



# Pro Utilitate

Preserving and promoting the St John heritage.

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

### Issue 2023/3

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## From the Editor

We have just enjoyed the 25th Seminar of our Society in Canberra. It was an historic weekend in that we shared it with the celebration of 140 years of St John Ambulance Australia. What a warm, enriching weekend it was! Please start your thinking now, of papers you might be able to present next year.

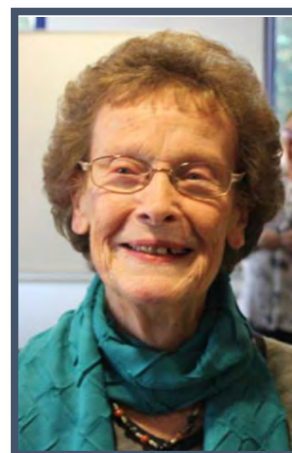
We note with sadness the passing of two of our members, each of whom made a unique and very special contribution and will be much missed by the St John family.

### Editor

## VALE

### Betty Esther Stirton OAM DStJ

Joining St John NSW as a Cadet in 1942 with the Canterbury-Bankstown Division, Betty progressed through various roles, including Superintendent for t10 years leading to her appointment as Corps Officer Nursing Cadets and then promotion to the District Staff in 1968. There, between 1968 and 1995, Betty held roles such as, District Staff Officer Nursing Cadets, District Superintendent Nursing and Deputy Commissioner in 1983. She was the first woman in Australia to be appointed as a Deputy Commissioner.



Betty joined the newly established NSW St John Community Care Branch in 1989, then served as the Chair from 1992 to 1998 and thereafter as a Director of the St John NSW Board. Betty was also a member of the Training Branch Committee and Ophthalmic Care Branch Committee for many years. She was a long serving member of the State Council and was appointed

## Vale Betty Stirton continued

Vice President in 2004. Other St John commitments have included chairing the St John Facilities and Support Committee for the Sydney 2000 Olympics and Paralympic Games, and then for the Rugby World Cup in 2003.

Betty contributed countless hours to the service of her communities and St John during her 76 years as a member of St John. Although retiring in 1995 from operational service, she became our Honorary Archivist in 1990, gathering historical items and documents for the St John NSW Archives and Museum until her retirement in 2018. Betty represented St John NSW on the Priory Library Standing Committee (1993–1998) and then the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia from 2001. She was involved in every facet of St John NSW over many years and at a National Level.

Her volunteering contribution was so widely known and respected, Betty was given a special mention by Mr David

Elliot in the Legislative Assembly in 2012, impressed by her 60 years of volunteer service at that time. Of the many awards that she received, achieving her 70 years of service was important to Betty. She was also the recipient of numerous awards such as Honorary Life Membership, Priory Vote of Thanks, St John Special Plaque, and a Certificate of Appreciation. For her dedication and devotion to duty, Betty was admitted as a Member of the Order of St John in 1963, and then promoted to Officer in 1971, Commander in 1977, and Dame of Grace in 1983. In 1997, Betty was awarded the OAM for her service to the community through St John Ambulance Australia for over 50 years at that time, and as Chair of the Community Care Branch.

On her last known visit to Burwood, Betty was happy to look around, meet with staff members and share a cup of tea with them, telling everyone 'I've had a wonderful life'. Yes, you did Betty.

Betty was 93 years old.

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## VALE Professor Peter Leggat AM ADC JP KStJ

The Australian Office is deeply saddened to announce the death of Emeritus Professor Peter Leggat who died on Wednesday 20 September in Brisbane. He was only 62 years old. Our sincerest sympathies to his wife Ureporn (Pan), his dad Bruce, and all his friends and colleagues around the world.

Peter was always a most welcomed visitor to the Australian Office which he visited a few times a year as Board Director, and Deputy Chair and then Chair of the Medical Advisory Panel. We were also very honoured to host him in Canberra in 2021, when he was invested at Government House as a Knight of Grace in the Order of St John, and when he received his Gold Commendation from the Chancellor in the National Board Room.

For all Peter's Australian and international academic achievements (which you can readily find online), he is best remembered by us as a very humble and quietly spoken man who readily shared a funny story or gentle joke. He was an observant and attentive person, and the best listener. Peter loved the St John community and often joined us at investitures in



## Vale Prof. Peter Leggat continued

Canberra, and the annual Church Service and Chapter meeting. Peter will be so missed, especially those of us who worked closing with him.

### Peter's St John achievements

- \* Knight of Grace of the Order of St John (KStJ) 2021
- \* Gold Commendation 2020
- \* Second Silver Bar to Service Medal, 2019
- \* Commander of the Order of St John (CStJ), 2016

- \* First Silver Bar to Service Medal, 2014
- \* Admitted as an Officer of the Order of St John (OStJ), 2011
- \* Silver Commendation, 2011
- \* Service Medal, 2009

Peter worked tirelessly for St John; in Queensland for 20 years and nationally for a period of 12 years. He will be most sorely missed.

**Australian Office**  
**St John Ambulance Australia Ltd**

## Coming events

The Historical Society is hosting the second of an online series of talks in March of 2024 which will feature Michael Andrews on cataloguing your collection (further details will follow in due course). We hope that it can match that of our colleague Brodie Taylor from the University of Queensland titled 'From the pages of history to your shelves. A guide to caring for your St John Collection'. Brodie's booklet can be downloaded here: <https://stjohn.org.au/about> (scroll down to 'Caring for your St John treasures'.)



**St John of Jerusalem  
Eye Hospital Group**

# EMERGENCY APPEAL



Our friends and colleagues from the St John Eye Hospital Group and their patients need us.

Please consider donating today to help them with the support they need. Follow this link to donate now:

<https://www.mycause.com.au/page/327867>

St John International is currently releasing weekly bulletins on the situation. Those updates can be read here:

<https://www.stjohneyehospital.org/israel-gaza-hostilities-weekly-bulletin/>



# The 25th Historical Seminar

The 25th Historical Seminar was held in Canberra on November 11 and received much excellent feedback on the day. All papers will be published in the forthcoming issue of *St John History* Volume 23.

The program was book-ended by two invited speakers: Brendan Wood, Deputy Chancellor from NZ and Matt Anderson the Director of the Australian War Memorial, both of whom gave excellent presentations.

James Cheshire was awarded a Gold Commendation by our Lord Prior, for his 12 years as Secretary of our Association. Well deserved, James.

Among many great papers, we welcomed back Dr Neil Conn our Patron, who gave a fascinating presentation on the Jerusalem Eye Hospital and reminded us of the continuing need to support the work of the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem particularly during the current crisis.



James Cheshire receiving his Gold Commendation from the Society President David Fahey (left) and Lord Prior, Prof. Mark Compton (right).



The Historical Societies Patron, Dr Neil Conn, presenting at the annual History Seminar.

## The Challenge

From Matthew Glozier

Given here are the obverse (heads) and reverse (tails) of a silver-looking coin.

Your challenge is simple — identify the coin, transcribe the script, and for extra points, provide the story behind the coin.



# Heraldry

## Thomas Budd GCStJ Chancellor of the Order of St John

On Sunday 10 September, Thomas Matthew Budd GCStJ, was promoted to Grand Bailiff Cross and installed as Chancellor of The Most Venerable Order of St John at St Peter's Church, Tahuna Queenstown, Lake Wakatipu, New Zealand, during the Grand Council meeting.



As part of this auspicious ceremony, Tom's Banner was presented to the Lord Prior. According to custom, this Banner will now make its way back to London where it will be displayed during Tom's lifetime in the Priory Church of St John, Clerkenwell.

Each Banner holds meaning in its images; Tom's Banner contains a simplified version of his family's arms, which depict the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean on the north coast of New South Wales where Tom grew up, with three humpback whales breaching. The whales migrate along the coast in large numbers at this time of year and can be seen from the beaches and headlands.

Tom was born in northern New South Wales, Australia, and lived in Australia for the first 25 years of his life. He currently lives in London with his wife Gill, who supports him in all his work for St John.

Source: Tom Budd installed as the new Chancellor | St John International @ <https://www.stjohninternational.org/news/tom-budd-installed-as-the-new-chancellor-of-the-most-venerable-order-of-st-john#:~:text=On%20Sunday%2010th%20September,%2C%20Tahuna%20Queenstown%2C%20Lake%20Wakatipu>



Arms: Azure two barrulets wavy between three humpback whales breaching to the sinister Argent a bordure engrailed Or.

Crest: issuant from a grassy mount a Silver birch tree stump bend wise covered in lichen perched thereon a lyre bird close regardant holding in the dexter foot a bunch of five Red rose buds slipped and leaved Proper.

Motto: *Deum Me Dirige* (God Guide Me).



Heraldic banner as Bailiff Grand Cross, which includes the arms of the Order in Chief. *Grant of Arms* (College of Arms, London), 26 June 2019.



## From the Priory Collection

One of the Collection's most precious objects (and a favourite with guests to the Australian Office), is the Priory Stone and Angel (a corbel).

The Stone and Angel was a gift to our Priory from the Order in England. It was presented when the then Lord Prior, Lord Wakehurst (a former Governor of NSW), had come from London to Canberra in 1966, to lay the foundation stone of the former Priory Headquarters Building on Canberra Avenue.

The round block of stone that the Angel sits on, is an original piece of a pillar from the St John Priory Church in Clerkenwell. (The current Priory Church is opposite the familiar St John's Gate and retains the 12th Century crypt.) The Church has a rather convoluted history (as expected given its centuries-long story) but the stone is from the former parish St John church building which was destroyed by German bombing in 1941.

The Angel is a corbel – a decorative solid load-bearing bracket used in building construction. Our Angel comes from the St John's Gate building (not the nearby church of St John). As the label opposite tells us, it was carved in the 16th century.

The Angel's clothing is interesting — the scalloped cuffs of the sleeves of its robe are folded back; it is wearing a headband or crown with a prominent cross; and it has a large, plain, square pectoral cross suspended from a chain around its neck. Though it has shoulder-length hair, we cannot tell if it is meant to be male or female because it is androgynous — combining physical features of both sexes.

While the Australian Office of St John occupied the former Priory HQ Building (1968–2008), the Angel was positioned above the main entrance of the Elsa Albert Hall, the large assembly room at the centre of the building.

See [Wikipedia](#) for a brief history of the Church of St John.



The Australian Priory Stone (left), and (right) side view of the corbel. The whole of the corbel is a single piece of carved stone – both are very heavy!

# Behind the Scenes at the Museum: Queensland

## Beth Dawson AM DStJ – Honouring her legacy

In a heartfelt endeavour, the dedicated volunteers of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Queensland have successfully completed their latest project, paying homage to the late Beth Dawson AM DStJ. This article aims to shed light on the meticulous efforts undertaken by our volunteers and committee members to create a befitting tribute for Beth, showcasing her remarkable achievements and unwavering dedication to the organisation.

In 2022, the Dawson family graciously donated Beth's insignias and medals to the society, recognising her exceptional service and commitment to St John Ambulance. This act bestowed upon our volunteers and committee members a weighty responsibility, one that they

embraced with great enthusiasm. Their primary objective was to ensure that Beth's profound connection with St John could be shared with the public while preserving the integrity and provenance of the donated medals.

With meticulous attention to detail, our volunteers embarked on the task of designing an archival display that would celebrate Beth's incredible achievements while staying true to the essence of our esteemed organization. The result was a display that perfectly encapsulated the spirit of both Beth and but also gave protection to the medals and their story.

Beth's unwavering commitment to St John spanned an impressive 65 years, commencing in the Nundah Division in 1951 and only concluding with her



## Behind the scenes: Beth Dawson AM DStJ continued

passing in 2022. Throughout her illustrious career, Beth received numerous honours, culminating in her promotion to a Dame of Grace within the Order of St John. In 2002, her exceptional contributions to community health through St John Ambulance Australia were publicly acknowledged when she was admitted as a Member of the Order of Australia.

This project's success would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of several individuals. Dr. Fred Leditschke AM KStJ who deserves credit for coordinating with the Dawson family and facilitating the generous gift of Beth's medals. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to Brodie Taylor, whose generous donation of funds made this project a

reality. Lastly, we commend the members of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of Queensland for their unwavering commitment and meticulous care in preserving these invaluable items.

The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Queensland takes immense pride in honouring the legacy of Beth Dawson AM DStJ. The volunteers have created an archival display that not only pays tribute to Beth's extraordinary achievements but also serves as a testament to the enduring spirit of St John Ambulance. This project stands as a testament to the dedication and passion of our volunteers, ensuring that Beth's remarkable contributions will be remembered and celebrated for generations to come.

## History of Cadets.

### Australia's participation in the 50 year celebrations of Cadets at the Isle of Wight Camp in 1972

The Cadet movement started in England in 1922 and rapidly became popular there and in other St John centres around the world. The first in Australia was at Glebe, NSW, in 1928. The first in Victoria was Richmond in 1934. The Golden Jubilee of the Cadet movement was most importantly celebrated by a mass gathering in Hyde Park, London, in 1972. A highlight was the presentation of awards by Princess Anne, Commandant-in-Chief of Cadets.

Part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations was the 15th annual camp of the London (Prince of Wales) District of St John Ambulance Brigade. The District Council decided to invite an international contingent of 50 cadets in addition to their own 250 cadets. The camp was held at Stoa's Farm, Totland Bay, at the western end of the Isle of Wight from 6–13 August 1972.

Two Australian Cadets, Nursing Cadet Sergeant Wendy Lake and Ambulance Cadet Sergeant Rayner Bechman, both from St Albans Cadet Divisions in Victoria, were invited, along with Cadet Officer William Knowles. The contingent flew to Heathrow Airport on 24 July, where they were met by St John volunteer families with whom they were billeted before the camp. Comprehensive instructions were given beforehand about the camp,





## History of Cadets: 50 year celebrations continued



P7405 Isle of Wight Cadet Camp, 1972

**Left-Right** Ashley Mason (D/O Cadets), Colonel Lewis (Commissioner, London Prince of Wales District), Rayner Bechman (St Albans Div), William Knowles (Cadet Supt, St Albans), Lady Superintendent London District, Wendy Lake (St Albans Div), Colonel Bob Payne (Deputy Commissioner London District), Andrew McQuade (Cadet Officer, St Albans).

what to bring, how it would be conducted, who was in charge and what the timetable would be. The host families helped with sight-seeing in the few days before the camp.

On Sunday 6 August, they went to Camp by train from Waterloo (London) to Portsmouth (Hampshire), then by ferry across to Ryde (Isle of Wight). The ferry crossing of about half an hour was described as a very pleasant journey, followed by special buses to Totland Bay.

The management was outlined as:

The Commandant, Deputy Commissioner London District Lt. Col. R.A Payne, is in complete charge of the whole Camp. The District Camp Adviser London District, Miss. D.A.G. Watts, is his Deputy. There are two Assistant Commandants also known as Field Officers as one is in charge of the Field for Ambulance Cadets and one is in charge of the Field for Nursing Cadets; they are in charge of all Cadets. Certain Adults are directly responsible for the supervision and welfare of the Cadets. They are called "Group Leaders" and each has an Assistant. Each Group consists of

three tents of not more than eight Cadets in each tent. One of these Cadets is appointed as Tent Leader, and it is to this Cadet that the Group Leader looks for the discipline and standard of that particular tent. Each Adult is allocated to a particular department and works under the Head of that Department in running the Camp. Cadets are "on duty" for two half days - one morning and one afternoon — undertaking their share in running the Camp.

The training will include complete courses in Camping, Map Reading, Animal Care, Clerical Ability, Fire Fighting with examination for the St, John Proficiency Certificate in these subjects.

The activities will include shopping outings, visits to Osborne House, Carisbrook Castle, Blackgang Chine and other places of interest as well as various competitions.

The entertainments will include a talent contest, fancy dress competition, a social and dance, a camp fire and a camp concert.

**Allan Mawdsley**

## Book review

Anna Komnene 'The Alexiad', a Penguin Classic, 2009

Dr Elizabeth Ellis OStj



Anna Komnene was a Byzantine princess, the eldest child of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos who reigned from 1081 to 1118. Importantly this was the period covering the Crusades and a critical period in the formation of modern Europe. Komnene wrote the earliest known history to have been written by a woman not only in the East, but in the West as well. It is an epic story which combines elements of a biography of her father and all his exploits as an Emperor. It is said to be more like a hagiography (a story of the life of the Saints) than a wider history of a particular era.

Nonetheless, Komnene reveals extensive, intimate details of military history and battle stratagem over the nearly 30 years of her father's rule. Much of this history she completed when in exile in a nunnery after a failed coup by her and her husband after her father's death. Her husband had commenced a history of the period which is now believed by most scholars to have been completed to the greatest extent by Komnene herself. She reports (pp 420–22) to have had her recollections confirmed and elaborated on from others who were alive at the time. She accompanied her parents on many campaigns and therefore most of the material, she claims, comes from her own observations or because plans for or accounts of campaigns were discussed in her presence. She also sourced documents written by older soldiers who were serving at the time but had retired to monasteries. She compared these records to her own and what her father and uncles had told her.

One of the most obvious omissions is the dates of events which was befuddling. There is an extensive Notes section for each chapter, which attempts to date events. However, even this proves a

challenge at times for the note writer, Peter Frankopan. The Notes however, are an extensive piece of research in themselves and very helpful. Another confusing point is that she refers to her father's forces as the Roman army. All things Roman are usually associated with the Roman Catholic Church or to distinguish between forces from Rome or the Franks from France. The Crusaders are referred to by Komnene as either as a group Latins, or differentiated as Kelts or Franks. However, her low regard for any Crusader is not differentiated.

There are significant omissions in time and event. For example, this history almost implies that the Crusaders arrival was unannounced or unexpected. Frankopan explains in Note 14, Book 10, that the Emperor had written to Pope Urban for military assistance against the Turks, which was part of the impetus for the First Crusade. Frankopan surmises that it might not have been 'the number of armed pilgrims that arrived but their dubious quality' that caught the Emperor off guard.

Komnene makes a pointed claim of being unbiased in her record, however, most historians criticise the work for her obvious adoration of the Emperor and high regard for every decision that he made. If he made an error in judgement, in her opinion, it was on the basis of being overtaxed in his responsibilities or having been



## Book review continued

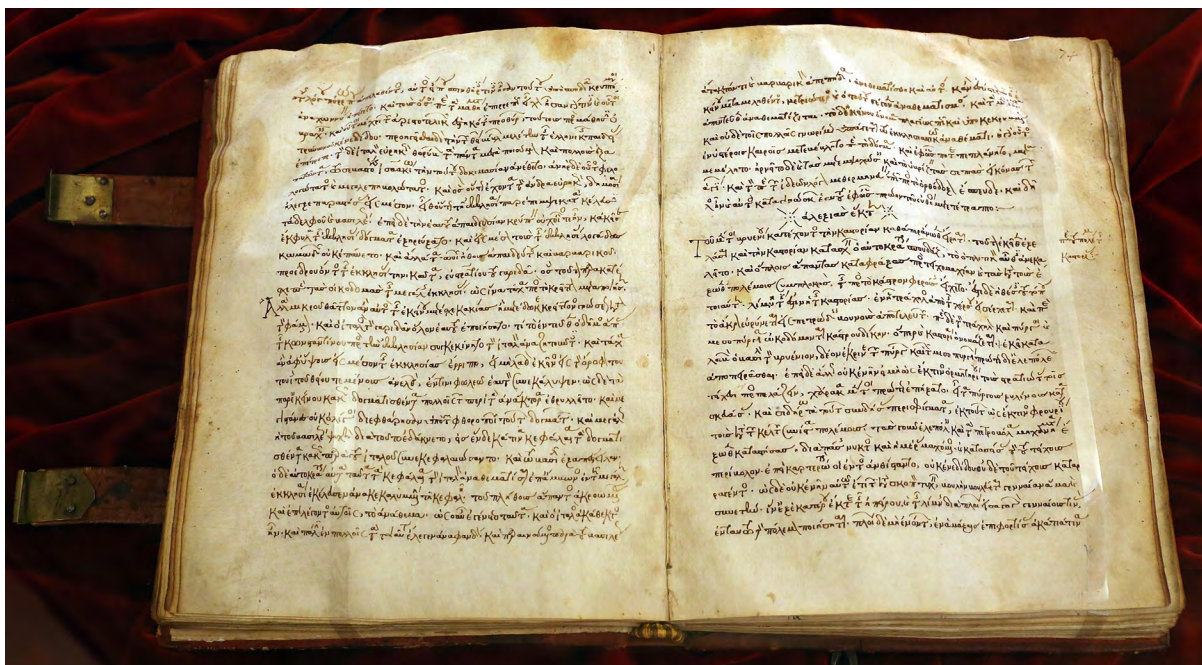
given poor information. There are times when she does criticise the strategies or behaviour of the troops but quickly follow this with a comment that they 'followed the example of the barbarians' (p. 74). She also viewed the Crusaders as barbarians, and while she writes very kindly of some, notably Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse, or Raymond of St Gilles, generally she holds the Crusaders in very low esteem. She writes,

For all my desire to name their leaders, I prefer not to do so. The words fail me, partly through my inability to make the unpronounceable barbaric sounds and partly because I am put off by just how many there were. (p. 290)

Having said all of that, this is a very important history of Alexios' reign and particularly of the period of the Crusades. It is an opportunity to examine the impact of the movement of the Crusaders,

through Asia and the origins of the ongoing conflict between the Eastern and Western churches. Komnene claims that each of the leaders of the Crusades was made to pledge an allegiance to Alexios as they passed through Constantinople in exchange for a safe passage, food and provisions, and some considerable wealth and presents. The intent of this allegiance was that any towns or lands captured by the Crusaders would belong to Alexios. Taking the oath was resisted initially by Godfrey but eventually all took the oath (pp 288–91) The failure to honour this deal by many, if not most, of the leaders of the Crusades, led to longstanding resentment and eventual retaliation by the Byzantines. Perhaps naively, I had often wondered why the 4th Crusade had sacked Constantinople, but this history clearly explains why.

Dr Elizabeth Ellis OSTJ



Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*. A 12th century copy of Anna's manuscript (Laurentian Library, Florence, Italy). See image at <https://shorturl.at/foG25> to view detail of the beautiful script.





23rd instalment from  
Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

#### Note from the Editor

Please join in with a letter to the Editor if you would like to contribute to this or any other discussion.

Another problem is ideological. What is acceptable historical comment and interpretation in one generation will be condemned in another. For instance, Manning Clark's six-volume *A History of Australia* (1962–1987) was widely praised during the 1960s and 70s for presenting Australian history as a grand epic, a saga through which a group of disparate convict colonies became a modern nation within fewer than 120 years. Not many historians would bother reading it nowadays because of its glaring faults. Among others, it says little about the indigenous peoples; and it almost wholly ignores women. Further, it subscribes to the 'Great Man' view of history, which sees human progress as being largely dominated by the influence of particular towering individuals, who are nearly always male — Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, Washington, Napoleon, Lenin, Roosevelt. According to Clark, Australia's 'great men' included John MacArthur (founder of the wool industry), William Wentworth (explorer, lawyer, newspaper proprietor and politician) and especially Alfred Deakin ('Father of Federation' and second Prime Minister).

Despite such difficulties, we probably all have our favourite books of history; and we might all be able to produce a 'Top Five' list.

# What is history?

## History's best history books

No two people could ever agree on what the all-time best books are; and even less could any pair of historians concur on history's best history books.

One problem is that styles of historical writing come in and out of fashion. Thus, the grandiloquent, oratorical style of Winston Churchill's four-volume *A History of the English Speaking People* was already old-fashioned when it was published (1956–1958). If the four volumes are still read, the readers will probably be Churchill fans who think he was the greatest Englishman who ever lived. In that connection, Churchill topped the list in a recent UK poll on the '100 Greatest Britons'.

If we did, we can be sure that no two lists would be the same. For what it's worth, here's my 'Top Five', all of them produced by professional practising historians:

1. Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (1996)
2. Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (1989)
3. Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Jerusalem: The Biography* (2012)
4. Robert Conquest, *Stalin: Breaker of Nations* (1991)
5. Diarmid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity* (2009).

Of the five, I class the first three as the best books I've ever read. The other two are also excellent histories. Some on my list are much more ambitious than others. MacCulloch's *History of Christianity*, for instance, is a hugely detailed 1160-page tome tracing the evolution of the world's largest religion in all its almost infinite variety. Conquest's *Stalin*, by contrast, is only a third as long as that and is a biography of just one man. What they all have in common, however, is the depth of their research, their authors' superlative historiographical skills, and the brilliance of the writing. Anyone who has diligently read any of my 'Top Five' history books will come away from the experience knowing that

## What is history? continued

they have been very well informed by truly masterful practitioners of the historian's craft.

Can we play this same game with histories of St John? Well, yes, of course we can, but how far will we cast the net? Do we wish to include the Crusades and then the long history of the ancient Knights of St John of Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta? Or do we narrow it down by confining it to histories of the modern Most Venerable Order. Or will we narrow it even further, to, say, St John Ambulance histories?

For purposes of this discussion, I'll limit the field to books on the Orders of St John. (Please note the plural here.) Here's my 'Top Five' listed in order of publication:

1. Edwin King and Sir Harry Luke, *The Knights of St John in the British Realm: Being the Official History of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem* (1967).
2. Guy Stair Sainty, *The Orders of St John: The History, Structure, Membership and Modern Role of the Five Hospitaller Orders of St John of Jerusalem* (1991).
3. Henry JA Sire, *The Knights of Malta* (1994) and its sequel *The Knights of Malta: A Modern Reconstruction* (2016).
4. Murdoch Wales and John Pearn, *First in First Aid: The History of St John Ambulance in Queensland* (1998).

5. Frank Dunstan, *Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs: A History of St John Ambulance in the Northern Territory 1915–2012* (2013).

These five books — six if we count Henry Sire's two sequential volumes separately — were produced over a 46-year time-span. Only some of their authors have been professionally trained historians. The others became St John historians because either/and/or they were curious, had specialised knowledge, had a story to tell, and developed the requisite historiographical and writing skills 'on the job'.

It's this latter group which demonstrate an important aspect of historical writing. This is that although professional training in historiography is advantageous, it isn't necessary to have had it to become a competent practising historian. What's important is commitment, that is dedication to the history research-writing task, determination to acquire historiographical skills, and application in writing up one's research results so as to convey one's findings pleasingly to other people. However the St John historians came to be what they are, we can be grateful for their work because it helps us better appreciate the benefits to humanity brought by the Johannine Orders.

## Editor's note

One PU subscriber, neither professional nor amateur historian, or author, does, however, proclaim a love of all things historical. They highly recommend the current No. 1 in history podcasts, 'The Rest is History' presented by historians Tom Holland and Dominc Sandbrook.

One reviewer writes of the series, 'The hosts are able to convey their knowledge and analysis of the importance of historical events with humour and fair balance. Education in a thoughtful manner without appearing elitist or dogmatic'.

Our subscriber further comments, that the series makes history interesting and accessible to anyone curious about the world we live in.

'The Rest is History' can be downloaded from various apps including ApplePodcasts, Spotify and GooglePodcasts.

## Recent publications

### The Priory Stones

St John Tasmania has recently published a paper on the Priory Stones. Pam Heiermann gave a thoroughly researched and well received paper on these at our November Seminar. This paper is available online at [stjohn.org.au/about](http://stjohn.org.au/about) .

### One St John Volume 8

The Order's international history journal, *One St John* Volume 8 is now available online for download from: [Reports and publications | St John International](#)

### Hato Hone St John

St John in New Zealand has recently released a number of publications which are currently available for download from <https://shorturl.at/btBD0>. Todd Skilton is working on getting these up on the St John public website in due course also.

*West Coast St John Ambulance Brigade, 1900–1950. Aspects of History* by Eleanor RMcLennan has also been recently released and is available for purchase for \$50. Please contact Todd Skilton at [librarian@orderofstjohn.org](mailto:librarian@orderofstjohn.org) for a copy.

## St Agnes Prize

The recently launched international Sister Agnes Prize is for an essay or piece of research work on women in the ancient Hospitaller Order of St John, during the period 1099–1798.

The maximum word length is 3,000 words and this could be in the form of an article for publication or an essay but is intended as a written exercise. The Prize is open to all members of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital St John of Jerusalem. Initially, the annual prize will be €200 for the submission that best meets the criteria including:

- Focus on primarily women in the Hospitaller Order, 1099–1798
- Women who significantly assisted the Hospitaller Order, 1099–1798
- Originality – newly researched findings or recently expanded findings showing insight and depth of coverage.

The submissions will be blind-judged by three suitably qualified persons, in academia and/or with a significant knowledge of the Order.

Please contact [jenny.wilcox@orderofstjohn.org](mailto:jenny.wilcox@orderofstjohn.org) for further information and a submission form and with any questions you may have. Deadline: 31 January 2024.

## Renewals for 2024

As we close 2023, we remind you to renew your Historical Society subscription for 2024 if you would like to continue your membership. As a paid-up member, you receive 3 issues of *Pro Utilitate*, a copy of *St John History* and access to a wealth of information on the ancient and modern history of our international organisation. You will find the generic membership application/renewal form on the national website: [stjohn.org.au/about](http://stjohn.org.au/about) Follow the instructions given on the form.

## And finally ...

The first issue of *Pro Utilitate* (No 2024-1) will be out in 2024 with a deadline for contributions by mid-April. We encourage letters, articles, or ideas for the forthcoming publication.

All the very best to you and your loved ones for the holiday season and a safe 2024. Please enjoy your reading of our publication. If you have any comments about this edition (good or bad) – just drop me a line.

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