



Pro Utilitate

Preserving and promoting the St John heritage.

Newsletter of The St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia

Issue 2024/1

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From the Editor

History keeps being made around us at almost every issue. At this time, we can report that the Lord Prior has been asked to extend his term by an extra 3 years, from 2025–2028. This is an exceptional event in the history of the modern Order and a tribute to the Lord Prior's excellent and untiring work for the Order. The formal announcement of the Lord Prior's extension received from the Order's Prelate Bishop Tim Stevens read in part:

On the recommendation of the Order's trustees, HRH the Grand Prior has issued a Regulation appointing Professor Mark Compton for a third term as Lord Prior. The trustees made their recommendation on the basis that the significant challenges facing the Order demanded proven, consistent and established leadership. They concluded that Professor Compton was the best person to provide this leadership and that appointing him for a third term was therefore in the best interests of the Order. His term will now run for an additional three years from June 2025 to June 2028. The Grand Prior's regulation is personal to Professor Compton, and to the current specific circumstances.

Editor

Lord Prior, Professor Mark Compton AM GCStJ. Photo by Julian Colder, © St John International 2024



Call for participants



Cadet Oral History Project

As you would be aware, in 2025 we will be celebrating the Centenary of Cadets. The Cadet Oral History coordinators are looking for people who were Cadets—in every decade as far back as we can go. The plan is to interview them about their Cadet experiences.



They do not need to be current members but preferably they will have a clear and endearing recollection of their time in St John's history.

If you are one of those people, please send your details to: fairlie.tucker@stjohn.org.au. If you know somebody who was a Cadet and would be willing to share their story, please let them know about this project or ask their permission to forward their contact details.

This is a great project for all of us to get behind and support. Thank you so much.

Coming events

'How to get the Best from On-line Search Engines'

Monday 6 May, 8.00 pm

The Historical Society is hosting the second of our online webinars on 'How to get the Best from On-line Search Engines'. Our panel of presenters will include Dr Matthew Glozier, Dr David Fahey, and Philip Blackwell. To register go to: <https://www.trybooking.com/CQWQA>

HS's AGM

Monday 24 June, 8.00 pm

The Historical Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on-line — more information to follow separately.

Opening of the new St John Museum, Tasmania

The new St John Museum in Tasmania will be opened in October 2024 — date to be confirmed. They are always on the lookout for donations of items that help to record the very rich history of St John in Tasmania.

2024 Annual Seminar

Our 2024 Seminar will be held in Canberra on Saturday 23 November 23 — get your pencils sharpened for papers! More details to follow however, it will be the same weekend as the Priory Chapter Meeting and Church Service as usual. If you do happen to have a paper ready to go, please send it to history.secretary@stjohn.org.au

Vale Frank Dunstan CStJ



Frank was a Commander of the Order of St John who had dedicated over 25 years to volunteering within the Territory community with Bushfires NT and St John NT. He tirelessly devoted thousands of hours and was honoured with a number of awards for his dedicated service.

As St John NT's volunteer historian, Frank had written four books about our organisation, the last and final *About the Order of St John* was launched just last week by His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie PSM, Administrator of the Northern Territory and Deputy Prior of the Order of St John, and our Patron Ms Ruth Jones.

In his own words, Frank was inspired to write the book because he noticed that 'few members of the Order knew anything about the Order', himself included. As an organisation steeped in history, the handbook includes an explanation of the Grades of the Order, the mantles, medals and Investiture ceremonies held in the Northern Territory.

Frank first came in contact with St John when he enrolled in a First Aid course in 2001 which ended in him being invited to join as a volunteer. Frank signed up with the Darwin Adult Division before moving to the new Humpty Doo Adult Division, where he became the inaugural Divisional Superintendent and in 2002 was awarded the Adult Volunteer of the Year, and the Humpty Doo Division was named Adult Division of the Year.

In 2006, he was no longer an active member but agreed to become an affiliate member and took on the role of writer and editor of the *Vollie News* — a publication that Frank composed every week for over 12 years, issuing almost 600 editions documenting the life and work of the volunteers across the Territory and capturing a valuable part of St John history.

Adapted from the message from Andrew Toombs CEO St John NT

The SJEHG – ongoing crisis and appeal

The CEO of the St John Eye Hospital Group releases a public monthly bulletin that aims to provide the latest information about the Israel-Gaza crisis and the impact on the Hospital. It can be accessed here: <https://www.stjohnseyehospital.org/israel-gaza-hostilities-weekly-bulletin/>



Australian Heraldry

Thomas Sugget MStJ

On 27 May 2020 Thomas Sugget received the right to bear arms, in Letters Patent, from Lord Lyon King of Arms in Scotland. While an Australian, Thomas fell under the jurisdiction of Lord Lyon through his father who is Scottish-Australian. The thoughts behind the design process were as follows.

- Above the arms is displayed the motto in Latin 'State Ceteris Cadentibus', or 'stand when others fall' in English. This was chosen to reflect a desire for service in the need of others, particularly where they need assistance.
- The Crest of the arms features an Australian White Ibis, believed to be the first use of the bird in heraldry, clutching a chess rook (which you will note has a much different appearance in heraldry to the tower or castle you may be familiar with). The ibis was selected as a homage to Thomas' long-term residency in Brisbane, where the ibis is quite prolific, as well as for its virtues as being resilient and adaptive, having been able to adapt and thrive in an urban environment where other birds have been driven away.
- The shield is divided into blue and gold, chosen to reflect colours found in the heraldry of both Western Australia (gold) and Queensland (Blue) which reflects his long-term residency in both locations. Two stars were selected as a homage to his Scottish ancestry, descending from the Crockett family who use stars prolifically in their arms. In the Scottish heraldic tradition, it is the norm to retain



elements of your family in some way like this and Lord Lyon made the suggestion as part of the design process. Seven points were selected for each of the stars to allude to the Australian federation star. Beneath them is a portcullis which was selected as to form a 'cant' (a heraldic term for a visual pun based on the surname of the armiger) with the origins of the name 'Sugget' being Southgate, hence a gate to the 'south' of the stars.

In addition to involvement with St John, Thomas is the current president of the Australian Heraldry Society and welcomes any questions on heraldry to be directed to him at president@heraldryaustralia.org.

Note The original Arms were granted prior to Thomas being admitted as a Member of the Order of the St John. The image above shows the Member medal suspended beneath the Arms.

Behind the Scenes at the Museum

Western Australia

A quick update on the Museum at Belmont, WA ... after numerous delays it is finally packed up and in storage. The anticipated time for rebuilding is 18 months (maybe!) Until then I am able to offer a very limited reference service only.

Edith KhangureDStJ

South Australia

The young man described in the following article is listed in the new publication, *For Service in the Cause of Humanity* —

Award for boy, 14

Wearing the uniform of a cadet of the St. John Ambulance, 14-year-old William Stuart McLoughlin, of Moseley Street, Glenelg, was presented with the St. John Lifesaving Medal by the Governor (Sir Willoughby Norrie) at Government House today.

It was only the second time in Australia that the medal had been awarded.

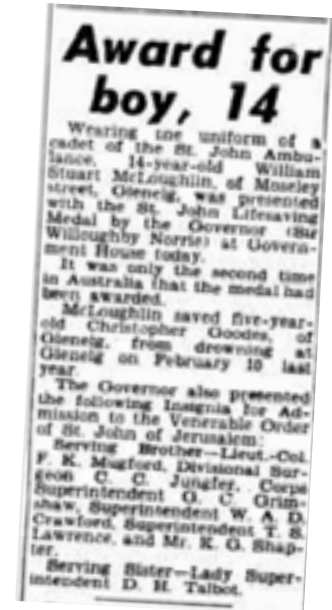
McLoughlin saved five-year-old Christopher Goodes, of Glenelg, from drowning at Glenelg on February 10 last year.

The Governor also presented the following Insignia for Admission to the Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem:

Serving Brother—Lieut.-Col. F. K. Mugford, Divisional Surgeon C. C. Jungfer, Corps Superintendent G. C. Grimshaw, Superintendent W. A. D. Crawford, Superintendent T. S. Lawrence, and Mr. K. G. Shapter.

Serving Sister—Lady Superintendent D. H. Talbot.

The News [Adelaide], Wednesday, December 13, 1950 [page 2]



Lyn Dansie DStJ

Editor—Read our review of *For Service in the Cause of Humanity* in this issue of *Pro Utilitate*.

The Challenge



A familiar face?

Matthew Glozier presents us with another challenge.

Can you tell us what this medal is and its significance?



No one cracked this challenge, also from Matthew — this is an Egypt Red Cross/ St John Pearl appeal coin recently up for sale on Ebay. Matthew also provided a link for a fascinating back story: <https://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/articles/a-first-act-of-remembrance-the-red-cross-pearls/>

Book review

For Service in the Cause of Humanity

Editors: Roger Willoughby and John Wilson
 Publisher: Worcestershire Medal Service Ltd, 2024

This recently published book is a reference book listing all the events and circumstances in which the life-saving awards of the Order of St John have ever been given. The book has a forward from the Grand Prior and a congratulations and commendation on the flyleaf from the Lord Prior.

The book is divided into three sections. The first section allows the reader to position the awards within the history of the Most Venerable Order and its structures. This section was written by Abigail Cornick MStJ who is the Curator and Volunteer Coordinator at the Museum of the Order of St John in Clerkenwell. This section largely focuses on the history of the Order in England and the British Empire. However, it does explain the links back through the ancient history as well, carefully avoiding direct links. There are some beautiful images in this section of the Crypt and other historical items as well as St John volunteers in action around the world.

Section II examines the history of the Life-Saving Medal tracing its origins from 1870 to the current day, and Certificate of Honour, from its origins in 1885. This section written by Norman Goodin CStJ, Roger Willoughby and John Wilson, follows the development of the awards and their evolving design, as well as attempts to gain more recognition for these awards. There is some very interesting research on the breakdown of the numbers of awarded in each category (Gold, Silver, Bronze and the Certificate), across the decades and the occupational categories where known. The analysis goes on to include the location of the rescue, the circumstances that lead to the awards and the distribution between males and females. There are also 14 pages of specifications for



the medals across the years. A valuable resource indeed for numismatists and others.

The last section (III) is an alphabetical roll of recipients as far as the editors were able to collect. Each entry includes whether the award was made posthumously, their surname, first names, location of incident and type of award. It also includes a synthesis of the original recommendation or citation and the provenance of the awards. Obviously, this is the main bulk of the whole book and includes photographs as available. Sometimes there is very little in the entry or a cross reference to another awardee for the circumstances. However, more often than not, there is a detailed description. The Order of St John and the editors write that they would appreciate any further information that anyone might have for the record and for future editions.

While this book will be most useful as a reference book it is the sort of book you could put on a coffee table and browse through from time to time and find something interesting on every page. It constitutes an enormous amount of work and is extraordinarily comprehensive.

Dr Elizabeth Ellis OStJ



24rd instalment from
Dr Ian Howie-Willis KStJ

Note from the Editor

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

What is history?

Future history

Chronologically speaking, history is always one of three kinds — past, present or future. Past history is what historians write about, i.e. the events that have happened and are now in the past. Present history is usually called ‘current events’. It comprises what’s happening right now; and that’s what you see, hear and read about in the news media.

Future history hasn’t happened yet; and so no one can really say what its events will be. Short of being able to climb into Dr Who’s time-machine, the ‘Tardis’, and zoom off into future millennia, we cannot predict with 100% accuracy what the future holds.

That, however, doesn’t prevent people from trying to predict what will happen. In Biblical times such people were called prophets, especially when they warned their fellow citizens that the wrath of God would befall those who lived wicked lives and failed to repent of their sins. In later ages they were known as sooth-sayers. Depending on the culture they belonged to, they might gaze into a crystal ball to discern the course of future events; or they might try to find meaning in the pattern of tea leaves left behind in a cup. In ancient Rome a specialist called a ‘haruspex’ practised a gruesome form of divination to predict the future. This involved examining the entrails of a dead chicken or other sacrificial animal to seek clues about coming events.

In the present era, those who try to foretell what will happen are called ‘futurolologists’. Their specialty, variously called ‘futurolology’, ‘futuristics’ or ‘futuring’, is an interdisciplinary study that claims to be rigorous in its approach to events that haven’t yet happened. They emphasise the point that what they are engaged in is best described as ‘strategic foresight’ because it helps people plan realistically.

Futurolologists believe that governments, organisations and institutions can influence future events to their own advantage. Government instrumentalities habitually try to do that in their planning processes. They try to place new transport infrastructure, schools, hospitals, commercial outlets and social amenities where they will be most needed. Indeed the governments that fail to indulge in such futurolology are unlikely to survive because by not planning adequately they create chaos and accordingly will inevitably lose popularity.

Amazingly, there are now commercial futurolology firms which offer consultancy services, advising organisations on planning strategies. One such Australian firm is McCrindle Research, whose website argues that: ‘Better decisions today make a better tomorrow. We want to partner with you to help you turn insights into action that help you do what you do better’.

The principal of the firm is a young chap called Mark McCrindle who advertises himself as ‘a leader in tracking emerging issues and researching social trends’. He doesn’t call himself a

What is history? continued

futurologist but that's plainly what he does because he peppers his speeches and articles with gems of 'futuristics' such as these: 'The future is no longer a destination to which we are travelling but rather something that is coming at us from various directions at an incredible velocity. A future that represents many new opportunities.'

Those of us who've spent our lives thinking about history can't be quite so enthusiastically optimistic. We recall certain predictions by so-called experts that soon turned out to be very wrong. They included these: (1) 'Advances in modern medicine will soon ensure that humans will live to 150'; (2) 'Viewers will soon tire of TV because no one wants to sit staring at a screen for hours on end'; (3) 'Robots performing human tasks might happen in science fiction but will never ever do that in real life'; (4) 'The Internet is just a fad that will soon be forgotten'; and (5) 'Online shopping will flop because it doesn't include human interaction'.

On the other hand, in the decades before they were invented, few people — not even futurologists — could have foretold what far-ranging changes would be wrought by innovations such as the mobile phone (which doubles as a pocket-sized camera and personal computer), social media (a personal means for communicating with

the rest of humanity) and unmanned aerial vehicles (a.k.a. drones).

But is any of this relevant to St John Ambulance Australia (SJAA)? In this author's opinion yes, it is. Here I remind readers that back in those balmy pre-Covid years when we held annual Members' Conventions that rotated from one capital city to another, the grand seminars we held were essentially exercises in futurology. They variously canvassed topics like 'The Future of First Aid', 'Future Training for First Aid Volunteers', 'How to Attract and Retain Volunteers', 'Future First Aid Skills' and 'The First Aid Kit of the Future'.

As a modern national organisation, SJAA is obliged to keep a weather eye on the future. SJAA's planning processes at all levels, local, state/territory and national, are obligatory futuristics. Unless we fore-arm ourselves, how can we meet the challenge of our commercial competitors? How do we guarantee our future financial integrity? How do we retain our voluntaristic and charitable ethos in an increasingly materialistic society? How do we attract and retain the right staff and volunteers to perpetuate ourselves institutionally? Unless our planning processes come up with answers that can be implemented, we will drift directionlessly. And so, I pray, may futurology flourish in SJAA!

Our Society's Publisher

Gabrielle Lhuede MStJ, has left the Australian Office to pursue other publishing opportunities. Gab has been a loyal friend to the Historical Society and much valued by all of us over the past 14 years. She has produced 13 volumes of the 20 issues of *St John History*, and all 8 issues of *One St John* for St John International. Her assistance with projects like *A Beacon of Hope* did not just mean the difference between it being published ahead of time or not, but giving it such a glorious finish. It is fantastic that Gab will remain an active member of the Society and still support us in a volunteer role. Thank goodness for that.



Gab working with Matthew Glozier, Ian Howie-Willis and John Pearn.

Recent publications

West Coast St John Ambulance Brigade by Eleanor McLennan details the fortunes of the Brigade during its first 50 years on the West Coast of New Zealand.

Please contact Todd Skilton, if you'd like a copy (\$50.00): librarian@orderofstjohn.org

St Agnes Prize

The inaugural, international Sister Agnes Prize has been awarded to David Berezen from Alberta Canada.

David's paper 'Women of Singular Significance in the Order of St John' was a comprehensive paper of the role of women in the early Order.

We were delighted to receive a number of quality entries, which made the process quite competitive. All of the candidates for the prize have been asked if they would like to have their papers considered for a special issue of *One St John* under the editorship of Dr Matthew Glozier. An exciting start to developing herstory further.

Renewals for 2024

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

And finally ...

The first issue of *Pro Utilitate* (No 2024-2) will be out in July 2024 with a deadline for contributions by mid-June. We encourage letters, articles, or ideas for the forthcoming publication.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Editor, *Pro Utilitate*, Dr Elizabeth Ellis OStJ

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