

# Dr William Langsford CStJ

1965 | DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Dr William Langsford joined St John Ambulance Brigade as a Cadet in Auckland, New Zealand and graduated to the adult division. He served as a medical orderly during World War 2 and then came to Darwin in 1952. He left the Territory for a time but returned in the 1960s and took up a position as the Darwin Hospital Superintendent.

In October 1965 the South Australian Commissioner of the St John Ambulance Brigade, Dr J M Pedler, was invited to Darwin to help establish the Northern Territory as a sub-District of the Brigade. This was approved on 8th November 1965 and Dr William “Spike” Langsford, Principal Medical Officer for the Northern Territory, was appointed Deputy Commissioner. He held this position until leaving the Territory in 1972.

Dr Langsford was admitted as an Officer in the Order of St John in 1966.

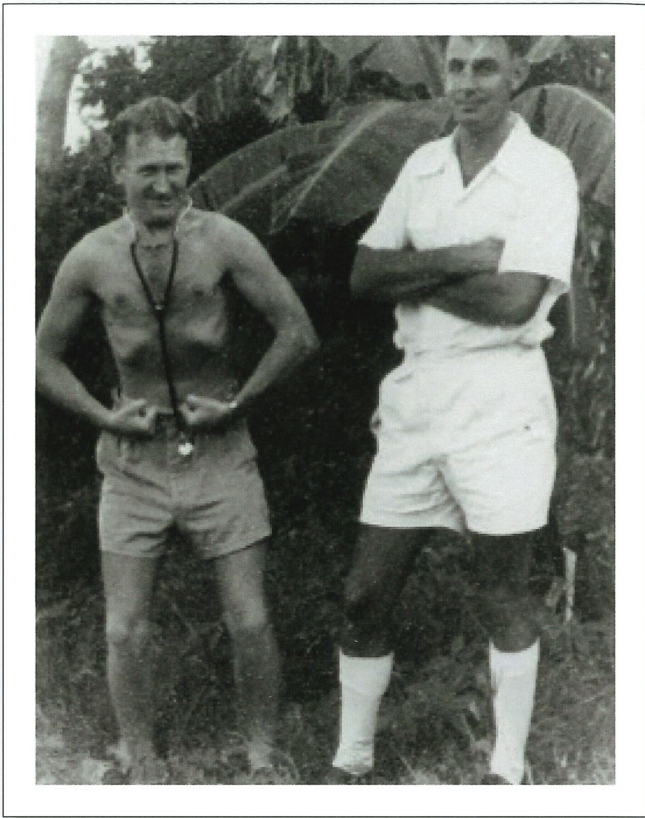
In 1969 a combined committee of St John Ambulance and Red Cross was formed with Dr Langsford as the Chairman. This committee was formed as part of a major recruitment campaign to boost volunteer numbers.

In 1970 he was promoted to Commander in the Order of St John.

Dr Langsford was the first chairman of the Council of the Order of St John in the Northern Territory.

He was transferred to Canberra in 1972 and was the Northern Territory representative at the inaugural Institute of Ambulance Officers (Australia) meeting.

He spent time in the Embassy in Rome before retiring in Canberra.



# Dr Colin Mills OBStJ

1972 | DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

1976 | COMMISSIONER

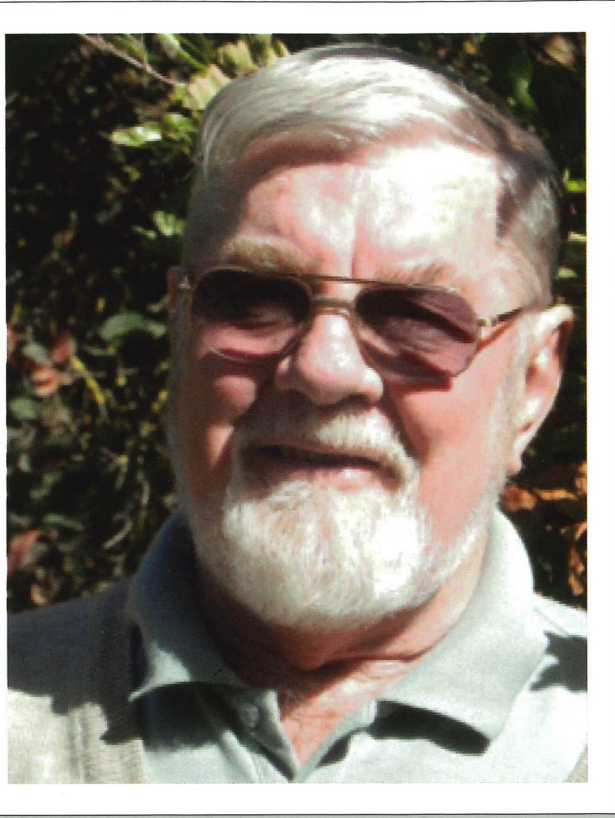
Dr Colin Mills was born on 26th December 1938 and grew up on a farm on the Eyre Peninsular in South Australia. Until the end of World War 2 when his father, who had served in the 9th Division AIF, returned home he lived and was educated in Adelaide. He continued his education at Urrbrae Boys High School from 1950 to 1953 then studied medicine at Adelaide University from 1959 to 1964. After his internship he worked in Papua New Guinea, initially at Bulolo Morobe district then Mendi Southern Highlands district before finally becoming Regional Medical Officer in Papua. During this time he was studying at Dunedin University for the Diploma Public Health and Diploma Industrial Health.

In 1972 he and his family moved to the Northern Territory where he directed the NT Health Planning unit until after Cyclone Tracy, he was then appointed Medical Superintendent CEO Darwin Hospital.

Due to his imminent departure from the Territory Dr “Spike” Langsford, who was Director of Health and Deputy Commissioner for St John Ambulance, asked Dr Mills if he would take over the role of Deputy Commissioner. He agreed and was eventually commissioned in 1973 when he was also promoted to Officer Brother in the Priory of St John.

The role of Deputy Commissioner entailed many meetings and much correspondence between Darwin and Adelaide. This was especially so while proposing and arranging the formation of the Brigade in the NT, the formation of the St John Council and ongoing administration of the NT District. Until now the Northern Territory was still under the control of South Australia.

On Christmas Eve 1974 Dr Mills was in Adelaide with his family when Cyclone Tracy devastated Darwin. On Christmas Day unable to contact anyone in Darwin he contacted the Director General Commonwealth Health who asked him to fly to Alice Springs pick up the Aeromedical Service aircraft, a de Havilland Dove, and fly to Katherine and operate the Aeromedical Service from there. With great assistance from the Katherine Hospital staff and the local General Practitioners they provided a service for the outback and for the thousands fleeing Darwin by road. Many of these evacuees required considerable medical help. “Around 2pm one night while in casualty a woman I recognised from Darwin Hospital nursing staff said ‘could you please help my husband?’ She gave me a tissue wrapped object then went on to



say ‘we rolled over just up the road’. It was a piece of his skull bone! After emergency surgery in Katherine he was evacuated to an interstate neurosurgical unit”.

After a week in Katherine Dr Mills returned to Darwin, the city was devastated but the St John Ambulance service had been magnificent. During the cyclone volunteers had remained at the ambulance station and when the wind subsided they had provided assistance to the locals; in the absence of road transport this was the only medical help available for some time. There were a number of individual great efforts by St John volunteers during the cyclone and Dr Mills recommended to Priory that they be acknowledged. It was, however, an overall team effort and all were recognised by a Priory Vote of Thanks.

In his submission to the Commonwealth Department of Health in Canberra, regarding funding for a St John managed ambulance service; it was this local community first aid in an emergency that Dr Mills highlighted. The community support was enormous and the proposal was successful. The mix of full-time paid staff and volunteer members provided wide community support in many emergencies. There were to be teething problems, the ambulance staff transporting patients over long distances in such a hot climate needed skills in rehydration and other medical areas. These problems were overcome and

## Promotions in the Order

- 1966 Officer
- 1970 Commander

## References

- Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs  
Frank Dunstan 2012
- Alan Bromwich personal memoirs



St John Northern Territory could be said to have provided some of the impetus for the improvement in Australian ambulance transport.

After Cyclone Tracy with community support high and grants from the Commonwealth Government the Casuarina St John Centre was established. The design was from a winning entry in a design competition. The Brigade flourished and the St John Council was very busy with tremendous support from the community as a whole. From Darwin to the border with South Australia the St John Ambulance volunteers and staff had earned community respect by their service during emergencies.

In 1975 Dr Mills had the pleasure of announcing that Mr Warren Burgess was to be the first full time Manager for St John Ambulance in the NT and would commence duty in August. It was following this appointment that Dr Mills announced that a proposal was before the Government for St John to take over administration of the ambulance service. It had previously been run by four paid staff from the Health Department and St John volunteers.

Dr Mills was appointed Acting Commissioner in September 1976 when the Territory was granted autonomy as a District.

In November 1976 he was appointed the first Commissioner in the Northern Territory.

On Wednesday 4th November 1976 the Commissioner, Dr Colin Mills presented a Service medal to Grant Keetley. Grant was the first Territorian to be presented with the Service Medal. Dr Mills says "I was very privileged to be the first Commissioner of St John in the Northern Territory."

"Unfortunately there were family difficulties and I resigned my Commission and moved to Adelaide. My wife and I divorced and I returned to practice Occupational Medicine. In 1983 I married Heather. My four daughters have University degrees, the youngest is a Medical graduate and my youngest child, a son, is currently at the University of SA studying aviation."

Dr Mills is now retired and living in Adelaide.

### Promotions in the Order

1973 Officer Brother

### References

Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs  
Frank Dunstan 2012

Dr Colin Mills personal memoir



Photograph courtesy of John Pohl: Parap centre repairs following Cyclone Tracy

## Dr Alan Bromwich OBE, RFD KStJ

1978 | COMMISSIONER

Born in England in 1924, Alan Bromwich graduated in medicine from King's College, Cambridge in 1945 and served in the Royal Air Force from 1946 until 1948. After that he gained his surgical fellowship and worked in England as a surgical registrar. In 1956 while working in the operating theatre at Charing Cross Hospital Alan was asked by the senior anaesthetist if he was interested in working overseas. With prospects of getting a consultant's job very poor due to extreme competition, he took up the challenge and a month later found himself in Aden, South Arabia, as a surgeon in the oil refinery. That job lasted two and a half years, finishing due to the deteriorating security situation.

Alan and his family returned to England, determined to return to the healthier tropics rather than live once again in cold, rainy England. Three months passed without any prospects and the family were feeling rather disheartened. Then two jobs were advertised, one for a surgeon in Darwin and the other in the Copper belt of Northern Rhodesia. Alan applied and was short listed for both positions. The Darwin interview came up first and in November 1958 Alan, his wife Rosemary and children sailed from England, eventually arriving in Darwin on Boxing Day 1958.

The Bromwich family had their first experience with the Canberra bureaucratic mentality while still in England. Having picked up and studied information about Darwin from Australia House, they were later interviewed by an Australian immigration official in Brighton. When the official said that he didn't know if there was even a school in Darwin, Alan replied that last year there had been three hundred school children in Darwin.

Alan's first impression of the old Darwin Hospital at Myilly Point was that it was primitive. It had been built just before the start of World War 2 and was now twenty years old. It had been extended with corrugated iron sheds for things like the TB ward. The single operating theatre was pretty poor, but they were already building new improved theatres. There were open wards and the maternity ward, which was an extension, had only just been enclosed with insect screens. "So bits of it were adequate. Bits of it were hopelessly inadequate."

Having come from an air conditioned refinery hospital and air conditioned housing the whole place was a bit of a shock.



After having done a lot of surgery on primitive tribesmen in Aden, Alan found that indigenous Territorians with their health problems weren't all that very much different.

With only seven doctors in the hospital a general surgeon had to be versatile, carrying out procedures that nowadays would be performed by specialist orthopaedic surgeons, gynaecologists and ENT surgeons. The hospital did have an eye specialist, so that's one area he didn't have to learn.

Alan retired from the Department of Health in 1981 and continued in private practice for the next ten years or so. "Until 1994, I was doing mostly medico-legal work, reporting for third party and workers' compensation, and various similar things. I finished that and retired completely in '94."

By the time that Alan retired in 1981 the Myilly Point hospital had expanded considerably. There were new operating theatres and "the old, rather tumbledown wards" had gone. A new surgical block had been built with two surgical, one paediatric and an intensive care ward. The hospital had come into the twentieth century and was as good as any country hospital could be expected.

In the early days the ambulance service as such came under the Department of Health with one or two ambulances attached to each hospital in the Territory. They were driven by a duty orderly who at best had a first



aid certificate. If the case warranted, he would pick up a sister from casualty who had absolutely no ambulance training at all. "The ambulances themselves were neither designed, equipped nor manned to give any ongoing care to a casualty en route to hospital and it was mostly a matter of 'grab and run'". The ambulances "weren't very much more than taxis with horizontal fares". In order to overcome these problems, the head orderly at the Darwin Hospital, Phillip Ganley, brought in some systematic training for the orderlies who did ambulance duty. Some of these orderlies were also volunteers with the St John Ambulance Brigade. It was at Ganley's suggestion that the Bromwich Cup came into being for ambulance competitions in Darwin as a way of improving standards through competition and rivalry. Teams competed from the Navy, Army, RAAF, Civil Defence, St John Ambulance Brigade and the Department of Health. In 1972 the RAAF won the cup and in 1973 a St John team won. There are no records of the competition after this date and the Alan Bromwich Cup currently resides in the display cabinet at the Bernie Kilgariff Centre, Alice Springs.

Alan got involved with St John Ambulance in late 1973 when Deputy Commissioner Colin Mills asked him to become Corps Surgeon. His warrant as Corps Surgeon Grade III is dated 17th April 1974, but Alan started a few months before that.

The Corps Surgeon was responsible for training and professional standards in the Brigade, with Divisional Surgeons responsible to him. At the time Charlie Stal was employed as Training Officer for the Ambulance Service and in a voluntary capacity for the Brigade.

When the St John Ambulance Brigade in the Northern Territory gained independence from South Australia and became a separate District on 30th September 1976 Colin Mills became Commissioner and Alan Bromwich became District Surgeon. Lionel Crompton was appointed to the vacated position of Corps Surgeon.

On Saturday 16th July 1977, the Chancellor of the Order of St John in Australia, Colonel Sir George Stening invested outgoing St John Council Chairman Brian Young as Officer Brother; Council Secretary Tom Abbott as Officer Brother; District Superintendent and Manager of the Ambulance Service, Warren Burgess as Officer Brother; and District Surgeon Alan Bromwich as Serving Brother in the Order of St John.

In November, Colin Mills left the Territory and resigned his position as Commissioner. Alan Bromwich wrote to the Chief Commissioner asking that the resignation not be accepted in a hurry, hoping that Dr Mills would return, meanwhile offering to fill in as Acting Commissioner in his absence. When it became obvious by February 1978 that Dr Mills was not coming back, Alan Bromwich was

appointed Commissioner on 16th February, effective from 28th February. He served two triennia in the position, retiring on 24th June 1984.

Alan remained on the St John Council and was elected Honorary Treasurer for the 1987-89 years, Vice-Chairman for the 1989-97 years, then the largely ceremonial role of President in 1998 until retirement in 2012.

Alan's term as Commissioner was one of great expansion for St John in the Northern Territory. In 1979 St John took control of the ambulance services in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, followed by Katherine in January 1980. New adult Divisions were started at Ayers Rock, Katherine, Jabiru and Nhulunbuy during the 1980s.

Cadet Divisions flourished, being limited only by the number of adults available to manage them. New Cadet Divisions started at Leanyer, Sanderson and Dripstone in Darwin's northern suburbs and at Jabiru within what is now Kakadu National Park. Others started at Katherine and Alice Springs. The Tennant Creek Cadets built up sufficiently to register their Division in 1981.

Now that the Territory was a District in its own right it was felt that the Brigade should have its own colours and Commissioner Alan Bromwich wrote to the Chief Commissioner in May 1980 requesting the granting of colours. District strength of 600 was normally required, but the Territory with its small population now had 359 members at the end of 1979, or 0.4% of the population. This was four times the rest of Australia as a whole and well above South Australia. There was no hesitation and approval was granted almost immediately.

In 1980 Alan attended a St John Overseas Conference in London. He was going to England anyway and it was interesting to meet people from all over the Commonwealth and to find that the more intractable problems were universal.

In the 1970s Alan was a member of the National Education Committee of the Australian Institute of Ambulance Officers. There were two members from each District, the senior medical adviser to the Ambulance Service and the senior training officer of the service. Charlie Stal was the other member from the Northern Territory.

The role of this committee was to formulate a national training curriculum for ambulance officers which would have national recognition.

When Commissioner Ian Ping suddenly resigned in May 1991, St John Council Chairman, Richard Morris, asked Alan to step into the position "for a few months". He agreed to fill the position as Acting Commissioner and recruited Stephen Baddeley to take the position of Commissioner when the new triennium started on 24th June.

The annual Priory Conference was held in Darwin that weekend, but with Steve Baddeley having to go to England for his mother's 75th birthday, Alan ended up having to take charge of the ceremonies after all.

Alan and Rosemary Bromwich travelled to London in 1999 to represent the Northern Territory in the celebration of the Nona centenary of the foundation of the Order of St John.

Among Alan's other interests was as a reserve officer in the RAAMC where he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, retiring on his 61st birthday in 1985.

He was made an Officer in the Order of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, June 1983.

Promotions in the Order

- 1976 Serving Brother
- 1979 Officer
- 1984 Commander
- 1992 Knight of Grace

Bibliography

Northern Territory Archives Service – NTRS  
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Bromwich, Alan; Extract from untitled autobiography, 2001  
  
Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs  
Frank Dunstan, 2012





*Casuarina Headquarters past and present*



## Dr Lionel Crompton KStJ

1984 | COMMISSIONER

Lionel John Crompton was born in Richmond, Victoria on 15th November, 1943 and attended school in Victoria before moving to Mackay State High School in Queensland in 1959 where he completed year 10. From 1960 to 1964, while working for the then PMG Department, he attended evening classes conducted by Queensland Education Department, and Matriculated in 1963. He then attended the University of Queensland graduating in 1970 with a MBBS. In 1995 he was admitted as a Fellow of Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and has been an examiner for the college since 1998 and was also admitted as a fellow of ACRRM in 2000. He is married to Patricia and they now live in Yungaburra in Far North Queensland.

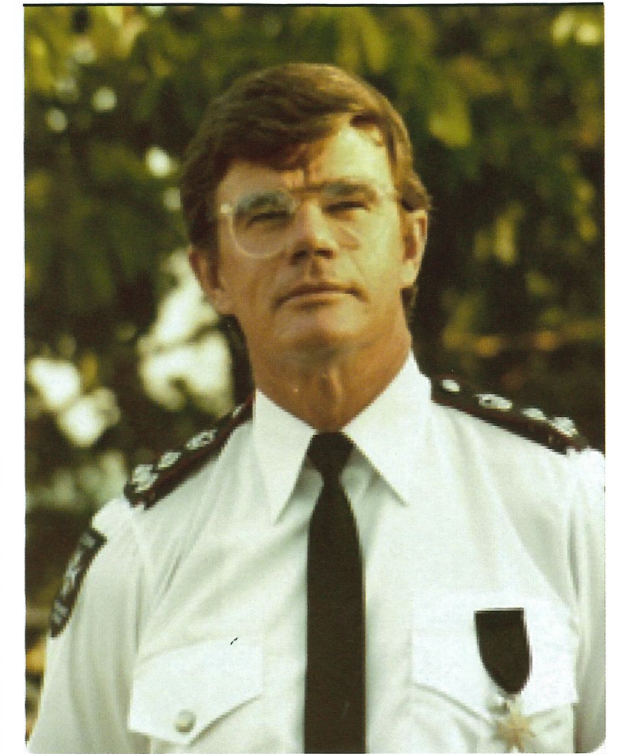
Lionel moved to Darwin in the Northern Territory in 1971 and began work at the Darwin Hospital as a Junior RMO. He held many positions with the Northern Territory Health Department between 1971 and 1975 and was the Registrar in charge of the Emergency Department at the time of Cyclone Tracy.

He left the NT Health Department in order to open his own private practice in Parap in 1975 which eventually grew into a group practice before the premises were demolished for redevelopment in 1995. He continued in private practice on a contract basis until branching out and opening Medical Centres in Humpty Doo in 1997, Oasis Medical Centre, Palmerston in 2005, Casuarina and Howard Springs Centres in 2007. He is still involved with these Centres although no longer consulting since becoming more involved with teaching and supervising medical students.

Lionel was recruited into the St. John Ambulance Brigade in 1975 by Sr. Ellie Pitts, who was the Nursing Sister in charge of the Adelaide River Medical Centre at the time. He recalls 'being handed a warrant of appointment by Dr Alan Bromwich on a wintery July night in Adelaide River, both were in uniform shorts, had goose bumps and windswept knees.'

The St. John Ambulance service was in its infancy and operated as a cooperative basis with the N.T. Health Department. St. John volunteers were covering weekends and evenings and some of the outlying calls for assistance.

Lionel recalls one of the main problems with the longer distance calls was not arriving at the Royal Darwin Hospital with a live patient; the ambulance crew would arrive at the scene while the patient was still alive but too



often they would die of hypovolemic shock before they got to the hospital. The lessons of Vietnam and Korea had taught us that we could save lives by putting 'salty water' into the veins. Doctors were rostered to accompany the crews but that often resulted in delays. Then as now, there just weren't enough doctors to send out. The Medical act of 1934 made it illegal for non-medical people to access veins. Not to be deterred some of the members decided to 'break the law'. They sat around on milk crates in a back room while Lionel taught them how to cannulate on each other. When he was satisfied that they were competent he authorised them to administer saline via intravenous drips. He had no authority to do this and admits that 'the local Medical establishment was livid. Who did we think we were doing Doctors' work?' They continued to break the law – but saved lives – for some decades until the medical act was changed.

1975, following Cyclone Tracy, the Health Department Ambulance service was struggling and so St. John Ambulance negotiated with the Commonwealth Government to become the sole ambulance service and this continues today

Lionel Crompton was the third St. John Ambulance Commissioner in the Northern Territory following on from Colin Mills and Alan Bromwich.



Early in his term there was trouble with the Ambulance Officers' Union. The union were of the opinion that there should be no volunteer ambulance crews. There were hostile meetings between union representatives and St. John Council, at one of the meetings Lionel found himself and one other volunteer advocate arguing the case for volunteer crews. After pointing out that their salaries came from money raised by grants obtained by volunteers, the St. John Council, the situation seemed to settle for a time and there were many years of industrial peace with the new union members working constructively with management and volunteers to achieve a mutually satisfactory agreement.

Lionel claims that many of his proudest memories are of seeing Ambulance Officers/Paramedics graduating. Many of them started with St. John as volunteers and still performed volunteer duties, when they were able to, as well as working as professional ambulance officers.

Lionel is justly proud of his part in establishing the ambulance service and says, "It is a jolly fine service, the people who designed it, us old codgers, must have been brilliant".



## Promotions in the Order

- 1979 Serving Brother
- 1984 Officer Brother
- 1989 Commander
- 1996 Knight of Grace

## References

Personal account Lionel Crompton  
Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs  
Frank Dunstan, 2012

# Dr Iain Ping

1990 | COMMISSIONER

Iain was born in London, United Kingdom, on 5 August 1939.

Following medical training at St Bartholomew's Hospital London in 1963, Iain held positions in United Kingdom hospitals in Surgery, Medicine, Emergency, Orthopaedics and Obstetrics/Gynaecology at Resident, Junior and Senior Registrar levels.

In 1966 he migrated to Australia, taking up a position as Registrar at the Royal Melbourne Children's Hospital, Victoria. In 1968 he relocated to Adelaide, South Australia and started the Fulham Medical Clinic, where he practised until 1988. During this time he also founded the Mile End Industrial Injury Clinic; chaired the Medical Committee of the Western Community Hospital; was Senior Medical Examiner of the Civil Aviation Authority and was the Medical Consultant for all international and domestic airlines serving South Australia.

Iain was also instrumental in establishing the Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix in South Australia, serving as Deputy Chief Medical Officer from 1986 to 1988.

In 1988 Iain relocated to Darwin where his principal position was Director of the Emergency Department, Royal Darwin Hospital. Alongside this role he also served as Director of the Staff Occupational Health and Safety Unit and was Medical Coordinator of the Counter Disaster Committee. His spare time was devoted to completing his Master of Health Administration and his keen interest in fishing.

From June 1990 to May 1991, Iain held the position of Commissioner of St John Ambulance, Northern Territory.

During this time opportunities also arose for Iain to undertake the role of Acting Director of Regional Medical Services in both Katherine and East Arnhem Land, and a further stint as Acting Medical Superintendent, Alice Springs Hospital.

In 1992, Iain was appointed Director of Medical Services, Wide Bay Health Region, Queensland. He held this position until 1994, when he moved to the Gold Coast to resume general practice. His great passion for game fishing was finally realised as time now allowed for fishing expeditions to such places as Egypt, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Cape York.

Iain remained in general practice on the Gold Coast until his death in December 2013.



## References

Dr Alan Bromwich advised District staff in May 1991 that Dr Ping had resigned as Commissioner and that he, Dr Bromwich, had been asked to take over the role until Dr Baddeley was appointed to the position on 23rd June.

St John Annual Report 1991

'During his time as Commissioner Dr Ping was very supportive of the volunteers and their willingness to continually strive to become better qualified first aiders. He was very keen to see the volunteers have the opportunity to do ambulance studies and therefore be more active in the Ambulance service.'

Mrs Lesley King, DStJ

I would like to thank Mrs Mary Ping for providing the story and photos of the late Dr Iain Ping.

Dawn Bat OStJ





Farewell at Yirrkala by Health Workers

# Dr Stephen Baddeley CStJ

1991 | COMMISSIONER

I was born in London in 1949 and was educated in London and at boarding school in Hertfordshire until I came to Australia in 1966. I spent a year at Scotch College in Melbourne before entering Medical School at the University of Melbourne in 1968.

I came to Darwin immediately after qualification in 1974 and experienced Cyclone Tracey and its aftermath. I met my future wife Dr Sue Sayers on the day of the cyclone.

Following this I moved to Auckland to complete my Orthopaedic training as this was the first centre outside the United Kingdom allowed to perform total hip joint replacements.

I returned to Darwin to set up the Orthopaedic unit in 1980.

Both Sue and I had always wanted to spend our professional lives in Darwin.

We have four children, Rebecca aged 35, Hamish aged 33, Rupert aged 29 and Lucy aged 27. We have one grandson; Hugo aged 18 months and another, Oscar, due in March.

I first became seriously involved with St John at the request of Dr Alan Bromwich who asked that I consider becoming Commissioner.

I can remember my time as Commissioner as a very thrilling and fulfilling time in my life and I found it an honour to work with so many people giving so much of their time and expertise in a voluntary capacity to an organisation that supplies such an excellent service to the community.

I feel that the most significant thing we achieved as a group during my time as Commissioner was to stem the gradual decrease in volunteer numbers and by the end of my period the numbers of volunteer's had started to increase significantly throughout the Territory.

I was particularly proud to be associated, with many others, with the further development of the Band Division.

I found working with the board of St John a remarkable experience and the leadership of Richard Morris and subsequently, Mike Mooney was really inspiring.

I remained on the board of St John for a period of three years following my period as Commissioner. Whilst I am no longer actively involved with St John, I feel proud of my past association with what is one of the Northern Territory



and Australia's most significant volunteer organisations.

## Notes from St John NT records

After being approached by the Chairman of St John Ambulance (NT) Inc, Richard Morris, Steve Baddeley agreed to accept the position of Commissioner in June 1991. The position became vacant prior to this as the Commissioner at the time, Dr Iain Ping, resigned in May. Dr Alan Bromwich filled the position until Dr Baddeley commenced his term on 23rd June 1991.

It was during his term as Commissioner that Dr Baddeley made a lasting legacy to St John in the Northern Territory. He introduced many changes to Operations Branch which highlighted his vision, strength and passion. After negotiating with the St John Chief Commissioner, Dr Baddeley accepted the challenge to implement significant changes to membership and management of volunteers in the Northern Territory. The challenge was to work outside the current General Regulations and develop new methods for managing the volunteers. The changes involved flattening the structure of Operations Branch and removing a layer of management, Corps level. Removing ranks, introducing major changes to regulations and selling the change to members was a difficult task which required a great deal of skill and patience.

Qualifications	Date Obtained	Institution
LCRP, MRCS	1963	College of Surgeons & Physicians
DRCOG	1964	Royal College of Obstetrics & Gynaecology
MHA	1990	UNSW
AFCHSE	1999	College of Health Services & Executives

LCRP: London College of Physicians of England

MRCS: Member of Royal College of Surgeons London

DRCOG: Diploma of the Royal College of Obstetrics & Gynaecology

MHA: Masters in Health Administration

AFCHSE: Fellowship with College of Health Services & Executives



One of the aspects of the change was for members to be promoted for their knowledge, skill and experience not for being a member for any length of time, which had seemed to occur in the past. Promoted members would be responsible for a portfolio and have defined responsibilities. As a result of these changes Management and Development and Leadership courses were introduced in the Northern Territory. These courses were designed to assist Divisional Superintendents to manage their members in an appropriate way.

The changes to the hierarchical structure were substantial and modernised the rank structure of the organisation. The changes have led us to the current flexible volunteering structure we follow today.

In 1997, Dr Baddeley and St John hosted the St John National Conference in Darwin. Once again the Northern Territory displayed how the ceremonial aspects of the organisation can be maintained and retained by some modernization and change where necessary.

Steve Baddeley was a visionary who recognised the need for change and had the knowledge and courage to implement it. His term as Commissioner will be debated for many years to come but there is little doubt that change was necessary and we now enjoy the result today.

After completing two terms as Commissioner Dr Baddeley agreed to remain active as the Medical Officer, a role which included reviewing all medicals for adult membership, advising on clinical matters and attending Northern Territory and National meetings. Dr Baddeley also willingly shared his vast knowledge with members by giving regular lectures.

*Author - not known*

### Promotions in the Order

1992 Officer  
1998 Commander

### References

Personal Story - Dr Stephen Baddeley



## Andrew Hodges CStJ

1995 - 2005 | COMMISSIONER

Andrew Hodges was born in Lismore, Victoria, on the 18th September 1959 to the Rev. Lawrence Hodges and Judith Hodges. As the son of an Anglican priest, he moved around rural Victoria spending the early part of his life in Warracknabeal, before moving to Coleraine in 1972. He was educated at Monivae College in Hamilton, where, through his participation in school cadets, he developed a keen interest in the military.

During his time in Coleraine he also became active in the Scouting Association as both a cub and scout. This was probably responsible for shaping some of his early views towards community involvement. Sadly the 1st Coleraine scouts were to close, due to the lack of adult leaders. For a short time the scouts tried unsuccessfully to maintain the group themselves.

Andrew joined the Australian Army in 1975 furthering the interest he had acquired whilst in Coleraine. Through his friendship with a local amateur radio operator and pharmacist, Roy Muir, he developed a passion for radio and electronics and went into the Corps of Signals as a radio and cypher technician.

During his postings to Diggers Rest in Victoria and Toowoomba in Queensland he tried hard to ensure that young boys could enjoy the benefits of the Scouting movement as he had as a youngster. He became a leader in Scout packs in Toowoomba and started the 1st Diggers Rest Scout Group.

He moved to Darwin in 1985 and lived for a short time in Casuarina before he moved to Palmerston where he starting the 1st Driver Cub Pack.

His interest in the community increased and after attending a St John public First Aid Course, run by Gordon Bowman, Andrew developed a keen interest in St John. He joined the Palmerston adult division and was taken under the wings of Ed Sinclair, Brian Maden and his wife Joyce, very active members of the Division. Brian was the Superintendent and after a short time he appointed Andrew as his Divisional Officer. When Brian resigned Andrew was asked to take over the responsibility of leading the Division, which he did.

With a keen interest in working on the ambulance, Andrew commenced his studies completing the Introduction to Ambulance Care and subsequently moved to the Certificate study stream as it was introduced.



He was very active on the ambulance from Palmerston Centre, spending most weekends doing multiple shifts in addition to public duties

Palmerston Division was struggling to retain volunteers and in 1991 it was decided to merge with the Darwin Division, the merger taking place in February 1992. It was here that Andrew met Lucinda, also an active volunteer, who was later to become his wife.

Andrew was a very active volunteer member and continued to maintain his ambulance skills whilst being involved in most other aspects of St John activities. He managed the National Cadet Competition in 2001 which was staged in Casuarina Shopping Mall. He recalls "the regular staging of competitions in a shopping mall was great publicity for St John although at times the casualty simulation could be a little too real". He recounts "while watching the competitions with his father a small boy vomited at one of the scenarios when the he saw the makeshift intestines hanging from a patient with a mock evisceration!"

In 2002 in conjunction with key sponsors, he organised the Ride for Life promotional bike ride from Katherine to Darwin, for St John Cadets and the Police and Citizens Youth Club.



Again with a riding theme, in 2004 he decided to raise funds and awareness for St John by riding, with a small group, from Darwin to the National Conference in Alice Springs. This event raised significant funding for the organisation. The event attracted media attention and both the Minister for Health Peter Toyne MLA and Richard Lim MLA joined the ride into Alice Springs to meet the Governor General, Major General the Honourable Michael Jeffery, who was attending the National Conference.

National Headquarters had asked the Northern Territory Commissioner, Steve Baddeley to challenge the paramilitary management style and rank structure of St John. Andrew, who was Territory Superintendent at the time, worked very closely with Steve and developed approaches aimed at changing the management style and its relevance to modern volunteer organisations whilst at the same time maintaining strong links to traditions.

It was against that background that when asked to take over as Commissioner in 1999, at the end of Steve Baddeley's term, Andrew accepted the challenge. He maintained and increased the focus on the Officer's Mess and a series of formal dinners were held. These dinners, focusing on tradition, provided tremendous community outreach for not only Operations Branch, but the St John Council, as they became a "must attend" event for some community leaders and Government Officials.

### Promotions in the Order

1994 Officer Brother  
2003 Commander

### Promotions in Operations Branch

1988 Divisional Officer Palmerston Division  
1990 Superintendent Palmerston Division  
1991 Corps Staff Officer  
1992 Corps Superintendent  
1996 District Superintendent  
1999 Commissioner

### References

Story provided by Andrew and Lucinda Hodges.

During his time as Commissioner, Andrew encouraged and supported the hundreds of committed volunteers that he managed. He was very capably assisted by Territory Superintendent Sue Cooper, a skilled professional and volunteer with years of experience as a paramedic, accountant and leader. As Commissioner he attracted to St John a "corporate" leadership team with specific skills, such as Rex Symmonds (IT), Sandy Cartwright (Education), Sandra Downing (Medical) and Linda Fazldeen (Marketing). He was also fortunate to have had a first class volunteer services coordinator in Gwyn Balch. Though a permanent role, Gwyn put in countless hours of voluntary service supporting this highly active period.

With both an operational background and a community outreach focus, Andrew and Sue tested the operational response to emergencies by staging a mock breakout at Darwin Prison. Enlisting volunteers from emergency services to act as the "would be" escapees, the prison break occurred shortly after midnight on a Saturday morning. Whilst this was coordinated with senior prison management, neither general prison staff, nor St John Volunteers were aware of the nature of the incident, adding to the realism.

It was events like this as well as a strong ethos of volunteerism and sense of community involvement, that during his term as Commissioner, he raised the profile of St John in the community and the Operations Branch volunteer membership almost doubled.

Andrew resigned from St John Northern Territory in June 2008.



Palmerston Volunteer Centre

## Peter Poole KStJ

2005 | COMMISSIONER

Peter James Poole was born on 8th November 1947 in Richmond Victoria. He has an elder sister and younger sister and brother. The family home was at Croydon a suburb of Melbourne. He started school at Wangaratta Primary School in Victoria and says his education didn't get off to a good start as he failed his first year because his handwriting was illegible! He continued his schooling at Mooroolbark Primary School, Ringwood Technical School, was briefly an Apprentice Fitter and Turner, and then gained a Diploma in Civil Engineering from the Caulfield Institute of Technology.

He was a member of the Kilsyth Cubs, Boy Scouts, Senior Scouts and Rovers and achieved the Queens Scout Award; the compulsory badge for the award was First Aid. The Kilsyth group had excellent leaders and numerous extra outdoor activities were undertaken. The annual bush walking expedition where up to ten days were spent trekking through the Great Dividing Range carrying all of your equipment and food in a pack on your back were the highlight of the year. Walks were from near Benambra in Victoria to Adaminaby in NSW, Cradle Mountain / Lake St Clair and the Bogong High Plains.

He is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia, a Chartered Professional Engineer and is on the National Professional Engineers Register. He was the Northern Division Professional Engineer of the Year in 2001.

He was a member of the Citizens Military Forces for four years, with 2, 16 & 10 Field Squadrons, Third Division, Royal Australian Engineers, whilst undertaking his Diploma studies.

In 1967 Peter went to the Northern Territory at the suggestion of his Great Aunt and Uncle who lived in Katherine. Their advice to him was 'if you want to see the Territory before it all changes you should come immediately'.

During the Christmas holidays of 1967, 1968 and 1969 he worked for the Commonwealth Department of Works (CDW) in Katherine as a Technical Assistant mainly on Beef Road projects. In 1970 after finally passing all the subjects of the Diploma he gained a position as an engineer with CDW in Katherine.

In September 1971 a friend who was teaching at Umbakumba convinced a Canadian girl who was also teaching at Umbakumba to visit Katherine with her during the school holidays. This led to the chance meeting of



Peter Poole and Adina Klassen. Adina was on an around the world working holiday; after four days they had agreed that they should consider a future together. Adina completed her around the world trip and returned to Australia in February 1972 where she taught at Roper Valley pastoral station school. They were married at St Michael's and All Angels Church at Kaloramba on 12 December 1972.

Adina has supported Peter in all his endeavours; he recognises the contributions she and the boys have made and that the hours spent with St John were hours not spent with the family. They have three sons and now have six grandsons and a very special granddaughter.

In November 1973 they moved to Darwin where he worked on Land Development and Civil Construction with CDW, in 1978 after the Northern Territory was granted limited self-government he was compulsorily transferred to the Northern Territory Department of Transport and Works (T & W). In 1981 he resigned from T & W and then worked in private enterprise on Land Development, Defence Infrastructure, Gold and Uranium Mining, mine closure, Civil Engineering, multi-disciplinary engineering and national highway construction. Projects were in the NT, WA, Qld and Indonesia. He currently has a contract with Remote Operations Power and Water Corporation managing water supply and sewerage systems on remote communities in the top 50% of the NT.





*Peter being knighted by Lord Prior Prof Anthony Mellows OBE TD*

In late 1978 he had finished building a new house to replace the one destroyed in Cyclone Tracy so he now had some spare time. He had trained with one of the local Australian Rules teams and considered re-joining the CMF however he decided that Darwin wet season climate was more conducive to less active pastimes. He was spending a lot of time working remotely from Darwin and thought that relearning first aid might be a good investment. A friend suggested that he consider joining St John. He joined the Darwin Combined Division of St John in February 1979, in May 1979 he was transferred to Tennant Creek with work, he joined the Tennant Creek Combined Division and it was there that he completed a Casualty Care and Transport course. St John took over running the Tennant Creek ambulance service from the Department of Health on 1 July 1979. The ambulance was crewed by two paid staff during working hours and a paid officer and a volunteer after hours.

In July 1980 he transferred back to Darwin Combined Division. They were the days when St John volunteer numbers and activities were at their peak; although he lived within walking distance of Casuarina Centre where Casuarina Combined Division met he re-joined Darwin Combined Division because it was easier to get positions on the roster. In 1983 Peter represented the NT in the National First Aid competitions and his involvement in competitions was to continue for many years both as a competitor, a trainer, team manager and an adjudicator. When he heard that the 2010 National Competitions were to be the last held a team was put together that won the NT competition and was able to compete in Melbourne. It was at these competitions that he realised it was a younger person's activity.

He has seen the Volunteer movement at its peak in the 1980s and witnessed its decline in the years since.

He remembers the night when Casuarina and Darwin Combined Divisions were addressed by Beth Haddon who had been appointed to an Ambulance Officer Training position with the Service, Parap Training Hall was filled to overflowing. She advised that all on road members had to undertake the Associate Diploma in Ambulance Studies and that the course had to be completed in a short period of time and lectures would start next week. A week later two thirds of the members had voted with their feet and only a small number of Volunteers completed the course.

He relinquished his position as Superintendent in 1990. In 1992 he was appointed to an acting position as District Superintendent. On 23rd July 1996 Peter once again took on the position of Superintendent of Darwin Division and Andrew Hodges took over as District Superintendent. Peter relinquished the position of Superintendent in 2001.

He was Ambulance Officer of the Year in 2002; the Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise runs an annual award where nominations are sought from the public for Ambulance Officer / Paramedics who deserve recognition

In 2005 Peter was appointed as Commissioner, a position he held for one triennium.

Most significant event during his time as Commissioner was the break down in the relationship between St John and the NT Government over operation and funding of the ambulance service contract. As Commissioner he was a member of the St John Council so he had a ring side seat as the "encounter" unfolded. The contract had some mutually exclusive conditions; the Northern Territory Health Department nominated how many crews were to be provided by St John and provided funding accordingly. The contract also had clauses on response times, the work load and subsequently response times were increasing. Health Department bureaucrats would not agree to fund additional crews so St John put on extra crews and funded them from financial reserves while negotiations with the Health Department continued.

St John reported in its 1995 Annual Report that expenditure for the Ambulance Service had exceeded income for the past year and that if additional funding was not received from the NT government then expenditure would exceed income in the next year. St John had cash reserves so it could pay its debtors and wages however the Department of Business and Corporate Affairs summoned the Council to its offices on the Thursday evening before Good Friday and advised the Councillors that if they traded whilst being insolvent the Councillors would be personally liable.

A short while later the NT Government removed the Health bureaucrats and agreed to fund the additional crews to allow St John to continue to deliver their service to the community in a timely manner.

Another defining moment was the introduction and application of the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

where Tertiary trained teachers had to undertake training in Training and Assessment. When the senior training person in Australia was approached to discuss the situation the response given was "Teachers teach and Assessors assess!"

Cadets used to be treated as adults if they were mature and acted as Adults, now they have to be treated as minors/children until the day of their eighteenth birthday then as adults on the day after. Once you had several Cadets at each public duty; these days you may have one Cadet attend one duty a year. The role of volunteers continued to decline as did the numbers and it was becoming difficult at times to attend all the duties we were asked to attend.

Several recruitment drives have been held and numbers appear to be increasing over the years.

In his spare time Peter's interests include St John where he continues to devote many hundreds of hours of voluntary service annually to the community; rural living growing mangos and vegetables, restoration of old railway section cars, recording and preparing papers on NT engineering heritage and conducting tours for the Institution of Engineers, the National Trust and other heritage groups on Darwin's engineering history.

### Promotions in the Order

1988	Serving Brother
1993	Officer Brother
1998	Commander Brother
2009	Knight of Grace

### References

Peter Poole's personal story  
Awkward Hours, Awkward Jobs  
Frank Dunstan 2012



# Steve Peers OAM, KStJ

2008 | COMMISSIONER

Steve was born in Mansfield, Victoria and educated at the Benalla Technical College. In 1964 he joined the RAAF with postings to Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and in Darwin from 1966 to 1969 when he returned to Melbourne for discharge in 1970.

He then worked in Victoria for the Forest Commission for about nine months before returning to Darwin. Steve's first job in the northern capital was to work as an engineering labourer, then as a sales representative for another company. His next job was with the Northern Territory Housing Commission where he stayed for five years. It was during this time that he attended a first aid course with the St John Ambulance Brigade at their Parap Headquarters and on completion joined Darwin Combined Division as a volunteer. This was in 1977 and Steve quickly gained a reputation for his dedication and commitment, reputedly working more hours as a volunteer Ambulance Officer than in his paid job.

In 1979, with moves afoot for St John to take over the Ambulance Services in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, Steve was approached by Brigade Training Officer John Hill and offered a paid Ambulance Officer's position in Tennant Creek. John was to be the Regional Officer and he needed someone reliable and not afraid of working long hours to help establish and run this new area.

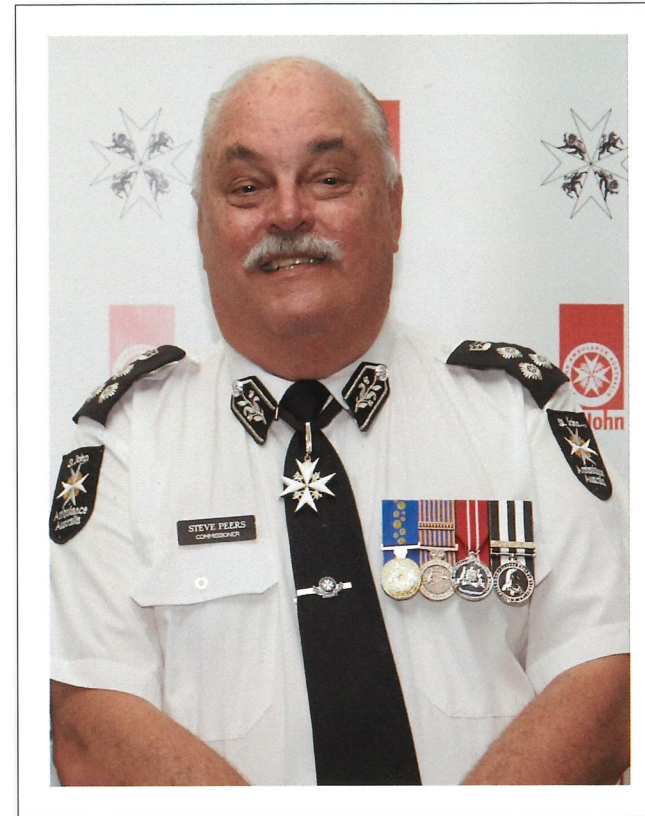
Steve had transferred to Casuarina Combined Division, with Northern Territory News journalist Terry Dahlenburg as Divisional Officer, and this is how the newspaper reported Steve's departure from Darwin:

"St John Ambulance Officer Steve Peers and his wife Ros were farewelled by Casuarina Division members last night. Steve joined the division when there were only a handful of volunteers and as one of the mainstays chalked up almost 80 hours a week, double his paid job! Now he's off to help pioneer the St John Ambulance Service in Tennant Creek - and is one of only two regular staff charged with establishing a volunteer division.

What will his hours be then? Ros suggests he should buy his own ambulance - he practically lives in one now, and should have one to sleep in." 1

Steve first went to Tennant Creek in May, returning to Darwin for a few weeks when his daughter was born.

Few records were kept of ambulance activity under the Department of Health and John and Steve quickly found



that the job was much too big for two people. They needed a lot of help to manage the workload, and with the Tennant Creek Combined Division pretty much in the doldrums it was imperative to recruit and train new members. A recruiting drive began on arrival in May and an Ambulance Officers Recruit Course started on the 12th June.

On Monday 11th June the Minister for Health, Ian Tuxworth, presented a cheque for \$24,000 to John Hill for operating expenses and on 1st July 1979, St John Ambulance officially took over the ambulance service in Tennant Creek and Alice Springs from the Department of Health, together with their ambulances.

Steve remembered telling John: "I'm not very experienced at this. I've only been working as a volunteer. There's work here that I've never encountered, so I need a lot of guidance." John's advice was: "If you don't tell no-one, I won't, and we'll see how we go." 2

The Ambulance Service road crew consisted of John and Steve during weekdays, and one paid and one volunteer Ambulance Officer with several trainees after hours and on weekends. Steve learnt fast and was charged with building up the cadets to the stage where they could split from the adults, and the Tennant Creek Combined Cadet Division was registered on 31 July 1981.

When John Hill transferred back to Darwin on 7 February 1981, Steve became Regional Ambulance Officer and also Officer Administering Command of the Tennant Creek Combined Division. He was Superintendent of the Division from 8 June 1981 until 12 March 1982 when he was promoted to Corps Superintendent Southern Corps.

Concerned for their eldest son's education, Steve and family decided to resign and leave Tennant Creek, but St John weren't ready to lose such a good man and he transferred to Alice Springs as Deputy Operations Superintendent (Southern Region), working under Brian Males. When Brian resigned on 14 October 1983, Steve took over as Operations Superintendent until a transfer to Darwin in early 1985 as Personal Assistant to the Chief Superintendent. He was promoted to Senior Centre Officer on 2 December 1985.

When the North Eastern Corps was formed in 1985, he became Superintendent until its closure two years later.

He graduated from the Darwin Institute of Technology in 1988 with the Associate Diploma in Emergency Care and returned to Alice Springs as Regional Manager Southern Region. Steve was the Alice Springs Operations Manager until 2008 when he was appointed as the First Aid Services Manager.

Among his notable achievements, Steve was responsible for establishing ambulance services in Tennant Creek and the Barkly region; he established the Royal Flying Doctor Service Communications and linkages between remote ambulance services, clinics and communities; and provided admirable leadership in the development of St John Ambulance Volunteer Services Territory wide. Steve's extensive knowledge and 'hands-on' experience made a vital contribution to disaster planning and

readiness of ambulance services in the Northern Territory as a result of coordinating of medical counter disaster plans and management of ambulance responses to the Alice Springs floods of 1983 and 1988.

As he lived in Alice Springs, and the majority of his work was in the southern region, he became involved in Disaster Planning for the Alice Springs, Tennant Creek areas. He worked hard to see the volunteer members and service personnel responding as 'One St John'.

One of Steve's goals as Commissioner was to see Divisions working closely and integrating with their local community and for St John to become well known as a community group.

Steve says his greatest satisfaction in both roles - volunteer and service - was 'seeing a job well done' and 'in members cooperating to achieve the best outcome possible'.

Adding to a lifetime of outstanding community contribution in the Northern Territory, Steve maintained active involvement as a member of the Australian College of Ambulance Professionals, Alice Springs Rotary Club, Alice Springs Road Safety Board and Alice Springs Emergency Services. 3

In his retirement Steve intends to maintain a close link with St John and to remain active as a volunteer while ever there is something for him to do!

He and his wife, Ros, intend to travel and also to spend more time with family.

Steve retired from St John Ambulance in 2014 after 37 years as a volunteer, the last six as Commissioner, and after 35 years as a paid ambulance officer.





Personal Highlights

- 1983 The completion of the Alice Springs Ambulance Centre.
- 1983 Opening of the Centre by Prince Charles and Lady Dianna
- 1985 Coordinating emergency response when a truck was driven into the Inland Motel.
- 1980s Helicopters introduced to Finke Desert race for emergency medical evacuations.
- 1995 First on the scene at the Pelair plane crash in Alice Springs
- 2005 Hosting the National Conference in Alice Springs – first time out of a capital city.

Represented St John on -

- Road Safety Council of NT
- Joint Emergency Services Disaster planning committee
- National Ambulance vehicle design committee

Timeline of Volunteer Service

- May 1977 Joined the St John Ambulance Brigade, Darwin Combined Division  
Transferred to Casuarina Combined Division
- May 1979 Transferred to Tennant Creek
- 17 Feb 1981 OAC, Tennant Creek Combined Division
- 8 Jun 1981 Divisional Superintendent, Tennant Creek Combined Division
- 12 Mar 1982 Corps Superintendent, Southern Corps
- 1982 Transferred to Alice Springs
- 1985 Transferred to Darwin
- May 1985 Corps Superintendent North Eastern Corps
- 30 Sep 1987 North Eastern Corps disbanded - Corps Superintendent Southern Corps 4
- 1988 Transferred to Alice Springs
- 30 Sep 1997 Assistant Commissioner 5
- 2 Sep 1999 District Officer Remote Area Liaison 6
- 2000 Territory Officer Remote Area Liaison
- 24 Jun 2005 Territory Superintendent
- 24 Jun 2008 Commissioner
- 24 Jun 2014 Retired as Commissioner
- Jun - Dec 2014 Continued with ceremonial duties

Awards and Promotions in the Order of St John

- 1983 Priory Vote of Thanks (PVT)
- 1987 Serving Brother (SBStJ)
- 1993 Officer Brother (OStJ)
- 2002 Commander (CStJ)
- 2008 Knight of Grace (KStJ)
- 2009 32 years Bar to Service Medal
- 2012 Gold Commendation
- 2014 37 years Bar to Service Medal

Other Awards

- 1989 National Medal
- 2005 Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) For service to the community through St John Ambulance Australia 7
- 2006 Australian Defence Medal

References

- 1 Northern Territory News, Tuesday 7 August 1979
- 2 NTRS226: TS 1023
- 3 Outback Ambulance, December 2009
- 4 Letter, Lionel Crompton to R. Bramley, 14 September 1987
- 5 Warrant of Appointment, Assistant Commissioner
- 6 Letter, Commissioner Andrew Hodges to Steve Peers, Friday 2 September 1999
- 7 It's An Honour website





# Mark Ferguson MStJ

2015 | COMMISSIONER

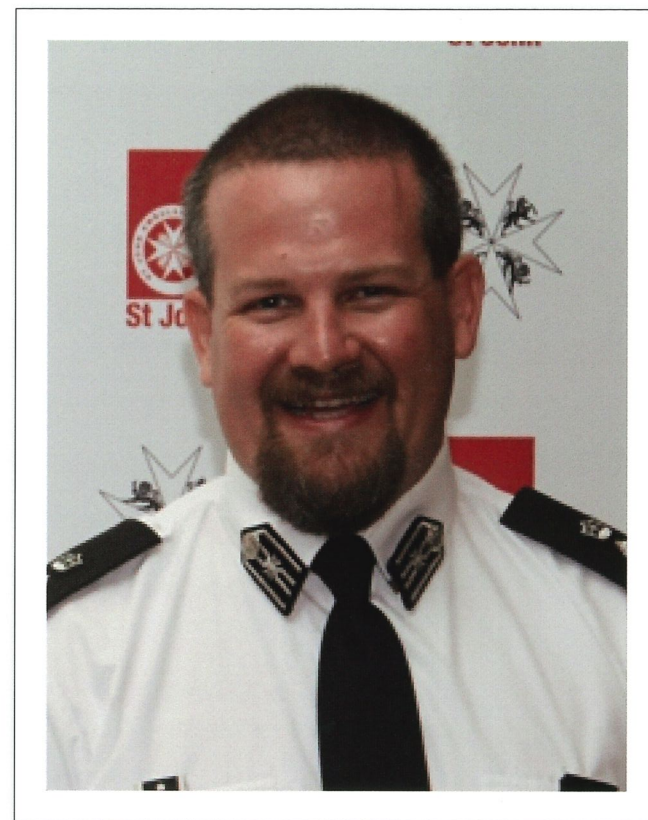
Mark Daniel Ferguson was born on the 13th October 1979 in Balaklava, South Australia. He commenced his education at Peterborough Primary School at the age of 5. In 1986 his mother, with Mark and his sisters, moved to Alice Springs where Mark completed his primary school years. In 1991-92 he attended the Alice Springs Cadet Division, and there started his passion for volunteering. In 1993 Mark's family moved to Katherine where he completed his education at the Katherine High School. He was keen to continue with the St John Cadets but when he enquired about joining in Katherine he was told that there wasn't a Division in Katherine.

While still at High School he started working part-time as a check out operator at Woolworths in Katherine. On completion of year 12 he was given the opportunity of attending Charles Darwin University to study retail management, this enabled him to progress up the ranks to a Management role. This was where Mark was to meet his future wife, Melanie. After the 1998 flood in Katherine he was promoted to Perishables Manager and was given the opportunity to do a St John Ambulance First Aid course. During the course, information on become an adult volunteer was distributed and discussed. Mark decided to apply and joined the Katherine Adult Volunteer Division; it was during this time that he was given the opportunity of studying to become a paramedic. He started the course while still working fulltime at Woolworths. He took annual leave to go to Darwin to do placements and volunteered many hours working with the ambulances crews.

In the middle of 1999 Mark was volunteering as a casual with St John Ambulance and did a lot of shifts while still working fulltime at Woolworths. In 2000 he decided to investigate the possibility of creating a Cadet Division in Katherine. Initially there were some difficulties starting the division but these were overcome. The Katherine cadet division was created and to this day is still going strong.

In 2000 he attended the Finke Desert Race and the arrival of the Olympic torch at Ayers Rock (now known as Uluru). Mark resigned from Woolworths at the beginning of 2001, and started working at Somerville Community Services caring for five disabled Aboriginal clients.

In July 2001 Mark and Melanie were married and a week later he accepted a fulltime position with the Ambulance service as an Ambulance Officer grade III. Mark and Melanie moved to Darwin in August 2002 and he transferred from Katherine with the N T Ambulance



Service. He qualified as a paramedic a couple of months later and began studying to become an Intensive Care Paramedic. During this time he and Melanie decided to start a family. He took leave of absence from the volunteers and in 2009 he was transferred to Nhulunbuy, with his wife and two daughters, as the Officer in Charge of the Ambulance service in the Arnhem region.

He resumed his volunteer involvement in the Nhulunbuy Adult Division as a Divisional Paramedic and six months after arriving was appointed as the Divisional Superintendent. Mandy, who was the Cadet Superintendent and Mark worked together to start a cadet division at Yirrkala, an aboriginal community, twenty kilometres from Nhulunbuy. The Community Education team of Kelly and Kathy assisted in trying to keep the Yirrkala division viable but in 2011 the division folded.

While in Nhulunbuy their third child, a daughter, was welcomed and soon after, in April 2011, they transferred back to Darwin. His continued dedicated involvement in the volunteers soon saw him promoted to Deputy Territory Superintendent and then in 2014 he accepted the position of Territory Superintendent.

Mark has continued with his studies and is studying for his Masters in Paramedical science. He has been employed

in senior roles within the Ambulance Service while also maintaining his involvement in the Volunteers.

Since returning to Darwin he and Melanie have added another daughter to their family and now have Chloe, Hailey, Sophie and Lilly.

In a new chapter in Mark's career he has been appointed to the role of Director Volunteer First Aid Services. This role involves the day to day management of all volunteer divisions and their community involvement throughout the Northern Territory.

Due to restructuring in the management of volunteers in St John NT, the position of VFAS Director also includes the position of Commissioner at ceremonial and public events. This is a position which is very well suited to Mark as he has a wide and varied knowledge of volunteering with St John.

Mark said "I am honoured to be appointed as the Director Volunteer First Aid Services and the Commissioner and I look forward to working with volunteers and serving the community of the Northern Territory".

When asked about some highlights of his time with St John Mark said "As a volunteer and a fulltime ambulance Paramedic I have been all over the place. In 2000 I went with two other members to be a volunteer to see the Olympic flame arrive in Uluru. I have also attended six Finke Desert races and have spent time in many of the mine sites around the Territory. A definite highlight was being the paramedic for eight weeks on the movie set of Australia, with Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman."

## Promotions in the Order

2012 Member of the Order

2011 Priority vote of thanks

## References

Personal account Mark Ferguson.

