



# The Link



Sharing news from St John International

## Hello!

Welcome to our winter newsletter.

Read on for the latest stories from St John around the world. We hope you will enjoy reading the latest updates.

From everyone at the International Office, we wish you all a Happy Christmas and a New Year!

## FIND US ONLINE

[www.stjohninternational.org](http://www.stjohninternational.org)



You can find all the latest international and Order news, information on St John Establishments and the many ways to support us.

## Christmas Message from the new Lord Prior



*"My first few months as Lord Prior have been extremely interesting and hugely enjoyable. I have been very touched by the warm welcome I have received and have been greatly impressed by all that I have seen. This has made the learning process a pleasure!*

*Next year will be very busy and I look forward to meeting many more members of the St John 'family'.*

*I send you all my very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year."*

- Sir Malcolm Ross GCVO OBE

## The Installation of Great Officers



The installation party on the steps of the Priory Church in London

On Thursday 10 November, Sir Malcolm Ross GCVO OBE was installed as the 18th Lord Prior by the Grand Prior His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester. At the same time, The Right Reverend Timothy John Stevens CBE was enthroned as the 8th Prelate, and Mr John Mah CD QC installed as the 4th Sub-Prior.

The Lord Prior is the third most senior individual within the Order, under the Sovereign Head the Queen, and the Grand Prior

The role of the Prelate is to advise the Grand Prior in all ecclesiastical matters concerning the Order; while the Sub-Prior ensures all circumstances and concerns of Independent Commanderies and St John Associations around the world are brought to the attention of the Grand Council.

Continued on page 2...

The Installation of Great Officers took place in the Priory Church of the Order of St John in London in the presence of representatives from the 11 Pories, England and the Islands, Scotland, Wales, South Africa, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, USA, Kenya, Singapore and Hong Kong; 4 Commanderies, of Ards in Northern Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey, and the Isle of Man; and St John Associations from around the world.

In his address to the congregation, Sir Malcolm Ross spoke of the notion of St John moving forward and broadening the membership. He also pledged to lead St John in the coming years, ensuring the leadership becomes more representative of the organisation as a whole.

On behalf of all of those who work and volunteers within the St John family, we would like to wish Sir

Malcolm Ross, The Right Reverend Timothy John Stevens and Mr John Mah many congratulations and all the very best.



*The installation of the Lord Prior by HRH The Duke of Gloucester*

## Earthquake heroes in New Zealand: Ambulance volunteers go beyond the call



*(l - r) Sara van Reenen and Ginnaya MacDonald*

Two heroic St John volunteers from Kaikoura, New Zealand responded during the magnitude 7.8 earthquake on 14 November.

Ginnaya MacDonald heroically went on duty after taking her children to a safe place.

She explained to her perplexed 8, 9 and 12-year-olds that she had to leave.

*"I said, 'I have to go'. Breaking that to the kids was quite hard. They were crying. People said, 'You don't have to go'. I said, 'No, I do. I can't in good conscience stay here.'"*

Her partner drove her to the ambulance station. She was worried about the roads - daylight revealed wide cracks in the highway between South Bay and the



*The huge quake ripped up roads throughout the town main town.*

At the ambulance station, in the heart of the tsunami zone, Sara van Reenen had forced open one jammed door and driven out one ambulance. The second had to be manoeuvred out the same door.

In the pitch black, they negotiated damaged roads and bridges to transport patients with fractured femurs and fractured hips. People were ill from the sheer shock. It was busy, but not chaotic.

MacDonald's children are proud of what she does.

She explains, *"I'm loving being able to do something. That's why I volunteer."*

## Teaching first aid to the community in Cambodia



As part of their continued efforts to teaching everyone basic first aid in Cambodia, officers and members of the St John Brigade Singapore, Phnom Penh division partnered with Techo Voluntary Youth Doctor Association (TYDA) on a joint mission to Koh Kong Province.

Together the two organisations conducted first aid lessons to over 400 high school students and 187 villagers at Koh Kong, Cambodia.

## Saving lives during a fire outbreak at a hospital in Malaysia



After a serious fire broke out in one of the wings of Sultanah Aminah Hospital in Johor, Malaysia, the St John Ambulance Kluang branch responded by assisting with the evacuation of patients and the injured.

Using ambulance vehicles donated by the public, 20 members from the St John Ambulance Kluang were able to transport the patients to the nearest hospital.

## Helping Alice to become a mother of a healthy child



Alice is from rural Malawi, and by the time she was 34 years old she had five pregnancies. Three of her babies died at birth.

She had never gone to any health check-ups during pregnancy because she simply didn't know how important they are. She also never learned how to make sure her own health and the health of her child were protected.

During her most recent pregnancy, Alice was visited by St John Malawi volunteers who were providing support to households for healthy motherhood. For the first time ever, Alice learned about frequent check-ups that can help to spot problems early enough, from pregnancy right through the first weeks of the infant's life.

The local volunteers also encouraged her to have a safe delivery at a health centre, where a trained health worker can act immediately if complications occur. Happily, Alice gave birth to a healthy child.

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, there is an unacceptably high number of mothers and newborn infants who die each year. But it doesn't take a lot to help a mother and her baby through a safe delivery and in the first months after birth.

To learn more about the Mother and Baby Programme, and how to support it, visit: [www.stjohninternational.org](http://www.stjohninternational.org)

## Investiture of Dato' Dr Low Bin Tick



(l - r) Birgitte, Duchess of Gloucester; HRH The Duke of Gloucester; Dato' Dr Low Bin Tick and Datin Regina Lee

On the morning of Thursday 10 November, HRH The Grand Prior conducted a special investiture at Kensington Palace. Having been promoted to Bailiff Grand Cross in 2014, Dato' Dr Low Bin Tick, Chairman of St John Ambulance Malaysia was invested at that grade during his visit to London to attend the installation of the Lord Prior, Prelate, and Sub-Prior. He was accompanied by his wife Datin Regina Lee.

## Supporting the communities during Hurricane Matthew



Hurricane Matthew began as a tropical storm off the coast of Africa in late September. Within six days, it had intensified to a strong tropical storm and escalated to a highly destructive hurricane.

As part of Jamaica's national support and recovery efforts, St John Ambulance Jamaica mobilised teams of volunteers and members to visit major shelters and help to attend vulnerable groups as well as providing ambulance services where possible.

Jamaica was on the storm's path, but managed to escape with minimal damage, but Haiti was not as fortunate.

## Celebrating The Order of St John and Eye Hospital Group work at Buckingham Palace



HRH The Duke of Gloucester speaking with Dr Ahmad Ma'ali, Nursing Director from St John Eye Hospital Group

On Tuesday 8 November, members, donors and friends of The Order of St John and St John Eye Hospital Group were invited by HRH The Duke of Gloucester to an afternoon reception at Buckingham Palace celebrating both charities' extraordinary work for people in need around the world.

The reception took place in the Picture Gallery of the Palace, traditionally home to some of the most beautiful and well-known paintings in the Royal Collection. Among the 250 guests were the Great Officers of The Order of St John, representatives of the Pories as well as HM Queen Noor of Jordan, actress Vanessa Redgrave and other European Royalty.

## Upcoming Event Dates

- 23 December - 2 January - International Office closed for Christmas and New Year
- 2 - 3 February - Africa Regional Meeting (Kenya)
- 22 - 23 February - Europe Regional Meeting (Cardiff)
- 23 February - OHAC (Cardiff)
- 24 February - Steering Committee Meeting (Cardiff)
- 20 - 24 March - Asia Regional Meeting (New Zealand)

If you have any stories you would like to be covered in the Link newsletter, or you would like information on any of the news featured in this edition, please email Chiao at:

[chiao.kwan@orderofstjohn.org](mailto:chiao.kwan@orderofstjohn.org)

