



The Link



AFRICA REGIONAL MEETING

Pippa Hoyland

In October 2006, representatives of all eleven St John Associations in Africa travelled to West Africa where we were generously hosted in Accra by St John Ghana. The meeting also welcomed the participation of delegates from the Priory for South Africa and our sister Order, Die Johanniter from Germany. The Order Secretariat was represented and the Deputy Lord Prior (Establishments), John Strachan, chaired the meeting. We were 29 participants in all.

Feedback from participants has indicated that this meeting was one of the most successful yet. Associations had been invited to prepare and present case studies to highlight a particular aspect of their work and this allowed for a real sharing of experience on both programme and organisational issues. Other sharing took place informally outside the meeting.

A session on Strategic Planning introduced by International Development Officer, Pippa Hoyland, provoked a lot of interest from representatives in incorporating planning into their work and Matt Holton, Associations Training Co-ordinator, facilitated a highly



Above: St John Ghana youth await inspection

successful one day workshop on youth development.

No meeting would be complete without some time for rest and relaxation and exploration of the local environment. St John Ghana arranged a visit to the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park in central Accra, where visitors can commemorate the life and work of the great pan-Africanist. Many delegates also honed their bargaining skills at the Arts and Crafts Market and all of us had a chance to test our dancing shoes to a Ghanaian band around the swimming pool!

Travel from east to west in Africa is not easy and many participants had lengthy journeys with several changes of planes. The luggage of

several people only arrived in Accra as the meeting ended and we began to depart. Thank you everyone for making the journey. I hope it was worth it for you and we will all meet again in 2008. Especial thanks to all at St John Ghana but most especially to Hilda and Philip.

PARTICIPATING ASSOCIATIONS WERE:
GHANA, KENYA, MALAWI, MAURITIUS, NAMIBIA, NIGERIA, SWAZILAND, TANZANIA, UGANDA, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE

Does anyone have anything they wish to write about, or let people know about for the next issue of The Link? All items welcome. Just contact Estherbloom@orderofstjohn.org
Please note that PDF versions of each new Link can be found on the Order of St John website

St John Sri Lanka - Humanity Award



This picture was captured on 6th August 2006 at the Blue Elephant (Hilton Hotel) during a ceremony arranged by hotel staff to acknowledge service to humanity. This picture shows St. John Ambulance Sri Lanka staff presenting a memento of appreciation to Ms. Kumari Weerasingha (pictured on the right). This special gift was specifically arranged to commemorate the service of this young lady for saving the life of a young man. From the perspective of St. John Ambulance this was an excellent act worthy of the Guinness Book of Records. We would like to convey our gratitude to Kumari for using the knowledge obtained through our First Aid training programme which motivated her for this heroic humanitarian act.

Background story:-

On the night 20th August 2006 around midnight, as Kumari and her colleague were travelling home in the Hilton staff transport, they came across a young man who had met with an accident whilst riding his motor bike on the Negombo road. When the young girls tried to approach the victim, the people around him advised them not to get involved because they strongly believed that he was dead. But fortunately some power forced Kumari to check whether the man was alive or not. She immediately removed the casualty's

helmet. After the removal of the helmet the injured man began to breathe and she realized that he was still alive. Then Kumari checked for other injuries and felt broken bones in his leg. Without wasting time, she stopped one vehicle and, helped by her colleague, Ms. Nadeeshani Senanayka, took the injured man to the closest hospital. Nadeeshani carried the young man to the vehicle with the support of some bystanders and got one of the vehicle's passengers to support the victim. After sending this vehicle to the hospital, these two young girls, soiled with blood, collected the casualty's belongings. Later these were handed over to the Doctor in charge at the Ragama hospital. In this way, these two young ladies saved a helpless human being from a cruel death. Continuing their service, Kumari and Nadeeshani visit the young man regularly and keep in contact with his family to check on his daily improvement.

During a time when human lives are destroyed without any attention on the road, at least saving one life of a human being is something that should be appreciated by a grateful public.

S.M.H. Prasanna Xavier, Youth Work Development Officer, St. John Ambulance Sri Lanka

Volunteer in Ghana

Rachel Boyle-Hamill, a senior cadet with St. John Ambulance in Northern Ireland, spent time with St. John volunteers in Ghana earlier this year. On her return she talked and wrote about her experience

there. As a result Regent House School, Newtownards, Northern Ireland has sent a donation to St. John Ghana to help in completing their new headquarters building.

The Caribbean Regional Meeting Pippa Hoyland



It is really not surprising that the delegates at the 2006 Caribbean Regional Meeting are looking so relaxed! Grenada, the Spice Island of the Caribbean, was the location and the Chairman of the St John Association of Grenada, Sir Paul Scoon, council members and volunteers ensured a wonderfully warm welcome and excellent hospitality.

The meeting took place over two days, with the first being dedicated to sharing of information among the

participating Establishments alongside the business agenda. Several Associations introduced the successes and challenges of their work, with plenty of time for debate. The second day introduced two half day workshops on the themes of Youth Development and HIV and AIDS. Matt Holton from the Order Secretariat facilitated the first while Salim October from the Caribbean HIV and AIDS Alliance shared his experience of the region during the second.

The meeting was the best attended for many years with delegates from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bermuda, Dominica, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. Apologies were received from St John Associations in Guyana and Montserrat. The Priory of Canada was represented by Hon. Rene Marin and CEO Paul Migus while Ms Jutta Meissner came from our sister organisation in Germany, Die Johanniter. The Governor General of Grenada and his wife invited the delegation to an informal social evening at their residence. The whole event was enjoyable and informative.

Let us look forward to our next meeting in Trinidad.

Handover of Ambulance to Sri Lanka

Below: Eric Barry, the Lord Prior, who was at Sri Lanka's Centenary celebrations, attended the handover of an ambulance from St John Malaysia to St John Sri Lanka. Left to right in photo: Mr Raja Sinnaturai, Chairman, St John Sri Lanka, Dr J G Jayatilaka, Chief Commander, St John Sri Lanka, Mr Eric Barry, Lord Prior, Mr V S Maniam, Chief Superintendent (Operations), St John Malaysia, Dr Low Bin Tick, Chairman, St John Malaysia.



Right: Chancery staff Hazel Lewis (Wales) Joan Blair (Scotland) and Margaret Crane (Order) met up in Cardiff in November to mark Margaret Crane's retirement.

Farewell to Margaret Andrew Gough, Secretary General

It is with very great regret that we say goodbye to Mrs Margaret Crane, who has been a stalwart of the Secretariat since 2001.

Margaret is well known to St John Associations as the Order Financial Controller, and Head of Chancery. Margaret will be joined in her retirement by her husband, John, a cameraman with the BBC, and they will move to the countryside in Oxfordshire.

Throughout her time in the Order Secretariat, Margaret has been renowned for her efficiency and professionalism. She has been an absolute linchpin within the office, on whom all other roles depend. In recognition of her very great contribution to the Order, Margaret was honoured by Her Majesty by being admitted to the Order as an Officer Sister of the Order of St John. We wish Margaret and her family the very best wishes for the future, and say a very fond farewell.



Capacity Building Column

Pippa Hoyland, International Development Officer, Order Secretariat

The Order Secretariat Capacity Building Programme has been able to support a range of activities within Associations during the past few months. One of the biggest was a one week training entitled "Introduction to Operational and Strategic Financial Management" held in Nairobi, Kenya in October, together with a regional trainer from MANGO. MANGO is a not for profit organisation providing financial services training specifically for voluntary and non-governmental organisations (see www.mango.org.uk). Twelve participants from Kenya's regional centres, three members from St John Uganda and one from Zambia

came together for the event. Feedback on the course content, methodology used and practical application have so far all been extremely positive. One comment from the final evaluation forms writes: "Presentations by the trainer were well presented and easy to understand. She's perfect, she should come back!"

MANGO provides regional training and tailored in-house training events. If you think your Association could benefit from this sort of training please contact: pippahoyland@orderofstjohn.org

Around the World In Brief - Namibia

Sophie Cornford, Associations Support Coordinator

St John Namibia is one of the smaller St. John organisations. It is also one of the youngest, being established as an independent Association in 1990 when the country gained its independence from South Africa. To date, they operate one Division in the capital, Windhoek and have recently opened a new branch 300 km away to the north in Otjiwarongo. With enthusiasm and commitment, St John members are working hard to establish a new Council with a new Constitution and to find sponsors in order to expand and develop the work of St John. The neighbouring Priory for South Africa will be assisting them with training activities.

With their limited resources, St John members are focusing especially on young people who represent a majority of the Namibian population. They undertake public duties at sports events and in schools and provide voluntary assistance to the nursing staff in the Casualty and X-Ray Departments of Katutura Hospital. (Katutura is the largest township outside Windhoek)

Key data

Population	2 million
GDP per capita	US\$7,000
Life expectancy	43
Adult literacy rate	84%

People

In each issue of The Link we talk to somebody who is making a significant difference in St John. In this issue we introduce Emefa Toppar, who joined the Secretariat in November 2006, replacing Margaret Crane as Order Secretariat Financial Controller and Administrator.

Emefa, who is originally from Ghana, has lived in the UK since 1995. She has a degree in Business Studies and an MBA from the University of Hull, and is currently working towards a professional qualification in Accounting (ACCA). She enjoys reading, learning new languages and meeting new people.

What was your previous job?

I worked at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London for almost 12 years, mainly in the Finance and Management Information Section. I was involved in various financial duties. I also worked as part of the staff support team, providing financial and administrative assistance and observing presidential and local government elections in Cameroon, Mozambique and Nigeria.

How do you hope to benefit the Order in your new role?

I am excited by the challenges of my job at the Order, and impressed with the work of St John. I am delighted to have the opportunity to contribute to the humanitarian service it does through my work at the Secretariat.

