

ADDRESS BY
HIS HONOUR MR TOM PAULING AO QC
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
ON THE OCCASION OF
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What an excellent parade. It is a pleasure to be here. I would like to share with you today the worldwide context of St John Ambulance. Sometimes the focus on local issues overlooks the fact we are part of a much wider body, comprising thousands of members worldwide.

The history of St John features prominently in the Mediterranean. Malta was the headquarters of The Order for two hundred years from 1530, when the King of Spain, Emperor Charles V, gave tenure of Malta to the Knights of St John following the capture of Rhodes (headquarters from 1310) by the Turks.

Links with Gibraltar can be traced back to the sixteenth century. The Order owned land on the island where a church was erected and the grounds included a cemetery, the burial place of the Knights.

Surgeon-Major William Manley of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, established St John Ambulance in India in 1873, and in Hong Kong it is one of the oldest voluntary bodies, founded in 1884.

The following year, 1885, St John began in South Island, New Zealand, providing ambulance services in Christchurch. Those first ambulances were wheeled hand litters complete with haversacks of equipment, pulled through the streets by the volunteers. Horse drawn ambulances then replaced the litters and motorised ambulances became commonplace from the 1920s.

St John Ambulance was formed in the major states of Malaysia just prior to World War II. Members were first recruited as stretcher bearers.

When the Japanese declared war on 8 December 1941, Brigade members did magnificent work in all the first aid posts. Many withdrew to the south, together with the armed forces, when the Japanese forces captured their towns. Many more served in the battle of Singapore and lost their lives.

The St John Ambulance Brigade also played an important role during the Second World War on the Caribbean island of Barbados, where members attended to injured survivors of torpedoed ships.

In more modern times, in the mid-1970s, St John in the Solomon Islands grew steadily under the direction of Mrs Hilary Broughton, an expatriate British St John Ambulance nurse. This nation in Melanesia consists of nearly one thousand islands. The organisation struggled in

the 1990s when political problems overtook the islands, however it is now, once again, active and growing.

This year, St John Ambulance Canada celebrated its 125th anniversary. With 22,000 volunteers, it is one of the country's largest volunteer-based organisations with first aid programmes and community services reaching out to all stages of life, including soldiers stationed in Afghanistan. In 2003, during the deadly 2003 SARS outbreak that killed forty-four people in Toronto and then as forest fires raged through Western Canada, St John Ambulance volunteers provided extensive assistance.

Finally, the story of Wales is one for the future: The youth of St John Wales are the lifeblood of their membership, with over 60% under the age of eighteen. The legacy lives on.

All of you at this St John Ambulance Australia (Northern Territory) Annual Review are part of a worldwide commitment to serve humanity.

It is a matter of great pride to me as Administrator of the Northern Territory that I too can be involved as Deputy Prior.

I would like to conclude by sharing with you a verse written by the American poet, Susan Polis Schutz, in response to the tragic events of Tuesday 11 September 2001:

*We who give birth to new life
who are exhilarated by the sun rising
who are romanced by the sun setting
who dream to the floating clouds ...*

*We who have a passing mark on the future of the world
must have the same heart
must have compassion for one another
must have respect for one another
must understand that though we have differences
we all want the same things*

Nothing should divide us