to the Drapers' Company of 1439 and many of the early grants are to other livery companies; 'eminent men' is therefore deemed to include eminent corporate bodies.

The College of Arms was established by Richard III by way of Royal Charter in 1484. The College is known in the United Kingdom as a Royal Corporation, what might be known in Australia as a public authority, whereby it is a state-owned company which undertakes commercial activities. It receives no money from government and is required to support its self through its commercial endeavours.

The College is overseen by the Earl Marshal who is currently the Duke of Norfolk. There are thirteen officers of the College including the:

- three Kings of Arms: Garter Principal, Clarenceux, and Norroy and Ulster
- six Heralds, being Chester, Lancaster, Windsor, Somerset, Richmond and York
- four Pursuivants of Arms: Bluemantle, Portcullis, Rouge Croix and Rouge Dragon.

The Windsor Herald also holds the office of Genealogist of the Order of St John, as provided for in Regulation 11. The current Windsor Herald and Genealogist of the Order is Major William Hunt CStJ TD FCA.

While Canada has created its own heraldic authority, Australia has not done so and thus the College of Arms retains the right to grant arms to Her Majesty's subjects in the Commonwealth of Australia.

## Approved banner design

So what then is this approved banner design? It is clearly a representation of the Banner of the Priory in Australia. It has the hallmarks of the basic Order heraldic design, being Gules, with a Cross Argent and in the first quarter a representation of Her Majesty's Crest. At the centre there is a circle azure (blue) bearing a representation of the constellation crux or Southern Cross. The inscription reads:

The Order of St John  
Standard of the Priory in Australia

It is then endorsed *without* a date and just this simple copperplate notation and the signature of one 'Henry':

Approved  
Henry  
Grand Prior.

The chronology of the Priory's early years would suggest that the 'Henry' in question was His Royal Highness Field Marshal Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, who was Grand Prior between 1942 and 1974, when his son, the current Duke of Gloucester, HRH Prince Richard, took over the role on his father's death. Prince Henry was also the 11th Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia between 1945 and 1947. Given that the Priory of Australia was established in 1947, while Prince Henry was concurrently the Governor General and Grand Prior, it would seem not impossible that he approved this design whilst performing both roles and perhaps while still domiciled in Australia.

The first dated reference to the banner that can be located within the Priory archives is found in the annual report of the Priory in Australia of 1956. An almost passing reference is made by Lieutenant-Colonel EAH Russell in his Priory Librarian's Report for the twelve months ending 31 December 1956, in which he notes that the Priory Library had 'been endowed with gifts of great historical value', including:

3. Grand Priory: A Standard, manufactured and presented by Grand Priory, and brought to Australia by Lieut.-Colonel Owen B. Williams, M.C., K.St.J.

There is no record of when the standard first came in to hands of the Priory, nor is there any particular note of its use. One can only assume from the information available that some time soon after the approval the banner was made in the United Kingdom and then transported to Australia by Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, as mentioned in the report by the Priory Librarian.

## The Commandery of Western Australia

At this point in my research I was still no closer to identifying a grant of any Arms to the Priory in Australia. I therefore decided to engage another of our eminent St John historians, Dr Edith Khangure, and her cohort of 'can-do' fellow St John researchers, heritage custodians and knowledge-holders in Western Australia.

And so I enquired of Dr Khangure if she was aware of any grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia or to the Commandery of Western Australia. The immediate answer was that there is no instant recollection of anyone in the West ever seeing a formal grant, but that she could remember previously sighting an authority for the Banner of the Commandery. No closer to a result but a familiar pattern was developing!

The good Dr Khangure was able to provide me with a banner design endorsed as approved by 'Henry Grand Prior' and again, undated.

The design of the Commandery banner is true to the form seen previously. It takes as its base the Arms and banner of the Order with a local embellishment to signify the particular entity which it represents. In this case it is the Black Swan or *Cygnus atratus*—the official emblem of the State of Western Australia.



The signature 'Henry' signifying the Grand Prior's approval of the Arms of the Priory in Australia.





*The painting of the Banner of the Commandery in Western Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, with a note at the bottom right indicating that the Grand Prior had approved the design of the Commandery's Arms.*

But what of any formal grant of Arms? This is the design used for many years by the Commandery of Western Australia as its Arms, even prior to its closer administrative links with the Priory in Australia. No grant of Arms can be found, nor can any reference to a grant of Arms be located within the archives of St John in Western Australia. Nor, for that matter, does there appear to be a record of a grant of Arms to the Priory and Commandery in the archives of the Order at St John's Gate in London!

Clearly the only logical next step was to go to the issuing authority, the College of Arms in London, to obtain some information from their records about when the grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia was made.

## Windsor Herald and genealogist of the Order of St John

Prior to venturing into what was thought to be uncharted waters overseas, I sought and was granted the permission of the Priory's Director of Ceremonies and the Priory Secretary to make an initial enquiry with the Windsor Herald. I sent Major William Hunt an email outlining that I was doing some research and that I was keen to ascertain some detail about the grant of Arms to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. Major Hunt very kindly and promptly responded with the information that there was no record within the College of Arms databases of any grant being made to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. It was at this point that we now found ourselves on a sticky wicket.

The Law of Arms is an ancient one and since 1417 vests power with the Kings of Arms to prevent anyone bearing Arms 'unless by ancestral right or by grant from a competent authority'. This was ongoing work during the period with various actions being taken by the Kings of Arms to eliminate 'all false armory and arms devised without authority'.

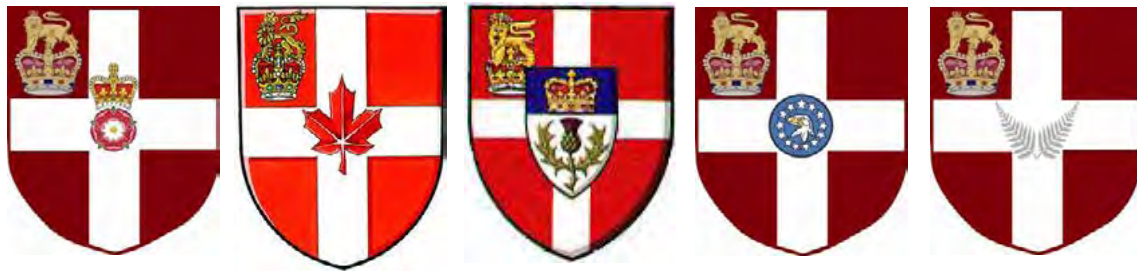
Given a Royal Commission, the Kings of Arms between 1530 and 1689 visited English and Welsh counties to establish that Arms were borne with proper authority, with anyone found using Arms without entitlement forced to make a public disclaimer.

Since the 14th century the Court of Chivalry has had jurisdiction over cases of misuse of Arms. The court sits in the civil jurisdiction and has as its sole judge the Earl Marshal. There have been a number of cases in the past; however, the court's authority remains extant and was exercised as recently as 1954 when the Manchester Corporation took action against the Manchester Palace of Varieties with the latter being a theatre which was successfully sued for illegally displaying the Arms belonging to the corporation.



I wrote back to Major Hunt outlining the research I had done and provided copies of the endorsed Banners for the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. I asked if it were possible that they may have been granted under another grant by the College. Major Hunt very kindly offered to look through the archives given we could establish that it was unlikely to have been granted prior to the establishment of the Priory in Australia in 1947 and certainly not prior to the establishment of the Commandery of Australia in 1941. Major Hunt was able to locate approximately two dozen archive boxes dealing with St John issues which he inherited from the previous Windsor Herald and Genealogist of the Order of St John, Sir Peter Gwynn-Jones. Alas Major Hunt was still unable to identify any grant of Arms or any registering of the Banners with the College of Arms.

Major Hunt then made some enquiries on my behalf and now, on his own motion, has identified other Priories that had not received a grant of Arms but would appear to have been using same. The larger question was: who were they and what can be done?



*Arms of five Priories of the Most Venerable Order of St John. (L–R): the Priory of England and the Islands, the Priory of Canada, the Priory of Scotland, the Priory in the United States of America and the Priory in New Zealand.*

## The way forward

I was fortunate to spend some time speaking on the telephone with Major Hunt in the past few weeks. Although extremely busy with a variety of ceremonial and other heraldic and St John tasks, he has been extremely helpful and provided the Priory and myself with outstanding support and advice.

While some of the background briefing Major Hunt has been able to provide me shall remain in confidence as he requested, it can be said that Major Hunt has prepared a formal report for the Garter King of Arms in relation to the issue, as well as briefing St John International Office. Within this report he outlines the issues identified as a result of the search he has conducted of the records of the College and the areas requiring some formal decision in relation to the regularising of current practice.

It seems that, given there are a number of other St John Arms to be granted in the near future, being the new Commanderies of Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man, it could be possible for a composite grant of Arms to be made by the College. This would regularise the Arms currently being used by the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia.

Whether or not this is a possible way forward is still dependant on the results of the recommendations contained in the report that Major Hunt has prepared for the Garter King of Arms. We await his further advice.

## Reports from the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society

### **St John Ambulance Archives, New South Wales**

*Loredana Napoli, Information Management Coordinator, and  
Betty Stirton DStJ, Honorary Archivist St John Ambulance New South Wales*

During the past twelve months, the St John Ambulance Australia NSW Archive has maintained the work of research and record keeping. As an Archive operating during business hours, we do not have a committee and therefore no Annual General Meeting. An Archive report is presented by Betty Stirton, Honorary Archivist at the NSW State Council Meetings giving details of the work that has been done in the previous three months. Significant events and achievements during the year were as follows.

#### **Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary**

In 2011 Western Suburbs Cadet Division held their Jubilee celebration of 75 years. St John Archives prepared and supplied histories of past members for their families as well as a display depicting the work of the Cadets. The Division has a strong membership of 20 juniors, 12 preliminary members and 40 senior cadets, in addition to senior Cadet Leaders, Officers, Superintendent and President.



*Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary celebrations.*

### **St John (NSW) Registers**

Since our Archive commenced in 1990 we have compiled registers for St John Honours with over 2200 entries, Service Awards 2200 entries, Grand Prior Awardees 1737 entries and Special Service Shields 363 entries. The St John Honours register contains the following information: Full name of Postulant, Awarded dates of Priory Vote of Thanks (PVT), Member St John, Officer St John, Commander, Dame, Knight, Bailiff Grand Cross. Also within this register are the dates of Centenary Medal and St John 50 Year Plaque (issued by St John [NSW] for 50 years of Service) and Deceased date.

As well as PVT dates there are these awards: Honorary Associate 1895–1926, Vellum Vote of Thanks 1901–1943, Commandery Vote of Thanks 1945–1947, Priory Vote of Thanks 1948–2010.

The St John Service Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee, Division/Training area the member belongs to, the Year the Service Medal was received, followed by the Years when Bars 1 through to 9 were awarded.

The Grand Prior and Special Service Shield Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee; Division the Awardee belongs to; Year Award was received. Service hours include 100, 200, 500, 800, 1000, 1,200, 1500, 1800 and 2000. Special Service Shields were introduced in 1947. The First Grand Prior Award in Australia was in 1933 to Marion Higgins from Marrickville Cadet Division (NSW).

### **Homage Roll**

In 1995 we commenced a Homage Roll and each year at the Investiture the Governor and recipients sign their name. This year a Homage Roll was prepared for the Investiture held by Professor Anthony Mellows, Lord Prior of The Most Venerable Order, held at The Great Hall, University of Sydney. As well as the NSW Postulants the Homage Roll includes the International and Interstate Postulants.

### **Research**

We were very fortunate that the early Secretaries of the St John Ambulance Association and Brigade were people who kept the history and gave us an excellent start to our Archives. This enabled Archives to provide seven of the ten names of Australians who attended the Centenary of the Revival of the Order of St John in England in 1931. Those named were NSW members.

We encourage all sections of St John Ambulance in NSW to deposit their Minute books in our Archive as the information provides valuable information on the work performed in their local communities.

### **Women in St John History Project**

Histories and photographs of St John New South Welsh-women were submitted, and a selection published in *Celebrating women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future*. This publication was officially launched on Saturday 19 May 2012 at the 2012 National St John Member Convention in Sydney.

## **Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee**

*Dawn Bat OStJ, Secretary, Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee*

The Northern Territory St John Historical Group met on Thursday 29 March 2012 and elected committee members as required by National Headquarters. Frank Dunstan agreed to be Chairman and Dawn Bat accepted the Secretarial position; Steve Peers, Gwyn Balch, Lesley King, Pat King and Debbie Garraway make up the Committee. Alan Caust, who had been a long standing member, has recently left the Territory. We intend to hold quarterly meetings in the lead up to the 2013 Conference in Darwin to plan and prepare activities and displays. We are hoping to include our Youth Division in the program as some of the members have expressed an interest in being involved.

Our financial membership has decreased this year although it is difficult to be sure of the exact number as some membership has been forwarded directly to the National Office whilst others have still chosen to pay in the Volunteer Office in Darwin. The change in payment of membership fees from local acceptance to the need to send fees to National Office has not been well received hence the drop off in financial membership. We are hoping to be able to discuss this problem with the National Committee at this year's Convention.

The volunteer members of St John in Alice Springs celebrated fifty years of serving their community in October 2011. Among the dignitaries who attended the celebrations were St John Ambulance Chancellor, Dr Neil Conn AO and Mrs Lesley Conn as well as former NT Administrator, Mr Ted Egan AO and Ms Nerys Evans. It was also an honour to have long serving St John NT board member, Dr. Alan Bromwich in attendance. The Mayor of Alice Springs, Mr Damian Ryan, hosted a reception where a number of presentations were made recognising the service of the members to the Alice community.

*Alice Springs St John 50th anniversary birthday cake.*



The ambulance centre on Telegraph Terrace was renamed the Bernie Kilgariff Complex in honour of the well-known and respected Bernie Kilgariff AM who recently passed away. He was a Board member for over twenty years and was always willing to assist the volunteers in any way he could. His daughter Fran Kilgariff is now a board member and carries on her father's tradition.



*Members of the Kilgariff Family at the Ambulance Centre in Alice Springs.*

The Northern Territory History book which is being written by Frank Dunstan is progressing well and it is hopefully going to be ready to be launched at the 2013 Conference. On a recent visit to Darwin, Commissioner Steve Peers took several boxes of records from Alice Springs to be stored in our archives. Frank has been going through these and scanning important and interesting accounts of the Alice Springs history for the book. We were fortunate enough to receive a small grant to assist with the work Frank is doing, this will help him with the incidental costs involved in research, travel and copying fees. [Editorial note: at the time of printing this volume of the history journal, Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs: A history of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory is at the printers, and it will be officially launched at the National Member Convention Opening Ceremony being held on Friday 31 May at Government House.

Following on from the *Celebrating Women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future* which includes thirteen Territorians, it has been decided to collect



*History Display at the St John members' dinner, Alice Springs 2011.*



the stories of other Northern Territory St John women and create a book of Territory women's stories. We are also investigating the possibility of producing a similar book recording details of past Commissioners of the NT.

The Volunteer Office Staff has been increased from two to three this year as the administration work load continues to grow. There are also two Community Education Officers working from the Volunteer Office making for a very busy and relatively small office.

At the Sydney St John Members' Convention in May 2012 we were pleased to meet St John volunteers and Historical Society members from other States, taking opportunity of the Convention to promoting the 2013 Members' Convention in Darwin.

## **The Priory and Australian Capital Territory**

*Ian Howie-Willis KStJ, historical adviser, Office of the Priory*

The Chancellor's Priory Heritage Collection, consisting of library, pictorial and museum-type holdings, continues to grow steadily if slowly. The collection receives donations of materials and, where necessary, particular desirable items are purchased with moneys made available via the small annual budget for that purpose by the Priory Secretary. The items received into the collection are not necessarily spectacular, but rather reflect particular aspects of St John's historical development in Australia especially but also overseas as well. Several particular items added to the collection in the past year suggest the eclectic nature of the collection. These include:

- an original copy of the first 'Little Black Book' or St John Ambulance first aid manual, Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd's iconic 1878 *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries and Sudden Illness*, donated by Terry Walton, the Historical Society's representative in the UK;
- a framed copy of the Pro Hart painting, 'Knights of St John in Australia', donated by the late Pro Hart;
- copies of the St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea 50th anniversary commemorative medal and ribbon plus miniature, donated by Peter Le Cornu, the Priory Secretary;
- a 1960s St John Ambulance Brigade (Queensland) probationary member's reflective armband, donated by Beth Dawson, the Chair of the History and Heritage Committee of St John Ambulance (Queensland);
- a large set of matchbox-size model ambulances of various types and makes, all marked with the St John Ambulance name and logo, purchased from the owner with Peter McMurtrie (St John Commissioner in Queensland) acting as the go-between;
- a copy of the book *Two pennies and a piece of wire*, an oral history of the former South Australian St John Ambulance Service compiled by Glen Woods, the donor;
- a model of the 'Tardis', the time-travel spaceship from the long-running BBC television science fiction drama, *Dr Who*, donated by Ian Howie-Willis, retiring Priory Librarian. The Tardis from the outside appears to be an ordinary public police call-box of the type common in London in the 1960s. On its front door is a St John Ambulance logo, because such call-boxes also functioned as emergency first aid posts. As *Doctor Who* is hugely popular with its vast worldwide audience, the Tardis brings the St John Ambulance logo to the TV screens of countless millions of viewers. Even if it acts only subliminally, the St John image on the Tardis door is a powerful free promotional boost for the Order.

The Priory Bibliographer, Pam Cunningham, and Priory Curator, Jeanette Regan, are making steady progress in cataloguing and numbering the books and other print media materials in the library and the many items in the pictorial and museum collections. The computer program they are using for this task, Collectorz, is a sophisticated database enabling the catalogues to be placed online for use by anyone with Internet access. The program includes thumbnail images of the covers of the books, journals, pictures and museum exhibits in the collections, thus facilitating easy visual recognition.

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) St John History and Heritage Society remains quiescent; however, if and when necessary, it can be readily reactivated. Meanwhile, the Priory Librarian, Priory Bibliographer, Priory Curator and historical adviser to the Office of the Priory remain available to advise St John Ambulance (ACT) management on matters relating to history and heritage. One project that

this team will attempt in the year ahead will be the compilation of an ACT Roll of Honour of all ACT personnel who have been members of the Order.

Finally, 20 May 2012 was a comparatively rare day in the life of the Priory, one on which one Priory Librarian succeeded another. That day, Professor John Pearn took over from Dr Ian Howie-Willis. Professor Pearn thus became only the tenth person, and the eighth medical practitioner, to have held the position since its creation in 1941. Dr Howie-Willis continues his association with the Australian Office of the Priory as historical adviser (a new honorary position) and he continues as the Historical Society's Editor..

## **The History and Heritage Committee, St John Ambulance, Queensland**

*Beth Dawson DStJ, Chair, History and Heritage Committee,  
St John Ambulance, Queensland*

The History and Heritage Committee of St John Ambulance (Qld) functions as the Queensland branch of The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia. The 'H&H' Committee has enjoyed an active and beneficial year since the last report. H&H Committee members have endeavoured to recruit new Queensland members for the Historical Society during the year, with some success.

Committee membership changed due to the death of Brian Dunstan in November 2011 and the resignations of Dr Geoffrey Gray and Mrs Margaret Hunt. Appointments to the Committee from February 2012 are: Mrs Rebecca McEwan CSU and Mr Robert De Vere MStJ; the other vacancy is yet to be filled. The Committee Chairman remains unchanged with the Minute Secretary being Executive Officer, Secretariat Ms Faye Gledhill CSTJ.

The Committee's financial matters are controlled by the Finance Department, hence an Hon. Treasurer has not been appointed. Due to the St John (Qld) Annual General Meeting being held at the end of March (which all St John Members are invited to) the Queensland branch of the society has not held an AGM. Branch reports are presented at each State Council Meeting as well as the Annual General Meeting to provide information of the branch's activities and future goals.

One of the Committee's projects for 2012 is the preparation of the Rolls of Honour, which is being undertaken by Mrs Ann Demaine. The Roll of Honour for Queensland Members of the Order of St John has been available for many years. Details of Priory Vote of Thanks, Service Medals and Bars as well as Grand Prior's Badge recipients are available as printed in 'First in First Aid' published in 1999. Queensland recipients of the St John Commendation (Silver and Bronze) details have recently been provided by First Aid Services and Community Services.

The scrapbook relating to the voluntary aid detachments in Queensland during WWII has been restored as a printed book by Mrs Dorothy Davidson MBE DStJ. The document has considerable historical significance for Australia. It also records the contribution of St John Ambulance VADs from England during the war who worked at the Royal Naval Hospital, Ekibin (Brisbane). A copy of this document will be donated to the John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland and the St John Ambulance Australia Library, Canberra.

As the History and Heritage Committee is a member of the National Trust of Queensland, a display has been contributed to the 2012 National Trust of Queensland Heritage Festival. The month-long festival celebrates historical and cultural heritage with this year's theme being 'Amazing stories, innovation and invention'. The St John (Qld) display focuses on the changes in first aid treatments and resuscitation methods since 1889, including the first aid kit style and content as well as the variety of services provided by the organisation.

St John Cadets continue to be supported by the Committee with the provision of resources for the Knowledge of the Order Proficiency Badge Course as well as assessment of projects submitted for the annual Mark Compton Award. An opportunity was provided for a Committee member to prepare material and speak to divisional superintendents/officers regarding the award, which has resulted in greater interest in the course.

Donations continue to be received, including a collection of earlier uniforms from a division established in 1951. Trophies have been restored as well as the binding of journals published by the St John Association and St John Ambulance Brigade during the 1970s and 1980s. Initial copies (printed in purple ink) of *The Review* have been found and the content is being read and recorded by a Committee member. This will provide a complete set of *The Review*, which Mrs Davidson started and has been editing for many years.

Research into the history of the Queensland Ambulance Service Transport Brigades (QATB) Cup has begun thanks to the assistance of Mr Vince Little KStJ. St John nursing members competed in the cup from 1952 to the mid-1970s. The current location of the QATB Cup is unknown.

The enthusiasm and commitment of the Committee members has enabled so much to be achieved during the monthly two-day working bees in the past year. I wish to thank each and every one of our members for their valuable input.

## **St John Historical Society of South Australia**

*Brian Fotheringham KStJ, Chair, St John Historical Society of South Australia*

In the previous report from South Australia it was mentioned that we were successful in gaining a Community Heritage Grant, and that several positive occurrences followed. On this occasion I can report that more nice things have happened following the publicity we received concerning the Grant. We received a substantial donation from a St John Ambulance member, for which we are most grateful. We used part of this donation to transfer the images on old movie film to DVDs. The film includes sequences showing Sir James Sleeman, Chief Commissioner of the Brigade Overseas, in South Australia in 1936.

We have also earned the right, by completing a Preservation Needs Assessment and the Significance Assessment, to now apply for a further grant from the Federal Government, via the Australian National Library. Our application this time is for funding to provide optimum storage for the estimated 10,000 photographs in our collection.

Sadly two of our members died during the year. They were Harry Tornaros and Alan Hills and we will miss their contributions to our regular meetings.

As requested, we have set about recording the names of all South Australians who have been members of the Order of St John. There are 999 names on the list at this stage.

Our office bearers, elected at the AGM in December, have shown great tenacity. They are the same talented individuals as listed in several previous reports and who give stability to our little society. They are Cliff Wright (Deputy Chairman), David Heard (Treasurer) and Lyn Dansie (Secretary). Indeed the whole of our membership is very loyal and we have consistently good attendances at our meetings.

Maintaining stability is a little difficult at times. The St John Board in South Australia a few months ago sold the former Unley Ambulance Centre in Arthur Street, Unley, the building that houses our collection. We believe that another site in Unley may become available for our use in the near future. It is even closer to our headquarters building than the Arthur Street property. Unfortunately any move to new premises cannot take place directly and our collection has to be packaged and placed in storage for a time. We look forward to our new accommodation and trust it will not be long before we can again display our collection.

On a lighter note, one of the removalist firms we asked to give an indicative quotation on packing and moving our many items, mentioned to us that they had four dummies (mannequins) they no longer required. They earlier had been acquired by the Customs authority but were no longer required. We now have them, free of charge, two males and two females. We have checked them for contraband, but didn't find any!

## **St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria**

*Shirley Moon OStJ, Chair, St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria*

The Victorian Branch continues to grow both in membership and in the scope of its activities. Membership as at the end of the financial year was 56 members.

During the year the Branch had a further four quarterly meetings at which, in addition to the business matters relating to the Branch and the St John Museum, there were presentations of historical papers. The topics were:

- Heroes of our forgotten past: The story of Eirene Appleton DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Saints associated with the Order of St John by Michael Sellar
- Alice Ishbel Hay Creswick QBE DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Evolution of grades in the Order of St John by Gary Harris.

Several of the papers were so well-received that presenters were urged to offer them for presentation at the annual Priory Conference. The custom of making such presentations at our quarterly meetings is seen as an important reason for the growing interest in local Branch membership.

A major activity of the Branch has been development of the Roll of Honour. It began a couple of years ago as a list of names of current and past members of all grades within the Order of St John in Victoria since its inception. It was then developed on a spreadsheet to include the years of award of Priory Votes of Thanks and admission and promotions to various grades, and the year of death of deceased members. This proved to be invaluable information for preparation of nominations for promotion, or writing obituaries where relevant. The next enhancement, mainly due to the hard work of our Treasurer, Gary Harris, was the inclusion of the Service medal and bars, and more recently, the 3, 6 and 9 years certificates, the Grand Prior's awards, all other awards recognised in post-nominals plus additional information such as St John Council membership and Senior Officer appointments. With these inclusions the Roll of Honour now has over 3000 names.

The Roll has now become so valuable that it is a primary source for Headquarters in appraisals for appointments and promotions as well as a resource for SJHS biographical papers. It is entirely composed of material from published public record material and does not rely on private confidential submissions.

A different but somewhat parallel program planned for the near future is the database recording of all old membership records. These are currently held in paper hard copy format in headquarters storage and are quite difficult to access when queries are received about former members. Although it will be a difficult task to list the thousands of past members we believe this will be a valuable resource for the archives.

St John Museum has received many donations of personal memorabilia and past records and materials from St John Divisions during the year. The displays and collections are constantly being updated. Several small albums devoted to specific members have been added to the collection when enough certificates, photos and documents are available. Our obituary display board now has more than forty brief biographies with photographs.

During the year our Honorary Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley, published a biography of the late Mrs Alice Creswick QBE DStJ, titled *Such Big Work*. This book was officially launched early in 2012 and is available through all bookshops.

Office-bearers in the SJHS Victorian Branch for 2011 were: Chair, Mrs Shirley Moon OStJ; Hon. Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ; Hon. Treasurer, Mr Gary Harris OStJ. The Committee members were: Mr Mervyn Goodali KStJ, Mr George Jackson CStJ, Miss Dorothy Bache DStJ, Mr Nicholas Clarke MStJ, Mr William Foley KSU and Mrs Gladys Blackstock CStJ.

At the time of writing (March 2012), nominations have been called for the 2012 election of Office-bearers which will be completed before the forthcoming Priory Conference



## **The Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, Western Australia**

*Edith Khangure CStJ, Librarian and Archivist, the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, St John Ambulance Australia (WA) Inc.*

In Western Australia the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre functions as the State branch of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia.

### **General status**

The general status of the Heritage Centre is good and summaries of work in the St John Museum and Archives are given in this report. Supplements provide additional information as required. We continue with our membership of Museums Australia.

### **Information Resource Centre**

The Heritage Centre continues as a reference centre for the Museum and Archives.

### **Archives**

This year considerable effort has been spent on acquiring and filing material related to volunteer sub-centres and Event First Aid Services (EFAS) divisions. We have also been sorting our records for past Priory meetings. Our ongoing commitment to digitising SJAA committee minutes is being maintained. This year we have commenced digital copying of official portraits.

### **Donations to and from the Museum**

Donations this year include a circular table, trophies and special presentation items, ties, photographs, books, (including some first aid books from Terry Walton, and, a copy of Maria Godwell's Fremantle Cadet history), ambulance equipment, a Resusci-Anne manikin, uniform items, first aid medallions and labels, shields, manuals, sub-centre records and documents. The donations came from members of the public, SJA personnel, EFAS and St John in Queensland.

The Museum donated a copy of our 'Centennial Anthology' book to a cadet from the Northern Territory. Insignia and duplicate books have been donated to a collection in Mandurah. Two SJAA ties were donated to a sub-centre. Three trophies, which were sent from EFAS to the Museum were national awards and, after consultation with the Priory Historian were returned to Canberra for their collection. Irene and John Ree delivered the trophies to the national office while they were visiting the eastern states.

### **Acquisitions by purchase**

A third montage of ambulance vehicles used in WA, ordered in the previous financial year, was received and has now been hung in the Heritage Centre foyer. A new tablecloth for the original SJAA Council table has also been purchased.

### **Loans**

Material was loaned to Fremantle EFAS cadet division for their 75th anniversary. Photographs were loaned to EFAS to assist with their sub-centre display in August 2011.

### **Reference queries and research work**

Requests for information on sub-centre and EFAS history; SJA personnel and old ambulances have been met this year. Inter-library loans were supplied to Dr Ozer. We provided information to Pam Cunningham and Jeanette Regan, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator in Canberra regarding Library and Museum protocols. We also assisted the Queensland History and Heritage Committee on computer programs for archives.

At the time of writing (March 2012), the 'Women in St John History' project is almost finished. Final selections for the book have been made and all editing is completed. The book is to be launched at the SJAA Members' Convention in Sydney in May 2012.

Two EFAS members from Mundaring sub-centre are compiling a detailed history and we are assisting with this project, which includes providing access to photocopying, digitising minutes of meetings, professional advice and marketing.

A roll of all members of the Order in WA is being compiled.

Research for our 120th anniversary of teaching first aid in WA is underway. We are assisting the Marketing department with information and illustrations for a major promotion of this milestone.

### **Cataloguing**

There is a substantial backlog with cataloguing but our major area of activity is currently with archival work.

### **Digitisation and binding**

The SJAA Council Reports for 2011 have been sent for copying in a digital format for archival purposes. The hard copy has been sent for binding and on its return will be housed in our fire-proof, secure room in Central Records. Some volumes of annual reports are being bound.

### **Restoration**

Considerable restoration work was undertaken this year. The original SJAA Council table and some chairs have been french-polished.

### **Museum promotion**

Material from the Museum was provided for the annual sub-centre conference in August 2011. In addition, tours of the Heritage Centre were organised during the conference.

We are currently assisting the Human Resources department in a revision of their Staff Handbook, which includes historical material. The Heritage Centre is also part of the tour for all new employees.

The Commandery Annual Report now includes items on ceremonial and heritage issues. This is a welcome development and follows a similar initiative in the Priory Annual Reports.

### **Museum volunteers**

Our regular volunteers are: Irene Simpson, John Ree, Barbara Franklin, Des Franklin, Frank Di Scerni, George Ferguson, Kevin Young and Betty Dyke. We are all working on material in the archives. Assistance is also received from Terry Walton in London. Our thanks go to these volunteers without whose help we would not be able to achieve so much.

### **Finance and security**

We are grateful to the organisation for providing our security system, insurance and funding. A fire safety audit this year resulted in an upgrading of fire extinguishers in the Centre.

### **Visitors**

The Centre has been delighted to receive visitors from the general public in WA and other states, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator, some schools and community groups, country and metropolitan SJAA staff and volunteers. The self-guided tour brochure is working well and will be revised this year as we change a number of displays.

### **Publications**

A feature on the Community Care Branch was included in the Commandery Annual Report 2010–2011.

### **The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia**

The Society's 2012 history seminar in May 2012 will feature some international speakers as the Grand Council are meeting in Sydney and overseas delegates have been asked to present a paper on behalf of their Priors. Several have accepted the invitation.

As mentioned, the Heritage Centre functions as the Western Australian Branch of the Historical Society. After being elected President of the Society in May 2011, Dr Allan Mawdsley advised all the Society's committee members of his vision to further the work of the Society, specifically that every State/Territory would: have a local elected committee with office bearers; hold an annual general meeting, and organise regular meetings with historical presentations. The first goal of this committee would be to compile an honour roll of every person in the State/Territory who is, or has ever been, a member of the Order.

The situation in Western Australia is that the State members of the Society's committee (Harry Oxer, Kevin Young and Edith Khangure) take care of all heritage matters; that is, there is no elected local committee. However, research is undertaken by the volunteer Ceremonial and Heritage group, which meets regularly, discusses issues and sorts archival material.

The WA members were surveyed as to whether they wished to adopt Dr Mawdsley's proposals. There was insufficient support for the idea of a local elected committee and our current status will therefore continue. WA is meeting the purposes and objects of the Society. The proposed honour roll was favourably received and it is underway. However, as this is an intense data-mining exercise it will take some time. Our best estimate of this is late 2013 after which we will continue with recording other categories, e.g. Service Medal and Bar recipients. This project will be undertaken alongside our other research and archival work. Further discussion on this is expected at the May 2012 meeting.

### **Projects 2012–2013**

Cataloguing, restoration work as funding permits, meeting reference requests and sorting Archival documents are ongoing.

The 'Women in St John History' project will continue through 2012. After the official launch the issue of the other entries which might be included is to be finalised. Material for the next sub-centre conference will be provided. Work will continue on the WA honour roll.

### **Summary**

We have had another busy and productive year in the Archives and all areas of our work.



'Preserving and promoting the St John heritage'

The pictures on the front cover reflect the theme of the leading article in this edition of St John History: 'Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management by Dr David Fahey, the State Medical Officer for St John Ambulance First Aid Services in New South Wales. As Dr Fahey's article makes clear, von Esmarch was a pioneering medical innovator as well as being the Surgeon-General of the German Army from 1870. Among his inventions was the triangular calico bandage that now bears his name: the versatile 'Esmarch bandage' imprinted with illustrations for its application. Successive generations of St John Ambulance-trained first aiders have learnt to use it, to the extent that it is often called the 'St John bandage'.

The front cover shows a portrait of von Esmarch in full formal military uniform superimposed on images of two versions of his famous eponymous bandage. Interestingly, among his honours and awards is the Maltese Cross of the Johanniterorden, the Order of St John of German and Lutheran tradition. The title page of *The Surgeon's Handbook* is also shown; one of Esmarch's two great books.





'Preserving and promoting  
the St John heritage'

*St John History* is the annual journal of the Historical Society, and is provided gratis to all financial members of the Society.

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# St John History

Proceedings of the St John Ambulance  
Historical Society of Australia  
Volume 13, 2013

Editor: Ian Howie-Willis (Historical Advisor), St John Ambulance Australia)

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## Introduction

### **St John History: about Volume 13, 2013**

*St John History* is the annual journal of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia. This edition, Volume 13, follows on from Volume 12, the special edition distributed in December 2012.

Whereas Volume 12, 2012 included the papers delivered at the Historical Society's International Symposium on 19 May 2012, this present volume, Volume 13, 2013, publishes the papers delivered at the domestic seminar the following day, 20 May 2012. It also contains the reports of the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society tabled at the Society's Annual General Meeting, which immediately followed the International Symposium on 19 May.

The domestic seminar on 20 May was the customary annual presentation of historical research papers by the Society's Australian members. It was the fourteenth consecutive seminar since the series began in Perth in 1999. The seminar was organised by the Historical Society's Secretary, Mr James Cheshire MStJ, with his usual flair and attention to detail. In planning and conducting the seminar, he was supported by the Society's President, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ, and Deputy Secretary, Dr Edith Khangure CStJ. Dr Mawdsley introduced and concluded the seminar, while Dr Khangure chaired both seminar sessions.

The seminar's keynote paper, delivered by Dr David Fahey, was the first of nine on the program, where he spoke of Friedrich von Eschscholtz and his contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management. Fahey's paper was followed by Dr Franklin Bridgewater KStJ with his fascinating paper titled *'The Most Venerable Order' or 'The Most Vulnerable Order' of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem?*; Mr Gary Harris OStJ talked about member quotas in *Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective*; Professor John Pearn KStJ and Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ reflected on the influential *Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his 'Little Black Book'*; Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ reminded us about *James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia*; Mr Trevor Mayhew KStJ gave an interesting talk on the *Medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John: A short history*; Dr Brian Fotheringham KStJ introduced *Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'*; Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ, looked at the *Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance*; and finally Mr James Cheshire MStJ closed with *'To Arms!' The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia*.

As usual, State and Territory historical society reports were tabled on 19 May 2012, and they are reflected here.

I trust that readers of this edition of the journal will agree with me that, like all its preceding twelve companion volumes, Volume 13 presents a kaleidoscopic but comprehensive view of the many activities being undertaken in Australia to 'Preserve and Promote the St John Heritage', as the Historical Society's motto says. Such activities are many and varied and probably will occur wherever there are 'St Johnnies' who appreciate what a great historical force for good St John Ambulance has been in Australia since arriving here 130 years ago.

On behalf of the Executive and members of the Historical Society, I express our gratitude to the Chancellor of the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, Dr Neil Conn GCStJ, who gives the Society much encouragement. Dr Conn appreciates the imperative of the Society's motto, 'Preserving and Promoting the St John Heritage', and that in turn helps us ensure that we can achieve our objectives. In this connection I also thank Mr Peter LeCornu OStJ, the Priory Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of St John Ambulance Australia. Mr LeCornu's generous support of the Society, both moral and material, is a key factor in the Society's continuing success. More particularly, it makes possible the publication and distribution of this journal.



Ian Howie-Willis  
Editor, February 2013

## Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management.

### David Fahey OStJ

*Dr David Fahey is a specialist anaesthetist working at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney. He is also the State Medical Officer for St John in NSW. Dr Fahey joined St John in 1983 as a 13-year-old Cadet in Goulburn Division, and during his 28 years of membership he has held Divisional, Regional and State positions in both NSW and Queensland. After training as a nurse, he moved to Queensland in 1999 to study medicine, and then undertake postgraduate specialist training in anaesthesia. In 2009 he spent six months working with the CareFlight rescue helicopter in Brisbane, and acquired an additional qualification in aeromedical retrieval. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Dr Fahey's sixth consecutive presentation to an Historical Society seminar.*



This paper describes the life and work of Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), an innovative German military and academic surgeon. Esmarch was able to channel his intense dislike of war in a pragmatic way, towards improving the standard of medical care which was provided to injured soldiers. In its most basic form, Esmarch saw the need for on the spot help—not from doctors, but from the soldiers themselves. To this end, Esmarch devised the triangular bandage, issued it to all troops, and trained them to use it for haemorrhage control and basic splinting. This was the origin of recognisable ‘first aid’ in the sense of an organised series of drills. Esmarch’s teachings subsequently formed the basis of the first aid training which was extended to any member of the public, under the banner of the Order of St John in England.

### Life and civilian work

Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch was born on 9 January 1823 in Tönning, a small town in northern Germany. He was the son of a well-respected surgeon of the district, and even as a small boy, Esmarch accompanied his father on rounds. This early exposure to medical practise inspired Esmarch to follow in his father’s footsteps, and he gained entry to the medical school at the University of Kiel in 1843 (in spite of his less than exemplary performance at school).

Following graduation in 1848, Esmarch’s career progressed rapidly. He began working as an assistant to Professor von Langenbeck, at the Kiel Hospital, and in 1867, Esmarch was elevated to the position of Professor and Chair of Surgery. Esmarch was committed to teaching—not only of medical students, but also of his peers in the form of postgraduate education. He insisted upon accurate documentation on patient charts, and used the data collected as the basis for scientific research.

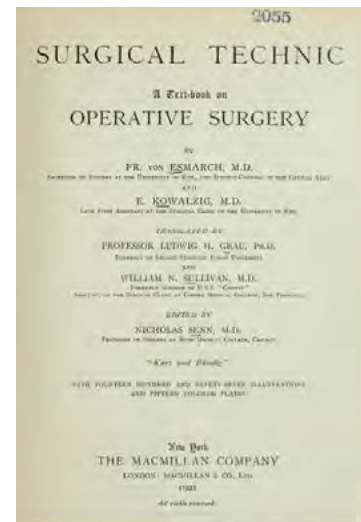
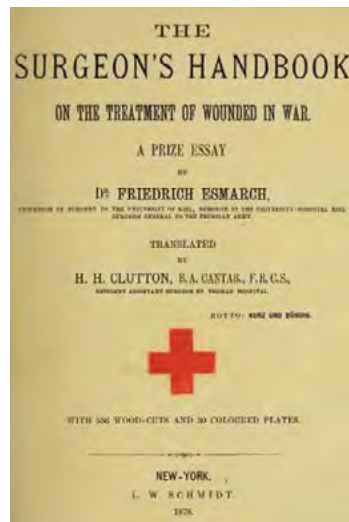
Esmarch’s colleagues praised him as being a genius, with the ability to see underlying relationships in apparently simple processes, and to evaluate their importance. He wrote extensively on a range of novel topics, including the debridement of gunshot wounds (rather than amputation) (1851); cryotherapy to reduce inflammation (1862); and limb exsanguination



*The young Dr Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), a pioneering military and academic surgeon.*



to allow bloodless surgery (1877). His greatest works include *The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War* (1878), and *Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery* (1901). These substantial volumes are comprehensively illustrated, and provide sound anatomical explanations of the operations described. Many of Esmarch's works were translated into several languages (including English), and were utilised throughout Europe and the United States. During his many decades of practice, Esmarch performed over 20,000 major operations. He continued in active surgical practice until his retirement at the age of 76. Despite his technical and academic prowess, he was not arrogant. Esmarch was loved by his patients, and it is said that he had a gentle way with small children.



*The title pages of Esmarch's two great books: The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War and Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery.*

Esmarch was married in 1854, to the daughter of a senior colleague. The marriage was apparently happy, and produced a son, Edwin Esmarch, who later became a bacteriologist and Professor of Hygiene at the University of Gottingen. Tragically, Esmarch's first wife died on 30 May 1870 after a severe chronic illness. In 1872, he married his second wife, the Princess Caroline Christiane Auguste Emilie Henriette Elisabeth of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg (1833–1917), commonly known as the Princess Henriette, an aunt of the wife of the German Emperor Wilhelm II. The marriage was controversial within royal circles, but Princess Henriette was content to live in a modest home near the hospital, and she supported Esmarch in his endeavours.

Outside of medical work, Esmarch was apparently a capable sportsman, mountaineer and hunter. He enjoyed the company of small groups, and was an entertaining story teller.

Emperor Wilhelm II elevated Esmarch to the nobility in 1887. This permitted him to use the title 'Excellency', and use the prefix 'von' in front of his surname. Nine years later, His Excellency Professor von Esmarch died of pneumonia, on 23 February 1908.



*Esmarch and his second wife, the Princess Henriette, after his ennoblement in 1887.*

## Military surgeon

Esmarch lived at a time when Germany was repeatedly involved in military conflicts. Immediately after his medical graduation, war broke out between Denmark and Germany, and Esmarch began his career as a military surgeon. While tending to the wounded during the Battle of Bau, he was captured and taken prisoner, but was eventually released following an exchange with a Danish doctor.

During the wars of 1848 and 1850, Esmarch gained further experience in field hospitals, working alongside his mentors, Professors Langenbeck and Stromeyer. During this time, Esmarch pioneered a new approach to the treatment of gunshot wounds of the limbs. Rather than amputation of the entire limb, Esmarch favoured local debridement. Later, this conservative approach was used together with Lister's 'antiseptic' method of using a carbolic acid spray during surgery.

Esmarch recognised the importance of controlling haemorrhage, and he described numerous methods of applying pressure to the major arteries. He devised tourniquets with effective tightening screws that could be rapidly applied to a damaged limb. Esmarch's textbook *The Surgeon's Handbook of the Treatment of Wounded in War* describes in detail the method of exposing and ligating the arteries of the upper and lower limbs.

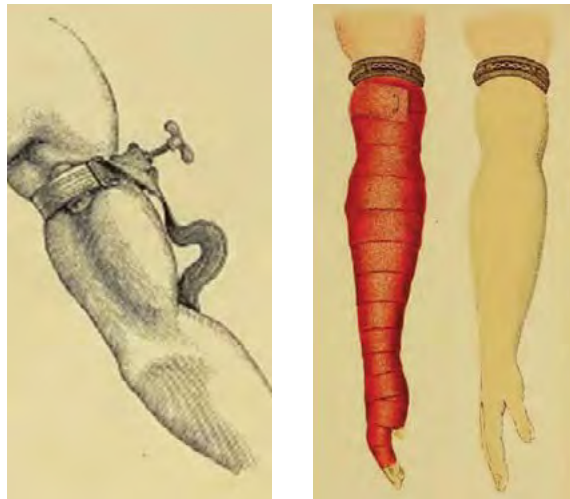
Perhaps Esmarch is best remembered for his technique of 'bloodless surgery', utilising a rubber bandage which is still used today, and still bears his name. This technique was developed during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, and was formally published in 1873. A 5-centimetre rubber bandage is tightly applied to the limb, starting at the fingers or toes. This squeezes capillary and venous blood out of the limb, prior to the application of an arterial tourniquet. In this way, the surgical field is rendered 'bloodless', and the volume of blood contained in the limb is not wasted.

Esmarch is known to have experimented with blood transfusion, and he invented a variety of transfusion equipment and techniques. Esmarch makes no mention of how frequently he performed transfusions or the outcome for the patients. His success must have been limited, given that the concept of blood groups was not known until 1901.

Esmarch displayed deep concern for wounded soldiers. At that time, conditions on the battlefield were appalling, and injured soldiers received inadequate treatment—a situation which had not changed for centuries. During the Franco-Prussian War, Esmarch served as a senior surgeon and public health officer, supervising the military hospitals near Berlin. In this position, he collaborated with the great pathologist Rudolph Virchow, to develop a hygienic pavilion-style hospital system for the battlefield, modelled on the system which had been used during the American Civil War. Further, he implemented ambulance wagons, mobile pharmacies, and soup kitchens, to provide wounded men with effective care. He made use of railways to transport both patients and supplies.

Esmarch's battlefield experience convinced him of the need for a system to enable the most effective use of scarce medical resources. The introduction of 'triage' was unprecedented at a time when treatment was provided based on military rank, rather than severity of injury.

In 1871, aged 48, Esmarch became Surgeon-General of the German army. In this position he was able to exert an even greater influence, to continue modernising and shaping military medical care.



Illustrations for the 'bloodless surgery' techniques from Esmarch's textbook on the treatment of the wounded in war, showing the tourniquet with tightening screw and the rubber bandage with tourniquet.



## First aid

Esmarch's sense of humanity, and his abhorrence of war, led him to develop a revolutionary, pragmatic approach to pre-hospital care on the battlefield. Rather than leaving an injured man to wait for hours for treatment to be provided by a doctor, Esmarch's idea was to train the soldiers to deliver basic initial care to each other. Here, Esmarch emphasised haemorrhage control; experience had taught him that many soldiers needlessly bled to death from badly shattered limbs. Of course, this idea was met with opposition from the medical establishment, which felt that it was inappropriate to teach medical skills to ordinary laymen. Esmarch refuted this brilliantly, as evidenced by the following quote from 'First Aid to the Injured' (1882):

Though I have invited you here to teach you how to render the first aid to the injured, I do not in the least aim at rendering a doctor's services unnecessary; on the contrary, I hope to convince you how important the immediate help of a doctor is in most cases. What I wish to do is enable you to give the right kind of aid before the doctor arrives—without which, irreparable injury might be done, and perhaps even a valuable life be lost.



*Esmarch as a German Army surgeon.*

Esmarch popularised the triangular bandage, as an ideal 'universal' bandage and dressing. He conceived no less than 32 methods of applying it to the body, and produced bandages with printed illustrations to show the soldiers how it could be used. The initial illustrations were criticised as being too morbid, because they depicted realistic battle scenes. Therefore, subsequent editions of the bandage were printed with less confronting images. These techniques were described by Esmarch in a pamphlet titled 'The First Dressing on the Battlefield' (1869). Today, we continue to use the triangular bandage in exactly the same ways that were described by Esmarch almost 150 years ago. Indeed, the triangular bandage is still frequently referred to as the 'Esmarch bandage'.

When appointed as Surgeon-General, Esmarch ordered that every German soldier would carry a first aid pack. This consisted of a triangular bandage, two antiseptic muslin compresses, and a gauze bandage. Today, soldiers continue to carry emergency dressings on their person.



*Two early versions of Esmarch's famous triangular bandage, each printed with illustrations for its application.*



'Pushing forward the lower jaw for threatening asphyxia in chloroform narcosis.' An illustration of Esmarch's manoeuvre from his first aid manual, the instructions reading:

14. In asphyxia the mouth should be opened, and the lower jaw raised with both hands, the index fingers of each being applied behind the ascending ramus, so that the lower range of teeth projects beyond the upper (partial dislocation) (fig. 242)



Esmarch also advocated the use of tongue holding forceps to grasp the tongue and pull it forward if jaw thrust was felt to be inadequate. One can only grimace at the thought of the injuries to tongues caused by these forceps! For some strange reason, the idea of pulling the tongue out of the mouth became part of our early first aid doctrine (not with the aid of forceps, but using a handkerchief held in the fingers), while Esmarch's manoeuvre was never mentioned. It is such a shame that jaw thrust was not adopted by St John, right from the start in 1878.

In a lecture given by Esmarch in 1899, he left the following testimony of his humanistic attitude and goals:

... perhaps later generations will assess these efforts made in an attempt to change the miserable conditions on the battlefield as one of the most commendable acts of the outgoing 19th century.

Esmarch's self-assessment is accurate, but completely inadequate. His legacy continues throughout the world in the form of first aid—essential life-saving skills which have been learned by millions.

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# ‘The Most Venerable Order’ or ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem?

## Franklin Bridgewater KStJ

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What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
by any other name would smell as sweet.

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 1–2.

A confusingly large number of organisations include the phrase ‘Order of St John’, with or without ‘of Jerusalem’, in their titles.<sup>1</sup> Many make unjustified claims to an historical connection to the movement known as the Crusades, from its birth in the 11th century to its decline in the 14th century.<sup>2</sup>

## Early history of the ‘Order of St John’<sup>3</sup>

The Blessed Gerard, probably a Catholic oblate (committed but not under vows), founded a religious community in the 11th century to provide hospice and hospital care for pilgrims and crusaders in and en route to the Holy Land. In 1113, Pope Paschal II approved the establishment of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem with Gerard as its first provost.<sup>2</sup> Within a couple of decades, the members of the Order were also known as ‘Knights Hospitaller’ as they took on a military as well as charitable function. With time, the Order became a rich, powerful military force. The Saracens forced the Order out of the Holy Land in 1291, and it then established its headquarters successively in Cyprus, Rhodes and Malta. The English *Langue* or branch of the Order continued to function until the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII in 1540. Finally, the Order lost its standing as a military power when it capitulated to Napoleon in 1798. He expelled it from Malta.<sup>3</sup> After the expulsion it continued as a sovereign, albeit domain-less, charitable institution.

## Present day ‘Orders of St John’

The present day Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta is the direct descendant of the founding Order. It remains a lay religious Order of Roman Catholic ethos and Rome, Italy, is now its base. It re-established its English Priory in 1993. It has recognised international status as a sovereign body, with diplomatic representatives in many countries and delegates to major intergovernmental organisations.<sup>4</sup>



*Arms of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, the Catholic order whose title is often abbreviated to ‘Sovereign Military Order of Malta’.*

## The concordant Orders of St John<sup>5</sup>

There are only five 'Orders of St John' which are directly descended from the original 11th century Order, and/or are established under Royal Charter, or similarly recognised by an appropriate authority. They are:

1. The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (short title: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta; SMOM), and the four members of The Alliance of Orders of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem<sup>6,7</sup> viz.
2. The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem (short title: The Order of St John; OStJ)
3. Die Balley Brandenburg des ritterlichen Ordens St Johannis vom Spital zu Jerusalem (short title: The Johanniterorden)
4. Johanniterorden i Sverige (a Swedish Royal Order)
5. Johanniter Orde in Nederland (a Dutch Royal Order).

In 1963, a concordat was signed by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and The Order of St John.<sup>6</sup> In 1987, these five orders published a joint declaration.<sup>8</sup> These agreements provide the basis for mutual recognition and acceptance of each Order's historical basis, humanitarian aims and founding authority. The declaration states, 'They are the only Orders of St John which may legitimately use that name'.

## The non-concordant 'Orders of St John'<sup>9,10</sup>

Many of the orders not recognised by the five signatories of the joint statement have their roots in an American organisation called the 'The Knights Hospitallers of the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem' (established/revived late 1800s or early 1900s). This Order has been variously called 'the American Order', 'The Ecumenical Order' and 'the Shickshinny Order'.<sup>1</sup> It had its headquarters in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, in the 1930s and 1940s. Its offshoots are 'Shickshinny Orders'. Several have enrolled members of the European nobility. For example, ex-King Peter of Yugoslavia was closely associated with the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller. Some have engaged to a limited extent in charitable work, though in the main their activities have been only ceremonial and fraternal.



*Emblem of a non-concordant or self-styled 'Order of St John', the 'Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller of Florida'. This is one of various similar 'orders' claiming links with the late ex-King Peter II of Yugoslavia. An off-shoot of this group of 'Orders' is active in Australia, where it has influence among some politicians. Its functions are mainly ceremonial and fraternal rather than charitable.*

## The legitimacy of 'Orders of St John'<sup>1</sup>

In 2006 Hoegen Dijkhof submitted a doctoral thesis through the Faculty of Theology to Leiden University in The Netherlands on 'The legitimacy of Orders of St John'. While not all-encompassing, this is a scholarly, detailed, critical and iconoclastic dissertation on the significant Orders.

## The 'Most Venerable Order' correctly known as 'The Order of St John'

### Historical origin, development and present function

In the 1820s and 1830s interested parties made serious attempts to revive the long defunct English Grand Priory of The Sovereign Military Order of Malta. The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Order refused to provide it with legitimacy. In response to this repudiation, the British body made a unilateral declaration that it was to be the sovereign Order of St John in the United Kingdom, under the title 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of St John of Jerusalem: Anglia'.<sup>3</sup>

## 'The most vulnerable Order'

### Historical usage of phrase

As it was the Royal Charter of Queen Elisabeth II in 1955<sup>11</sup> that introduced the phrase 'The Most Venerable Order', it is only after this date, therefore, that the use of the phrase 'The Most Vulnerable Order' may be validly considered.

### 1984

*Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*<sup>15</sup> was a Canadian parody on publications such as *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage* produced by one 'Charlie Farquharson', also known as Don Harron.<sup>16</sup> This may have been the first occasion on which 'The Most Vulnerable Order' appeared in this context. *Debunk's Illustrated Guide* refers to The Order of St John as 'the Most Vulnerable Order of St John's Ambivalence'. It not only parodied 'The Venerable Order' but also the prestigious Canadian 'Order of Military Merit'<sup>17</sup> being deliberately renamed the 'Order of Millinery Merit'. In addition it linked 'The Most Vulnerable Order' to 'St John's Ambivalence'.



First use of the term 'Most Vulnerable Order' from *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, a spoof on *Debrett's Peerage*, the 'Who's Who' of the British aristocracy.

### 1994

In 1994, Dr Donald Trunkey published an article in the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons* focusing on the wounds sustained by Admiral Nelson of the Royal Navy.<sup>18</sup> In considering the naval battle at Aboukir Bay, 1–3 August 1798, he stated that one of the French vessels sunk by Nelson carried 'ingots of gold and treasures of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem [sic]—the second instance of 'Vulnerable' replacing 'Venerable' in the Order's title, not only confused the Most Venerable Order with the earlier Knights of Malta but getting 'venerable' wrong. By now the Order was becoming vulnerable to such 'mondegreens'.

### 2006

The phrase was next used by Dr LN Sisulu, Minister of Housing, Cabinet of South Africa, in a speech at the launch of the N2 Gateway, Cape Town, South Africa, in 2006.<sup>19</sup> On that occasion, she stated that:

It is also with a great deal of gratitude that we accept our new partner, the Priory for South Africa of the Order of St John, under the leadership of the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Bishop Mvume Dandala. The Most Vulnerable Order is bringing in health facilities and services to the partnership. [sic]

Without doubt, this refers to The Most Venerable Order of St John.

In the same year, and also on the African continent Uganda,<sup>20</sup> was the occasion of the admission of a Kampala businessman as an Honorary Officer within The Most Venerable Order of St John. This was in the presence of Rear-Admiral Andrew Gough, the Secretary-General for The Order of St John. The news reporter stated: 'Queen Elisabeth II founded St John Ambulance in 1930. The Queen is also the sovereign head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'. [sic]

What Andrew Gough made of all this is unknown, but we can imagine that he would have been surprised to learn that the Queen had established St John Ambulance in 1930, when she was only four years old!

## 2007

The feast day for St John the Baptist is 24 June. It is a focal point in the calendar for The Order of St John. A news report of a celebratory church service in Suva, Fiji, detailed a comment by the visiting Deputy Lord Prior of The Order, Sir John Strachan, 'St John, which is the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, had a unique combination of features[sic]'.<sup>21</sup>

## 2009

The Order of St John achieves its aims through a number of functioning arms. Members of those arms come from all socio-economic groups and a range of professions. Exceptional commitment and achievement can result in admission to membership of The Order itself. In 2009 The Order of St John honored a radiographer in the Royal Navy in this way. The Society of Radiographers reported his admission:

as a Serving Brother to the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (more commonly known as the Order of St John).[sic]<sup>22</sup>

I would presume that reports originating from sources closely related to St John would not use this erroneous term. This is demonstrably not so. In the same year, on 15 September, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, the Grand Prior of The Order of St John, joined supporters and members of St John Ambulance at the opening of a memorial garden to commemorate all those who had faithfully served the organisation over its long history.<sup>23</sup>

This evoked the following response on a site associated with former and current members of St John Ambulance in Staffordshire, UK: '... all proud to serve the most vulnerable order of st john ambulance[sic]'.<sup>24</sup>

Did the Grand Prior ever read this? If so, we must hope that he or one of his underlings gave the St John organisation in Staffordshire a pep talk on the correct name of the Order they represent!



*The memorial garden in Staffordshire, England, commemorating St John Ambulance members' service to the community. To their shame, their website proclaimed that they were proud to represent the 'Most Vulnerable Order'.*

## 2010

Likewise, a long and creditable association does not prevent its use. After an association of 35 years, a Serving Brother within the Order in Kenya states in his curriculum vitae:

... during the investiture held for the admission and promotion of members into the most vulnerable order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem ... at State House, Nairobi. [sic]<sup>25</sup>

Late in 2010, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, presented the insignia of a Member of The Order of St John to a Divisional Superintendent of St John Ambulance from south England. In reporting the upcoming event, the local newspaper stated, 'The Queen, Sovereign Head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, has sanctioned the admittance of...[sic]'.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, a number of ambulance services back in Oklahoma, USA, have taken up the report, including the erroneous title.<sup>27,28</sup>

'The Most Vulnerable Order' is an example of a 'mondegreen' which is the mishearing or misinterpretation of a phrase due to near homophony in a way that gives it a new meaning (e.g. typically a standardised phrase such as a line in a poem or a lyric in a song).<sup>29</sup> For example, Pink Floyd's 'no dark sarcasm in the classroom' becomes 'no ducks or hazards in the classroom'. The term 'mondegreen' itself comes from a mishearing of a line in a Scottish ballad, 'The Bonny Earl o' Murray'. The original line was '... they hae slain the Earl o' Murray, and laid him on the green'—this was interpreted as: '... Earl o' Murray and Lady Mondegreen'.



*The Arms of the University of Nairobi, Kenya, where one of the professors of medicine stated in his CV in 2010 that he was a member of the Most 'Vulnerable' Order of St John—a 35-year St John Ambulance veteran, he should have known better. His one excuse for such an error would have been that, speaking English as a second or even third language, he had been confused by two similar-sounding multisyllabic words.*



### **Deliberate construction**

It is only the usage of the term by Harron, in *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, which I consider deliberate. He clearly recognised the nature of the title and chose to substitute words of similar sounding but different meaning for the purpose of parody. He created a mondegreen.

### **Inadvertent corruption**

All other occasions are the result of inadvertent corruption by the user. The corruption from 'venerable' to 'vulnerable' seems more than a typing error. It probably reflects both factors of mishearing and imputation. The pronunciation of 'venerable' (ve-nĕrăb'l) with an unaccustomed accent, and being a word which is itself uncommon, could reasonably be heard as 'vulnerable' (vu-lnĕrăb'l).<sup>30</sup> Allied to this is a general recognition that the role of this Order of St John is fundamentally philanthropic with delivery of a range of services to a group of people, which is indeed 'vulnerable'.

Trunkey<sup>18</sup> in using the title 'the Most Vulnerable Order' imputed its existence more than 150 years before its reality as 'The Most Venerable Order' in 1955. On 16 June 1798, Napoleon's fleet had departed Malta's Valetta Harbor with the treasure of The Holy Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem and of the Sepulchre of Christ [pers. comm. Howie-Willis, 23 Nov. 2009]. This was the treasure lost in Aboukir Bay. With the passage of time, that Order has become the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.<sup>4</sup> The source of Trunkey's information is now speculative [pers. comm. Trunkey, 9 Sept. 2010]. There is nevertheless an element of truth in describing that order as 'vulnerable'. Napoleon had demonstrated it to be such.

Of the remaining seven occasions, four involve media coverage by personnel for whom English may have been a second language. In this setting, mispronunciation, mishearing and misunderstanding may all have played a role. Failure to pronounce the first vowels of 'venerable' produces the word 'vunnrable' and a slight further corruption leads to 'vulnerable'. The use of the phrase in these settings is probably neither intentional nor malicious but rather would seem to have arisen from the confusion by a non-native English speaker between two uncommon, multisyllabic, homophonic words. In the Fijian setting, it is unlikely that the Deputy Lord Prior of The Order would have personally used the reported phrase.

The remaining three reports originate from areas where English is the native tongue. It is true that in areas there are strong local accents. These, on occasion, make dialectal speech almost unintelligible even to a fluent English speaker. The Midlands of England, including Staffordshire, is one such area. Ignorance of the existence of 'venerable' combined with a knowledge of The Order of St John's work to the disadvantaged would then lead to the use of 'vulnerable'.

To end this discussion on a cautionary note, we can reflect that even computer software utilities capable of checking spelling are unable to detect a mondegreen by virtue of its nature.

# Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective

## Gary Harris OStJ

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When Pope Paschall II issued the Papal Bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis* approving the foundation of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in February 1113, he was formalising the work of a monastic community that had Amalfi's sponsorship, which had cared for the sick and injured pilgrims to Jerusalem about 1023.

As with any organisation, the Order needed a structure. The membership gradings were simple. Knights were of noble birth and could prove their noble bearing for at least the previous 100 years. Chaplains tended the religious needs of the Order's members. And Serving Brothers were the monks who attended to the physical needs of the Knights and Chaplains.

Like all organisations, the Order grew and evolved. And evolve it did. After some four centuries headquartered in the Holy Land, then on Cyprus and later Rhodes, the Order moved to Malta in 1530. There it became the Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Malta and was widely known by that name for the next 268 years (and beyond), until Napoleon Bonaparte expelled the Order from Malta in 1798. Meanwhile, the Order in England had continued until 1540, when it was dissolved by an Act of Parliament under King Henry VIII, restored in 1557 by Queen Mary I, then finally dissolved for the last time in 1559 by Queen Elisabeth I.

## Ranks and grades of knighthoods

Knights of Justice, or 'professed' knights, were persons who were entitled to be Knights because of their noble birth. They took religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and formed what amounted to a separate caste within the wider Order. Knights of Obedience made a promise, rather than a vow, of obedience, again having noble bearing of 100 years. Knights of Honour and Devotion and Knights of Grace and Devotion required less noble lineage than the higher grades of knights. Knights of Magistral Grace were appointed by the Grand Master in recognition of their contribution to the Order and were not required to prove noble descent. In the modern era, the strict rules relating to proof of noble lineage were dropped during the 1990s, mainly because of the rarity of noble persons willing to take holy orders as professed knights.

Within each class of knights there were ranks or grades of knighthoods ranging from Bailiff Grand Cross, through Knight Grand Cross, Knight Commander, Knight Officer and down to plain Knight. And so there were 20 to 25 gradations of knights.

As well as the knights there was a separate group of 'donats', who had been awarded membership in the Order because of significant acts of generosity to it. The Donats or donors were considered to be in the 'of Justice' class but were not Knights.



*A Chaplain (left), Knight (centre) and Serving Brother (right) of the ancient Order of St John.*

## Sovereignty

The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John called 'of Jerusalem', called 'of Rhodes' and called 'of Malta' is currently the official name of the continuing Order, but in all there has been a total of 16 variations of the name, much as our Most Venerable Order has several names in popular if informal use. The most commonly used is probably 'the Sovereign Military Order of Malta', often abbreviated to the simple acronym 'SMOM'.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta is technically a sovereign state under today's international law, by virtue of having ruled Malta for 268 years from 1530 to 1798, when the Order surrendered the islands to Napoleon. During those 268 years the Order was indeed sovereign in that it independently ruled its own territories according to its own law. It continues as a 'sovereign' order in that it has never surrendered its right to independent statehood. It emphasises its sovereign credentials by retaining the words 'Sovereign' and 'Malta' in its name.

Although SMOM has been permanently headquartered in Rome since 1834, nowadays in two embassies, by agreement with the government of Malta the Order has a 99-year holding over the Fort St Angelo in Valetta. The obstacle to its universal recognition as a sovereign state is that, apart from its embassies in Rome and abroad, it has no territory.

As an 'entity', however, like the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Olympic Committee and others, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta enjoys permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly and on various UN committees.

## The revived *langue* of England

After the Napoleonic Wars, a Capitular Commission of the Order, made up of the *langues* (tongues) of France, Auvergne and Provence had as one of its main aims the securing of an island so that the Order could resume its effective sovereignty over land and people, as it had done in Rhodes and Malta. In furthering this cause, the Commission deemed it important to enlist the aid of England and so attempted to restore the English *langue*, which had effectively disappeared some 260 years earlier during the reign of Elizabeth I. A Prior was appointed temporarily, the general aim being to raise funds in Britain, use unemployed British soldiers and cheap war surpluses to lay claim to an island territory. When this did not come to pass, the revived *langue* in England simmered along, recruiting nobility and others over the next 50 or so years. It was envisaged that the *langue* would eventually be re-admitted into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

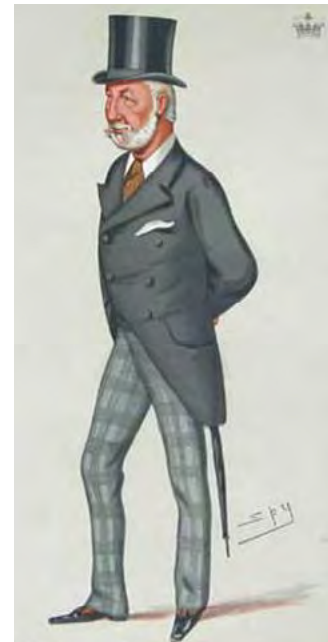
The revival of the English *langue* was intended to be a British Roman Catholic order with provision for Protestant members. When inclusion into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta was requested, the Church in Rome had reasserted its authority over the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and, being Catholic, could not countenance the admission of what would be, effectively, a Protestant branch into what remained of a Catholic religious order.

A second attempt by the revived *langue* in 1858 for inclusion in the Sovereign Military Order again ran up against this stumbling block. The religious argument prevailed and Rome declined to recognise that the English *langue* had been legitimately revived at all. With this rebuff the English *langue* renamed itself 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Anglia' and proceeded to seek its own destinies as a separate order independent of both SMOM and the Catholic Church. Over the next three decades, the revived *langue* evolved fairly rapidly, soon becoming a British Royal Order of Chivalry by virtue of a Royal Charter granted by Queen Victoria in 1888. Whatever it might have been previously, in 1888 it assumed the status and prestige of being an official Order of St John in its own right.



*The arms of the Reverend Sir Robert Peat, Grand Prior 1831–1837 of the 'revived' Langue of England of the Order of St John.*

*A cartoon by Sir Leslie Ward, depicting William Drogo Montague (1823–1890), the 7th Duke of Manchester, published in Vanity Fair in December 1878. The duke was Grand Prior from 1863 until 1888, when Queen Victoria granted it her Royal Charter.*



When the Order was re-established in England, the Maltese Cross was embellished with a unicorn passant and a lion passant guardant (which the French call a leopard in this configuration) in the alternate angles of the Cross. This was apparently in imitation of the Italian tongue's cross which had fleur de lys in the angles. The beasts were discontinued in 1871 but were restored by the Royal Charter of 1888.

Since then the Order has used the two emblems of the ancient Order: the white 'Latin' cross ('square' cross or 'crux immissa') on a scarlet field of the patron saint, John the Baptist, and the eight-pointed 'Maltese', 'Amalfitan' or 'St John' cross: with and without the 'Queen's beasts', the royal lion and unicorn. Interestingly, the beasts at times have been both included with, and omitted, from the angles of both crosses in several permutations of the Coat of Arms.

In 1871, well before the Royal Charter, 'Ladies of Justice/Grace' were included in the grades of membership of the revived English Order. The title was later changed to 'Dames of Justice/Grace'. Donats were not admitted to the revived Order, but wore a demicross, having donated one pound or more to the Order.





*The present two emblems of the Order—the Arms (left) and the Badge (right). Displayed on the Arms are a white Crux Immissa on a red field with the Royal lion surmounting a crown in the top left quarter. The Badge displays a white Maltese cross with the Royal Beasts alternating at the cross's four main angles.*



*The Order's emblems have varied over time. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Royal Beasts were displayed at the angles of the Crux Immissa, as here. Later they were displayed only on Badge of the Order within the four central angles of the Maltese cross.*

## St John Ambulance

In 1877 the Order's 'Ambulance Department' established the St John Ambulance Association, the proliferating regional 'Centres' of which provided for the teaching of first aid initially to miners and railwaymen but soon to members of the general public in sex-segregated classes. In 1882 a hospice and ophthalmic dispensary was established in Jerusalem. In 1887 the St John Ambulance Brigade followed, forming a disciplined, uniformed first aid field force for duty at public events. The good works of these practically-oriented branches of the Order persuaded Queen Victoria to grant it the Royal Charter already noted.

## Some renaming

Under the Charter, the Order was renamed the Grand Priory of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England. At this time 'Commanders' of the Order were the heads of 'Commanderies' or regional branches of the Order. The Commanders relinquished their titles after serving their five-year term of office. They were selected from the ranks of 'Chevaliers' (Knights) of Justice or Grace, Chaplains or Esquires.

The Order also embraced 'Honorary Associates', who, being of Christian faith, devoted their energies to the objects of the Order or were distinguished in philanthropy but were not members of the Order. The grade of Honorary Associate was created on St John Day, 1869. The Associates, not being members, were persons who took an active part in the establishment and development of the modern Hospitaller work.

From 1906 to 1955 each Bailiff Grand Cross and Knight of Justice could appoint a 'personal esquire', who was admitted to the Order as an Officer Brother.

The year 1926 saw the simplification of the gradings. 'Ladies' were now called 'Dames'. The renaming continued with 'Order' becoming 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'.

Bailiff and Dame Grand Cross and Knight and Dame of Justice and Grace became equivalent to the Ancient Knight.

Dame Grand Cross was created allowing women to be elevated to the highest grade.

The grades of Commander, Officer and Serving Brother/Sister became equivalent to what the 'Serving Brothers' of the ancient Order had been; that is not Knights, but nevertheless members of the Order. Honorary Associates were offered the grade of Officer, or if they preferred, Serving Brother/Sister (presumably dependent on their desire to pay the oblations if they took up the Officer grading). The grade of 'Associate' of 1888 was discontinued; however, the use of the term has continued, the grouping as we understand it today being for non-Christian citizens of Commonwealth countries.

In 1936 the 'Justice' and 'Grace' gradings were amalgamated, the intention being to bring these gradings into line with other British royal orders of chivalry; however, the listings and insignia for each group remained separate and distinct until very recently. The gradings of 1936 continued till 1970, when 'Esquires' were added as the lowest of six grades of the Order.



*'Of Justice' or 'Of Grace'? Among other distinctions, Knights and Dames of Justice wear mantles bearing the Badge of the Order with gold Royal Beasts; Knights and Dames of Grace wear a Badge with white Royal Beasts.*

In the revised Charter issued by Queen Elizabeth II in 1955 the term 'Most' was included in the Order's title, which accordingly became 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem'. In the Supplemental Royal Charter of 1974 the name was amended to what it is today, The Grand Priory of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem. The reforms and restructuring of the Order during the late 1990s instituted the formation of an international Grand Council of the Order in place of the previous Chapter General.

The year 2008 saw the renaming of the fifth grade of membership of the Order. Grade 5 members, the Serving Brothers and Sisters, were redesignated as 'Members'; and the gender-specific names of Grade 3 and Grade 4 members—'Commander Brothers/Sisters' and 'Officer Brothers/Sisters'—became simply generic 'Commanders' and 'Officers', again in line with the other British orders of chivalry.

## Some membership statistics

I will conclude this brief survey of changes in the membership structures and nomenclature of the Most Venerable Order of St John by making the point that admissions into and promotions within the Order are conferred for sustained outstanding service to the Order and its Branches. They are not granted for mere longevity of service; nor can they be purchased or gained through paying the high entry fees required elsewhere in other orders.

If admissions and promotions must be earned through conspicuous service, how many people benefit? I will cite some statistics to show that membership of the Order remains a comparatively rare honour. I will use the example of my home State, Victoria, to illustrate this fact.

Since 1896, the Order of St John in Victoria has had only 1067 admissions to its ranks, an average of approximately nine annually out of the many thousands who have worked for the St John Ambulance branches. About 600 of those admitted subsequently received no promotion within the Order. The rest, some 360 or about a third of those admitted, received promotions within the Order. These promotees

shared a total of 535 promotions, that is, an average of fewer than five promotions annually; and of course many promotees were promoted more than once. Typically, someone admitted as a Member (Grade 5) and subsequently promoted to Knight/Dame (Grade 2) will have been promoted three times: to Officer (Grade 4) then to Commander (Grade 3) and finally to Knight/Dame. The following table summarises the situation.

**Promotions within the Order of St John in Victoria, 1896–2012**

Promotions	Number	Total years' service	Average years' service
Esquire to Member	1	6	6.0
Member to Officer	315	2779	8.8
Officer to Commander	146	1195	8.2
Commander to Knight/Dame	71	575	8.1
Knight/Dame to Bailiff/Dame Grand Cross	2	36	18.0
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>4591</b>	<b>8.6</b>

These figures are of 'mainstream' promotions only, not taking into account the extreme instances of the promotion from Esquire to Member, and Knight to Bailiff Grand Cross and those that have skipped grades. Surprisingly, the average time in years between promotions from Member to Officer, Officer to Commander and Commander to Dame or Knight, are within a narrow range of years, being 8.8, 8.2 and 8.1 years respectively. This is significant because these averages do not take into account the individual circumstances of each Member. The spread of these averages could be a variation on the 'wisdom of the crowd'. (I shall let my readers research that phenomenon for themselves.)

Putting these instructive averages together, and assuming 15 years' service before admission to the Order, we can conclude that a newly admitted member Grade 5 Member of the Order who aspires to Grade 2 membership could expect on average, promotion to Officer in about nine years, to Commander in a further eight years and to Knight/Dame another eight years after that. In other words, he/she might anticipate a total of about 40 years' continual service between affiliating with a St John branch and promotion to Grade 2 membership. If joining as a young adult, promotion to Knight or Dame at the age of about 60 years would therefore be the most likely reality. A target worth aspiring to, perhaps?

# Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his ‘Little Black Book’

## John Pearn KStJ and Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

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**Ian Howie-Willis** is a professional historian. He joined St John 33 years ago, recruited to produce the centenary history, *A Century for Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia 1883–1983*. Since then he has produced six other St John histories either alone or with co-authors. He was Priory Librarian 2003–2012 and was the foundation Secretary of the Historical Society. He is currently the Society’s Editor and also the historical adviser to the Office of the Priory of St John Ambulance Australia. Professor Pearn and Dr Howie-Willis are frequent contributors of articles to this journal.



Until 1878, the teaching of resuscitation and first aid skills to members of the civilian lay public was a novel concept. What today is taken for granted—the teaching of the drills and skills of best-practice emergency response to injury and acute illness—resulted from the vision of several military surgeons. They invented the profession of prehospital care as this discipline exists today.

The pivot among these doctors was Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), a Scot serving in the Army Medical Department at the Woolwich Garrison in London. In 1878, Peter Shepherd compiled a handwritten manuscript which he called *Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. This book evolved as a manuscript, written over several months, as the public first aid classes which he taught in Woolwich progressed. In the following year (1879) Shepherd was killed in the massacre of the British Military Force at the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879. Prior to his death, his ‘Aids’ were published in London, in absentia, as his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. Issued in December 1878, it was covered in black leatherette with a simple silver Maltese cross on the cover. Shepherd never saw this bound volume, but it is not an exaggeration to say that this ‘Little Black Book’ was in many ways to change the world.

That ‘Little Black Book’ contained the doctrine of what we now call ‘First Aid’. The concept of teaching first aid drills and skills to everyone was a startling innovation. It was nevertheless the catalyst which led to the development of the ambulance and paramedic professions, of many rescue and retrieval organisations and of the now universal desideratum of ‘First Aid for All’. Subsequent editions of Shepherd’s manual collectively became the world’s best-seller after the Bible. Its influence, both in the technical sense of the promotion of techniques of first aid and also in its pioneering advocacy for the broader ethos of bystander prehospital care, cannot be overstated.



Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), author of the initial St John Ambulance first aid manual.



## Bystander care before Peter Shepherd

The application of woundworts to cuts and abrasions is older than recorded history. Bandaging skills for wounds sustained in battle were documented on Grecian pottery from circa 500 BC, by the enigmatic vase painter, Sosias. The 'Good Samaritan' ethic of succour and efficiency in bandaging, dates from the bronze age in the Middle East, and is immortalised in the Gospel of St Luke (10:30). The Dutch were the first in 1767 to institute a society for the rescue and resuscitation of the apparently drowned, the *Maatschappij tot Redding van Drenkelingen*. Drowning was a confronting cause of death in the canals of Holland's cities and towns. In Britain, The Royal Humane Society, founded in 1774, followed this example and did much to promote the attempted resuscitation of the apparently drowned.

Various resuscitation methods were introduced from the middle of the 19th century. These were principally aimed at educating doctors, nurses and apothecaries. Early and occasionally successful techniques tried to simulate breathing by alternately inflating and deflating the lungs. Henry Robert Silvester (1829–1908), an English physician, developed his 'physiological method of resuscitation' in 1861, in which the unconscious person was placed on their back and the arms were alternately raised above the head and then lowered onto the chest. This was adopted as the preferred method by the Royal Humane Society and promoted in Britain and throughout the Colonies.

It was not until the late 1860s however, that the Prussian military surgeon, Johannes Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908) first used the term *Erste Hilfe* (German: 'First Aid') and taught soldiers that they could help their wounded comrades on the battlefield by carrying a triangular bandage and using a standard set of bandaging and splinting skills.

In civilian life, literate adults could buy a family medical guide. In Australia, in many outback homesteads, a domestic medical guide was the only book which the family possessed. One of the first outback manuals, *A Family Medical Guide*, written specifically for Australian conditions, was published in 1870 by Dr George Fullerton, the first President of the Medical Board of Queensland. It contained advice about home care for victims of trauma or illness.

In British outposts, including the Australian colonies, drownings, horseriding injuries, gunshot wounds, emergency childbirth and snakebite were common occurrences. All called for help from bystanders or family members or even self-help by the victims themselves. A widely dispersed population, long distances to medical help, extremes of heat and cold, and a high risk of trauma—all produced a hostile environment for the sick and injured and a great need for first aid.

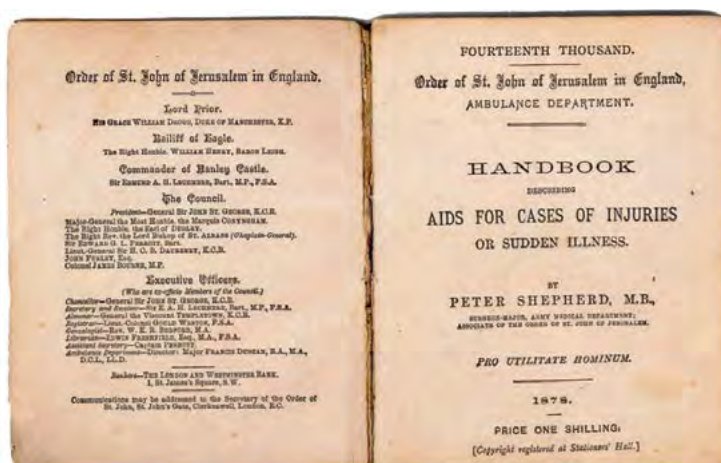
This then was the background which in 1877 engendered the formation of the St John Ambulance Association in London and the radical concept which followed: that of teaching and vigorously promoting a set of safe basic drills and skills embodying the best-practice of the day and which a bystander could perform.

## Shepherd's Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness

The St John Ambulance Association was established on 1 July 1877, the result of co-operative advocacy by senior officers of the British Army and the Order of St John. Following the establishment of the Association and under its aegis, three doctors—Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Surgeon-Major Francis Falwasser and a civilian doctor, Dr Coleman—planned the initial public classes in what was soon called 'First Aid'. Hitherto this had been the exclusive doctrine of military medical orderlies and stretcher-bearers.



*Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book': the 1878 edition, the first of 40 editions, hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies, 1878–1958.*



The twin title pages of Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book'. The verso page sets out the Order's leadership positions. The recto page bears the title of the book, 'Handbook describing aids for cases of injuries or sudden illnesses'.

In January 1878, Peter Shepherd and Dr Coleman taught the inaugural First Aid class in the hall of the church school beside the Presbyterian Church at Woolwich in London. The course in first aid was taught from hand-written notes prepared by Shepherd. The details of the syllabus were published on 2 March 1878, in the *Kentish Independent*, the local newspaper.

Shepherd formalised his teaching notes in October 1878, probably days before he embarked with Lord Chelmsford's Contingent to confront the Zulus in South Africa. It was a busy time for Shepherd, appointed as the Senior Medical Officer to a contingent of over 4000 men. The Force was hurriedly preparing for its operational deployment. Before departing, Shepherd had printed and distributed to all the troops in the contingent a *Pocket Aide Memoire*, that is a single card of first aid instructions in an envelope.

On 30 October 1878, in his 'Introduction' to the notes for his proposed 'Handbook', Shepherd wrote that 'the careful work which I should like to have bestowed [in finalising the first aid manuscript] has been rendered impossible by the exigencies of the Service requiring me to proceed on foreign service'. Nevertheless, he found time to 'hurriedly arrange the following Manual for the use of the Metropolitan Police and the other Ambulance Classes now organised by the Order of St John in all parts of England'.

Shepherd left his hand-written manuscript with a colleague with instructions that it be published. This was a young fellow Scot, Dr (later Sir) James Cantlie, who would later become the author of all six major revisions of the 'Little Black Book' between 1901 and 1928. Cantlie would also later become Britain's leading authority on tropical diseases.

It was either whilst Shepherd was at sea en route for South Africa, or after his arrival and during his overland march to Pietermaritzburg that his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness* was published in London.

Sir James Cantlie (1851–1926), the Scottish physician and surgeon, who took over the authorship and editorship of the 'Little Black Book' in 1901 and then produced the 1901, 1904, 1908, 1917, 1919 and 1928 editions.



## Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879)

Peter Shepherd was born on 9 January 1842 at his father's farm, 'Craigmill', in the hamlet of Leochel-Cushnie, a village in Donside in Aberdeenshire. His father, also Peter Shepherd, was a farmer. Shepherd Snr and his wife, Mary Anne (*née* Dewar) had three boys and a girl. Peter Jnr was the second son.<sup>19</sup> In that era first sons stayed on the farm, and second and subsequent sons either joined the army or were ordained as ministers in the Church.

As a boy, Peter Shepherd worked on his family's farm. He was educated at schools in Aberdeen and won a bursary for further study. With additional financial support of family and friends—to whom he repaid their contributions after his graduation—he matriculated and studied medicine at Marischal College at the University of Aberdeen. In the fourth year of his course he won the prize for Medical Jurisprudence.

Peter Shepherd graduated in 1864 and immediately joined the Army Medical Department. After initial training at the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley near Southampton, he was commissioned with the rank of Assistant Surgeon and posted to Grahamstown in South Africa with the 99th (Lanarkshire) Regiment of Foot. After several years service in South Africa, he was posted to Ireland and then to Bengal in 1873. In 1874 he returned to England as Medical Officer to the Woolwich Garrison where, after 12 years service, he was promoted to surgeon-major in 1876. It was as Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd that his significance as the principal founder of the discipline of first aid is remembered. Tragically, he was killed in the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879, one of 1329 members of the British contingent who died in the disastrous opening battle of the Anglo–Zulu War.

### The battle of Isandlwana

Briefly, what happened was that two columns of Lord Chelmsford's force, about 1700 troops, had marched north-east into Zululand in present-day Natal Province. They camped at the foot of a prominent hill, Mount Isandlwana, where 15,000 warriors of an *impi* (i.e. army) of the Zulu chieftain, Cetshwayo, descended upon them from the heights of a nearby plateau, surrounded them and massacred them. Though they fought bravely, they were completely overwhelmed. Only about 400 or fewer than a quarter of their number survived, mainly by escaping to Rorke's Drift, a camp 14 kilometres to the rear, which was attacked next day but survived the Zulu onslaught. The Zulus lost 1000 at Isandlwana.

Peter Shepherd is thought to have been killed when struck by a thrown *assegai* (broad-bladed spear) while trying to move a wagonload of the wounded back to Rorke's Drift. His grave is unmarked

*The Zulu warriors' view of the plain before Mt Isandlwana as they began their charge on the 24th Regiment.*



*The Isandlwana battlefield, the Nqutu area, with memorials marking the graves of the identified dead. Peter Shepherd's grave is unidentified and unmarked.*



but is thought to be within 20 metres of the grave of George MacLeroy, the soldier he was treating when killed, whose grave is marked. Memorials to him, however, were later placed in the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley and in the churchyard of his family church at Leochel-Cushnie. In addition, the Shepherd Memorial Medal for Surgery was instituted in 1879 at his *alma mater*, the University of Aberdeen.

A bronze memorial plaque to Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd may be found in the former Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire. The inscription reads:

In memory of Peter Shepherd MB, University of Aberdeen, Surgeon-Major, Her Majesty's Army, born at Leochel-Cushnie, Aberdeenshire, 25 August 1841, who sacrificed his own life at the Battle of Isandhlwane, Zululand, 22 January 1879, in the endeavour to save the life of a wounded comrade. Erected by his brother officers and friends.

## The 'Little Black Book'

The St John Ambulance Association, in collaboration with the Army Medical Department, had initially intended that the teaching of first aid to civilians would provide: 'a civilian reserve for the Army Medical Department ... to train men and women for the benefit of the sick and wounded'. However, within months of the commencement of the first civilian courses at Woolwich, the value of first aid skills that could be used in the normal daily life of the civilian population had become obvious. These evolving concepts were accompanied by increasing zeal throughout British society. Within the first year of the Woolwich civilian classes, 40,000 copies of the 'Little Black Book' had been sold. The book carried the quaint disclaimer that the St John Ambulance Association course did not qualify members of the public to practise surgery!

By the end of June 1878, at least, 1100 people had been taught St John-approved first aid skills. By July 1878, provincial centres at Worcester, Malvern, Chesterfield, Southport, and Clay Cross (Derbyshire) had established first aid classes. The enthusiasm in provincial centres knew no bounds. One Scottish observer noted that the St John Ambulance movement had 'something of the contagiousness of the Salvation Army'. Further editions of the 'Little Black Book' had to be published to keep up with the demand: in 1881, 1885 and 1887. Eventually 40 major revised editions were published over the 80 years 1878–1958, encompassing hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies.

Women in particular enthusiastically espoused the idea of general public first aid training. Initially classes were segregated by sex. In 1885 'Ladies' First Aid Classes' were being held at the Mansion House in central London for the benefit of women employed in offices and businesses in the City and Port of London under the auspices of the Lady Mayoress of London.

By the end of 1887, St John first aid classes were being taught to the general public in Malta (1882), Cannes, Melbourne (1883), Bermuda, the Bahamas, Bombay, Gibraltar, Hong Kong (1884), New Zealand (1885), Singapore, South Africa (Kimberley in 1885), and Borneo (1887). Within a century of Shepherd's earliest class in Woolwich, millions of people of all ages and from all walks of life had bought a copy of the 'Little Black Book' for their instruction in the rudiments of first aid.

## Aftermath

Shepherd's vision led to the establishment of many first aid organisations. Von Esmarch himself, the first to use the term 'first aid' in the military context, began teaching civilians in Germany. He established the civilian Samaritan Society in Germany in 1888. By 1898, the sixth edition of Esmarch's *First Aid to the Injured* was also published in English in London.

The first civilian ambulance service in Australia and New Zealand was established in Brisbane in 1892. The [Brisbane] City Ambulance Transport Brigade was formed in response to a perceived lack of appropriate civilian emergency treatment for a horseman who had sustained a broken leg in a trotting event at the Brisbane Exhibition in August 1892. The Brigade's members were trained in first aid by St John.



# James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia

## J Allan Mawdsley KStJ

*Dr Mawdsley is the President of the Historical Society. A retired psychiatrist who lives in Melbourne, he has spent 64 years continuously in St John, having first joined as an 11-year-old Cadet in the Malvern division in 1949. In the intervening years he has held almost every position available to a St John volunteer in Victoria. He is a former Victorian Commissioner and has been a long-serving member of his State St John Council, of which he was a member for 37 years. He is also the current Secretary of the Victorian branch of the Historical Society, which runs a first rate St John museum at Williamstown. An accomplished medical historian, Dr Mawdsley is the author of three books of St John history and he edited the official history of the Order in Victoria, the late Millie Field's The Order of St John in Victoria: Our First 100 Years. He is a frequent contributor of articles to this journal.*



Dr James Edward Neild, founder of St John Ambulance in Australia, has been the subject of previous presentations and one might well ask, 'Why give another paper on a subject that has already been done? Is there some value to be added?'

Neild has certainly received ample attention from historians in recent decades. As well as being publicly enshrined in Volume 5 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, he was the subject of Harold Love's entertaining book, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso*, in 1989. Various St John Ambulance historians have also tackled him. Important profiles of Neild appear in papers by Sir William Johnston (St John Ambulance Brigade Chief Commissioner) and the late Miss Amelia ('Millie') Field (historian of St John in Victoria) and in the first centenary history produced by Dr Ian Howie-Willis for St John. There have also been mentions of Dr Neild in the Medical History Museum's celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Melbourne University medical school.

Despite such coverage of Neild's life and work, perhaps the time has come to reconsider him. Hence this present article, which offers a new synthesis although it relies heavily on these earlier secondary sources. The seminar presentation on which this article is based also used PowerPoint technology to display images of Neild that past presenters would not have been able to show and to which they probably lacked access. A further reason for considering Dr Neild again is that the seminar in question, the Historical Society's fourteenth, coincided with the second meeting in Australia of the Grand Council of the Order of St John. The occasion was therefore one when it seemed appropriate to revisit the origins of St John Ambulance in Australia.

## St John Ambulance reaches the Australian colonies

The founding of St John Ambulance Association in 1877 and the publication of Peter Shepherd's textbook in the next year led to a rapid uptake of first aid training in England, followed soon afterwards throughout the colonies of the British Empire. Dr Ian Howie-Willis explained this process in his 1983 centenary history, *A Century For Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia, 1883–1983*:

Quite a few Australians would have been familiar with the work of St John Ambulance before the establishment of a St John centre in Australia. In three Australian colonies at least it seems that first



*Dr James Edward Neild (1824–1906), 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. This portrait is on display at the offices of St John Ambulance Victoria.*

aid training using the Association's course might have occurred well before any local branch of the Association formed.

The first person known to have attempted St John Ambulance-type training was Dr Robert Robertson, a private practitioner in St Kilda. Robertson gave four public lectures on military first aid in Melbourne between March 1880 and February 1881. He conducted these principally for members of the St Kilda Volunteer Artillery, of which he was then surgeon, but he also allowed the public to attend.

Robertson wished his lectures to bear the imprimatur of the St John Ambulance Association, for on 11th October 1880 he wrote to the Lord Prior of the British Order of St John, the 7th Duke of Manchester, who was then in Sydney. The Duke replied to the effect that he himself could not help much because he knew little about first aid, but suggested that Robertson mention his name in approaching the Association in London. What emerged from Robertson's efforts was not a local Branch of the St John Ambulance Association but the Victorian Militia Ambulance Corps.

Robertson's was not the only positive contact Australian medicos made with St John's Gate in the very early 1880s. Almost a decade before the official foundation of a New South Wales Centre, Dr Samuel T Knaggs of Newcastle obtained permission from St John's Gate in 1881 to train railwaymen according to the Association's methods.

The early classes Knaggs and others ran in Sydney and Newcastle would have been what St John's Gate called 'detached' classes, that is, instruction of groups organized by various interested individuals in areas where no formal Association Centre existed. The Association sponsored much teaching like that, in Britain, in the colonies and in other places.

Although individual doctors like Robertson and Knaggs were keen to see the St John Ambulance Association established in Australia there was no formal Centre until one was formed in Melbourne in June 1883. The initiative came from a leading member of the Melbourne medical fraternity, a Yorkshireman called James Edward Neild.



*Dr Samuel T Knaggs (1824–1906), who should share with Dr Neild the title 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. While Neild was largely responsible for establishing the Victorian St John Centre in 1883, Knaggs had organised and taught the first public St John first aid course in Sydney in 1881.*

## JE Neild's early years

Neild's interesting life story goes some way towards explaining why his promotion of St John Ambulance was more successful than that of his predecessors. James Edward Neild was born at Doncaster, Yorkshire, England, in 1824, one of several children of James Neild and his wife, Sarah Bilton, daughter of a Yorkshire land-owner.

Neild Snr was in training for the Anglican ministry when he became inspired by a Wesleyan Methodist preacher and changed direction to become a school-teacher and lay preacher. He later worked as a book-keeper and Brewer's clerk. It is clear that the family had a strong ethical and humanitarian ethos.

In his younger years, Neild attended an unusual private school run by an educational reformer, Richard Hiley, in Leeds. This was clearly the stimulus for his love of writing. He began writing for publication from the age of 13 years.

## Medical education and early years in practice

When he was 18, Neild began his career in medicine. This took the form, in 1842, of an apprenticeship to his uncle, Edwin Harrison, a leading medical practitioner in Sheffield. Medical education in England at that time was still conducted on a basis not very different from that of the skilled trades, until reforms more than a decade later. Five years later Neild enrolled in medicine at University College, London, where Joseph Lister was a fellow student. He qualified as a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1848.

The young Dr Neild showed evidence of a wide range of interests and became active in the political movements of the day. He advocated repeal of the Corn Laws, which kept prices artificially high for the benefit of land-owners and detriment of the poor, and he strongly supported the demands of the Chartist leaders for democratic voting reforms. He was the only student of University College who refused to be enrolled as a special constable when the Chartist agitations occurred.

Neild later became resident apothecary to the Rochdale Dispensary for the years 1851 to 1853. The dispensary had first opened for the relief of the sick poor in 1832. The Infirmary building was located at the back of the Rochdale Workhouse, a much more salubrious building. There was evidently more money available for employing the poor than for looking after their health. The post of resident apothecary became known as Resident Medical Officer somewhere about this time. In addition to compounding and dispensing medicines, Neild vaccinated the children of the poor every Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock, provided that the parents paid a shilling deposit, to be returned when the child was brought back for inspection of the result.



*The Rochdale Dispensary, Lancashire, c. 1890. Dr Neild was the resident apothecary, 1851–1853.*

Through his insistence on introducing anaesthetics and other innovations, Neild came into conflict with the authorities and resigned; but that his services were appreciated was shown by the presentation to him of a valuable case of instruments. This was inscribed: '*Presented by the Governors of the Rochdale General Dispensary to Mr James Edward Neild, for the zealous and faithful performance of his duties as house surgeon during a period of three years*'. A certificate 'expressive of the confidence and approval of the medical staff' was also given to him.

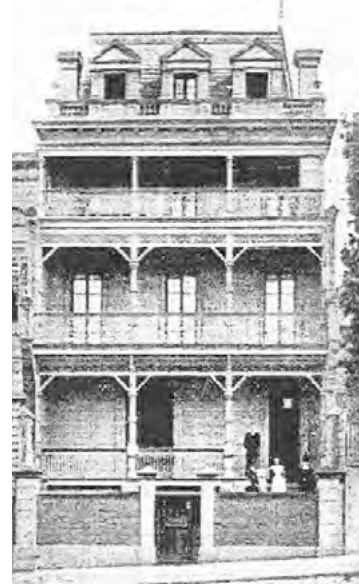
## To Australia

On leaving Rochdale, Neild sailed for Australia. At the height of the gold rush he tried his hand on the diggings near Castlemaine in the central Victoria goldfields but was unsuccessful and the call of medicine soon prevailed. He worked for Mr Daniel Rutter Long as a druggist in Long's pharmacy in Bourke Street, Melbourne, but also took care to have his name included in the medical practitioners' register in 1855. In 1857 Neild married Susannah Long, his boss's daughter.

Dr Neild and his new wife set up house at 165 Collins Street East, naming their residence 'New House'. It was a two-storeyed white stone house with an arched doorway and long, narrow windows. This house was later sold as the site of 'Lister House', well-known for the rooms of medical specialists. The Neilds later moved around the corner to 21 Spring Street, opposite Treasury Gardens, naming their new home 'Bilton House' after Neild's mother. This was to remain their home until his death in 1906. In all, they had eleven children, nine of whom survived their father.



*Susannah Long, who married her father's employee, Dr James E Neild, in 1857.*



*The Neild family's second home in Melbourne, 'Bilton House' at 21 Spring Street, a very prestigious address.*

## Literary and theatrical endeavours

Outside medicine Neild had broad interests. He wrote literary pieces for the newspapers of the day. He was a founding member and subsequently president of the Shakespearean Society, was a frequent attendee of theatre performances, and in later years held regular Sunday afternoon gatherings for theatrical aficionados at his home.

Under various noms de plume, including 'Jaques', Neild was the drama and music critic of the *Argus* for many years. He is said to have been one of the founders of *Melbourne Punch* and a close associate of the local literary luminaries, Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall. A further claim is that he 'discovered' the operatic diva Nellie Melba and encouraged her to give priority to her singing over her piano playing.

As theatrical critic of *My Note Book*, writing under the name 'Christopher Sly', Neild's comments so enraged a magician whose performance was adversely reviewed that Neild was subjected to verbal abuse in the theatre and newspaper commentary including a satirical cartoon. However, in general his contributions were so well appreciated that near the end of his career in 1890 a public concert was held at the Melbourne Town Hall and he was given a public testimonial at the Princess Theatre presided over by his friend, the actor and impresario. George Coppin.



*Dr JE Neild as 'Jaques', the theatre critic of the Melbourne Argus.*





Neild also began a long association with the the University of Melbourne medical school, which opened in 1862. Within the next two years Neild took the higher degree of Doctor of Medicine (Melbourne) by examination. Shortly afterwards, in 1865, he was appointed lecturer in Forensic Medicine by the University of Melbourne and was thus an original member of the university medical school staff. He held this position for forty years until 1904, a short time before his death in 1906. He was also appointed City Coroner, and thus became closely associated with many criminal inquiries.

Dr Neild was a leading member of the Medical Society of Victoria, to which he was admitted in 1861. He was appointed Librarian in 1863, Vice-President in 1867 and President in 1868. He was again Librarian from 1870 to 1874, and in 1875 became Honorary Secretary. Concurrently he was also Honorary Librarian of the Royal Society of Victoria for more than 20 years, and successfully nominated his daughter, Helen (known in the family as 'Nellie'), a zoologist, to become its first female member. He was an honorary physician to the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum and helped found the Medical Benevolent Association. He was an assistant honorary medical officer at the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals.

Neild was appointed editor of the *Australian Medical Journal* from 1862, only six years after its commencement. Three years later a testimonial on vellum, signed by 27 eminent fellow practitioners, was presented to Neild as an appreciation of services rendered to the *Australian Medical Journal* and to the medical profession. Adding considerable weight to their expression of good will was a gift of fifty sovereigns.

Holding the two positions of Honorary Secretary of the Medical Society of Victoria and editor of its journal, Neild was able to exert strong influence on government medical policy. There were eager and dominant personalities taking part in medical politics at that time, and they did not always agree with Dr Neild, particularly with his virulent attacks on what he regarded as quackery. He was also in conflict with some of his colleagues over the failure to elect Dr Louis Henry to membership of the Medical Society of Victoria, which he saw as arising from an anti-Semitic bias. As a consequence Neild resigned from both posts in 1879.



*The medical academic: Dr JE Neild MD, lecturer in forensic medicine at the University of Melbourne, 1865–1904.*

Coincidentally as this was happening, Neild became one of the founders of the Victorian Branch of the British Medical Association, initially intended to foster connection with British authorities but which now became an alternative medico-political forum. In time it was to eclipse the Victorian Medical Society and eventually become the Australian Medical Association. The first meeting was held in Neild's house, and he was elected President in 1882. Dr Louis Henry became the Honorary Secretary. This ensured that Neild remained at the forefront of medical politics of the time.



*Dr James Edward Neild (seated) and Dr Louis Henry.*

## St John Ambulance Founding Father

Turning now to Neild's link with St John Ambulance, I quote again from Howie-Willis:

At the end of 1881 Neild received a letter from Francis Duncan, the Director of the St John Ambulance Association at St John's Gate, saying that he had been given Neild's name as one of a number of Melbourne medicos who might volunteer to examine first aid classes. It was the sort of letter that might have been sent to numerous other doctors. Neild apparently answered it affirmatively, for on 20th February 1882, Sir Herbert Perrott, the General Secretary in London, wrote to thank him for 'the friendly spirit' of his offer to help. Perrott also mentioned that Dr Samuel T Knaggs had recently left London for Newcastle with information on how to go about setting up Association classes 'in different parts of the Colony'. He said that as soon as he had heard from Knaggs he would contact Neild further.

Over a year later, at the end of 1882, and still with no further word from St John's Gate, Neild discussed the matter with Robertson. Then in June 1883 Neild and Dr Richard Warren of Brighton wrote a circular announcing their intention of forming a Melbourne branch of the Association. They sent out over 400 copies of this to the leading citizens—the editors of the eight newspapers, professors, judges, parliamentarians, public servants, city councillors, businessmen, the clergy, and 84 medicos. Neild apparently did not inform Robertson of his intention of issuing the circular, because the latter wrote expressing his surprise at not being consulted but undertaking to co-operate despite that slight.

Neild and Warren received only about thirty replies to their circular. Undiscouraged, they arranged a meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall under the chairmanship of Mr George Coppin, MLA (actor 'Coppin the Great', theatrical manager and entrepreneur, banker and social reformer). This meeting duly took place. During the proceedings Professor Henry Martyn Andrew successfully moved a resolution that 'it is desirable that there should be established in Victoria a branch of the St John Ambulance Association'. Mr Ephraim Zox, MLA (retail trader, philanthropist, campaigner for friendly societies, leading member of the Athenaeum Club and president of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation) then moved that a provisional committee should be formed to draw up rules for the proposed Centre. This consisted of the Mayor, Judges TS Cope and F Quinlan, the parliamentarians Coppin and Zox, two professors (including Andrew), eight medicos (including Neild, Warren and Robertson), the Reverend DJ Hamer, and seven others including the noted architect Lloyd Tayler (who later became Chairman), with Warren as secretary and Zox treasurer.

The provisional committee met a week later at the Royal Society of Victoria and, after completing the draft rules, called a public meeting in the Athenaeum Hall, Collins Street on Tuesday 26 June 1883, to adopt the rules and appoint a permanent council. At the public meeting under the chairmanship of Judge Quinlan, Warren read a letter from Sir Edmund Lechmere, the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Association in London, authorizing the formation of a Victorian Centre of the Association. Neild then moved the adoption of the draft rules. A fourteen-member Council was appointed to govern the Centre.

The public meeting also resolved to approach Sir William Clarke Bt, to accept the position of Association President. Clarke was among Victoria's leading citizens: a major landowner, leading philanthropist, agricultural 'improver', Freemason, sportsman and Member of the Legislative Council.

He was also an honorary Doctor of Laws of Cambridge University and one of the first Australians to be created baronet. Clarke agreed to become President and held the position for fifteen years, until his death in 1897. His widow, Lady Janet Clarke, had already become a great benefactor of St John Ambulance. Among others, she donated money to permit the purchase of the six Ashford Litters (St John-marketed stretchers mounted on light cartwheels) from which Melbourne's ambulance service developed.

The Order of St John in Australia regards the meeting in the Athenaeum Hall on 26 June 1883 as the foundation date of St John Ambulance in Australia. The first meeting of the new Council took place in Neild's rooms nine days later. In October that year, Warren as Secretary read a letter from St John's Gate expressing the pleasure of the Central Council at seeing the first Australian Centre successfully established. Over the next decade other Centres followed in the other colonies, all these except for the Tasmania Centre independent of the Victorian Centre.

Neild remained a member of the St John Council in Victoria for 23 years until the year of his death. In 1895 he was enrolled as an Associate of the Order of St John, a grade equivalent to 'Member' in today's terminology. He died on 17 August 1906 and is buried in a grave with his wife, Susannah and daughter, Helen, at the Melbourne General Cemetery. Sadly, the grave is unmarked and in a poor state of repair. Perhaps this recollection of his great contribution to our nation might be a timely opportunity for a more fitting memorial. A project for our Historical Society, perhaps?



*Sir William Clarke Bt. (1831–1897), inaugural president of the St John Ambulance Association Centre in Melbourne.*



*The unmarked Neild family grave in the Melbourne General Cemetery, Carlton, in disrepair and much in need of tender-loving care.*

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# A short history of the medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John

## Trevor Mayhew KStJ

*Trevor Mayhew joined St John as a Cadet in 1953. He was awarded his Grand Prior's Badge in 1958 and since then has held various appointments, including Divisional and Corps Superintendent and State Staff Officer. He is a former State Operations Officer and currently is State Ceremonial Officer. He served in the Reserve Forces 1959–1973, in both the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, holding appointments such as Acting Wardmaster, Foreman of Signals and Squadron Sergeant Major. In civilian life, he retired in 2007 from WorkCover NSW as a Technical Specialist (Occupational Hygienist) Working Environment. His professional qualifications include a Graduate Diploma in Safety Science and a Master's degree in Occupational Health and Safety. His wife, Jean Mayhew OStJ, served for 36 years in St John and their eldest daughter, Michele Mayhew OStJ, is the New South Wales State Nursing Officer. In 2011 Mr Mayhew was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his St John work. The seminar paper on which this article is based was the second that he has presented to the Historical Society's seminar series.*



This historical outline of the medals issued by the Most Venerable Order of St John is just that: an outline. There is insufficient space to permit a detailed account of the minutiae of all the medals—and all their variations—ever issued by the Order. This article therefore covers its topic by selecting the more important and more common among the range of medals as well as several representative examples of the rest.

## Meaning and origin of medals

The classification and description of medals is a subset of numismatics, which is the systematic study of coins, commercial tokens, medals and medallions. This specialised branch of numismatics may be conveniently understood according to these three statements, cited from *Wikipedia*:

**Definition:** A medal, or medallion, is generally a circular object that has been sculpted, molded, cast, struck, stamped, or some way rendered with an insignia, portrait, or other artistic rendering. A medal may be awarded to a person or organisation as a form of recognition for athletic, military, scientific, academic, or various other achievements. Other medals are issued to celebrate particular events deemed worthy of commemoration.

**Etymology:** First attested in English in 1578, the word 'medal' is derived from the Middle French 'médaille', itself from Italian 'medaglia', and ultimately from the post-classical Latin 'medalia', meaning a coin worth half a denarius.

**History:** The first known instance of a medal being awarded comes from the Romano–Jewish historian Josephus who, writing in the first century AD, wrote of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) awarding a gold button to the High Priest Jonathan who led the Hebrews in aid of Alexander the Great.

## Symbolism in medals

While all medals are intended either to reward the individuals receiving them, or to remind them of an event being commemorated, many medals also have symbolic connotations. That is, they are often emblematic of certain values which the organisation issuing them seeks to promote.

A ready example here is the eight-pointed St John or 'Maltese' Cross embellished with the Queen's Beasts (lions and unicorns) worn by those who have been admitted into membership of the Most Venerable Order of St John. The Order teaches that the four main arms of the cross represent the four Christian virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, and the eight points represent



the eight Beatitudes proclaimed by Christ during his famous 'Sermon on the Mount' ('Blessed are the merciful', 'Blessed are the peacemakers', etc. from Matthew 5: 3–12).

St John Ambulance has taken the symbolism of the St John Cross further by applying secular meanings to the eight points. Thus, the eight points have become a mnemonic for summarizing the qualities of a good first aider, who is ideally: observant, tactful, resourceful, dexterous, explicit, discriminating, persevering and sympathetic.

## St John medals

Turning now to the medals awarded by the Most Venerable Order, we will begin with the earliest and rarest, the Lifesaving Medal.

### The Lifesaving Medal of The Order of St John

The Order of St John first instituted an award for lifesaving nearly 140 years ago in 1874. The St John Lifesaving Medal is awarded to those individuals who, in a conspicuous act of gallantry, have endangered their own lives in saving or attempting to save the life of some other person or persons. The medal is bestowed upon these courageous individuals by the Grand Prior, currently on the recommendation of the Grand Council of the Order.

The Lifesaving Medal of the Order may be awarded in gold, silver or bronze according to the circumstances of the incident, the measure of courage displayed, the degree of resourcefulness used, the administration of first aid and the extent to which the individual's own life was at risk during the incident. Other factors, such as fire, heights or weather conditions where significant hazards exist, assist in determining the level of the award granted.

The awarding of a St John Lifesaving Medal of the Order is rare at any level, but extremely rare at the gold level. Submissions proposing the award are today put forward to the Grand Council from all Pories of St John and are reviewed to determine eligibility in accordance with international regulations.

The first of the medals was awarded in 1875. The recipients were two colliers, Elijah Hallam and Frederick Vickers, who on 6 September that year, at imminent risk of their own lives, rescued six of their fellow workmen suspended in a broken cage halfway down the shaft of the Albert Colliery in Lancashire, England. They received the medal in silver.

Other medals were awarded in the decades that followed. One worthy of comment was the medal in silver presented to Captain Barry Hartwell (1880–1914) of the 2nd Battalion of the 8th Gurkha Rifles, who received the medal at the age of 25 in 1905 for 'saving life' during an earthquake at Dharamsala, India, in 1905. Unfortunately, Hartwell was subsequently killed in action early in World War I.

A mass awarding of the Lifesaving Medal occurred following the rescue effort at a mine disaster at the Hulton Colliery, West Houghton, Lancashire. On 21 Dec 1910, 344 men and boys of the 898 working in the mine at the time lost their lives as a result of a huge underground explosion. This was the third largest mining disaster in British history. The explosion at 7.50 in the morning could be heard and felt miles away. The cage down to the mine was broken in the blast and Alfred Tonge, the general manager of the colliery, gave instructions for it to be repaired. In the meantime he took charge of rescue operations, ensuring that workers in the other seams were brought safely to the surface. For his efforts in organising and leading the rescue effort, Tonge received no fewer than three awards: the Lifesaving Medal of the Order of St John in silver, the Bolton and District Humane Society Medal and the Edward Medal, a civilian gallantry award for lifesaving in mines and quarries which ranks with the George Cross and is now only awarded posthumously. Twenty other rescuers received the St John Lifesaving Medal in bronze.



*The original Lifesaving Medal of the Order: obverse (left) and reverse faces. The medal is suspended from a black ribbon mounted on a metal frame representing a first aider's stretcher.*

In 1907 the Order introduced the gold version, which was authorised in 1907. Originally the ribbon was plain watered black silk but in 1950 a new ribbon in black and white longitudinal stripes was authorised. This was later modified to include a thin scarlet band at the outer edges. In 1963, a bar to the medal was instituted to recognise further acts of bravery. The bar has only ever been awarded twice in gold.

Awards of the Lifesaving Medal are still made, though unfortunately not in recent decades in Australia, where the Priory has tended to the view that eligible candidates should receive the official Australian bravery awards instead.

One of the most recent recipients of the medal in gold was a St John Ambulance Cadet, 17-year-old Paul Swift, who rescued a woman and her small child from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Blackburn, Lancashire, in 2003. Despite a strong current caused by a draining lock on the canal, he jumped into the canal and rescued the child first. After bringing her to the bank, he returned to fetch the mother. With mother and daughter safely on the riverbank, he checked their breathing and placed them in the recovery position.



*Paul Swift, the Cadet awarded the St John Lifesaving Medal in gold in 2003.*

### The Service Medal of St John

The first mention of the Service Medal is found in St John Ambulance Brigade General Regulations for 1895 where paragraph 11 announced that:

Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to authorise the issue of Service Medals to reward Distinguished Services and to encourage efficiency and long service in the various Departments of the Order. Members of the Brigade who have performed distinguished services, or have served honourably and efficiently for a period of not less than fifteen consecutive years, will be eligible for this medal.

(The 15-year qualification period was subsequently amended to 12 years.)

The Service Medal is suspended from a satin ribbon in alternating longitudinal parallel broad bands of black and white (three black, two white). The obverse (front) face of the Service Medal displays the right profile of the head and shoulders of Queen Victoria. It is the only medal to retain the head of Queen Victoria on a current issue. In a circlet around the circumference of the obverse face is the abbreviated Latin inscription:

VICTORIA + D + G + BRITT + REG + F + D + IND + IMP

*(Victoria Deo Gratia Britannia Regina Fidei Defensor India Imperatrix Magnus Prioratus Ordinis Hospitalis Sancti Johannis Jerusalem in Anglia)*

Victoria by the grace of God Queen of [Great] Britain, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India.

The complex reverse face of the medal displays the Royal Arms at the centre, above it the Imperial Crown, to its left the Arms of the Order, to its right the Arms of the Prince of Wales as Grand Prior and below it the crest of the Prince of Wales. The four outer devices are separated by a sprig of St John's Wort, the Order's floral emblem. Around the circumference is the Latin inscription:

*MAGNUS PRIORATUS ORDINIS HOSPITALIS SANCTI-JOHANNIS JERUSALEM IN ANGLIA*

Grand Priory of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England



*The Service Medal of the Order: obverse (above) and reverse faces.*

Periods of efficient service longer than the initial 12 (previously 15) years are indicated by a series of bars, crosses and a laurel leaf added, as follows:

- 17 years: 1 silver bar or cross
- 22 years: 2 silver bars or crosses
- 27 years: 3 silver bars or crosses
- 32 years: 1 gilt bar or cross (all silver crosses are removed at this stage)
- 37 years: 2 gilt bars or crosses
- 42 years: 3 gilt bars or crosses
- 47 years: 4 gilt bars or crosses
- 52 years: 1 gilt laurel leaf (all gilt bars are removed at this stage).

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medal of 1897**

This was a medal issued in 1897 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne, the 'diamond jubilee' of her reign. It is a circular bronze medal with claw and ribbon bar suspension. The obverse face displays the veiled head of Queen Victoria facing left. It is dated 1897. Only 910 St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medals were awarded. There were five different versions: for the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance, the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and of course the St John Ambulance Brigade.

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1902**

This was a medal issued to commemorate the coronation in 1902 of King Edward VII who succeeded his mother, Queen Victoria, to the throne on her death in 1901. As Prince of Wales, King Edward had served as Grand Prior of the Order, 1888–1901. The distribution of the Coronation Medal was similar to that of the Jubilee Medal of 1897, with 912 of the medals issued.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade medals commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897 (left), King Edward VII's coronation in 1902 (centre), and King George V's coronation in 1911 (right).*

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1911**

A similar coronation medal to that issued in 1902 was distributed in celebration of the coronation of King George V in 1911. Like his father, Edward VII, George V had served as Grand Prior of the Order, his period in office being 1901–1910. It is estimated that approximately 3000 medals were issued to St John Ambulance Brigade to commemorate George V's coronation. In addition to these, the medal was distributed to the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance and the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and St John Ambulance Brigade. Other medals of similar type were provided for the County and Borough Police, the Scottish Police, the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Royal Parks workers and the St Andrew's Ambulance Corps (in Scotland).

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Medal for South Africa**

The Order issued this medal mainly to members of the St John Ambulance Brigade who served in the South African or Boer War of 1898–1902. The Brigade in England sent various of its members to join the British Army contingent in South Africa 1899–1902. They served as orderlies and ancillaries with Army Medical Corps units and with a separate St John Ambulance Brigade Field Hospital.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade Boer War Medal presented in 1902 to Brigade members who had served in the St John units sent to South Africa: the obverse (left) and reverse faces.*

Over 1800 of the medals were issued, some being awarded to those who had organised or assisted in the deployment of the Brigade members sent to the war. No fewer than 60 Brigade members died in the war, most the victims of typhoid fever.

### **The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal**

The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve (RNASBR) was a medical ancillary force staffed by volunteers of the St John Ambulance Brigade. Formed in 1910, its purpose was to support the work of the Royal Navy's medical units. The RNASBR uniform consisted of a navy blue single-breasted jacket with a stand-up collar with five buttons bearing the St John's cross. On the right sleeve, they wore a badge with the words 'St John Ambulance Brigade RN Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserves'. The RNASBR was initially formed to maintain an acceptable wartime ratio between medically trained personnel and seaman. The medal was awarded for 12 years service with the RNASBR, with war service counting as double that rate; that is, one year of wartime service counting as the equivalent of two non-wartime years. The RNASBR continued in existence through World Wars I and II; it was disbanded in 1949.



*The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Two series of the medal were awarded: left is the obverse of the series of 1919 to 1943; right is the reverse of the 1943 to 1949 series.*

### **The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-Year Service Badge**

This was a service badge worn above the medal ribbons on the right breast of the St John Ambulance Brigade uniform by eligible members who had served with the Voluntary Aid Detachments.

The Voluntary Aid Detachments, commonly known by their acronym VADs, were a quasi-military medical voluntary (i.e. non-salaried) ancillary service established prior to World War I in Britain. The idea of the VADs was soon adopted by the military authorities in Britain's overseas dominions. In Australia the VAD scheme was run by a structure of national and State committees with representation drawn from the armed services, Red Cross and St John Ambulance. On duty VAD members wore a Red Cross uniform. They received their instruction in first aid and home nursing from the St John Ambulance Association. They were organised into local units similar to the local divisions of the St John Ambulance Brigade. In many cases whole Brigade divisions registered as VAD units.

During World War I many VAD members drove military ambulances. During World War II the VAD members were given more medical training, but they were not fully qualified nurses. In 1942 the Army medical authorities established their own fulltime ancillary medical force, the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWS). The AAMWS recruited many female VAD members, who accordingly became eligible for the award of military medals. The VAD members who remained in their VAD units were nevertheless in demand. They worked mainly as aides in the military hospitals, convalescent homes, on hospital ships and in the blood banks. VAD members who served in the two World Wars received badges to commemorate their wartime service; however, to receive the VAD 12-year service award required them to remain a member for a period substantially longer than either of the world wars.



*The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-year Service Badge;*

### **The St John Ambulance Association Medallion**

In 1879, two years after its foundation, St John Ambulance Association introduced a medallion to award those who had passed three annual examinations. At least two of the examinations had to be in First Aid to the Injured but the third could be in either Home Nursing or Home Hygiene. The medallion number and name of the recipient were engraved on the plain reverse. A 'label' could then be earned by a medallion holder for each successful reexamination at intervals of not less than 12 months after the third examination for the medallion. In 1916 pendants were introduced to indicate a reexamination in a subject



other than First Aid, that is Home Nursing and Home Hygiene. The small 20-millimetre pendants took the form of a quatrefoil edged with a twisted rope design having a small rectangular box in the middle bearing the initial letters of the specialist qualification.

In time, people who undertook annual reexaminations over many years would accumulate many labels and pendants. Some people linked these together in chains from which they would suspend their original medallions. Eventually some such chains were so long they could be worn around the neck. The practice of awarding medallions, labels and pendants continued for over a century, into the mid-1980s.



*The St John Ambulance Association medallion, to which successive 'labels' could be attached forming a chain.*

### **Other St John Ambulance medals, coins and medallions**

A number of national St John Ambulance organisations have issued their own commemorative medals and medallions. In addition the currency-issuing agencies in some nations have produced special coins to help celebrate the achievement of milestone anniversaries by their national St John branches. In this section of the article we will consider a representative sampling, beginning with the Order of St John '900th Year' commemorative medallion.

### **Service Medal of St John Ambulance Ireland**

In the Republic of Ireland, the St John Ambulance Brigade is an independent charitable voluntary organisation. For historical and constitutional reasons it is not a full member association of the Most Venerable Order of St John and the international St John Ambulance movement, but is classed instead as an 'associated body' of the Order.

The Brigade uniform in the Republic is nearly identical to the English uniform, although there are some differences. Instead of wearing distinctive county emblems as in England, Irish Brigade members wear a Brigade emblem consisting of the eight-pointed St John Cross with green shamrocks replacing the lions and unicorns between the four arms of the cross. This emblem is worn under the shoulder flash but is not received until the member has two years' service.

The Brigade in Ireland also awards its own Service Medal. Instituted in 1945, this is awarded in silver for 15 years' service and in silver-gilt for 50 years' service.



*The Service Medal of the St John Ambulance Brigade of Ireland.*

### **St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea Golden Jubilee Medal and commemorative 50-toea coin**

St John Ambulance in Papua New Guinea, Australia's nearest neighbour and former territory, was an import from Australia during the 1960s. In 2007, the St John Council of Papua New Guinea issued a commemorative medal to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of a formal St John organisation there.



*The St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea 50th anniversary commemorative medal.*

The government of Papua New Guinea also marked this anniversary by minting a commemorative 50-toea coin (roughly equivalent to the Australian 50-cent coin) bearing the St John name and badge on the reverse face.

### **Order of St John, 900th Year Commemorative Medallion**

In 1999, the year of the 900th anniversary of the capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the Most Venerable Order of St John produced and marketed a commemorative medallion. Both faces of the medallion carried the promotional slogan: '900 Years of Caring'. This was perhaps misleading because the event being commemorated was not the 900th centenary of the foundation of the Blessed Gerard's original hospice for pilgrims from which the ancient Order of St John had developed; nor was it the nonacentenary of the establishment of the ancient Order. The former event took place about the year 1980; the latter is being celebrated in 2013.



*The Order of St John '900 Years of Caring' medallion of 1999. Obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) faces.*

### **St John Ambulance Malaysia 100th Anniversary Medallion**

St John Ambulance in Malaysia celebrated its centenary in 2008. To commemorate this event, the St John Council for Malaysia published a sumptuous centenary history. The council also issued an impressive commemorative medallion in gilt alloy to celebrate the centenary.



*The St John Ambulance Malaysia centenary medallion of 2008; the obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces of the medallion.*

### **St John Ambulance Association Singapore Service Award**

As in Malaysia, St John Ambulance in Singapore has a long history, though not quite as long as its near neighbour on the opposite shore of the narrow Strait of Johore. St John in Singapore dates its origin to 1935, when a Dr JS Webster OStJ, a radiologist at the Singapore General Hospital, organised first aid lectures with the help of a few public-spirited friends and fellow doctors. By September 1938 sufficient numbers of first aiders had been trained to form the first local uniformed division of the St John Ambulance Brigade.



*The Singapore St John Ambulance Association Service Award; obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces.*



In October 1969, a Sub-Centre of the St John Ambulance Association (now called Training Branch in Australia) was formed in the industrialised area of Singapore. With the Brigade, the Sub-Centre gave lectures in First Aid and Home Nursing to many factory workers. It is now known as Jurong Centre.

The St John Ambulance Association in Singapore began issuing its own Service Medal in 1980. Minted in bronze and suspended from a ribbon of five alternating vertical bands of black and green, the medal displays the Badge of the Order on the obverse face with the second of the Order's mottoes, 'For The Service Of Mankind', around the rim.

### **Malta District of the St John Ambulance Brigade Golden Jubilee Medal**

Outside of the United Kingdom, St John Ambulance in Malta has the longest history of any St John branch. A Centre of the St John Ambulance Association was established there in 1882, a year before a similar Centre opened in Melbourne in 1883.

In Malta St John Ambulance is a voluntary organisation, an autonomous overseas branch of the Most Venerable Order governed by its own national St John Council. The Council is chaired by the Chief Justice of Malta, Professor JJ Cremona. (The Patron of St John Ambulance in Malta is the President of the Republic of Malta, His Excellency Dr George Abela.) Under the Council, St John Ambulance operates through three branches: the Training Association, First Aid and Nursing and the Rescue Corps.

The St John Ambulance Brigade District in Malta was one of the earliest established outside of the United Kingdom. Founded in 1909, it predated all the Australian State Brigade Districts except for New South Wales (1902) and Western Australia (1904). To celebrate its 50th anniversary, the Brigade in Malta issued a Golden Jubilee commemorative medal in 1959. The obverse face shows first aiders attending to a patient; the reverse face displays a crown above the St John Cross Badge of the Order.



*Right: the St John Ambulance Brigade Malta District golden jubilee medallion. (Obverse at left and reverse at right in each case.)*

The medals, coins, medallions and badges of the Most Venerable Order and its associated St John Ambulance organisations have multiplied to the extent that they now comprise a specialised branch of numismatics. Beginning with just the Lifesaving Medal in 1874 and the Service Medal in 1895, they have proliferated as a range of commemorative medals were added to the range. As more international St John branches began forming, they in turn eventually issued their own service medals and commemorative medallions. In some instances they also persuaded their national governments to issue commemorative coins to celebrate their milestone anniversaries.

As well as being highly 'collectible', and therefore comprising prized exhibits in St John museums, these exemplars of the numismatic craft are of interest to St John historians. First, they are inherently worthy of study because of their own innate beauty of design and manufacture. Second, they tell us much about the historical growth and development of the Order. Finally, these items remind us that 125 years after Queen Victoria granted our Royal Charter, the Order has transcended the circumstances of its foundation in 1831 to become a great worldwide family of charitable institutions, agencies and individuals dedicated to 'The Service Of Mankind'. I trust that the foregoing brief survey of the Order's medals has established these points in the minds of my readers.

# Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'

## Brian Fotheringham KStJ

*Dr Brian Fotheringham is the founder and foundation President of the Historical Society. He is also the founder of the Society's State branch in South Australia, which preceded the national society by several years. Previously he was the 14th St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia and then served a record period of 13 years as the eighth Priory Librarian. He joined St John 53 years ago as a 'Probationary Surgeon' within the South Australian St John Ambulance organisation. His late father, Dr Jim Fotheringham MC, was also a St John Commissioner in South Australia. In his professional life, Dr Fotheringham Jnr spent most of career as a senior medical administrator at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal.*



In the little museum in Adelaide, South Australia, that is dedicated to collecting, preserving and displaying items relating to St John Ambulance, there is a curious inclusion known as the 'Pipe of Peace'. Perhaps it should not be there as its use, as far as I know, was never condoned by St John. It does however serve as an interesting conversation piece with some likenesses and links to the history of St John, and possibly also a lesson or even a warning for St John. It is also a story that crosses international boundaries, appropriate for a time such as this when the Grand Council of St John is meeting here in Australia.



*The 'Pipe of Peace'—an inhaler invented by Sir Hiram Maxim.*

## Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim

The 'Pipe of Peace' was invented by Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim (1840–1916). Hiram was born in Sangerville, Maine, USA, on 5 February 1840. Curiously, Sangerville is directly west of another place in Maine called St John. Hiram was the son of a farmer and when aged 14 was apprenticed to a carriage maker. His hobby was inventing things and this later became his life's work. He invented lots of things. He was 26 years old when he took out his first patent—for a hair curling iron. In the next half century he took out 271 American and British patents. No easy feat! They included gas generators, carburettors, steam traps, meters, pumps, chandeliers, heaters, batteries, regulators, dynamos, solvent recovery processes, riveting devices and stone cutting implements. And that is just a few of the American patents.

The British ones covered processes for the separation of metals, pipe and tube manufacture, the production of vacuums, devices to measure wind velocity and others to stop ships from rolling, wheels for railway carriages, shafts for screw propellers, shoe heel protectors, pneumatic tyres, coffee substitutes and fire extinguishers.

His electrical pressure regulator was displayed at the Paris Exhibition of 1881 and earned for him the decoration of Legion of Honour. Hiram went to Paris to collect this honour, but this may not have been his real reason for leaving America. In 1876 he had married Jane Budden in Boston. They had three children. In 1878 he married Helen Leighton in New York. In 1880 he married Sarah Haynes, also in New York. Jane divorced him *after* he had married Helen. Sarah divorced him as she, for a time, was just one of *three* current wives. Hiram never went back to America.



*Sir Hiram Maxim (1840-1916) wears his accumulation of awards.*



Hiram's inventions were not always successful. In England he designed and built a huge two-propeller steam-driven aeroplane. It was tested on rails with an extra restraining rail preventing the plane from lifting off more than a few inches. The restraining rail broke. Hiram did not venture further in the field of aviation.



*Hiram Maxim at the controls of a famous but impractical invention—his steam-powered, rail-mounted biplane made of tubular steel and canvas biplane in 1894. It 'flew' for about 200 metres during a trial in 1895 but then broke an axle and was so seriously damaged that Maxim abandoned the project.*

## A very famous invention

One Maxim invention in particular was a huge success. It was developed in 1884 by Hiram who by this time was living in London. Although he was born in America, Hiram later became a British citizen. The year 1884 was an interesting time for St John. The St John Ambulance Association in England was just seven years old, the St John Ophthalmic Hospital was just two years old and the St John Ambulance Brigade was still three years away from being formed. Hiram's 1884 invention was so noisy that he issued warning notices to people in the area when he tested it. That area was Clerkenwell.

The site of the tests, on the corner of Hatten Garden and Clerkenwell Road, is marked now by one of those ubiquitous British blue plaques. The plaque is no more than 500 metres from St John's Gate purchased for St John by Sir Edmund Lechmere in 1873. Hiram's noisy tests may well have been heard at the Gate. The warnings were not without reason; Sir Hiram himself became deaf from the noise he created. The invention was described as the first (satisfactory) fully automatic machine gun. The Maxim gun consisted of a single barrel and made use of the recoil to eject spent cartridges and to reload the firing chamber. It could fire about 1000 rounds a minute, equivalent to about 30 rounds of the rifles of the day. The Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, was greatly impressed by the gun and it was adopted by the British Army in 1889 and by the Royal Navy in 1892.

In the Matabele War of 1893, fifty British infantrymen with four Maxim guns defended themselves against 5000 warriors and killed 3000 of them. As Hiliare Belloc (1870–1953), famously the author of *Cautionary Tales for Children*, wrote:

Whatever happens, we have got  
the Maxim gun, and they have not.

However it was not long hence that the armies of USA, Russia, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, Italy, Serbia and Finland soon all acquired the Maxim gun.

Hiram was knighted in 1901 by King Edward VII who by then was the Sovereign Head of the Order of St John, having previously been the Grand Prior.



*Sir Hiram Maxim demonstrates his famous machine gun.*

## The development of the 'Pipe of Peace'

When Sir Hiram, at the age of 60, began suffering severe attacks of bronchitis he consulted his family physician and several other doctors. He tried hot springs in France and the treatment system at Vos's Inhalatorium in Nice. That Inhalatorium was the only treatment that gave him significant relief.

Sir Hiram bought some glass tubing and made some simple inhalers for himself. He found them more effective than those of Mr Vos. He gave them to a few people who gave glowing reports of their usefulness. He then made 200 and gave them away. Thereafter sale of the inhalers was placed in the hands of John Morgan Richards and Sons Ltd, of 46 Holborn Viaduct, London. Hundreds of thousands were sold through this one agency.



*Maxim's 'Pipe of Peace' or bronchial inhaler, with its glass tubing and menthol-soaked gauze.*

Actually, two slightly different inhalers were marketed for Sir Hiram Maxim by John Morgan Richards and Sons. They were the Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace. The Inhaler was meant as a pocket appliance to be brought into play at the first sign of bronchial or similar trouble. It was comprised of a glass tube containing gauze material already soaked in menthol. By breathing through the tube, air could be drawn through the menthol-soaked gauze and delivered to the back of the patient's throat. Indents were provided in the tubing into which the patient's teeth could sink so that the device extended for 5.5 cms into the mouth. If the dose of menthol seemed too great, Sir Hiram instructed patients not to close their lips tightly around the tubing, but to allow air in alongside the tubing as well as through it.

The larger inhaler was known as the Pipe of Peace. The principle of direct inhalation was the same as with the Maxim Inhaler, but a compound essence of pine was used instead of menthol. The essence of pine was extracted from pine needles. You will recall that Hiram was born in Maine, USA. Pine trees grew in abundance in Maine and are featured on Maine's Coat of Arms. The pine essence is so highly volatile that the warmth of hands holding the bowl of the Pipe of Peace provided sufficient heat to give healing fumes in the inhalation. Pine needles were said to contain a principle fatal to germs 'which although unidentified are known to be the direct cause of bronchitis and bronchial irritation'.

Inhaling pine essence often caused coughing. To avoid this complication Sir Hiram devised a secret formula by adding small quantities of the essences of Wintergreen and Sweet Birch to the pine essence. This combined product was marketed under the name of 'Dirigo', from the Latin which means 'I guide' or 'I direct'. Sir Hiram's Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler were designed to guide or direct the curative vapours straight to the throat. It is no coincidence that the term 'Dirigo' is the one word motto on the Coat of Arms of the State of Maine.

The Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace were described as being of great service to clergymen, vocalists, actors and public speakers. The package deal of the Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler together with bottles of Dirigo and menthol crystals could be obtained for 15 shillings and six pence and only from John Morgan Richards and Sons. It came in a plain strong cardboard box and postage was included in the price.

## Instructive parallels

There is a certain parallel here between Sir Hiram and the Order of St John. Both had a military bent. The Hospitallers as far back as the twelfth century, when Raymond Du Puy became Master of the Order, were a well-equipped and feared fighting force. Hiram's Machine Gun, likewise was a significantly feared military piece of equipment—it killed far more of the enemy than all the Hospitallers ever did.

The parallels go further than that, however. Both Hiram and St John volunteers worked in London, and more precisely, in Clerkenwell. And then both Sir Hiram and the Order turned to peaceful pursuits. Sir Hiram invented his 'Pipe of Peace' and St John dedicated itself to the relief of suffering. The warning for St John is that Sir Hiram is remembered more for his machine gun than for his inhalers. We should take note!

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# Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance

## Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

*As noted above in the introduction to the article on Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Dr Howie-Willis is a Canberra-based professional historian. His most recent book, A Medical Emergency (Blue Sky Publishing, 2012), is a biography of the inaugural St John Ambulance Chief Commissioner in Australia, Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston. He is currently researching a history of the Australian Army's experience of malaria.*



From its inception in Australia in 1902 the St John Ambulance Brigade (later called 'Operations Branch' and later still 'First Aid Services') has had close and continuing ties with the Australian Army Medical Services. This article aims to present an overview of the many links between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. It is, however, such a vast topic, I could not hope to cover it comprehensively in the 15 minutes available for the seminar paper from which it grew. What therefore follows is the barest summary and leaves the way open to other researchers who might wish to pursue the topic further.

I propose to deal with the topic biographically by alluding to some of the leading St John figures who have held office in both St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. Before doing that, however, I must explain what the Army Medical Services are. Briefly, and depending on what war or period of peace is under consideration, the Army Medical Services have comprised the following military formations:

- the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, extant from 1902 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, extant from 1903 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps, extant from 1943 until the present
- the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS), extant from 1942 until 1951, the AAMWS having been a wartime outgrowth of ...
- the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs), extant from 1909 until post-World War II, the VADs having been a uniformed, quasi-military ancillary medical service not within the Army but operating under military control and using personnel drawn mainly from Red Cross and St John Ambulance.



*The formations which have historically comprised the Australian Army Medical Services: (L–R) the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps and the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS).*

My argument is that at all stages of Australian history since Federation in 1901 a close and continuing connection between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services (AMS) has existed. The link is informal and personal, consisting of a high degree of cross-membership rather than through any structural bonds. The link works to the great advantage of both organisations because St John



personnel comprise a pool of professionally trained, highly motivated and skilled first aiders on which the AMS may draw; conversely, St John has been able to secure professional expertise from the AMS plus potential leaders with experience of emergency medicine under the most trying conditions of all—on the battlefield and under fire.

## Origins of the St John Ambulance Army Medical Services link

As originally conceived in 1887 and continuing into the early post-World War II years, the role of the St John Ambulance Brigade was twofold. First, the Brigade was a disciplined, uniformed civilian organisation undertaking first aid duties at public events. Second, the Brigade was also available when required to be a military medical reserve force in times of war.

The ancillary military purpose was set out in the Brigade's first set of General Regulations, issued in April 1889. The third of four 'objects' or aims was 'to enrol a highly trained body of civilians as supplement to Army Medical Department for service at home and abroad'. It was in fulfillment of this objective that the Brigade in Britain sent contingents of first aiders to the Boer or South African War of 1898–1902.

## A personal approach

I cannot possibly include here all the very many distinguished St John people with Army Medical Service experience, so what I plan to do is divide the past 136 years since the foundation of St John Ambulance into seven major eras or phases of history and then discuss the AMS–St John link through reference to several representative personages from each era. I have no time to give even the shortest of biographical profiles of each of the twenty characters I will use to demonstrate the strength of the link. Instead I will simply comment briefly on their significance.

## First era: pre–1900

### Not Australian St John history but relevant to its subsequent development.

- Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879): career Army medical officer, teacher of the inaugural St John first aid class and author of the first St John first aid manual.
- Surgeon-General William George Nicholas Manley VC (1831–1901): career Army medical officer, a co-founder of St John Ambulance and possibly the person who developed the St John two-wheeled stretcher or litter, the original 'St John ambulance' which gives us our name.
- Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC (1831–1901).



*Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC, 1831–1901.*

## Second era: 1900 to World War I

### The period of the foundation of the St John Ambulance Brigade in Australia.

- Dr George Thomas Lane Mullins (1862–1918): the first effective St John Commissioner in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel during World War I.
- Dr Reuter Emrich Roth (1858–1924): the first District Surgeon in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel with service experience in the South African and First World Wars.
- Dr George F McWilliams (1865–1907): a Medical Corp lieutenant-colonel who had seen active service in the Boer War, he had taught the first public first aid class in Western Australia in 1892 and in 1904 became the inaugural St John Ambulance Commissioner there.



*Dr Reuter E Roth  
(1858–1924)*



*Dr George F McWilliams  
(1865–1907)*



*Dr George T Lane  
Mullins (1862–1918).*

### Third era: World War I

**The period when St John Ambulance demonstrated its usefulness as an AMS ancillary.**

- Sir Neville Reginald Howse VC (1863–1930): a VC and KStJ who led the AMS units in the 1st AIF then served as post-war AMS head, 1921–1925.
- Sir Hugh Raymond Guy Poate (1884–1961): the record-holding NSW St John Ambulance Commissioner and inaugural Chancellor of Priory; a lieutenant-colonel with active service at Gallipoli in World War I then a RAAF Group Captain in World War II.



*Sir Neville R Howse VC  
(1863–1930)*



*Sir Hugh RG Poate  
(1884–1961)*

### Fourth era: inter-war years

**The period when the AMS leadership fully recognised the potential of St John Ambulance as ancillary support for the Army.**

- Major-General Rupert Major Downes (1885–1945): his 24 years as Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner is the Australian record; he was a World War I colonel with active service on Gallipoli and in Palestine in World War I; then led the AMS into World War II.
- Dr John R Donaldson (1895–1985): he was a captain with overseas service in World War I; he was commandant of VADs in Western Australia during 1930s and was a lieutenant-colonel during World War II; he served as WA St John Ambulance Commissioner 1939–1961 then as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia, 1959–1969.



*Major-General Rupert M  
Downes (1885–1945)*



*Dr John R Donaldson  
(1895–1985)*

## Fifth era (Part 1): World War II (Army Medical Corps)

### The 'golden age' of the AMS–St John link.

- Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston (1888–1960): he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia then inaugural Chief Commissioner for Australia 1946–1956; he had active service at Gallipoli and on the Western Front in World War I; he led the AMS in the Middle East in World War II and then from 1942 led the AMS in Australia for the remainder of the war during the Island campaigns, when it reached its maximum strength of 32,000 personnel.
- Brigadier Sir William Wallace Stewart Johnston (1887–1962): he saw active service on the Western Front in World War I; he was deputy head of the AMS at the outbreak of World War II; he then saw much active service in Palestine, Greece and the Island campaigns as a brigadier; he was Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner 1951–1956 then Chief Commissioner 1957–1962.
- Major-General Sir Frank Kingsley Norris (1893–1984): he saw active service on Gallipoli in World War I and in World War II in the Syrian and Island campaigns; he succeeded Burston as head of the AMS in 1948 and held the position until 1955, leading the AMS during the Korean War of the early 1950s; he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1956–1959 and was then Chief Commissioner 1962–1969.



(L–R) Major-General Sir S Roy Burston (1898–1960), Sir William WS Johnston (1884–1962) and Major-General Sir F Kingsley Norris (1893–1984).

## Fifth era (Part 2): World War II (VADs and AAMWS)

### The period when St John-trained VADs proved so effective that the Army assimilated them as a new formation, the AAMWS.

- Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976): she joined a VAD unit early in World War II and rose rapidly to become VAD State secretary for Queensland; she was then recruited to become inaugural St John Ambulance Brigade District Superintendent in Queensland in 1950 then, after serving 19 years, became national Chief Superintendent Nursing 1969–1976.
- Amelia ('Millie') Field (1917–2007): after learning first aid, she joined the pre-war South Melbourne VAD unit; she transferred into the AAMWS in 1942; taught first aid for St John Ambulance post-war; and late in life she wrote and published the Victorian St John Ambulance centenary history.



Mrs Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976), left; and Miss Millie Field (1917–2007).

## Sixth era: early post-war decades

**The period when, under the direction of former senior AMS officers who had been wartime commanders, the St John Ambulance Brigade reached its historic maximum strength.**

- Sir George Grafton Lees Stening (1904–1996): he was a colonel who saw active service at Tobruk and then commanded the Concord Military Hospital in Sydney; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in New South Wales 1945–1951; Sir Hugh Poate's protégé, he succeeded him as Priory Chancellor in 1961 and then held the position for a record 21 years.
- Brigadier Alec Letts Dawkins (1905–1975): reached the rank of brigadier in World War II after active service in the Middle East and the Island campaigns; St John Ambulance Commissioner in Western Australia 1961–66 then served as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia 1969–1973.
- Colonel Charles Douglas Donald (1910–1979): saw active service in World War II, in which he served as a major; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1959–66 and then Chief Commissioner 1969–1979.



*(L–R) Brigadier Alec L. Dawkins (1905–1975) , Colonel Sir George GL Stening (1904–1996) and Colonel C Douglas Donald (1910–1979).*

## Seventh era: recent times

**A competitive period during which St John had to fend off competitors to retain pre-eminence in the field of first aid delivery.**

- Ms Lynne Spencer (formerly Allen-Brown, 1946– ): a career nursing administrator and a captain in the Royal Australian Nursing Corps; St John Ambulance District Superintendent in New South Wales from 1990, then Chief Superintendent from 1993 and then became our first (and so far only) female Chief Commissioner in 1999.
- Major-General David Rossi (1945– ): career Army medical officer; saw active service in Vietnam; Director-General of Army Health Services 1990–1992 then Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1992–1996; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland then Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory 2002–2005.
- Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ): career Army medical officer but now the Director (Professor) of the Centre for Military and Veterans' Health at the University of Queensland; saw active service in Vietnam and Rwanda; St John Ambulance Director of Training 2002–2011.
- Major-General John Hemsley Pearn (1940– ): active service in Papua New Guinea, Vietnam and Rwanda; Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1998–2001; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland; he was St John Ambulance Director of Training 1990–1999; and from May 2012 has been the Priory Librarian, the tenth to hold the position since it was established in 1942.

This brisk canter through 136 years of St John history has passed more figures than it has stopped to consider. Those left out of my survey include significant personalities like Lieutenant-Colonel George Horne (inaugural St John Commissioner in Victoria); Sir Kenneth Fraser (inaugural Commissioner in





(L–R) Major-General David Rossi (1945– ), Major-General John H Pearn (1940– ), Ms Lynne Allen-Brown (1946– ) and Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ).

Queensland) and his successor Colonel Murray Elliott (a subsequent Priory Librarian, the seventh); Colonel Alex Christie (inaugural Chief Superintendent); Drs Noel Colyer and Alan King (Commissioners in Western Australia); Dr James Fotheringham MC (Commissioner in South Australia); Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon Young (Commissioner in New South Wales then Chief Commissioner); Major-General Colin Gurner (inaugural Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory); Dr Vlas Efsthatis (Commissioner and then St John Council Chair in Queensland); Dr Franklin Bridgewater (a St John Chief Professional Officer; then Commissioner in South Australia and now the Priory Director of Ceremonies); Lieutenant-Colonel Geoffrey Newman-Martin (former Commissioner in the ACT); Professor Peter Leggatt (James Cook University); Colonel Jeffrey Rosenfeld (former Commissioner in Victoria); Michael Campion (current Hospitaller of our Priory) and Major Michael Tyquin (the historian of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps). Nor does my survey include any of the many hundreds of other ranks: the privates and non-commissioned officers who, like two current Historical Society members, Vince Little and Trevor Mayhew, gave the best years of their lives to both St John and the Army Medical Services.

I apologise to them all for my sin of omission but plead that this is only a preliminary survey and hopefully other historians will continue where I've left off. Meanwhile, I hope that the foregoing article has demonstrated the point that there is a continuing close but informal link between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services through particular individuals who have worked in both.

For St John Ambulance at least, the connection has been greatly advantageous. It has brought into the organisation people of great talent and with skills immediately applicable in the health and caring causes which St John serves. Their knowledge, discipline, application, steadfastness, sense of community service and leadership skills have had a hugely beneficial impact on St John Ambulance. Long may St John continue to attract people like them!

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 —the Voluntary Aid Detachments.

# ‘To Arms!’ The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia

## James Cheshire MStJ

*Mr James Cheshire is the Secretary of the Historical Society. As such he organised the annual gathering of the Society in Sydney in May 2012, which generated the seminar papers from which the articles in Volumes 12 and 13 of this journal have been developed. Mr Cheshire is a member of the Australian Federal Police, in which he is a Federal Agent in Crime Operations in Melbourne. He is also studying law part-time. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal. He is married to Cherie, who has been a St John member for many years and has made a significant contribution to the development of the St John Cadet movement both in Victoria and nationally.*



During a visit to the Australian Office of St John Ambulance Australia some months ago, I took the opportunity to examine a fine framed document displayed within the museum display cabinets. It depicts the Banner of the Priory in Australia and is endorsed ‘Henry’. It was from this and strengthened by a discussion with the then Priory Librarian, Ian Howie-Willis, that I embarked on an effort to find the ‘grant of arms’ for the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem; that is, the official certificate authorising the Priory to display a heraldic device.

Had anyone seen a vellum parchment? Was there a seal-laden relic supporting the grand table in the board room? After realising that the answers to all such questions were probably in the negative, I set off on a research trek which found me causing more problems than I have so far solved.

In telling the story of my quest, I acknowledge and thank the outstanding assistance I have received in the production of this paper from Major William Hunt, the Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and also the Genealogist of the Order of St John.



*Major William G Hunt CStJ, Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and Genealogist of the Most Venerable Order of St John.*

## The arms and banner of the Order

The arms of the Most Venerable Order are the base for all of the arms of the Priorities and Commanderies within the Order. We have all seen the Order’s arms before and are familiar with them as the base for the arms of the other national associations of St John.

The arms are simply described in heraldic terms as being ‘Gules (red) a cross argent (silver), in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign’s Crest’. A very basic yet unmistakable design! In laypersons’ words, we could add that the arms consist of the square white cross on red field of our patron Saint, St John the Baptist, with the royal crown and lion in the top left section. The arms are referred to in the Royal Charters and Statutes (2004), and the St John (Order) Regulations 2003 in the following terms:



*The painting of the Standard (banner) of the Priory in Australia, framed and on display in the Chancellor's Priory Heritage Collection in Canberra; and Lieutenant-Colonel Owen Beresford Williams MC, KStJ (1885–1963), the Victorian member of the Order who brought the Standard to Australia.*

## **Royal Charters and Statutes of the Order (2004)**

### **Part Four — Arms, Insignia, etc.**

#### **Statute 44. Arms of the Order**

The Arms of the Order shall be: Gules [red] a cross argent [silver], in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign's Crest and they shall be depicted and used in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

#### **Statute 46. Great Banner of the Order**

The Great Banner of the Order shall bear the Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 and it shall be designed and flown in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

## **The St John (Order) Regulations 2003**

### **Regulation 34. Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order**

Appendix I shall have effect for the purposes of Statutes 44, 45 and 46, under which provision may be made in respect of the Arms, the Badge and the Great Banner of the Order.

### **Appendix I Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order (Regulation 34)**

#### **1 Arms of the Order**

- (i) The following illustrates the ARMS of the Order as laid down in Statute 44, viz. Gules, a Cross Argent, in the first quarter a representation of Her Majesty's Crest.
- (ii) How Used

The Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 shall be used as laid down in Statute 46 (Great Banner of the Order) and Statute 49 (Armorial Bearings). They may also be used in any property, flag, parchment, paper, publication, or other article belonging to, used by, or issued by the Headquarters of the Order or Headquarters of Establishments of the Order, or otherwise as authorised by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council. Any other use of the Arms of the Order is prohibited.



*The Great Banner of the Order  
which displays the Order's Arms.*

## Authority to grant arms

The authority to grant armorial bearings or coats of arms is a regal *sui generis* right as the *fons honorum*. In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland it is the sole prerogative of the monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, so to do.

This power has been delegated by the Crown, however. The English Kings of Arms are appointed by the Sovereign by Letters Patent, which authorise them, inter alia, to grant on behalf of the Crown:

to eminent men Letters Patent of Arms and Crests jointly ... or alone at the will and pleasure of the Earl Marshal of England according to the ordinances and statutes from time to time issued.

The jurisdiction of the English Kings of Arms is generally considered to extend to all subjects of the Crown worldwide, with the exception of 'domiciled Scotsmen living in Scotland' and 'domiciled Canadians living in Canada', which have their own heraldic authorities.

The earliest surviving grant of Arms is to the Drapers' Company of 1439 and many of the early grants are to other livery companies; 'eminent men' is therefore deemed to include eminent corporate bodies.

The College of Arms was established by Richard III by way of Royal Charter in 1484. The College is known in the United Kingdom as a Royal Corporation, what might be known in Australia as a public authority, whereby it is a state-owned company which undertakes commercial activities. It receives no money from government and is required to support its self through its commercial endeavours.

The College is overseen by the Earl Marshal who is currently the Duke of Norfolk. There are thirteen officers of the College including the:

- three Kings of Arms: Garter Principal, Clarenceux, and Norroy and Ulster
- six Heralds, being Chester, Lancaster, Windsor, Somerset, Richmond and York
- four Pursuivants of Arms: Bluemantle, Portcullis, Rouge Croix and Rouge Dragon.

The Windsor Herald also holds the office of Genealogist of the Order of St John, as provided for in Regulation 11. The current Windsor Herald and Genealogist of the Order is Major William Hunt CStJ TD FCA.

While Canada has created its own heraldic authority, Australia has not done so and thus the College of Arms retains the right to grant arms to Her Majesty's subjects in the Commonwealth of Australia.

## Approved banner design

So what then is this approved banner design? It is clearly a representation of the Banner of the Priory in Australia. It has the hallmarks of the basic Order heraldic design, being Gules, with a Cross Argent and in the first quarter a representation of Her Majesty's Crest. At the centre there is a circle azure (blue) bearing a representation of the constellation crux or Southern Cross. The inscription reads:



The Order of St John  
Standard of the Priory in Australia

It is then endorsed *without* a date and just this simple copperplate notation and the signature of one 'Henry':

Approved  
Henry  
Grand Prior.

The chronology of the Priory's early years would suggest that the 'Henry' in question was His Royal Highness Field Marshal Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, who was Grand Prior between 1942 and 1974, when his son, the current Duke of Gloucester, HRH Prince Richard, took over the role on his father's death. Prince Henry was also the 11th Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia between 1945 and 1947. Given that the Priory of Australia was established in 1947, while Prince Henry was concurrently the Governor General and Grand Prior, it would seem not impossible that he approved this design whilst performing both roles and perhaps while still domiciled in Australia.

The first dated reference to the banner that can be located within the Priory archives is found in the annual report of the Priory in Australia of 1956. An almost passing reference is made by Lieutenant-Colonel EAH Russell in his Priory Librarian's Report for the twelve months ending 31 December 1956, in which he notes that the Priory Library had 'been endowed with gifts of great historical value', including:

3. Grand Priory: A Standard, manufactured and presented by Grand Priory, and brought to Australia by Lieut.-Colonel Owen B. Williams, M.C., K.St.J.

There is no record of when the standard first came in to hands of the Priory, nor is there any particular note of its use. One can only assume from the information available that some time soon after the approval the banner was made in the United Kingdom and then transported to Australia by Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, as mentioned in the report by the Priory Librarian.

## The Commandery of Western Australia

At this point in my research I was still no closer to identifying a grant of any Arms to the Priory in Australia. I therefore decided to engage another of our eminent St John historians, Dr Edith Khangure, and her cohort of 'can-do' fellow St John researchers, heritage custodians and knowledge-holders in Western Australia.

And so I enquired of Dr Khangure if she was aware of any grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia or to the Commandery of Western Australia. The immediate answer was that there is no instant recollection of anyone in the West ever seeing a formal grant, but that she could remember previously sighting an authority for the Banner of the Commandery. No closer to a result but a familiar pattern was developing!

The good Dr Khangure was able to provide me with a banner design endorsed as approved by 'Henry Grand Prior' and again, undated.

The design of the Commandery banner is true to the form seen previously. It takes as its base the Arms and banner of the Order with a local embellishment to signify the particular entity which it represents. In this case it is the Black Swan or *Cygnus atratus*—the official emblem of the State of Western Australia.



The signature 'Henry' signifying the Grand Prior's approval of the Arms of the Priory in Australia.



*The painting of the Banner of the Commandery in Western Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, with a note at the bottom right indicating that the Grand Prior had approved the design of the Commandery's Arms.*

But what of any formal grant of Arms? This is the design used for many years by the Commandery of Western Australia as its Arms, even prior to its closer administrative links with the Priory in Australia. No grant of Arms can be found, nor can any reference to a grant of Arms be located within the archives of St John in Western Australia. Nor, for that matter, does there appear to be a record of a grant of Arms to the Priory and Commandery in the archives of the Order at St John's Gate in London!

Clearly the only logical next step was to go to the issuing authority, the College of Arms in London, to obtain some information from their records about when the grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia was made.

## Windsor Herald and genealogist of the Order of St John

Prior to venturing into what was thought to be uncharted waters overseas, I sought and was granted the permission of the Priory's Director of Ceremonies and the Priory Secretary to make an initial enquiry with the Windsor Herald. I sent Major William Hunt an email outlining that I was doing some research and that I was keen to ascertain some detail about the grant of Arms to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. Major Hunt very kindly and promptly responded with the information that there was no record within the College of Arms databases of any grant being made to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. It was at this point that we now found ourselves on a sticky wicket.

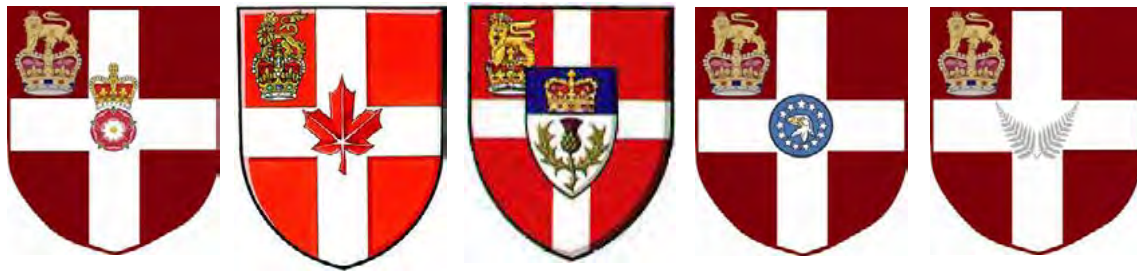
The Law of Arms is an ancient one and since 1417 vests power with the Kings of Arms to prevent anyone bearing Arms 'unless by ancestral right or by grant from a competent authority'. This was ongoing work during the period with various actions being taken by the Kings of Arms to eliminate 'all false armory and arms devised without authority'.

Given a Royal Commission, the Kings of Arms between 1530 and 1689 visited English and Welsh counties to establish that Arms were borne with proper authority, with anyone found using Arms without entitlement forced to make a public disclaimer.

Since the 14th century the Court of Chivalry has had jurisdiction over cases of misuse of Arms. The court sits in the civil jurisdiction and has as its sole judge the Earl Marshal. There have been a number of cases in the past; however, the court's authority remains extant and was exercised as recently as 1954 when the Manchester Corporation took action against the Manchester Palace of Varieties with the latter being a theatre which was successfully sued for illegally displaying the Arms belonging to the corporation.

I wrote back to Major Hunt outlining the research I had done and provided copies of the endorsed Banners for the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. I asked if it were possible that they may have been granted under another grant by the College. Major Hunt very kindly offered to look through the archives given we could establish that it was unlikely to have been granted prior to the establishment of the Priory in Australia in 1947 and certainly not prior to the establishment of the Commandery of Australia in 1941. Major Hunt was able to locate approximately two dozen archive boxes dealing with St John issues which he inherited from the previous Windsor Herald and Genealogist of the Order of St John, Sir Peter Gwynn-Jones. Alas Major Hunt was still unable to identify any grant of Arms or any registering of the Banners with the College of Arms.

Major Hunt then made some enquiries on my behalf and now, on his own motion, has identified other Priories that had not received a grant of Arms but would appear to have been using same. The larger question was: who were they and what can be done?



*Arms of five Priories of the Most Venerable Order of St John. (L–R): the Priory of England and the Islands, the Priory of Canada, the Priory of Scotland, the Priory in the United States of America and the Priory in New Zealand.*

## The way forward

I was fortunate to spend some time speaking on the telephone with Major Hunt in the past few weeks. Although extremely busy with a variety of ceremonial and other heraldic and St John tasks, he has been extremely helpful and provided the Priory and myself with outstanding support and advice.

While some of the background briefing Major Hunt has been able to provide me shall remain in confidence as he requested, it can be said that Major Hunt has prepared a formal report for the Garter King of Arms in relation to the issue, as well as briefing St John International Office. Within this report he outlines the issues identified as a result of the search he has conducted of the records of the College and the areas requiring some formal decision in relation to the regularising of current practice.

It seems that, given there are a number of other St John Arms to be granted in the near future, being the new Commanderies of Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man, it could be possible for a composite grant of Arms to be made by the College. This would regularise the Arms currently being used by the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia.

Whether or not this is a possible way forward is still dependant on the results of the recommendations contained in the report that Major Hunt has prepared for the Garter King of Arms. We await his further advice.



## Reports from the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society

### **St John Ambulance Archives, New South Wales**

*Loredana Napoli, Information Management Coordinator, and  
Betty Stirton DStJ, Honorary Archivist St John Ambulance New South Wales*

During the past twelve months, the St John Ambulance Australia NSW Archive has maintained the work of research and record keeping. As an Archive operating during business hours, we do not have a committee and therefore no Annual General Meeting. An Archive report is presented by Betty Stirton, Honorary Archivist at the NSW State Council Meetings giving details of the work that has been done in the previous three months. Significant events and achievements during the year were as follows.

#### **Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary**

In 2011 Western Suburbs Cadet Division held their Jubilee celebration of 75 years. St John Archives prepared and supplied histories of past members for their families as well as a display depicting the work of the Cadets. The Division has a strong membership of 20 juniors, 12 preliminary members and 40 senior cadets, in addition to senior Cadet Leaders, Officers, Superintendent and President.



*Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary celebrations.*

### **St John (NSW) Registers**

Since our Archive commenced in 1990 we have compiled registers for St John Honours with over 2200 entries, Service Awards 2200 entries, Grand Prior Awardees 1737 entries and Special Service Shields 363 entries. The St John Honours register contains the following information: Full name of Postulant, Awarded dates of Priory Vote of Thanks (PVT), Member St John, Officer St John, Commander, Dame, Knight, Bailiff Grand Cross. Also within this register are the dates of Centenary Medal and St John 50 Year Plaque (issued by St John [NSW] for 50 years of Service) and Deceased date.

As well as PVT dates there are these awards: Honorary Associate 1895–1926, Vellum Vote of Thanks 1901–1943, Commandery Vote of Thanks 1945–1947, Priory Vote of Thanks 1948–2010.



The St John Service Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee, Division/Training area the member belongs to, the Year the Service Medal was received, followed by the Years when Bars 1 through to 9 were awarded.

The Grand Prior and Special Service Shield Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee; Division the Awardee belongs to; Year Award was received. Service hours include 100, 200, 500, 800, 1000, 1,200, 1500, 1800 and 2000. Special Service Shields were introduced in 1947. The First Grand Prior Award in Australia was in 1933 to Marion Higgins from Marrickville Cadet Division (NSW).

### **Homage Roll**

In 1995 we commenced a Homage Roll and each year at the Investiture the Governor and recipients sign their name. This year a Homage Roll was prepared for the Investiture held by Professor Anthony Mellows, Lord Prior of The Most Venerable Order, held at The Great Hall, University of Sydney. As well as the NSW Postulants the Homage Roll includes the International and Interstate Postulants.

### **Research**

We were very fortunate that the early Secretaries of the St John Ambulance Association and Brigade were people who kept the history and gave us an excellent start to our Archives. This enabled Archives to provide seven of the ten names of Australians who attended the Centenary of the Revival of the Order of St John in England in 1931. Those named were NSW members.

We encourage all sections of St John Ambulance in NSW to deposit their Minute books in our Archive as the information provides valuable information on the work performed in their local communities.

### **Women in St John History Project**

Histories and photographs of St John New South Welsh-women were submitted, and a selection published in *Celebrating women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future*. This publication was officially launched on Saturday 19 May 2012 at the 2012 National St John Member Convention in Sydney.

## **Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee**

*Dawn Bat OStJ, Secretary, Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee*

The Northern Territory St John Historical Group met on Thursday 29 March 2012 and elected committee members as required by National Headquarters. Frank Dunstan agreed to be Chairman and Dawn Bat accepted the Secretarial position; Steve Peers, Gwyn Balch, Lesley King, Pat King and Debbie Garraway make up the Committee. Alan Caust, who had been a long standing member, has recently left the Territory. We intend to hold quarterly meetings in the lead up to the 2013 Conference in Darwin to plan and prepare activities and displays. We are hoping to include our Youth Division in the program as some of the members have expressed an interest in being involved.

Our financial membership has decreased this year although it is difficult to be sure of the exact number as some membership has been forwarded directly to the National Office whilst others have still chosen to pay in the Volunteer Office in Darwin. The change in payment of membership fees from local acceptance to the need to send fees to National Office has not been well received hence the drop off in financial membership. We are hoping to be able to discuss this problem with the National Committee at this year's Convention.

The volunteer members of St John in Alice Springs celebrated fifty years of serving their community in October 2011. Among the dignitaries who attended the celebrations were St John Ambulance Chancellor, Dr Neil Conn AO and Mrs Lesley Conn as well as former NT Administrator, Mr Ted Egan AO and Ms Nerys Evans. It was also an honour to have long serving St John NT board member, Dr. Alan Bromwich in attendance. The Mayor of Alice Springs, Mr Damian Ryan, hosted a reception where a number of presentations were made recognising the service of the members to the Alice community.

*Alice Springs St John 50th anniversary birthday cake.*



The ambulance centre on Telegraph Terrace was renamed the Bernie Kilgarriff Complex in honour of the well-known and respected Bernie Kilgarriff AM who recently passed away. He was a Board member for over twenty years and was always willing to assist the volunteers in any way he could. His daughter Fran Kilgarriff is now a board member and carries on her father's tradition.



*Members of the Kilgarriff Family at the Ambulance Centre in Alice Springs.*

The Northern Territory History book which is being written by Frank Dunstan is progressing well and it is hopefully going to be ready to be launched at the 2013 Conference. On a recent visit to Darwin, Commissioner Steve Peers took several boxes of records from Alice Springs to be stored in our archives. Frank has been going through these and scanning important and interesting accounts of the Alice Springs history for the book. We were fortunate enough to receive a small grant to assist with the work Frank is doing, this will help him with the incidental costs involved in research, travel and copying fees. [Editorial note: at the time of printing this volume of the history journal, Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs: A history of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory is at the printers, and it will be officially launched at the National Member Convention Opening Ceremony being held on Friday 31 May at Government House.

Following on from the *Celebrating Women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future* which includes thirteen Territorians, it has been decided to collect



*History Display at the St John members' dinner, Alice Springs 2011.*

## **St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria**

*Shirley Moon OStJ, Chair, St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria*

The Victorian Branch continues to grow both in membership and in the scope of its activities. Membership as at the end of the financial year was 56 members.

During the year the Branch had a further four quarterly meetings at which, in addition to the business matters relating to the Branch and the St John Museum, there were presentations of historical papers. The topics were:

- Heroes of our forgotten past: The story of Eirene Appleton DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Saints associated with the Order of St John by Michael Sellar
- Alice Ishbel Hay Creswick QBE DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Evolution of grades in the Order of St John by Gary Harris.

Several of the papers were so well-received that presenters were urged to offer them for presentation at the annual Priory Conference. The custom of making such presentations at our quarterly meetings is seen as an important reason for the growing interest in local Branch membership.

A major activity of the Branch has been development of the Roll of Honour. It began a couple of years ago as a list of names of current and past members of all grades within the Order of St John in Victoria since its inception. It was then developed on a spreadsheet to include the years of award of Priory Votes of Thanks and admission and promotions to various grades, and the year of death of deceased members. This proved to be invaluable information for preparation of nominations for promotion, or writing obituaries where relevant. The next enhancement, mainly due to the hard work of our Treasurer, Gary Harris, was the inclusion of the Service medal and bars, and more recently, the 3, 6 and 9 years certificates, the Grand Prior's awards, all other awards recognised in post-nominals plus additional information such as St John Council membership and Senior Officer appointments. With these inclusions the Roll of Honour now has over 3000 names.

The Roll has now become so valuable that it is a primary source for Headquarters in appraisals for appointments and promotions as well as a resource for SJHS biographical papers. It is entirely composed of material from published public record material and does not rely on private confidential submissions.

A different but somewhat parallel program planned for the near future is the database recording of all old membership records. These are currently held in paper hard copy format in headquarters storage and are quite difficult to access when queries are received about former members. Although it will be a difficult task to list the thousands of past members we believe this will be a valuable resource for the archives.

St John Museum has received many donations of personal memorabilia and past records and materials from St John Divisions during the year. The displays and collections are constantly being updated. Several small albums devoted to specific members have been added to the collection when enough certificates, photos and documents are available. Our obituary display board now has more than forty brief biographies with photographs.

During the year our Honorary Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley, published a biography of the late Mrs Alice Creswick QBE DStJ, titled *Such Big Work*. This book was officially launched early in 2012 and is available through all bookshops.

Office-bearers in the SJHS Victorian Branch for 2011 were: Chair, Mrs Shirley Moon OStJ; Hon. Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ; Hon. Treasurer, Mr Gary Harris OStJ. The Committee members were: Mr Mervyn Goodali KStJ, Mr George Jackson CStJ, Miss Dorothy Bache DStJ, Mr Nicholas Clarke MStJ, Mr William Foley KSU and Mrs Gladys Blackstock CStJ.

At the time of writing (March 2012), nominations have been called for the 2012 election of Office-bearers which will be completed before the forthcoming Priory Conference

## **The Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, Western Australia**

*Edith Khangure CStJ, Librarian and Archivist, the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, St John Ambulance Australia (WA) Inc.*

In Western Australia the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre functions as the State branch of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia.

### **General status**

The general status of the Heritage Centre is good and summaries of work in the St John Museum and Archives are given in this report. Supplements provide additional information as required. We continue with our membership of Museums Australia.

### **Information Resource Centre**

The Heritage Centre continues as a reference centre for the Museum and Archives.

### **Archives**

This year considerable effort has been spent on acquiring and filing material related to volunteer sub-centres and Event First Aid Services (EFAS) divisions. We have also been sorting our records for past Priory meetings. Our ongoing commitment to digitising SJAA committee minutes is being maintained. This year we have commenced digital copying of official portraits.

### **Donations to and from the Museum**

Donations this year include a circular table, trophies and special presentation items, ties, photographs, books, (including some first aid books from Terry Walton, and, a copy of Maria Godwell's Fremantle Cadet history), ambulance equipment, a Resusci-Anne manikin, uniform items, first aid medallions and labels, shields, manuals, sub-centre records and documents. The donations came from members of the public, SJA personnel, EFAS and St John in Queensland.

The Museum donated a copy of our 'Centennial Anthology' book to a cadet from the Northern Territory. Insignia and duplicate books have been donated to a collection in Mandurah. Two SJAA ties were donated to a sub-centre. Three trophies, which were sent from EFAS to the Museum were national awards and, after consultation with the Priory Historian were returned to Canberra for their collection. Irene and John Ree delivered the trophies to the national office while they were visiting the eastern states.

### **Acquisitions by purchase**

A third montage of ambulance vehicles used in WA, ordered in the previous financial year, was received and has now been hung in the Heritage Centre foyer. A new tablecloth for the original SJAA Council table has also been purchased.

### **Loans**

Material was loaned to Fremantle EFAS cadet division for their 75th anniversary. Photographs were loaned to EFAS to assist with their sub-centre display in August 2011.

### **Reference queries and research work**

Requests for information on sub-centre and EFAS history; SJA personnel and old ambulances have been met this year. Inter-library loans were supplied to Dr Ozer. We provided information to Pam Cunningham and Jeanette Regan, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator in Canberra regarding Library and Museum protocols. We also assisted the Queensland History and Heritage Committee on computer programs for archives.

At the time of writing (March 2012), the 'Women in St John History' project is almost finished. Final selections for the book have been made and all editing is completed. The book is to be launched at the SJAA Members' Convention in Sydney in May 2012.

Two EFAS members from Mundaring sub-centre are compiling a detailed history and we are assisting with this project, which includes providing access to photocopying, digitising minutes of meetings, professional advice and marketing.

A roll of all members of the Order in WA is being compiled.



Research for our 120th anniversary of teaching first aid in WA is underway. We are assisting the Marketing department with information and illustrations for a major promotion of this milestone.

### **Cataloguing**

There is a substantial backlog with cataloguing but our major area of activity is currently with archival work.

### **Digitisation and binding**

The SJAA Council Reports for 2011 have been sent for copying in a digital format for archival purposes. The hard copy has been sent for binding and on its return will be housed in our fire-proof, secure room in Central Records. Some volumes of annual reports are being bound.

### **Restoration**

Considerable restoration work was undertaken this year. The original SJAA Council table and some chairs have been french-polished.

### **Museum promotion**

Material from the Museum was provided for the annual sub-centre conference in August 2011. In addition, tours of the Heritage Centre were organised during the conference.

We are currently assisting the Human Resources department in a revision of their Staff Handbook, which includes historical material. The Heritage Centre is also part of the tour for all new employees.

The Commandery Annual Report now includes items on ceremonial and heritage issues. This is a welcome development and follows a similar initiative in the Priory Annual Reports.

### **Museum volunteers**

Our regular volunteers are: Irene Simpson, John Ree, Barbara Franklin, Des Franklin, Frank Di Scerni, George Ferguson, Kevin Young and Betty Dyke. We are all working on material in the archives. Assistance is also received from Terry Walton in London. Our thanks go to these volunteers without whose help we would not be able to achieve so much.

### **Finance and security**

We are grateful to the organisation for providing our security system, insurance and funding. A fire safety audit this year resulted in an upgrading of fire extinguishers in the Centre.

### **Visitors**

The Centre has been delighted to receive visitors from the general public in WA and other states, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator, some schools and community groups, country and metropolitan SJAA staff and volunteers. The self-guided tour brochure is working well and will be revised this year as we change a number of displays.

### **Publications**

A feature on the Community Care Branch was included in the Commandery Annual Report 2010–2011.

### **The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia**

The Society's 2012 history seminar in May 2012 will feature some international speakers as the Grand Council are meeting in Sydney and overseas delegates have been asked to present a paper on behalf of their Priors. Several have accepted the invitation.

As mentioned, the Heritage Centre functions as the Western Australian Branch of the Historical Society. After being elected President of the Society in May 2011, Dr Allan Mawdsley advised all the Society's committee members of his vision to further the work of the Society, specifically that every State/Territory would: have a local elected committee with office bearers; hold an annual general meeting, and organise regular meetings with historical presentations. The first goal of this committee would be to compile an honour roll of every person in the State/Territory who is, or has ever been, a member of the Order.

The situation in Western Australia is that the State members of the Society's committee (Harry Oxer, Kevin Young and Edith Khangure) take care of all heritage matters; that is, there is no elected local committee. However, research is undertaken by the volunteer Ceremonial and Heritage group, which meets regularly, discusses issues and sorts archival material.

The WA members were surveyed as to whether they wished to adopt Dr Mawdsley's proposals. There was insufficient support for the idea of a local elected committee and our current status will therefore continue. WA is meeting the purposes and objects of the Society. The proposed honour roll was favourably received and it is underway. However, as this is an intense data-mining exercise it will take some time. Our best estimate of this is late 2013 after which we will continue with recording other categories, e.g. Service Medal and Bar recipients. This project will be undertaken alongside our other research and archival work. Further discussion on this is expected at the May 2012 meeting.

### **Projects 2012–2013**

Cataloguing, restoration work as funding permits, meeting reference requests and sorting Archival documents are ongoing.

The 'Women in St John History' project will continue through 2012. After the official launch the issue of the other entries which might be included is to be finalised. Material for the next sub-centre conference will be provided. Work will continue on the WA honour roll.

### **Summary**

We have had another busy and productive year in the Archives and all areas of our work.



'Preserving and promoting the St John heritage'

The pictures on the front cover reflect the theme of the leading article in this edition of St John History: 'Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management by Dr David Fahey, the State Medical Officer for St John Ambulance First Aid Services in New South Wales. As Dr Fahey's article makes clear, von Esmarch was a pioneering medical innovator as well as being the Surgeon-General of the German Army from 1870. Among his inventions was the triangular calico bandage that now bears his name: the versatile 'Esmarch bandage' imprinted with illustrations for its application. Successive generations of St John Ambulance-trained first aiders have learnt to use it, to the extent that it is often called the 'St John bandage'.

The front cover shows a portrait of von Esmarch in full formal military uniform superimposed on images of two versions of his famous eponymous bandage. Interestingly, among his honours and awards is the Maltese Cross of the Johanniterorden, the Order of St John of German and Lutheran tradition. The title page of *The Surgeon's Handbook* is also shown; one of Esmarch's two great books.



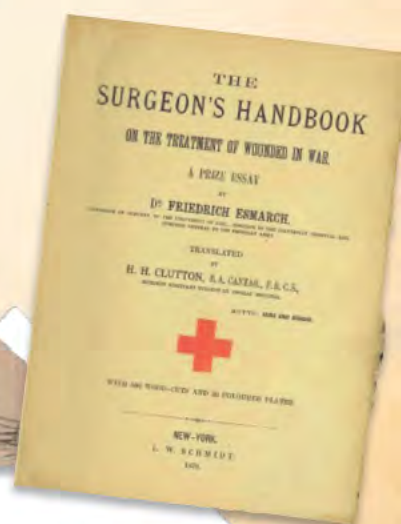


# St John History



THE JOURNAL OF THE ST JOHN AMBULANCE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

VOLUME 13, 2013







'Preserving and promoting  
the St John heritage'

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# St John History

Proceedings of the St John Ambulance  
Historical Society of Australia  
Volume 13, 2013

Editor: Ian Howie-Willis (Historical Advisor), St John Ambulance Australia)

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## Introduction

### **St John History: about Volume 13, 2013**

*St John History* is the annual journal of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia. This edition, Volume 13, follows on from Volume 12, the special edition distributed in December 2012.

Whereas Volume 12, 2012 included the papers delivered at the Historical Society's International Symposium on 19 May 2012, this present volume, Volume 13, 2013, publishes the papers delivered at the domestic seminar the following day, 20 May 2012. It also contains the reports of the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society tabled at the Society's Annual General Meeting, which immediately followed the International Symposium on 19 May.

The domestic seminar on 20 May was the customary annual presentation of historical research papers by the Society's Australian members. It was the fourteenth consecutive seminar since the series began in Perth in 1999. The seminar was organised by the Historical Society's Secretary, Mr James Cheshire MStJ, with his usual flair and attention to detail. In planning and conducting the seminar, he was supported by the Society's President, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ, and Deputy Secretary, Dr Edith Khangure CStJ. Dr Mawdsley introduced and concluded the seminar, while Dr Khangure chaired both seminar sessions.

The seminar's keynote paper, delivered by Dr David Fahey, was the first of nine on the program, where he spoke of Friedrich von Eschscholtz and his contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management. Fahey's paper was followed by Dr Franklin Bridgewater KStJ with his fascinating paper titled *'The Most Venerable Order' or 'The Most Vulnerable Order' of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem?*; Mr Gary Harris OStJ talked about member quotas in *Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective*; Professor John Pearn KStJ and Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ reflected on the influential *Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his 'Little Black Book'*; Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ reminded us about *James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia*; Mr Trevor Mayhew KStJ gave an interesting talk on the *Medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John: A short history*; Dr Brian Fotheringham KStJ introduced *Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'*; Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ, looked at the *Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance*; and finally Mr James Cheshire MStJ closed with *'To Arms!' The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia*.

As usual, State and Territory historical society reports were tabled on 19 May 2012, and they are reflected here.

I trust that readers of this edition of the journal will agree with me that, like all its preceding twelve companion volumes, Volume 13 presents a kaleidoscopic but comprehensive view of the many activities being undertaken in Australia to 'Preserve and Promote the St John Heritage', as the Historical Society's motto says. Such activities are many and varied and probably will occur wherever there are 'St Johnnies' who appreciate what a great historical force for good St John Ambulance has been in Australia since arriving here 130 years ago.

On behalf of the Executive and members of the Historical Society, I express our gratitude to the Chancellor of the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, Dr Neil Conn GCStJ, who gives the Society much encouragement. Dr Conn appreciates the imperative of the Society's motto, 'Preserving and Promoting the St John Heritage', and that in turn helps us ensure that we can achieve our objectives. In this connection I also thank Mr Peter LeCornu OStJ, the Priory Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of St John Ambulance Australia. Mr LeCornu's generous support of the Society, both moral and material, is a key factor in the Society's continuing success. More particularly, it makes possible the publication and distribution of this journal.



Ian Howie-Willis  
Editor, February 2013

## Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management.

### David Fahey OStJ

*Dr David Fahey is a specialist anaesthetist working at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney. He is also the State Medical Officer for St John in NSW. Dr Fahey joined St John in 1983 as a 13-year-old Cadet in Goulburn Division, and during his 28 years of membership he has held Divisional, Regional and State positions in both NSW and Queensland. After training as a nurse, he moved to Queensland in 1999 to study medicine, and then undertake postgraduate specialist training in anaesthesia. In 2009 he spent six months working with the CareFlight rescue helicopter in Brisbane, and acquired an additional qualification in aeromedical retrieval. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Dr Fahey's sixth consecutive presentation to an Historical Society seminar.*



This paper describes the life and work of Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), an innovative German military and academic surgeon. Esmarch was able to channel his intense dislike of war in a pragmatic way, towards improving the standard of medical care which was provided to injured soldiers. In its most basic form, Esmarch saw the need for on the spot help—not from doctors, but from the soldiers themselves. To this end, Esmarch devised the triangular bandage, issued it to all troops, and trained them to use it for haemorrhage control and basic splinting. This was the origin of recognisable ‘first aid’ in the sense of an organised series of drills. Esmarch’s teachings subsequently formed the basis of the first aid training which was extended to any member of the public, under the banner of the Order of St John in England.

### Life and civilian work

Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch was born on 9 January 1823 in Tönning, a small town in northern Germany. He was the son of a well-respected surgeon of the district, and even as a small boy, Esmarch accompanied his father on rounds. This early exposure to medical practise inspired Esmarch to follow in his father’s footsteps, and he gained entry to the medical school at the University of Kiel in 1843 (in spite of his less than exemplary performance at school).

Following graduation in 1848, Esmarch’s career progressed rapidly. He began working as an assistant to Professor von Langenbeck, at the Kiel Hospital, and in 1867, Esmarch was elevated to the position of Professor and Chair of Surgery. Esmarch was committed to teaching—not only of medical students, but also of his peers in the form of postgraduate education. He insisted upon accurate documentation on patient charts, and used the data collected as the basis for scientific research.

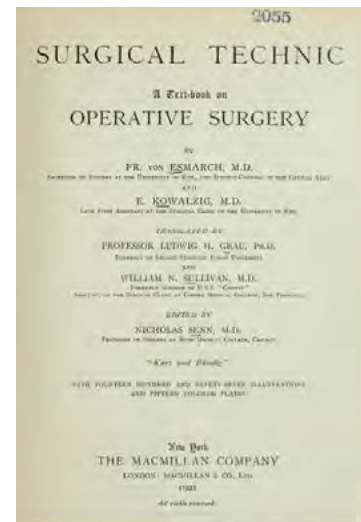
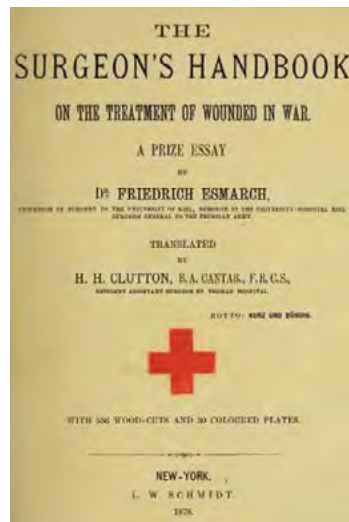
Esmarch’s colleagues praised him as being a genius, with the ability to see underlying relationships in apparently simple processes, and to evaluate their importance. He wrote extensively on a range of novel topics, including the debridement of gunshot wounds (rather than amputation) (1851); cryotherapy to reduce inflammation (1862); and limb exsanguination



*The young Dr Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), a pioneering military and academic surgeon.*



to allow bloodless surgery (1877). His greatest works include *The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War* (1878), and *Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery* (1901). These substantial volumes are comprehensively illustrated, and provide sound anatomical explanations of the operations described. Many of Esmarch's works were translated into several languages (including English), and were utilised throughout Europe and the United States. During his many decades of practice, Esmarch performed over 20,000 major operations. He continued in active surgical practice until his retirement at the age of 76. Despite his technical and academic prowess, he was not arrogant. Esmarch was loved by his patients, and it is said that he had a gentle way with small children.



*The title pages of Esmarch's two great books: The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War and Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery.*

Esmarch was married in 1854, to the daughter of a senior colleague. The marriage was apparently happy, and produced a son, Edwin Esmarch, who later became a bacteriologist and Professor of Hygiene at the University of Gottingen. Tragically, Esmarch's first wife died on 30 May 1870 after a severe chronic illness. In 1872, he married his second wife, the Princess Caroline Christiane Auguste Emilie Henriette Elisabeth of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg (1833–1917), commonly known as the Princess Henriette, an aunt of the wife of the German Emperor Wilhelm II. The marriage was controversial within royal circles, but Princess Henriette was content to live in a modest home near the hospital, and she supported Esmarch in his endeavours.

Outside of medical work, Esmarch was apparently a capable sportsman, mountaineer and hunter. He enjoyed the company of small groups, and was an entertaining story teller.

Emperor Wilhelm II elevated Esmarch to the nobility in 1887. This permitted him to use the title 'Excellency', and use the prefix 'von' in front of his surname. Nine years later, His Excellency Professor von Esmarch died of pneumonia, on 23 February 1908.



*Esmarch and his second wife, the Princess Henriette, after his ennoblement in 1887.*

## Military surgeon

Esmarch lived at a time when Germany was repeatedly involved in military conflicts. Immediately after his medical graduation, war broke out between Denmark and Germany, and Esmarch began his career as a military surgeon. While tending to the wounded during the Battle of Bau, he was captured and taken prisoner, but was eventually released following an exchange with a Danish doctor.

During the wars of 1848 and 1850, Esmarch gained further experience in field hospitals, working alongside his mentors, Professors Langenbeck and Stromeyer. During this time, Esmarch pioneered a new approach to the treatment of gunshot wounds of the limbs. Rather than amputation of the entire limb, Esmarch favoured local debridement. Later, this conservative approach was used together with Lister's 'antiseptic' method of using a carbolic acid spray during surgery.

Esmarch recognised the importance of controlling haemorrhage, and he described numerous methods of applying pressure to the major arteries. He devised tourniquets with effective tightening screws that could be rapidly applied to a damaged limb. Esmarch's textbook *The Surgeon's Handbook of the Treatment of Wounded in War* describes in detail the method of exposing and ligating the arteries of the upper and lower limbs.

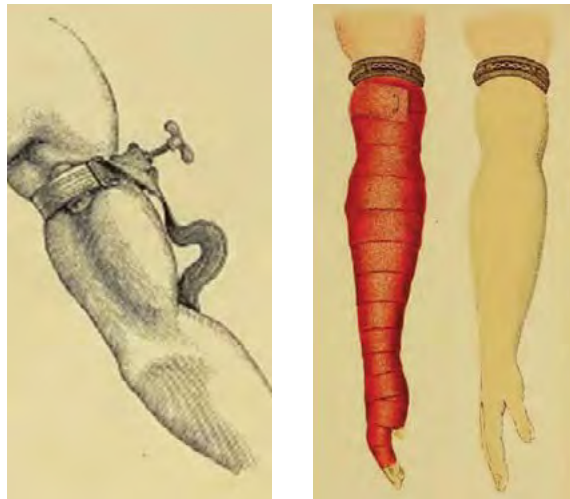
Perhaps Esmarch is best remembered for his technique of 'bloodless surgery', utilising a rubber bandage which is still used today, and still bears his name. This technique was developed during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, and was formally published in 1873. A 5-centimetre rubber bandage is tightly applied to the limb, starting at the fingers or toes. This squeezes capillary and venous blood out of the limb, prior to the application of an arterial tourniquet. In this way, the surgical field is rendered 'bloodless', and the volume of blood contained in the limb is not wasted.

Esmarch is known to have experimented with blood transfusion, and he invented a variety of transfusion equipment and techniques. Esmarch makes no mention of how frequently he performed transfusions or the outcome for the patients. His success must have been limited, given that the concept of blood groups was not known until 1901.

Esmarch displayed deep concern for wounded soldiers. At that time, conditions on the battlefield were appalling, and injured soldiers received inadequate treatment—a situation which had not changed for centuries. During the Franco-Prussian War, Esmarch served as a senior surgeon and public health officer, supervising the military hospitals near Berlin. In this position, he collaborated with the great pathologist Rudolph Virchow, to develop a hygienic pavilion-style hospital system for the battlefield, modelled on the system which had been used during the American Civil War. Further, he implemented ambulance wagons, mobile pharmacies, and soup kitchens, to provide wounded men with effective care. He made use of railways to transport both patients and supplies.

Esmarch's battlefield experience convinced him of the need for a system to enable the most effective use of scarce medical resources. The introduction of 'triage' was unprecedented at a time when treatment was provided based on military rank, rather than severity of injury.

In 1871, aged 48, Esmarch became Surgeon-General of the German army. In this position he was able to exert an even greater influence, to continue modernising and shaping military medical care.



Illustrations for the 'bloodless surgery' techniques from Esmarch's textbook on the treatment of the wounded in war, showing the tourniquet with tightening screw and the rubber bandage with tourniquet.



## First aid

Esmarch's sense of humanity, and his abhorrence of war, led him to develop a revolutionary, pragmatic approach to pre-hospital care on the battlefield. Rather than leaving an injured man to wait for hours for treatment to be provided by a doctor, Esmarch's idea was to train the soldiers to deliver basic initial care to each other. Here, Esmarch emphasised haemorrhage control; experience had taught him that many soldiers needlessly bled to death from badly shattered limbs. Of course, this idea was met with opposition from the medical establishment, which felt that it was inappropriate to teach medical skills to ordinary laymen. Esmarch refuted this brilliantly, as evidenced by the following quote from 'First Aid to the Injured' (1882):

Though I have invited you here to teach you how to render the first aid to the injured, I do not in the least aim at rendering a doctor's services unnecessary; on the contrary, I hope to convince you how important the immediate help of a doctor is in most cases. What I wish to do is enable you to give the right kind of aid before the doctor arrives—without which, irreparable injury might be done, and perhaps even a valuable life be lost.



*Esmarch as a German Army surgeon.*

Esmarch popularised the triangular bandage, as an ideal 'universal' bandage and dressing. He conceived no less than 32 methods of applying it to the body, and produced bandages with printed illustrations to show the soldiers how it could be used. The initial illustrations were criticised as being too morbid, because they depicted realistic battle scenes. Therefore, subsequent editions of the bandage were printed with less confronting images. These techniques were described by Esmarch in a pamphlet titled 'The First Dressing on the Battlefield' (1869). Today, we continue to use the triangular bandage in exactly the same ways that were described by Esmarch almost 150 years ago. Indeed, the triangular bandage is still frequently referred to as the 'Esmarch bandage'.

When appointed as Surgeon-General, Esmarch ordered that every German soldier would carry a first aid pack. This consisted of a triangular bandage, two antiseptic muslin compresses, and a gauze bandage. Today, soldiers continue to carry emergency dressings on their person.



*Two early versions of Esmarch's famous triangular bandage, each printed with illustrations for its application.*



'Pushing forward the lower jaw for threatening asphyxia in chloroform narcosis.' An illustration of Esmarch's manoeuvre from his first aid manual, the instructions reading:

14. In asphyxia the mouth should be opened, and the lower jaw raised with both hands, the index fingers of each being applied behind the ascending ramus, so that the lower range of teeth projects beyond the upper (partial dislocation) (fig. 242)



Esmarch also advocated the use of tongue holding forceps to grasp the tongue and pull it forward if jaw thrust was felt to be inadequate. One can only grimace at the thought of the injuries to tongues caused by these forceps! For some strange reason, the idea of pulling the tongue out of the mouth became part of our early first aid doctrine (not with the aid of forceps, but using a handkerchief held in the fingers), while Esmarch's manoeuvre was never mentioned. It is such a shame that jaw thrust was not adopted by St John, right from the start in 1878.

In a lecture given by Esmarch in 1899, he left the following testimony of his humanistic attitude and goals:

... perhaps later generations will assess these efforts made in an attempt to change the miserable conditions on the battlefield as one of the most commendable acts of the outgoing 19th century.

Esmarch's self-assessment is accurate, but completely inadequate. His legacy continues throughout the world in the form of first aid—essential life-saving skills which have been learned by millions.

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# ‘The Most Venerable Order’ or ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem?

## Franklin Bridgewater KStJ

*Dr Franklin Bridgewater is a retired surgeon who lives in Adelaide. In retirement he has undertaken several overseas tours of duty as an officer in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps. He is a St John veteran, with many years of experience in senior management and leadership positions at the State and national level. A former Chief Medical Officer on the National Headquarters Staff of the St John First Aid Services Branch, he is also a former St John Ambulance Commissioner for South Australia. He is the current Director of Ceremonies for the Priory in Australia. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Dr Bridgewater’s first presentation to an Historical Society seminar.*



What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
by any other name would smell as sweet.

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 1–2.

A confusingly large number of organisations include the phrase ‘Order of St John’, with or without ‘of Jerusalem’, in their titles.<sup>1</sup> Many make unjustified claims to an historical connection to the movement known as the Crusades, from its birth in the 11th century to its decline in the 14th century.<sup>2</sup>

## Early history of the ‘Order of St John’<sup>3</sup>

The Blessed Gerard, probably a Catholic oblate (committed but not under vows), founded a religious community in the 11th century to provide hospice and hospital care for pilgrims and crusaders in and en route to the Holy Land. In 1113, Pope Paschal II approved the establishment of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem with Gerard as its first provost.<sup>2</sup> Within a couple of decades, the members of the Order were also known as ‘Knights Hospitaller’ as they took on a military as well as charitable function. With time, the Order became a rich, powerful military force. The Saracens forced the Order out of the Holy Land in 1291, and it then established its headquarters successively in Cyprus, Rhodes and Malta. The English *Langue* or branch of the Order continued to function until the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII in 1540. Finally, the Order lost its standing as a military power when it capitulated to Napoleon in 1798. He expelled it from Malta.<sup>3</sup> After the expulsion it continued as a sovereign, albeit domain-less, charitable institution.

## Present day ‘Orders of St John’

The present day Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta is the direct descendant of the founding Order. It remains a lay religious Order of Roman Catholic ethos and Rome, Italy, is now its base. It re-established its English Priory in 1993. It has recognised international status as a sovereign body, with diplomatic representatives in many countries and delegates to major intergovernmental organisations.<sup>4</sup>



*Arms of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, the Catholic order whose title is often abbreviated to ‘Sovereign Military Order of Malta’.*

## The concordant Orders of St John<sup>5</sup>

There are only five 'Orders of St John' which are directly descended from the original 11th century Order, and/or are established under Royal Charter, or similarly recognised by an appropriate authority. They are:

1. The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (short title: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta; SMOM), and the four members of The Alliance of Orders of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem<sup>6,7</sup> viz.
2. The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem (short title: The Order of St John; OStJ)
3. Die Balley Brandenburg des ritterlichen Ordens St Johannis vom Spital zu Jerusalem (short title: The Johanniterorden)
4. Johanniterorden i Sverige (a Swedish Royal Order)
5. Johanniter Orde in Nederland (a Dutch Royal Order).

In 1963, a concordat was signed by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and The Order of St John.<sup>6</sup> In 1987, these five orders published a joint declaration.<sup>8</sup> These agreements provide the basis for mutual recognition and acceptance of each Order's historical basis, humanitarian aims and founding authority. The declaration states, 'They are the only Orders of St John which may legitimately use that name'.

## The non-concordant 'Orders of St John'<sup>9,10</sup>

Many of the orders not recognised by the five signatories of the joint statement have their roots in an American organisation called the 'The Knights Hospitallers of the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem' (established/revived late 1800s or early 1900s). This Order has been variously called 'the American Order', 'The Ecumenical Order' and 'the Shickshinny Order'.<sup>1</sup> It had its headquarters in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, in the 1930s and 1940s. Its offshoots are 'Shickshinny Orders'. Several have enrolled members of the European nobility. For example, ex-King Peter of Yugoslavia was closely associated with the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller. Some have engaged to a limited extent in charitable work, though in the main their activities have been only ceremonial and fraternal.



*Emblem of a non-concordant or self-styled 'Order of St John', the 'Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller of Florida'. This is one of various similar 'orders' claiming links with the late ex-King Peter II of Yugoslavia. An off-shoot of this group of 'Orders' is active in Australia, where it has influence among some politicians. Its functions are mainly ceremonial and fraternal rather than charitable.*

## The legitimacy of 'Orders of St John'<sup>1</sup>

In 2006 Hoegen Dijkhof submitted a doctoral thesis through the Faculty of Theology to Leiden University in The Netherlands on 'The legitimacy of Orders of St John'. While not all-encompassing, this is a scholarly, detailed, critical and iconoclastic dissertation on the significant Orders.

## The 'Most Venerable Order' correctly known as 'The Order of St John'

### Historical origin, development and present function

In the 1820s and 1830s interested parties made serious attempts to revive the long defunct English Grand Priory of The Sovereign Military Order of Malta. The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Order refused to provide it with legitimacy. In response to this repudiation, the British body made a unilateral declaration that it was to be the sovereign Order of St John in the United Kingdom, under the title 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of St John of Jerusalem: Anglia'.<sup>3</sup>

## ‘The most vulnerable Order’

### Historical usage of phrase

As it was the Royal Charter of Queen Elisabeth II in 1955<sup>11</sup> that introduced the phrase ‘The Most Venerable Order’, it is only after this date, therefore, that the use of the phrase ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ may be validly considered.

### 1984

*Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*<sup>15</sup> was a Canadian parody on publications such as *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage* produced by one ‘Charlie Farquharson’, also known as Don Harron.<sup>16</sup> This may have been the first occasion on which ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ appeared in this context. *Debunk's Illustrated Guide* refers to The Order of St John as ‘the Most Vulnerable Order of St John's Ambivalence’. It not only parodied ‘The Venerable Order’ but also the prestigious Canadian ‘Order of Military Merit’<sup>17</sup> being deliberately renamed the ‘Order of Millinery Merit’. In addition it linked ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ to ‘St John's Ambivalence’.

### 1994

In 1994, Dr Donald Trunkey published an article in the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons* focusing on the wounds sustained by Admiral Nelson of the Royal Navy.<sup>18</sup> In considering the naval battle at Aboukir Bay, 1–3 August 1798, he stated that one of the French vessels sunk by Nelson carried ‘ingots of gold and treasures of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem [sic]—the second instance of ‘Vulnerable’ replacing ‘Venerable’ in the Order's title, not only confused the Most Venerable Order with the earlier Knights of Malta but getting ‘venerable’ wrong. By now the Order was becoming vulnerable to such ‘mondegreens’.



First use of the term ‘Most Vulnerable Order’ from *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, a spoof on *Debrett's Peerage*, the ‘Who's Who’ of the British aristocracy.

### 2006

The phrase was next used by Dr LN Sisulu, Minister of Housing, Cabinet of South Africa, in a speech at the launch of the N2 Gateway, Cape Town, South Africa, in 2006.<sup>19</sup> On that occasion, she stated that:

It is also with a great deal of gratitude that we accept our new partner, the Priory for South Africa of the Order of St John, under the leadership of the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Bishop Mvume Dandala. The Most Vulnerable Order is bringing in health facilities and services to the partnership. [sic]

Without doubt, this refers to The Most Venerable Order of St John.

In the same year, and also on the African continent Uganda,<sup>20</sup> was the occasion of the admission of a Kampala businessman as an Honorary Officer within The Most Venerable Order of St John. This was in the presence of Rear-Admiral Andrew Gough, the Secretary-General for The Order of St John. The news reporter stated: ‘Queen Elisabeth II founded St John Ambulance in 1930. The Queen is also the sovereign head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem’. [sic]

What Andrew Gough made of all this is unknown, but we can imagine that he would have been surprised to learn that the Queen had established St John Ambulance in 1930, when she was only four years old!

## 2007

The feast day for St John the Baptist is 24 June. It is a focal point in the calendar for The Order of St John. A news report of a celebratory church service in Suva, Fiji, detailed a comment by the visiting Deputy Lord Prior of The Order, Sir John Strachan, 'St John, which is the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, had a unique combination of features[sic]'.<sup>21</sup>

## 2009

The Order of St John achieves its aims through a number of functioning arms. Members of those arms come from all socio-economic groups and a range of professions. Exceptional commitment and achievement can result in admission to membership of The Order itself. In 2009 The Order of St John honored a radiographer in the Royal Navy in this way. The Society of Radiographers reported his admission:

as a Serving Brother to the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (more commonly known as the Order of St John).[sic]<sup>22</sup>

I would presume that reports originating from sources closely related to St John would not use this erroneous term. This is demonstrably not so. In the same year, on 15 September, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, the Grand Prior of The Order of St John, joined supporters and members of St John Ambulance at the opening of a memorial garden to commemorate all those who had faithfully served the organisation over its long history.<sup>23</sup>

This evoked the following response on a site associated with former and current members of St John Ambulance in Staffordshire, UK: '... all proud to serve the most vulnerable order of st john ambulance[sic]'.<sup>24</sup>

Did the Grand Prior ever read this? If so, we must hope that he or one of his underlings gave the St John organisation in Staffordshire a pep talk on the correct name of the Order they represent!



*The memorial garden in Staffordshire, England, commemorating St John Ambulance members' service to the community. To their shame, their website proclaimed that they were proud to represent the 'Most Vulnerable Order'.*

## 2010

Likewise, a long and creditable association does not prevent its use. After an association of 35 years, a Serving Brother within the Order in Kenya states in his curriculum vitae:

... during the investiture held for the admission and promotion of members into the most vulnerable order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem ... at State House, Nairobi. [sic]<sup>25</sup>

Late in 2010, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, presented the insignia of a Member of The Order of St John to a Divisional Superintendent of St John Ambulance from south England. In reporting the upcoming event, the local newspaper stated, 'The Queen, Sovereign Head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, has sanctioned the admittance of...[sic]'.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, a number of ambulance services back in Oklahoma, USA, have taken up the report, including the erroneous title.<sup>27,28</sup>

'The Most Vulnerable Order' is an example of a 'mondegreen' which is the mishearing or misinterpretation of a phrase due to near homophony in a way that gives it a new meaning (e.g. typically a standardised phrase such as a line in a poem or a lyric in a song).<sup>29</sup> For example, Pink Floyd's 'no dark sarcasm in the classroom' becomes 'no ducks or hazards in the classroom'. The term 'mondegreen' itself comes from a mishearing of a line in a Scottish ballad, 'The Bonny Earl o' Murray'. The original line was '... they hae slain the Earl o' Murray, and laid him on the green'—this was interpreted as: '... Earl o' Murray and Lady Mondegreen'.



*The Arms of the University of Nairobi, Kenya, where one of the professors of medicine stated in his CV in 2010 that he was a member of the Most 'Vulnerable' Order of St John—a 35-year St John Ambulance veteran, he should have known better. His one excuse for such an error would have been that, speaking English as a second or even third language, he had been confused by two similar-sounding multisyllabic words.*



### Deliberate construction

It is only the usage of the term by Harron, in *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, which I consider deliberate. He clearly recognised the nature of the title and chose to substitute words of similar sounding but different meaning for the purpose of parody. He created a mondegreen.

### Inadvertent corruption

All other occasions are the result of inadvertent corruption by the user. The corruption from 'venerable' to 'vulnerable' seems more than a typing error. It probably reflects both factors of mishearing and imputation. The pronunciation of 'venerable' (ve-nĕrăb'l) with an unaccustomed accent, and being a word which is itself uncommon, could reasonably be heard as 'vulnerable' (vu-lnĕrăb'l).<sup>30</sup> Allied to this is a general recognition that the role of this Order of St John is fundamentally philanthropic with delivery of a range of services to a group of people, which is indeed 'vulnerable'.

Trunkey<sup>18</sup> in using the title 'the Most Vulnerable Order' imputed its existence more than 150 years before its reality as 'The Most Venerable Order' in 1955. On 16 June 1798, Napoleon's fleet had departed Malta's Valetta Harbor with the treasure of The Holy Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem and of the Sepulchre of Christ [pers. comm. Howie-Willis, 23 Nov. 2009]. This was the treasure lost in Aboukir Bay. With the passage of time, that Order has become the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.<sup>4</sup> The source of Trunkey's information is now speculative [pers. comm. Trunkey, 9 Sept. 2010]. There is nevertheless an element of truth in describing that order as 'vulnerable'. Napoleon had demonstrated it to be such.

Of the remaining seven occasions, four involve media coverage by personnel for whom English may have been a second language. In this setting, mispronunciation, mishearing and misunderstanding may all have played a role. Failure to pronounce the first vowels of 'venerable' produces the word 'vunnrable' and a slight further corruption leads to 'vulnerable'. The use of the phrase in these settings is probably neither intentional nor malicious but rather would seem to have arisen from the confusion by a non-native English speaker between two uncommon, multisyllabic, homophonic words. In the Fijian setting, it is unlikely that the Deputy Lord Prior of The Order would have personally used the reported phrase.

The remaining three reports originate from areas where English is the native tongue. It is true that in areas there are strong local accents. These, on occasion, make dialectal speech almost unintelligible even to a fluent English speaker. The Midlands of England, including Staffordshire, is one such area. Ignorance of the existence of 'venerable' combined with a knowledge of The Order of St John's work to the disadvantaged would then lead to the use of 'vulnerable'.

To end this discussion on a cautionary note, we can reflect that even computer software utilities capable of checking spelling are unable to detect a mondegreen by virtue of its nature.

# Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective

## Gary Harris OStJ

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When Pope Paschall II issued the Papal Bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis* approving the foundation of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in February 1113, he was formalising the work of a monastic community that had Amalfi's sponsorship, which had cared for the sick and injured pilgrims to Jerusalem about 1023.

As with any organisation, the Order needed a structure. The membership gradings were simple. Knights were of noble birth and could prove their noble bearing for at least the previous 100 years. Chaplains tended the religious needs of the Order's members. And Serving Brothers were the monks who attended to the physical needs of the Knights and Chaplains.

Like all organisations, the Order grew and evolved. And evolve it did. After some four centuries headquartered in the Holy Land, then on Cyprus and later Rhodes, the Order moved to Malta in 1530. There it became the Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Malta and was widely known by that name for the next 268 years (and beyond), until Napoleon Bonaparte expelled the Order from Malta in 1798. Meanwhile, the Order in England had continued until 1540, when it was dissolved by an Act of Parliament under King Henry VIII, restored in 1557 by Queen Mary I, then finally dissolved for the last time in 1559 by Queen Elisabeth I.

## Ranks and grades of knighthoods

Knights of Justice, or 'professed' knights, were persons who were entitled to be Knights because of their noble birth. They took religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and formed what amounted to a separate caste within the wider Order. Knights of Obedience made a promise, rather than a vow, of obedience, again having noble bearing of 100 years. Knights of Honour and Devotion and Knights of Grace and Devotion required less noble lineage than the higher grades of knights. Knights of Magistral Grace were appointed by the Grand Master in recognition of their contribution to the Order and were not required to prove noble descent. In the modern era, the strict rules relating to proof of noble lineage were dropped during the 1990s, mainly because of the rarity of noble persons willing to take holy orders as professed knights.

Within each class of knights there were ranks or grades of knighthoods ranging from Bailiff Grand Cross, through Knight Grand Cross, Knight Commander, Knight Officer and down to plain Knight. And so there were 20 to 25 gradations of knights.

As well as the knights there was a separate group of 'donats', who had been awarded membership in the Order because of significant acts of generosity to it. The Donats or donors were considered to be in the 'of Justice' class but were not Knights.



*A Chaplain (left), Knight (centre) and Serving Brother (right) of the ancient Order of St John.*

## Sovereignty

The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John called 'of Jerusalem', called 'of Rhodes' and called 'of Malta' is currently the official name of the continuing Order, but in all there has been a total of 16 variations of the name, much as our Most Venerable Order has several names in popular if informal use. The most commonly used is probably 'the Sovereign Military Order of Malta', often abbreviated to the simple acronym 'SMOM'.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta is technically a sovereign state under today's international law, by virtue of having ruled Malta for 268 years from 1530 to 1798, when the Order surrendered the islands to Napoleon. During those 268 years the Order was indeed sovereign in that it independently ruled its own territories according to its own law. It continues as a 'sovereign' order in that it has never surrendered its right to independent statehood. It emphasises its sovereign credentials by retaining the words 'Sovereign' and 'Malta' in its name.

Although SMOM has been permanently headquartered in Rome since 1834, nowadays in two embassies, by agreement with the government of Malta the Order has a 99-year holding over the Fort St Angelo in Valetta. The obstacle to its universal recognition as a sovereign state is that, apart from its embassies in Rome and abroad, it has no territory.

As an 'entity', however, like the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Olympic Committee and others, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta enjoys permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly and on various UN committees.

## The revived *langue* of England

After the Napoleonic Wars, a Capitular Commission of the Order, made up of the *langues* (tongues) of France, Auvergne and Provence had as one of its main aims the securing of an island so that the Order could resume its effective sovereignty over land and people, as it had done in Rhodes and Malta. In furthering this cause, the Commission deemed it important to enlist the aid of England and so attempted to restore the English *langue*, which had effectively disappeared some 260 years earlier during the reign of Elizabeth I. A Prior was appointed temporarily, the general aim being to raise funds in Britain, use unemployed British soldiers and cheap war surpluses to lay claim to an island territory. When this did not come to pass, the revived *langue* in England simmered along, recruiting nobility and others over the next 50 or so years. It was envisaged that the *langue* would eventually be re-admitted into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

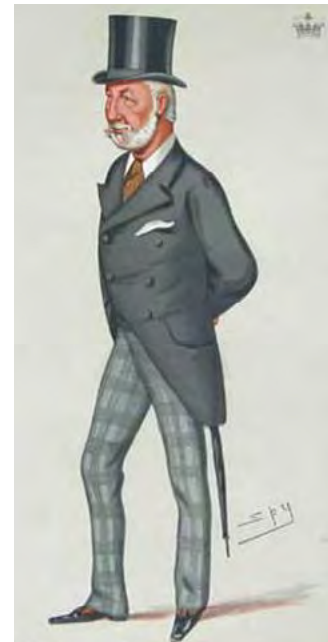
The revival of the English *langue* was intended to be a British Roman Catholic order with provision for Protestant members. When inclusion into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta was requested, the Church in Rome had reasserted its authority over the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and, being Catholic, could not countenance the admission of what would be, effectively, a Protestant branch into what remained of a Catholic religious order.

A second attempt by the revived *langue* in 1858 for inclusion in the Sovereign Military Order again ran up against this stumbling block. The religious argument prevailed and Rome declined to recognise that the English *langue* had been legitimately revived at all. With this rebuff the English *langue* renamed itself 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Anglia' and proceeded to seek its own destinies as a separate order independent of both SMOM and the Catholic Church. Over the next three decades, the revived *langue* evolved fairly rapidly, soon becoming a British Royal Order of Chivalry by virtue of a Royal Charter granted by Queen Victoria in 1888. Whatever it might have been previously, in 1888 it assumed the status and prestige of being an official Order of St John in its own right.



*The arms of the Reverend Sir Robert Peat, Grand Prior 1831–1837 of the 'revived' Langue of England of the Order of St John.*

*A cartoon by Sir Leslie Ward, depicting William Drogo Montague (1823–1890), the 7th Duke of Manchester, published in Vanity Fair in December 1878. The duke was Grand Prior from 1863 until 1888, when Queen Victoria granted it her Royal Charter.*



When the Order was re-established in England, the Maltese Cross was embellished with a unicorn passant and a lion passant guardant (which the French call a leopard in this configuration) in the alternate angles of the Cross. This was apparently in imitation of the Italian tongue's cross which had fleur de lys in the angles. The beasts were discontinued in 1871 but were restored by the Royal Charter of 1888.

Since then the Order has used the two emblems of the ancient Order: the white 'Latin' cross ('square' cross or 'crux immissa') on a scarlet field of the patron saint, John the Baptist, and the eight-pointed 'Maltese', 'Amalfitan' or 'St John' cross: with and without the 'Queen's beasts', the royal lion and unicorn. Interestingly, the beasts at times have been both included with, and omitted, from the angles of both crosses in several permutations of the Coat of Arms.

In 1871, well before the Royal Charter, 'Ladies of Justice/Grace' were included in the grades of membership of the revived English Order. The title was later changed to 'Dames of Justice/Grace'. Donats were not admitted to the revived Order, but wore a demicross, having donated one pound or more to the Order.





*The present two emblems of the Order—the Arms (left) and the Badge (right). Displayed on the Arms are a white Crux Immissa on a red field with the Royal lion surmounting a crown in the top left quarter. The Badge displays a white Maltese cross with the Royal Beasts alternating at the cross's four main angles.*



*The Order's emblems have varied over time. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Royal Beasts were displayed at the angles of the Crux Immissa, as here. Later they were displayed only on Badge of the Order within the four central angles of the Maltese cross.*

## St John Ambulance

In 1877 the Order's 'Ambulance Department' established the St John Ambulance Association, the proliferating regional 'Centres' of which provided for the teaching of first aid initially to miners and railwaymen but soon to members of the general public in sex-segregated classes. In 1882 a hospice and ophthalmic dispensary was established in Jerusalem. In 1887 the St John Ambulance Brigade followed, forming a disciplined, uniformed first aid field force for duty at public events. The good works of these practically-oriented branches of the Order persuaded Queen Victoria to grant it the Royal Charter already noted.

## Some renaming

Under the Charter, the Order was renamed the Grand Priory of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England. At this time 'Commanders' of the Order were the heads of 'Commanderies' or regional branches of the Order. The Commanders relinquished their titles after serving their five-year term of office. They were selected from the ranks of 'Chevaliers' (Knights) of Justice or Grace, Chaplains or Esquires.

The Order also embraced 'Honorary Associates', who, being of Christian faith, devoted their energies to the objects of the Order or were distinguished in philanthropy but were not members of the Order. The grade of Honorary Associate was created on St John Day, 1869. The Associates, not being members, were persons who took an active part in the establishment and development of the modern Hospitaller work.

From 1906 to 1955 each Bailiff Grand Cross and Knight of Justice could appoint a 'personal esquire', who was admitted to the Order as an Officer Brother.

The year 1926 saw the simplification of the gradings. 'Ladies' were now called 'Dames'. The renaming continued with 'Order' becoming 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'.

Bailiff and Dame Grand Cross and Knight and Dame of Justice and Grace became equivalent to the Ancient Knight.

Dame Grand Cross was created allowing women to be elevated to the highest grade.

The grades of Commander, Officer and Serving Brother/Sister became equivalent to what the 'Serving Brothers' of the ancient Order had been; that is not Knights, but nevertheless members of the Order. Honorary Associates were offered the grade of Officer, or if they preferred, Serving Brother/Sister (presumably dependent on their desire to pay the oblations if they took up the Officer grading). The grade of 'Associate' of 1888 was discontinued; however, the use of the term has continued, the grouping as we understand it today being for non-Christian citizens of Commonwealth countries.

In 1936 the 'Justice' and 'Grace' gradings were amalgamated, the intention being to bring these gradings into line with other British royal orders of chivalry; however, the listings and insignia for each group remained separate and distinct until very recently. The gradings of 1936 continued till 1970, when 'Esquires' were added as the lowest of six grades of the Order.



*'Of Justice' or 'Of Grace'? Among other distinctions, Knights and Dames of Justice wear mantles bearing the Badge of the Order with gold Royal Beasts; Knights and Dames of Grace wear a Badge with white Royal Beasts.*

In the revised Charter issued by Queen Elizabeth II in 1955 the term 'Most' was included in the Order's title, which accordingly became 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem'. In the Supplemental Royal Charter of 1974 the name was amended to what it is today, The Grand Priory of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem. The reforms and restructuring of the Order during the late 1990s instituted the formation of an international Grand Council of the Order in place of the previous Chapter General.

The year 2008 saw the renaming of the fifth grade of membership of the Order. Grade 5 members, the Serving Brothers and Sisters, were redesignated as 'Members'; and the gender-specific names of Grade 3 and Grade 4 members—'Commander Brothers/Sisters' and 'Officer Brothers/Sisters'—became simply generic 'Commanders' and 'Officers', again in line with the other British orders of chivalry.

## Some membership statistics

I will conclude this brief survey of changes in the membership structures and nomenclature of the Most Venerable Order of St John by making the point that admissions into and promotions within the Order are conferred for sustained outstanding service to the Order and its Branches. They are not granted for mere longevity of service; nor can they be purchased or gained through paying the high entry fees required elsewhere in other orders.

If admissions and promotions must be earned through conspicuous service, how many people benefit? I will cite some statistics to show that membership of the Order remains a comparatively rare honour. I will use the example of my home State, Victoria, to illustrate this fact.

Since 1896, the Order of St John in Victoria has had only 1067 admissions to its ranks, an average of approximately nine annually out of the many thousands who have worked for the St John Ambulance branches. About 600 of those admitted subsequently received no promotion within the Order. The rest, some 360 or about a third of those admitted, received promotions within the Order. These promotees

shared a total of 535 promotions, that is, an average of fewer than five promotions annually; and of course many promotees were promoted more than once. Typically, someone admitted as a Member (Grade 5) and subsequently promoted to Knight/Dame (Grade 2) will have been promoted three times: to Officer (Grade 4) then to Commander (Grade 3) and finally to Knight/Dame. The following table summarises the situation.

**Promotions within the Order of St John in Victoria, 1896–2012**

Promotions	Number	Total years' service	Average years' service
Esquire to Member	1	6	6.0
Member to Officer	315	2779	8.8
Officer to Commander	146	1195	8.2
Commander to Knight/Dame	71	575	8.1
Knight/Dame to Bailiff/Dame Grand Cross	2	36	18.0
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>4591</b>	<b>8.6</b>

These figures are of 'mainstream' promotions only, not taking into account the extreme instances of the promotion from Esquire to Member, and Knight to Bailiff Grand Cross and those that have skipped grades. Surprisingly, the average time in years between promotions from Member to Officer, Officer to Commander and Commander to Dame or Knight, are within a narrow range of years, being 8.8, 8.2 and 8.1 years respectively. This is significant because these averages do not take into account the individual circumstances of each Member. The spread of these averages could be a variation on the 'wisdom of the crowd'. (I shall let my readers research that phenomenon for themselves.)

Putting these instructive averages together, and assuming 15 years' service before admission to the Order, we can conclude that a newly admitted member Grade 5 Member of the Order who aspires to Grade 2 membership could expect on average, promotion to Officer in about nine years, to Commander in a further eight years and to Knight/Dame another eight years after that. In other words, he/she might anticipate a total of about 40 years' continual service between affiliating with a St John branch and promotion to Grade 2 membership. If joining as a young adult, promotion to Knight or Dame at the age of about 60 years would therefore be the most likely reality. A target worth aspiring to, perhaps?

# Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his ‘Little Black Book’

## John Pearn KStJ and Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

**John Pearn** is a Professor Emeritus of Paediatrics at the Royal Children’s Hospital campus of the University of Queensland. A retired major-general, he is also a former Surgeon General to the Australian Defence Force. Professor Pearn is a former Director of Training for St John Ambulance Australia and the co-author of the centenary history of St John in Queensland, *First in First Aid: A history of St John Ambulance in Queensland*. He is the current Priory Librarian of St John Ambulance Australia. An eminent medical scientist and professionally qualified historian, he is greatly in demand as a lecturer at national and overseas medical symposia.



**Ian Howie-Willis** is a professional historian. He joined St John 33 years ago, recruited to produce the centenary history, *A Century for Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia 1883–1983*. Since then he has produced six other St John histories either alone or with co-authors. He was Priory Librarian 2003–2012 and was the foundation Secretary of the Historical Society. He is currently the Society’s Editor and also the historical adviser to the Office of the Priory of St John Ambulance Australia. Professor Pearn and Dr Howie-Willis are frequent contributors of articles to this journal.



Until 1878, the teaching of resuscitation and first aid skills to members of the civilian lay public was a novel concept. What today is taken for granted—the teaching of the drills and skills of best-practice emergency response to injury and acute illness—resulted from the vision of several military surgeons. They invented the profession of prehospital care as this discipline exists today.

The pivot among these doctors was Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), a Scot serving in the Army Medical Department at the Woolwich Garrison in London. In 1878, Peter Shepherd compiled a handwritten manuscript which he called *Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. This book evolved as a manuscript, written over several months, as the public first aid classes which he taught in Woolwich progressed. In the following year (1879) Shepherd was killed in the massacre of the British Military Force at the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879. Prior to his death, his ‘Aids’ were published in London, in absentia, as his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. Issued in December 1878, it was covered in black leatherette with a simple silver Maltese cross on the cover. Shepherd never saw this bound volume, but it is not an exaggeration to say that this ‘Little Black Book’ was in many ways to change the world.

That ‘Little Black Book’ contained the doctrine of what we now call ‘First Aid’. The concept of teaching first aid drills and skills to everyone was a startling innovation. It was nevertheless the catalyst which led to the development of the ambulance and paramedic professions, of many rescue and retrieval organisations and of the now universal desideratum of ‘First Aid for All’. Subsequent editions of Shepherd’s manual collectively became the world’s best-seller after the Bible. Its influence, both in the technical sense of the promotion of techniques of first aid and also in its pioneering advocacy for the broader ethos of bystander prehospital care, cannot be overstated.



Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), author of the initial St John Ambulance first aid manual.



## Bystander care before Peter Shepherd

The application of woundworts to cuts and abrasions is older than recorded history. Bandaging skills for wounds sustained in battle were documented on Grecian pottery from circa 500 BC, by the enigmatic vase painter, Sosias. The 'Good Samaritan' ethic of succour and efficiency in bandaging, dates from the bronze age in the Middle East, and is immortalised in the Gospel of St Luke (10:30). The Dutch were the first in 1767 to institute a society for the rescue and resuscitation of the apparently drowned, the *Maatschappij tot Redding van Drenkelingen*. Drowning was a confronting cause of death in the canals of Holland's cities and towns. In Britain, The Royal Humane Society, founded in 1774, followed this example and did much to promote the attempted resuscitation of the apparently drowned.

Various resuscitation methods were introduced from the middle of the 19th century. These were principally aimed at educating doctors, nurses and apothecaries. Early and occasionally successful techniques tried to simulate breathing by alternately inflating and deflating the lungs. Henry Robert Silvester (1829–1908), an English physician, developed his 'physiological method of resuscitation' in 1861, in which the unconscious person was placed on their back and the arms were alternately raised above the head and then lowered onto the chest. This was adopted as the preferred method by the Royal Humane Society and promoted in Britain and throughout the Colonies.

It was not until the late 1860s however, that the Prussian military surgeon, Johannes Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908) first used the term *Erste Hilfe* (German: 'First Aid') and taught soldiers that they could help their wounded comrades on the battlefield by carrying a triangular bandage and using a standard set of bandaging and splinting skills.

In civilian life, literate adults could buy a family medical guide. In Australia, in many outback homesteads, a domestic medical guide was the only book which the family possessed. One of the first outback manuals, *A Family Medical Guide*, written specifically for Australian conditions, was published in 1870 by Dr George Fullerton, the first President of the Medical Board of Queensland. It contained advice about home care for victims of trauma or illness.

In British outposts, including the Australian colonies, drownings, horseriding injuries, gunshot wounds, emergency childbirth and snakebite were common occurrences. All called for help from bystanders or family members or even self-help by the victims themselves. A widely dispersed population, long distances to medical help, extremes of heat and cold, and a high risk of trauma—all produced a hostile environment for the sick and injured and a great need for first aid.

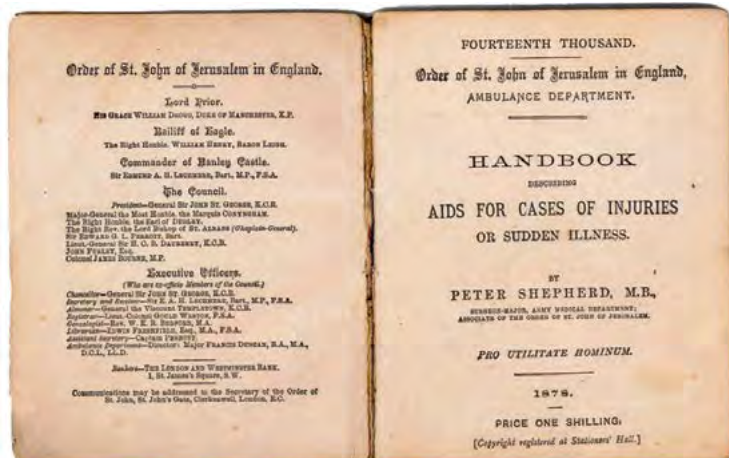
This then was the background which in 1877 engendered the formation of the St John Ambulance Association in London and the radical concept which followed: that of teaching and vigorously promoting a set of safe basic drills and skills embodying the best-practice of the day and which a bystander could perform.

## Shepherd's Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness

The St John Ambulance Association was established on 1 July 1877, the result of co-operative advocacy by senior officers of the British Army and the Order of St John. Following the establishment of the Association and under its aegis, three doctors—Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Surgeon-Major Francis Falwasser and a civilian doctor, Dr Coleman—planned the initial public classes in what was soon called 'First Aid'. Hitherto this had been the exclusive doctrine of military medical orderlies and stretcher-bearers.



*Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book': the 1878 edition, the first of 40 editions, hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies, 1878–1958.*



The twin title pages of Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book'. The verso page sets out the Order's leadership positions. The recto page bears the title of the book, 'Handbook describing aids for cases of injuries or sudden illnesses'.

In January 1878, Peter Shepherd and Dr Coleman taught the inaugural First Aid class in the hall of the church school beside the Presbyterian Church at Woolwich in London. The course in first aid was taught from hand-written notes prepared by Shepherd. The details of the syllabus were published on 2 March 1878, in the *Kentish Independent*, the local newspaper.

Shepherd formalised his teaching notes in October 1878, probably days before he embarked with Lord Chelmsford's Contingent to confront the Zulus in South Africa. It was a busy time for Shepherd, appointed as the Senior Medical Officer to a contingent of over 4000 men. The Force was hurriedly preparing for its operational deployment. Before departing, Shepherd had printed and distributed to all the troops in the contingent a *Pocket Aide Memoire*, that is a single card of first aid instructions in an envelope.

On 30 October 1878, in his 'Introduction' to the notes for his proposed 'Handbook', Shepherd wrote that 'the careful work which I should like to have bestowed [in finalising the first aid manuscript] has been rendered impossible by the exigencies of the Service requiring me to proceed on foreign service'. Nevertheless, he found time to 'hurriedly arrange the following Manual for the use of the Metropolitan Police and the other Ambulance Classes now organised by the Order of St John in all parts of England'.

Shepherd left his hand-written manuscript with a colleague with instructions that it be published. This was a young fellow Scot, Dr (later Sir) James Cantlie, who would later become the author of all six major revisions of the 'Little Black Book' between 1901 and 1928. Cantlie would also later become Britain's leading authority on tropical diseases.

It was either whilst Shepherd was at sea en route for South Africa, or after his arrival and during his overland march to Pietermaritzburg that his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness* was published in London.

Sir James Cantlie (1851–1926), the Scottish physician and surgeon, who took over the authorship and editorship of the 'Little Black Book' in 1901 and then produced the 1901, 1904, 1908, 1917, 1919 and 1928 editions.



## Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879)

Peter Shepherd was born on 9 January 1842 at his father's farm, 'Craigmill', in the hamlet of Leochel-Cushnie, a village in Donside in Aberdeenshire. His father, also Peter Shepherd, was a farmer. Shepherd Snr and his wife, Mary Anne (*née* Dewar) had three boys and a girl. Peter Jnr was the second son.<sup>19</sup> In that era first sons stayed on the farm, and second and subsequent sons either joined the army or were ordained as ministers in the Church.

As a boy, Peter Shepherd worked on his family's farm. He was educated at schools in Aberdeen and won a bursary for further study. With additional financial support of family and friends—to whom he repaid their contributions after his graduation—he matriculated and studied medicine at Marischal College at the University of Aberdeen. In the fourth year of his course he won the prize for Medical Jurisprudence.

Peter Shepherd graduated in 1864 and immediately joined the Army Medical Department. After initial training at the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley near Southampton, he was commissioned with the rank of Assistant Surgeon and posted to Grahamstown in South Africa with the 99th (Lanarkshire) Regiment of Foot. After several years service in South Africa, he was posted to Ireland and then to Bengal in 1873. In 1874 he returned to England as Medical Officer to the Woolwich Garrison where, after 12 years service, he was promoted to surgeon-major in 1876. It was as Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd that his significance as the principal founder of the discipline of first aid is remembered. Tragically, he was killed in the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879, one of 1329 members of the British contingent who died in the disastrous opening battle of the Anglo–Zulu War.

### The battle of Isandlwana

Briefly, what happened was that two columns of Lord Chelmsford's force, about 1700 troops, had marched north-east into Zululand in present-day Natal Province. They camped at the foot of a prominent hill, Mount Isandlwana, where 15,000 warriors of an *impi* (i.e. army) of the Zulu chieftain, Cetshwayo, descended upon them from the heights of a nearby plateau, surrounded them and massacred them. Though they fought bravely, they were completely overwhelmed. Only about 400 or fewer than a quarter of their number survived, mainly by escaping to Rorke's Drift, a camp 14 kilometres to the rear, which was attacked next day but survived the Zulu onslaught. The Zulus lost 1000 at Isandlwana.

Peter Shepherd is thought to have been killed when struck by a thrown *assegai* (broad-bladed spear) while trying to move a wagonload of the wounded back to Rorke's Drift. His grave is unmarked

*The Zulu warriors' view of the plain before Mt Isandlwana as they began their charge on the 24th Regiment.*



*The Isandlwana battlefield, the Nqutu area, with memorials marking the graves of the identified dead. Peter Shepherd's grave is unidentified and unmarked.*



but is thought to be within 20 metres of the grave of George MacLeroy, the soldier he was treating when killed, whose grave is marked. Memorials to him, however, were later placed in the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley and in the churchyard of his family church at Leochel-Cushnie. In addition, the Shepherd Memorial Medal for Surgery was instituted in 1879 at his *alma mater*, the University of Aberdeen.

A bronze memorial plaque to Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd may be found in the former Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire. The inscription reads:

In memory of Peter Shepherd MB, University of Aberdeen, Surgeon-Major, Her Majesty's Army, born at Leochel-Cushnie, Aberdeenshire, 25 August 1841, who sacrificed his own life at the Battle of Isandhlwane, Zululand, 22 January 1879, in the endeavour to save the life of a wounded comrade. Erected by his brother officers and friends.

## The 'Little Black Book'

The St John Ambulance Association, in collaboration with the Army Medical Department, had initially intended that the teaching of first aid to civilians would provide: 'a civilian reserve for the Army Medical Department ... to train men and women for the benefit of the sick and wounded'. However, within months of the commencement of the first civilian courses at Woolwich, the value of first aid skills that could be used in the normal daily life of the civilian population had become obvious. These evolving concepts were accompanied by increasing zeal throughout British society. Within the first year of the Woolwich civilian classes, 40,000 copies of the 'Little Black Book' had been sold. The book carried the quaint disclaimer that the St John Ambulance Association course did not qualify members of the public to practise surgery!

By the end of June 1878, at least, 1100 people had been taught St John-approved first aid skills. By July 1878, provincial centres at Worcester, Malvern, Chesterfield, Southport, and Clay Cross (Derbyshire) had established first aid classes. The enthusiasm in provincial centres knew no bounds. One Scottish observer noted that the St John Ambulance movement had 'something of the contagiousness of the Salvation Army'. Further editions of the 'Little Black Book' had to be published to keep up with the demand: in 1881, 1885 and 1887. Eventually 40 major revised editions were published over the 80 years 1878–1958, encompassing hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies.

Women in particular enthusiastically espoused the idea of general public first aid training. Initially classes were segregated by sex. In 1885 'Ladies' First Aid Classes' were being held at the Mansion House in central London for the benefit of women employed in offices and businesses in the City and Port of London under the auspices of the Lady Mayoress of London.

By the end of 1887, St John first aid classes were being taught to the general public in Malta (1882), Cannes, Melbourne (1883), Bermuda, the Bahamas, Bombay, Gibraltar, Hong Kong (1884), New Zealand (1885), Singapore, South Africa (Kimberley in 1885), and Borneo (1887). Within a century of Shepherd's earliest class in Woolwich, millions of people of all ages and from all walks of life had bought a copy of the 'Little Black Book' for their instruction in the rudiments of first aid.

## Aftermath

Shepherd's vision led to the establishment of many first aid organisations. Von Esmarch himself, the first to use the term 'first aid' in the military context, began teaching civilians in Germany. He established the civilian Samaritan Society in Germany in 1888. By 1898, the sixth edition of Esmarch's *First Aid to the Injured* was also published in English in London.

The first civilian ambulance service in Australia and New Zealand was established in Brisbane in 1892. The [Brisbane] City Ambulance Transport Brigade was formed in response to a perceived lack of appropriate civilian emergency treatment for a horseman who had sustained a broken leg in a trotting event at the Brisbane Exhibition in August 1892. The Brigade's members were trained in first aid by St John.



# James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia

## J Allan Mawdsley KStJ

*Dr Mawdsley is the President of the Historical Society. A retired psychiatrist who lives in Melbourne, he has spent 64 years continuously in St John, having first joined as an 11-year-old Cadet in the Malvern division in 1949. In the intervening years he has held almost every position available to a St John volunteer in Victoria. He is a former Victorian Commissioner and has been a long-serving member of his State St John Council, of which he was a member for 37 years. He is also the current Secretary of the Victorian branch of the Historical Society, which runs a first rate St John museum at Williamstown. An accomplished medical historian, Dr Mawdsley is the author of three books of St John history and he edited the official history of the Order in Victoria, the late Millie Field's The Order of St John in Victoria: Our First 100 Years. He is a frequent contributor of articles to this journal.*



Dr James Edward Neild, founder of St John Ambulance in Australia, has been the subject of previous presentations and one might well ask, 'Why give another paper on a subject that has already been done? Is there some value to be added?'

Neild has certainly received ample attention from historians in recent decades. As well as being publicly enshrined in Volume 5 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, he was the subject of Harold Love's entertaining book, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso*, in 1989. Various St John Ambulance historians have also tackled him. Important profiles of Neild appear in papers by Sir William Johnston (St John Ambulance Brigade Chief Commissioner) and the late Miss Amelia ('Millie') Field (historian of St John in Victoria) and in the first centenary history produced by Dr Ian Howie-Willis for St John. There have also been mentions of Dr Neild in the Medical History Museum's celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Melbourne University medical school.

Despite such coverage of Neild's life and work, perhaps the time has come to reconsider him. Hence this present article, which offers a new synthesis although it relies heavily on these earlier secondary sources. The seminar presentation on which this article is based also used PowerPoint technology to display images of Neild that past presenters would not have been able to show and to which they probably lacked access. A further reason for considering Dr Neild again is that the seminar in question, the Historical Society's fourteenth, coincided with the second meeting in Australia of the Grand Council of the Order of St John. The occasion was therefore one when it seemed appropriate to revisit the origins of St John Ambulance in Australia.

## St John Ambulance reaches the Australian colonies

The founding of St John Ambulance Association in 1877 and the publication of Peter Shepherd's textbook in the next year led to a rapid uptake of first aid training in England, followed soon afterwards throughout the colonies of the British Empire. Dr Ian Howie-Willis explained this process in his 1983 centenary history, *A Century For Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia, 1883–1983*:

Quite a few Australians would have been familiar with the work of St John Ambulance before the establishment of a St John centre in Australia. In three Australian colonies at least it seems that first



*Dr James Edward Neild (1824–1906), 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. This portrait is on display at the offices of St John Ambulance Victoria.*

aid training using the Association's course might have occurred well before any local branch of the Association formed.

The first person known to have attempted St John Ambulance-type training was Dr Robert Robertson, a private practitioner in St Kilda. Robertson gave four public lectures on military first aid in Melbourne between March 1880 and February 1881. He conducted these principally for members of the St Kilda Volunteer Artillery, of which he was then surgeon, but he also allowed the public to attend.

Robertson wished his lectures to bear the imprimatur of the St John Ambulance Association, for on 11th October 1880 he wrote to the Lord Prior of the British Order of St John, the 7th Duke of Manchester, who was then in Sydney. The Duke replied to the effect that he himself could not help much because he knew little about first aid, but suggested that Robertson mention his name in approaching the Association in London. What emerged from Robertson's efforts was not a local Branch of the St John Ambulance Association but the Victorian Militia Ambulance Corps.

Robertson's was not the only positive contact Australian medicos made with St John's Gate in the very early 1880s. Almost a decade before the official foundation of a New South Wales Centre, Dr Samuel T Knaggs of Newcastle obtained permission from St John's Gate in 1881 to train railwaymen according to the Association's methods.

The early classes Knaggs and others ran in Sydney and Newcastle would have been what St John's Gate called 'detached' classes, that is, instruction of groups organized by various interested individuals in areas where no formal Association Centre existed. The Association sponsored much teaching like that, in Britain, in the colonies and in other places.

Although individual doctors like Robertson and Knaggs were keen to see the St John Ambulance Association established in Australia there was no formal Centre until one was formed in Melbourne in June 1883. The initiative came from a leading member of the Melbourne medical fraternity, a Yorkshireman called James Edward Neild.



*Dr Samuel T Knaggs (1824–1906), who should share with Dr Neild the title 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. While Neild was largely responsible for establishing the Victorian St John Centre in 1883, Knaggs had organised and taught the first public St John first aid course in Sydney in 1881.*

## JE Neild's early years

Neild's interesting life story goes some way towards explaining why his promotion of St John Ambulance was more successful than that of his predecessors. James Edward Neild was born at Doncaster, Yorkshire, England, in 1824, one of several children of James Neild and his wife, Sarah Bilton, daughter of a Yorkshire land-owner.

Neild Snr was in training for the Anglican ministry when he became inspired by a Wesleyan Methodist preacher and changed direction to become a school-teacher and lay preacher. He later worked as a book-keeper and Brewer's clerk. It is clear that the family had a strong ethical and humanitarian ethos.

In his younger years, Neild attended an unusual private school run by an educational reformer, Richard Hiley, in Leeds. This was clearly the stimulus for his love of writing. He began writing for publication from the age of 13 years.

## Medical education and early years in practice

When he was 18, Neild began his career in medicine. This took the form, in 1842, of an apprenticeship to his uncle, Edwin Harrison, a leading medical practitioner in Sheffield. Medical education in England at that time was still conducted on a basis not very different from that of the skilled trades, until reforms more than a decade later. Five years later Neild enrolled in medicine at University College, London, where Joseph Lister was a fellow student. He qualified as a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1848.

The young Dr Neild showed evidence of a wide range of interests and became active in the political movements of the day. He advocated repeal of the Corn Laws, which kept prices artificially high for the benefit of land-owners and detriment of the poor, and he strongly supported the demands of the Chartist leaders for democratic voting reforms. He was the only student of University College who refused to be enrolled as a special constable when the Chartist agitations occurred.

Neild later became resident apothecary to the Rochdale Dispensary for the years 1851 to 1853. The dispensary had first opened for the relief of the sick poor in 1832. The Infirmary building was located at the back of the Rochdale Workhouse, a much more salubrious building. There was evidently more money available for employing the poor than for looking after their health. The post of resident apothecary became known as Resident Medical Officer somewhere about this time. In addition to compounding and dispensing medicines, Neild vaccinated the children of the poor every Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock, provided that the parents paid a shilling deposit, to be returned when the child was brought back for inspection of the result.



*The Rochdale Dispensary, Lancashire, c. 1890. Dr Neild was the resident apothecary, 1851–1853.*

Through his insistence on introducing anaesthetics and other innovations, Neild came into conflict with the authorities and resigned; but that his services were appreciated was shown by the presentation to him of a valuable case of instruments. This was inscribed: '*Presented by the Governors of the Rochdale General Dispensary to Mr James Edward Neild, for the zealous and faithful performance of his duties as house surgeon during a period of three years*'. A certificate 'expressive of the confidence and approval of the medical staff' was also given to him.

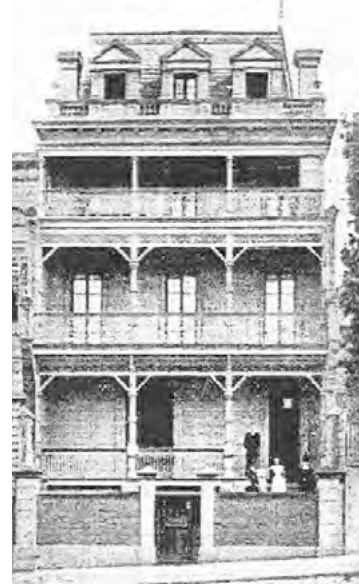
## To Australia

On leaving Rochdale, Neild sailed for Australia. At the height of the gold rush he tried his hand on the diggings near Castlemaine in the central Victoria goldfields but was unsuccessful and the call of medicine soon prevailed. He worked for Mr Daniel Rutter Long as a druggist in Long's pharmacy in Bourke Street, Melbourne, but also took care to have his name included in the medical practitioners' register in 1855. In 1857 Neild married Susannah Long, his boss's daughter.

Dr Neild and his new wife set up house at 165 Collins Street East, naming their residence 'New House'. It was a two-storeyed white stone house with an arched doorway and long, narrow windows. This house was later sold as the site of 'Lister House', well-known for the rooms of medical specialists. The Neilds later moved around the corner to 21 Spring Street, opposite Treasury Gardens, naming their new home 'Bilton House' after Neild's mother. This was to remain their home until his death in 1906. In all, they had eleven children, nine of whom survived their father.



*Susannah Long, who married her father's employee, Dr James E Neild, in 1857.*



*The Neild family's second home in Melbourne, 'Bilton House' at 21 Spring Street, a very prestigious address.*

## Literary and theatrical endeavours

Outside medicine Neild had broad interests. He wrote literary pieces for the newspapers of the day. He was a founding member and subsequently president of the Shakespearean Society, was a frequent attendee of theatre performances, and in later years held regular Sunday afternoon gatherings for theatrical aficionados at his home.

Under various noms de plume, including 'Jaques', Neild was the drama and music critic of the *Argus* for many years. He is said to have been one of the founders of *Melbourne Punch* and a close associate of the local literary luminaries, Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall. A further claim is that he 'discovered' the operatic diva Nellie Melba and encouraged her to give priority to her singing over her piano playing.

As theatrical critic of *My Note Book*, writing under the name 'Christopher Sly', Neild's comments so enraged a magician whose performance was adversely reviewed that Neild was subjected to verbal abuse in the theatre and newspaper commentary including a satirical cartoon. However, in general his contributions were so well appreciated that near the end of his career in 1890 a public concert was held at the Melbourne Town Hall and he was given a public testimonial at the Princess Theatre presided over by his friend, the actor and impresario. George Coppin.



*Dr JE Neild as 'Jaques', the theatre critic of the Melbourne Argus.*





Neild also began a long association with the the University of Melbourne medical school, which opened in 1862. Within the next two years Neild took the higher degree of Doctor of Medicine (Melbourne) by examination. Shortly afterwards, in 1865, he was appointed lecturer in Forensic Medicine by the University of Melbourne and was thus an original member of the university medical school staff. He held this position for forty years until 1904, a short time before his death in 1906. He was also appointed City Coroner, and thus became closely associated with many criminal inquiries.

Dr Neild was a leading member of the Medical Society of Victoria, to which he was admitted in 1861. He was appointed Librarian in 1863, Vice-President in 1867 and President in 1868. He was again Librarian from 1870 to 1874, and in 1875 became Honorary Secretary. Concurrently he was also Honorary Librarian of the Royal Society of Victoria for more than 20 years, and successfully nominated his daughter, Helen (known in the family as 'Nellie'), a zoologist, to become its first female member. He was an honorary physician to the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum and helped found the Medical Benevolent Association. He was an assistant honorary medical officer at the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals.

Neild was appointed editor of the *Australian Medical Journal* from 1862, only six years after its commencement. Three years later a testimonial on vellum, signed by 27 eminent fellow practitioners, was presented to Neild as an appreciation of services rendered to the *Australian Medical Journal* and to the medical profession. Adding considerable weight to their expression of good will was a gift of fifty sovereigns.

Holding the two positions of Honorary Secretary of the Medical Society of Victoria and editor of its journal, Neild was able to exert strong influence on government medical policy. There were eager and dominant personalities taking part in medical politics at that time, and they did not always agree with Dr Neild, particularly with his virulent attacks on what he regarded as quackery. He was also in conflict with some of his colleagues over the failure to elect Dr Louis Henry to membership of the Medical Society of Victoria, which he saw as arising from an anti-Semitic bias. As a consequence Neild resigned from both posts in 1879.



*The medical academic: Dr JE Neild MD, lecturer in forensic medicine at the University of Melbourne, 1865–1904.*

Coincidentally as this was happening, Neild became one of the founders of the Victorian Branch of the British Medical Association, initially intended to foster connection with British authorities but which now became an alternative medico-political forum. In time it was to eclipse the Victorian Medical Society and eventually become the Australian Medical Association. The first meeting was held in Neild's house, and he was elected President in 1882. Dr Louis Henry became the Honorary Secretary. This ensured that Neild remained at the forefront of medical politics of the time.



*Dr James Edward Neild (seated) and Dr Louis Henry.*

## St John Ambulance Founding Father

Turning now to Neild's link with St John Ambulance, I quote again from Howie-Willis:

At the end of 1881 Neild received a letter from Francis Duncan, the Director of the St John Ambulance Association at St John's Gate, saying that he had been given Neild's name as one of a number of Melbourne medicos who might volunteer to examine first aid classes. It was the sort of letter that might have been sent to numerous other doctors. Neild apparently answered it affirmatively, for on 20th February 1882, Sir Herbert Perrott, the General Secretary in London, wrote to thank him for 'the friendly spirit' of his offer to help. Perrott also mentioned that Dr Samuel T Knaggs had recently left London for Newcastle with information on how to go about setting up Association classes 'in different parts of the Colony'. He said that as soon as he had heard from Knaggs he would contact Neild further.

Over a year later, at the end of 1882, and still with no further word from St John's Gate, Neild discussed the matter with Robertson. Then in June 1883 Neild and Dr Richard Warren of Brighton wrote a circular announcing their intention of forming a Melbourne branch of the Association. They sent out over 400 copies of this to the leading citizens—the editors of the eight newspapers, professors, judges, parliamentarians, public servants, city councillors, businessmen, the clergy, and 84 medicos. Neild apparently did not inform Robertson of his intention of issuing the circular, because the latter wrote expressing his surprise at not being consulted but undertaking to co-operate despite that slight.

Neild and Warren received only about thirty replies to their circular. Undiscouraged, they arranged a meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall under the chairmanship of Mr George Coppin, MLA (actor 'Coppin the Great', theatrical manager and entrepreneur, banker and social reformer). This meeting duly took place. During the proceedings Professor Henry Martyn Andrew successfully moved a resolution that 'it is desirable that there should be established in Victoria a branch of the St John Ambulance Association'. Mr Ephraim Zox, MLA (retail trader, philanthropist, campaigner for friendly societies, leading member of the Athenaeum Club and president of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation) then moved that a provisional committee should be formed to draw up rules for the proposed Centre. This consisted of the Mayor, Judges TS Cope and F Quinlan, the parliamentarians Coppin and Zox, two professors (including Andrew), eight medicos (including Neild, Warren and Robertson), the Reverend DJ Hamer, and seven others including the noted architect Lloyd Tayler (who later became Chairman), with Warren as secretary and Zox treasurer.

The provisional committee met a week later at the Royal Society of Victoria and, after completing the draft rules, called a public meeting in the Athenaeum Hall, Collins Street on Tuesday 26 June 1883, to adopt the rules and appoint a permanent council. At the public meeting under the chairmanship of Judge Quinlan, Warren read a letter from Sir Edmund Lechmere, the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Association in London, authorizing the formation of a Victorian Centre of the Association. Neild then moved the adoption of the draft rules. A fourteen-member Council was appointed to govern the Centre.

The public meeting also resolved to approach Sir William Clarke Bt, to accept the position of Association President. Clarke was among Victoria's leading citizens: a major landowner, leading philanthropist, agricultural 'improver', Freemason, sportsman and Member of the Legislative Council.

He was also an honorary Doctor of Laws of Cambridge University and one of the first Australians to be created baronet. Clarke agreed to become President and held the position for fifteen years, until his death in 1897. His widow, Lady Janet Clarke, had already become a great benefactor of St John Ambulance. Among others, she donated money to permit the purchase of the six Ashford Litters (St John-marketed stretchers mounted on light cartwheels) from which Melbourne's ambulance service developed.

The Order of St John in Australia regards the meeting in the Athenaeum Hall on 26 June 1883 as the foundation date of St John Ambulance in Australia. The first meeting of the new Council took place in Neild's rooms nine days later. In October that year, Warren as Secretary read a letter from St John's Gate expressing the pleasure of the Central Council at seeing the first Australian Centre successfully established. Over the next decade other Centres followed in the other colonies, all these except for the Tasmania Centre independent of the Victorian Centre.

Neild remained a member of the St John Council in Victoria for 23 years until the year of his death. In 1895 he was enrolled as an Associate of the Order of St John, a grade equivalent to 'Member' in today's terminology. He died on 17 August 1906 and is buried in a grave with his wife, Susannah and daughter, Helen, at the Melbourne General Cemetery. Sadly, the grave is unmarked and in a poor state of repair. Perhaps this recollection of his great contribution to our nation might be a timely opportunity for a more fitting memorial. A project for our Historical Society, perhaps?



*Sir William Clarke Bt. (1831–1897), inaugural president of the St John Ambulance Association Centre in Melbourne.*



*The unmarked Neild family grave in the Melbourne General Cemetery, Carlton, in disrepair and much in need of tender-loving care.*

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# A short history of the medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John

## Trevor Mayhew KStJ

*Trevor Mayhew joined St John as a Cadet in 1953. He was awarded his Grand Prior's Badge in 1958 and since then has held various appointments, including Divisional and Corps Superintendent and State Staff Officer. He is a former State Operations Officer and currently is State Ceremonial Officer. He served in the Reserve Forces 1959–1973, in both the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, holding appointments such as Acting Wardmaster, Foreman of Signals and Squadron Sergeant Major. In civilian life, he retired in 2007 from WorkCover NSW as a Technical Specialist (Occupational Hygienist) Working Environment. His professional qualifications include a Graduate Diploma in Safety Science and a Master's degree in Occupational Health and Safety. His wife, Jean Mayhew OStJ, served for 36 years in St John and their eldest daughter, Michele Mayhew OStJ, is the New South Wales State Nursing Officer. In 2011 Mr Mayhew was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his St John work. The seminar paper on which this article is based was the second that he has presented to the Historical Society's seminar series.*



This historical outline of the medals issued by the Most Venerable Order of St John is just that: an outline. There is insufficient space to permit a detailed account of the minutiae of all the medals—and all their variations—ever issued by the Order. This article therefore covers its topic by selecting the more important and more common among the range of medals as well as several representative examples of the rest.

## Meaning and origin of medals

The classification and description of medals is a subset of numismatics, which is the systematic study of coins, commercial tokens, medals and medallions. This specialised branch of numismatics may be conveniently understood according to these three statements, cited from *Wikipedia*:

**Definition:** A medal, or medallion, is generally a circular object that has been sculpted, molded, cast, struck, stamped, or some way rendered with an insignia, portrait, or other artistic rendering. A medal may be awarded to a person or organisation as a form of recognition for athletic, military, scientific, academic, or various other achievements. Other medals are issued to celebrate particular events deemed worthy of commemoration.

**Etymology:** First attested in English in 1578, the word 'medal' is derived from the Middle French 'médaille', itself from Italian 'medaglia', and ultimately from the post-classical Latin 'medalia', meaning a coin worth half a denarius.

**History:** The first known instance of a medal being awarded comes from the Romano–Jewish historian Josephus who, writing in the first century AD, wrote of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) awarding a gold button to the High Priest Jonathan who led the Hebrews in aid of Alexander the Great.

## Symbolism in medals

While all medals are intended either to reward the individuals receiving them, or to remind them of an event being commemorated, many medals also have symbolic connotations. That is, they are often emblematic of certain values which the organisation issuing them seeks to promote.

A ready example here is the eight-pointed St John or 'Maltese' Cross embellished with the Queen's Beasts (lions and unicorns) worn by those who have been admitted into membership of the Most Venerable Order of St John. The Order teaches that the four main arms of the cross represent the four Christian virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, and the eight points represent



the eight Beatitudes proclaimed by Christ during his famous 'Sermon on the Mount' ('Blessed are the merciful', 'Blessed are the peacemakers', etc. from Matthew 5: 3–12).

St John Ambulance has taken the symbolism of the St John Cross further by applying secular meanings to the eight points. Thus, the eight points have become a mnemonic for summarizing the qualities of a good first aider, who is ideally: observant, tactful, resourceful, dexterous, explicit, discriminating, persevering and sympathetic.

## St John medals

Turning now to the medals awarded by the Most Venerable Order, we will begin with the earliest and rarest, the Lifesaving Medal.

### The Lifesaving Medal of The Order of St John

The Order of St John first instituted an award for lifesaving nearly 140 years ago in 1874. The St John Lifesaving Medal is awarded to those individuals who, in a conspicuous act of gallantry, have endangered their own lives in saving or attempting to save the life of some other person or persons. The medal is bestowed upon these courageous individuals by the Grand Prior, currently on the recommendation of the Grand Council of the Order.

The Lifesaving Medal of the Order may be awarded in gold, silver or bronze according to the circumstances of the incident, the measure of courage displayed, the degree of resourcefulness used, the administration of first aid and the extent to which the individual's own life was at risk during the incident. Other factors, such as fire, heights or weather conditions where significant hazards exist, assist in determining the level of the award granted.

The awarding of a St John Lifesaving Medal of the Order is rare at any level, but extremely rare at the gold level. Submissions proposing the award are today put forward to the Grand Council from all Priors of St John and are reviewed to determine eligibility in accordance with international regulations.

The first of the medals was awarded in 1875. The recipients were two colliers, Elijah Hallam and Frederick Vickers, who on 6 September that year, at imminent risk of their own lives, rescued six of their fellow workmen suspended in a broken cage halfway down the shaft of the Albert Colliery in Lancashire, England. They received the medal in silver.

Other medals were awarded in the decades that followed. One worthy of comment was the medal in silver presented to Captain Barry Hartwell (1880–1914) of the 2nd Battalion of the 8th Gurkha Rifles, who received the medal at the age of 25 in 1905 for 'saving life' during an earthquake at Dharamsala, India, in 1905. Unfortunately, Hartwell was subsequently killed in action early in World War I.

A mass awarding of the Lifesaving Medal occurred following the rescue effort at a mine disaster at the Hulton Colliery, West Houghton, Lancashire. On 21 Dec 1910, 344 men and boys of the 898 working in the mine at the time lost their lives as a result of a huge underground explosion. This was the third largest mining disaster in British history. The explosion at 7.50 in the morning could be heard and felt miles away. The cage down to the mine was broken in the blast and Alfred Tonge, the general manager of the colliery, gave instructions for it to be repaired. In the meantime he took charge of rescue operations, ensuring that workers in the other seams were brought safely to the surface. For his efforts in organising and leading the rescue effort, Tonge received no fewer than three awards: the Lifesaving Medal of the Order of St John in silver, the Bolton and District Humane Society Medal and the Edward Medal, a civilian gallantry award for lifesaving in mines and quarries which ranks with the George Cross and is now only awarded posthumously. Twenty other rescuers received the St John Lifesaving Medal in bronze.



*The original Lifesaving Medal of the Order: obverse (left) and reverse faces. The medal is suspended from a black ribbon mounted on a metal frame representing a first aider's stretcher.*

In 1907 the Order introduced the gold version, which was authorised in 1907. Originally the ribbon was plain watered black silk but in 1950 a new ribbon in black and white longitudinal stripes was authorised. This was later modified to include a thin scarlet band at the outer edges. In 1963, a bar to the medal was instituted to recognise further acts of bravery. The bar has only ever been awarded twice in gold.

Awards of the Lifesaving Medal are still made, though unfortunately not in recent decades in Australia, where the Priory has tended to the view that eligible candidates should receive the official Australian bravery awards instead.

One of the most recent recipients of the medal in gold was a St John Ambulance Cadet, 17-year-old Paul Swift, who rescued a woman and her small child from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Blackburn, Lancashire, in 2003. Despite a strong current caused by a draining lock on the canal, he jumped into the canal and rescued the child first. After bringing her to the bank, he returned to fetch the mother. With mother and daughter safely on the riverbank, he checked their breathing and placed them in the recovery position.



*Paul Swift, the Cadet awarded the St John Lifesaving Medal in gold in 2003.*

### The Service Medal of St John

The first mention of the Service Medal is found in St John Ambulance Brigade General Regulations for 1895 where paragraph 11 announced that:

Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to authorise the issue of Service Medals to reward Distinguished Services and to encourage efficiency and long service in the various Departments of the Order. Members of the Brigade who have performed distinguished services, or have served honourably and efficiently for a period of not less than fifteen consecutive years, will be eligible for this medal.

(The 15-year qualification period was subsequently amended to 12 years.)

The Service Medal is suspended from a satin ribbon in alternating longitudinal parallel broad bands of black and white (three black, two white). The obverse (front) face of the Service Medal displays the right profile of the head and shoulders of Queen Victoria. It is the only medal to retain the head of Queen Victoria on a current issue. In a circlet around the circumference of the obverse face is the abbreviated Latin inscription:

VICTORIA + D + G + BRITT + REG + F + D + IND + IMP

*(Victoria Deo Gratia Britannia Regina Fidei Defensor India Imperatrix Magnus Prioratus Ordinis Hospitalis Sancti Johannis Jerusalem in Anglia)*

Victoria by the grace of God Queen of [Great] Britain, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India.

The complex reverse face of the medal displays the Royal Arms at the centre, above it the Imperial Crown, to its left the Arms of the Order, to its right the Arms of the Prince of Wales as Grand Prior and below it the crest of the Prince of Wales. The four outer devices are separated by a sprig of St John's Wort, the Order's floral emblem. Around the circumference is the Latin inscription:

*MAGNUS PRIORATUS ORDINIS HOSPITALIS SANCTI-JOHANNIS JERUSALEM IN ANGLIA*

Grand Priory of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England



*The Service Medal of the Order: obverse (above) and reverse faces.*

Periods of efficient service longer than the initial 12 (previously 15) years are indicated by a series of bars, crosses and a laurel leaf added, as follows:

- 17 years: 1 silver bar or cross
- 22 years: 2 silver bars or crosses
- 27 years: 3 silver bars or crosses
- 32 years: 1 gilt bar or cross (all silver crosses are removed at this stage)
- 37 years: 2 gilt bars or crosses
- 42 years: 3 gilt bars or crosses
- 47 years: 4 gilt bars or crosses
- 52 years: 1 gilt laurel leaf (all gilt bars are removed at this stage).

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medal of 1897**

This was a medal issued in 1897 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne, the 'diamond jubilee' of her reign. It is a circular bronze medal with claw and ribbon bar suspension. The obverse face displays the veiled head of Queen Victoria facing left. It is dated 1897. Only 910 St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medals were awarded. There were five different versions: for the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance, the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and of course the St John Ambulance Brigade.

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1902**

This was a medal issued to commemorate the coronation in 1902 of King Edward VII who succeeded his mother, Queen Victoria, to the throne on her death in 1901. As Prince of Wales, King Edward had served as Grand Prior of the Order, 1888–1901. The distribution of the Coronation Medal was similar to that of the Jubilee Medal of 1897, with 912 of the medals issued.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade medals commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897 (left), King Edward VII's coronation in 1902 (centre), and King George V's coronation in 1911 (right).*

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1911**

A similar coronation medal to that issued in 1902 was distributed in celebration of the coronation of King George V in 1911. Like his father, Edward VII, George V had served as Grand Prior of the Order, his period in office being 1901–1910. It is estimated that approximately 3000 medals were issued to St John Ambulance Brigade to commemorate George V's coronation. In addition to these, the medal was distributed to the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance and the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and St John Ambulance Brigade. Other medals of similar type were provided for the County and Borough Police, the Scottish Police, the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Royal Parks workers and the St Andrew's Ambulance Corps (in Scotland).

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Medal for South Africa**

The Order issued this medal mainly to members of the St John Ambulance Brigade who served in the South African or Boer War of 1898–1902. The Brigade in England sent various of its members to join the British Army contingent in South Africa 1899–1902. They served as orderlies and ancillaries with Army Medical Corps units and with a separate St John Ambulance Brigade Field Hospital.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade Boer War Medal presented in 1902 to Brigade members who had served in the St John units sent to South Africa: the obverse (left) and reverse faces.*

Over 1800 of the medals were issued, some being awarded to those who had organised or assisted in the deployment of the Brigade members sent to the war. No fewer than 60 Brigade members died in the war, most the victims of typhoid fever.

### **The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal**

The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve (RNASBR) was a medical ancillary force staffed by volunteers of the St John Ambulance Brigade. Formed in 1910, its purpose was to support the work of the Royal Navy's medical units. The RNASBR uniform consisted of a navy blue single-breasted jacket with a stand-up collar with five buttons bearing the St John's cross. On the right sleeve, they wore a badge with the words 'St John Ambulance Brigade RN Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserves'. The RNASBR was initially formed to maintain an acceptable wartime ratio between medically trained personnel and seaman. The medal was awarded for 12 years service with the RNASBR, with war service counting as double that rate; that is, one year of wartime service counting as the equivalent of two non-wartime years. The RNASBR continued in existence through World Wars I and II; it was disbanded in 1949.



*The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Two series of the medal were awarded: left is the obverse of the series of 1919 to 1943; right is the reverse of the 1943 to 1949 series.*

### **The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-Year Service Badge**

This was a service badge worn above the medal ribbons on the right breast of the St John Ambulance Brigade uniform by eligible members who had served with the Voluntary Aid Detachments.

The Voluntary Aid Detachments, commonly known by their acronym VADs, were a quasi-military medical voluntary (i.e. non-salaried) ancillary service established prior to World War I in Britain. The idea of the VADs was soon adopted by the military authorities in Britain's overseas dominions. In Australia the VAD scheme was run by a structure of national and State committees with representation drawn from the armed services, Red Cross and St John Ambulance. On duty VAD members wore a Red Cross uniform. They received their instruction in first aid and home nursing from the St John Ambulance Association. They were organised into local units similar to the local divisions of the St John Ambulance Brigade. In many cases whole Brigade divisions registered as VAD units.

During World War I many VAD members drove military ambulances. During World War II the VAD members were given more medical training, but they were not fully qualified nurses. In 1942 the Army medical authorities established their own fulltime ancillary medical force, the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWS). The AAMWS recruited many female VAD members, who accordingly became eligible for the award of military medals. The VAD members who remained in their VAD units were nevertheless in demand. They worked mainly as aides in the military hospitals, convalescent homes, on hospital ships and in the blood banks. VAD members who served in the two World Wars received badges to commemorate their wartime service; however, to receive the VAD 12-year service award required them to remain a member for a period substantially longer than either of the world wars.



*The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-year Service Badge;*

### **The St John Ambulance Association Medallion**

In 1879, two years after its foundation, St John Ambulance Association introduced a medallion to award those who had passed three annual examinations. At least two of the examinations had to be in First Aid to the Injured but the third could be in either Home Nursing or Home Hygiene. The medallion number and name of the recipient were engraved on the plain reverse. A 'label' could then be earned by a medallion holder for each successful reexamination at intervals of not less than 12 months after the third examination for the medallion. In 1916 pendants were introduced to indicate a reexamination in a subject



other than First Aid, that is Home Nursing and Home Hygiene. The small 20-millimetre pendants took the form of a quatrefoil edged with a twisted rope design having a small rectangular box in the middle bearing the initial letters of the specialist qualification.

In time, people who undertook annual reexaminations over many years would accumulate many labels and pendants. Some people linked these together in chains from which they would suspend their original medallions. Eventually some such chains were so long they could be worn around the neck. The practice of awarding medallions, labels and pendants continued for over a century, into the mid-1980s.



*The St John Ambulance Association medallion, to which successive 'labels' could be attached forming a chain.*

### **Other St John Ambulance medals, coins and medallions**

A number of national St John Ambulance organisations have issued their own commemorative medals and medallions. In addition the currency-issuing agencies in some nations have produced special coins to help celebrate the achievement of milestone anniversaries by their national St John branches. In this section of the article we will consider a representative sampling, beginning with the Order of St John '900th Year' commemorative medallion.

### **Service Medal of St John Ambulance Ireland**

In the Republic of Ireland, the St John Ambulance Brigade is an independent charitable voluntary organisation. For historical and constitutional reasons it is not a full member association of the Most Venerable Order of St John and the international St John Ambulance movement, but is classed instead as an 'associated body' of the Order.

The Brigade uniform in the Republic is nearly identical to the English uniform, although there are some differences. Instead of wearing distinctive county emblems as in England, Irish Brigade members wear a Brigade emblem consisting of the eight-pointed St John Cross with green shamrocks replacing the lions and unicorns between the four arms of the cross. This emblem is worn under the shoulder flash but is not received until the member has two years' service.

The Brigade in Ireland also awards its own Service Medal. Instituted in 1945, this is awarded in silver for 15 years' service and in silver-gilt for 50 years' service.



*The Service Medal of the St John Ambulance Brigade of Ireland.*

### **St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea Golden Jubilee Medal and commemorative 50-toea coin**

St John Ambulance in Papua New Guinea, Australia's nearest neighbour and former territory, was an import from Australia during the 1960s. In 2007, the St John Council of Papua New Guinea issued a commemorative medal to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of a formal St John organisation there.



*The St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea 50th anniversary commemorative medal.*

The government of Papua New Guinea also marked this anniversary by minting a commemorative 50-toea coin (roughly equivalent to the Australian 50-cent coin) bearing the St John name and badge on the reverse face.

### **Order of St John, 900th Year Commemorative Medallion**

In 1999, the year of the 900th anniversary of the capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the Most Venerable Order of St John produced and marketed a commemorative medallion. Both faces of the medallion carried the promotional slogan: '900 Years of Caring'. This was perhaps misleading because the event being commemorated was not the 900th centenary of the foundation of the Blessed Gerard's original hospice for pilgrims from which the ancient Order of St John had developed; nor was it the nonacentenary of the establishment of the ancient Order. The former event took place about the year 1980; the latter is being celebrated in 2013.



*The Order of St John '900 Years of Caring' medallion of 1999. Obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) faces.*

### **St John Ambulance Malaysia 100th Anniversary Medallion**

St John Ambulance in Malaysia celebrated its centenary in 2008. To commemorate this event, the St John Council for Malaysia published a sumptuous centenary history. The council also issued an impressive commemorative medallion in gilt alloy to celebrate the centenary.



*The St John Ambulance Malaysia centenary medallion of 2008; the obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces of the medallion.*

### **St John Ambulance Association Singapore Service Award**

As in Malaysia, St John Ambulance in Singapore has a long history, though not quite as long as its near neighbour on the opposite shore of the narrow Strait of Johore. St John in Singapore dates its origin to 1935, when a Dr JS Webster OStJ, a radiologist at the Singapore General Hospital, organised first aid lectures with the help of a few public-spirited friends and fellow doctors. By September 1938 sufficient numbers of first aiders had been trained to form the first local uniformed division of the St John Ambulance Brigade.



*The Singapore St John Ambulance Association Service Award; obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces.*



In October 1969, a Sub-Centre of the St John Ambulance Association (now called Training Branch in Australia) was formed in the industrialised area of Singapore. With the Brigade, the Sub-Centre gave lectures in First Aid and Home Nursing to many factory workers. It is now known as Jurong Centre.

The St John Ambulance Association in Singapore began issuing its own Service Medal in 1980. Minted in bronze and suspended from a ribbon of five alternating vertical bands of black and green, the medal displays the Badge of the Order on the obverse face with the second of the Order's mottoes, 'For The Service Of Mankind', around the rim.

### **Malta District of the St John Ambulance Brigade Golden Jubilee Medal**

Outside of the United Kingdom, St John Ambulance in Malta has the longest history of any St John branch. A Centre of the St John Ambulance Association was established there in 1882, a year before a similar Centre opened in Melbourne in 1883.

In Malta St John Ambulance is a voluntary organisation, an autonomous overseas branch of the Most Venerable Order governed by its own national St John Council. The Council is chaired by the Chief Justice of Malta, Professor JJ Cremona. (The Patron of St John Ambulance in Malta is the President of the Republic of Malta, His Excellency Dr George Abela.) Under the Council, St John Ambulance operates through three branches: the Training Association, First Aid and Nursing and the Rescue Corps.

The St John Ambulance Brigade District in Malta was one of the earliest established outside of the United Kingdom. Founded in 1909, it predated all the Australian State Brigade Districts except for New South Wales (1902) and Western Australia (1904). To celebrate its 50th anniversary, the Brigade in Malta issued a Golden Jubilee commemorative medal in 1959. The obverse face shows first aiders attending to a patient; the reverse face displays a crown above the St John Cross Badge of the Order.



*Right: the St John Ambulance Brigade Malta District golden jubilee medallion. (Obverse at left and reverse at right in each case.)*

The medals, coins, medallions and badges of the Most Venerable Order and its associated St John Ambulance organisations have multiplied to the extent that they now comprise a specialised branch of numismatics. Beginning with just the Lifesaving Medal in 1874 and the Service Medal in 1895, they have proliferated as a range of commemorative medals were added to the range. As more international St John branches began forming, they in turn eventually issued their own service medals and commemorative medallions. In some instances they also persuaded their national governments to issue commemorative coins to celebrate their milestone anniversaries.

As well as being highly 'collectible', and therefore comprising prized exhibits in St John museums, these exemplars of the numismatic craft are of interest to St John historians. First, they are inherently worthy of study because of their own innate beauty of design and manufacture. Second, they tell us much about the historical growth and development of the Order. Finally, these items remind us that 125 years after Queen Victoria granted our Royal Charter, the Order has transcended the circumstances of its foundation in 1831 to become a great worldwide family of charitable institutions, agencies and individuals dedicated to 'The Service Of Mankind'. I trust that the foregoing brief survey of the Order's medals has established these points in the minds of my readers.

# Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'

## Brian Fotheringham KStJ

*Dr Brian Fotheringham is the founder and foundation President of the Historical Society. He is also the founder of the Society's State branch in South Australia, which preceded the national society by several years. Previously he was the 14th St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia and then served a record period of 13 years as the eighth Priory Librarian. He joined St John 53 years ago as a 'Probationary Surgeon' within the South Australian St John Ambulance organisation. His late father, Dr Jim Fotheringham MC, was also a St John Commissioner in South Australia. In his professional life, Dr Fotheringham Jnr spent most of career as a senior medical administrator at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal.*



In the little museum in Adelaide, South Australia, that is dedicated to collecting, preserving and displaying items relating to St John Ambulance, there is a curious inclusion known as the 'Pipe of Peace'. Perhaps it should not be there as its use, as far as I know, was never condoned by St John. It does however serve as an interesting conversation piece with some likenesses and links to the history of St John, and possibly also a lesson or even a warning for St John. It is also a story that crosses international boundaries, appropriate for a time such as this when the Grand Council of St John is meeting here in Australia.



*The 'Pipe of Peace'—an inhaler invented by Sir Hiram Maxim.*

## Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim

The 'Pipe of Peace' was invented by Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim (1840–1916). Hiram was born in Sangerville, Maine, USA, on 5 February 1840. Curiously, Sangerville is directly west of another place in Maine called St John. Hiram was the son of a farmer and when aged 14 was apprenticed to a carriage maker. His hobby was inventing things and this later became his life's work. He invented lots of things. He was 26 years old when he took out his first patent—for a hair curling iron. In the next half century he took out 271 American and British patents. No easy feat! They included gas generators, carburettors, steam traps, meters, pumps, chandeliers, heaters, batteries, regulators, dynamos, solvent recovery processes, riveting devices and stone cutting implements. And that is just a few of the American patents.

The British ones covered processes for the separation of metals, pipe and tube manufacture, the production of vacuums, devices to measure wind velocity and others to stop ships from rolling, wheels for railway carriages, shafts for screw propellers, shoe heel protectors, pneumatic tyres, coffee substitutes and fire extinguishers.

His electrical pressure regulator was displayed at the Paris Exhibition of 1881 and earned for him the decoration of Legion of Honour. Hiram went to Paris to collect this honour, but this may not have been his real reason for leaving America. In 1876 he had married Jane Budden in Boston. They had three children. In 1878 he married Helen Leighton in New York. In 1880 he married Sarah Haynes, also in New York. Jane divorced him *after* he had married Helen. Sarah divorced him as she, for a time, was just one of *three* current wives. Hiram never went back to America.



*Sir Hiram Maxim (1840-1916) wears his accumulation of awards.*



Hiram's inventions were not always successful. In England he designed and built a huge two-propeller steam-driven aeroplane. It was tested on rails with an extra restraining rail preventing the plane from lifting off more than a few inches. The restraining rail broke. Hiram did not venture further in the field of aviation.



*Hiram Maxim at the controls of a famous but impractical invention—his steam-powered, rail-mounted biplane made of tubular steel and canvas biplane in 1894. It 'flew' for about 200 metres during a trial in 1895 but then broke an axle and was so seriously damaged that Maxim abandoned the project.*

## A very famous invention

One Maxim invention in particular was a huge success. It was developed in 1884 by Hiram who by this time was living in London. Although he was born in America, Hiram later became a British citizen. The year 1884 was an interesting time for St John. The St John Ambulance Association in England was just seven years old, the St John Ophthalmic Hospital was just two years old and the St John Ambulance Brigade was still three years away from being formed. Hiram's 1884 invention was so noisy that he issued warning notices to people in the area when he tested it. That area was Clerkenwell.

The site of the tests, on the corner of Hatten Garden and Clerkenwell Road, is marked now by one of those ubiquitous British blue plaques. The plaque is no more than 500 metres from St John's Gate purchased for St John by Sir Edmund Lechmere in 1873. Hiram's noisy tests may well have been heard at the Gate. The warnings were not without reason; Sir Hiram himself became deaf from the noise he created. The invention was described as the first (satisfactory) fully automatic machine gun. The Maxim gun consisted of a single barrel and made use of the recoil to eject spent cartridges and to reload the firing chamber. It could fire about 1000 rounds a minute, equivalent to about 30 rounds of the rifles of the day. The Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, was greatly impressed by the gun and it was adopted by the British Army in 1889 and by the Royal Navy in 1892.

In the Matabele War of 1893, fifty British infantrymen with four Maxim guns defended themselves against 5000 warriors and killed 3000 of them. As Hiliare Belloc (1870–1953), famously the author of *Cautionary Tales for Children*, wrote:

Whatever happens, we have got  
the Maxim gun, and they have not.

However it was not long hence that the armies of USA, Russia, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, Italy, Serbia and Finland soon all acquired the Maxim gun.

Hiram was knighted in 1901 by King Edward VII who by then was the Sovereign Head of the Order of St John, having previously been the Grand Prior.



*Sir Hiram Maxim demonstrates his famous machine gun.*

## The development of the 'Pipe of Peace'

When Sir Hiram, at the age of 60, began suffering severe attacks of bronchitis he consulted his family physician and several other doctors. He tried hot springs in France and the treatment system at Vos's Inhalatorium in Nice. That Inhalatorium was the only treatment that gave him significant relief.

Sir Hiram bought some glass tubing and made some simple inhalers for himself. He found them more effective than those of Mr Vos. He gave them to a few people who gave glowing reports of their usefulness. He then made 200 and gave them away. Thereafter sale of the inhalers was placed in the hands of John Morgan Richards and Sons Ltd, of 46 Holborn Viaduct, London. Hundreds of thousands were sold through this one agency.



*Maxim's 'Pipe of Peace' or bronchial inhaler, with its glass tubing and menthol-soaked gauze.*

Actually, two slightly different inhalers were marketed for Sir Hiram Maxim by John Morgan Richards and Sons. They were the Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace. The Inhaler was meant as a pocket appliance to be brought into play at the first sign of bronchial or similar trouble. It was comprised of a glass tube containing gauze material already soaked in menthol. By breathing through the tube, air could be drawn through the menthol-soaked gauze and delivered to the back of the patient's throat. Indents were provided in the tubing into which the patient's teeth could sink so that the device extended for 5.5 cms into the mouth. If the dose of menthol seemed too great, Sir Hiram instructed patients not to close their lips tightly around the tubing, but to allow air in alongside the tubing as well as through it.

The larger inhaler was known as the Pipe of Peace. The principle of direct inhalation was the same as with the Maxim Inhaler, but a compound essence of pine was used instead of menthol. The essence of pine was extracted from pine needles. You will recall that Hiram was born in Maine, USA. Pine trees grew in abundance in Maine and are featured on Maine's Coat of Arms. The pine essence is so highly volatile that the warmth of hands holding the bowl of the Pipe of Peace provided sufficient heat to give healing fumes in the inhalation. Pine needles were said to contain a principle fatal to germs 'which although unidentified are known to be the direct cause of bronchitis and bronchial irritation'.

Inhaling pine essence often caused coughing. To avoid this complication Sir Hiram devised a secret formula by adding small quantities of the essences of Wintergreen and Sweet Birch to the pine essence. This combined product was marketed under the name of 'Dirigo', from the Latin which means 'I guide' or 'I direct'. Sir Hiram's Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler were designed to guide or direct the curative vapours straight to the throat. It is no coincidence that the term 'Dirigo' is the one word motto on the Coat of Arms of the State of Maine.

The Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace were described as being of great service to clergymen, vocalists, actors and public speakers. The package deal of the Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler together with bottles of Dirigo and menthol crystals could be obtained for 15 shillings and six pence and only from John Morgan Richards and Sons. It came in a plain strong cardboard box and postage was included in the price.

## Instructive parallels

There is a certain parallel here between Sir Hiram and the Order of St John. Both had a military bent. The Hospitallers as far back as the twelfth century, when Raymond Du Puy became Master of the Order, were a well-equipped and feared fighting force. Hiram's Machine Gun, likewise was a significantly feared military piece of equipment—it killed far more of the enemy than all the Hospitallers ever did.

The parallels go further than that, however. Both Hiram and St John volunteers worked in London, and more precisely, in Clerkenwell. And then both Sir Hiram and the Order turned to peaceful pursuits. Sir Hiram invented his 'Pipe of Peace' and St John dedicated itself to the relief of suffering. The warning for St John is that Sir Hiram is remembered more for his machine gun than for his inhalers. We should take note!

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# Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance

## Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

*As noted above in the introduction to the article on Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Dr Howie-Willis is a Canberra-based professional historian. His most recent book, A Medical Emergency (Blue Sky Publishing, 2012), is a biography of the inaugural St John Ambulance Chief Commissioner in Australia, Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston. He is currently researching a history of the Australian Army's experience of malaria.*



From its inception in Australia in 1902 the St John Ambulance Brigade (later called 'Operations Branch' and later still 'First Aid Services') has had close and continuing ties with the Australian Army Medical Services. This article aims to present an overview of the many links between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. It is, however, such a vast topic, I could not hope to cover it comprehensively in the 15 minutes available for the seminar paper from which it grew. What therefore follows is the barest summary and leaves the way open to other researchers who might wish to pursue the topic further.

I propose to deal with the topic biographically by alluding to some of the leading St John figures who have held office in both St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. Before doing that, however, I must explain what the Army Medical Services are. Briefly, and depending on what war or period of peace is under consideration, the Army Medical Services have comprised the following military formations:

- the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, extant from 1902 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, extant from 1903 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps, extant from 1943 until the present
- the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS), extant from 1942 until 1951, the AAMWS having been a wartime outgrowth of ...
- the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs), extant from 1909 until post-World War II, the VADs having been a uniformed, quasi-military ancillary medical service not within the Army but operating under military control and using personnel drawn mainly from Red Cross and St John Ambulance.



*The formations which have historically comprised the Australian Army Medical Services: (L–R) the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps and the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS).*

My argument is that at all stages of Australian history since Federation in 1901 a close and continuing connection between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services (AMS) has existed. The link is informal and personal, consisting of a high degree of cross-membership rather than through any structural bonds. The link works to the great advantage of both organisations because St John



personnel comprise a pool of professionally trained, highly motivated and skilled first aiders on which the AMS may draw; conversely, St John has been able to secure professional expertise from the AMS plus potential leaders with experience of emergency medicine under the most trying conditions of all—on the battlefield and under fire.

## Origins of the St John Ambulance Army Medical Services link

As originally conceived in 1887 and continuing into the early post-World War II years, the role of the St John Ambulance Brigade was twofold. First, the Brigade was a disciplined, uniformed civilian organisation undertaking first aid duties at public events. Second, the Brigade was also available when required to be a military medical reserve force in times of war.

The ancillary military purpose was set out in the Brigade's first set of General Regulations, issued in April 1889. The third of four 'objects' or aims was 'to enrol a highly trained body of civilians as supplement to Army Medical Department for service at home and abroad'. It was in fulfillment of this objective that the Brigade in Britain sent contingents of first aiders to the Boer or South African War of 1898–1902.

## A personal approach

I cannot possibly include here all the very many distinguished St John people with Army Medical Service experience, so what I plan to do is divide the past 136 years since the foundation of St John Ambulance into seven major eras or phases of history and then discuss the AMS–St John link through reference to several representative personages from each era. I have no time to give even the shortest of biographical profiles of each of the twenty characters I will use to demonstrate the strength of the link. Instead I will simply comment briefly on their significance.

## First era: pre–1900

### Not Australian St John history but relevant to its subsequent development.

- Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879): career Army medical officer, teacher of the inaugural St John first aid class and author of the first St John first aid manual.
- Surgeon-General William George Nicholas Manley VC (1831–1901): career Army medical officer, a co-founder of St John Ambulance and possibly the person who developed the St John two-wheeled stretcher or litter, the original 'St John ambulance' which gives us our name.
- Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC (1831–1901).



*Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC, 1831–1901.*

## Second era: 1900 to World War I

### The period of the foundation of the St John Ambulance Brigade in Australia.

- Dr George Thomas Lane Mullins (1862–1918): the first effective St John Commissioner in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel during World War I.
- Dr Reuter Emrich Roth (1858–1924): the first District Surgeon in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel with service experience in the South African and First World Wars.
- Dr George F McWilliams (1865–1907): a Medical Corp lieutenant-colonel who had seen active service in the Boer War, he had taught the first public first aid class in Western Australia in 1892 and in 1904 became the inaugural St John Ambulance Commissioner there.



*Dr Reuter E Roth  
(1858–1924)*



*Dr George F McWilliams  
(1865–1907)*



*Dr George T Lane  
Mullins (1862–1918).*

### Third era: World War I

**The period when St John Ambulance demonstrated its usefulness as an AMS ancillary.**

- Sir Neville Reginald Howse VC (1863–1930): a VC and KStJ who led the AMS units in the 1st AIF then served as post-war AMS head, 1921–1925.
- Sir Hugh Raymond Guy Poate (1884–1961): the record-holding NSW St John Ambulance Commissioner and inaugural Chancellor of Priory; a lieutenant-colonel with active service at Gallipoli in World War I then a RAAF Group Captain in World War II.



*Sir Neville R Howse VC  
(1863–1930)*



*Sir Hugh RG Poate  
(1884–1961)*

### Fourth era: inter-war years

**The period when the AMS leadership fully recognised the potential of St John Ambulance as ancillary support for the Army.**

- Major-General Rupert Major Downes (1885–1945): his 24 years as Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner is the Australian record; he was a World War I colonel with active service on Gallipoli and in Palestine in World War I; then led the AMS into World War II.
- Dr John R Donaldson (1895–1985): he was a captain with overseas service in World War I; he was commandant of VADs in Western Australia during 1930s and was a lieutenant-colonel during World War II; he served as WA St John Ambulance Commissioner 1939–1961 then as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia, 1959–1969.



*Major-General Rupert M  
Downes (1885–1945)*



*Dr John R Donaldson  
(1895–1985)*

## Fifth era (Part 1): World War II (Army Medical Corps)

### The 'golden age' of the AMS–St John link.

- Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston (1888–1960): he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia then inaugural Chief Commissioner for Australia 1946–1956; he had active service at Gallipoli and on the Western Front in World War I; he led the AMS in the Middle East in World War II and then from 1942 led the AMS in Australia for the remainder of the war during the Island campaigns, when it reached its maximum strength of 32,000 personnel.
- Brigadier Sir William Wallace Stewart Johnston (1887–1962): he saw active service on the Western Front in World War I; he was deputy head of the AMS at the outbreak of World War II; he then saw much active service in Palestine, Greece and the Island campaigns as a brigadier; he was Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner 1951–1956 then Chief Commissioner 1957–1962.
- Major-General Sir Frank Kingsley Norris (1893–1984): he saw active service on Gallipoli in World War I and in World War II in the Syrian and Island campaigns; he succeeded Burston as head of the AMS in 1948 and held the position until 1955, leading the AMS during the Korean War of the early 1950s; he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1956–1959 and was then Chief Commissioner 1962–1969.



(L–R) Major-General Sir S Roy Burston (1898–1960), Sir William WS Johnston (1884–1962) and Major-General Sir F Kingsley Norris (1893–1984).

## Fifth era (Part 2): World War II (VADs and AAMWS)

### The period when St John-trained VADs proved so effective that the Army assimilated them as a new formation, the AAMWS.

- Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976): she joined a VAD unit early in World War II and rose rapidly to become VAD State secretary for Queensland; she was then recruited to become inaugural St John Ambulance Brigade District Superintendent in Queensland in 1950 then, after serving 19 years, became national Chief Superintendent Nursing 1969–1976.
- Amelia ('Millie') Field (1917–2007): after learning first aid, she joined the pre-war South Melbourne VAD unit; she transferred into the AAMWS in 1942; taught first aid for St John Ambulance post-war; and late in life she wrote and published the Victorian St John Ambulance centenary history.



Mrs Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976), left; and Miss Millie Field (1917–2007).

## Sixth era: early post-war decades

**The period when, under the direction of former senior AMS officers who had been wartime commanders, the St John Ambulance Brigade reached its historic maximum strength.**

- Sir George Grafton Lees Stening (1904–1996): he was a colonel who saw active service at Tobruk and then commanded the Concord Military Hospital in Sydney; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in New South Wales 1945–1951; Sir Hugh Poate's protégé, he succeeded him as Priory Chancellor in 1961 and then held the position for a record 21 years.
- Brigadier Alec Letts Dawkins (1905–1975): reached the rank of brigadier in World War II after active service in the Middle East and the Island campaigns; St John Ambulance Commissioner in Western Australia 1961–66 then served as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia 1969–1973.
- Colonel Charles Douglas Donald (1910–1979): saw active service in World War II, in which he served as a major; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1959–66 and then Chief Commissioner 1969–1979.



*(L–R) Brigadier Alec L. Dawkins (1905–1975) , Colonel Sir George GL Stening (1904–1996) and Colonel C Douglas Donald (1910–1979).*

## Seventh era: recent times

**A competitive period during which St John had to fend off competitors to retain pre-eminence in the field of first aid delivery.**

- Ms Lynne Spencer (formerly Allen-Brown, 1946– ): a career nursing administrator and a captain in the Royal Australian Nursing Corps; St John Ambulance District Superintendent in New South Wales from 1990, then Chief Superintendent from 1993 and then became our first (and so far only) female Chief Commissioner in 1999.
- Major-General David Rossi (1945– ): career Army medical officer; saw active service in Vietnam; Director-General of Army Health Services 1990–1992 then Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1992–1996; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland then Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory 2002–2005.
- Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ): career Army medical officer but now the Director (Professor) of the Centre for Military and Veterans' Health at the University of Queensland; saw active service in Vietnam and Rwanda; St John Ambulance Director of Training 2002–2011.
- Major-General John Hemsley Pearn (1940– ): active service in Papua New Guinea, Vietnam and Rwanda; Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1998–2001; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland; he was St John Ambulance Director of Training 1990–1999; and from May 2012 has been the Priory Librarian, the tenth to hold the position since it was established in 1942.

This brisk canter through 136 years of St John history has passed more figures than it has stopped to consider. Those left out of my survey include significant personalities like Lieutenant-Colonel George Horne (inaugural St John Commissioner in Victoria); Sir Kenneth Fraser (inaugural Commissioner in





(L–R) Major-General David Rossi (1945– ), Major-General John H Pearn (1940– ), Ms Lynne Allen-Brown (1946– ) and Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ).

Queensland) and his successor Colonel Murray Elliott (a subsequent Priory Librarian, the seventh); Colonel Alex Christie (inaugural Chief Superintendent); Drs Noel Colyer and Alan King (Commissioners in Western Australia); Dr James Fotheringham MC (Commissioner in South Australia); Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon Young (Commissioner in New South Wales then Chief Commissioner); Major-General Colin Gurner (inaugural Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory); Dr Vlas Efsthathis (Commissioner and then St John Council Chair in Queensland); Dr Franklin Bridgewater (a St John Chief Professional Officer; then Commissioner in South Australia and now the Priory Director of Ceremonies); Lieutenant-Colonel Geoffrey Newman-Martin (former Commissioner in the ACT); Professor Peter Leggatt (James Cook University); Colonel Jeffrey Rosenfeld (former Commissioner in Victoria); Michael Campion (current Hospitaller of our Priory) and Major Michael Tyquin (the historian of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps). Nor does my survey include any of the many hundreds of other ranks: the privates and non-commissioned officers who, like two current Historical Society members, Vince Little and Trevor Mayhew, gave the best years of their lives to both St John and the Army Medical Services.

I apologise to them all for my sin of omission but plead that this is only a preliminary survey and hopefully other historians will continue where I've left off. Meanwhile, I hope that the foregoing article has demonstrated the point that there is a continuing close but informal link between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services through particular individuals who have worked in both.

For St John Ambulance at least, the connection has been greatly advantageous. It has brought into the organisation people of great talent and with skills immediately applicable in the health and caring causes which St John serves. Their knowledge, discipline, application, steadfastness, sense of community service and leadership skills have had a hugely beneficial impact on St John Ambulance. Long may St John continue to attract people like them!

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# ‘To Arms!’ The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia

## James Cheshire MStJ

*Mr James Cheshire is the Secretary of the Historical Society. As such he organised the annual gathering of the Society in Sydney in May 2012, which generated the seminar papers from which the articles in Volumes 12 and 13 of this journal have been developed. Mr Cheshire is a member of the Australian Federal Police, in which he is a Federal Agent in Crime Operations in Melbourne. He is also studying law part-time. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal. He is married to Cherie, who has been a St John member for many years and has made a significant contribution to the development of the St John Cadet movement both in Victoria and nationally.*



During a visit to the Australian Office of St John Ambulance Australia some months ago, I took the opportunity to examine a fine framed document displayed within the museum display cabinets. It depicts the Banner of the Priory in Australia and is endorsed ‘Henry’. It was from this and strengthened by a discussion with the then Priory Librarian, Ian Howie-Willis, that I embarked on an effort to find the ‘grant of arms’ for the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem; that is, the official certificate authorising the Priory to display a heraldic device.

Had anyone seen a vellum parchment? Was there a seal-laden relic supporting the grand table in the board room? After realising that the answers to all such questions were probably in the negative, I set off on a research trek which found me causing more problems than I have so far solved.

In telling the story of my quest, I acknowledge and thank the outstanding assistance I have received in the production of this paper from Major William Hunt, the Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and also the Genealogist of the Order of St John.



*Major William G Hunt CStJ, Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and Genealogist of the Most Venerable Order of St John.*

## The arms and banner of the Order

The arms of the Most Venerable Order are the base for all of the arms of the Priorities and Commanderies within the Order. We have all seen the Order’s arms before and are familiar with them as the base for the arms of the other national associations of St John.

The arms are simply described in heraldic terms as being ‘Gules (red) a cross argent (silver), in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign’s Crest’. A very basic yet unmistakable design! In laypersons’ words, we could add that the arms consist of the square white cross on red field of our patron Saint, St John the Baptist, with the royal crown and lion in the top left section. The arms are referred to in the Royal Charters and Statutes (2004), and the St John (Order) Regulations 2003 in the following terms:



*The painting of the Standard (banner) of the Priory in Australia, framed and on display in the Chancellor's Priory Heritage Collection in Canberra; and Lieutenant-Colonel Owen Beresford Williams MC, KStJ (1885–1963), the Victorian member of the Order who brought the Standard to Australia.*

## **Royal Charters and Statutes of the Order (2004)**

### **Part Four — Arms, Insignia, etc.**

#### **Statute 44. Arms of the Order**

The Arms of the Order shall be: Gules [red] a cross argent [silver], in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign's Crest and they shall be depicted and used in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

#### **Statute 46. Great Banner of the Order**

The Great Banner of the Order shall bear the Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 and it shall be designed and flown in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

## **The St John (Order) Regulations 2003**

### **Regulation 34. Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order**

Appendix I shall have effect for the purposes of Statutes 44, 45 and 46, under which provision may be made in respect of the Arms, the Badge and the Great Banner of the Order.

### **Appendix I Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order (Regulation 34)**

#### **1 Arms of the Order**

- (i) The following illustrates the ARMS of the Order as laid down in Statute 44, viz. Gules, a Cross Argent, in the first quarter a representation of Her Majesty's Crest.
- (ii) How Used

The Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 shall be used as laid down in Statute 46 (Great Banner of the Order) and Statute 49 (Armorial Bearings). They may also be used in any property, flag, parchment, paper, publication, or other article belonging to, used by, or issued by the Headquarters of the Order or Headquarters of Establishments of the Order, or otherwise as authorised by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council. Any other use of the Arms of the Order is prohibited.



*The Great Banner of the Order  
which displays the Order's Arms.*

## Authority to grant arms

The authority to grant armorial bearings or coats of arms is a regal *sui generis* right as the *fons honorum*. In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland it is the sole prerogative of the monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, so to do.

This power has been delegated by the Crown, however. The English Kings of Arms are appointed by the Sovereign by Letters Patent, which authorise them, inter alia, to grant on behalf of the Crown:

to eminent men Letters Patent of Arms and Crests jointly ... or alone at the will and pleasure of the Earl Marshal of England according to the ordinances and statutes from time to time issued.

The jurisdiction of the English Kings of Arms is generally considered to extend to all subjects of the Crown worldwide, with the exception of 'domiciled Scotsmen living in Scotland' and 'domiciled Canadians living in Canada', which have their own heraldic authorities.

The earliest surviving grant of Arms is to the Drapers' Company of 1439 and many of the early grants are to other livery companies; 'eminent men' is therefore deemed to include eminent corporate bodies.

The College of Arms was established by Richard III by way of Royal Charter in 1484. The College is known in the United Kingdom as a Royal Corporation, what might be known in Australia as a public authority, whereby it is a state-owned company which undertakes commercial activities. It receives no money from government and is required to support its self through its commercial endeavours.

The College is overseen by the Earl Marshal who is currently the Duke of Norfolk. There are thirteen officers of the College including the:

- three Kings of Arms: Garter Principal, Clarenceux, and Norroy and Ulster
- six Heralds, being Chester, Lancaster, Windsor, Somerset, Richmond and York
- four Pursuivants of Arms: Bluemantle, Portcullis, Rouge Croix and Rouge Dragon.

The Windsor Herald also holds the office of Genealogist of the Order of St John, as provided for in Regulation 11. The current Windsor Herald and Genealogist of the Order is Major William Hunt CStJ TD FCA.

While Canada has created its own heraldic authority, Australia has not done so and thus the College of Arms retains the right to grant arms to Her Majesty's subjects in the Commonwealth of Australia.

## Approved banner design

So what then is this approved banner design? It is clearly a representation of the Banner of the Priory in Australia. It has the hallmarks of the basic Order heraldic design, being Gules, with a Cross Argent and in the first quarter a representation of Her Majesty's Crest. At the centre there is a circle azure (blue) bearing a representation of the constellation crux or Southern Cross. The inscription reads:



The Order of St John  
Standard of the Priory in Australia

It is then endorsed *without* a date and just this simple copperplate notation and the signature of one 'Henry':

Approved  
Henry  
Grand Prior.

The chronology of the Priory's early years would suggest that the 'Henry' in question was His Royal Highness Field Marshal Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, who was Grand Prior between 1942 and 1974, when his son, the current Duke of Gloucester, HRH Prince Richard, took over the role on his father's death. Prince Henry was also the 11th Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia between 1945 and 1947. Given that the Priory of Australia was established in 1947, while Prince Henry was concurrently the Governor General and Grand Prior, it would seem not impossible that he approved this design whilst performing both roles and perhaps while still domiciled in Australia.

The first dated reference to the banner that can be located within the Priory archives is found in the annual report of the Priory in Australia of 1956. An almost passing reference is made by Lieutenant-Colonel EAH Russell in his Priory Librarian's Report for the twelve months ending 31 December 1956, in which he notes that the Priory Library had 'been endowed with gifts of great historical value', including:

3. Grand Priory: A Standard, manufactured and presented by Grand Priory, and brought to Australia by Lieut.-Colonel Owen B. Williams, M.C., K.St.J.

There is no record of when the standard first came in to hands of the Priory, nor is there any particular note of its use. One can only assume from the information available that some time soon after the approval the banner was made in the United Kingdom and then transported to Australia by Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, as mentioned in the report by the Priory Librarian.

## The Commandery of Western Australia

At this point in my research I was still no closer to identifying a grant of any Arms to the Priory in Australia. I therefore decided to engage another of our eminent St John historians, Dr Edith Khangure, and her cohort of 'can-do' fellow St John researchers, heritage custodians and knowledge-holders in Western Australia.

And so I enquired of Dr Khangure if she was aware of any grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia or to the Commandery of Western Australia. The immediate answer was that there is no instant recollection of anyone in the West ever seeing a formal grant, but that she could remember previously sighting an authority for the Banner of the Commandery. No closer to a result but a familiar pattern was developing!

The good Dr Khangure was able to provide me with a banner design endorsed as approved by 'Henry Grand Prior' and again, undated.

The design of the Commandery banner is true to the form seen previously. It takes as its base the Arms and banner of the Order with a local embellishment to signify the particular entity which it represents. In this case it is the Black Swan or *Cygnus atratus*—the official emblem of the State of Western Australia.



The signature 'Henry' signifying the Grand Prior's approval of the Arms of the Priory in Australia.



*The painting of the Banner of the Commandery in Western Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, with a note at the bottom right indicating that the Grand Prior had approved the design of the Commandery's Arms.*

But what of any formal grant of Arms? This is the design used for many years by the Commandery of Western Australia as its Arms, even prior to its closer administrative links with the Priory in Australia. No grant of Arms can be found, nor can any reference to a grant of Arms be located within the archives of St John in Western Australia. Nor, for that matter, does there appear to be a record of a grant of Arms to the Priory and Commandery in the archives of the Order at St John's Gate in London!

Clearly the only logical next step was to go to the issuing authority, the College of Arms in London, to obtain some information from their records about when the grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia was made.

## Windsor Herald and genealogist of the Order of St John

Prior to venturing into what was thought to be uncharted waters overseas, I sought and was granted the permission of the Priory's Director of Ceremonies and the Priory Secretary to make an initial enquiry with the Windsor Herald. I sent Major William Hunt an email outlining that I was doing some research and that I was keen to ascertain some detail about the grant of Arms to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. Major Hunt very kindly and promptly responded with the information that there was no record within the College of Arms databases of any grant being made to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. It was at this point that we now found ourselves on a sticky wicket.

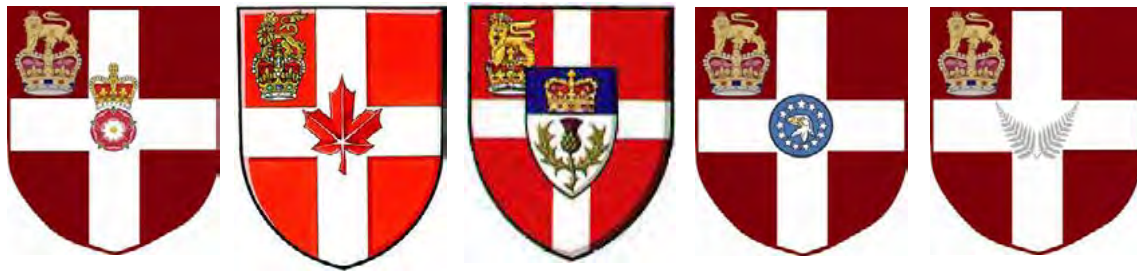
The Law of Arms is an ancient one and since 1417 vests power with the Kings of Arms to prevent anyone bearing Arms 'unless by ancestral right or by grant from a competent authority'. This was ongoing work during the period with various actions being taken by the Kings of Arms to eliminate 'all false armory and arms devised without authority'.

Given a Royal Commission, the Kings of Arms between 1530 and 1689 visited English and Welsh counties to establish that Arms were borne with proper authority, with anyone found using Arms without entitlement forced to make a public disclaimer.

Since the 14th century the Court of Chivalry has had jurisdiction over cases of misuse of Arms. The court sits in the civil jurisdiction and has as its sole judge the Earl Marshal. There have been a number of cases in the past; however, the court's authority remains extant and was exercised as recently as 1954 when the Manchester Corporation took action against the Manchester Palace of Varieties with the latter being a theatre which was successfully sued for illegally displaying the Arms belonging to the corporation.

I wrote back to Major Hunt outlining the research I had done and provided copies of the endorsed Banners for the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. I asked if it were possible that they may have been granted under another grant by the College. Major Hunt very kindly offered to look through the archives given we could establish that it was unlikely to have been granted prior to the establishment of the Priory in Australia in 1947 and certainly not prior to the establishment of the Commandery of Australia in 1941. Major Hunt was able to locate approximately two dozen archive boxes dealing with St John issues which he inherited from the previous Windsor Herald and Genealogist of the Order of St John, Sir Peter Gwynn-Jones. Alas Major Hunt was still unable to identify any grant of Arms or any registering of the Banners with the College of Arms.

Major Hunt then made some enquiries on my behalf and now, on his own motion, has identified other Priories that had not received a grant of Arms but would appear to have been using same. The larger question was: who were they and what can be done?



*Arms of five Priories of the Most Venerable Order of St John. (L–R): the Priory of England and the Islands, the Priory of Canada, the Priory of Scotland, the Priory in the United States of America and the Priory in New Zealand.*

## The way forward

I was fortunate to spend some time speaking on the telephone with Major Hunt in the past few weeks. Although extremely busy with a variety of ceremonial and other heraldic and St John tasks, he has been extremely helpful and provided the Priory and myself with outstanding support and advice.

While some of the background briefing Major Hunt has been able to provide me shall remain in confidence as he requested, it can be said that Major Hunt has prepared a formal report for the Garter King of Arms in relation to the issue, as well as briefing St John International Office. Within this report he outlines the issues identified as a result of the search he has conducted of the records of the College and the areas requiring some formal decision in relation to the regularising of current practice.

It seems that, given there are a number of other St John Arms to be granted in the near future, being the new Commanderies of Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man, it could be possible for a composite grant of Arms to be made by the College. This would regularise the Arms currently being used by the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia.

Whether or not this is a possible way forward is still dependant on the results of the recommendations contained in the report that Major Hunt has prepared for the Garter King of Arms. We await his further advice.



## Reports from the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society

### **St John Ambulance Archives, New South Wales**

*Loredana Napoli, Information Management Coordinator, and  
Betty Stirton DStJ, Honorary Archivist St John Ambulance New South Wales*

During the past twelve months, the St John Ambulance Australia NSW Archive has maintained the work of research and record keeping. As an Archive operating during business hours, we do not have a committee and therefore no Annual General Meeting. An Archive report is presented by Betty Stirton, Honorary Archivist at the NSW State Council Meetings giving details of the work that has been done in the previous three months. Significant events and achievements during the year were as follows.

#### **Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary**

In 2011 Western Suburbs Cadet Division held their Jubilee celebration of 75 years. St John Archives prepared and supplied histories of past members for their families as well as a display depicting the work of the Cadets. The Division has a strong membership of 20 juniors, 12 preliminary members and 40 senior cadets, in addition to senior Cadet Leaders, Officers, Superintendent and President.



*Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary celebrations.*

### **St John (NSW) Registers**

Since our Archive commenced in 1990 we have compiled registers for St John Honours with over 2200 entries, Service Awards 2200 entries, Grand Prior Awardees 1737 entries and Special Service Shields 363 entries. The St John Honours register contains the following information: Full name of Postulant, Awarded dates of Priory Vote of Thanks (PVT), Member St John, Officer St John, Commander, Dame, Knight, Bailiff Grand Cross. Also within this register are the dates of Centenary Medal and St John 50 Year Plaque (issued by St John [NSW] for 50 years of Service) and Deceased date.

As well as PVT dates there are these awards: Honorary Associate 1895–1926, Vellum Vote of Thanks 1901–1943, Commandery Vote of Thanks 1945–1947, Priory Vote of Thanks 1948–2010.



The St John Service Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee, Division/Training area the member belongs to, the Year the Service Medal was received, followed by the Years when Bars 1 through to 9 were awarded.

The Grand Prior and Special Service Shield Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee; Division the Awardee belongs to; Year Award was received. Service hours include 100, 200, 500, 800, 1000, 1,200, 1500, 1800 and 2000. Special Service Shields were introduced in 1947. The First Grand Prior Award in Australia was in 1933 to Marion Higgins from Marrickville Cadet Division (NSW).

### **Homage Roll**

In 1995 we commenced a Homage Roll and each year at the Investiture the Governor and recipients sign their name. This year a Homage Roll was prepared for the Investiture held by Professor Anthony Mellows, Lord Prior of The Most Venerable Order, held at The Great Hall, University of Sydney. As well as the NSW Postulants the Homage Roll includes the International and Interstate Postulants.

### **Research**

We were very fortunate that the early Secretaries of the St John Ambulance Association and Brigade were people who kept the history and gave us an excellent start to our Archives. This enabled Archives to provide seven of the ten names of Australians who attended the Centenary of the Revival of the Order of St John in England in 1931. Those named were NSW members.

We encourage all sections of St John Ambulance in NSW to deposit their Minute books in our Archive as the information provides valuable information on the work performed in their local communities.

### **Women in St John History Project**

Histories and photographs of St John New South Welsh-women were submitted, and a selection published in *Celebrating women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future*. This publication was officially launched on Saturday 19 May 2012 at the 2012 National St John Member Convention in Sydney.

## **Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee**

*Dawn Bat OStJ, Secretary, Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee*

The Northern Territory St John Historical Group met on Thursday 29 March 2012 and elected committee members as required by National Headquarters. Frank Dunstan agreed to be Chairman and Dawn Bat accepted the Secretarial position; Steve Peers, Gwyn Balch, Lesley King, Pat King and Debbie Garraway make up the Committee. Alan Caust, who had been a long standing member, has recently left the Territory. We intend to hold quarterly meetings in the lead up to the 2013 Conference in Darwin to plan and prepare activities and displays. We are hoping to include our Youth Division in the program as some of the members have expressed an interest in being involved.

Our financial membership has decreased this year although it is difficult to be sure of the exact number as some membership has been forwarded directly to the National Office whilst others have still chosen to pay in the Volunteer Office in Darwin. The change in payment of membership fees from local acceptance to the need to send fees to National Office has not been well received hence the drop off in financial membership. We are hoping to be able to discuss this problem with the National Committee at this year's Convention.

The volunteer members of St John in Alice Springs celebrated fifty years of serving their community in October 2011. Among the dignitaries who attended the celebrations were St John Ambulance Chancellor, Dr Neil Conn AO and Mrs Lesley Conn as well as former NT Administrator, Mr Ted Egan AO and Ms Nerys Evans. It was also an honour to have long serving St John NT board member, Dr. Alan Bromwich in attendance. The Mayor of Alice Springs, Mr Damian Ryan, hosted a reception where a number of presentations were made recognising the service of the members to the Alice community.

*Alice Springs St John 50th anniversary birthday cake.*



The ambulance centre on Telegraph Terrace was renamed the Bernie Kilgariff Complex in honour of the well-known and respected Bernie Kilgariff AM who recently passed away. He was a Board member for over twenty years and was always willing to assist the volunteers in any way he could. His daughter Fran Kilgariff is now a board member and carries on her father's tradition.



*Members of the Kilgariff Family at the Ambulance Centre in Alice Springs.*

The Northern Territory History book which is being written by Frank Dunstan is progressing well and it is hopefully going to be ready to be launched at the 2013 Conference. On a recent visit to Darwin, Commissioner Steve Peers took several boxes of records from Alice Springs to be stored in our archives. Frank has been going through these and scanning important and interesting accounts of the Alice Springs history for the book. We were fortunate enough to receive a small grant to assist with the work Frank is doing, this will help him with the incidental costs involved in research, travel and copying fees. [Editorial note: at the time of printing this volume of the history journal, Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs: A history of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory is at the printers, and it will be officially launched at the National Member Convention Opening Ceremony being held on Friday 31 May at Government House.

Following on from the *Celebrating Women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future* which includes thirteen Territorians, it has been decided to collect



*History Display at the St John members' dinner, Alice Springs 2011.*

## **St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria**

*Shirley Moon OStJ, Chair, St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria*

The Victorian Branch continues to grow both in membership and in the scope of its activities. Membership as at the end of the financial year was 56 members.

During the year the Branch had a further four quarterly meetings at which, in addition to the business matters relating to the Branch and the St John Museum, there were presentations of historical papers. The topics were:

- Heroes of our forgotten past: The story of Eirene Appleton DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Saints associated with the Order of St John by Michael Sellar
- Alice Ishbel Hay Creswick QBE DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Evolution of grades in the Order of St John by Gary Harris.

Several of the papers were so well-received that presenters were urged to offer them for presentation at the annual Priory Conference. The custom of making such presentations at our quarterly meetings is seen as an important reason for the growing interest in local Branch membership.

A major activity of the Branch has been development of the Roll of Honour. It began a couple of years ago as a list of names of current and past members of all grades within the Order of St John in Victoria since its inception. It was then developed on a spreadsheet to include the years of award of Priory Votes of Thanks and admission and promotions to various grades, and the year of death of deceased members. This proved to be invaluable information for preparation of nominations for promotion, or writing obituaries where relevant. The next enhancement, mainly due to the hard work of our Treasurer, Gary Harris, was the inclusion of the Service medal and bars, and more recently, the 3, 6 and 9 years certificates, the Grand Prior's awards, all other awards recognised in post-nominals plus additional information such as St John Council membership and Senior Officer appointments. With these inclusions the Roll of Honour now has over 3000 names.

The Roll has now become so valuable that it is a primary source for Headquarters in appraisals for appointments and promotions as well as a resource for SJHS biographical papers. It is entirely composed of material from published public record material and does not rely on private confidential submissions.

A different but somewhat parallel program planned for the near future is the database recording of all old membership records. These are currently held in paper hard copy format in headquarters storage and are quite difficult to access when queries are received about former members. Although it will be a difficult task to list the thousands of past members we believe this will be a valuable resource for the archives.

St John Museum has received many donations of personal memorabilia and past records and materials from St John Divisions during the year. The displays and collections are constantly being updated. Several small albums devoted to specific members have been added to the collection when enough certificates, photos and documents are available. Our obituary display board now has more than forty brief biographies with photographs.

During the year our Honorary Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley, published a biography of the late Mrs Alice Creswick QBE DStJ, titled *Such Big Work*. This book was officially launched early in 2012 and is available through all bookshops.

Office-bearers in the SJHS Victorian Branch for 2011 were: Chair, Mrs Shirley Moon OStJ; Hon. Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ; Hon. Treasurer, Mr Gary Harris OStJ. The Committee members were: Mr Mervyn Goodali KStJ, Mr George Jackson CStJ, Miss Dorothy Bache DStJ, Mr Nicholas Clarke MStJ, Mr William Foley KSU and Mrs Gladys Blackstock CStJ.

At the time of writing (March 2012), nominations have been called for the 2012 election of Office-bearers which will be completed before the forthcoming Priory Conference

## **The Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, Western Australia**

*Edith Khangure CStJ, Librarian and Archivist, the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, St John Ambulance Australia (WA) Inc.*

In Western Australia the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre functions as the State branch of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia.

### **General status**

The general status of the Heritage Centre is good and summaries of work in the St John Museum and Archives are given in this report. Supplements provide additional information as required. We continue with our membership of Museums Australia.

### **Information Resource Centre**

The Heritage Centre continues as a reference centre for the Museum and Archives.

### **Archives**

This year considerable effort has been spent on acquiring and filing material related to volunteer sub-centres and Event First Aid Services (EFAS) divisions. We have also been sorting our records for past Priory meetings. Our ongoing commitment to digitising SJAA committee minutes is being maintained. This year we have commenced digital copying of official portraits.

### **Donations to and from the Museum**

Donations this year include a circular table, trophies and special presentation items, ties, photographs, books, (including some first aid books from Terry Walton, and, a copy of Maria Godwell's Fremantle Cadet history), ambulance equipment, a Resusci-Anne manikin, uniform items, first aid medallions and labels, shields, manuals, sub-centre records and documents. The donations came from members of the public, SJA personnel, EFAS and St John in Queensland.

The Museum donated a copy of our 'Centennial Anthology' book to a cadet from the Northern Territory. Insignia and duplicate books have been donated to a collection in Mandurah. Two SJAA ties were donated to a sub-centre. Three trophies, which were sent from EFAS to the Museum were national awards and, after consultation with the Priory Historian were returned to Canberra for their collection. Irene and John Ree delivered the trophies to the national office while they were visiting the eastern states.

### **Acquisitions by purchase**

A third montage of ambulance vehicles used in WA, ordered in the previous financial year, was received and has now been hung in the Heritage Centre foyer. A new tablecloth for the original SJAA Council table has also been purchased.

### **Loans**

Material was loaned to Fremantle EFAS cadet division for their 75th anniversary. Photographs were loaned to EFAS to assist with their sub-centre display in August 2011.

### **Reference queries and research work**

Requests for information on sub-centre and EFAS history; SJA personnel and old ambulances have been met this year. Inter-library loans were supplied to Dr Ozer. We provided information to Pam Cunningham and Jeanette Regan, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator in Canberra regarding Library and Museum protocols. We also assisted the Queensland History and Heritage Committee on computer programs for archives.

At the time of writing (March 2012), the 'Women in St John History' project is almost finished. Final selections for the book have been made and all editing is completed. The book is to be launched at the SJAA Members' Convention in Sydney in May 2012.

Two EFAS members from Mundaring sub-centre are compiling a detailed history and we are assisting with this project, which includes providing access to photocopying, digitising minutes of meetings, professional advice and marketing.

A roll of all members of the Order in WA is being compiled.



Research for our 120th anniversary of teaching first aid in WA is underway. We are assisting the Marketing department with information and illustrations for a major promotion of this milestone.

### **Cataloguing**

There is a substantial backlog with cataloguing but our major area of activity is currently with archival work.

### **Digitisation and binding**

The SJAA Council Reports for 2011 have been sent for copying in a digital format for archival purposes. The hard copy has been sent for binding and on its return will be housed in our fire-proof, secure room in Central Records. Some volumes of annual reports are being bound.

### **Restoration**

Considerable restoration work was undertaken this year. The original SJAA Council table and some chairs have been french-polished.

### **Museum promotion**

Material from the Museum was provided for the annual sub-centre conference in August 2011. In addition, tours of the Heritage Centre were organised during the conference.

We are currently assisting the Human Resources department in a revision of their Staff Handbook, which includes historical material. The Heritage Centre is also part of the tour for all new employees.

The Commandery Annual Report now includes items on ceremonial and heritage issues. This is a welcome development and follows a similar initiative in the Priory Annual Reports.

### **Museum volunteers**

Our regular volunteers are: Irene Simpson, John Ree, Barbara Franklin, Des Franklin, Frank Di Scerni, George Ferguson, Kevin Young and Betty Dyke. We are all working on material in the archives. Assistance is also received from Terry Walton in London. Our thanks go to these volunteers without whose help we would not be able to achieve so much.

### **Finance and security**

We are grateful to the organisation for providing our security system, insurance and funding. A fire safety audit this year resulted in an upgrading of fire extinguishers in the Centre.

### **Visitors**

The Centre has been delighted to receive visitors from the general public in WA and other states, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator, some schools and community groups, country and metropolitan SJAA staff and volunteers. The self-guided tour brochure is working well and will be revised this year as we change a number of displays.

### **Publications**

A feature on the Community Care Branch was included in the Commandery Annual Report 2010–2011.

### **The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia**

The Society's 2012 history seminar in May 2012 will feature some international speakers as the Grand Council are meeting in Sydney and overseas delegates have been asked to present a paper on behalf of their Priors. Several have accepted the invitation.

As mentioned, the Heritage Centre functions as the Western Australian Branch of the Historical Society. After being elected President of the Society in May 2011, Dr Allan Mawdsley advised all the Society's committee members of his vision to further the work of the Society, specifically that every State/Territory would: have a local elected committee with office bearers; hold an annual general meeting, and organise regular meetings with historical presentations. The first goal of this committee would be to compile an honour roll of every person in the State/Territory who is, or has ever been, a member of the Order.

The situation in Western Australia is that the State members of the Society's committee (Harry Oxer, Kevin Young and Edith Khangure) take care of all heritage matters; that is, there is no elected local committee. However, research is undertaken by the volunteer Ceremonial and Heritage group, which meets regularly, discusses issues and sorts archival material.

The WA members were surveyed as to whether they wished to adopt Dr Mawdsley's proposals. There was insufficient support for the idea of a local elected committee and our current status will therefore continue. WA is meeting the purposes and objects of the Society. The proposed honour roll was favourably received and it is underway. However, as this is an intense data-mining exercise it will take some time. Our best estimate of this is late 2013 after which we will continue with recording other categories, e.g. Service Medal and Bar recipients. This project will be undertaken alongside our other research and archival work. Further discussion on this is expected at the May 2012 meeting.

### **Projects 2012–2013**

Cataloguing, restoration work as funding permits, meeting reference requests and sorting Archival documents are ongoing.

The 'Women in St John History' project will continue through 2012. After the official launch the issue of the other entries which might be included is to be finalised. Material for the next sub-centre conference will be provided. Work will continue on the WA honour roll.

### **Summary**

We have had another busy and productive year in the Archives and all areas of our work.



'Preserving and promoting the St John heritage'

The pictures on the front cover reflect the theme of the leading article in this edition of St John History: 'Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management by Dr David Fahey, the State Medical Officer for St John Ambulance First Aid Services in New South Wales. As Dr Fahey's article makes clear, von Esmarch was a pioneering medical innovator as well as being the Surgeon-General of the German Army from 1870. Among his inventions was the triangular calico bandage that now bears his name: the versatile 'Esmarch bandage' imprinted with illustrations for its application. Successive generations of St John Ambulance-trained first aiders have learnt to use it, to the extent that it is often called the 'St John bandage'.

The front cover shows a portrait of von Esmarch in full formal military uniform superimposed on images of two versions of his famous eponymous bandage. Interestingly, among his honours and awards is the Maltese Cross of the Johanniterorden, the Order of St John of German and Lutheran tradition. The title page of *The Surgeon's Handbook* is also shown; one of Esmarch's two great books.



'Preserving and promoting  
the St John heritage'

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# St John History

Proceedings of the St John Ambulance  
Historical Society of Australia  
Volume 13, 2013

Editor: Ian Howie-Willis (Historical Advisor), St John Ambulance Australia)

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## Introduction

### **St John History: about Volume 13, 2013**

*St John History* is the annual journal of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia. This edition, Volume 13, follows on from Volume 12, the special edition distributed in December 2012.

Whereas Volume 12, 2012 included the papers delivered at the Historical Society's International Symposium on 19 May 2012, this present volume, Volume 13, 2013, publishes the papers delivered at the domestic seminar the following day, 20 May 2012. It also contains the reports of the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society tabled at the Society's Annual General Meeting, which immediately followed the International Symposium on 19 May.

The domestic seminar on 20 May was the customary annual presentation of historical research papers by the Society's Australian members. It was the fourteenth consecutive seminar since the series began in Perth in 1999. The seminar was organised by the Historical Society's Secretary, Mr James Cheshire MStJ, with his usual flair and attention to detail. In planning and conducting the seminar, he was supported by the Society's President, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ, and Deputy Secretary, Dr Edith Khangure CStJ. Dr Mawdsley introduced and concluded the seminar, while Dr Khangure chaired both seminar sessions.

The seminar's keynote paper, delivered by Dr David Fahey, was the first of nine on the program, where he spoke of Friedrich von Eschmarch and his contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management. Fahey's paper was followed by Dr Franklin Bridgewater KStJ with his fascinating paper titled *'The Most Venerable Order' or 'The Most Vulnerable Order' of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem?*; Mr Gary Harris OStJ talked about member quotas in *Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective*; Professor John Pearn KStJ and Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ reflected on the influential *Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his 'Little Black Book'*; Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ reminded us about *James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia*; Mr Trevor Mayhew KStJ gave an interesting talk on the *Medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John: A short history*; Dr Brian Fotheringham KStJ introduced *Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'*; Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ, looked at the *Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance*; and finally Mr James Cheshire MStJ closed with *'To Arms!' The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia*.

As usual, State and Territory historical society reports were tabled on 19 May 2012, and they are reflected here.

I trust that readers of this edition of the journal will agree with me that, like all its preceding twelve companion volumes, Volume 13 presents a kaleidoscopic but comprehensive view of the many activities being undertaken in Australia to 'Preserve and Promote the St John Heritage', as the Historical Society's motto says. Such activities are many and varied and probably will occur wherever there are 'St Johnnies' who appreciate what a great historical force for good St John Ambulance has been in Australia since arriving here 130 years ago.

On behalf of the Executive and members of the Historical Society, I express our gratitude to the Chancellor of the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, Dr Neil Conn GCStJ, who gives the Society much encouragement. Dr Conn appreciates the imperative of the Society's motto, 'Preserving and Promoting the St John Heritage', and that in turn helps us ensure that we can achieve our objectives. In this connection I also thank Mr Peter LeCornu OStJ, the Priory Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of St John Ambulance Australia. Mr LeCornu's generous support of the Society, both moral and material, is a key factor in the Society's continuing success. More particularly, it makes possible the publication and distribution of this journal.



Ian Howie-Willis  
Editor, February 2013

## Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management.

### David Fahey OStJ

*Dr David Fahey is a specialist anaesthetist working at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney. He is also the State Medical Officer for St John in NSW. Dr Fahey joined St John in 1983 as a 13-year-old Cadet in Goulburn Division, and during his 28 years of membership he has held Divisional, Regional and State positions in both NSW and Queensland. After training as a nurse, he moved to Queensland in 1999 to study medicine, and then undertake postgraduate specialist training in anaesthesia. In 2009 he spent six months working with the CareFlight rescue helicopter in Brisbane, and acquired an additional qualification in aeromedical retrieval. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Dr Fahey's sixth consecutive presentation to an Historical Society seminar.*



This paper describes the life and work of Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), an innovative German military and academic surgeon. Esmarch was able to channel his intense dislike of war in a pragmatic way, towards improving the standard of medical care which was provided to injured soldiers. In its most basic form, Esmarch saw the need for on the spot help—not from doctors, but from the soldiers themselves. To this end, Esmarch devised the triangular bandage, issued it to all troops, and trained them to use it for haemorrhage control and basic splinting. This was the origin of recognisable ‘first aid’ in the sense of an organised series of drills. Esmarch’s teachings subsequently formed the basis of the first aid training which was extended to any member of the public, under the banner of the Order of St John in England.

### Life and civilian work

Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch was born on 9 January 1823 in Tönning, a small town in northern Germany. He was the son of a well-respected surgeon of the district, and even as a small boy, Esmarch accompanied his father on rounds. This early exposure to medical practise inspired Esmarch to follow in his father’s footsteps, and he gained entry to the medical school at the University of Kiel in 1843 (in spite of his less than exemplary performance at school).

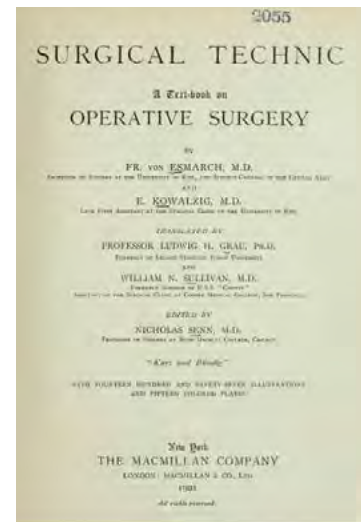
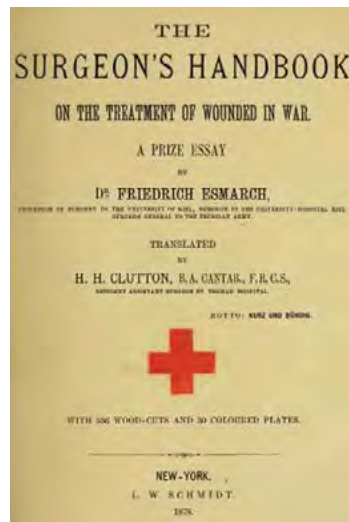
Following graduation in 1848, Esmarch’s career progressed rapidly. He began working as an assistant to Professor von Langenbeck, at the Kiel Hospital, and in 1867, Esmarch was elevated to the position of Professor and Chair of Surgery. Esmarch was committed to teaching—not only of medical students, but also of his peers in the form of postgraduate education. He insisted upon accurate documentation on patient charts, and used the data collected as the basis for scientific research.

Esmarch’s colleagues praised him as being a genius, with the ability to see underlying relationships in apparently simple processes, and to evaluate their importance. He wrote extensively on a range of novel topics, including the debridement of gunshot wounds (rather than amputation) (1851); cryotherapy to reduce inflammation (1862); and limb exsanguination



*The young Dr Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), a pioneering military and academic surgeon.*

to allow bloodless surgery (1877). His greatest works include *The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War* (1878), and *Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery* (1901). These substantial volumes are comprehensively illustrated, and provide sound anatomical explanations of the operations described. Many of Esmarch's works were translated into several languages (including English), and were utilised throughout Europe and the United States. During his many decades of practice, Esmarch performed over 20,000 major operations. He continued in active surgical practice until his retirement at the age of 76. Despite his technical and academic prowess, he was not arrogant. Esmarch was loved by his patients, and it is said that he had a gentle way with small children.



*The title pages of Esmarch's two great books: The Surgeon's Handbook on the Treatment of Wounded in War and Surgical Technic: A Textbook on Operative Surgery.*

Esmarch was married in 1854, to the daughter of a senior colleague. The marriage was apparently happy, and produced a son, Edwin Esmarch, who later became a bacteriologist and Professor of Hygiene at the University of Gottingen. Tragically, Esmarch's first wife died on 30 May 1870 after a severe chronic illness. In 1872, he married his second wife, the Princess Caroline Christiane Auguste Emilie Henriette Elisabeth of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg (1833–1917), commonly known as the Princess Henriette, an aunt of the wife of the German Emperor Wilhelm II. The marriage was controversial within royal circles, but Princess Henriette was content to live in a modest home near the hospital, and she supported Esmarch in his endeavours.

Outside of medical work, Esmarch was apparently a capable sportsman, mountaineer and hunter. He enjoyed the company of small groups, and was an entertaining story teller.

Emperor Wilhelm II elevated Esmarch to the nobility in 1887. This permitted him to use the title 'Excellency', and use the prefix 'von' in front of his surname. Nine years later, His Excellency Professor von Esmarch died of pneumonia, on 23 February 1908.



*Esmarch and his second wife, the Princess Henriette, after his ennoblement in 1887.*



## Military surgeon

Esmarch lived at a time when Germany was repeatedly involved in military conflicts. Immediately after his medical graduation, war broke out between Denmark and Germany, and Esmarch began his career as a military surgeon. While tending to the wounded during the Battle of Bau, he was captured and taken prisoner, but was eventually released following an exchange with a Danish doctor.

During the wars of 1848 and 1850, Esmarch gained further experience in field hospitals, working alongside his mentors, Professors Langenbeck and Stromeyer. During this time, Esmarch pioneered a new approach to the treatment of gunshot wounds of the limbs. Rather than amputation of the entire limb, Esmarch favoured local debridement. Later, this conservative approach was used together with Lister's 'antiseptic' method of using a carbolic acid spray during surgery.

Esmarch recognised the importance of controlling haemorrhage, and he described numerous methods of applying pressure to the major arteries. He devised tourniquets with effective tightening screws that could be rapidly applied to a damaged limb. Esmarch's textbook *The Surgeon's Handbook of the Treatment of Wounded in War* describes in detail the method of exposing and ligating the arteries of the upper and lower limbs.

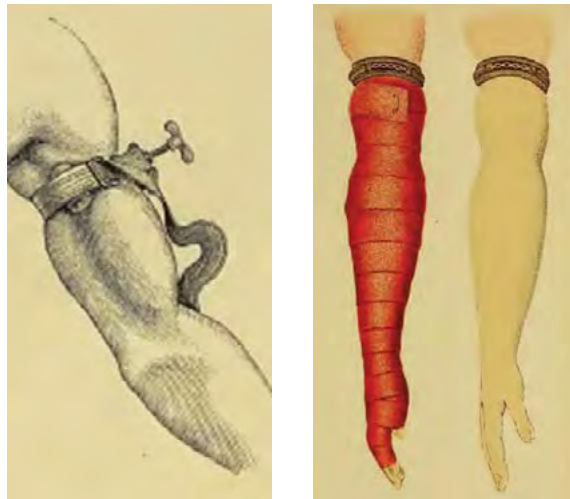
Perhaps Esmarch is best remembered for his technique of 'bloodless surgery', utilising a rubber bandage which is still used today, and still bears his name. This technique was developed during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, and was formally published in 1873. A 5-centimetre rubber bandage is tightly applied to the limb, starting at the fingers or toes. This squeezes capillary and venous blood out of the limb, prior to the application of an arterial tourniquet. In this way, the surgical field is rendered 'bloodless', and the volume of blood contained in the limb is not wasted.

Esmarch is known to have experimented with blood transfusion, and he invented a variety of transfusion equipment and techniques. Esmarch makes no mention of how frequently he performed transfusions or the outcome for the patients. His success must have been limited, given that the concept of blood groups was not known until 1901.

Esmarch displayed deep concern for wounded soldiers. At that time, conditions on the battlefield were appalling, and injured soldiers received inadequate treatment—a situation which had not changed for centuries. During the Franco-Prussian War, Esmarch served as a senior surgeon and public health officer, supervising the military hospitals near Berlin. In this position, he collaborated with the great pathologist Rudolph Virchow, to develop a hygienic pavilion-style hospital system for the battlefield, modelled on the system which had been used during the American Civil War. Further, he implemented ambulance wagons, mobile pharmacies, and soup kitchens, to provide wounded men with effective care. He made use of railways to transport both patients and supplies.

Esmarch's battlefield experience convinced him of the need for a system to enable the most effective use of scarce medical resources. The introduction of 'triage' was unprecedented at a time when treatment was provided based on military rank, rather than severity of injury.

In 1871, aged 48, Esmarch became Surgeon-General of the German army. In this position he was able to exert an even greater influence, to continue modernising and shaping military medical care.



Illustrations for the 'bloodless surgery' techniques from Esmarch's textbook on the treatment of the wounded in war, showing the tourniquet with tightening screw and the rubber bandage with tourniquet.

## First aid

Esmarch's sense of humanity, and his abhorrence of war, led him to develop a revolutionary, pragmatic approach to pre-hospital care on the battlefield. Rather than leaving an injured man to wait for hours for treatment to be provided by a doctor, Esmarch's idea was to train the soldiers to deliver basic initial care to each other. Here, Esmarch emphasised haemorrhage control; experience had taught him that many soldiers needlessly bled to death from badly shattered limbs. Of course, this idea was met with opposition from the medical establishment, which felt that it was inappropriate to teach medical skills to ordinary laymen. Esmarch refuted this brilliantly, as evidenced by the following quote from 'First Aid to the Injured' (1882):

Though I have invited you here to teach you how to render the first aid to the injured, I do not in the least aim at rendering a doctor's services unnecessary; on the contrary, I hope to convince you how important the immediate help of a doctor is in most cases. What I wish to do is enable you to give the right kind of aid before the doctor arrives—without which, irreparable injury might be done, and perhaps even a valuable life be lost.



*Esmarch as a German Army surgeon.*

Esmarch popularised the triangular bandage, as an ideal 'universal' bandage and dressing. He conceived no less than 32 methods of applying it to the body, and produced bandages with printed illustrations to show the soldiers how it could be used. The initial illustrations were criticised as being too morbid, because they depicted realistic battle scenes. Therefore, subsequent editions of the bandage were printed with less confronting images. These techniques were described by Esmarch in a pamphlet titled 'The First Dressing on the Battlefield' (1869). Today, we continue to use the triangular bandage in exactly the same ways that were described by Esmarch almost 150 years ago. Indeed, the triangular bandage is still frequently referred to as the 'Esmarch bandage'.

When appointed as Surgeon-General, Esmarch ordered that every German soldier would carry a first aid pack. This consisted of a triangular bandage, two antiseptic muslin compresses, and a gauze bandage. Today, soldiers continue to carry emergency dressings on their person.



*Two early versions of Esmarch's famous triangular bandage, each printed with illustrations for its application.*



'Pushing forward the lower jaw for threatening asphyxia in chloroform narcosis.' An illustration of Esmarch's manoeuvre from his first aid manual, the instructions reading:

14. In asphyxia the mouth should be opened, and the lower jaw raised with both hands, the index fingers of each being applied behind the ascending ramus, so that the lower range of teeth projects beyond the upper (partial dislocation) (fig. 242)



Esmarch also advocated the use of tongue holding forceps to grasp the tongue and pull it forward if jaw thrust was felt to be inadequate. One can only grimace at the thought of the injuries to tongues caused by these forceps! For some strange reason, the idea of pulling the tongue out of the mouth became part of our early first aid doctrine (not with the aid of forceps, but using a handkerchief held in the fingers), while Esmarch's manoeuvre was never mentioned. It is such a shame that jaw thrust was not adopted by St John, right from the start in 1878.

In a lecture given by Esmarch in 1899, he left the following testimony of his humanistic attitude and goals:

... perhaps later generations will assess these efforts made in an attempt to change the miserable conditions on the battlefield as one of the most commendable acts of the outgoing 19th century.

Esmarch's self-assessment is accurate, but completely inadequate. His legacy continues throughout the world in the form of first aid—essential life-saving skills which have been learned by millions.

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# ‘The Most Venerable Order’ or ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem?

## Franklin Bridgewater KStJ

*Dr Franklin Bridgewater is a retired surgeon who lives in Adelaide. In retirement he has undertaken several overseas tours of duty as an officer in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps. He is a St John veteran, with many years of experience in senior management and leadership positions at the State and national level. A former Chief Medical Officer on the National Headquarters Staff of the St John First Aid Services Branch, he is also a former St John Ambulance Commissioner for South Australia. He is the current Director of Ceremonies for the Priory in Australia. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Dr Bridgewater’s first presentation to an Historical Society seminar.*



What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
by any other name would smell as sweet.

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 1–2.

A confusingly large number of organisations include the phrase ‘Order of St John’, with or without ‘of Jerusalem’, in their titles.<sup>1</sup> Many make unjustified claims to an historical connection to the movement known as the Crusades, from its birth in the 11th century to its decline in the 14th century.<sup>2</sup>

## Early history of the ‘Order of St John’<sup>3</sup>

The Blessed Gerard, probably a Catholic oblate (committed but not under vows), founded a religious community in the 11th century to provide hospice and hospital care for pilgrims and crusaders in and en route to the Holy Land. In 1113, Pope Paschal II approved the establishment of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem with Gerard as its first provost.<sup>2</sup> Within a couple of decades, the members of the Order were also known as ‘Knights Hospitaller’ as they took on a military as well as charitable function. With time, the Order became a rich, powerful military force. The Saracens forced the Order out of the Holy Land in 1291, and it then established its headquarters successively in Cyprus, Rhodes and Malta. The English *Langue* or branch of the Order continued to function until the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII in 1540. Finally, the Order lost its standing as a military power when it capitulated to Napoleon in 1798. He expelled it from Malta.<sup>3</sup> After the expulsion it continued as a sovereign, albeit domain-less, charitable institution.

## Present day ‘Orders of St John’

The present day Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta is the direct descendant of the founding Order. It remains a lay religious Order of Roman Catholic ethos and Rome, Italy, is now its base. It re-established its English Priory in 1993. It has recognised international status as a sovereign body, with diplomatic representatives in many countries and delegates to major intergovernmental organisations.<sup>4</sup>



*Arms of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, the Catholic order whose title is often abbreviated to ‘Sovereign Military Order of Malta’.*



## The concordant Orders of St John<sup>5</sup>

There are only five 'Orders of St John' which are directly descended from the original 11th century Order, and/or are established under Royal Charter, or similarly recognised by an appropriate authority. They are:

1. The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (short title: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta; SMOM), and the four members of The Alliance of Orders of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem<sup>6,7</sup> viz.
2. The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem (short title: The Order of St John; OStJ)
3. Die Balley Brandenburg des ritterlichen Ordens St Johannis vom Spital zu Jerusalem (short title: The Johanniterorden)
4. Johanniterorden i Sverige (a Swedish Royal Order)
5. Johanniter Orde in Nederland (a Dutch Royal Order).

In 1963, a concordat was signed by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and The Order of St John.<sup>6</sup> In 1987, these five orders published a joint declaration.<sup>8</sup> These agreements provide the basis for mutual recognition and acceptance of each Order's historical basis, humanitarian aims and founding authority. The declaration states, 'They are the only Orders of St John which may legitimately use that name'.

## The non-concordant 'Orders of St John'<sup>9,10</sup>

Many of the orders not recognised by the five signatories of the joint statement have their roots in an American organisation called the 'The Knights Hospitallers of the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem' (established/revived late 1800s or early 1900s). This Order has been variously called 'the American Order', 'The Ecumenical Order' and 'the Shickshinny Order'.<sup>1</sup> It had its headquarters in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, in the 1930s and 1940s. Its offshoots are 'Shickshinny Orders'. Several have enrolled members of the European nobility. For example, ex-King Peter of Yugoslavia was closely associated with the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller. Some have engaged to a limited extent in charitable work, though in the main their activities have been only ceremonial and fraternal.



*Emblem of a non-concordant or self-styled 'Order of St John', the 'Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller of Florida'. This is one of various similar 'orders' claiming links with the late ex-King Peter II of Yugoslavia. An off-shoot of this group of 'Orders' is active in Australia, where it has influence among some politicians. Its functions are mainly ceremonial and fraternal rather than charitable.*

## The legitimacy of 'Orders of St John'<sup>1</sup>

In 2006 Hoegen Dijkhof submitted a doctoral thesis through the Faculty of Theology to Leiden University in The Netherlands on 'The legitimacy of Orders of St John'. While not all-encompassing, this is a scholarly, detailed, critical and iconoclastic dissertation on the significant Orders.

## The 'Most Venerable Order' correctly known as 'The Order of St John'

### Historical origin, development and present function

In the 1820s and 1830s interested parties made serious attempts to revive the long defunct English Grand Priory of The Sovereign Military Order of Malta. The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Order refused to provide it with legitimacy. In response to this repudiation, the British body made a unilateral declaration that it was to be the sovereign Order of St John in the United Kingdom, under the title 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of St John of Jerusalem: Anglia'.<sup>3</sup>

## ‘The most vulnerable Order’

### Historical usage of phrase

As it was the Royal Charter of Queen Elisabeth II in 1955<sup>11</sup> that introduced the phrase ‘The Most Venerable Order’, it is only after this date, therefore, that the use of the phrase ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ may be validly considered.

### 1984

*Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*<sup>15</sup> was a Canadian parody on publications such as *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage* produced by one ‘Charlie Farquharson’, also known as Don Harron.<sup>16</sup> This may have been the first occasion on which ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ appeared in this context. *Debunk's Illustrated Guide* refers to The Order of St John as ‘the Most Vulnerable Order of St John's Ambivalence’. It not only parodied ‘The Venerable Order’ but also the prestigious Canadian ‘Order of Military Merit’<sup>17</sup> being deliberately renamed the ‘Order of Millinery Merit’. In addition it linked ‘The Most Vulnerable Order’ to ‘St John's Ambivalence’.

### 1994

In 1994, Dr Donald Trunkey published an article in the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons* focusing on the wounds sustained by Admiral Nelson of the Royal Navy.<sup>18</sup> In considering the naval battle at Aboukir Bay, 1–3 August 1798, he stated that one of the French vessels sunk by Nelson carried ‘ingots of gold and treasures of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem [sic]—the second instance of ‘Vulnerable’ replacing ‘Venerable’ in the Order's title, not only confused the Most Venerable Order with the earlier Knights of Malta but getting ‘venerable’ wrong. By now the Order was becoming vulnerable to such ‘mondegreens’.



First use of the term ‘Most Vulnerable Order’ from *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, a spoof on *Debrett's Peerage*, the ‘Who's Who’ of the British aristocracy.

### 2006

The phrase was next used by Dr LN Sisulu, Minister of Housing, Cabinet of South Africa, in a speech at the launch of the N2 Gateway, Cape Town, South Africa, in 2006.<sup>19</sup> On that occasion, she stated that:

It is also with a great deal of gratitude that we accept our new partner, the Priory for South Africa of the Order of St John, under the leadership of the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Bishop Mvume Dandala. The Most Vulnerable Order is bringing in health facilities and services to the partnership. [sic]

Without doubt, this refers to The Most Venerable Order of St John.

In the same year, and also on the African continent Uganda,<sup>20</sup> was the occasion of the admission of a Kampala businessman as an Honorary Officer within The Most Venerable Order of St John. This was in the presence of Rear-Admiral Andrew Gough, the Secretary-General for The Order of St John. The news reporter stated: ‘Queen Elisabeth II founded St John Ambulance in 1930. The Queen is also the sovereign head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem’. [sic]

What Andrew Gough made of all this is unknown, but we can imagine that he would have been surprised to learn that the Queen had established St John Ambulance in 1930, when she was only four years old!

## 2007

The feast day for St John the Baptist is 24 June. It is a focal point in the calendar for The Order of St John. A news report of a celebratory church service in Suva, Fiji, detailed a comment by the visiting Deputy Lord Prior of The Order, Sir John Strachan, 'St John, which is the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem, had a unique combination of features[sic]'.<sup>21</sup>

## 2009

The Order of St John achieves its aims through a number of functioning arms. Members of those arms come from all socio-economic groups and a range of professions. Exceptional commitment and achievement can result in admission to membership of The Order itself. In 2009 The Order of St John honored a radiographer in the Royal Navy in this way. The Society of Radiographers reported his admission:

as a Serving Brother to the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (more commonly known as the Order of St John).[sic]<sup>22</sup>

I would presume that reports originating from sources closely related to St John would not use this erroneous term. This is demonstrably not so. In the same year, on 15 September, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, the Grand Prior of The Order of St John, joined supporters and members of St John Ambulance at the opening of a memorial garden to commemorate all those who had faithfully served the organisation over its long history.<sup>23</sup>

This evoked the following response on a site associated with former and current members of St John Ambulance in Staffordshire, UK: '... all proud to serve the most vulnerable order of st john ambulance[sic]'.<sup>24</sup>

Did the Grand Prior ever read this? If so, we must hope that he or one of his underlings gave the St John organisation in Staffordshire a pep talk on the correct name of the Order they represent!



*The memorial garden in Staffordshire, England, commemorating St John Ambulance members' service to the community. To their shame, their website proclaimed that they were proud to represent the 'Most Vulnerable Order'.*

## 2010

Likewise, a long and creditable association does not prevent its use. After an association of 35 years, a Serving Brother within the Order in Kenya states in his curriculum vitae:

... during the investiture held for the admission and promotion of members into the most vulnerable order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem ... at State House, Nairobi. [sic]<sup>25</sup>

Late in 2010, HRH Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, presented the insignia of a Member of The Order of St John to a Divisional Superintendent of St John Ambulance from south England. In reporting the upcoming event, the local newspaper stated, 'The Queen, Sovereign Head of the Most Vulnerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, has sanctioned the admittance of...[sic]'.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, a number of ambulance services back in Oklahoma, USA, have taken up the report, including the erroneous title.<sup>27,28</sup>

'The Most Vulnerable Order' is an example of a 'mondegreen' which is the mishearing or misinterpretation of a phrase due to near homophony in a way that gives it a new meaning (e.g. typically a standardised phrase such as a line in a poem or a lyric in a song).<sup>29</sup> For example, Pink Floyd's 'no dark sarcasm in the classroom' becomes 'no ducks or hazards in the classroom'. The term 'mondegreen' itself comes from a mishearing of a line in a Scottish ballad, 'The Bonny Earl o' Murray'. The original line was '... they hae slain the Earl o' Murray, and laid him on the green'—this was interpreted as: '... Earl o' Murray and Lady Mondegreen'.

*The Arms of the University of Nairobi, Kenya, where one of the professors of medicine stated in his CV in 2010 that he was a member of the Most 'Vulnerable' Order of St John—a 35-year St John Ambulance veteran, he should have known better. His one excuse for such an error would have been that, speaking English as a second or even third language, he had been confused by two similar-sounding multisyllabic words.*



### **Deliberate construction**

It is only the usage of the term by Harron, in *Debunk's Illustrated Guide to the Canadian Establishment*, which I consider deliberate. He clearly recognised the nature of the title and chose to substitute words of similar sounding but different meaning for the purpose of parody. He created a mondegreen.

### **Inadvertent corruption**

All other occasions are the result of inadvertent corruption by the user. The corruption from 'venerable' to 'vulnerable' seems more than a typing error. It probably reflects both factors of mishearing and imputation. The pronunciation of 'venerable' (ve-nĕrăb'l) with an unaccustomed accent, and being a word which is itself uncommon, could reasonably be heard as 'vulnerable' (vu-lnĕrăb'l).<sup>30</sup> Allied to this is a general recognition that the role of this Order of St John is fundamentally philanthropic with delivery of a range of services to a group of people, which is indeed 'vulnerable'.

Trunkey<sup>18</sup> in using the title 'the Most Vulnerable Order' imputed its existence more than 150 years before its reality as 'The Most Venerable Order' in 1955. On 16 June 1798, Napoleon's fleet had departed Malta's Valetta Harbor with the treasure of The Holy Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem and of the Sepulchre of Christ [pers. comm. Howie-Willis, 23 Nov. 2009]. This was the treasure lost in Aboukir Bay. With the passage of time, that Order has become the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.<sup>4</sup> The source of Trunkey's information is now speculative [pers. comm. Trunkey, 9 Sept. 2010]. There is nevertheless an element of truth in describing that order as 'vulnerable'. Napoleon had demonstrated it to be such.

Of the remaining seven occasions, four involve media coverage by personnel for whom English may have been a second language. In this setting, mispronunciation, mishearing and misunderstanding may all have played a role. Failure to pronounce the first vowels of 'venerable' produces the word 'vunnrable' and a slight further corruption leads to 'vulnerable'. The use of the phrase in these settings is probably neither intentional nor malicious but rather would seem to have arisen from the confusion by a non-native English speaker between two uncommon, multisyllabic, homophonic words. In the Fijian setting, it is unlikely that the Deputy Lord Prior of The Order would have personally used the reported phrase.

The remaining three reports originate from areas where English is the native tongue. It is true that in areas there are strong local accents. These, on occasion, make dialectal speech almost unintelligible even to a fluent English speaker. The Midlands of England, including Staffordshire, is one such area. Ignorance of the existence of 'venerable' combined with a knowledge of The Order of St John's work to the disadvantaged would then lead to the use of 'vulnerable'.

To end this discussion on a cautionary note, we can reflect that even computer software utilities capable of checking spelling are unable to detect a mondegreen by virtue of its nature.



# Membership in the Order's grades: An historical perspective

## Gary Harris OStJ

*Mr Gary Harris is the Historical Society's National Treasurer. He began his working career in a bank but later switched to nursing. He undertook his training at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital in Melbourne, where he eventually rose to be an Associate Nurse Unit Manager and Nurse Educator. He has had a long career in St John Ambulance and is a member of long-standing in this Historical Society and its Victorian branch, of which he is treasurer and membership secretary. He originally came into St John via the Broadmeadows Division of the St John Ambulance Brigade, eventually rising to become the Divisional Superintendent. He is currently the Divisional Nursing Officer with Banyule Division. The seminar paper on which this article is based was Mr Harris's second presentation to an Historical Society seminar*



When Pope Paschall II issued the Papal Bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis* approving the foundation of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in February 1113, he was formalising the work of a monastic community that had Amalfi's sponsorship, which had cared for the sick and injured pilgrims to Jerusalem about 1023.

As with any organisation, the Order needed a structure. The membership gradings were simple. Knights were of noble birth and could prove their noble bearing for at least the previous 100 years. Chaplains tended the religious needs of the Order's members. And Serving Brothers were the monks who attended to the physical needs of the Knights and Chaplains.

Like all organisations, the Order grew and evolved. And evolve it did. After some four centuries headquartered in the Holy Land, then on Cyprus and later Rhodes, the Order moved to Malta in 1530. There it became the Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Malta and was widely known by that name for the next 268 years (and beyond), until Napoleon Bonaparte expelled the Order from Malta in 1798. Meanwhile, the Order in England had continued until 1540, when it was dissolved by an Act of Parliament under King Henry VIII, restored in 1557 by Queen Mary I, then finally dissolved for the last time in 1559 by Queen Elisabeth I.

## Ranks and grades of knighthoods

Knights of Justice, or 'professed' knights, were persons who were entitled to be Knights because of their noble birth. They took religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and formed what amounted to a separate caste within the wider Order. Knights of Obedience made a promise, rather than a vow, of obedience, again having noble bearing of 100 years. Knights of Honour and Devotion and Knights of Grace and Devotion required less noble lineage than the higher grades of knights. Knights of Magistral Grace were appointed by the Grand Master in recognition of their contribution to the Order and were not required to prove noble descent. In the modern era, the strict rules relating to proof of noble lineage were dropped during the 1990s, mainly because of the rarity of noble persons willing to take holy orders as professed knights.

Within each class of knights there were ranks or grades of knighthoods ranging from Bailiff Grand Cross, through Knight Grand Cross, Knight Commander, Knight Officer and down to plain Knight. And so there were 20 to 25 gradations of knights.

As well as the knights there was a separate group of 'donats', who had been awarded membership in the Order because of significant acts of generosity to it. The Donats or donors were considered to be in the 'of Justice' class but were not Knights.



*A Chaplain (left), Knight (centre) and Serving Brother (right) of the ancient Order of St John.*

## Sovereignty

The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John called 'of Jerusalem', called 'of Rhodes' and called 'of Malta' is currently the official name of the continuing Order, but in all there has been a total of 16 variations of the name, much as our Most Venerable Order has several names in popular if informal use. The most commonly used is probably 'the Sovereign Military Order of Malta', often abbreviated to the simple acronym 'SMOM'.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta is technically a sovereign state under today's international law, by virtue of having ruled Malta for 268 years from 1530 to 1798, when the Order surrendered the islands to Napoleon. During those 268 years the Order was indeed sovereign in that it independently ruled its own territories according to its own law. It continues as a 'sovereign' order in that it has never surrendered its right to independent statehood. It emphasises its sovereign credentials by retaining the words 'Sovereign' and 'Malta' in its name.

Although SMOM has been permanently headquartered in Rome since 1834, nowadays in two embassies, by agreement with the government of Malta the Order has a 99-year holding over the Fort St Angelo in Valetta. The obstacle to its universal recognition as a sovereign state is that, apart from its embassies in Rome and abroad, it has no territory.

As an 'entity', however, like the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Olympic Committee and others, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta enjoys permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly and on various UN committees.

## The revived *langue* of England

After the Napoleonic Wars, a Capitular Commission of the Order, made up of the *langues* (tongues) of France, Auvergne and Provence had as one of its main aims the securing of an island so that the Order could resume its effective sovereignty over land and people, as it had done in Rhodes and Malta. In furthering this cause, the Commission deemed it important to enlist the aid of England and so attempted to restore the English *langue*, which had effectively disappeared some 260 years earlier during the reign of Elizabeth I. A Prior was appointed temporarily, the general aim being to raise funds in Britain, use unemployed British soldiers and cheap war surpluses to lay claim to an island territory. When this did not come to pass, the revived *langue* in England simmered along, recruiting nobility and others over the next 50 or so years. It was envisaged that the *langue* would eventually be re-admitted into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

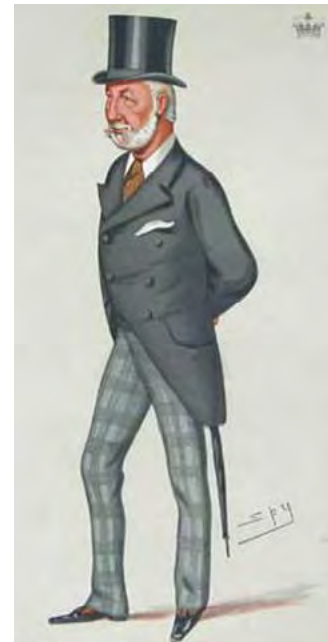
The revival of the English *langue* was intended to be a British Roman Catholic order with provision for Protestant members. When inclusion into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta was requested, the Church in Rome had reasserted its authority over the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and, being Catholic, could not countenance the admission of what would be, effectively, a Protestant branch into what remained of a Catholic religious order.

A second attempt by the revived *langue* in 1858 for inclusion in the Sovereign Military Order again ran up against this stumbling block. The religious argument prevailed and Rome declined to recognise that the English *langue* had been legitimately revived at all. With this rebuff the English *langue* renamed itself 'The Sovereign and Illustrious Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Anglia' and proceeded to seek its own destinies as a separate order independent of both SMOM and the Catholic Church. Over the next three decades, the revived *langue* evolved fairly rapidly, soon becoming a British Royal Order of Chivalry by virtue of a Royal Charter granted by Queen Victoria in 1888. Whatever it might have been previously, in 1888 it assumed the status and prestige of being an official Order of St John in its own right.



*The arms of the Reverend Sir Robert Peat, Grand Prior 1831–1837 of the 'revived' Langue of England of the Order of St John.*

*A cartoon by Sir Leslie Ward, depicting William Drogo Montague (1823–1890), the 7th Duke of Manchester, published in Vanity Fair in December 1878. The duke was Grand Prior from 1863 until 1888, when Queen Victoria granted it her Royal Charter.*



When the Order was re-established in England, the Maltese Cross was embellished with a unicorn passant and a lion passant guardant (which the French call a leopard in this configuration) in the alternate angles of the Cross. This was apparently in imitation of the Italian tongue's cross which had fleur de lys in the angles. The beasts were discontinued in 1871 but were restored by the Royal Charter of 1888.

Since then the Order has used the two emblems of the ancient Order: the white 'Latin' cross ('square' cross or 'crux immissa') on a scarlet field of the patron saint, John the Baptist, and the eight-pointed 'Maltese', 'Amalfitan' or 'St John' cross: with and without the 'Queen's beasts', the royal lion and unicorn. Interestingly, the beasts at times have been both included with, and omitted, from the angles of both crosses in several permutations of the Coat of Arms.

In 1871, well before the Royal Charter, 'Ladies of Justice/Grace' were included in the grades of membership of the revived English Order. The title was later changed to 'Dames of Justice/Grace'. Donats were not admitted to the revived Order, but wore a demicross, having donated one pound or more to the Order.



*The present two emblems of the Order—the Arms (left) and the Badge (right). Displayed on the Arms are a white Crux Immissa on a red field with the Royal lion surmounting a crown in the top left quarter. The Badge displays a white Maltese cross with the Royal Beasts alternating at the cross's four main angles.*



*The Order's emblems have varied over time. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Royal Beasts were displayed at the angles of the Crux Immissa, as here. Later they were displayed only on Badge of the Order within the four central angles of the Maltese cross.*

## St John Ambulance

In 1877 the Order's 'Ambulance Department' established the St John Ambulance Association, the proliferating regional 'Centres' of which provided for the teaching of first aid initially to miners and railwaymen but soon to members of the general public in sex-segregated classes. In 1882 a hospice and ophthalmic dispensary was established in Jerusalem. In 1887 the St John Ambulance Brigade followed, forming a disciplined, uniformed first aid field force for duty at public events. The good works of these practically-oriented branches of the Order persuaded Queen Victoria to grant it the Royal Charter already noted.

## Some renaming

Under the Charter, the Order was renamed the Grand Priory of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England. At this time 'Commanders' of the Order were the heads of 'Commanderies' or regional branches of the Order. The Commanders relinquished their titles after serving their five-year term of office. They were selected from the ranks of 'Chevaliers' (Knights) of Justice or Grace, Chaplains or Esquires.

The Order also embraced 'Honorary Associates', who, being of Christian faith, devoted their energies to the objects of the Order or were distinguished in philanthropy but were not members of the Order. The grade of Honorary Associate was created on St John Day, 1869. The Associates, not being members, were persons who took an active part in the establishment and development of the modern Hospitaller work.

From 1906 to 1955 each Bailiff Grand Cross and Knight of Justice could appoint a 'personal esquire', who was admitted to the Order as an Officer Brother.

The year 1926 saw the simplification of the gradings. 'Ladies' were now called 'Dames'. The renaming continued with 'Order' becoming 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem'.

Bailiff and Dame Grand Cross and Knight and Dame of Justice and Grace became equivalent to the Ancient Knight.



Dame Grand Cross was created allowing women to be elevated to the highest grade.

The grades of Commander, Officer and Serving Brother/Sister became equivalent to what the 'Serving Brothers' of the ancient Order had been; that is not Knights, but nevertheless members of the Order. Honorary Associates were offered the grade of Officer, or if they preferred, Serving Brother/Sister (presumably dependent on their desire to pay the oblations if they took up the Officer grading). The grade of 'Associate' of 1888 was discontinued; however, the use of the term has continued, the grouping as we understand it today being for non-Christian citizens of Commonwealth countries.

In 1936 the 'Justice' and 'Grace' gradings were amalgamated, the intention being to bring these gradings into line with other British royal orders of chivalry; however, the listings and insignia for each group remained separate and distinct until very recently. The gradings of 1936 continued till 1970, when 'Esquires' were added as the lowest of six grades of the Order.



*'Of Justice' or 'Of Grace'? Among other distinctions, Knights and Dames of Justice wear mantles bearing the Badge of the Order with gold Royal Beasts; Knights and Dames of Grace wear a Badge with white Royal Beasts.*

In the revised Charter issued by Queen Elizabeth II in 1955 the term 'Most' was included in the Order's title, which accordingly became 'The Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem'. In the Supplemental Royal Charter of 1974 the name was amended to what it is today, The Grand Priory of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem. The reforms and restructuring of the Order during the late 1990s instituted the formation of an international Grand Council of the Order in place of the previous Chapter General.

The year 2008 saw the renaming of the fifth grade of membership of the Order. Grade 5 members, the Serving Brothers and Sisters, were redesignated as 'Members'; and the gender-specific names of Grade 3 and Grade 4 members—'Commander Brothers/Sisters' and 'Officer Brothers/Sisters'—became simply generic 'Commanders' and 'Officers', again in line with the other British orders of chivalry.

## Some membership statistics

I will conclude this brief survey of changes in the membership structures and nomenclature of the Most Venerable Order of St John by making the point that admissions into and promotions within the Order are conferred for sustained outstanding service to the Order and its Branches. They are not granted for mere longevity of service; nor can they be purchased or gained through paying the high entry fees required elsewhere in other orders.

If admissions and promotions must be earned through conspicuous service, how many people benefit? I will cite some statistics to show that membership of the Order remains a comparatively rare honour. I will use the example of my home State, Victoria, to illustrate this fact.

Since 1896, the Order of St John in Victoria has had only 1067 admissions to its ranks, an average of approximately nine annually out of the many thousands who have worked for the St John Ambulance branches. About 600 of those admitted subsequently received no promotion within the Order. The rest, some 360 or about a third of those admitted, received promotions within the Order. These promotees

shared a total of 535 promotions, that is, an average of fewer than five promotions annually; and of course many promotees were promoted more than once. Typically, someone admitted as a Member (Grade 5) and subsequently promoted to Knight/Dame (Grade 2) will have been promoted three times: to Officer (Grade 4) then to Commander (Grade 3) and finally to Knight/Dame. The following table summarises the situation.

**Promotions within the Order of St John in Victoria, 1896–2012**

Promotions	Number	Total years' service	Average years' service
Esquire to Member	1	6	6.0
Member to Officer	315	2779	8.8
Officer to Commander	146	1195	8.2
Commander to Knight/Dame	71	575	8.1
Knight/Dame to Bailiff/Dame Grand Cross	2	36	18.0
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>4591</b>	<b>8.6</b>

These figures are of 'mainstream' promotions only, not taking into account the extreme instances of the promotion from Esquire to Member, and Knight to Bailiff Grand Cross and those that have skipped grades. Surprisingly, the average time in years between promotions from Member to Officer, Officer to Commander and Commander to Dame or Knight, are within a narrow range of years, being 8.8, 8.2 and 8.1 years respectively. This is significant because these averages do not take into account the individual circumstances of each Member. The spread of these averages could be a variation on the 'wisdom of the crowd'. (I shall let my readers research that phenomenon for themselves.)

Putting these instructive averages together, and assuming 15 years' service before admission to the Order, we can conclude that a newly admitted member Grade 5 Member of the Order who aspires to Grade 2 membership could expect on average, promotion to Officer in about nine years, to Commander in a further eight years and to Knight/Dame another eight years after that. In other words, he/she might anticipate a total of about 40 years' continual service between affiliating with a St John branch and promotion to Grade 2 membership. If joining as a young adult, promotion to Knight or Dame at the age of about 60 years would therefore be the most likely reality. A target worth aspiring to, perhaps?

# Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd and his ‘Little Black Book’

## John Pearn KStJ and Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

**John Pearn** is a Professor Emeritus of Paediatrics at the Royal Children’s Hospital campus of the University of Queensland. A retired major-general, he is also a former Surgeon General to the Australian Defence Force. Professor Pearn is a former Director of Training for St John Ambulance Australia and the co-author of the centenary history of St John in Queensland, *First in First Aid: A history of St John Ambulance in Queensland*. He is the current Priory Librarian of St John Ambulance Australia. An eminent medical scientist and professionally qualified historian, he is greatly in demand as a lecturer at national and overseas medical symposia.



**Ian Howie-Willis** is a professional historian. He joined St John 33 years ago, recruited to produce the centenary history, *A Century for Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia 1883–1983*. Since then he has produced six other St John histories either alone or with co-authors. He was Priory Librarian 2003–2012 and was the foundation Secretary of the Historical Society. He is currently the Society’s Editor and also the historical adviser to the Office of the Priory of St John Ambulance Australia. Professor Pearn and Dr Howie-Willis are frequent contributors of articles to this journal.



Until 1878, the teaching of resuscitation and first aid skills to members of the civilian lay public was a novel concept. What today is taken for granted—the teaching of the drills and skills of best-practice emergency response to injury and acute illness—resulted from the vision of several military surgeons. They invented the profession of prehospital care as this discipline exists today.

The pivot among these doctors was Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), a Scot serving in the Army Medical Department at the Woolwich Garrison in London. In 1878, Peter Shepherd compiled a handwritten manuscript which he called *Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. This book evolved as a manuscript, written over several months, as the public first aid classes which he taught in Woolwich progressed. In the following year (1879) Shepherd was killed in the massacre of the British Military Force at the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879. Prior to his death, his ‘Aids’ were published in London, in absentia, as his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness*. Issued in December 1878, it was covered in black leatherette with a simple silver Maltese cross on the cover. Shepherd never saw this bound volume, but it is not an exaggeration to say that this ‘Little Black Book’ was in many ways to change the world.

That ‘Little Black Book’ contained the doctrine of what we now call ‘First Aid’. The concept of teaching first aid drills and skills to everyone was a startling innovation. It was nevertheless the catalyst which led to the development of the ambulance and paramedic professions, of many rescue and retrieval organisations and of the now universal desideratum of ‘First Aid for All’. Subsequent editions of Shepherd’s manual collectively became the world’s best-seller after the Bible. Its influence, both in the technical sense of the promotion of techniques of first aid and also in its pioneering advocacy for the broader ethos of bystander prehospital care, cannot be overstated.



Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879), author of the initial St John Ambulance first aid manual.



## Bystander care before Peter Shepherd

The application of woundworts to cuts and abrasions is older than recorded history. Bandaging skills for wounds sustained in battle were documented on Grecian pottery from circa 500 BC, by the enigmatic vase painter, Sosias. The 'Good Samaritan' ethic of succour and efficiency in bandaging, dates from the bronze age in the Middle East, and is immortalised in the Gospel of St Luke (10:30). The Dutch were the first in 1767 to institute a society for the rescue and resuscitation of the apparently drowned, the *Maatschappij tot Redding van Drenkelingen*. Drowning was a confronting cause of death in the canals of Holland's cities and towns. In Britain, The Royal Humane Society, founded in 1774, followed this example and did much to promote the attempted resuscitation of the apparently drowned.

Various resuscitation methods were introduced from the middle of the 19th century. These were principally aimed at educating doctors, nurses and apothecaries. Early and occasionally successful techniques tried to simulate breathing by alternately inflating and deflating the lungs. Henry Robert Silvester (1829–1908), an English physician, developed his 'physiological method of resuscitation' in 1861, in which the unconscious person was placed on their back and the arms were alternately raised above the head and then lowered onto the chest. This was adopted as the preferred method by the Royal Humane Society and promoted in Britain and throughout the Colonies.

It was not until the late 1860s however, that the Prussian military surgeon, Johannes Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908) first used the term *Erste Hilfe* (German: 'First Aid') and taught soldiers that they could help their wounded comrades on the battlefield by carrying a triangular bandage and using a standard set of bandaging and splinting skills.

In civilian life, literate adults could buy a family medical guide. In Australia, in many outback homesteads, a domestic medical guide was the only book which the family possessed. One of the first outback manuals, *A Family Medical Guide*, written specifically for Australian conditions, was published in 1870 by Dr George Fullerton, the first President of the Medical Board of Queensland. It contained advice about home care for victims of trauma or illness.

In British outposts, including the Australian colonies, drownings, horseriding injuries, gunshot wounds, emergency childbirth and snakebite were common occurrences. All called for help from bystanders or family members or even self-help by the victims themselves. A widely dispersed population, long distances to medical help, extremes of heat and cold, and a high risk of trauma—all produced a hostile environment for the sick and injured and a great need for first aid.

This then was the background which in 1877 engendered the formation of the St John Ambulance Association in London and the radical concept which followed: that of teaching and vigorously promoting a set of safe basic drills and skills embodying the best-practice of the day and which a bystander could perform.

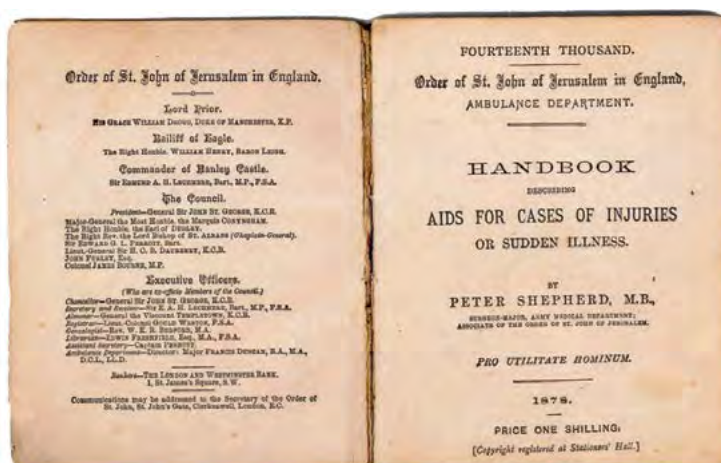
## Shepherd's Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness

The St John Ambulance Association was established on 1 July 1877, the result of co-operative advocacy by senior officers of the British Army and the Order of St John. Following the establishment of the Association and under its aegis, three doctors—Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Surgeon-Major Francis Falwasser and a civilian doctor, Dr Coleman—planned the initial public classes in what was soon called 'First Aid'. Hitherto this had been the exclusive doctrine of military medical orderlies and stretcher-bearers.



*Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book': the 1878 edition, the first of 40 editions, hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies, 1878–1958.*





The twin title pages of Peter Shepherd's 'Little Black Book'. The verso page sets out the Order's leadership positions. The recto page bears the title of the book, 'Handbook describing aids for cases of injuries or sudden illnesses'.

In January 1878, Peter Shepherd and Dr Coleman taught the inaugural First Aid class in the hall of the church school beside the Presbyterian Church at Woolwich in London. The course in first aid was taught from hand-written notes prepared by Shepherd. The details of the syllabus were published on 2 March 1878, in the *Kentish Independent*, the local newspaper.

Shepherd formalised his teaching notes in October 1878, probably days before he embarked with Lord Chelmsford's Contingent to confront the Zulus in South Africa. It was a busy time for Shepherd, appointed as the Senior Medical Officer to a contingent of over 4000 men. The Force was hurriedly preparing for its operational deployment. Before departing, Shepherd had printed and distributed to all the troops in the contingent a *Pocket Aide Memoire*, that is a single card of first aid instructions in an envelope.

On 30 October 1878, in his 'Introduction' to the notes for his proposed 'Handbook', Shepherd wrote that 'the careful work which I should like to have bestowed [in finalising the first aid manuscript] has been rendered impossible by the exigencies of the Service requiring me to proceed on foreign service'. Nevertheless, he found time to 'hurriedly arrange the following Manual for the use of the Metropolitan Police and the other Ambulance Classes now organised by the Order of St John in all parts of England'.

Shepherd left his hand-written manuscript with a colleague with instructions that it be published. This was a young fellow Scot, Dr (later Sir) James Cantlie, who would later become the author of all six major revisions of the 'Little Black Book' between 1901 and 1928. Cantlie would also later become Britain's leading authority on tropical diseases.

It was either whilst Shepherd was at sea en route for South Africa, or after his arrival and during his overland march to Pietermaritzburg that his *Handbook Describing Aids for Cases of Injuries or Sudden Illness* was published in London.

Sir James Cantlie (1851–1926), the Scottish physician and surgeon, who took over the authorship and editorship of the 'Little Black Book' in 1901 and then produced the 1901, 1904, 1908, 1917, 1919 and 1928 editions.



## Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879)

Peter Shepherd was born on 9 January 1842 at his father's farm, 'Craigmill', in the hamlet of Leochel-Cushnie, a village in Donside in Aberdeenshire. His father, also Peter Shepherd, was a farmer. Shepherd Snr and his wife, Mary Anne (*née* Dewar) had three boys and a girl. Peter Jnr was the second son.<sup>19</sup> In that era first sons stayed on the farm, and second and subsequent sons either joined the army or were ordained as ministers in the Church.

As a boy, Peter Shepherd worked on his family's farm. He was educated at schools in Aberdeen and won a bursary for further study. With additional financial support of family and friends—to whom he repaid their contributions after his graduation—he matriculated and studied medicine at Marischal College at the University of Aberdeen. In the fourth year of his course he won the prize for Medical Jurisprudence.

Peter Shepherd graduated in 1864 and immediately joined the Army Medical Department. After initial training at the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley near Southampton, he was commissioned with the rank of Assistant Surgeon and posted to Grahamstown in South Africa with the 99th (Lanarkshire) Regiment of Foot. After several years service in South Africa, he was posted to Ireland and then to Bengal in 1873. In 1874 he returned to England as Medical Officer to the Woolwich Garrison where, after 12 years service, he was promoted to surgeon-major in 1876. It was as Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd that his significance as the principal founder of the discipline of first aid is remembered. Tragically, he was killed in the Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879, one of 1329 members of the British contingent who died in the disastrous opening battle of the Anglo–Zulu War.

### The battle of Isandlwana

Briefly, what happened was that two columns of Lord Chelmsford's force, about 1700 troops, had marched north-east into Zululand in present-day Natal Province. They camped at the foot of a prominent hill, Mount Isandlwana, where 15,000 warriors of an *impi* (i.e. army) of the Zulu chieftain, Cetshwayo, descended upon them from the heights of a nearby plateau, surrounded them and massacred them. Though they fought bravely, they were completely overwhelmed. Only about 400 or fewer than a quarter of their number survived, mainly by escaping to Rorke's Drift, a camp 14 kilometres to the rear, which was attacked next day but survived the Zulu onslaught. The Zulus lost 1000 at Isandlwana.

Peter Shepherd is thought to have been killed when struck by a thrown *assegai* (broad-bladed spear) while trying to move a wagonload of the wounded back to Rorke's Drift. His grave is unmarked

*The Zulu warriors' view of the plain before Mt Isandlwana as they began their charge on the 24th Regiment.*



*The Isandlwana battlefield, the Nqutu area, with memorials marking the graves of the identified dead. Peter Shepherd's grave is unidentified and unmarked.*



but is thought to be within 20 metres of the grave of George MacLeroy, the soldier he was treating when killed, whose grave is marked. Memorials to him, however, were later placed in the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley and in the churchyard of his family church at Leochel-Cushnie. In addition, the Shepherd Memorial Medal for Surgery was instituted in 1879 at his *alma mater*, the University of Aberdeen.

A bronze memorial plaque to Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd may be found in the former Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire. The inscription reads:

In memory of Peter Shepherd MB, University of Aberdeen, Surgeon-Major, Her Majesty's Army, born at Leochel-Cushnie, Aberdeenshire, 25 August 1841, who sacrificed his own life at the Battle of Isandhlwane, Zululand, 22 January 1879, in the endeavour to save the life of a wounded comrade. Erected by his brother officers and friends.

## The 'Little Black Book'

The St John Ambulance Association, in collaboration with the Army Medical Department, had initially intended that the teaching of first aid to civilians would provide: 'a civilian reserve for the Army Medical Department ... to train men and women for the benefit of the sick and wounded'. However, within months of the commencement of the first civilian courses at Woolwich, the value of first aid skills that could be used in the normal daily life of the civilian population had become obvious. These evolving concepts were accompanied by increasing zeal throughout British society. Within the first year of the Woolwich civilian classes, 40,000 copies of the 'Little Black Book' had been sold. The book carried the quaint disclaimer that the St John Ambulance Association course did not qualify members of the public to practise surgery!

By the end of June 1878, at least, 1100 people had been taught St John-approved first aid skills. By July 1878, provincial centres at Worcester, Malvern, Chesterfield, Southport, and Clay Cross (Derbyshire) had established first aid classes. The enthusiasm in provincial centres knew no bounds. One Scottish observer noted that the St John Ambulance movement had 'something of the contagiousness of the Salvation Army'. Further editions of the 'Little Black Book' had to be published to keep up with the demand: in 1881, 1885 and 1887. Eventually 40 major revised editions were published over the 80 years 1878–1958, encompassing hundreds of impressions and many millions of copies.

Women in particular enthusiastically espoused the idea of general public first aid training. Initially classes were segregated by sex. In 1885 'Ladies' First Aid Classes' were being held at the Mansion House in central London for the benefit of women employed in offices and businesses in the City and Port of London under the auspices of the Lady Mayoress of London.

By the end of 1887, St John first aid classes were being taught to the general public in Malta (1882), Cannes, Melbourne (1883), Bermuda, the Bahamas, Bombay, Gibraltar, Hong Kong (1884), New Zealand (1885), Singapore, South Africa (Kimberley in 1885), and Borneo (1887). Within a century of Shepherd's earliest class in Woolwich, millions of people of all ages and from all walks of life had bought a copy of the 'Little Black Book' for their instruction in the rudiments of first aid.

## Aftermath

Shepherd's vision led to the establishment of many first aid organisations. Von Esmarch himself, the first to use the term 'first aid' in the military context, began teaching civilians in Germany. He established the civilian Samaritan Society in Germany in 1888. By 1898, the sixth edition of Esmarch's *First Aid to the Injured* was also published in English in London.

The first civilian ambulance service in Australia and New Zealand was established in Brisbane in 1892. The [Brisbane] City Ambulance Transport Brigade was formed in response to a perceived lack of appropriate civilian emergency treatment for a horseman who had sustained a broken leg in a trotting event at the Brisbane Exhibition in August 1892. The Brigade's members were trained in first aid by St John.

# James Edward Neild, the founder of St John Ambulance in Australia

## J Allan Mawdsley KStJ

*Dr Mawdsley is the President of the Historical Society. A retired psychiatrist who lives in Melbourne, he has spent 64 years continuously in St John, having first joined as an 11-year-old Cadet in the Malvern division in 1949. In the intervening years he has held almost every position available to a St John volunteer in Victoria. He is a former Victorian Commissioner and has been a long-serving member of his State St John Council, of which he was a member for 37 years. He is also the current Secretary of the Victorian branch of the Historical Society, which runs a first rate St John museum at Williamstown. An accomplished medical historian, Dr Mawdsley is the author of three books of St John history and he edited the official history of the Order in Victoria, the late Millie Field's The Order of St John in Victoria: Our First 100 Years. He is a frequent contributor of articles to this journal.*



Dr James Edward Neild, founder of St John Ambulance in Australia, has been the subject of previous presentations and one might well ask, 'Why give another paper on a subject that has already been done? Is there some value to be added?'

Neild has certainly received ample attention from historians in recent decades. As well as being publicly enshrined in Volume 5 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, he was the subject of Harold Love's entertaining book, *James Edward Neild: Victorian Virtuoso*, in 1989. Various St John Ambulance historians have also tackled him. Important profiles of Neild appear in papers by Sir William Johnston (St John Ambulance Brigade Chief Commissioner) and the late Miss Amelia ('Millie') Field (historian of St John in Victoria) and in the first centenary history produced by Dr Ian Howie-Willis for St John. There have also been mentions of Dr Neild in the Medical History Museum's celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Melbourne University medical school.

Despite such coverage of Neild's life and work, perhaps the time has come to reconsider him. Hence this present article, which offers a new synthesis although it relies heavily on these earlier secondary sources. The seminar presentation on which this article is based also used PowerPoint technology to display images of Neild that past presenters would not have been able to show and to which they probably lacked access. A further reason for considering Dr Neild again is that the seminar in question, the Historical Society's fourteenth, coincided with the second meeting in Australia of the Grand Council of the Order of St John. The occasion was therefore one when it seemed appropriate to revisit the origins of St John Ambulance in Australia.

## St John Ambulance reaches the Australian colonies

The founding of St John Ambulance Association in 1877 and the publication of Peter Shepherd's textbook in the next year led to a rapid uptake of first aid training in England, followed soon afterwards throughout the colonies of the British Empire. Dr Ian Howie-Willis explained this process in his 1983 centenary history, *A Century For Australia: St John Ambulance in Australia, 1883–1983*:

Quite a few Australians would have been familiar with the work of St John Ambulance before the establishment of a St John centre in Australia. In three Australian colonies at least it seems that first



*Dr James Edward Neild (1824–1906), 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. This portrait is on display at the offices of St John Ambulance Victoria.*



aid training using the Association's course might have occurred well before any local branch of the Association formed.

The first person known to have attempted St John Ambulance-type training was Dr Robert Robertson, a private practitioner in St Kilda. Robertson gave four public lectures on military first aid in Melbourne between March 1880 and February 1881. He conducted these principally for members of the St Kilda Volunteer Artillery, of which he was then surgeon, but he also allowed the public to attend.

Robertson wished his lectures to bear the imprimatur of the St John Ambulance Association, for on 11th October 1880 he wrote to the Lord Prior of the British Order of St John, the 7th Duke of Manchester, who was then in Sydney. The Duke replied to the effect that he himself could not help much because he knew little about first aid, but suggested that Robertson mention his name in approaching the Association in London. What emerged from Robertson's efforts was not a local Branch of the St John Ambulance Association but the Victorian Militia Ambulance Corps.

Robertson's was not the only positive contact Australian medicos made with St John's Gate in the very early 1880s. Almost a decade before the official foundation of a New South Wales Centre, Dr Samuel T Knaggs of Newcastle obtained permission from St John's Gate in 1881 to train railwaymen according to the Association's methods.

The early classes Knaggs and others ran in Sydney and Newcastle would have been what St John's Gate called 'detached' classes, that is, instruction of groups organized by various interested individuals in areas where no formal Association Centre existed. The Association sponsored much teaching like that, in Britain, in the colonies and in other places.

Although individual doctors like Robertson and Knaggs were keen to see the St John Ambulance Association established in Australia there was no formal Centre until one was formed in Melbourne in June 1883. The initiative came from a leading member of the Melbourne medical fraternity, a Yorkshireman called James Edward Neild.



*Dr Samuel T Knaggs (1824–1906), who should share with Dr Neild the title 'Founding Father' of St John Ambulance Australia. While Neild was largely responsible for establishing the Victorian St John Centre in 1883, Knaggs had organised and taught the first public St John first aid course in Sydney in 1881.*

## JE Neild's early years

Neild's interesting life story goes some way towards explaining why his promotion of St John Ambulance was more successful than that of his predecessors. James Edward Neild was born at Doncaster, Yorkshire, England, in 1824, one of several children of James Neild and his wife, Sarah Bilton, daughter of a Yorkshire land-owner.

Neild Snr was in training for the Anglican ministry when he became inspired by a Wesleyan Methodist preacher and changed direction to become a school-teacher and lay preacher. He later worked as a book-keeper and Brewer's clerk. It is clear that the family had a strong ethical and humanitarian ethos.

In his younger years, Neild attended an unusual private school run by an educational reformer, Richard Hiley, in Leeds. This was clearly the stimulus for his love of writing. He began writing for publication from the age of 13 years.

## Medical education and early years in practice

When he was 18, Neild began his career in medicine. This took the form, in 1842, of an apprenticeship to his uncle, Edwin Harrison, a leading medical practitioner in Sheffield. Medical education in England at that time was still conducted on a basis not very different from that of the skilled trades, until reforms more than a decade later. Five years later Neild enrolled in medicine at University College, London, where Joseph Lister was a fellow student. He qualified as a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1848.

The young Dr Neild showed evidence of a wide range of interests and became active in the political movements of the day. He advocated repeal of the Corn Laws, which kept prices artificially high for the benefit of land-owners and detriment of the poor, and he strongly supported the demands of the Chartist leaders for democratic voting reforms. He was the only student of University College who refused to be enrolled as a special constable when the Chartist agitations occurred.

Neild later became resident apothecary to the Rochdale Dispensary for the years 1851 to 1853. The dispensary had first opened for the relief of the sick poor in 1832. The Infirmary building was located at the back of the Rochdale Workhouse, a much more salubrious building. There was evidently more money available for employing the poor than for looking after their health. The post of resident apothecary became known as Resident Medical Officer somewhere about this time. In addition to compounding and dispensing medicines, Neild vaccinated the children of the poor every Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock, provided that the parents paid a shilling deposit, to be returned when the child was brought back for inspection of the result.



*The Rochdale Dispensary, Lancashire, c. 1890. Dr Neild was the resident apothecary, 1851–1853.*

Through his insistence on introducing anaesthetics and other innovations, Neild came into conflict with the authorities and resigned; but that his services were appreciated was shown by the presentation to him of a valuable case of instruments. This was inscribed: '*Presented by the Governors of the Rochdale General Dispensary to Mr James Edward Neild, for the zealous and faithful performance of his duties as house surgeon during a period of three years*'. A certificate 'expressive of the confidence and approval of the medical staff' was also given to him.

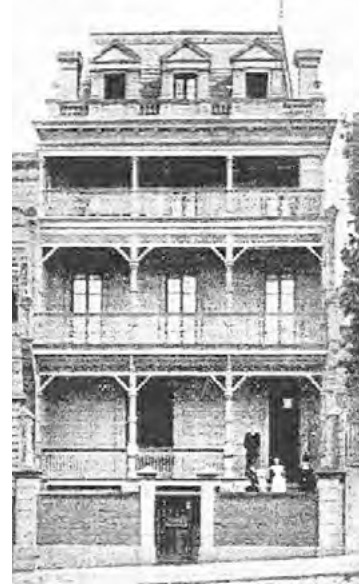
## To Australia

On leaving Rochdale, Neild sailed for Australia. At the height of the gold rush he tried his hand on the diggings near Castlemaine in the central Victoria goldfields but was unsuccessful and the call of medicine soon prevailed. He worked for Mr Daniel Rutter Long as a druggist in Long's pharmacy in Bourke Street, Melbourne, but also took care to have his name included in the medical practitioners' register in 1855. In 1857 Neild married Susannah Long, his boss's daughter.

Dr Neild and his new wife set up house at 165 Collins Street East, naming their residence 'New House'. It was a two-storeyed white stone house with an arched doorway and long, narrow windows. This house was later sold as the site of 'Lister House', well-known for the rooms of medical specialists. The Neilds later moved around the corner to 21 Spring Street, opposite Treasury Gardens, naming their new home 'Bilton House' after Neild's mother. This was to remain their home until his death in 1906. In all, they had eleven children, nine of whom survived their father.



*Susannah Long, who married her father's employee, Dr James E Neild, in 1857.*



*The Neild family's second home in Melbourne, 'Bilton House' at 21 Spring Street, a very prestigious address.*

## Literary and theatrical endeavours

Outside medicine Neild had broad interests. He wrote literary pieces for the newspapers of the day. He was a founding member and subsequently president of the Shakespearean Society, was a frequent attendee of theatre performances, and in later years held regular Sunday afternoon gatherings for theatrical aficionados at his home.

Under various noms de plume, including 'Jaques', Neild was the drama and music critic of the *Argus* for many years. He is said to have been one of the founders of *Melbourne Punch* and a close associate of the local literary luminaries, Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall. A further claim is that he 'discovered' the operatic diva Nellie Melba and encouraged her to give priority to her singing over her piano playing.

As theatrical critic of *My Note Book*, writing under the name 'Christopher Sly', Neild's comments so enraged a magician whose performance was adversely reviewed that Neild was subjected to verbal abuse in the theatre and newspaper commentary including a satirical cartoon. However, in general his contributions were so well appreciated that near the end of his career in 1890 a public concert was held at the Melbourne Town Hall and he was given a public testimonial at the Princess Theatre presided over by his friend, the actor and impresario. George Coppin.



*Dr JE Neild as 'Jaques', the theatre critic of the Melbourne Argus.*



Neild also began a long association with the the University of Melbourne medical school, which opened in 1862. Within the next two years Neild took the higher degree of Doctor of Medicine (Melbourne) by examination. Shortly afterwards, in 1865, he was appointed lecturer in Forensic Medicine by the University of Melbourne and was thus an original member of the university medical school staff. He held this position for forty years until 1904, a short time before his death in 1906. He was also appointed City Coroner, and thus became closely associated with many criminal inquiries.

Dr Neild was a leading member of the Medical Society of Victoria, to which he was admitted in 1861. He was appointed Librarian in 1863, Vice-President in 1867 and President in 1868. He was again Librarian from 1870 to 1874, and in 1875 became Honorary Secretary. Concurrently he was also Honorary Librarian of the Royal Society of Victoria for more than 20 years, and successfully nominated his daughter, Helen (known in the family as 'Nellie'), a zoologist, to become its first female member. He was an honorary physician to the Melbourne Benevolent Asylum and helped found the Medical Benevolent Association. He was an assistant honorary medical officer at the Melbourne and Alfred Hospitals.

Neild was appointed editor of the *Australian Medical Journal* from 1862, only six years after its commencement. Three years later a testimonial on vellum, signed by 27 eminent fellow practitioners, was presented to Neild as an appreciation of services rendered to the *Australian Medical Journal* and to the medical profession. Adding considerable weight to their expression of good will was a gift of fifty sovereigns.

Holding the two positions of Honorary Secretary of the Medical Society of Victoria and editor of its journal, Neild was able to exert strong influence on government medical policy. There were eager and dominant personalities taking part in medical politics at that time, and they did not always agree with Dr Neild, particularly with his virulent attacks on what he regarded as quackery. He was also in conflict with some of his colleagues over the failure to elect Dr Louis Henry to membership of the Medical Society of Victoria, which he saw as arising from an anti-Semitic bias. As a consequence Neild resigned from both posts in 1879.



*The medical academic: Dr JE Neild MD, lecturer in forensic medicine at the University of Melbourne, 1865–1904.*



Coincidentally as this was happening, Neild became one of the founders of the Victorian Branch of the British Medical Association, initially intended to foster connection with British authorities but which now became an alternative medico-political forum. In time it was to eclipse the Victorian Medical Society and eventually become the Australian Medical Association. The first meeting was held in Neild's house, and he was elected President in 1882. Dr Louis Henry became the Honorary Secretary. This ensured that Neild remained at the forefront of medical politics of the time.



*Dr James Edward Neild (seated) and Dr Louis Henry.*

## St John Ambulance Founding Father

Turning now to Neild's link with St John Ambulance, I quote again from Howie-Willis:

At the end of 1881 Neild received a letter from Francis Duncan, the Director of the St John Ambulance Association at St John's Gate, saying that he had been given Neild's name as one of a number of Melbourne medicos who might volunteer to examine first aid classes. It was the sort of letter that might have been sent to numerous other doctors. Neild apparently answered it affirmatively, for on 20th February 1882, Sir Herbert Perrott, the General Secretary in London, wrote to thank him for 'the friendly spirit' of his offer to help. Perrott also mentioned that Dr Samuel T Knaggs had recently left London for Newcastle with information on how to go about setting up Association classes 'in different parts of the Colony'. He said that as soon as he had heard from Knaggs he would contact Neild further.

Over a year later, at the end of 1882, and still with no further word from St John's Gate, Neild discussed the matter with Robertson. Then in June 1883 Neild and Dr Richard Warren of Brighton wrote a circular announcing their intention of forming a Melbourne branch of the Association. They sent out over 400 copies of this to the leading citizens—the editors of the eight newspapers, professors, judges, parliamentarians, public servants, city councillors, businessmen, the clergy, and 84 medicos. Neild apparently did not inform Robertson of his intention of issuing the circular, because the latter wrote expressing his surprise at not being consulted but undertaking to co-operate despite that slight.

Neild and Warren received only about thirty replies to their circular. Undiscouraged, they arranged a meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall under the chairmanship of Mr George Coppin, MLA (actor 'Coppin the Great', theatrical manager and entrepreneur, banker and social reformer). This meeting duly took place. During the proceedings Professor Henry Martyn Andrew successfully moved a resolution that 'it is desirable that there should be established in Victoria a branch of the St John Ambulance Association'. Mr Ephraim Zox, MLA (retail trader, philanthropist, campaigner for friendly societies, leading member of the Athenaeum Club and president of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation) then moved that a provisional committee should be formed to draw up rules for the proposed Centre. This consisted of the Mayor, Judges TS Cope and F Quinlan, the parliamentarians Coppin and Zox, two professors (including Andrew), eight medicos (including Neild, Warren and Robertson), the Reverend DJ Hamer, and seven others including the noted architect Lloyd Tayler (who later became Chairman), with Warren as secretary and Zox treasurer.

The provisional committee met a week later at the Royal Society of Victoria and, after completing the draft rules, called a public meeting in the Athenaeum Hall, Collins Street on Tuesday 26 June 1883, to adopt the rules and appoint a permanent council. At the public meeting under the chairmanship of Judge Quinlan, Warren read a letter from Sir Edmund Lechmere, the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Association in London, authorizing the formation of a Victorian Centre of the Association. Neild then moved the adoption of the draft rules. A fourteen-member Council was appointed to govern the Centre.

The public meeting also resolved to approach Sir William Clarke Bt, to accept the position of Association President. Clarke was among Victoria's leading citizens: a major landowner, leading philanthropist, agricultural 'improver', Freemason, sportsman and Member of the Legislative Council.

He was also an honorary Doctor of Laws of Cambridge University and one of the first Australians to be created baronet. Clarke agreed to become President and held the position for fifteen years, until his death in 1897. His widow, Lady Janet Clarke, had already become a great benefactor of St John Ambulance. Among others, she donated money to permit the purchase of the six Ashford Litters (St John-marketed stretchers mounted on light cartwheels) from which Melbourne's ambulance service developed.

The Order of St John in Australia regards the meeting in the Athenaeum Hall on 26 June 1883 as the foundation date of St John Ambulance in Australia. The first meeting of the new Council took place in Neild's rooms nine days later. In October that year, Warren as Secretary read a letter from St John's Gate expressing the pleasure of the Central Council at seeing the first Australian Centre successfully established. Over the next decade other Centres followed in the other colonies, all these except for the Tasmania Centre independent of the Victorian Centre.

Neild remained a member of the St John Council in Victoria for 23 years until the year of his death. In 1895 he was enrolled as an Associate of the Order of St John, a grade equivalent to 'Member' in today's terminology. He died on 17 August 1906 and is buried in a grave with his wife, Susannah and daughter, Helen, at the Melbourne General Cemetery. Sadly, the grave is unmarked and in a poor state of repair. Perhaps this recollection of his great contribution to our nation might be a timely opportunity for a more fitting memorial. A project for our Historical Society, perhaps?



*Sir William Clarke Bt. (1831–1897), inaugural president of the St John Ambulance Association Centre in Melbourne.*



*The unmarked Neild family grave in the Melbourne General Cemetery, Carlton, in disrepair and much in need of tender-loving care.*

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# A short history of the medals and emblems of the Most Venerable Order of St John

## Trevor Mayhew KStJ

*Trevor Mayhew joined St John as a Cadet in 1953. He was awarded his Grand Prior's Badge in 1958 and since then has held various appointments, including Divisional and Corps Superintendent and State Staff Officer. He is a former State Operations Officer and currently is State Ceremonial Officer. He served in the Reserve Forces 1959–1973, in both the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, holding appointments such as Acting Wardmaster, Foreman of Signals and Squadron Sergeant Major. In civilian life, he retired in 2007 from WorkCover NSW as a Technical Specialist (Occupational Hygienist) Working Environment. His professional qualifications include a Graduate Diploma in Safety Science and a Master's degree in Occupational Health and Safety. His wife, Jean Mayhew OStJ, served for 36 years in St John and their eldest daughter, Michele Mayhew OStJ, is the New South Wales State Nursing Officer. In 2011 Mr Mayhew was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his St John work. The seminar paper on which this article is based was the second that he has presented to the Historical Society's seminar series.*



This historical outline of the medals issued by the Most Venerable Order of St John is just that: an outline. There is insufficient space to permit a detailed account of the minutiae of all the medals—and all their variations—ever issued by the Order. This article therefore covers its topic by selecting the more important and more common among the range of medals as well as several representative examples of the rest.

## Meaning and origin of medals

The classification and description of medals is a subset of numismatics, which is the systematic study of coins, commercial tokens, medals and medallions. This specialised branch of numismatics may be conveniently understood according to these three statements, cited from *Wikipedia*:

**Definition:** A medal, or medallion, is generally a circular object that has been sculpted, molded, cast, struck, stamped, or some way rendered with an insignia, portrait, or other artistic rendering. A medal may be awarded to a person or organisation as a form of recognition for athletic, military, scientific, academic, or various other achievements. Other medals are issued to celebrate particular events deemed worthy of commemoration.

**Etymology:** First attested in English in 1578, the word 'medal' is derived from the Middle French 'médaille', itself from Italian 'medaglia', and ultimately from the post-classical Latin 'medalia', meaning a coin worth half a denarius.

**History:** The first known instance of a medal being awarded comes from the Romano–Jewish historian Josephus who, writing in the first century AD, wrote of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) awarding a gold button to the High Priest Jonathan who led the Hebrews in aid of Alexander the Great.

## Symbolism in medals

While all medals are intended either to reward the individuals receiving them, or to remind them of an event being commemorated, many medals also have symbolic connotations. That is, they are often emblematic of certain values which the organisation issuing them seeks to promote.

A ready example here is the eight-pointed St John or 'Maltese' Cross embellished with the Queen's Beasts (lions and unicorns) worn by those who have been admitted into membership of the Most Venerable Order of St John. The Order teaches that the four main arms of the cross represent the four Christian virtues of Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, and the eight points represent

the eight Beatitudes proclaimed by Christ during his famous 'Sermon on the Mount' ('Blessed are the merciful', 'Blessed are the peacemakers', etc. from Matthew 5: 3–12).

St John Ambulance has taken the symbolism of the St John Cross further by applying secular meanings to the eight points. Thus, the eight points have become a mnemonic for summarizing the qualities of a good first aider, who is ideally: observant, tactful, resourceful, dexterous, explicit, discriminating, persevering and sympathetic.

## St John medals

Turning now to the medals awarded by the Most Venerable Order, we will begin with the earliest and rarest, the Lifesaving Medal.

### The Lifesaving Medal of The Order of St John

The Order of St John first instituted an award for lifesaving nearly 140 years ago in 1874. The St John Lifesaving Medal is awarded to those individuals who, in a conspicuous act of gallantry, have endangered their own lives in saving or attempting to save the life of some other person or persons. The medal is bestowed upon these courageous individuals by the Grand Prior, currently on the recommendation of the Grand Council of the Order.

The Lifesaving Medal of the Order may be awarded in gold, silver or bronze according to the circumstances of the incident, the measure of courage displayed, the degree of resourcefulness used, the administration of first aid and the extent to which the individual's own life was at risk during the incident. Other factors, such as fire, heights or weather conditions where significant hazards exist, assist in determining the level of the award granted.

The awarding of a St John Lifesaving Medal of the Order is rare at any level, but extremely rare at the gold level. Submissions proposing the award are today put forward to the Grand Council from all Priors of St John and are reviewed to determine eligibility in accordance with international regulations.

The first of the medals was awarded in 1875. The recipients were two colliers, Elijah Hallam and Frederick Vickers, who on 6 September that year, at imminent risk of their own lives, rescued six of their fellow workmen suspended in a broken cage halfway down the shaft of the Albert Colliery in Lancashire, England. They received the medal in silver.

Other medals were awarded in the decades that followed. One worthy of comment was the medal in silver presented to Captain Barry Hartwell (1880–1914) of the 2nd Battalion of the 8th Gurkha Rifles, who received the medal at the age of 25 in 1905 for 'saving life' during an earthquake at Dharamsala, India, in 1905. Unfortunately, Hartwell was subsequently killed in action early in World War I.

A mass awarding of the Lifesaving Medal occurred following the rescue effort at a mine disaster at the Hulton Colliery, West Houghton, Lancashire. On 21 Dec 1910, 344 men and boys of the 898 working in the mine at the time lost their lives as a result of a huge underground explosion. This was the third largest mining disaster in British history. The explosion at 7.50 in the morning could be heard and felt miles away. The cage down to the mine was broken in the blast and Alfred Tonge, the general manager of the colliery, gave instructions for it to be repaired. In the meantime he took charge of rescue operations, ensuring that workers in the other seams were brought safely to the surface. For his efforts in organising and leading the rescue effort, Tonge received no fewer than three awards: the Lifesaving Medal of the Order of St John in silver, the Bolton and District Humane Society Medal and the Edward Medal, a civilian gallantry award for lifesaving in mines and quarries which ranks with the George Cross and is now only awarded posthumously. Twenty other rescuers received the St John Lifesaving Medal in bronze.



*The original Lifesaving Medal of the Order: obverse (left) and reverse faces. The medal is suspended from a black ribbon mounted on a metal frame representing a first aider's stretcher.*



In 1907 the Order introduced the gold version, which was authorised in 1907. Originally the ribbon was plain watered black silk but in 1950 a new ribbon in black and white longitudinal stripes was authorised. This was later modified to include a thin scarlet band at the outer edges. In 1963, a bar to the medal was instituted to recognise further acts of bravery. The bar has only ever been awarded twice in gold.

Awards of the Lifesaving Medal are still made, though unfortunately not in recent decades in Australia, where the Priory has tended to the view that eligible candidates should receive the official Australian bravery awards instead.

One of the most recent recipients of the medal in gold was a St John Ambulance Cadet, 17-year-old Paul Swift, who rescued a woman and her small child from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Blackburn, Lancashire, in 2003. Despite a strong current caused by a draining lock on the canal, he jumped into the canal and rescued the child first. After bringing her to the bank, he returned to fetch the mother. With mother and daughter safely on the riverbank, he checked their breathing and placed them in the recovery position.



*Paul Swift, the Cadet awarded the St John Lifesaving Medal in gold in 2003.*

### The Service Medal of St John

The first mention of the Service Medal is found in St John Ambulance Brigade General Regulations for 1895 where paragraph 11 announced that:

Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to authorise the issue of Service Medals to reward Distinguished Services and to encourage efficiency and long service in the various Departments of the Order. Members of the Brigade who have performed distinguished services, or have served honourably and efficiently for a period of not less than fifteen consecutive years, will be eligible for this medal.

(The 15-year qualification period was subsequently amended to 12 years.)

The Service Medal is suspended from a satin ribbon in alternating longitudinal parallel broad bands of black and white (three black, two white). The obverse (front) face of the Service Medal displays the right profile of the head and shoulders of Queen Victoria. It is the only medal to retain the head of Queen Victoria on a current issue. In a circlet around the circumference of the obverse face is the abbreviated Latin inscription:

VICTORIA + D + G + BRITT + REG + F + D + IND + IMP

*(Victoria Deo Gratia Britannia Regina Fidei Defensor India Imperatrix Magnus Prioratus Ordinis Hospitalis Sancti Johannis Jerusalem in Anglia)*

Victoria by the grace of God Queen of [Great] Britain, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India.

The complex reverse face of the medal displays the Royal Arms at the centre, above it the Imperial Crown, to its left the Arms of the Order, to its right the Arms of the Prince of Wales as Grand Prior and below it the crest of the Prince of Wales. The four outer devices are separated by a sprig of St John's Wort, the Order's floral emblem. Around the circumference is the Latin inscription:

*MAGNUS PRIORATUS ORDINIS HOSPITALIS SANCTI-JOHANNIS JERUSALEM IN ANGLIA*

Grand Priory of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in England



*The Service Medal of the Order: obverse (above) and reverse faces.*

Periods of efficient service longer than the initial 12 (previously 15) years are indicated by a series of bars, crosses and a laurel leaf added, as follows:

- 17 years: 1 silver bar or cross
- 22 years: 2 silver bars or crosses
- 27 years: 3 silver bars or crosses
- 32 years: 1 gilt bar or cross (all silver crosses are removed at this stage)
- 37 years: 2 gilt bars or crosses
- 42 years: 3 gilt bars or crosses
- 47 years: 4 gilt bars or crosses
- 52 years: 1 gilt laurel leaf (all gilt bars are removed at this stage).

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medal of 1897**

This was a medal issued in 1897 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's ascension to the throne, the 'diamond jubilee' of her reign. It is a circular bronze medal with claw and ribbon bar suspension. The obverse face displays the veiled head of Queen Victoria facing left. It is dated 1897. Only 910 St John Ambulance Brigade Jubilee Medals were awarded. There were five different versions: for the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance, the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and of course the St John Ambulance Brigade.

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1902**

This was a medal issued to commemorate the coronation in 1902 of King Edward VII who succeeded his mother, Queen Victoria, to the throne on her death in 1901. As Prince of Wales, King Edward had served as Grand Prior of the Order, 1888–1901. The distribution of the Coronation Medal was similar to that of the Jubilee Medal of 1897, with 912 of the medals issued.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade medals commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897 (left), King Edward VII's coronation in 1902 (centre), and King George V's coronation in 1911 (right).*

### **St John Ambulance Brigade Coronation Medal of 1911**

A similar coronation medal to that issued in 1902 was distributed in celebration of the coronation of King George V in 1911. Like his father, Edward VII, George V had served as Grand Prior of the Order, his period in office being 1901–1910. It is estimated that approximately 3000 medals were issued to St John Ambulance Brigade to commemorate George V's coronation. In addition to these, the medal was distributed to the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, the Police Ambulance and the London County Council Metropolitan Fire Brigade and St John Ambulance Brigade. Other medals of similar type were provided for the County and Borough Police, the Scottish Police, the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Royal Parks workers and the St Andrew's Ambulance Corps (in Scotland).

### **The St John Ambulance Brigade Medal for South Africa**

The Order issued this medal mainly to members of the St John Ambulance Brigade who served in the South African or Boer War of 1898–1902. The Brigade in England sent various of its members to join the British Army contingent in South Africa 1899–1902. They served as orderlies and ancillaries with Army Medical Corps units and with a separate St John Ambulance Brigade Field Hospital.



*The St John Ambulance Brigade Boer War Medal presented in 1902 to Brigade members who had served in the St John units sent to South Africa: the obverse (left) and reverse faces.*

Over 1800 of the medals were issued, some being awarded to those who had organised or assisted in the deployment of the Brigade members sent to the war. No fewer than 60 Brigade members died in the war, most the victims of typhoid fever.

### **The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal**

The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve (RNASBR) was a medical ancillary force staffed by volunteers of the St John Ambulance Brigade. Formed in 1910, its purpose was to support the work of the Royal Navy's medical units. The RNASBR uniform consisted of a navy blue single-breasted jacket with a stand-up collar with five buttons bearing the St John's cross. On the right sleeve, they wore a badge with the words 'St John Ambulance Brigade RN Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserves'. The RNASBR was initially formed to maintain an acceptable wartime ratio between medically trained personnel and seaman. The medal was awarded for 12 years service with the RNASBR, with war service counting as double that rate; that is, one year of wartime service counting as the equivalent of two non-wartime years. The RNASBR continued in existence through World Wars I and II; it was disbanded in 1949.



*The Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Two series of the medal were awarded: left is the obverse of the series of 1919 to 1943; right is the reverse of the 1943 to 1949 series.*

### **The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-Year Service Badge**

This was a service badge worn above the medal ribbons on the right breast of the St John Ambulance Brigade uniform by eligible members who had served with the Voluntary Aid Detachments.

The Voluntary Aid Detachments, commonly known by their acronym VADs, were a quasi-military medical voluntary (i.e. non-salaried) ancillary service established prior to World War I in Britain. The idea of the VADs was soon adopted by the military authorities in Britain's overseas dominions. In Australia the VAD scheme was run by a structure of national and State committees with representation drawn from the armed services, Red Cross and St John Ambulance. On duty VAD members wore a Red Cross uniform. They received their instruction in first aid and home nursing from the St John Ambulance Association. They were organised into local units similar to the local divisions of the St John Ambulance Brigade. In many cases whole Brigade divisions registered as VAD units.

During World War I many VAD members drove military ambulances. During World War II the VAD members were given more medical training, but they were not fully qualified nurses. In 1942 the Army medical authorities established their own fulltime ancillary medical force, the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (AAMWS). The AAMWS recruited many female VAD members, who accordingly became eligible for the award of military medals. The VAD members who remained in their VAD units were nevertheless in demand. They worked mainly as aides in the military hospitals, convalescent homes, on hospital ships and in the blood banks. VAD members who served in the two World Wars received badges to commemorate their wartime service; however, to receive the VAD 12-year service award required them to remain a member for a period substantially longer than either of the world wars.



*The Voluntary Aid Detachment 12-year Service Badge;*

### **The St John Ambulance Association Medallion**

In 1879, two years after its foundation, St John Ambulance Association introduced a medallion to award those who had passed three annual examinations. At least two of the examinations had to be in First Aid to the Injured but the third could be in either Home Nursing or Home Hygiene. The medallion number and name of the recipient were engraved on the plain reverse. A 'label' could then be earned by a medallion holder for each successful reexamination at intervals of not less than 12 months after the third examination for the medallion. In 1916 pendants were introduced to indicate a reexamination in a subject

other than First Aid, that is Home Nursing and Home Hygiene. The small 20-millimetre pendants took the form of a quatrefoil edged with a twisted rope design having a small rectangular box in the middle bearing the initial letters of the specialist qualification.

In time, people who undertook annual reexaminations over many years would accumulate many labels and pendants. Some people linked these together in chains from which they would suspend their original medallions. Eventually some such chains were so long they could be worn around the neck. The practice of awarding medallions, labels and pendants continued for over a century, into the mid-1980s.



*The St John Ambulance Association medallion, to which successive 'labels' could be attached forming a chain.*

### **Other St John Ambulance medals, coins and medallions**

A number of national St John Ambulance organisations have issued their own commemorative medals and medallions. In addition the currency-issuing agencies in some nations have produced special coins to help celebrate the achievement of milestone anniversaries by their national St John branches. In this section of the article we will consider a representative sampling, beginning with the Order of St John '900th Year' commemorative medallion.

### **Service Medal of St John Ambulance Ireland**

In the Republic of Ireland, the St John Ambulance Brigade is an independent charitable voluntary organisation. For historical and constitutional reasons it is not a full member association of the Most Venerable Order of St John and the international St John Ambulance movement, but is classed instead as an 'associated body' of the Order.

The Brigade uniform in the Republic is nearly identical to the English uniform, although there are some differences. Instead of wearing distinctive county emblems as in England, Irish Brigade members wear a Brigade emblem consisting of the eight-pointed St John Cross with green shamrocks replacing the lions and unicorns between the four arms of the cross. This emblem is worn under the shoulder flash but is not received until the member has two years' service.

The Brigade in Ireland also awards its own Service Medal. Instituted in 1945, this is awarded in silver for 15 years' service and in silver-gilt for 50 years' service.



*The Service Medal of the St John Ambulance Brigade of Ireland.*

### **St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea Golden Jubilee Medal and commemorative 50-toea coin**

St John Ambulance in Papua New Guinea, Australia's nearest neighbour and former territory, was an import from Australia during the 1960s. In 2007, the St John Council of Papua New Guinea issued a commemorative medal to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of a formal St John organisation there.



*The St John Ambulance Papua New Guinea 50th anniversary commemorative medal.*



The government of Papua New Guinea also marked this anniversary by minting a commemorative 50-toea coin (roughly equivalent to the Australian 50-cent coin) bearing the St John name and badge on the reverse face.

### **Order of St John, 900th Year Commemorative Medallion**

In 1999, the year of the 900th anniversary of the capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the Most Venerable Order of St John produced and marketed a commemorative medallion. Both faces of the medallion carried the promotional slogan: '900 Years of Caring'. This was perhaps misleading because the event being commemorated was not the 900th centenary of the foundation of the Blessed Gerard's original hospice for pilgrims from which the ancient Order of St John had developed; nor was it the nonacentenary of the establishment of the ancient Order. The former event took place about the year 1980; the latter is being celebrated in 2013.



*The Order of St John '900 Years of Caring' medallion of 1999. Obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) faces.*

### **St John Ambulance Malaysia 100th Anniversary Medallion**

St John Ambulance in Malaysia celebrated its centenary in 2008. To commemorate this event, the St John Council for Malaysia published a sumptuous centenary history. The council also issued an impressive commemorative medallion in gilt alloy to celebrate the centenary.



*The St John Ambulance Malaysia centenary medallion of 2008; the obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces of the medallion.*

### **St John Ambulance Association Singapore Service Award**

As in Malaysia, St John Ambulance in Singapore has a long history, though not quite as long as its near neighbour on the opposite shore of the narrow Strait of Johore. St John in Singapore dates its origin to 1935, when a Dr JS Webster OStJ, a radiologist at the Singapore General Hospital, organised first aid lectures with the help of a few public-spirited friends and fellow doctors. By September 1938 sufficient numbers of first aiders had been trained to form the first local uniformed division of the St John Ambulance Brigade.



*The Singapore St John Ambulance Association Service Award; obverse (left) and reverse (right) faces.*

In October 1969, a Sub-Centre of the St John Ambulance Association (now called Training Branch in Australia) was formed in the industrialised area of Singapore. With the Brigade, the Sub-Centre gave lectures in First Aid and Home Nursing to many factory workers. It is now known as Jurong Centre.

The St John Ambulance Association in Singapore began issuing its own Service Medal in 1980. Minted in bronze and suspended from a ribbon of five alternating vertical bands of black and green, the medal displays the Badge of the Order on the obverse face with the second of the Order's mottoes, 'For The Service Of Mankind', around the rim.

### **Malta District of the St John Ambulance Brigade Golden Jubilee Medal**

Outside of the United Kingdom, St John Ambulance in Malta has the longest history of any St John branch. A Centre of the St John Ambulance Association was established there in 1882, a year before a similar Centre opened in Melbourne in 1883.

In Malta St John Ambulance is a voluntary organisation, an autonomous overseas branch of the Most Venerable Order governed by its own national St John Council. The Council is chaired by the Chief Justice of Malta, Professor JJ Cremona. (The Patron of St John Ambulance in Malta is the President of the Republic of Malta, His Excellency Dr George Abela.) Under the Council, St John Ambulance operates through three branches: the Training Association, First Aid and Nursing and the Rescue Corps.

The St John Ambulance Brigade District in Malta was one of the earliest established outside of the United Kingdom. Founded in 1909, it predated all the Australian State Brigade Districts except for New South Wales (1902) and Western Australia (1904). To celebrate its 50th anniversary, the Brigade in Malta issued a Golden Jubilee commemorative medal in 1959. The obverse face shows first aiders attending to a patient; the reverse face displays a crown above the St John Cross Badge of the Order.



*Right: the St John Ambulance Brigade Malta District golden jubilee medallion. (Obverse at left and reverse at right in each case.)*

The medals, coins, medallions and badges of the Most Venerable Order and its associated St John Ambulance organisations have multiplied to the extent that they now comprise a specialised branch of numismatics. Beginning with just the Lifesaving Medal in 1874 and the Service Medal in 1895, they have proliferated as a range of commemorative medals were added to the range. As more international St John branches began forming, they in turn eventually issued their own service medals and commemorative medallions. In some instances they also persuaded their national governments to issue commemorative coins to celebrate their milestone anniversaries.

As well as being highly 'collectible', and therefore comprising prized exhibits in St John museums, these exemplars of the numismatic craft are of interest to St John historians. First, they are inherently worthy of study because of their own innate beauty of design and manufacture. Second, they tell us much about the historical growth and development of the Order. Finally, these items remind us that 125 years after Queen Victoria granted our Royal Charter, the Order has transcended the circumstances of its foundation in 1831 to become a great worldwide family of charitable institutions, agencies and individuals dedicated to 'The Service Of Mankind'. I trust that the foregoing brief survey of the Order's medals has established these points in the minds of my readers.



# Sir Hiram Maxim and the 'Pipe of Peace'

## Brian Fotheringham KStJ

*Dr Brian Fotheringham is the founder and foundation President of the Historical Society. He is also the founder of the Society's State branch in South Australia, which preceded the national society by several years. Previously he was the 14th St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia and then served a record period of 13 years as the eighth Priory Librarian. He joined St John 53 years ago as a 'Probationary Surgeon' within the South Australian St John Ambulance organisation. His late father, Dr Jim Fotheringham MC, was also a St John Commissioner in South Australia. In his professional life, Dr Fotheringham Jnr spent most of career as a senior medical administrator at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal.*



In the little museum in Adelaide, South Australia, that is dedicated to collecting, preserving and displaying items relating to St John Ambulance, there is a curious inclusion known as the 'Pipe of Peace'. Perhaps it should not be there as its use, as far as I know, was never condoned by St John. It does however serve as an interesting conversation piece with some likenesses and links to the history of St John, and possibly also a lesson or even a warning for St John. It is also a story that crosses international boundaries, appropriate for a time such as this when the Grand Council of St John is meeting here in Australia.



*The 'Pipe of Peace'—an inhaler invented by Sir Hiram Maxim.*

## Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim

The 'Pipe of Peace' was invented by Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim (1840–1916). Hiram was born in Sangerville, Maine, USA, on 5 February 1840. Curiously, Sangerville is directly west of another place in Maine called St John. Hiram was the son of a farmer and when aged 14 was apprenticed to a carriage maker. His hobby was inventing things and this later became his life's work. He invented lots of things. He was 26 years old when he took out his first patent—for a hair curling iron. In the next half century he took out 271 American and British patents. No easy feat! They included gas generators, carburettors, steam traps, meters, pumps, chandeliers, heaters, batteries, regulators, dynamos, solvent recovery processes, riveting devices and stone cutting implements. And that is just a few of the American patents.

The British ones covered processes for the separation of metals, pipe and tube manufacture, the production of vacuums, devices to measure wind velocity and others to stop ships from rolling, wheels for railway carriages, shafts for screw propellers, shoe heel protectors, pneumatic tyres, coffee substitutes and fire extinguishers.

His electrical pressure regulator was displayed at the Paris Exhibition of 1881 and earned for him the decoration of Legion of Honour. Hiram went to Paris to collect this honour, but this may not have been his real reason for leaving America. In 1876 he had married Jane Budden in Boston. They had three children. In 1878 he married Helen Leighton in New York. In 1880 he married Sarah Haynes, also in New York. Jane divorced him *after* he had married Helen. Sarah divorced him as she, for a time, was just one of *three* current wives. Hiram never went back to America.



*Sir Hiram Maxim (1840-1916) wears his accumulation of awards.*

Hiram's inventions were not always successful. In England he designed and built a huge two-propeller steam-driven aeroplane. It was tested on rails with an extra restraining rail preventing the plane from lifting off more than a few inches. The restraining rail broke. Hiram did not venture further in the field of aviation.



*Hiram Maxim at the controls of a famous but impractical invention—his steam-powered, rail-mounted biplane made of tubular steel and canvas biplane in 1894. It 'flew' for about 200 metres during a trial in 1895 but then broke an axle and was so seriously damaged that Maxim abandoned the project.*

## A very famous invention

One Maxim invention in particular was a huge success. It was developed in 1884 by Hiram who by this time was living in London. Although he was born in America, Hiram later became a British citizen. The year 1884 was an interesting time for St John. The St John Ambulance Association in England was just seven years old, the St John Ophthalmic Hospital was just two years old and the St John Ambulance Brigade was still three years away from being formed. Hiram's 1884 invention was so noisy that he issued warning notices to people in the area when he tested it. That area was Clerkenwell.

The site of the tests, on the corner of Hatten Garden and Clerkenwell Road, is marked now by one of those ubiquitous British blue plaques. The plaque is no more than 500 metres from St John's Gate purchased for St John by Sir Edmund Lechmere in 1873. Hiram's noisy tests may well have been heard at the Gate. The warnings were not without reason; Sir Hiram himself became deaf from the noise he created. The invention was described as the first (satisfactory) fully automatic machine gun. The Maxim gun consisted of a single barrel and made use of the recoil to eject spent cartridges and to reload the firing chamber. It could fire about 1000 rounds a minute, equivalent to about 30 rounds of the rifles of the day. The Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, was greatly impressed by the gun and it was adopted by the British Army in 1889 and by the Royal Navy in 1892.

In the Matabele War of 1893, fifty British infantrymen with four Maxim guns defended themselves against 5000 warriors and killed 3000 of them. As Hiliare Belloc (1870–1953), famously the author of *Cautionary Tales for Children*, wrote:

Whatever happens, we have got  
the Maxim gun, and they have not.

However it was not long hence that the armies of USA, Russia, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, Italy, Serbia and Finland soon all acquired the Maxim gun.

Hiram was knighted in 1901 by King Edward VII who by then was the Sovereign Head of the Order of St John, having previously been the Grand Prior.



*Sir Hiram Maxim demonstrates his famous machine gun.*



## The development of the 'Pipe of Peace'

When Sir Hiram, at the age of 60, began suffering severe attacks of bronchitis he consulted his family physician and several other doctors. He tried hot springs in France and the treatment system at Vos's Inhalatorium in Nice. That Inhalatorium was the only treatment that gave him significant relief.

Sir Hiram bought some glass tubing and made some simple inhalers for himself. He found them more effective than those of Mr Vos. He gave them to a few people who gave glowing reports of their usefulness. He then made 200 and gave them away. Thereafter sale of the inhalers was placed in the hands of John Morgan Richards and Sons Ltd, of 46 Holborn Viaduct, London. Hundreds of thousands were sold through this one agency.



*Maxim's 'Pipe of Peace' or bronchial inhaler, with its glass tubing and menthol-soaked gauze.*

Actually, two slightly different inhalers were marketed for Sir Hiram Maxim by John Morgan Richards and Sons. They were the Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace. The Inhaler was meant as a pocket appliance to be brought into play at the first sign of bronchial or similar trouble. It was comprised of a glass tube containing gauze material already soaked in menthol. By breathing through the tube, air could be drawn through the menthol-soaked gauze and delivered to the back of the patient's throat. Indents were provided in the tubing into which the patient's teeth could sink so that the device extended for 5.5 cms into the mouth. If the dose of menthol seemed too great, Sir Hiram instructed patients not to close their lips tightly around the tubing, but to allow air in alongside the tubing as well as through it.

The larger inhaler was known as the Pipe of Peace. The principle of direct inhalation was the same as with the Maxim Inhaler, but a compound essence of pine was used instead of menthol. The essence of pine was extracted from pine needles. You will recall that Hiram was born in Maine, USA. Pine trees grew in abundance in Maine and are featured on Maine's Coat of Arms. The pine essence is so highly volatile that the warmth of hands holding the bowl of the Pipe of Peace provided sufficient heat to give healing fumes in the inhalation. Pine needles were said to contain a principle fatal to germs 'which although unidentified are known to be the direct cause of bronchitis and bronchial irritation'.

Inhaling pine essence often caused coughing. To avoid this complication Sir Hiram devised a secret formula by adding small quantities of the essences of Wintergreen and Sweet Birch to the pine essence. This combined product was marketed under the name of 'Dirigo', from the Latin which means 'I guide' or 'I direct'. Sir Hiram's Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler were designed to guide or direct the curative vapours straight to the throat. It is no coincidence that the term 'Dirigo' is the one word motto on the Coat of Arms of the State of Maine.

The Maxim Inhaler and the Pipe of Peace were described as being of great service to clergymen, vocalists, actors and public speakers. The package deal of the Pipe of Peace and the Maxim Inhaler together with bottles of Dirigo and menthol crystals could be obtained for 15 shillings and six pence and only from John Morgan Richards and Sons. It came in a plain strong cardboard box and postage was included in the price.

## Instructive parallels

There is a certain parallel here between Sir Hiram and the Order of St John. Both had a military bent. The Hospitallers as far back as the twelfth century, when Raymond Du Puy became Master of the Order, were a well-equipped and feared fighting force. Hiram's Machine Gun, likewise was a significantly feared military piece of equipment—it killed far more of the enemy than all the Hospitallers ever did.

The parallels go further than that, however. Both Hiram and St John volunteers worked in London, and more precisely, in Clerkenwell. And then both Sir Hiram and the Order turned to peaceful pursuits. Sir Hiram invented his 'Pipe of Peace' and St John dedicated itself to the relief of suffering. The warning for St John is that Sir Hiram is remembered more for his machine gun than for his inhalers. We should take note!

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# Historic links between the Australian Army Medical Services and St John Ambulance

## Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

*As noted above in the introduction to the article on Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd, Dr Howie-Willis is a Canberra-based professional historian. His most recent book, A Medical Emergency (Blue Sky Publishing, 2012), is a biography of the inaugural St John Ambulance Chief Commissioner in Australia, Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston. He is currently researching a history of the Australian Army's experience of malaria.*



From its inception in Australia in 1902 the St John Ambulance Brigade (later called 'Operations Branch' and later still 'First Aid Services') has had close and continuing ties with the Australian Army Medical Services. This article aims to present an overview of the many links between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. It is, however, such a vast topic, I could not hope to cover it comprehensively in the 15 minutes available for the seminar paper from which it grew. What therefore follows is the barest summary and leaves the way open to other researchers who might wish to pursue the topic further.

I propose to deal with the topic biographically by alluding to some of the leading St John figures who have held office in both St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services. Before doing that, however, I must explain what the Army Medical Services are. Briefly, and depending on what war or period of peace is under consideration, the Army Medical Services have comprised the following military formations:

- the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, extant from 1902 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, extant from 1903 until the present
- the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps, extant from 1943 until the present
- the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS), extant from 1942 until 1951, the AAMWS having been a wartime outgrowth of ...
- the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs), extant from 1909 until post-World War II, the VADs having been a uniformed, quasi-military ancillary medical service not within the Army but operating under military control and using personnel drawn mainly from Red Cross and St John Ambulance.



*The formations which have historically comprised the Australian Army Medical Services: (L–R) the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps, the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps and the Australian Army Medical Women's Service (the AAMWS).*

My argument is that at all stages of Australian history since Federation in 1901 a close and continuing connection between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services (AMS) has existed. The link is informal and personal, consisting of a high degree of cross-membership rather than through any structural bonds. The link works to the great advantage of both organisations because St John

personnel comprise a pool of professionally trained, highly motivated and skilled first aiders on which the AMS may draw; conversely, St John has been able to secure professional expertise from the AMS plus potential leaders with experience of emergency medicine under the most trying conditions of all—on the battlefield and under fire.

## Origins of the St John Ambulance Army Medical Services link

As originally conceived in 1887 and continuing into the early post-World War II years, the role of the St John Ambulance Brigade was twofold. First, the Brigade was a disciplined, uniformed civilian organisation undertaking first aid duties at public events. Second, the Brigade was also available when required to be a military medical reserve force in times of war.

The ancillary military purpose was set out in the Brigade's first set of General Regulations, issued in April 1889. The third of four 'objects' or aims was 'to enrol a highly trained body of civilians as supplement to Army Medical Department for service at home and abroad'. It was in fulfillment of this objective that the Brigade in Britain sent contingents of first aiders to the Boer or South African War of 1898–1902.

## A personal approach

I cannot possibly include here all the very many distinguished St John people with Army Medical Service experience, so what I plan to do is divide the past 136 years since the foundation of St John Ambulance into seven major eras or phases of history and then discuss the AMS–St John link through reference to several representative personages from each era. I have no time to give even the shortest of biographical profiles of each of the twenty characters I will use to demonstrate the strength of the link. Instead I will simply comment briefly on their significance.

## First era: pre–1900

### Not Australian St John history but relevant to its subsequent development.

- Surgeon-Major Peter Shepherd (1841–1879): career Army medical officer, teacher of the inaugural St John first aid class and author of the first St John first aid manual.
- Surgeon-General William George Nicholas Manley VC (1831–1901): career Army medical officer, a co-founder of St John Ambulance and possibly the person who developed the St John two-wheeled stretcher or litter, the original 'St John ambulance' which gives us our name.
- Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC (1831–1901).



*Surgeon-General William GN Manley VC, 1831–1901.*

## Second era: 1900 to World War I

### The period of the foundation of the St John Ambulance Brigade in Australia.

- Dr George Thomas Lane Mullins (1862–1918): the first effective St John Commissioner in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel during World War I.
- Dr Reuter Emrich Roth (1858–1924): the first District Surgeon in Australia and a Medical Corps lieutenant-colonel with service experience in the South African and First World Wars.
- Dr George F McWilliams (1865–1907): a Medical Corp lieutenant-colonel who had seen active service in the Boer War, he had taught the first public first aid class in Western Australia in 1892 and in 1904 became the inaugural St John Ambulance Commissioner there.





*Dr Reuter E Roth  
(1858–1924)*



*Dr George F McWilliams  
(1865–1907)*



*Dr George T Lane  
Mullins (1862–1918).*

### Third era: World War I

**The period when St John Ambulance demonstrated its usefulness as an AMS ancillary.**

- Sir Neville Reginald Howse VC (1863–1930): a VC and KStJ who led the AMS units in the 1st AIF then served as post-war AMS head, 1921–1925.
- Sir Hugh Raymond Guy Poate (1884–1961): the record-holding NSW St John Ambulance Commissioner and inaugural Chancellor of Priory; a lieutenant-colonel with active service at Gallipoli in World War I then a RAAF Group Captain in World War II.



*Sir Neville R Howse VC  
(1863–1930)*



*Sir Hugh RG Poate  
(1884–1961)*

### Fourth era: inter-war years

**The period when the AMS leadership fully recognised the potential of St John Ambulance as ancillary support for the Army.**

- Major-General Rupert Major Downes (1885–1945): his 24 years as Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner is the Australian record; he was a World War I colonel with active service on Gallipoli and in Palestine in World War I; then led the AMS into World War II.
- Dr John R Donaldson (1895–1985): he was a captain with overseas service in World War I; he was commandant of VADs in Western Australia during 1930s and was a lieutenant-colonel during World War II; he served as WA St John Ambulance Commissioner 1939–1961 then as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia, 1959–1969.



*Major-General Rupert M  
Downes (1885–1945)*



*Dr John R Donaldson  
(1895–1985)*

## Fifth era (Part I): World War II (Army Medical Corps)

### The 'golden age' of the AMS–St John link.

- Major-General Sir Samuel Roy Burston (1888–1960): he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in South Australia then inaugural Chief Commissioner for Australia 1946–1956; he had active service at Gallipoli and on the Western Front in World War I; he led the AMS in the Middle East in World War II and then from 1942 led the AMS in Australia for the remainder of the war during the Island campaigns, when it reached its maximum strength of 32,000 personnel.
- Brigadier Sir William Wallace Stewart Johnston (1887–1962): he saw active service on the Western Front in World War I; he was deputy head of the AMS at the outbreak of World War II; he then saw much active service in Palestine, Greece and the Island campaigns as a brigadier; he was Victorian St John Ambulance Commissioner 1951–1956 then Chief Commissioner 1957–1962.
- Major-General Sir Frank Kingsley Norris (1893–1984): he saw active service on Gallipoli in World War I and in World War II in the Syrian and Island campaigns; he succeeded Burston as head of the AMS in 1948 and held the position until 1955, leading the AMS during the Korean War of the early 1950s; he was the St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1956–1959 and was then Chief Commissioner 1962–1969.



(L–R) Major-General Sir S Roy Burston (1898–1960), Sir William WS Johnston (1884–1962) and Major-General Sir F Kingsley Norris (1893–1984).

## Fifth era (Part 2): World War II (VADs and AAMWS)

### The period when St John-trained VADs proved so effective that the Army assimilated them as a new formation, the AAMWS.

- Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976): she joined a VAD unit early in World War II and rose rapidly to become VAD State secretary for Queensland; she was then recruited to become inaugural St John Ambulance Brigade District Superintendent in Queensland in 1950 then, after serving 19 years, became national Chief Superintendent Nursing 1969–1976.
- Amelia ('Millie') Field (1917–2007): after learning first aid, she joined the pre-war South Melbourne VAD unit; she transferred into the AAMWS in 1942; taught first aid for St John Ambulance post-war; and late in life she wrote and published the Victorian St John Ambulance centenary history.



Mrs Dorothy Davidson (1910–1976), left; and Miss Millie Field (1917–2007).

## Sixth era: early post-war decades

**The period when, under the direction of former senior AMS officers who had been wartime commanders, the St John Ambulance Brigade reached its historic maximum strength.**

- Sir George Grafton Lees Stening (1904–1996): he was a colonel who saw active service at Tobruk and then commanded the Concord Military Hospital in Sydney; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in New South Wales 1945–1951; Sir Hugh Poate's protégé, he succeeded him as Priory Chancellor in 1961 and then held the position for a record 21 years.
- Brigadier Alec Letts Dawkins (1905–1975): reached the rank of brigadier in World War II after active service in the Middle East and the Island campaigns; St John Ambulance Commissioner in Western Australia 1961–66 then served as Commandery Lieutenant of the Order in Western Australia 1969–1973.
- Colonel Charles Douglas Donald (1910–1979): saw active service in World War II, in which he served as a major; he was St John Ambulance Commissioner in Victoria 1959–66 and then Chief Commissioner 1969–1979.



*(L–R) Brigadier Alec L. Dawkins (1905–1975) , Colonel Sir George GL Stening (1904–1996) and Colonel C Douglas Donald (1910–1979).*

## Seventh era: recent times

**A competitive period during which St John had to fend off competitors to retain pre-eminence in the field of first aid delivery.**

- Ms Lynne Spencer (formerly Allen-Brown, 1946– ): a career nursing administrator and a captain in the Royal Australian Nursing Corps; St John Ambulance District Superintendent in New South Wales from 1990, then Chief Superintendent from 1993 and then became our first (and so far only) female Chief Commissioner in 1999.
- Major-General David Rossi (1945– ): career Army medical officer; saw active service in Vietnam; Director-General of Army Health Services 1990–1992 then Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1992–1996; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland then Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory 2002–2005.
- Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ): career Army medical officer but now the Director (Professor) of the Centre for Military and Veterans' Health at the University of Queensland; saw active service in Vietnam and Rwanda; St John Ambulance Director of Training 2002–2011.
- Major-General John Hemsley Pearn (1940– ): active service in Papua New Guinea, Vietnam and Rwanda; Surgeon-General of the Australian Defence Force 1998–2001; St John Ambulance District Surgeon in Queensland; he was St John Ambulance Director of Training 1990–1999; and from May 2012 has been the Priory Librarian, the tenth to hold the position since it was established in 1942.

This brisk canter through 136 years of St John history has passed more figures than it has stopped to consider. Those left out of my survey include significant personalities like Lieutenant-Colonel George Horne (inaugural St John Commissioner in Victoria); Sir Kenneth Fraser (inaugural Commissioner in





(L–R) Major-General David Rossi (1945– ), Major-General John H Pearn (1940– ), Ms Lynne Allen-Brown (1946– ) and Colonel Peter Warfe (1954– ).

Queensland) and his successor Colonel Murray Elliott (a subsequent Priory Librarian, the seventh); Colonel Alex Christie (inaugural Chief Superintendent); Drs Noel Colyer and Alan King (Commissioners in Western Australia); Dr James Fotheringham MC (Commissioner in South Australia); Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon Young (Commissioner in New South Wales then Chief Commissioner); Major-General Colin Gurner (inaugural Commissioner in the Australian Capital Territory); Dr Vlas Efsthathis (Commissioner and then St John Council Chair in Queensland); Dr Franklin Bridgewater (a St John Chief Professional Officer; then Commissioner in South Australia and now the Priory Director of Ceremonies); Lieutenant-Colonel Geoffrey Newman-Martin (former Commissioner in the ACT); Professor Peter Leggatt (James Cook University); Colonel Jeffrey Rosenfeld (former Commissioner in Victoria); Michael Campion (current Hospitaller of our Priory) and Major Michael Tyquin (the historian of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps). Nor does my survey include any of the many hundreds of other ranks: the privates and non-commissioned officers who, like two current Historical Society members, Vince Little and Trevor Mayhew, gave the best years of their lives to both St John and the Army Medical Services.

I apologise to them all for my sin of omission but plead that this is only a preliminary survey and hopefully other historians will continue where I've left off. Meanwhile, I hope that the foregoing article has demonstrated the point that there is a continuing close but informal link between St John Ambulance and the Army Medical Services through particular individuals who have worked in both.

For St John Ambulance at least, the connection has been greatly advantageous. It has brought into the organisation people of great talent and with skills immediately applicable in the health and caring causes which St John serves. Their knowledge, discipline, application, steadfastness, sense of community service and leadership skills have had a hugely beneficial impact on St John Ambulance. Long may St John continue to attract people like them!

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# ‘To Arms!’ The Arms of the Priory in Australia of the Order of St John and its Commandery in Western Australia

## James Cheshire MStJ

*Mr James Cheshire is the Secretary of the Historical Society. As such he organised the annual gathering of the Society in Sydney in May 2012, which generated the seminar papers from which the articles in Volumes 12 and 13 of this journal have been developed. Mr Cheshire is a member of the Australian Federal Police, in which he is a Federal Agent in Crime Operations in Melbourne. He is also studying law part-time. He is a regular contributor of articles to this journal. He is married to Cherie, who has been a St John member for many years and has made a significant contribution to the development of the St John Cadet movement both in Victoria and nationally.*



During a visit to the Australian Office of St John Ambulance Australia some months ago, I took the opportunity to examine a fine framed document displayed within the museum display cabinets. It depicts the Banner of the Priory in Australia and is endorsed ‘Henry’. It was from this and strengthened by a discussion with the then Priory Librarian, Ian Howie-Willis, that I embarked on an effort to find the ‘grant of arms’ for the Priory in Australia of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem; that is, the official certificate authorising the Priory to display a heraldic device.

Had anyone seen a vellum parchment? Was there a seal-laden relic supporting the grand table in the board room? After realising that the answers to all such questions were probably in the negative, I set off on a research trek which found me causing more problems than I have so far solved.

In telling the story of my quest, I acknowledge and thank the outstanding assistance I have received in the production of this paper from Major William Hunt, the Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and also the Genealogist of the Order of St John.



*Major William G Hunt CStJ, Windsor Herald of the College of Arms and Genealogist of the Most Venerable Order of St John.*

## The arms and banner of the Order

The arms of the Most Venerable Order are the base for all of the arms of the Priorities and Commanderies within the Order. We have all seen the Order’s arms before and are familiar with them as the base for the arms of the other national associations of St John.

The arms are simply described in heraldic terms as being ‘Gules (red) a cross argent (silver), in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign’s Crest’. A very basic yet unmistakable design! In laypersons’ words, we could add that the arms consist of the square white cross on red field of our patron Saint, St John the Baptist, with the royal crown and lion in the top left section. The arms are referred to in the Royal Charters and Statutes (2004), and the St John (Order) Regulations 2003 in the following terms:



*The painting of the Standard (banner) of the Priory in Australia, framed and on display in the Chancellor's Priory Heritage Collection in Canberra; and Lieutenant-Colonel Owen Beresford Williams MC, KStJ (1885–1963), the Victorian member of the Order who brought the Standard to Australia.*

## **Royal Charters and Statutes of the Order (2004)**

### **Part Four — Arms, Insignia, etc.**

#### **Statute 44. Arms of the Order**

The Arms of the Order shall be: Gules [red] a cross argent [silver], in the first quarter a representation of the Sovereign's Crest and they shall be depicted and used in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

#### **Statute 46. Great Banner of the Order**

The Great Banner of the Order shall bear the Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 and it shall be designed and flown in conformity with such provision as may from time to time be made by Regulations.

## **The St John (Order) Regulations 2003**

### **Regulation 34. Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order**

Appendix I shall have effect for the purposes of Statutes 44, 45 and 46, under which provision may be made in respect of the Arms, the Badge and the Great Banner of the Order.

### **Appendix I Arms, Badge and Great Banner of the Order (Regulation 34)**

#### **1 Arms of the Order**

- (i) The following illustrates the ARMS of the Order as laid down in Statute 44, viz. Gules, a Cross Argent, in the first quarter a representation of Her Majesty's Crest.
- (ii) How Used

The Arms of the Order as defined in Statute 44 shall be used as laid down in Statute 46 (Great Banner of the Order) and Statute 49 (Armorial Bearings). They may also be used in any property, flag, parchment, paper, publication, or other article belonging to, used by, or issued by the Headquarters of the Order or Headquarters of Establishments of the Order, or otherwise as authorised by the Grand Prior on the recommendation of the Grand Council. Any other use of the Arms of the Order is prohibited.

The Order of St John  
Standard of the Priory in Australia

It is then endorsed *without* a date and just this simple copperplate notation and the signature of one 'Henry':

Approved  
Henry  
Grand Prior.

The chronology of the Priory's early years would suggest that the 'Henry' in question was His Royal Highness Field Marshal Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, who was Grand Prior between 1942 and 1974, when his son, the current Duke of Gloucester, HRH Prince Richard, took over the role on his father's death. Prince Henry was also the 11th Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia between 1945 and 1947. Given that the Priory of Australia was established in 1947, while Prince Henry was concurrently the Governor General and Grand Prior, it would seem not impossible that he approved this design whilst performing both roles and perhaps while still domiciled in Australia.

The first dated reference to the banner that can be located within the Priory archives is found in the annual report of the Priory in Australia of 1956. An almost passing reference is made by Lieutenant-Colonel EAH Russell in his Priory Librarian's Report for the twelve months ending 31 December 1956, in which he notes that the Priory Library had 'been endowed with gifts of great historical value', including:

3. Grand Priory: A Standard, manufactured and presented by Grand Priory, and brought to Australia by Lieut.-Colonel Owen B. Williams, M.C., K.St.J.

There is no record of when the standard first came in to hands of the Priory, nor is there any particular note of its use. One can only assume from the information available that some time soon after the approval the banner was made in the United Kingdom and then transported to Australia by Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, as mentioned in the report by the Priory Librarian.

## The Commandery of Western Australia

At this point in my research I was still no closer to identifying a grant of any Arms to the Priory in Australia. I therefore decided to engage another of our eminent St John historians, Dr Edith Khangure, and her cohort of 'can-do' fellow St John researchers, heritage custodians and knowledge-holders in Western Australia.

And so I enquired of Dr Khangure if she was aware of any grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia or to the Commandery of Western Australia. The immediate answer was that there is no instant recollection of anyone in the West ever seeing a formal grant, but that she could remember previously sighting an authority for the Banner of the Commandery. No closer to a result but a familiar pattern was developing!

The good Dr Khangure was able to provide me with a banner design endorsed as approved by 'Henry Grand Prior' and again, undated.

The design of the Commandery banner is true to the form seen previously. It takes as its base the Arms and banner of the Order with a local embellishment to signify the particular entity which it represents. In this case it is the Black Swan or *Cygnus atratus*—the official emblem of the State of Western Australia.



The signature 'Henry' signifying the Grand Prior's approval of the Arms of the Priory in Australia.





*The painting of the Banner of the Commandery in Western Australia of the Most Venerable Order of St John, with a note at the bottom right indicating that the Grand Prior had approved the design of the Commandery's Arms.*

But what of any formal grant of Arms? This is the design used for many years by the Commandery of Western Australia as its Arms, even prior to its closer administrative links with the Priory in Australia. No grant of Arms can be found, nor can any reference to a grant of Arms be located within the archives of St John in Western Australia. Nor, for that matter, does there appear to be a record of a grant of Arms to the Priory and Commandery in the archives of the Order at St John's Gate in London!

Clearly the only logical next step was to go to the issuing authority, the College of Arms in London, to obtain some information from their records about when the grant of Arms to the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia was made.

## Windsor Herald and genealogist of the Order of St John

Prior to venturing into what was thought to be uncharted waters overseas, I sought and was granted the permission of the Priory's Director of Ceremonies and the Priory Secretary to make an initial enquiry with the Windsor Herald. I sent Major William Hunt an email outlining that I was doing some research and that I was keen to ascertain some detail about the grant of Arms to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. Major Hunt very kindly and promptly responded with the information that there was no record within the College of Arms databases of any grant being made to Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. It was at this point that we now found ourselves on a sticky wicket.

The Law of Arms is an ancient one and since 1417 vests power with the Kings of Arms to prevent anyone bearing Arms 'unless by ancestral right or by grant from a competent authority'. This was ongoing work during the period with various actions being taken by the Kings of Arms to eliminate 'all false armory and arms devised without authority'.

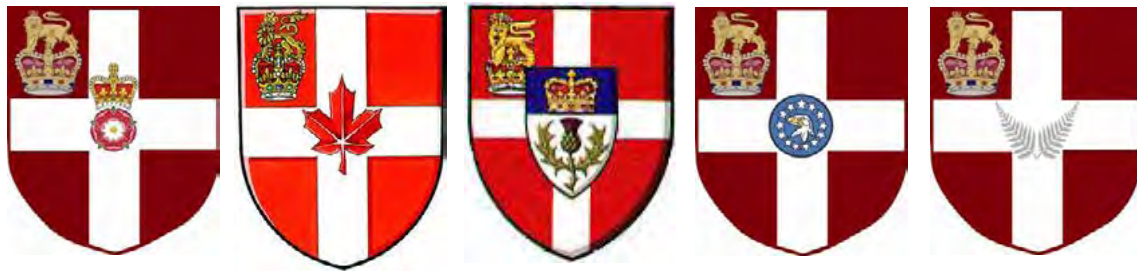
Given a Royal Commission, the Kings of Arms between 1530 and 1689 visited English and Welsh counties to establish that Arms were borne with proper authority, with anyone found using Arms without entitlement forced to make a public disclaimer.

Since the 14th century the Court of Chivalry has had jurisdiction over cases of misuse of Arms. The court sits in the civil jurisdiction and has as its sole judge the Earl Marshal. There have been a number of cases in the past; however, the court's authority remains extant and was exercised as recently as 1954 when the Manchester Corporation took action against the Manchester Palace of Varieties with the latter being a theatre which was successfully sued for illegally displaying the Arms belonging to the corporation.



I wrote back to Major Hunt outlining the research I had done and provided copies of the endorsed Banners for the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia. I asked if it were possible that they may have been granted under another grant by the College. Major Hunt very kindly offered to look through the archives given we could establish that it was unlikely to have been granted prior to the establishment of the Priory in Australia in 1947 and certainly not prior to the establishment of the Commandery of Australia in 1941. Major Hunt was able to locate approximately two dozen archive boxes dealing with St John issues which he inherited from the previous Windsor Herald and Genealogist of the Order of St John, Sir Peter Gwynn-Jones. Alas Major Hunt was still unable to identify any grant of Arms or any registering of the Banners with the College of Arms.

Major Hunt then made some enquiries on my behalf and now, on his own motion, has identified other Priories that had not received a grant of Arms but would appear to have been using same. The larger question was: who were they and what can be done?



*Arms of five Priories of the Most Venerable Order of St John. (L–R): the Priory of England and the Islands, the Priory of Canada, the Priory of Scotland, the Priory in the United States of America and the Priory in New Zealand.*

## The way forward

I was fortunate to spend some time speaking on the telephone with Major Hunt in the past few weeks. Although extremely busy with a variety of ceremonial and other heraldic and St John tasks, he has been extremely helpful and provided the Priory and myself with outstanding support and advice.

While some of the background briefing Major Hunt has been able to provide me shall remain in confidence as he requested, it can be said that Major Hunt has prepared a formal report for the Garter King of Arms in relation to the issue, as well as briefing St John International Office. Within this report he outlines the issues identified as a result of the search he has conducted of the records of the College and the areas requiring some formal decision in relation to the regularising of current practice.

It seems that, given there are a number of other St John Arms to be granted in the near future, being the new Commanderies of Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man, it could be possible for a composite grant of Arms to be made by the College. This would regularise the Arms currently being used by the Priory in Australia and the Commandery of Western Australia.

Whether or not this is a possible way forward is still dependant on the results of the recommendations contained in the report that Major Hunt has prepared for the Garter King of Arms. We await his further advice.

## Reports from the State and Territory branches of the Historical Society

### **St John Ambulance Archives, New South Wales**

*Loredana Napoli, Information Management Coordinator, and  
Betty Stirton DStJ, Honorary Archivist St John Ambulance New South Wales*

During the past twelve months, the St John Ambulance Australia NSW Archive has maintained the work of research and record keeping. As an Archive operating during business hours, we do not have a committee and therefore no Annual General Meeting. An Archive report is presented by Betty Stirton, Honorary Archivist at the NSW State Council Meetings giving details of the work that has been done in the previous three months. Significant events and achievements during the year were as follows.

#### **Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary**

In 2011 Western Suburbs Cadet Division held their Jubilee celebration of 75 years. St John Archives prepared and supplied histories of past members for their families as well as a display depicting the work of the Cadets. The Division has a strong membership of 20 juniors, 12 preliminary members and 40 senior cadets, in addition to senior Cadet Leaders, Officers, Superintendent and President.



*Western Suburbs Cadet Division, 75th Anniversary celebrations.*

### **St John (NSW) Registers**

Since our Archive commenced in 1990 we have compiled registers for St John Honours with over 2200 entries, Service Awards 2200 entries, Grand Prior Awardees 1737 entries and Special Service Shields 363 entries. The St John Honours register contains the following information: Full name of Postulant, Awarded dates of Priory Vote of Thanks (PVT), Member St John, Officer St John, Commander, Dame, Knight, Bailiff Grand Cross. Also within this register are the dates of Centenary Medal and St John 50 Year Plaque (issued by St John [NSW] for 50 years of Service) and Deceased date.

As well as PVT dates there are these awards: Honorary Associate 1895–1926, Vellum Vote of Thanks 1901–1943, Commandery Vote of Thanks 1945–1947, Priory Vote of Thanks 1948–2010.

The St John Service Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee, Division/Training area the member belongs to, the Year the Service Medal was received, followed by the Years when Bars 1 through to 9 were awarded.

The Grand Prior and Special Service Shield Awards register contains the following information: Full name of Awardee; Division the Awardee belongs to; Year Award was received. Service hours include 100, 200, 500, 800, 1000, 1,200, 1500, 1800 and 2000. Special Service Shields were introduced in 1947. The First Grand Prior Award in Australia was in 1933 to Marion Higgins from Marrickville Cadet Division (NSW).

### **Homage Roll**

In 1995 we commenced a Homage Roll and each year at the Investiture the Governor and recipients sign their name. This year a Homage Roll was prepared for the Investiture held by Professor Anthony Mellows, Lord Prior of The Most Venerable Order, held at The Great Hall, University of Sydney. As well as the NSW Postulants the Homage Roll includes the International and Interstate Postulants.

### **Research**

We were very fortunate that the early Secretaries of the St John Ambulance Association and Brigade were people who kept the history and gave us an excellent start to our Archives. This enabled Archives to provide seven of the ten names of Australians who attended the Centenary of the Revival of the Order of St John in England in 1931. Those named were NSW members.

We encourage all sections of St John Ambulance in NSW to deposit their Minute books in our Archive as the information provides valuable information on the work performed in their local communities.

### **Women in St John History Project**

Histories and photographs of St John New South Welsh-women were submitted, and a selection published in *Celebrating women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future*. This publication was officially launched on Saturday 19 May 2012 at the 2012 National St John Member Convention in Sydney.

## **Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee**

*Dawn Bat OStJ, Secretary, Northern Territory St John Ambulance Historical Committee*

The Northern Territory St John Historical Group met on Thursday 29 March 2012 and elected committee members as required by National Headquarters. Frank Dunstan agreed to be Chairman and Dawn Bat accepted the Secretarial position; Steve Peers, Gwyn Balch, Lesley King, Pat King and Debbie Garraway make up the Committee. Alan Caust, who had been a long standing member, has recently left the Territory. We intend to hold quarterly meetings in the lead up to the 2013 Conference in Darwin to plan and prepare activities and displays. We are hoping to include our Youth Division in the program as some of the members have expressed an interest in being involved.

Our financial membership has decreased this year although it is difficult to be sure of the exact number as some membership has been forwarded directly to the National Office whilst others have still chosen to pay in the Volunteer Office in Darwin. The change in payment of membership fees from local acceptance to the need to send fees to National Office has not been well received hence the drop off in financial membership. We are hoping to be able to discuss this problem with the National Committee at this year's Convention.

The volunteer members of St John in Alice Springs celebrated fifty years of serving their community in October 2011. Among the dignitaries who attended the celebrations were St John Ambulance Chancellor, Dr Neil Conn AO and Mrs Lesley Conn as well as former NT Administrator, Mr Ted Egan AO and Ms Nerys Evans. It was also an honour to have long serving St John NT board member, Dr. Alan Bromwich in attendance. The Mayor of Alice Springs, Mr Damian Ryan, hosted a reception where a number of presentations were made recognising the service of the members to the Alice community.

*Alice Springs St John 50th anniversary birthday cake.*



The ambulance centre on Telegraph Terrace was renamed the Bernie Kilgariff Complex in honour of the well-known and respected Bernie Kilgariff AM who recently passed away. He was a Board member for over twenty years and was always willing to assist the volunteers in any way he could. His daughter Fran Kilgariff is now a board member and carries on her father's tradition.



*Members of the Kilgariff Family at the Ambulance Centre in Alice Springs.*

The Northern Territory History book which is being written by Frank Dunstan is progressing well and it is hopefully going to be ready to be launched at the 2013 Conference. On a recent visit to Darwin, Commissioner Steve Peers took several boxes of records from Alice Springs to be stored in our archives. Frank has been going through these and scanning important and interesting accounts of the Alice Springs history for the book. We were fortunate enough to receive a small grant to assist with the work Frank is doing, this will help him with the incidental costs involved in research, travel and copying fees. [Editorial note: at the time of printing this volume of the history journal, Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs: A history of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory is at the printers, and it will be officially launched at the National Member Convention Opening Ceremony being held on Friday 31 May at Government House.

Following on from the *Celebrating Women in St John Ambulance Australia: Our past, present and future* which includes thirteen Territorians, it has been decided to collect



*History Display at the St John members' dinner, Alice Springs 2011.*



## **St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria**

*Shirley Moon OStJ, Chair, St John Ambulance Historical Society of Victoria*

The Victorian Branch continues to grow both in membership and in the scope of its activities. Membership as at the end of the financial year was 56 members.

During the year the Branch had a further four quarterly meetings at which, in addition to the business matters relating to the Branch and the St John Museum, there were presentations of historical papers. The topics were:

- Heroes of our forgotten past: The story of Eirene Appleton DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Saints associated with the Order of St John by Michael Sellar
- Alice Ishbel Hay Creswick QBE DStI by Allan Mawdsley
- Evolution of grades in the Order of St John by Gary Harris.

Several of the papers were so well-received that presenters were urged to offer them for presentation at the annual Priory Conference. The custom of making such presentations at our quarterly meetings is seen as an important reason for the growing interest in local Branch membership.

A major activity of the Branch has been development of the Roll of Honour. It began a couple of years ago as a list of names of current and past members of all grades within the Order of St John in Victoria since its inception. It was then developed on a spreadsheet to include the years of award of Priory Votes of Thanks and admission and promotions to various grades, and the year of death of deceased members. This proved to be invaluable information for preparation of nominations for promotion, or writing obituaries where relevant. The next enhancement, mainly due to the hard work of our Treasurer, Gary Harris, was the inclusion of the Service medal and bars, and more recently, the 3, 6 and 9 years certificates, the Grand Prior's awards, all other awards recognised in post-nominals plus additional information such as St John Council membership and Senior Officer appointments. With these inclusions the Roll of Honour now has over 3000 names.

The Roll has now become so valuable that it is a primary source for Headquarters in appraisals for appointments and promotions as well as a resource for SJHS biographical papers. It is entirely composed of material from published public record material and does not rely on private confidential submissions.

A different but somewhat parallel program planned for the near future is the database recording of all old membership records. These are currently held in paper hard copy format in headquarters storage and are quite difficult to access when queries are received about former members. Although it will be a difficult task to list the thousands of past members we believe this will be a valuable resource for the archives.

St John Museum has received many donations of personal memorabilia and past records and materials from St John Divisions during the year. The displays and collections are constantly being updated. Several small albums devoted to specific members have been added to the collection when enough certificates, photos and documents are available. Our obituary display board now has more than forty brief biographies with photographs.

During the year our Honorary Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley, published a biography of the late Mrs Alice Creswick QBE DStJ, titled *Such Big Work*. This book was officially launched early in 2012 and is available through all bookshops.

Office-bearers in the SJHS Victorian Branch for 2011 were: Chair, Mrs Shirley Moon OStJ; Hon. Secretary, Dr Allan Mawdsley KStJ; Hon. Treasurer, Mr Gary Harris OStJ. The Committee members were: Mr Mervyn Goodali KStJ, Mr George Jackson CStJ, Miss Dorothy Bache DStJ, Mr Nicholas Clarke MStJ, Mr William Foley KSU and Mrs Gladys Blackstock CStJ.

At the time of writing (March 2012), nominations have been called for the 2012 election of Office-bearers which will be completed before the forthcoming Priory Conference

## **The Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, Western Australia**

*Edith Khangure CStJ, Librarian and Archivist, the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre, St John Ambulance Australia (WA) Inc.*

In Western Australia the Ian Kaye-Eddie Heritage Centre functions as the State branch of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia.

### **General status**

The general status of the Heritage Centre is good and summaries of work in the St John Museum and Archives are given in this report. Supplements provide additional information as required. We continue with our membership of Museums Australia.

### **Information Resource Centre**

The Heritage Centre continues as a reference centre for the Museum and Archives.

### **Archives**

This year considerable effort has been spent on acquiring and filing material related to volunteer sub-centres and Event First Aid Services (EFAS) divisions. We have also been sorting our records for past Priory meetings. Our ongoing commitment to digitising SJAA committee minutes is being maintained. This year we have commenced digital copying of official portraits.

### **Donations to and from the Museum**

Donations this year include a circular table, trophies and special presentation items, ties, photographs, books, (including some first aid books from Terry Walton, and, a copy of Maria Godwell's Fremantle Cadet history), ambulance equipment, a Resusci-Anne manikin, uniform items, first aid medallions and labels, shields, manuals, sub-centre records and documents. The donations came from members of the public, SJA personnel, EFAS and St John in Queensland.

The Museum donated a copy of our 'Centennial Anthology' book to a cadet from the Northern Territory. Insignia and duplicate books have been donated to a collection in Mandurah. Two SJAA ties were donated to a sub-centre. Three trophies, which were sent from EFAS to the Museum were national awards and, after consultation with the Priory Historian were returned to Canberra for their collection. Irene and John Ree delivered the trophies to the national office while they were visiting the eastern states.

### **Acquisitions by purchase**

A third montage of ambulance vehicles used in WA, ordered in the previous financial year, was received and has now been hung in the Heritage Centre foyer. A new tablecloth for the original SJAA Council table has also been purchased.

### **Loans**

Material was loaned to Fremantle EFAS cadet division for their 75th anniversary. Photographs were loaned to EFAS to assist with their sub-centre display in August 2011.

### **Reference queries and research work**

Requests for information on sub-centre and EFAS history; SJA personnel and old ambulances have been met this year. Inter-library loans were supplied to Dr Ozer. We provided information to Pam Cunningham and Jeanette Regan, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator in Canberra regarding Library and Museum protocols. We also assisted the Queensland History and Heritage Committee on computer programs for archives.

At the time of writing (March 2012), the 'Women in St John History' project is almost finished. Final selections for the book have been made and all editing is completed. The book is to be launched at the SJAA Members' Convention in Sydney in May 2012.

Two EFAS members from Mundaring sub-centre are compiling a detailed history and we are assisting with this project, which includes providing access to photocopying, digitising minutes of meetings, professional advice and marketing.

A roll of all members of the Order in WA is being compiled.

Research for our 120th anniversary of teaching first aid in WA is underway. We are assisting the Marketing department with information and illustrations for a major promotion of this milestone.

### **Cataloguing**

There is a substantial backlog with cataloguing but our major area of activity is currently with archival work.

### **Digitisation and binding**

The SJAA Council Reports for 2011 have been sent for copying in a digital format for archival purposes. The hard copy has been sent for binding and on its return will be housed in our fire-proof, secure room in Central Records. Some volumes of annual reports are being bound.

### **Restoration**

Considerable restoration work was undertaken this year. The original SJAA Council table and some chairs have been french-polished.

### **Museum promotion**

Material from the Museum was provided for the annual sub-centre conference in August 2011. In addition, tours of the Heritage Centre were organised during the conference.

We are currently assisting the Human Resources department in a revision of their Staff Handbook, which includes historical material. The Heritage Centre is also part of the tour for all new employees.

The Commandery Annual Report now includes items on ceremonial and heritage issues. This is a welcome development and follows a similar initiative in the Priory Annual Reports.

### **Museum volunteers**

Our regular volunteers are: Irene Simpson, John Ree, Barbara Franklin, Des Franklin, Frank Di Scerni, George Ferguson, Kevin Young and Betty Dyke. We are all working on material in the archives. Assistance is also received from Terry Walton in London. Our thanks go to these volunteers without whose help we would not be able to achieve so much.

### **Finance and security**

We are grateful to the organisation for providing our security system, insurance and funding. A fire safety audit this year resulted in an upgrading of fire extinguishers in the Centre.

### **Visitors**

The Centre has been delighted to receive visitors from the general public in WA and other states, the new Priory Bibliographer and Curator, some schools and community groups, country and metropolitan SJAA staff and volunteers. The self-guided tour brochure is working well and will be revised this year as we change a number of displays.

### **Publications**

A feature on the Community Care Branch was included in the Commandery Annual Report 2010–2011.

### **The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia**

The Society's 2012 history seminar in May 2012 will feature some international speakers as the Grand Council are meeting in Sydney and overseas delegates have been asked to present a paper on behalf of their Priors. Several have accepted the invitation.

As mentioned, the Heritage Centre functions as the Western Australian Branch of the Historical Society. After being elected President of the Society in May 2011, Dr Allan Mawdsley advised all the Society's committee members of his vision to further the work of the Society, specifically that every State/Territory would: have a local elected committee with office bearers; hold an annual general meeting, and organise regular meetings with historical presentations. The first goal of this committee would be to compile an honour roll of every person in the State/Territory who is, or has ever been, a member of the Order.

The situation in Western Australia is that the State members of the Society's committee (Harry Oxer, Kevin Young and Edith Khangure) take care of all heritage matters; that is, there is no elected local committee. However, research is undertaken by the volunteer Ceremonial and Heritage group, which meets regularly, discusses issues and sorts archival material.

The WA members were surveyed as to whether they wished to adopt Dr Mawdsley's proposals. There was insufficient support for the idea of a local elected committee and our current status will therefore continue. WA is meeting the purposes and objects of the Society. The proposed honour roll was favourably received and it is underway. However, as this is an intense data-mining exercise it will take some time. Our best estimate of this is late 2013 after which we will continue with recording other categories, e.g. Service Medal and Bar recipients. This project will be undertaken alongside our other research and archival work. Further discussion on this is expected at the May 2012 meeting.

### **Projects 2012–2013**

Cataloguing, restoration work as funding permits, meeting reference requests and sorting Archival documents are ongoing.

The 'Women in St John History' project will continue through 2012. After the official launch the issue of the other entries which might be included is to be finalised. Material for the next sub-centre conference will be provided. Work will continue on the WA honour roll.

### **Summary**

We have had another busy and productive year in the Archives and all areas of our work.





'Preserving and promoting the St John heritage'

The pictures on the front cover reflect the theme of the leading article in this edition of St John History: 'Friedrich von Esmarch. His contributions to pre-hospital care and airway management by Dr David Fahey, the State Medical Officer for St John Ambulance First Aid Services in New South Wales. As Dr Fahey's article makes clear, von Esmarch was a pioneering medical innovator as well as being the Surgeon-General of the German Army from 1870. Among his inventions was the triangular calico bandage that now bears his name: the versatile 'Esmarch bandage' imprinted with illustrations for its application. Successive generations of St John Ambulance-trained first aiders have learnt to use it, to the extent that it is often called the 'St John bandage'.

The front cover shows a portrait of von Esmarch in full formal military uniform superimposed on images of two versions of his famous eponymous bandage. Interestingly, among his honours and awards is the Maltese Cross of the Johanniterorden, the Order of St John of German and Lutheran tradition. The title page of *The Surgeon's Handbook* is also shown; one of Esmarch's two great books.