



# The Link



## Nelson Mandela Investiture



*Above: Mr Nelson Mandela and the Duke of Gloucester, at the Knights and Dames Investiture on 23rd November at St James's Palace, when the Duke invested Mr Mandela as a Bailiff Grand Cross of the Order of St John. The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester were later the Guests of Honour at a dinner at the Army and Navy Club, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of His Royal Highness's appointment as Grand Prior*

### Princess Alice

Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, mother of the Grand Prior, died on 29 October 2004, aged 102. She was made Dame of the Grand Cross in 1936 and was Patron of The Ladies' Guild.

The Royal Family have requested that charity donations in her memory should go to The St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital, Priory House, 25 St John's Lane, London, EC1M 4PP ([www.stjohnseyehospital.org](http://www.stjohnseyehospital.org)).

### Death of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands

We have just learned of the sad death of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, on December 1st 2004. He was appointed a Grade I in the Order in November 1956.

### International Co-operation

An International Co-operation Agreement was signed in Rome on 22 October between the Five Orders of St. John of Jerusalem. This comprises the four members of the Alliance (the Most Venerable Order along with the Johanniter Orders in Germany, Netherlands and Sweden) and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. The Agreement acknowledges the Five Orders' common tradition and aims and recognizes the benefits of combining resources to greater effect in working for the sick and the needy across the world.

### Office Christmas and New Year Closure

The Order Secretariat will be closed from the afternoon of 23rd December 2004 until Tuesday 4th January 2005, for the Christmas and New Year break.

# BULLETIN BOARD

## APPOINTMENTS

Sir Brian Jenkins GBE KstJ has been appointed Prior of the Priory of England & The Islands on the retirement of the Rt. Hon. Lord Slynn of Hadley. The appointment took effect from 1 August 2004.

The Priory Chapter in New Zealand has unanimously recommended that Robert Fenwick CStJ be appointed as Chancellor-Elect to assume the position of Chancellor from 23 June 2005.

The Order Secretariat have a new permanent PA, Esther Bloom.

## GRADE I VACANCIES

Her Majesty The Queen, as Sovereign Head of the Order, has approved the nominations submitted to Her by the Grand Prior of Colonel James Stirling of Garden CBE TD (Priory of Scotland) as a Bailiff Grand Cross of the Order and the Rt Hon. Baroness Emerton DBE DL (Priory of England and the Islands) and Lady Daphne Blundell (Priory in New Zealand) as Dames Grand Cross of the Order.

## DATES

The Grand Council is to meet 6-8 April 2005 in Victoria, British Columbia and will be hosted by the Priory of Canada.

Meetings of the Order Honours and Awards Committee will be held on 9 February, 4 April, 15 June, 20 September and 22 November in 2005. All nominations for admission to or promotion in the Order should be sent to the Secretary General at least two weeks in advance of a meeting.

## OBITUARY

### DR. PRAKASH KOTHARE, MBE

Much of the success of the Mumbai Centenary functions and Parade were due to the tireless work of the Commissioner, Dr. Prakash Kothare who very sadly expired aged 67, on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September. He had joined the District as a Private 50 years ago, becoming Commissioner in 1998 and was awarded MBE (Hon) in 2001. All our sympathy to his widow Mrs. Madhuri Kothare and son Jayant, a District Ambulance Officer. He was a pillar of strength to the District and an inspiration to all with his strong leadership.

## No. III Maharashtra District Centenary Celebrations, India

No. III Maharashtra District celebrated its Centenary in April 2004. The Parsi Ambulance Division was formed in 1904. Events such as the EWT Camp, electrocardiogram Camp/ public awareness of first aid, medical check-ups, Pulse Polio Drive and the Centenary General Review Parade took place in the presence of Lord Slynn of Hadley, Prior of England and the Islands, who was Guest of Honour.



*Above: The Saifee Ambulance Society bagpipe band at the Mumbai Centenary Celebrations*

Odile, Lady Slynn presented prizes to the winners of the Interdivisional competitions. Dignitaries attending the Parade included the British Deputy High Commissioner, Consul of Germany, Mrs. Homai Modi, Jt. Sec of Indian Red Cross Society.

the District officers and Patrons. Finally Lord and Lady Slynn attended a dinner hosted by Captain Roddy Sale, Patron, at the Royal Bombay Yacht Club.

Lord Slynn also inaugurated a District History Book to mark the Centenary, and was photographed with officers and staff of the District. The District received a Centenary Certificate from the Lord Prior, Mr. Eric Barry, which Lord Slynn presented to the Commissioner, Dr Prakash Kothare, MBE. Lord and Lady Slynn were made Honorary Patrons of the District.

## Hong Kong

### First Aid Coverage for Anniversary Procession

On 1 July 2004, the seventh anniversary of Hong Kong's reunification with the mainland, the Civil Human Rights Front, Hong Kong St John Ambulance, Hong Kong Red Cross and Auxiliary Medical Services were deployed to provide first aid coverage for the two-mile public procession from Victoria Park to the Central Government Office. The previous year some 500,000 people took part in a successful procession.

First aid posts were set up at the start, finish and four points along the route. Most of the route followed Hennessy Road which has a tramline in the middle used for emergency vehicle access during the event. 25 duty officers and 147 members of St John were deployed all along the route and at the Central Government Office. Members of our Emergency Response Teams were held in reserve and five ambulances were on standby at different locations.

The very hot weather proved an important factor in the number of cases dealt with. It was the hottest day of the year so far with a maximum recorded temperature of 34.6C and humidity ranging from 61 to 86%. A hot weather warning was issued.

In view of the weather conditions, the Hong Kong Police started the procession 30 minutes early at 1430, to relieve pressure on the number of people waiting in Victoria Park. With banners, balloons and effigies, including a replica of the Yuen Long crocodile 'Pui Pui', the procession slowly moved along Hennessy Road which had been closed to traffic.

By 1530 hours, however, the number of cases being dealt with by the Hong Kong Red Cross was such that our Emergency Response Teams and the Auxiliary Medical Services held in reserve were mobilised to assist them. Additional assistance also came from our Kowloon Ambulance Depot. It was very difficult to get through the tightly-packed crowd and also difficult to remove patients to the treatment area. Due to the hot weather, there were insufficient water supplies to meet demand. The press reported that by 1800 hours, 550 requests for help had been received in Victoria Park.

St. John dealt with 111 patients, 9 ambulance calls and 12 patients were transferred to local hospitals. In total, St. John deployed 27 officers, 160 ambulance and nursing members and six ambulances. The 'carnival' atmosphere helped to make it an enjoyable duty.

The organisers announced that 530,000 people took part in the procession, whereas the police said it was 200,000. But from our point of view it is just another public duty which was properly and efficiently handled and we look forward to the next one. *Story by Chief Superintendent CHAN Kam-wah, O.I.C. Ambulance Region, Hong Kong Island Command, Hong Kong St John*

## St John Africa Meeting 2005

The Priory for South Africa will host the third St John Africa Regional Meeting in Johannesburg, 14-16 February 2005. One of the key elements will be the presentation of the redeveloped Lifesaver International First Aid Course in preparation for its pilot in Africa. The University of KwaZulu-Natal have been working with the Pories of England and South Africa to redevelop the course after agreement at the last St John Africa Meeting in Kampala in September 2005.



*Balloons become part of a Diversity Exercise for trainers at the July workshop.*

As part of this project, English and Welsh trainers took part in a workshop in July 2004 run by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It is planned that the revised course will become the standard first aid course for all Associations in Africa.

## Map Reading Course in Sri Lanka



*Officers from the Cadet & Youth programme's 10 districts attended a map-reading course at the Vocational Training Centre St.John Cadet & Youth department NHO 23-29 May at Tantirimale in Anuradapura.*

## Global Trading, Becoming Part of the Furniture

From its beginning, the Grand Council was concerned about the overlap of activities and cost saving possibilities which were felt to exist within the Order, following the reorganisation of 1999. There was a strong feeling that activities were being duplicated and that full advantage was not being taken of the purchasing power of the Order as a whole. Everyone was focused on managing their own bit to the best of their ability, but there did not seem to be a way of co-ordinating activities to take advantage of the wider opportunities available.

After trying to make progress through existing channels, a Steering Group was set up to develop a strategy. The Steering Group quickly realised that what was needed was to devote some effort from the Secretary General's Office to decide whether there are big cost savings which can be made and, if so, how best to direct effort to achieving them.

I was asked to spend 6 months evaluating the possibilities and report back to the Priory Executives Group (PEG) and the Grand Council with the findings.

This was duly done. It was clear that the Order as a whole is the largest single customer for many of its major suppliers, even though the activities of Establishments are so diverse. What was also clear, was that each Establishment has developed its own standards for everything from badges to bandages. So, although the Order has, potentially, enormous purchasing power, exploiting this requires a major effort of standardisation of products and services across the world. It sounds so obvious, but this insight took many months to become clear and it remains one of the principal impediments to saving money which could be better spent on charitable activities. A commitment is needed throughout the Order to face up to this problem if real progress is to be made.

Nevertheless we have spent the last three years or so struggling with the way things are and, happily, have had some successes mixed in with the frustrations. Perhaps most important, long term, is the developing realisation the "something must be done" coupled with the increased levels of communication and contact at all levels of the Order which will enable more rapid progress to be made in the future.

Have we saved any money? That, after all, was the objective. The answer is a resounding "Yes". Just as well or I wouldn't want to write this!

The Order is trying to extend this to other establishments but are finding that the devolved

organisation of St John makes this very difficult. They recognise the importance of St John's activities and continue to press ahead. There are large savings to be made by St John if we can get our act together. Projects are ongoing with savings of over £20,000 possible in purchasing latex and vinyl gloves. White shirts – chosen over two years ago as a "simple" product for which it was expected to be able to produce a "standard" quite easily, is still under consideration but the idea that any product is simple has been comprehensively disproven.

A series of administrative systems have been set up so that the process can be continued with, or without effort from the Secretary General's office. These include the Trading Principles and procedures. The data base to record Establishments "offshore" activities is an essential tool to avoid overlap of activities. The need for a common symbol by which the Order can be recognised has evolved into the programme to establish the new logo for the Order.

In an effort to cut down on the perceived "re-inventing the wheel" syndrome, three projects for common development by a group of Establishments were established, the most successful of which now has a life of its own as the up-dating of the LIFAC programme for Africa. The others, a common AED protocol and, perish the thought, a common First Aid Manual are slower to gather support.

A number of International Customers have come to the fore, some via existing activities within establishments such as Fidelity Investments. Others, such as Allen and Overy, a firm of International lawyers, have come to us in various ways. All provide an opportunity for St John to gain from its strength of operating in so many countries around the world. The latest of these is Pratt and Whitney where the Priory of Canada has been instrumental in bringing the customer forward and I have great hopes that this will be productive early in 2005.

The plan is, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2005, that the work which has been done over the last three years by the Global Trading Advisors, should then be taken in house by the Priors. With the system of the Common Purchasing System log and identification of Lead Establishments to power the process forward, there is no reason why the initiative cannot be driven into the future with an ever increasing benefit to the Order. It will need dedicated effort in the larger Establishments to avoid the temptation to put things into the "too difficult" pile. Everyone is very busy so time has to be created from tight resources so that the benefits can continue to accrue to the Order.

It will not be easy. A solid start has been made from which growing benefits will be felt, if we can stick at it.

*Story by Geoffrey Jennings*