



The St John Ambulance
Australia Historical Society



THE ST JOHN AMBULANCE AUSTRALIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Third Annual General Meeting,
at the Lasseters Hotel-Casino Convention Centre,
Alice Springs, 16 June 2004**

Draft Minutes

1. **Opening:** the Chairman, Mr Alan Bromwich, declared the meeting open at 1.30 p.m.
2. **Attendance:** 26 people signed the attendance register; however, up to 50 people were present at different stages of the meeting and the preceding History Seminar.
3. **Apologies** were received from: Dawn Bat, Sandra Bout, Lennis & Peter Burke, Geraldine, Goldie & Jim Byrne, Vera Cates, Averil Chadwick, Chris Cunneen, Anne & Norman Demaine, Vlas Efstathis, Murray Elliott, Brian Fotheringham, Trevor Gibson, Reg Graham, Geoffrey Gray, John Harper, Anthony Harrison, Alan Hills, Ian Kaye-Eddie, Peter Kemp, Vince Little, Kath Miller, Leslie Mills, Loredana Napoli, Raelene & Ray Schilling, John Springhall, Gail Vann, Terry Walton, Timothy Weiland, Gordon Young and Kevin Young.
4. **Welcome:** The Chairman welcomed the 30 people present at the opening of the meeting. The apologies were noted. Letters from Reg Graham, Alan Hills, Terry Walton and Kevin Young expressing their regrets at being unable to attend and conveying their best wishes for a successful meeting were also noted.
5. **Presentation of Life Membership Certificate:** The Chairman announced that the Historical Society was presenting its third Life Membership Certificate to Dr Brian Fotheringham in acknowledgment of his efforts in founding the Society and then being its President over the first three years of its formal existence. He explained that Dr Fotheringham was unable to be present to receive the certificate personally because of recent surgery; however, the Secretary would forward it to him. After reading to the meeting the citation on the certificate, Mr Bromwich called on those present to express their appreciation of Dr Fotheringham's services to the Society.
6. **Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation:** The Chairman presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Ms Cheryl Langdon-Orr in acknowledgement of her outstanding service to the Historical Society as Publications Officer. He read to the meeting the citation on the certificate, which commended Ms Langdon-Orr on the high standard of the Society's newsletter, *Pro Utilitate*, and journal, *St John History*, that she had recently produced. In thanking her, Mr Bromwich observed that the two publications projected a professional image for the Society while indicating to members and potential members that the Society was very serious about promoting the St John heritage.
7. **Minutes of the last meeting:** The Chairman called on the Secretary to introduce the Minutes of the last annual general meeting, held in the Grand Chancellor Hotel, Hobart, on 18 June 2003. The Secretary advised that printed copies of the Minutes had been distributed shortly before the meeting had begun, and further copies were available at the front of the room. The Chairman then called for a motion that the Minutes be received. Moved Dr Harry Oxer, seconded by Mrs Betty Stirton that the Minutes be received. Agreed unanimously.
8. **Matters arising from the Minutes:** The Chairman asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes. The Secretary drew the attention of the meeting to the item on elections for the management committee. He advised that by the time of the next annual general meeting the current office holders and management committee will have been in office for three years, and so elections for their positions will need to be held no later than the next annual general meeting.
9. **Annual Report:** The Chairman called on the Secretary to present the third annual report of the Historical Society. The Secretary advised that the President's annual report had been printed and distributed in advance. Unfortunately Dr Fotheringham could not present his report in person for reasons already explained; however, he would be present in spirit. The Secretary then pointed out that Dr Fotheringham's report followed the same style as his previous report; that is it considered the Society's achievements over the past year against its "Purposes and Objects" as specified in its constitution. As the report indicated, the Society had achieved much over the past year; however, in one area, encouraging interest in history within

the Cadet movement, it could be doing more. The Secretary concluded by observing that in this last area, too, the Society was already taking a significant forward step by providing advice to the national Cadet leadership as the latter group developed and implemented a new “Knowledge of the Order” syllabus. (This matter is discussed further below in Item 13.1.) The Chairman then moved the adoption of the report. His motion was seconded by Mrs Stirton. The motion was approved unanimously.

10. **Treasurer’s Report:** The Chairman called on the Secretary to present the report of the Treasurer, Mr James Byrne, which had been distributed with the other agenda papers before the beginning of the meeting. The Secretary said Mr Byrne’s report indicated that total income for the period from 3 June 2003 to 27 May 2004 had been \$3,659.12; total expenditure had been \$4.50; and the balance of income over expenditure had been \$3,654.62. He advised the meeting that the Society’s financial records had been voluntarily audited by Ms Therese Reilly, formerly National Manager of Finance and Personnel for St John Ambulance Australia, who had certified his statement of income and expenditure as correct. On behalf of Mr Byrne the Secretary expressed the gratitude of the Society for her assistance. The Secretary explained that the reason for the expenditure being so low were gifts in kind, in time, materials and postage, from himself and the Publications Officer, Ms Langdon-Orr. Ms Langdon-Orr still had to make a claim for some of her additional expenses, and this had not been included in the financial statement because it had not yet been costed. The Secretary also suggested that, rather than simply accumulating funds, the Society could be applying some of its resources to particular favoured projects, for example annually funding prizes for the best Cadet “Knowledge of the Order” projects. He concluded by emphasising the importance of membership subscriptions as a source of income to the Society, then moved that the Treasurer’s report be adopted. This motion, seconded by Mr Matthew Griffiths, was agreed to.
11. **Election of Office Bearers:** The Chairman pointed out that, as noted by the Secretary earlier (see item 8 above), elections need not be held before the next annual general meeting, in 2005. The Secretary suggested that the meeting endorse the present office bearers for a further year in office and that elections for all positions be held in 2005. This proposal was accepted by general assent.
12. **Reports from States & Territories:** The Chairman called on representatives of the various States & Territories to provide the meeting with written and/or oral reports on the work being done on St John heritage matters in their respective jurisdictions. The following members then spoke on behalf of their States and Territories:
 - New South Wales — Mrs Betty Stirton
 - Victoria — Mr John Blackstock
 - Queensland — Ms Beth Dawson
 - South Australia — Mr David Heard on behalf of Dr Brian Fotheringham
 - Western Australia — Dr Harry Oxer
 - Tasmania — Mrs Fay Reeve on behalf of Mr Ken Milbourne
 - Northern Territory — Ms Pat McQuillen
 - Australian Capital Territory & Australian Office — Dr Ian Howie-Willis

At the conclusion of the reports the Secretary advised the meeting that each report would be published in the next edition of *St John History*, the Society’s *Proceedings*. He also commented that this had been the first occasion in six years of such reports being presented that all eight States/Territories had contributed to this section of the meeting. In thanking those who had presented the reports, the Chairman complimented them on the thorough, comprehensive nature of the reports.

13. **Other business:**

13.1 Syllabus for Cadets’ “Knowledge of the Order” proficiency badge and the booklet *A very short history of the Order of St John (emphasising its Australian history)*

The Secretary advised the meeting that he had recently participated in a teleconference with the Chief Officer Cadets, Mr Kieran Brown, and the National Manager Volunteers, Mr Stephen Carter, on the subject matter covered by the new syllabus for the Cadet “Knowledge of the Order” proficiency badge. As a result of this teleconference the new syllabus would place greater emphasis on the Australian history and achievements of the Order. Further, the teleconference had agreed that he should write a booklet of 30 to 40 pages as a resource for this proficiency badge. He said he had already produced a first draft of the text for this booklet, which had the title “A very short history of the Order of St John (emphasising its Australian history)” and would be a useful reference work for new adult St John members as well as for the Cadet movement. The booklet was currently being considered by Messrs Brown and Carter and he was due to meet with them the next day to receive their feed-back and to consider syllabus teaching aids produced by Mr Brown. As a result of these developments the Historical Society would be taking a significant step towards achieving the second of its 11 “Purposes and Objects”, which relates to its educational function.

In the ensuing discussion of these related matters, it was pointed out that at the local level members of the Historical Society could assist in teaching the “Knowledge of the Order” syllabus, for example by giving talks to groups of Cadets on heritage matters, acting as interviewees for research projects etc.

13.2 St John History and Pro Utilitate

Ms Dawson complimented Ms Langdon-Orr on the high standard of the journal *St John History* and the newsletter *Pro Utilitate*. She observed that they were such high quality publications they were useful tools for promoting the Society to non-members and for recruiting new members.

13.3 Membership rules of the Historical Society

Ms Dawson raised the matter of the Society’s membership rules, which at present do not provide for a separate category of group or corporate membership. She asked whether or not it might be possible to change the constitution to include such membership. Mr Mark Compton pointed out that changing an organisation’s constitution was a very difficult procedure to organise, usually involving a special general meeting — a difficulty for the Society, which has so far met only annually. He suggested that the matter be referred to the management committee. Ms Dawson then moved that the matter be referred to the management committee for favourable consideration. Mr Compton seconded the motion, which the meeting then carried unanimously.

14. **Welcome to the Patron:** At this point in the proceedings the Society’s Patron, Professor Willis Marshall, entered the meeting. The Chairman welcomed him warmly on behalf of those present, his welcome being affirmed by acclamation. Invited to address the meeting, Professor Marshall spoke of the respect St John Ambulance enjoyed in the community because of the work of its volunteers. He said that the Board of Directors was keen to support the Society’s activities, which were building volunteers’ pride in their St John work. He went on to speak of challenges facing the St John organisation. One challenge was to prioritise future tasks so that the organisation could “fit enough carriages on the track”. Another challenge for St John as a global organisation was the wealthier nations within the St John “family” to help the poorer ones.

In supporting Profess Marshall’s comments on the Historical Society, Professor John Pearn commended the Society for the role it was assuming within the wider St John organisation. The Society, he said, was becoming a “glue” for St John Ambulance, providing the wider organisation with cohesion and a renewed sense of historical purpose.

15. **Closure:** There being no other business, the Chairman thanked all those in attendance for their presence and thanked all those who had participated by presenting reports and/or contributing to discussion. He declared the annual general meeting closed at 3.05 p.m.

Ian Howie-Willis
Secretary
4 July 2004

The St John Ambulance Australia Historical Society

Record of meeting of the Management Committee in the Alice Springs Convention Centre, 16 June 2004

1. **The meeting took place** immediately after the Society's annual general meeting. The Chairman, Alan Bromwich, welcomed those in attendance.
2. **Present were:** Alan Bromwich (Chairman), Ian Howie-Willis (Secretary), John Blackstock, Margaret Boulter, Vera Crook, Beth Dawson, Edith Khangure, Allan Mawdsley, Pat McQuillen, Harry Oxe, John Pearn, Faye Reeve and Betty Stirton.
3. **Evaluation of the History Seminar & Annual General Meeting**

The Chairman called for comments on the day's proceedings. During the discussion that followed the following points were made:

- Running the History Seminar before the AGM had been a good idea. About 50 people had attended the History Seminar, which had greater general appeal than the more procedural AGM, which about 30 people had attended.
 - This year's History Seminar had been the best to date, largely because of the greater professionalism of the paper presenters, all of who had used the modern communications technology effectively. The seminar chairperson, Betty Stirton, kept all eight speakers to their time limit of 15 minutes. The overall effect, as one audience member remarked, was "kaleidoscopic" — constantly changing images and impressions that relied on shorter presentations and fast turnover between speakers. This approach conveyed much information effectively and made for a lively learning experience for the audience.
 - Committee members generally agreed that on a scale of 1 to 10 this year's seminar deserved an "8 — very good" score compared to "6 — mediocre" for last year's seminar in Hobart.
 - We should start next year's History Seminar earlier, at 9.00 a.m., because we lost valuable morning time this year by starting at 10.30 a.m. If we'd started earlier we could, for instance, have had time to view Brian Fotheringham's video, "Introducing St John Ambulance" instead of having had to show it during the lunch break, when attention was focused on the launching of Bill Wilson's & Pat McQuillen's books on St John in the NT.
 - Where possible we should ensure that the History Seminar-AGM next year in Melbourne doesn't clash with the other major seminars. The Secretary undertook to liaise about this with the conference organiser, Jerome Currie.
4. **Venue for next year's meeting**
 - The meeting considered a proposal that next year's History Seminar and AGM be conducted at a venue near the Victorian St John Ambulance Museum at Williamstown.
 - After hearing points for and against this proposal, committee members agreed to conduct the History Seminar and AGM at the main conference venue, but to conduct the management committee meeting at Williamstown. In addition it was agreed that several bus tours to the Museum be arranged to enable as many conference participants as possible to see it.
 - In making these decisions, committee members had in mind the collegiate nature of the morning tea and lunch at the main conference venue. The likelihood of the seminar and AGM attracting additional attenders from among conference delegates and their companions if these events are held at the main conference venue was another consideration.
 - It was also suggested that the History Seminar and AGM be separated to enable the Society's members to enjoy a dinner together.
 5. **Topics for next year's History Seminar**
 - A number of suggestions were made both during the meeting and afterwards, including these:
 - ⇒ Villis Marshall on his St John career
 - ⇒ Malcolm Little on the insignia of the other recognised St John Orders (Sovereign Military Order and *Johanniters*)
 - ⇒ Richard Caesar-Thwaytes on his visit to London for the 500th anniversary of St John's Gate
 - ⇒ Ian Howie-Willis on Lady Brassey and her last voyage aboard *The Sunbeam*

- ⇒ Doug Sturkey on the origins of the triangular bandage
- ⇒ Ken Milbourne on Mary Robson, the pioneer of St John Ambulance in Northern Tasmania before World War II
- ⇒ Allan Mawdsley (as possible keynote speaker) on Victoria's Brigade/Operations Branch Commissioners

- Agreed that expressions of interest in presenting papers be called for via the newsletter.

6. Membership

- The proposal by Beth Dawson referred from the AGM, that the constitution be amended to include a class of corporate membership, was considered at length.
- During the discussion of this proposal, Ms Dawson pointed out that thus amending the constitution would result in: (a) stronger financial support for the Historical Society, for example from State/Territory St John Councils; and (b) better promotion of the Society among St John members and better distribution of the Society's publications.
- The meeting agreed to foreshadow a change to the constitution to include a category of corporate membership. This will be done by advising the Society's members through the newsletter that a proposal for such a change will be on the agenda for the next AGM.
- Further on membership matters, it was agreed that the State/Territory CEOs and Council chairpersons be invited to join the Society and asked to place its publications in their libraries.

7. Recruiting

- Agreed that the co-operation of Training, Operations and Community Care Branches be sought in sending out copies of the Society's membership application forms, which could be circulated via their regular training memoranda and other such means.

8. Publications

- Cheryl Langdon-Orr asked the meeting for management committee members to start collecting "shelf items" that could be used to enliven future publications.
- Such items could include Malcolm Little's item on Queensland mysterious Maltese cross, which turned out to be a medal of the Dutch *Johanniter* Order. Another would be Merv Goodall's & Ian Howie-Willis's attempt to track down the Kevin Kettle who made and donated to the Priory HQ about 30 armorial bearings of the Grand Masters of the ancient Hospitallers.

9. New committee member

- Beth Dawson nominated Vera Crook as a co-opted Queensland member of the management committee to replace Jackie Bettington, whose membership had lapsed.
- Mrs Crook's co-option was endorsed, and the Chairman formally welcomed her as a member of the committee.

10. Time available for presentation of States'/Territories' reports

- Fay Reeve drew attention to the fact that because the AGM had started 10 minutes late because of the late arrival back from lunch of several key members, the time for States/Territories' reports had been reduced from nine to six minutes. This had disadvantaged presenters of longer reports.
- The Secretary apologised for the late start of the AGM, and also to Mrs Reeve for her not consequently having had sufficient time to present Mr Ken Milbourne's report on Tasmania to her satisfaction.
- The meeting agreed that, now all eight States/Territories were presenting reports, it was important for future AGMs to start and run punctually.
- It was also agreed that one way to ensure that meetings ran to correct time and included sufficient time for all speakers would be for the presenters of the States/Territories' reports to make their reports available to the Secretary well in advance of the AGM. This would enable the Secretary to "translate" the reports into "Powerpoint" format to facilitate their prompt delivery to the audience.

11. A national St John museum?

- Professor Pearn raised the possibility of a national museum for the Order being developed at the Priory headquarters in Canberra.
- In responding to this suggestion, the Secretary said that as Priory Librarian such a museum was something dear to his heart. Constraints were the likely cost and uncertainty over the future of the present Priory HQ building and its annexe. Despite its large size, the present Priory HQ building had little space for offices let alone a museum. It might be possible to develop a museum in the annexe but until such time as the future of the annexe had been determined, it would be unwise to commit funds to developing a museum there.

12. Membership of the National Museums Association

- Beth Dawson suggested that there would be advantages for the Priory in having membership in organisations such as the National Museums Association and the National Archives Association.
- The Secretary undertook to make inquiries about this matter

13. Conclusion

- The Chairman thanked those present for attending and for contributing to discussion.
- He then closed the meeting at 4.45 p.m.

Ian Howie-Willis
Secretary
4 July 2004