

# Marking 50 years

**This year the St John Eye Hospital Group is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the main hospital building in East Jerusalem.**

The Jerusalem Hospital has had to move three times during its 128 year history. After leaving its original site in what is now West Jerusalem, when Israel and Jordan carved up the city between them after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Hospital was temporarily housed in the Old City, which had been annexed by Jordan.

In 1955, however, the decision was made to create a purpose built hospital in the Sheikh Jarrah district of East Jerusalem and, in 1960, this new building became its permanent home.

Last year the hospital treated 92,384 patients - 31,017 under the age of 18. One of the fastest growing conditions is retinal disease. Retinal medicine includes the treatment of both diabetic retinopathy and age-related macular degeneration.

Diabetic retinopathy is the most common cause of blindness and affects up to 80% of all patients who have had diabetes for 10 years or more. In the occupied Palestinian territory, the prevalence of diabetes stands between 470,000 and 570,000, or 12-15% of the population of 3,800,000. New cases of blindness due to diabetic retinopathy could be reduced with vigilant screening, treatment and monitoring of the eyes. The Retinal Unit needs to be redesigned to meet the increasing workload and to mark this special anniversary



year, an appeal is under way to raise £150,000 to expand and upgrade the unit. More details are on the St John Eye Hospital website: [www.stjohnseyehospital.org](http://www.stjohnseyehospital.org). To find out more about the appeal, please contact Nicky Wynne on 020 7553 6969 or email [nicky.wynne@stjohnseyehospital.org](mailto:nicky.wynne@stjohnseyehospital.org).

## On Parade



Jeanette Spriggs and Penny O'Callaghan of the St John and Red Cross Defence Medical Welfare Service were recently awarded medals for service in Afghanistan. This was at a medal presentation ceremony for Royal Navy personnel, many of whom provide medical, logistical, bomb disposal, air cover and other support in Afghanistan. Jeanette and Penny (in white shirts) had recently supported the Royal Marines there. The DMWS is the only welfare service to work in a front line environment. Recently made a charity in its own right, it began during World War II under the Joint Committee of St John and the British Red Cross. More information is at [www.dmws.org.uk](http://www.dmws.org.uk).

## How to get involved

"Membership has given me a wonderful opportunity to help a variety of local causes and overseas projects. At the same time, it is a real pleasure to meet and work together with like-minded people."



St John Scotland operates through 12 Area Committees:

- Aberdeen and the North-East
- Angus and Dundee
- Ayrshire and Arran
- Central
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Dunbartonshire
- Edinburgh and the South - East
- Fife
- Glasgow
- Highland
- Perth and Kinross
- West Lothian

These committees help achieve the mission of St John Scotland: to improve the safety, health and quality of life of people in need. The committees are involved in all kinds of charitable projects ranging from providing transport for people in need to supporting other local charities with similar aims. They raise funds by holding events in their areas and for larger projects can apply for additional support.

There are many ways you can support the work of St John Scotland in your area. The first step is to complete and send in the form below. Your details will be passed to your area secretary who will then contact you. Alternatively, you can contact your area secretary directly by going to [www.stjohnscotland.org.uk](http://www.stjohnscotland.org.uk) where you will find the contact details.

Members receive the newsletter two or three times a year and are invited to attend meetings and fundraising events such as garden parties, raffles, art shows and race nights. For people with more time to offer, there is the opportunity to volunteer, either occasionally or on a regular basis.

### ST JOHN SCOTLAND MEMBERSHIP FORM

Title .....

Surname .....

Forename .....

Address .....

.....

Town ..... Postcode .....

Telephone .....

Email .....

Date .....

Please return this form or a photocopy to:

Audrey Leighton, Priory Administrator, Order of St John,  
St John's House, 21 St John Street, Edinburgh EH8 8DG  
Thank you!



St John

# InFocus

www.stjohnscotland.org.uk

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## ST JOHN GOES THE EXTRA MILE

## Helping here and around the world

**With its origins in an 11th century hospital for pilgrims in Jerusalem, the Order of St John has evolved into a charity caring for people in need in over 40 countries.**



The Order is supported by thousands of volunteers worldwide who share its commitment to help people in sickness, distress, suffering or danger.

Today it is organised from centres, known as Priors, in eight countries: Australia, Canada, England and the Islands, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa, the United States and Wales.

St John Scotland's mission is to improve the safety, health and quality of life of people in need. Membership is open to all and through the 12 Area Committees, St John Scotland supports a variety of projects across the country. These include:

- Supporting mountain rescue teams
- Providing transport for people needing hospital treatment
- Supporting palliative care

Unlike its fellow Priors around the world, St John Scotland does not operate the ambulance service or provide first aid training. It does, however, contribute to two significant international projects: the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem and St John Malawi's Primary Health Care Project.

The Order is a royal order of chivalry with Queen Elizabeth II as its sovereign head who confers membership in recognition of an individual's service and commitment to caring for others.

If you would like to find out more, please contact the Edinburgh Office for details of your local area secretary:

The Chancery of the Priory of Scotland, St John's House, 21 St John Street, Edinburgh EH8 8DG  
Telephone 0131 556 8711  
Email [info@stjohnscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@stjohnscotland.org.uk)  
Scottish Charity SC000262



**A free, door-to-door transport service which takes people to hospital for cancer treatment has been a key activity of St John Dumfries and Galloway for 14 years.**

Now another scheme is well under way in East Scotland thanks to the efforts of St John Angus and Dundee. Both schemes rely completely on their teams of volunteer drivers.

In Dumfries and Galloway, around 40,000 miles are clocked up each year taking people from remote rural areas to hospitals in Dumfries, Glasgow and Edinburgh for treatment.

While the vehicles are provided by St John Scotland, the operating costs of the service are met by the committee's local fundraising activities. A grant from the NHS also helps with the cost.

Inspired by the success of this service, St John Angus and Dundee set up a patient transport scheme in conjunction with the Scottish Ambulance Service. Initially, the volunteers used their own cars to take patients for chemotherapy treatment at the Princess Alexandra Unit of Ninewells Teaching Hospital in Dundee.

"Most of the patients are elderly, without

Keys for new vehicle for Dumfries and Galloway presented to the committee secretary, Pat Calvert, and transport convenor, Adam Calderwood in November 2009

A new vehicle for Angus and Dundee took to the road in June 2009



## Knight of the Road Retires

Having clocked up thousands of miles as a patient transport convenor for the Order in Dumfries and Galloway, Adam Calderwood (main picture) retired in March 2010.

In his 14 years as a volunteer driver, Adam has got to know some roads such as the A75 all too well having driven hundreds of patients to Dumfries Infirmary and hospitals as far away as Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

"I will miss it as I have met many interesting people on the way and you know you are helping people at a very difficult time in their lives," said Adam.

personal transport and living at a distance from their treatment centre," explained Bill Spence, St John Angus and Dundee committee chairman. "Rather than undergoing daily extended journeys by public transport or by minibus when they are probably unwell and fragile, they are uplifted, transported and returned from the hospital. Usually we take one patient at a time unless another lives close by."

In 2009 this service was extended to people needing renal dialysis and a people carrier was provided by St John Scotland (pictured right). The number of patients now exceeds the capacity of the dedicated vehicle which is on the road six days a week. The remainder of the journeys are met by volunteers using their own cars.

"The service is currently undertaking around 15,000 miles per month mainly in Angus & Dundee, but some journeys take patients elsewhere depending on circumstances. The demand and extent of the service continues to grow and is sustained by our volunteers. The daily journeys start between 6am and 7am and even during last winter, volunteers maintained their full level of activity, often travelling through very stormy and difficult conditions to ensure that patients met their appointments," said Mr Spence.

## Editorial

The heavy snow and exceptional cold of last winter underlined the importance St John Scotland's continuing commitment to Scottish Mountain Rescue. Although winter is not the busiest time for the rescue teams, it certainly brings the most extreme conditions and dangerous situations.

The support of St John Scotland means the country's rescue teams, who are all volunteers, have the best vehicles for the task and secure bases with drying facilities, good storage space for equipment and training rooms.

The latest is a new base built outside Tillicoultry for the Ochils team. It will be officially opened later this year and brings the total spent since 1997 on Scottish Mountain Rescue to £2.5m.

St John Committees also support their rescue teams at a local level. Various events are held to raise funds for these courageous volunteers – see the Area Round Up for one such donation.

Winter is at last behind us but the rescue teams will remain on stand-by round the clock. As more people head for the hills the number of call-outs tends to increase.

For those of you tempted by the warmer weather and sunshine to don your backpack and boots - please, don't forget to take a map!

**Carolyn Nurse**  
Communications Officer

## DAEL TACKLES 1000 MILES FOR ST JOHN



Dael Wilson (left) and the chairman of Scottish Mountain Rescue, Alfie Ingram

Training has started for Dael Wilson, a 67-year-old retired police constable from Fife, who has set himself a new challenge: to cycle around the border of Scotland.

His epic journey starts on Saturday 1 May at 11am at St Andrews Cathedral. He will be keeping to the coast where possible taking in many of the islands such as Orkney and Skye and including a special trip to Iona, a place he has long wanted to visit. The 1000 mile trip will take around two months. Along the way he will be meeting members of the local mountain rescue teams.

"I would like to raise awareness of St John Scotland and its connection to Scottish Mountain

Rescue," says Dael, who lives in Markinch and is a keen walker. "I am going at my own pace, staying in hostels and camping, and will simply take each day as it comes."

This is not the first long-distance cycle ride Dael has undertaken. Ten years ago he and his wife cycled the pilgrim route to Santiago in Spain and more recently he cycled with a colleague from John O'Groats to Land's End as part of a united effort by all the police forces to raise funds for the RNLI.

Donations towards Dael's St John Challenge can be made directly by cheque payable to St John Scotland and sent to the head office in Edinburgh or online through [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com)

## Area Round Up



### Glasgow

Christmas came early in Glasgow when Hazelwood School for children who are sensory impaired received a minibus, partly funded by St John Glasgow.

Parents of the pupils raised £12,000 and St John Glasgow contributed a further £16,000 too to secure a new wheelchair-accessible bus for extra-curricular outings for the young people.

Headteacher Monica McGeever said: "We had two buses before but unfortunately they were not wheelchair accessible so we were having to arrange other transport like taxis which can be really expensive."

"Now we're able to organise more outings, making activities much more accessible for us.



### Edinburgh and the South-East

The annual musical event at Duns Castle in November saw reduced numbers as a result of the poor weather conditions but donations and proceeds from the raffle came to over £1100. Entertainment was provided by Gordon Ferries on lute and guitar.

During the evening an all-weather outfit was presented to Stuart Fuller-Shapcott of Border Search and Rescue Unit. The Committee plans to buy more all-weather gear for the team with a recent donation raised by Longridge Tower School at their Christmas Service.

A donation of £800 was made to the local Association of Riding for the Disabled to help create a storage facility for their equipment.

The next fundraising event is 14 May when the Berwick Male Voice Choir will be performing at Paxton House. To find out more please contact the committee secretary, Mrs Paterson on 01361 882727

### Dunbartonshire

In a new fundraising venture, Katharine Liston entertained friends with a programme of songs she composed herself and original sketches in June and December last year. Both evenings were well attended with over 50 people each time and raising a total of £1030. Bill Kean was a brilliant accompanist.

Later this year Mrs Liston is organising a 'Lunch with Laughter' to be held at Ross Priory, Gartocharn on Sunday 15 August. Tickets £25 each, including a glass of wine with the three course meal. To find out more please contact committee secretary Donald Fullarton on 01436 673774.

### Ayrshire and Arran

The fundraising effort continues to support the Lighthouse Project which provides facilities for children of addicts. Events planned for 2010 include various can collections, a bridge afternoon and a carol service.

### Dumfries and Galloway

A group of hardy friends from Portpatrick braved the sea on New Year's Day to raise money for the St John patient transport service in Stranraer. Their great effort raised £1400.

Also in Stranraer, a local band, Bad Reputation, held a fundraising concert at the Ryan Centre in memory of John McKeith, a band member who died of cancer in 2009. The proceeds from the night resulted in a cheque for £2439 being presented to St John Committee secretary, Pat Calvert (pictured with band members).



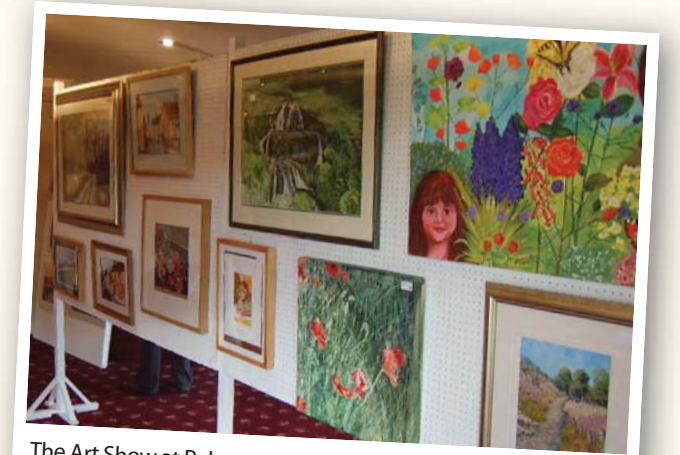
All weather outfit donated to Borders Search and Rescue

### Central

A successful Art Exhibition and Sale of Paintings was held in the former MacRobert Restaurant at the Retirement Complex, Polmont. Fond memories of the Restaurant were expressed by many who called in.

The quality of the display which featured hand-painted china plates and 120 paintings by local artists of a high standard and well supported. It included was paintings from senior pupils at Balfron High School.

Essential repairs and decoration have been completed over the winter at Sir Andrew Murray House, the St John holiday base for charities. New soft furnishings will give the main living room a contemporary and comfortable feel. There is also a new email address for enquiries and bookings. [stjohnstrathyre@aol.com](mailto:stjohnstrathyre@aol.com)



The Art Show at Polmont proved a success

### Perth and Kinross

A cheque for £1,000 to Moira Kerracher of Rachel House, the Children's Hospice Association, by Dorothy Sinclair and Brian Mackenzie on behalf of St John Perth & Kinross. The money was raised by St John pipers organised by Brian Mackenzie who pipe at Scone Palace during the summer and at the Kinross Show.



Moira Kerracher of CHAS receives the cheque from Dorothy Sinclair and Brian Mackenzie

### Fife



Stuart Morris of Balgonie laid a wreath to mark Remembrance Day in Fife

### Aberdeen and the North-East

Waves and Whisky is the title of a lecture being given by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston CBE in Aberdeen on Wednesday 28th April at 7.30pm

Sir Robin was the first person to sail single handed and non-stop around the world between 14th June 1968 and 22nd April 1969.

In 1992 Sir Robin was invited to become President of the Sail Training Association, a youth development organisation which operated two topsail schooners (the Sir Winston Churchill and the Malcolm Miller). He also organised the annual Tall Ships races before retiring in 2001.

He is currently President of the Little Ship Club and the Cruising Association and Chairman of Clipper Venture. Sir Robin was knighted in 1995 and has been the UK's Yachtsman of the Year three times.

He is a Global Brand Ambassador for Benromach Speyside Single Malt Scottish Whisky. The lecture will be in the main lecture theatre of the Robert Gordon University's School of Business Management on the Garthdee Campus and includes whisky tasting. Tickets are £10. To book a ticket, please contact committee secretary, Stuart MacBride on 01224 868291