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The St John Ambulance



Historical Society of Australia

## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting,

held in the St John Ambulance Museum,  
Arthur Street, Unley, South Australia,  
Friday 20 June 2008

# Minutes

*Preserving and promoting the St John heritage*

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1. **Opening:** The President, Dr Harry Oxer, declared the meeting open at 9.10 a.m. he expressed pleasure that the meeting was taking place in the St John Ambulance Museum for South Australia, the State with the second longest continual St John Ambulance presence. He commended the Museum to all present and said he hoped they would spend some time looking over it during morning tea and after the meeting had concluded.
2. **Welcome:** In welcoming those present, Dr Oxer made special mention of Lynne Panayiotis and asked her if she would be prepared to speak about the progress of her rehabilitation later in the meeting. She said she would be happy to do so after morning tea.
3. **Attendance and apologies:** A total of 40 people signed the attendance register. In calling for apologies the President asked for these to be entered in the register (22 names were subsequently entered). The Secretary then read out emails from Dr Colin Dawson, the founder of the UK St John Historical Society, and Terry Walton, the UK representative on the management committee, expressing their regrets, and those of our other UK members, at being unable to be present. Dr Dawson and Mr Walton also conveyed their best wishes for a successful meeting.
4. **Minutes of the last meeting:** The President advised that the Minutes had been circulated to all members with the last edition of the newsletter in May. He therefore suggested that the Minutes be taken as read and called for a motion that they be received. Moved Jack Blackstock seconded Kevin Young that the Minutes of the annual general meeting in Canberra on 22 June 2007 be accepted. Approved unanimously.
5. **Matters arising from the Minutes:**
  - The Secretary reported on the new system for managing memberships. As agreed at the last annual general meeting, instead of a single membership officer the system has been decentralised with membership management now a responsibility devolved to eight State/Territory membership liaison officers. The system is now working well because the liaison officers are more familiar with the membership locally than a sole national officer could be.

- The Secretary advised that other matters arising from the Minutes would be dealt with under other agenda items later in the meeting.
- Betty Stirton pointed out the necessity for printing the Minutes and all other permanent records on archival-quality paper and for refraining from using staples and paper clips with such records. The Secretary undertook to comply with this advice.

**6. Annual Report:** The President presented his annual report to the Society. As copies had been made available before the meeting started, he confined himself to particular points as follows:

- Dr Oxer acknowledged the productive effort of the constitutional subcommittee, which on the instructions of the last annual general meeting (AGM) had revised the constitution so as to make the Society a federal organisation and a constituent part of St John Ambulance Australia.
- Dr Oxer then alluded to the great benefits coming to the Society through having formally become an integral part of St John Ambulance Australia. The Society and its history-heritage functions had rejoined the St John Ambulance mainstream, thus affirming the value of the “One St John” ideal.
- Dr Oxer referred to the presentation the previous evening of the annual ‘Mark Compton Knowledge of the Order Prizes’ awarded to the Cadets who done the best project work in their studies for the ‘Knowledge of the Order’ proficiency badge. Appropriately, the presentation ceremony had taken place during the State Government reception hosted by the Minister for Volunteering. This year’s prize-winners had been Larry Lam (Miller Division, New South Wales), Philip Mallis (Whitehorse Division, Victoria), Ben Cross (Sandy Bay Division, Tasmania), Jenna Bambrick (Tea Tree Gully Division, South Australia) and Renae Leis (Rockhampton Division, Queensland). Ms Bambrick had been present to personally receive her award (a framed presentation certificate and \$50 gift voucher) from Mr Compton while the relevant State Cadet Officers had received the awards and behalf of the other prize-winners.
- Dr Oxer also pointed out that the Society had affirmed its appreciation of the generosity of Mr Mark Compton, the Priory Receiver General, in funding the ‘Knowledge of the Order’ prizes, by appointing him as its fourth Life Member. (Dr Oxer had presented Mr Compton with his Life Membership certificate during the History Seminar the previous day.)
- Dr Oxer thanked the Secretary for his efforts in organising both the History Seminar and the AGM. He also thanked the other members of the Society who had contributed to the success of these events.

Dr Oxer then moved that his report be received and adopted; seconded Vince Little; motion carried unanimously.

**7. Financial Report:** The Secretary presented the Financial Report, consisting of the Treasurer’s Report, Balance Sheet and Auditor’s Report. The Balance Sheet showed income of \$7816 (including a credit balance of \$4555 carried forward from 2006-07), expenditure of \$2569 and balance of income over expenditure of \$5247.

The report by the auditor (Ms Amanda Power, National Manager Finance for St John Ambulance Australia) drew attention to the Society’s need to switch from a financial year to

a calendar year for reporting to bring it into line with St John practice. Her report was therefore an interim one, her final report to be made shortly after the end of 2008.

The report by the Treasurer (Mr James Byrne) indicated that, largely because of the production of a high quality annual journal, the Society was being heavily subsidised by St John Ambulance Australia, a situation which cannot be expected to continue. The report suggested that the obvious way to reduce the level of subsidisation would be for the Society to raise the annual membership subscription and to seek sources of income other than subscriptions and donations. The Secretary advised that these matters would be the subject of separate agenda items later in the meeting. He then moved that the Financial Report be received and approved; seconded Vince Little; motion carried.

8. **Membership:** The Secretary displayed the Society's membership list, which was available for viewing by members. He reported that early in 2008, following the implementation of the decentralised system of membership management, it had been necessary to reconstruct the national membership database. At present the Society had 204 members on its books, only 167 of whom had been financial at 1<sup>st</sup> June. Early in July the State/Territory membership liaison officers would therefore cull their membership lists, removing the names of non-financial members. This would be necessary because distributing the quarterly newsletters and annual journal to non-financial members represented a considerable drain on the Society's resources.
9. **Publications:** The Secretary distributed a written report on the Society's three main publications, viz. the quarterly newsletter (*St John Heritage*), the annual journal or proceedings (*St John History*) and the internet website. The report indicated that after difficulties with distributing Volume 6 of the journal, which had been very late, Volume 7 had been distributed to all members on time in mid-May.

Regarding the newsletter, the report noted that *St John Heritage* had begun as a circular for committee members but in early 2008 became a newsletter for the general membership of the Society. The Secretary reported that *St John Heritage* was being distributed to all members in lieu of an earlier newsletter, *Pro Utilitate*, which had lapsed in 2004. Because of the similarity of the titles of the annual journal and the quarterly newsletter, and the consequent confusion between the two publications, members might prefer to revive the title *Pro Utilitate* for the newsletter. An advantage in doing so would be that the earlier *Pro Utilitate* had an international standard serials number (ISSN), and copies were accordingly deposited with the National Library of Australia. The Secretary therefore asked for an indication of who would like to see the earlier title revived. As most members present indicated that they would like to see this happen, the President declared that the meeting had just agreed that the title *Pro Utilitate* should replace *St John Heritage*.

In relation to the website, the Secretary said it was still extant but had not been fully developed or updated. It was therefore outdated and presented a misleading view of St John Ambulance Australia generally and the Society in particular. There was widespread agreement it should close. Meanwhile, the Deputy CEO of St John Ambulance Australia had agreed to allocate the Society space on the St John website. The Secretary said he was currently liaising with the Deputy CEO to bring this about.

## **10. Reports by sub-committees:**

- Ms Beth Dawson tabled the report of the subcommittee charged with developing a set of protocols for the management of St John heritage collections. The report contained useful guidelines for St John personnel with responsibilities for maintaining and displaying such collections. It also set out the means by which the various States/Territories could assist each other in developing management strategies. The President thanked Ms Dawson and her fellow subcommittee members, Mrs Betty Stirton and Dr Edith Khangure, for their productive effort over the past two years.
- The Secretary reported on the work of the constitutional subcommittee, which consisted of himself, Dr Brian Fotheringham and Dr Allan Mawdsley. The subcommittee's task had been to revise the constitution, federalising it to permit the formation of State/Territory branches of the Society while also making it possible for the Society to be integrated within the structure of St John Ambulance Australia. He said that the revised constitution was the subject of the next agenda item.

**11. Amended constitution:** Following on from the report of the constitutional subcommittee, the Secretary said that the Priory Solicitor (Mr Chris Chenoweth) had approved revised draft of the constitution, which had then been approved by the St John Ambulance Australia Board of Directors at its December 2008 meeting. With that, the revised constitution had come into force and the Society had become a constituent part of St John Ambulance Australia. All that therefore remained for the Society to do was to endorse the revision. The Secretary then moved that the meeting endorse the revised constitution; seconded Kevin Young; motion passed unanimously.

**12. Election of office bearers:** The President advised the meeting that as office holders had now held their positions for a full triennium, it would be appropriate to spill all positions and conduct an election for the vacant positions, viz. those of President, Secretary, Treasurer and the five elected committee members. He then vacated the chair and asked Dr Fotheringham as Immediate Past President to preside over the meeting for the period of the election. Dr Fotheringham asked the Secretary what nominations had been received. The latter reported that one nomination each had been received for the positions of President (Dr Oxer), Secretary (Dr Howie-Willis) and Treasurer (Mr Byrne). As there were no further nominations for these positions, Dr Fotheringham declared the three candidates elected.

Dr Oxer then resumed the chair. Moving to the election of committee members, he asked how many nominations had been received. The Secretary reported that as seven nominations had been duly lodged and there were only five positions to be filled, an election would be necessary. Ballot papers were distributed and completed by financial members present. Dr Oxer asked Dr Fotheringham and Ms Lyn Dansie to collect the ballot papers and tally the votes. After these tasks had been completed, Dr Fotheringham and Ms Dansie reported that the five candidates gaining the highest tally of votes had been Ms Gwyn Balch (Northern Territory), Ms Beth Dawson (Queensland), Dr Edith Khangure (Western Australia), Dr Allan Mawdsley (Victoria) and Mrs Betty Stirton (New South Wales). The President then declared them duly elected. The Secretary then requested that Ms Lyn Dansie (South Australia), Mr Jack Blackstock (Victoria) and Mr Matthew Griffiths (New South Wales) be co-opted to the committee and that they and all other co-opted committee members be endorsed for the next triennium. The President asked the meeting to indicate its approval of this request. Such approval was granted by general assent. In thanking the meeting for this decision, the



President pointed out that the system of co-opted members enabled the Society to have broad and cross-sectional representation from each State/Territory.

In addition the President pointed out that because of the triennial election of new office-bearers it would now be appropriate to have a change of signatories for the Society's account with the Bendigo Bank. He therefore ruled that the signatories to the account should be the President (Dr Harry Oxer), the Society's Secretary (Ian James Willis, also formally known as Dr Ian Howie-Willis, a Priory Officer of St John Ambulance Australia) and the Chief Executive Officer of St John Ambulance Australia (Mr Len Fiori, who as Priory Secretary is also a Priory Officer). He said that the change in signatories would ensure that the Society's bank account would be under the control of St John Ambulance Australia, which was proper because of the Society's new status as a constituent part of the St John Ambulance Australia organisation. He also said both Dr Howie-Willis and Mr Fiori were willing to serve as the signatories and that the change would be convenient as both are Canberra-based.

13. **Second bank account:** The Secretary pointed out that some State/Territory membership officers were experiencing difficulty in banking membership subscriptions because there are few Bendigo Bank branches near where they live. This requires them to spend needless time, travel and expense whenever they have subscription moneys to deposit. He suggested that the Historical Society could solve this problem by opening a "Society Business Cheque Account" with the Commonwealth Bank. As all the membership officers live in localities where there is ready access to Commonwealth Bank branches, having such an account would greatly ease the burden of duty for them. He accordingly requested permission to open such an account, to which he Ian Willis as Secretary, the President (Dr Harry Oxer) and the Deputy CEO of St John Ambulance Australia (Mr Peter Le Cornu) would be the signatories, with any two of them to sign cheques. The President ruled that this was such a sensible, practical proposition that it should be implemented. He directed the Secretary to take steps to open the proposed bank account.
14. **Reports by States/Territories:** The President called on representatives from the State/Territory branches of the Society to report on the management of the St John heritage in their jurisdictions. The following representatives then delivered their reports, most tabling printed copies: Mrs Betty Stirton (New South Wales), Dr Edith Khangure (Western Australia), Ms Beth Dawson (Queensland), Dr Brian Fotheringham (South Australia), Dr Ian Howie-Willis (Australian Capital Territory and the Priory), Mrs Fay Reeve (Tasmania) and Mr Jack Blackstock (Victoria). When all reports had been delivered, the President thanked the representatives who had presented them. He also said that the reports would be published in the next edition of the Society's journal.
15. **Membership types and subscriptions:** The Secretary presented a submission on the structure of membership types and the level of the annual membership subscription for each type. In speaking on the submission he pointed out that where more than one member of a family was a member of the Society, the subscription for the second and other family members should be at a discounted rate because the family received only one copy of each edition of the journal and newsletter. In addition, because the Society now had several groups as individual members there should be a separate category for group or 'corporate' membership. His submission accordingly proposed that there be three categories of membership: individual, family and group.

In relation to subscriptions, the Secretary said that as suggested in the Financial Report, the Society must raise its income level to be seen by the management of St John Ambulance Australia (SJAA) to making an effort to reduce its high level of subsidisation by SJAA. In this connection he pointed out that Volume 7 of the journal had cost almost \$25 to produce and distribute, whereas the present membership fee was only \$10 within Australia; in effect SJAA had therefore subsidised the journal by about \$15 per member. As the Society could not fairly expect such subsidisation to continue, the submission proposed an increase in subscriptions to the following levels in 2009:

- Individual membership—\$20 (within Australia) and £15 (UK)
- Family membership—\$30 for two family members, \$35 for three or more
- Group membership—\$30.

Having outlined his proposed membership categories and corresponding scale of subscriptions, the Secretary moved that his proposals be adopted for 2009. Seconded by Vince Little; motion carried without dissent.

**16. Society logo:** Mr James Cheshire presented a submission for the adoption of a new logo by the Society. His submission pointed out that the present logo (the name of the Society under the ‘red-bar’ logo of St John Ambulance Australia with a patterned boomerang below) had never been formally adopted by the Society although it had been in use since the Society came into being. His submission proposed a modification of the 1908 emblem of the Commonwealth of Australia: a shield supported by a kangaroo and emu, the shield depicting the Arms of the Priory surrounded by the armorial devices of the eight States/Territories plus the informal ‘red-bar’ and boomerang emblem at the top centre. Arranged above and below the proposed logo would be the name of the Society. He then outlined the advantages of the proposed new logo: it is historic, distinctively Australian, unmistakably of the Order and representative of the federal nature of St John Ambulance Australia. In response to a question, he pointed out that the logo would be used on letterheads, publications and the website and always in association with the principal emblem of St John Ambulance Australia (currently the ‘red-bar’ logo). He then moved the adoption of the recommended new logo; seconded Ian Howie-Willis; adopted without dissent.

**17. Lapel pin for members of the Order:** Mr James Cheshire presented a second submission, this time for the introduction by the Priory of a lapel pin analogous to the lapel pin of the Order of Australia. His submission argued that amidst the plethora of button-hole badges of St John Ambulance there was no one single uniform and standardised insignia for members of the Order. He then moved for the formation of a subcommittee to investigate this matter further and report on the feasibility of introducing a ‘Members of the Order’ lapel pin. Seconded by Ian Howie-Willis; adopted without dissent. The President then suggested that Mr Cheshire should chair the subcommittee and co-opt several other members to it. Mr Cheshire agreed to this; and Ms Lyn Dansie and Mr Matthew Griffiths then indicated their wish to join the subcommittee.

**18. Lynne Panayiotis:** Ms Panayiotis reported briefly on the progress of her rehabilitation following her injuries in a bus crash in Egypt in January 2006. Moved Ian Howie-Willis, seconded Betty Stirton, that the Historical Society donate \$500 to the Lynne Panayiotis Fund. Motion adopted unanimously. Ms Panayiotis thanked the members for their generosity and said that the donation would help her purchase a new ‘wheelie-walker’ walking frame.

## **19. Other business:**

- Dr Allan Mawdsley displayed a bound facsimile copy of the original St John Ambulance first aid manual written by Dr Peter Shepherd. St John Ambulance Victoria had produced the manual as a fundraising venture for the St John Jerusalem Eye Hospital. Copies were available at \$35 each. The meeting agreed that this venture should be advertised in the Society's newsletter.
- Ms Beth Dawson raised the matter of whether or not voluntary service in State/Territory branches of the Society could be considered as service towards the award of the Service Medal of the Order. The Secretary undertook to pursue this issue with the relevant officers in the Australian Office of St John Ambulance Australia.

**20. Closure:** No other business being forthcoming, the President thanked those present for their attendance and participation. He then declared the meeting closed at 11.30 a.m.. After that the Society's members spent a half-hour looking over the St John Ambulance Museum of South Australia before returning to the main conference venue in Adelaide on the conference bus.

**Ian Howie-Willis (Secretary)**  
**3 July 2008**

### **Secretary's record of the Historical Society's 10<sup>th</sup> annual History Seminar held at the Holiday Inn, Hindley Street, Adelaide, Thursday 19 June 2008**

1. **Opening:** The President, Dr Harry Oxe, welcomed the audience to the History Seminar and then declared the seminar open at 8.30 a.m.
2. **Attendance:** The attendance register was signed by 65 people and 9 apologies were recorded. However, for much of the day at least 70 people were present and at all times all 70 seats were occupied.
3. **Introduction of session chairpersons:** After welcoming the audience and guest speakers, Dr Oxe announced that ten papers from nine presenters were on the seminar program—a record number. He then introduced the two session chairpersons, Ms Loredana Napoli (morning session) and Ms Lyn Dansie (afternoon session).
4. **The speakers and topics:** Ms Napoli then took charge of the morning session and introduced each speaker. As she and later Ms Dansie took charge of their sessions they introduced successive speakers. In order of appearance, the ten presentations were as follows:
  - (a) **Brian Fotheringham:** *'Links between the Children's Hospital and St John Ambulance in South Australia (keynote paper.)*
  - (b) **Michael Compton:** *'The Australian Youth Council: Ten years old in 2008'*
  - (c) **James Cheshire:** *'The St John Life Saving Medal in Australia'*
  - (d) **Heather Fogerty:** *'Surgeon Manley VC: The first Director of the Ambulance Department of the Order of St John'*

- (e) **Allan Mawdsley:** *'Sir William Johnston: Victoria's fourth St John Ambulance Commissioner and the second Priory Commissioner'*
  - (f) **Vince Little:** *'Thomas and friends: The Thomas Splint'*
  - (g) **David Fahey:** *'The self-inflating resuscitator—the evolution of an idea'*
  - (h) **John Pearn:** *'St John and Scouting: Conjoint links in the Australian centenary of Scouting'*
  - (i) **Vince Little:** *'Candle of Hope: East Timor's ambulances'*
  - (j) **Ian Howie-Willis:** *'Who was Australia's first St John Ambulance Chief Commissioner? (A claim for Sir S. Roy Burston)'*
5. **Book launch:** During the afternoon tea break the Historical Society conducted the launch of Mr Vince Little's book, *Candle of Hope*, about his experiences in establishing an ambulance service in East Timor following the Indonesian withdrawal in 1999. Dr Oxer was Master of Ceremonies for this event. Professor John Pearn delivered the launching address, during which he spoke warmly of Mr Little's valiant efforts over several years to create an East Timorese ambulance service from almost nothing. In responding to Professor Pearn's comments Mr Little expressed his appreciation of the support he had received from individual St John members in Australia and especially from the State/Territory ambulance services and individual ambulance officers who had assisted him.
6. **Seminar closure:** Dr Oxer concluded the seminar by thanking the session chairpersons for managing their sessions effectively, the presenters of the papers for the time and effort that had gone into preparing and delivering their papers, and the members of the audience for having attended and taken an active interest in the proceedings throughout the day. He also observed that the papers which had been presented were evidence of the diversity and high quality of the ongoing research into St John history in Australia taking place in consequence of the leadership that the Historical Society provided. He formally closed the seminar at 4.15 p.m.

**Ian Howie-Willis (Secretary)**  
**3 July 2008**