



InFocus

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**St John
Scotland**
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Kiltwalk champions fly the flag for St John Scotland



If you were in Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee or Edinburgh this summer and spotted thousands of people on the streets in tartan and trainers, you will know that the Kiltwalk events are a Scottish fundraising phenomenon.

And this year, there was a familiar logo on the t-shirts among the crowds of walkers, as they were joined for the first time by St John Scotland supporters!

These 17 intrepid folk took the plunge and signed up to walk 6, 14 or 24 miles each.

As well as taking on their own personal challenges, these inspirational supporters also did themselves proud in raising a tremendous amount of money for St John Scotland. With the final total still rising, our walkers are on track to raise £10,000!

Among those who took part were Donald Scott, who just over a year ago suffered a life-threatening cardiac arrest in Edinburgh's Waverley station. Thanks in part to the help of passersby, who started CPR and used a

St John Scotland defibrillator to restart his heart, Donald is alive and well today.

He completed the 24 mile Kiltwalk in Edinburgh in an impressive eight hours, and has already raised more than £1,600. He hopes that by supporting St John Scotland, we can help more communities across the country get access to defibrillators, so that one day someone else's life could be saved too.

And just when we thought the Kiltwalk was over for 2019, it was announced that a new pop-up event will be held on 9 November in Dumfries!

The mini-Kiltwalk will take in a six mile route through the town centre, and offers another great opportunity to raise money and awareness.

The Kiltwalk will be back in Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh in 2020, and we are offering free places at all events! For more details, or if you'd like to sign up, please visit our website: www.stjohnscotland.org.uk/kiltwalk

Celebrating 21 years of Patient Transport



This summer marks an incredible 21 years since St John Scotland volunteers across Dumfries & Galloway began helping local cancer patients by offering free Patient Transport services.

It's a service of particular value for people in the area, where local specialist treatment options are very limited. Most patients need to make regular, long

journeys to the Central Belt for treatment - which for many can be incredibly difficult.

The St John Scotland volunteers give up their own time to drive patients directly from their homes to hospital and back again. As well as providing a reliable, comfortable journey, the drivers also offer an understanding ear and companionship on the long ride.

Local volunteers began taking cancer patients and their relatives to Edinburgh's Western General in 1998. Since then, the teams of drivers, plus co-ordinators and other helpers, have given up countless hours of their own time to help more than 2,000 patients, and covered more than 200,000 miles!

The teams celebrated their achievement this summer with events in Stranraer and Dumfries, where the volunteer drivers and co-ordinators enjoyed a well-earned celebration in recognition of the difference they have made to local patients over the past two decades.

Stranraer locals support vital service



A charity Will scheme run by Stranraer solicitors Smith & Valentine has raised just over £2,000 for St John Scotland in West Galloway.

During May, the firm invited clients who wanted to write a Will to make a donation to St John Scotland instead of pay the usual £100 fee.

The donations will be put towards the purchase of a new vehicle for our local Patient Transport service, to allow the volunteer team to help more patients in future.

A spokesperson for Smith & Valentine solicitors said: "It is important to us to support local causes and one of the ways we do this is through our Charity Will Scheme. We chose to support St John Scotland in 2019 as we recognise the vital service they provide within our local community. Through our Charity Will Scheme we can help raise funds and also awareness of the great work St John Scotland do."

Alex thanked for years of volunteering



Dedicated St John Scotland volunteer Alex Mackenzie has been thanked for his services to Patient Transport, as he stepped down from his role after eight years.

74 year old Alex began volunteering with the Angus and Dundee-based service in 2011 after he retired from a career in the police.

Alex would often volunteer three days a week, and over the eight years he was involved, has driven thousands of miles to help local patients.

He said: "It was very rewarding being a Patient Transport driver, and I made some very close friendships with patients over the years. When you are helping people regularly, you realise how difficult life is for them. I got a lot out of my time as a volunteer, and it's great to know the patients really value the service."

Alex was presented with a special gift of thanks by Chair of Angus & Dundee Area Committee, and coordinator of its Patient Transport service, Sandy Bowman.

CPR saved my life - Jean's story



If you've ever been on a workplace first aid course or learned CPR, you might imagine the chances of having to use the skills in a real life situation could be slim.

For J, who works at insurance company Esure in Glasgow, attending a quick CPR awareness session run by St John Scotland proved to be half an hour that would help save someone's life.

Just a week after the session, J was out shopping when she came across a crowd of people huddled around a woman who had collapsed in the street.

She said: "I asked if they needed help, but they said it was all OK. I went to get something from the shop, and it was only when I came out and she was still there, that I thought something could be seriously wrong.

"The woman wasn't breathing properly and her lips had turned blue."

With the training session still fresh in her mind, J knew she had to act quickly. She told the people helping to lay the woman down flat on the ground, and phoned 999.

"I put the phone on speakerphone so they could hear what was going on. I remembered what we had done in the training, and tilted her head back to check her airways, and looked for signs of normal breathing.

"I had just started to do chest compressions when two nurses came out of the health centre with a defibrillator, so I let them take over. They used the defibrillator on her and it worked, so by the time the ambulance came, she had a faint pulse back and she had shallow breathing again."

After the incident, J was fortunate to be put in touch with the woman who had collapsed, to find out how she was doing.

She was delighted to hear that she had survived, and was recovering well. Doctors later fitted an ICD (internal defibrillator), and the woman – Jean – is now recovering at home.

J says it means a lot to know that her actions had helped save Jean's life: "Knowing that she has such a large and loving family, and that they were all so grateful that she managed to survive, is really special.

"I was glad that St John Scotland came to do the CPR awareness session at my work, because it's not the sort of thing I would have sought out for myself. I had never

learned about CPR or defibrillators before.

"I might not have known what to do if I hadn't been on the training. The people who were helping Jean at first didn't realise how serious it was."

Jean says she will forever be grateful to J for helping to save her life: "When she told me that St John Scotland had given her CPR training just the week before, I couldn't believe it.

"I don't think the public realise how important it is to learn CPR – I certainly didn't. My doctor told me that it can be very rare for someone who has a cardiac arrest like I did, to go on to survive and have such a good recovery. I'll always be grateful to J and the nurses and everyone at the hospital for saving my life."

Stories like Jean's show the real-life impact of St John Scotland's work in spreading CPR awareness across the country. Every person trained has the potential, like J, to save someone's life with simple skills that take just minutes to learn.

Success for defib projects



Knightswood Community Fire Station in Glasgow has become the first venue to unveil a defibrillator as part of a joint project between St John Scotland and the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership.

The project sees both partners contributing £5,000 towards the purchase of eight Public Access Defibrillators, which will be installed at venues across the west of the city. St John Scotland volunteers will also work with each venue to deliver CPR awareness training to staff, customers and the wider community, with the aim of helping to save lives across the city.

Meanwhile in Edinburgh, ambitious plans have been announced to support the Church of Scotland to install Public Access Defibrillators in 49 churches as part of the St John and the City project.

The Presbytery of Edinburgh has committed £83,000 to purchase the devices, which will also help 15 churches who already host defibrillators to place them outside, and available 24/7, for the benefit of the whole community.

St John Scotland volunteers plan to work with each church to provide CPR training for their congregation and community.

Lord Prior visits St John Scotland



Volunteers, staff and the Board of St John Scotland recently had the privilege of meeting with the Order's newly appointed Lord Prior, Mark Compton, when he made a visit to St John organisations across the UK.

Spending time in England, Wales and Northern Ireland during his visit, Professor Compton also took the opportunity to travel to Scotland and see for himself the work we do here.

He met volunteers in Polmont, where he learned

about our work on CPR training, defibrillators, First Responders and Patient Transport. Volunteer driver Alan Campbell showed the Lord Prior a St John Scotland Patient Transport vehicle and described the difference the service makes to local patients.

Professor Compton also heard from the Ochils Mountain Rescue Team about the support they receive from St John Scotland, and the difference it makes to their ability to save lives on the hills.

The new Lord Prior has a long association with St John, having signed up as a cadet in his native Australia. A 45 year career with the organisation there saw him rise to the office of Chancellor, from where he comes to his new role. He succeeds Sir Malcolm Ross, who was the first Scot to hold the position of Lord Prior.

Speaking with the Board and staff on a visit to St John House in Edinburgh, he said he was keen to foster stronger connections between St John organisations worldwide. He was excited to hear about how our charitable work has developed in recent years, and thanked all those who had played a part.

Historic office reinstated



At the annual Torphichen service, held this year on 25 August, it was announced that a historic office was to be restored to the Priory of Scotland.

The Prior, Major General Mark Strudwick CBE KStJ, announced that he had reinstated the ancient office of Preceptor of Torphichen, dormant since 1999. The new incumbent is former Priory Hospitalier, Ian Wallace KStJ.

In 1947 when the Priory of Scotland of the Venerable Order of St John was established, the office of Preceptor of Torphichen was recognised as a vital connection with our historic past.

Mr Wallace took up the honorary office as Preceptor at the Torphichen service.

Scottish Knights invested



Members of the Order who have been promoted to the rank of Knight or Dame over the past three years were formally invested by the Grand Prior, HRH Duke of Gloucester, at a ceremony in London on 19 September.

Among them were four Scottish members: John Ferguson-Smith from Perthshire, Joe Mackie from Aberdeen, Jim Bingham from Glasgow and John Cairns, Dean of St John Scotland, who were all recognised for their significant contribution over the years.

They were invested alongside the installation of the new Lord Prior, Professor Mark Compton, at the ceremony at the Priory Church in Clerkenwell.

Also in attendance were the Prior and Chancellor from Scotland.