
The St John Ambulance



Historical Society of Australia

10th Annual General Meeting,

held in the Wrest Point Convention Centre, Sandy
Bay, Hobart, Tasmania,
Sunday 29 May 2011

Minutes

Preserving and promoting the St John heritage

1. **Opening:** The President, Dr Harry Oxer, declared the meeting open at 2.00 p.m.
2. **Welcome:** In welcoming those present, Dr Oxer said he hoped the AGM would be as enjoyable for those present as the History Seminar that had been conducted the previous day.
3. **Attendance and apologies:** A total of 30 people signed the attendance register; however, 40 members attended the meeting. In calling for apologies the President asked for these to be entered in the register (32 names were subsequently entered).
4. **Certificates of appreciation:** The President thanked the auditor, Ms Amanda Power, the journal production manager, Ms Gabi Lhuede, the Priory Secretary, Peter Le Cornu and the Priory Secretary's PA, Ms Kylie Seidel, for their contributions to the success of the Society's endeavours. He then presented certificates of appreciation to Ms Power, Ms Lhuede and Mr Le Cornu and *in absentia* to Ms Seidel.
5. **Minutes of the last meeting:** The President advised that the Minutes had been circulated to all members with the last edition of the newsletter earlier in May. He therefore suggested that the Minutes be taken as read and called for a motion that they be received. Moved Dr Fotheringham seconded Mr Griffiths that the Minutes of the annual general meeting in Melbourne on 24 June 2010 be accepted. Approved by assent.
6. **Matters arising from the Minutes:**
 - Nil.
7. **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 thanked the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Treasurer, Management Committee members and the State/Territory Membership Secretaries for their efforts throughout the year.
 - Dr Oxer referred to the presentation the previous morning 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. The presentation ceremony had taken place during the Grand Prior's Badge Awardees Breakfast. Mr Mark Compton (Priory Receiver General), the donor of the prizes, had been present to award them in person. Here he had been assisted by Dr Oxer, Mr Cheshire (Deputy Secretary) and Ms Helen Banu-Lawrence (Chief Cadet Officer). This year's Tasmania prize-winner, Sara Duff of Ulverstone Cadet Division, had 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 on behalf of the other prize-winners.

- Dr Oxer also drew attention to the fact that this meeting was the historic 10th AGM of the Historical Society. After briefly charting the successful growth & development of the Society since its formal foundation by the Board of Directors in Brisbane in June 2001, he commended the members and office holders whose efforts over the past decade had contributed to the Society's becoming an integral, respected and important part of the St John 'family'.
- Dr Oxer then referred to the triennial elections to be held later in the meeting. He observed that the elections would result in a "changing of the guard" in the Society's Executive because neither he nor the present Secretary would be seeking re-appointment.
- Dr Oxer concluded his report by thanking the Deputy Secretary, Mr James Cheshire, 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.

Moved Lyn Dansie that Dr Oxer's report be received and adopted; seconded Trevor Mayhew; motion carried unanimously.

8. Financial Report: On behalf of the Treasurer, Mr James Byrne, who was detained in Launceston because of family illnesses, the Secretary presented the Financial Report, which consisted of the Treasurer's Report & Balance Sheet. The main points from Mr Byrne's report were as follows:

- The balance sheet indicates that, after a credit balance of \$8,345.70 was carried over from 2009, income of \$3,682.20 was received from subscriptions (\$2,950.00), donations (\$520.00), sale of Priory ties and scarves (\$200.00) and bank interest (\$12.20).
- Expenditure totalled \$5,062.00, comprising payments to the 'Open Gate' appeal of St John's Gate, London, for the redevelopment of the Museum and creation of a modern Research Centre (\$500.00), the Australian Office of St John Ambulance Australia for production of Volumes 9 of the annual journal *St John History* (\$4,312.00) and the purchase of gift vouchers for the Cadets' "Knowledge of the Order" prizes (\$250.00).
- After meeting expenditure, the Society therefore ended the year with a total credit balance of \$6,965.00 in its Bendigo Bank and Commonwealth Bank accounts.
- There has been a declining rate of membership subscriptions, with many—40+—unfinancial members in the membership database. The unfinancial members represent a severe drain on the Society's funds; and for that reason he recommended a cull of the membership database at the end of June to remove the names of all unfinancial members.

Moved Beth Dawson, seconded Betty Stirton, that the Treasurer's Report and Balance Sheet be received and adopted. Carried by assent.

9. Membership: The Secretary reported that at the beginning of May 2011 the Society had 252 members, the largest number since its formation in 2001. Unfortunately, however, there were over 40 unfinancial members. As recommended by Mr Byrne in his Treasurer's Report, their names will be culled from the membership list unless their 2011 subscription are received by 30th June..

10. Publications: At Dr Oxe's invitation, the Secretary spoke briefly about the Society's two main publications, viz. the quarterly newsletter (*Pro Utilitate*) and the annual journal (*St John History*). He said that Volume 10 of the journal had been distributed to all members on time in early May while the newsletter had also appeared regularly four times annually. Members' feedback indicated that both publications were well appreciated by the membership. In addition, information about the Society appears on the St John Ambulance Australia website, www.stjohn.org.au, in the "About Us"/"History" section; and the Society has its own page in the *Annual Reports* of St John Ambulance Australia. In addition, the National Manager Publications, Ms Lhuede, has now added a "PDF" copy of Volume 10 of the journal on the website and will add the previous volumes of the journal as she finds the time. The Secretary thanked the CEO—Priority Secretary, Mr Le Cornu, and his PA, Ms Seidel, for their assistance in producing and distributing the publications and for the favours shown to the Society via the website and the *Annual Reports*.

11. Reports by States/Territories: The President called on representatives from the State/Territory branches of the Society to table their reports on the management of the St John heritage in their jurisdictions. The following representatives then tabled their reports, and presented brief summaries of the "History & Heritage" activities in their jurisdictions. Those tabling reports were: Mrs Betty Stirton on behalf of Ms Loredana Napoli (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), Ms Gwyn Balch (Northern Territory) and Mrs Ruth Moon (Victoria). Dr Oxe thanked the representatives who had tabled reports. He also said that the reports would be published in the next edition of the Society's journal, *St John History*.

12. Election and Co-option of Office Bearers: The President asked the Secretary to announce those who had submitted nominations for the various elected and co-opted positions on the Society's Executive and Management Committee. The Secretary then announced that he had received the following nominations for the elected positions:

- **Allan Mawdsley**—President
- **James Cheshire**—Secretary
- **Dawn Bat**—Committee Member
- **Lyn Dansie**—Committee Member
- **Beth Dawson**—Committee Member
- **Betty Stirton**—Committee Member

As these nominations matched the vacancies and there were no other nominations, the President declared these people to be elected and then congratulated them on their appointments.

As no one had nominated for the Treasurer's position and there was now a vacancy for the Deputy Secretary's position (Mr Cheshire just having been elected Secretary), Dr Oxer asked the retiring Secretary, Dr Ian Howie-Willis, if he knew of anyone willing to fill these positions as co-opted office-holders. Dr Howie-Willis reported that the following two financial members had offered their services:

- **Gary Harris**—Treasurer
- **Edith Khangure**—Deputy Secretary

Dr Oxer then moved that Mr Harris be appointed as the co-opted Treasurer and Dr Khangure as the co-opted Deputy Secretary; seconded Dr Howie-Willis. Dr Oxer put the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Moving on to the appointments of co-opted Committee Members representing the States/Territories, Dr Oxer asked Dr Howie-Willis which of the former co-opted members of the committee had signified their willingness to continue in their positions during the next triennium. Dr Howie-Willis then read the list of names of those who had agreed to continue, these members being:

- **Alan Caust** (Northern Territory)
- **Richard Caesar-Thwaytes** (ACT)
- **Vera Crook** (Queensland)
- **Mervyn Goodall** (Victoria)
- **David Heard** (South Australia)
- **George Jackson** (Victoria).
- **Loredana Napoli** (New South Wales)
- **Terry Walton** (United Kingdom) &
- **Kevin Young** (Western Australia).

Dr Oxer then moved that these nine members be endorsed as co-opted Committee Members; seconded Dr Howie-Willis; motion unanimously approved.

Dr Howie-Willis then advised the meeting that in addition to the above elected and co-opted members, there was a group of six people who should also be endorsed as co-opted Committee Members because of the positions they hold in the Society and/or St John Ambulance. The six people were:

- **Brian Fotheringham** (past President)
- **Ian Howie-Willis** (Priory Librarian and Historical Society Editor)
- **Peter Le Cornu** (Priory Secretary, representing the Board of Directors)
- **Harry Oxer** (immediate past President)
- **John Pearn** (Priory Librarian designate) &
- **Pamela Willis** (Curator, Museum of the Order, representing Jonathan Riley-Smith, Librarian of the Order).

Dr Oxer then moved that these six members be endorsed as co-opted Committee Members; seconded Dr Howie-Willis; motion unanimously approved.

After congratulating all those who had been elected or co-opted to the Management Committee and its Executive, Dr Oxer invited the newly elected President and Secretary to take their seats at the presidential table and take charge of the meeting. While Drs Oxer and Howie-Willis seated themselves in the body of the meeting room, Dr Mawdsley and Mr Cheshire took their seats at the table and together conducted the remainder of the meeting. The

meeting indicated its satisfaction with the change-over in the Executive by applauding the new President, Secretary, Treasurer and Deputy Secretary.

13. Other business:

(a) **Life Memberships:** The President moved, seconded by the Secretary, that the retiring President and Secretary, Drs Oxer & Howie-Willis, be appointed as, respectively, the fifth and sixth Life Members of the Historical Society in recognition of their services in the positions they had just relinquished. Motion adopted unanimously. Dr Mawdsley congratulated Drs Oxer and Howie-Willis on their appointments.

(b) **Priory Commendation:** Dr Mawdsley invited the Chancellor, Dr Neil Conn, to come forward and present to Dr Howie-Willis a Priory Commendation. Accepting the invitation, Dr Conn explained that the Priory had recently instituted a system of awards at three levels—Gold, Silver & Bronze—to acknowledge exceptional service to St John Ambulance. The new awards were to be called Priory Commendations. He then congratulated Dr Howie-Willis and presented him with his certificate and badge for a Commendation in Gold.

(c) **The Society's bank accounts:** The retiring Secretary explained that, as indicated in the Treasurer's Report, the Society maintains two bank accounts, one with the Bendigo Bank and the other with the Commonwealth Bank. The signatories for both accounts were the retiring President and Secretary (Dr Harry Oxer and Dr Ian Howie-Willis) and the St John Ambulance Australia CEO, Mr Peter Le Cornu, with any two of these together being able to make withdrawals and payments and sign cheques. As payments from the Bendigo Account required the use of an electronic "security access token" and the use of regularly changed electronic pass-words, there would be difficulties in managing the account with a Treasurer in Melbourne and a CEO in Canberra. Further, there would be a need in operating the Commonwealth Bank account to mail the cheque book backwards and forwards between Melbourne and Canberra. Dr Howie-Willis suggested that to simplify banking matters, these new arrangements should now be put in place:

- the Bendigo Bank account should be closed and the funds in it transferred to the Commonwealth Bank;
- Dr Oxer, the retiring President (who lives in Perth) should no longer be a signatory to the accounts;
- Dr Ian Howie-Willis, the retiring Secretary (who lives in Canberra) should continue as a signatory in his new capacity as Editor because he will be required to pay printing and publication bills;
- for convenience, Mr Peter Le Cornu, the CEO (who also lives in Canberra), should also continue as a signatory;
- in addition, the members of the new Executive, Dr Allan Mawdsley (President), Mr James Cheshire (Secretary) and Mr Gary Harris (Treasurer), all of whom live in Melbourne, should be added as signatories to the Commonwealth Bank account;
- a second cheque book for the Commonwealth Bank account should be issued and retained in Melbourne by the Treasurer, Mr Harris;
- finally, statements for the Commonwealth Bank account should be received monthly (instead of quarterly as at present); and these should be sent to Mr Harris's address.

Dr Howie-Willis then moved that the procedures set out in the above seven dot-points be instituted as the Society's new banking arrangements; seconded Gary Harris. The motion

was then put and, there being no dissent, was declared adopted.

- 14. Closure:** No other business being forthcoming, the President thanked those present for their attendance and participation. Observing that it had been a productive meeting that had put in place some key changes in the Society's leadership, Dr Mawdsley said he hoped to see a large turn-out of members at next year's 11th AGM in Sydney. He then declared the meeting closed at 3.30 p.m.

Ian Howie-Willis (Retiring Secretary)
31 May 2011