



Pro Utilitate

Preserving and promoting the St John heritage.

Newsletter of The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia

Issue 2021/3

In this issue ...

* From the Editor	1
* Another transition	1
* The 'Challenge'	2
* Who's in Order?	5
* Numismatics	6
* Making history	7
* Behind the scenes in the Museum	8
* A question of history	9
* Book reviews	10
* What is history?	11
* A new publication	12
* SOA-Australia	13
* Renewals for 2021	13
* And finally ...	13

Forthcoming event

29 November 2021

The Historical Society will be conducting its annual seminar in November. This will be hosted by St John ACT in Canberra followed the next day with the Church Service and Priory Chapter meeting.

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From the Editor

I am incredibly impressed with the enthusiasm and expertise of those who contribute to this publication. Also, I'm extremely grateful for the stream of ideas, writings, conundrums and differences of opinion that cross my desk. Thank you for making my life so much easier by your contributions. **Editor**

Another transition

The National Office recently announced the appointment of **Dr Matthew Glozier OStJ** to the position of Priory Librarian for St John Ambulance Australia. Matthew succeeds **Professor John Pearn AO GCStJ** who provided three erudite and enthusiastic terms in this voluntary role.



Matthew is currently the History Master at Sydney Grammar School; holds positions with the University of Sydney; is the Honorary Archivist with St John Ambulance New South Wales and is the Editor of both *St John History* and *One St John*. He is an internationally recognised authority on the history of the Order of St John, Scottish military history, Australian Air Force Cadets, and the Boer War. Matthew is widely published, with six books in print and numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals. He is deeply committed to community volunteering and holds several significant positions of trust and leadership.

The role of the Priory Librarian is to promote the history and traditions of the Order through activities relating to St John historical studies, including the establishment and maintenance of repositories for library, pictorial, museum, archival and other heritage material.

Mr Len Fiori KStJ, CEO and Priory Secretary

The 'Challenge'

The **first challenge** for this Issue is to identify these two medals provided by **Matthew Glozier**.



The **second challenge** comes from **Dr Allan Mawdsley OAM KStJ** who hopes it will be of interest to our dear readers.

This small 2 cm diameter badge was recently donated to the St John Museum of Victoria.



It shows the Order of St John white cross surmounted on an eleven-pointed gold star. If any member can identify the badge, Allan and Co. would be most grateful.

The previous Challenge

Thanks to all the thoroughly researched responses to the last challenge. They are worthy of a lengthy article ...

Yes, the regalia in the image below was identified! And **Matthew Glozier** was correct that someone would know the identity of who they belonged to. Congratulations **Mr Malcom Little OAM CStJ**! They belonged to **Dr Frances McKay OBE**. Following is a collation of all that we know from your contributions.



But first, for all of you who correctly identified that the image was reversed, you will have to accept a mea culpa. When you reduce an image down in size too quickly it will reverse automatically. They say women are fickle but it's nothing compared to computers. **Editor**



Left to Right: Officer of the Order of the British Empire, Coronation Medal (1953), St John Ambulance Service Medal, Dame of the Venerable Order of St John (Breast Star and Badge), and miniature medals (DStJ, Coronation Medal and St John Service Medal).

Malcolm's logic went like this: I chose Dr McKay because the miniature group does NOT have the OBE mounted with it. Dr McKay was awarded the OBE in 1968 and died on 4 August, 1969 so possibly didn't have time or inclination to have her miniature group updated. The number of bars on the Service Medal would indicate the recipient served at least 27 years and possibly longer. Against the argument for Dr McKay is a photo of her in *St John History* (Volume 9, 2009–10) which shows her wearing her Coronation Medal on a bow. As far as I could see only Dr McKay and Dr Ardill-Brice received both a DStJ and a 1953 Coronation Medal.

The Challenge continues

The **final challenge** is to ask if anyone knows who might have owned this ceremonial baton which is now in the possession of our current **Lord Prior**. It may have been used as a walking stick; it is 90 cm long. It has St John Ambulance Brigade and St John Ambulance Association inscribed on the top. The silver markings are 'WH', an 'O', and there's an anchor and a lion. 'WH' may refer to William Hammon who was a registered silversmith from 1863.



The anchor tells us it was made in Birmingham and the 'O' tells us it was made in 1913. It was purchased from an auction house in Petersham, in Sydney and was reportedly from a collection from Western NSW. It has been well used by someone.

If anyone has seen it in action or knows anything of its history it would be great to hear. And extra points if you know what to call a person who collects walking sticks, canes or staffs! **Editor**

The previous Challenge continued

Further information from Malcom:

The Order of the British Empire changed design in 1937. It was due to change in 1936 but the abdication put that on hold. The New Year's Honour List of 1936 reflected the awards approved by George V, but he died before they were presented and those awards were of the old design. Queen Mary never liked the old purple ribbon and following the death of her husband she became Grand Master of the Order, taking over from her son Edward VIII. It was decided not to make any change until George VI ascended the throne and those awarded in the 1937 New Year's Honours List were of the new design. The obverse bears the conjoined busts of George V and Mary as the Order was instituted by George V in 1917. The design remains the same to this day.

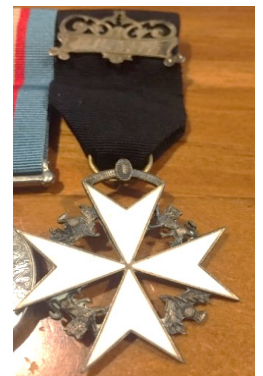
Malcom Little

Importantly, Dr McKay was our Australian Priory representative at the opening of the new Jerusalem eye hospital at its Sheik Jarrah location, in 1960.

A Maltese cross 'jewel'

An earlier Challenge was set by **Allan Mawdsley**, to identify this Maltese Cross.

As you can see, it has alternating Scotch thistles and lions passant between the four arms of the cross; and at the top of the black ribbon is an elaborate gold bar bearing what appears to be an inscription (which is indecipherable).



Ian Howie-Willis says: My own bet, 'Edinburgh to a brick', is that it's a Masonic award from one of the 'Scottish Rite' orders of Templars or Hospitallers, possibly in Scotland itself.

Here are a couple of points that **Paul Rosenzweig** contributed.

Firstly, the medal is not necessarily related to World War 2 service but being mounted after an Australia Service Medal 1939-1945 does verify that its owner served in the Australian military forces during the war. It is worth noting that as an Australian, the war medals will be named, and this will help with researching the recipient.

The previous Challenge continued



These are the Masonic breast jewels of Dr Gavin Viner Smith CStJ MBBS (1911–1989). He served as Assistant Commissioner of the St John Ambulance Brigade (SA) from 1973 until his retirement on 30 June 1977. Dr Viner Smith was appointed SBStJ in 1965, promoted OStJ in 1972, and to CStJ in 1977. He also received the Service Medal of the Order in 1960, with three Service Bars (1966, 1970 and 1975).

The medal on the left is the Knight's Cross of the Masonic Knights Templar ('Order of the Temple'), a breast jewel in gold and red enamel. The medal on the right is the Knight's Cross of the Ancient and Masonic Order of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes, and Malta. From the collection of the Museum and Research Centre of the St John Ambulance Historical Society of South Australia.

Secondly, the presumption that the insignia is not part of the Order of St John is correct. The form and structure of the medal indicate that it is a Freemasonry medal (known as a 'Jewel'). The St John Ambulance Historical Society of SA holds a similar medal in its collection (see right)—a Knight's Cross of the Masonic Knights of Malta or simply the 'Order of Malta'. This order is often known by the full title of 'the Ancient and Masonic Order of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes, and Malta'. This medal is a breast jewel, in gilt metal and white enamel, bearing four lions passant guardant in the angles between the arms of the cross, all facing counter-clockwise.

This is an important aspect of the symbolism: a 'lion passant' is walking with its head facing directly forward, with the right forepaw raised and all others on the ground. When 'guardant', its head is turned to face the viewer. The insignia of the Order of St John includes two lions passant guardant. The lion passant guardant is also known as the 'Lion of England', and hence this Masonic Jewel represents the 'Order of Malta' awarded under the English Constitution.

It has been quite common to embellish the white enamel Maltese cross. The insignia of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta has fleur-de-lis emblems between the arms. The Order of St John (Johanniter Orden) of the Kingdom of Prussia had a Prussian eagle between the white enamelled arms. The symbolism of the medal shown in the Challenge—a Masonic breast jewel bearing two lions passant guardant alternating with thistles—suggests it is a Knight's Cross of the Masonic Knights of Malta awarded under the Scottish Constitution.

Of interest, there is no known historical connection to the original medieval Order of Knights Templar, nor is such a connection claimed by the Freemasons.

Maj. Paul A Rosenzweig OAM

Who's in Order?

Many St John Ambulance members received awards in the Queen's Birthday Honours List announced on 14 June. Congratulations to the following Members:

- * Governor Designate Ms Frances Adamson AC (SA)
- * Mr Roland Chin AM CStJ (NT)
- * Mr Ian Cox AM MStJ (SA)
- * Mr David Czerkies OAM CStJ (NSW)
- * Ms Sandra Haring OAM CStJ (NSW)
- * Dr Edith Khangure OAM DStJ (WA)
- * Reverend James Pilmer PSM OAM OStJ (Vic.)
- * Mrs Elizabeth Scarce AM DStJ (SA)
- * Mrs Margaret Vincent OAM CStJ (NSW)

Dr Edith Khangure (HS member) has been honoured 'for service to community history'. Edith has been the Deputy Secretary of the Historical Society since 2012 and is a Life Member of the Society. Her many other distinctions include: being a member of the five-person committee that drafted the original Constitution which brought the Society into existence in 2001; being the foundation Curator of the 'Ian Kaye-Eddie' Heritage Centre of St John Ambulance in Western Australia; being the present Director of Ceremonies for the Western Australian Commandery of the Order; and being a Dame of Grace of the Order.

Mr Roland Chin (HS member) has been honoured 'for significant services to the community' including his contribution to St John Ambulance Northern Territory including being a Board Member since 2002, Chair, 2015–2018 and Treasurer since 2018.

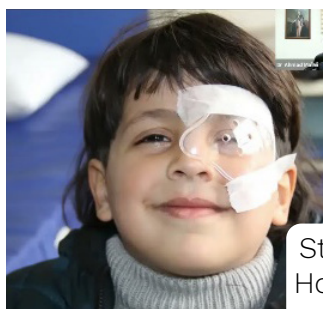
Pro Utilitate congratulates all these members of St John on their well-deserved honours.

The sculptured Swifts of the St John Eye Hospital

In March, Matthew Glozier conducted an interview with British sculptor, Mark Coreth, who designed the magnificent tree in the peace garden of our Order's Muristan clinic in the Old City of Jerusalem. He is also responsible for the 'swifts' sculptures that help raise money for the Hospital. You can watch the recorded interview on the Museum of the Order of St John's Youtube channel: '[Swifts of Hope and the St John Eye Hospital](#)'.



**St John of Jerusalem
Eye Hospital Group**



St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group is the oldest and only charitable provider of expert eye care in the Middle East. It transforms lives by saving sight.



Numismatics

The Queen Victoria Jubilee medals

Two lots of related medals have come to us. The 2020/4 edition of *Pro Utilitate* contained a challenge regarding a pair of miniature medals, and various responses were published in edition 2021/1. In addition, [Allan Mawdsley](#) has sent in this pair of images for another medal for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Allan was unaware that such a medal existed although he was aware that it was this celebration that led to the formation of the Brigade in England.

Paul Rosenzweig has added a little more information regarding the first medal and some insight as to what the second medal might signify. To mark the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession in 1887, the Queen sanctioned a Golden Jubilee commemorative medal to be struck in gold, silver and bronze, with a ring suspension. The suspension ribbon was in garter blue (drawn from the ribbon of the Order of the Garter), with wide white stripes towards each edge. The text on the reverse shows that the medal commemorates the 50th year of reign, with the date '21 June 1887', the date of 'Jubilee Day' and the Royal Jubilee Procession in London.

A decade later, Queen Victoria created the Diamond Jubilee Medal, again struck in gold, silver and bronze. The design and ribbon are identical to the 1887 medal, however the reverse shows that the medal commemorates the 60th year of reign, with the date '20 June 1897', the actual anniversary of the Queen's accession.

Despite having the same ribbon and obverse design, these two medals can readily be distinguished by the detail on the reverse. The image provided is not clear, but it no doubt shows the date '20 June 1897' on the reverse.

There is another significant aspect – the medal depicted in PU 2020/4 was certainly not awarded to volunteers of the St John Ambulance Brigade for being on duty in London at the time of the celebrations on 21 June and the Great Procession on 22 June 1897. These members received a distinctively different award: the Queen Victoria Police Jubilee Medal (1897), a bronze medal with a straight bar suspension and a plain dark blue ribbon. There were 10,086 awards of the 1897 Police Jubilee Medal, with five variations of the



Miniature medals commemorating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.



This is the Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Medal (1897) in Bronze. This particular medal was awarded to a Drawing Room maid at Buckingham Palace, as a personal gift from the Sovereign.

Ladies could wear the medal near their left shoulder with the ribbon tied in the form of a bow (from the Paul Rosenzweig collection).



Numismatics continued

Service title on the reverse: there were just 910 such medals awarded to members of the St John Ambulance Association and the St John Ambulance Brigade making it quite rare.

[[Editor](#): Perhaps the medal from the St John Museum in Victoria pictured on the previous page?]

The previous medal shown, in silver, was awarded to a notable person who attended the Diamond Jubilee Medal events in 1897, as a guest or as a member of the military and colonial contingents.

In this case, as previously stated, the recipient was Captain Charles Ansell Emanuel (1867–1947) of the 1st Hampshire Volunteer Artillery (VA), a unit which had responsibility for the Portsmouth Fixed Defences. The 1st Hants VA was represented in the Jubilee Procession by 1 Officer, 1 Sergeant and 8 men, parading with the Portsmouth Brigade.

[Maj. Paul A Rosenzweig OAM](#)

Captain R. T. Ellison, 2nd Life Guards.

Lieutenant W. V. J. C. Elwes, Royal Horse Artillery.

Captain C. A. Emanuel, 1st Hampshire Vol. Artillery.

" J. F. Etskine, 1st Bn. Scotch Guards

Lieut-Colonel F. J. W. Eustace, Royal Horse Artillery.

This is an extract from War Office WO/100/111 (The National Archives, 'Jubilee-Coronation Medal Rolls, 1897–1902') showing Captain Emanuel's entitlement to the Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Medal (1897), as the sole officer representative of the 1st Hants VA.

Making history Formation of the International Youth Network

The first iteration of the International Youth Network (IYAN) formed after the 2019 Grand Council in Singapore. This was a historic milestone for youth representation within St John, both because 'youth' was a key theme, and all Pories were invited to bring a young person to the discussions. IYAN was reconstituted in 2021 and includes two representatives from most Pories. The team is accountable to Grand Council and IEM for providing a youth voice into decision-making and advancing the interests of the young people of St John globally.

Within its first six months, the IYAN team have undertaken several projects including developing governance policies, and advocating for the necessity of national level youth representative bodies in all pories globally. The team is currently undertaking a review of inconsistencies of Order admission requirements globally and the impact that has upon young people. We have been fortunate to have support from many people, most notably through our [Lord Prior, Prof. Mark Compton](#), who continues to be a strong advocate for youth.

[Mr Thomas Sugget, Inaugural Chair of IYAN](#)



Presentation of St John Youth to the Lord Prior at the 2019 Grand Council in Singapore.

Making history continued

St John making history in Papua New Guinea

St John has created history for Papua New Guinea (PNG) in many ways including developing PNG's professional ambulance officer training programs, building a modern national ambulance control centre, and establishing a new computer dispatch system called Responder.One.

Between 2016 and 2021 over 150 ambulance officers were trained and deployed to St John stations within Papua New Guinea. Around 20 ambulance officers completed an intermediate (EMT) level of training, including three Health Extension Officers (e.g. physician associate), and three Registered Nurses. Four ambulance officers completed training with St John New Zealand, all four graduating with a Certificate IV in Medical First Response. One graduated with a Diploma of Ambulance Practice. St John opened stations in Waigani (2017), Kokopo (May 2020), Lae (March 2021), and Kundiawa (July 2021). The ambulance stations are located at existing fire stations as a partnership between the PNG Fire Service and St John. Kundiawa station is located with the Provincial Hospital. St John introduced a First Aid In Schools program funded by the Sir Brian Bell Foundation. Around 4,000 Year 9 students across PNG have been trained since 2018.

St John PNG has been instrumental in the response to the COVID pandemic through funding by the PNG, Australian and New Zealand governments, and UNWomen, to supplement health support services to the PNG Government Pandemic Control Centre. St John helped with the setup of the National Control Centre and its COVID-19 hotline during the initial days of the State of Emergency in March 2020. In 2021, St John established a 300-bed COVID-19 field hospital for mild COVID-19 patients to isolate and recover. The field hospital is operated in partnership with the Port Moresby General Hospital.

Mr Matt Cannon OStJ, Chief Executive Officer



Behind the scenes in the Museum South Australia

The St John Museum in Adelaide has now moved to the beach-side suburb of Brighton, to a large high-ceilinged hall that was originally built for the Scout Association. It was bought by a Division of St John in 1999, and was a Divisional meeting place until the beginning of this year when it was converted to accommodate our Museum. Members of

Entrance to the new home of the St John Museum at 7 Arundel Road, Brighton, South Australia. All most welcome!



Behind the scenes in the Museum continued

our Historical Society have worked hard to carry out the move and make the new home welcoming. The pictures give some indication of what it is like. It is by far the largest venue of the four spaces we have occupied over the last 33 years.

The official opening of the Museum was carried out by the His Excellency, the Honourable Hieu Van Le, Governor of South Australia in the presence of the Minister for Health and Welfare, the Shadow Minister for Health and Welfare, Senator Andrew McLachlan, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the local City of Holdfast Bay Council, and the Chair, several members, and the CEO of the St John Board in SA. Quite a gathering!

The Museum is currently open 10.30–12.30 on Fridays, and 1.30–3.30 on Sundays but can be opened at any mutually agreed time for groups or visitors from interstate.

Dr Brian Fotheringham AM KStJ

A question of history The Esmarch Bandage

Dr Finley Macneill CStJ has offered this record of an early Esmarch bandage–

This is a mounted and framed St John Triangular Bandage (original design by surgeon, Johannes Friedrich August von Esmarch), can be found in the St John Museum in South Australia. It was bought in a SA antique store in about 2000. The bandage has our Australian version of the St John Cross, and the words 'REGISTERED DESIGN 399667' printed at the bottom; there are no notations of base or sides. The clothing of the models would suggest it was designed between the wars, but there is no provenance. Finlay doubts it is rare, but feels it is worth drawing attention to.

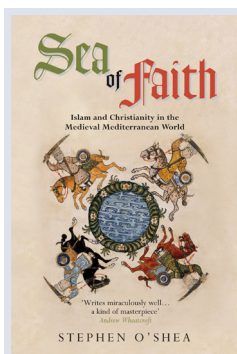


Lyn Dansie DStJ, appropriately dressed in a historic St John nurse's uniform, presents the Hon. Hieu Van Le, with a gift of thanks for formally opening the Museum.



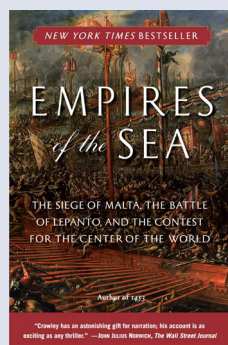
Left to right, Mr Mark Groote (CEO, St John in SA), His Excellency, the Hon. Hieu Van Le (SA Governor), and Brian Fotheringham (Chairman, SA St John Ambulance Historical Society) admire the 1949 BSA motorcycle with side-car.

Book reviews



Sea of Faith. Islam and Christianity in the Medieval Mediterranean World

Stephen O'Shea. Walker & Company, 2006, ISBN 9780802714985



Empires of the Sea. The siege of Malta, the battle of Lepanto, and the contest for the center of the world

Roger Crowley. Penguin Random House, 2009, ISBN 9780812977646

Sea of Faith and *Empires of the Sea* are being reviewed together because of their similarities in style and content. Both books give the focus on the Mediterranean as a significant battle ground for the clash between the Ottoman and Christian empires. *Sea of Faith* gives a broader scope in time from 636 to 1565, while *Empires of the Sea* starts in 1521 just before the siege of Rhodes and finishes with the battle of Lepanto in 1580. *Sea of Faith* is more comprehensive but not as detailed. For example, both books give an account of the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. However, *Empires of the Sea* gives much more detail in eight chapters—the whole of Part II, while *Sea of Faith* covers the event in one chapter. For those readers with a particular interest in the history of the ancient Hospitaller Order, *Empires of the Sea* will be of greater value. For those readers who are more interested in broadening their understanding of the geopolitics of the Mediterranean from the rise of Islam as a political force, will be fascinated with *Sea of Faith*.

Both authors write with authority and careful scholarship using numerous references and an extensive bibliography. Both books have benefited from more recently translated Ottoman texts, and the authors have included a more balanced treatment of the strengths and weakness of both Empires—the Ottoman and the Christian. In the introduction to *Sea of Faith*, O'Shea states, 'Thanks to the work of professional historians in the last half-century, these [Muslim] sources have been made available in translation, although much of their content has yet to be presented to the nonspecialist reader'.

On the cover of *Sea of Faith* Robert Irwin (British historian, novelist and writer on Arabic literature) is quoted as saying '... he [O'Shea] vividly evokes the interaction of Christianity and Islam over ten centuries and their struggle for pre-eminence'. O'Shea's language is poetic and does paint a vivid picture of large events and personalities—at times it is a little too elaborate, sending this reader to the dictionary several times. However, generally speaking it is a very good read. He has 10 chapters in chronological order from Yarmuk in 636 (the first chapter), through to Hattin in 1187 (chapter 6), and finally Malta in 1565 (chapter 10). He ranges with panoramic scope all over Europe, particularly Spain, across the Mediterranean to the Levant and back again.

Stephen O'Shea is a Canadian writer, historian and journalist who has lived for long periods in France and America. His previous works have been on World War I and on the Cathars and since this book, he has published histories of the Alps and Carcassonne. He has studied in Quebec and in Paris, and currently gives guest lectures at a range of universities in North America.

On the cover of *Empires of the Sea* is a quote from Andrew Taylor of the *Spectator's* 'Books of the Year' which describes it as 'Riveting ... Narrative history at its best'. It is all of this and more. It offers scope with an enormous amount of detail and a more balanced treatment of both sides during the 60 years of jostling between Sulieman and the West. This book, which covers the period 1521–1580, is

Book reviews continued

appropriately subtitled as 'The Final Battle for the Mediterranean'. Importantly for St John readers, it covers in detail the events surrounding the Siege of Rhodes (Part I) and the Great Siege of Malta (Part II). In addition, Part III covers the 'Endgame' the sea battles of Lepanto. He goes a long way to link the geography, culture and politics of the Mediterranean from both sides of the conflict, in what is a page-turning experience to read.

Since studying at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, Roger Crowley has become an award-winning narrative historian with a particular interest in the history of the Mediterranean countries. Like many children of naval families, he spent some of his childhood in Malta where he developed his interest in the Knights Hospitaller and the culture of the Mediterranean more generally. This book was the *Sunday Times* (UK) History Book of the Year in 2009, and a *New York Times* Bestseller. His latest book published in 2019, *Accursed Tower*, explores the end of the crusaders in the Holy Land.

Dr Elizabeth Ellis



From Ian Howie-Willis, episode 15, in the 'What is history?' series.

What is history?

Thinking historically: 'Myth-making or truth-telling?'

Myth-making My online dictionary defines 'myth' as a noun with these two meanings: (1) a traditional story typically involving supernatural beings or events; and (2) a widely held but false belief or idea.

An example of (1) is the story that Romulus and Remus, the reputed founders of Rome, were a pair of twins raised by a she-wolf. An example of (2) is the argument that HIV-AIDS began as an experiment-gone-wrong in which a mutated form of the poliomyelitis virus escaped from a US laboratory.

Myth-making of the first kind is probably easy to detect and dismiss as fable. For example, in the myth of Romulus and Remus, the twins were the sons of a virgin who had been impregnated by Mars, the god of war. Their wicked uncle, brother of their mother, ordered that they be killed; but instead, they were abandoned as babes and left to die. A she-wolf found them, took them to a cave and suckled them, allowing them to survive. Eventually, after growing to adulthood, they overthrew their wicked uncle then went on to found Rome, which was named after Romulus.

Historians might agree on the possibility that Rome had been founded by a historical figure called Romulus; but they could not accept a supernatural element like the role of Mars in his paternity or an unlikely possibility of a she-wolf nurturing the young of another species. They would attribute such elements of the tale to the ancient Romans' deep-seated psychological need for a 'creation story' involving the gods.

'What is history?' continued

A new publication

The *History of St John and the Priory for South Africa* covers the founding and history of the Hospitallers, the Venerable Order, and the history of St John in South Africa. It is aimed primarily at a South African audience, since one of its main purposes is to help members of the Brigade, the Order, and those who work for St John in South Africa, better understand the organisation with which they are associated. However, it may be of interest to the wider St John community.

The price is Rand350 plus postage. If you feel able to pay more, then clearly that would be appreciated. All the funds received from these sales will go directly to the Priory.

If you would like to buy a copy, please contact Sarah Heep at the Priory (Sarah.Heep@stjohn.org.za). There are currently only 140 copies for sale.

Mark Goodman OStJ,
Priory Historian, The Priory
for South Africa

Truth-telling Unfortunately, myth-making of the second kind—false stories widely believed to be true—often intrudes into historiography. A good example in Australia is the so-called ‘Anzac legend’. It is certainly true that in 1915 the Australian and New Zealand troops fought bravely and with great determination against almost impossible odds in trying to secure a toehold on the Gallipoli Peninsula under heavy Turkish fire. It is also true that after eight months they were forced to withdraw from the campaign because their commanders eventually realised they could never gain their objective, which was to capture the peninsula and then go on to take Istanbul (Constantinople), the Turkish capital.

The heroic but failed struggle of the Anzacs to capture Gallipoli becomes a myth when historians make claims about it that are untrue. The most common myth is that it was a campaign mainly fought by the Anzacs.

The truth is that many more British and French soldiers than Australians and New Zealanders participated, and suffered higher losses. The number of deaths among the Allies at Gallipoli totalled 44,150. In descending order by nation, those killed were: British 21,255, French about 10,000, Australian 8,709, New Zealand 2,779, Indian 1,358, Newfoundland 49. Australian deaths were accordingly 19.7% of the Allied total, and New Zealand’s 6.3%; i.e., the Anzacs killed were 26% or a little more than a quarter of all Allied deaths in the campaign. A sobering statistic is that 86,692 Turks were killed at Gallipoli. Of the total of 130,842 dead among all combatants, the Turks comprised 49% or almost half the total. And they, of course, were defending their homeland.

Why has the myth developed? Why has something so demonstrably untrue become widely accepted as historical fact? The answer possibly lies in a need among Australians and New Zealanders for heroes to populate their comparatively short national histories.

Britain has heroes galore down its 1,300 years of nationhood: Alfred the Great, Richard the Lionheart, William Wallace (‘Braveheart’), Robert the Bruce, Owen Glendower, Queen Elizabeth I, the Duke of Wellington and Winston Churchill. In the same time France has Charlemagne, Charles Martel, St Joan of Arc, the ‘Sun King’ Louis XIV, Napoleon Bonaparte and Charles de Gaulle. The Ottoman Turks, too, have national heroes aplenty, including Suleiman the Magnificent, who captured Rhodes from the Knights of St John in 1522, and Kemal Ataturk, the victor

'What is history?' continued

at Gallipoli. Few Australians or New Zealanders have attained such worldwide historical stature; and so we collectively promote the Anzacs.

'Promoting' the Anzacs and acknowledging their contribution to our sense of nationhood is one thing. Making them the heroes of the Gallipoli campaign is quite another. It amounts to a transition from truthfully recording history to manufacturing myths about it. Historians' chief responsibility is best described as 'truth-telling'. As the great 19th century German historian, Leopold von Ranke once said, historians should 'tell it like it really was'. That's the same as 'truth-telling'. Myth-making, on the other hand, obscures and corrupts historical truth.

We St John historians must also be truth-tellers. We must avoid making outrageous, demonstrably false claims about our Order's history. We've probably all heard statements like these: (1) 'St John Ambulance began during the First Crusade'; (2) 'the Blessed Gerard founded the Most Venerable Order of St John in 1113'; (3) 'the Knights Hospitaller were the earliest first-aiders'; and—a hoary old favourite—'the Order of St John is the world's oldest order of chivalry'. We discredit ourselves by allowing such myths to go unchallenged. We expose our Order to ridicule if we spread such misinformation; and in this case it's better called 'fake history'. And, worse still, the myths we promote have the potential for embarrassing our Sovereign Head, our Grand Prior, our Grand Council, and its hierarchy of senior officers.

Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

Renewals for 2021

As we're now more than half-way through 2021, you'll be unfinancial if you haven't already renewed your Historical Society membership subscription. As a paid-up member, you receive 3 issues of *Pro Utilitate*, a copy of *St John History*, and, not to mention, access to a wealth of information on the ancient and modern history of our international organisation. You'll find the generic membership application and renewal form on the [national website](#) (scroll down to History) Follow the instructions given on the form.

SOA-Australia

SOA-Australia recently hosted the third St John Ophthalmic Case Series, on Saturday 10 July. This 90-minute meeting began with a welcome from the Lord Prior of the Order of St John. It proceeded with case study on glaucoma, the history of first aid, presentations from Jerusalem and Gaza, and updates from the Australian and Order Hospitaller. This recording of the series can be viewed on [Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/573594975/f3621e4830). <https://vimeo.com/573594975/f3621e4830>

Donations to the hospital can be made on the [St John Ophthalmic Association website](#).

And finally ...

That's it for the third edition of *Pro Utilitate*, dear reader. The next issue (2021/4) will be out in November with a deadline for contributions by mid-October. Potential articles or ideas for forthcoming publication are warmly invited.

You're also invited to email me as editor with comments or questions.

Until then ...

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