

# The Link



**St John**

*Sharing news from the Order of St John*

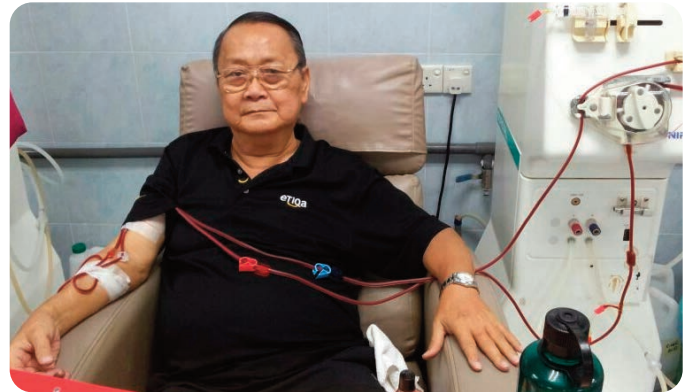
## St John Malaysia provides vital medical facilities for those in need *“I have to stop working and my family is worried about me”*

Teh Seng Huat is 64 years old and has been suffering kidney failure for the last 6 years. His condition causes severe difficulty with breathing and painful swelling in the legs. The severe symptoms mean that Seng Huat could no longer work and treatment at the private clinic was becoming a huge drain on the family. It was at the right time that Seng Huat heard about the St John dialysis centre, situated nearby to where he lived. Seng Huat now visits the centre three times a week



*“St John nurses treat me well. They take their job seriously and I enjoy coming to the centre for dialysis. Most importantly, the service helps me to reduce the suffering of the illness”*

This dialysis centre was opened in 2002, but St John



has been operating centres since 1993 to meet a need in the community for people experiencing serious problems with their kidneys. Kidney failure is often caused by diabetes and high blood pressure – two of the fastest growing non-communicable diseases which are manifesting in every corner of the world today. The Haemodialysis service is vital for filtering out the harmful substances in the blood when the kidney is unable to do so.

St John Malaysia manages 16 dialysis centres with more than 200 machines and currently more than 500 patients under care. Much of the cost for these vital services is generated from public donations.

*“St John has done a good deed for the community. If it was not for St John, a lot of patients would be unable to get the service they need” - Teh Seng Huat, St John Dialysis service user.*

Visit their website: <http://www.sjam.org>

## Grand Council Meeting 2014



***A note from the Lord Prior*** This year's Grand Council, hosted splendidly by St John Canada in Toronto, started with a show case of St John Canada's most innovative activities as well as its very successful therapy dog operations. Indeed, a photograph of a St John therapy dog was given pride of place on the Governor-General's official website. Archbishop Desmond Tutu was present for part of the meeting, as Prior of the Priory for South Africa. The Deputy Prior of St John Kenya and the Prior of St John Singapore participated for the first time since their Associations had become Pories. The Governor-General of Canada, the Prior of the Priory of Canada, and the Prior's wife flew down from Ottawa to be present at the final event. *Continue on page 3 for a summary of the meeting...*

## Big First Aid Lesson: Giving students a front row seat to First Aid

Recent news from St John England has hit the headlines as it gears up for a BIG FIRST AID LESSON to be streamed online.

Scheduled for Friday 20 June at 2 pm GMT, it's a free, one-hour, online first aid lesson streaming to 1,000 schools around the country.

Students aged from 7 to 16 years-old will get a front-row seat to the country's largest first aid lesson, where they will learn basic skills that can save lives. During the lesson, they can join in through a live web chat, and hear stories of other students who have saved lives with first aid.

## 97% of teachers want to teach First Aid

Many St John organisations offer First Aid in schools with School Programmes prominent in Zimbabwe, Fiji, Sri Lanka and Ghana. St John England asked over a thousand primary and secondary school teachers across England for their views on teaching first aid. An amazing 97 per cent of teachers feel young people should learn first aid, while more than half (57 per cent) believe it needs to be added to the national curriculum to be taken seriously. Currently, just 21 per cent of teachers actually bring first aid lessons into their classrooms. A lack of time (35%), their own lack of training (33%), and cost (21%) stop more from doing this.

Hearing this, St John wanted to break down barriers for students to learn first aid and reach out to teach them the skills now. The only equipment schools need to participate in the Big First Aid Lesson is an internet connection and a screen.

Meanwhile, St John Cymru Wales is creating a generation of lifesavers, by pledging to train 1000 pupils at one school alone as part of a First Aid Awareness Programme which has been funded by a legacy left by a local businessman. First aid is included in the National



## How Jaipal saved her friend

Jaipal Basi was 10 when her friend Joanna started choking on a piece of cucumber at school. Instinctively, she knew exactly what to do because she learned first aid at school from one of our trainers. Jaipal gave her friend five back blows and saved her friend's life.

'Everyone in year five had done the training, and I remembered straight away what I needed to do,' she said.

***'First aid is really important and I feel confident that I would be able to help someone else again if they needed it.'***

Curriculum in Wales however, teaching the subject isn't mandatory.

St John Wales has teamed up with the British Heart Foundation Cymru, The Red Cross in Wales and the British Medical Association Cymru to form a campaigning alliance to raise awareness of the importance of teaching emergency life skills in school. Suzanne Cass, St John Wales' Director of Fundraising and Marketing said, "Our vision is to have a first aider on every street in Wales and we believe that it is never too early to start learning first aid. At St John Wales we would like to see all children leaving school with the skills needed to save a life. We believe that first aid is as essential as learning to swim".

David Blackmore, district manager for St John Ambulance in Devon and Cornwall, said:

"First Aid is so easy to learn and can have such an incredible impact on people's lives. We want as many schools as possible to sign up to the Big First Aid Lesson and take advantage of the funded training we're able to offer this year." To join go online and visit <http://bigfirstaidlesson.sja.org.uk>

Visit [www.sja.org](http://www.sja.org) and [www.stjohnwales.co.uk](http://www.stjohnwales.co.uk)

## Grand Council 2014 *The Lord Prior's note continued...*



At the meeting, the Mother and Baby programme in Africa, which continues to be the number one Strategic Objective for the Order, was given further credibility.

Grand Council recognised that in an era of immediate communications around the world, what affects St John in one country can affect St John in many others. In the interests of us all, some standards must be observed by St John organisations everywhere. A constructive debate took place about removing the constitutional distinction between Priories and St John Associations. This process will take time to accomplish, and it will go hand-in-hand with the development of common standards.

Attention also focused on the role which individual members of the Order can have in the governance and development of St John and in the preservation of its values and ethos. This will be increasingly important as St John expands.

Everyone present warmly thanked St John Canada for hosting this very successful meeting of the Council. It was attended by the largest number of members ever, and it signalled St John moving forward in a more focused and purposeful way.

## New life for defibrillators

When St John Western Australia's (WA) Ambulance service gets updated equipment, it makes sure nothing goes to waste.

St John Ambulance WA is sending 74 Zoll defibrillators to overseas ambulance services that struggle to get modern reliable heart-starting equipment. The defibrillators were recently replaced by the Philips HeartStart MRx series in the WA fleet.

The older defibrillators, which are in good order, will go to various St John and non-St John organisations in Papua New Guinea, Kenya, East Timor, Malawi, South Africa and Nepal.

Chief Executive Officer Tony Ahern said "These machines will go to areas where they are needed most. Charitable work is part of the fabric that makes up St John and we're proud to carry on this work at home and overseas."



## The Lord Prior completes his tenure this St John Day

*The Prelate, Bishop Jack Nicholls shares his tribute.*



I write this short tribute to our Lord Prior, Professor Anthony Mellows, whilst overlooking Lake Ontario at the end of the meeting of the Grand Council of the Order of St John in Toronto.

The remarkable achievements of the St John family worldwide over the fifteen years since the creation of our present form of governance in 1999 are in no small measure due to this "reluctant revolutionary" (his words). Indeed the creation of our present way of being St John was largely down to his vision and Tony possesses that rare combination of seeing the big picture together with a distinguished lawyer's eye for detail.

To be Lord Prior of St John demands an almost impossible variety of talents and a great deal of hard work. He, together with Elizabeth, without whose loving support none of this would be possible, have..

*read more overleaf*

# News in brief...

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..travelled the world. They have brought confidence and encouragement to many thousands of members of the St John family, some of whom work in the most isolated and impoverished parts of the world.



*The Lord Prior and Elizabeth Mellows in Fiji last year*

His battle cry "One St John" has begun to bring a sense of belonging and mutual concern to a very disparate organisation which attempts to bring healing and hope to people of many different cultures. He has held together difference by his deep understanding of what it means to be a human being, made in the image of God and precious. He has held together our Order of St John with our brothers and sisters of the other Orders of St John which has taken great diplomatic skill.

For many of us Tony and Elizabeth Mellows are St John. Their home has become an open house of generous hospitality. They will be much missed but we receive consolation from the fact that they are still very much around and are there for us in their typically generous way. I know that Dr Neil Conn, his successor as Lord Prior and his wife Leslie are particularly grateful for that, as am I.

The Grand Council paid its tributes to Tony and Elizabeth at a dinner near Niagara Falls. A further, rather more formal tribute will happen in London shortly but no number of such tributes will do justice when measured against all we owe to them. We wish them every blessing in the years to come together with our heartfelt thanks.

Everyone at the International Office and at St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group would like to extend their warm thanks and best wishes to Professor Anthony Mellows who has always been a steadfast and generous supporter of our work.

We also welcome Dr Neil Conn, the new Lord Prior whose appointment will begin late this month. Dr Conn was Chancellor of St John Ambulance Australia from 2007, and the Order of St John appointed him Bailiff Grand Cross in May 2012.

## Farewell and Thank You to Pippa Hoyland and Gemma Mullick

*Words from Director of International Development Programmes, Sally O'Neill*

Two well known and well loved members of the International Office have recently moved on to new chapters in their lives. We thank Pippa for her 9 years, and Gemma for her 6 years, and for all they have done to support St John Associations worldwide. Through their personal relationships built over recent years, St John has seen stronger, more strategic and more outward looking Associations across the world. Gemma's work has dramatically enhanced the fundraising and communications work of the International Office and many Associations. Her management of regional projects, especially with Associations in the Caribbean, has brought about successful First Aid and Disaster Preparedness Programmes,



*Pippa and Gemma with delegates of the Caribbean Regional Meeting held in Bermuda 2008*

benefitting thousands of people. Pippa's work, building capacity across many Associations to develop their own strategic plans, and, more latterly, leading the process to work with the five African Associations to develop the Mother & Baby Programme, is a legacy to her dedication and commitment to the grassroots work of St John. We also thank Sherona Parkinson for a short term return to St John, to undertake a much needed systems and filing refresh. We thank these amazing women for all they have done for St John, acknowledge that their legacies are stronger and more strategic Associations, and wish them well in the future.

*Dates for the Diary..*

June 24th - St John Day

September 2nd-3rd - Steering Committee & OHAC \*Postponed from July\*

If you have any stories you would like to be covered in The Link or you would like information on any of the news featured in this edition, please contact Saffi Jones at the St John International Office on [saffi.jones@orderofstjohn.org](mailto:saffi.jones@orderofstjohn.org) or ++44 (0)20 7251 3292