

The BULLETIN

The Order of St John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller

THE GRAND PRIORY OF AUSTRALASIA

Under the Royal Charter of HM King Peter II of Yugoslavia

THE PRIORY OF
QUEENSLAND AND
COMMANDERIES:
BRISBANE, GOLD COAST

THE PRIORY OF THE
SUNSHINE COAST

THE PRIORY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE PRIORY OF THE
DARLING DOWNS

THE PRIORY OF
VICTORIA

NOVEMBER 2020

Zooming	3
Generous hospitality	3
Vale Graham Michalanney	4
SOSJ bush fire donation	6
Sovereign Council by Zoom	7
Coming to life again	7
Malta commemoration	8
Honouring Dame Lucette	9
A Christmas Miracle	9
Australasian Report	10
Tsar Paul I part two	11
Vale Dame Benise	12



Covid 19 brings a new friend

The Prior of Victoria HE Bailiff Martin Conlon GCSJ did more gardening than usual during the lock-down period, as so many of us did, and found a new friend. He said: "The Kookaburra did

not show any fear and sat beside me for a good five minutes."

Is Martin really quite so friendly, or was there a little green tree snake in the bottom of the bin? ☩



CHEVALIER CHARLES CLARK GCSJ MMSJ

From the Editor's desk

As the year 2020 approaches its end, most people are saying it is a year they would wish to forget. It is a year that is extraordinary in the history of the world, the Covid19 pandemic bringing about conditions unparalleled since the plagues of the Middle Ages. Then there are wars and rumours of wars, refugees, human misery, and, of course, the Election.

In all these, the lack of consideration, the exploitation and cruelty of humans to humans is beyond contemplation. We are very fortunate in Australia to be remote from much of this. And yet, the virus got to us.

It is amazing that this tiny micron sized bit of DNA or RNA

with its coating of protein – not even a form of life – could bring humanity to its knees, humanity which in many ways considers itself to be supreme, beyond destruction, secure in ever-advancing technology. Stephen Hawking, in one of his controversial lectures, said that a virus is a parasite, because it relies on a life-form host for sustenance and replication. But then he says human beings are also parasites because we, too, feed on other life forms.

Activity within the Order of Saint John has scaled down, but some good work has been done and some meetings have been held, mainly by virtual means, a technique only recently and most

timely available. The Sovereign Council Meeting which was to have been held in Vancouver was held with a world-wide hook up by Zoom; in Australia, the Annual General Meeting of the Grand Priory was held in a similar way, as were meetings of the five Australian Priors, and other Priory and Commandery meetings.

While we will get back to face-to-face meetings, we have learned through this pandemic that there are savings to be made in time and travel, and we will continue to use the virtual meeting at appropriate times. Not only in the business world, for families have found it a way of bringing far-flung members together.

A year to forget, so let us not look back, but forward to Christmas and the message of the Christ Child, and to a better 2021. This is the last Bulletin for the year, so early though it may be, "Happy and Holy Christmas and a much improved New Year". ☩



The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller

THE GRAND PRIORY OF AUSTRALASIA

The modern Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller is a Christian, chivalric, ecumenical, and international community directly descended from the Hospitaller activities at the Hospice founded before the turn of the 11th century by Amalfi merchants, for pilgrims in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem 1048-1291; Cyprus 1292-1310;
Rhodes 1311-1523; Malta 1530-1798;
Australia 1969.

Australasia: osj.org.au

Sovereign Order: sosjinternational.org

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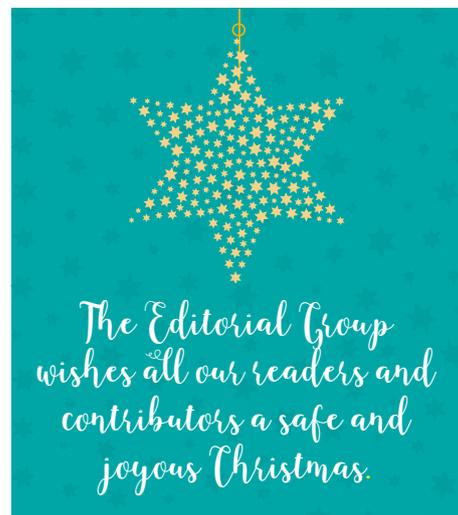
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Web signing-on

The Sign-Up page comes up at the beginning of the Members' Domain. Enter your email address as given in the Roll of Honour and create a password which you will use from then on to log in. ☩

Zooming: the virtual meeting space

At this time when face-to-face gatherings and social distancing are so restrictive, the virtual meeting has come to the fore as an administrative tool and as a way of maintaining social contact.



It is often referred to as “Zoom” but this is the name of only one virtual meeting facility. It’s common use is similar to that of the Americans who “hoover” their carpets.

The Order of Saint John Hospitallers has made use of the virtual meeting on a few occasions, most notably to hold the mandatory Annual General Meetings of the Grand Priory of Australasia and the Company, which gathers up Office-bearers and Members from all around Australia.

Priories and Commanderies

have used it successfully for some of their executive meetings, and the five Priors of Australasia have joined in informal meetings from time to time without moving from their own States.

The screen shot below was taken from a somewhat experimental “Drinks before Dinner” social function, hosted by the Prior of Queensland and the Commanders of Brisbane and the Gold Coast, and provided an hour of conversation and exchange of ideas, with drinks in hand. ✠



Apologies for the quality of the screen-shot images, but be assured there was much merriment, some wonderful occasion dressing, and gentle pouring of libations. As with all parties, be assured, a good time was had by all! *Prior Charles Clark*

Generous hospitality in the face of Covid

Two qualities which characterise the activities of the Sunshine Coast Priory have continued to flourish in 2020, even in the face of the social and physical limitations imposed by the COVID-19 regulations. They are generous hospitality to fellow members in private homes, and unwavering commitment to financial support for our lords the sick and our lords the poor through selected charities. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions the Priory was able to provide financial support to three worthy local charities amounting to \$14,500.

The Priory's long term support for Our Rainbow House in Zambia continued with a donation of \$4000 in February for the purchase of vital vaccines for students.

Despite the forced cancellation of the True Blue Cocktail Party in April, the commitment to provide much needed equipment for Sunshine Butterflies produced a fundraising effort which raised \$10,000. The Fundraising Committee thank all who supported this most worthy cause.

Donations received by the Priory with the annual oblations amounted to \$4,000, which was given to Rural Fire Services, who in turn distributed it to four local branches at Caloundra, Maroochy North, Maroochy South and Noosa.

The Relief of the Siege of Malta was celebrated with a luncheon at the home of Chevalier John Hazelwood on Sunday 13th September. After the social deprivation of the COVID-19 lockdown, this was a relaxed and enjoyable resumption of friendship and fellowship, enhanced by the relaxed and serene atmosphere



...generous hospitality to fellow members in private homes, and unwavering commitment to financial support for our lords the sick and our lords the poor...

under the umbrellas by the canal. Dame Leonie Barnes did the honours as an excellent barbecue chef.

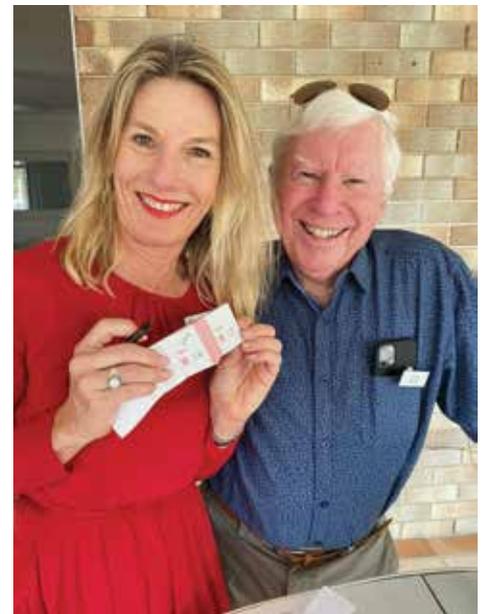
Prior Chevalier Mel Tipper and Dame Bette Tipper were gracious hosts at a gathering for members of the Priory on Monday 9th November at their beautiful unit overlooking Mooloolaba beach. It was a particularly happy event, full of warmth and friendship.

On Sunday 6th December at 5.30 p.m. the 2020 Priory Christmas Party will be held at the home of Dame Vicki Stewart DSJ at Mooloolaba. All are welcome. Please contact Dame Jenny Cant for further information if you wish to



Images: At the luncheon at the home of Chevalier John Hazelwood, were, above, Chevalier Russell Brothers and his wife Kay and at left, Dame Leonie Barnes.

Below, with raffle books at the ready were Melanie De Wit and Mike Milwright



attend. The proceeds of this party and the Siege of Malta luncheon will be directed to a local organization for needy children at Christmas.

Plans are in hand for activities in 2021. They include the True Blue Cocktail Party on Saturday 27th March in Buderim and a Garden Party on Sunday 17th October to benefit Cittamani Palliative Care. ☒

Vale Graham Thomas Michalanney

Graham Michalanney passed peacefully after a long battle with illness, with his wife and his children by his side until the end on Tuesday 29th September.

Graham was born in South Australia on the 31st July 1941. He was educated in Adelaide and was then accepted into Elders Smith and Company Limited in the cadet intake, where he undertook and completed a management Diploma at Adelaide University. He also completed his Import Export Diploma.

It was during this time he made the decision to pursue a career in Commerce (Shipping) rather than Pastoral/Farming that a number of his family were involved in. In 1965 he was transferred by Elders to London and subsequently was admitted as a member of the Baltic Exchange, representing the company on the floor.

During his posting in London he undertook and qualified as a Member of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, from the City of London College.

After qualifying he was elected and became a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (FICS). On returning to Adelaide



in 1967, he married Susan and was transferred to Melbourne as a qualified ship broker.

Their daughter Rachael was born in 1971, and their son Andrew in 1973. In 1980 he was posted to Sydney to manage the Sydney office and was elected to the Board. The company by this time was known as Elder Austral Chartering and subsequently as Austral Chartering Proprietary Limited. He became Managing Director responsible for the Sydney Melbourne and London offices of the company.

He became Chairman, also being a Director of Clarksons in London, the world's largest shipbroking

organization. Both he and Susan did many overseas trips, attending many ship launches in many countries around the world.

Graham retired in 2001 and moved to Melbourne.

Graham became a member of the Order of St John and was invested into the Order in NSW. In 1998 he transferred to the Priory of Victoria and was Prior of Victoria from March 2015 – July 2018 Knight Commander of Justice.

He was a Member of the Victorian Racing Club, The Royal Society of St George, The Melbourne Club and President of the Dromana Valley Probus Club. He spent many years volunteering with Meals on Wheels until his illness made it no longer possible.

His interests were collecting early Australian Art, antiques, horse racing and a love of music.

He is survived by his wife Susan, daughter Rachael, her husband, Duncan, son Andrew, and wife Shirmeen, and his four adorable grandchildren.

Graham will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by all. ✠



Images: Above, Graham and Susan Michalanney at an OSJ function

At left, on becoming Knight Commander of Justice, with, from left, George Kearney, Rob De Martini, and Victor Feros, at right.

PRIOR DR JEFFREY PREBBLE OAM KCSJ

SOSJ Vancouver Donate to Rural Bush Fire Relief



THE WATER TANKER TRAILER, A GENEROUS GIFT FROM SOSJ TO EASTERN DOWNS RURAL FIRE BRIGADE. BELOW: THE TANKER'S PLAQUE

The Summer of 2019-2020 saw disastrous bush fires throughout Australia. Our Brothers and Sisters of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller (headquartered in Vancouver, Canada) very kindly sent a donation of Can\$10,000 (AUD11,000) for the Order to direct appropriately to support the bush fire relief funds.

\$5,500 was distributed to the Victorian Priory and then donated to the Gippsland Bushfire Appeal via the Gippsland Anglican Church Diocese.

In Queensland, \$5,500 was donated to the Eastern Downs Rural Fire Brigade Group. These are volunteer fire fighters who bear the brunt of rural firefighting efforts in our region.



Supplemented by a donation of \$5,000 from the Priory of The Darling Downs, the funds were used to purchase a much-needed new water tanker trailer which will be shared with other rural fire services. The tanker was specially designed by members of the Brigade to overcome equipment shortcomings

Darling Downs F

On the 3rd August, the Darling Downs Administrative Council met, and on the 6th August, the Priory of the Darling Downs held a meeting followed by a dinner at the Downs Club.

At the meeting tribute was paid to the late Chev. Christian Lundgaard KSJ and the late Chevalier Emeritus Professor George Kearney AM RFD ED GCSJ followed by a minute's silence.

Acknowledgement and congratulations were made of the 50th anniversary of the ordination as a catholic priest of our Chaplain Emeritus, Chevalier The Very Reverend Dr Brian Sparksman KCSJ. A celebratory mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, Toowoomba in September was attended by Chevaliers Bob Kretchmann and Rob Rimmer.

Members were informed of the donations made earlier in the year – the Toowoomba Hospice received \$120,000 in donation and kind and the Family Support Area is completed. \$2,500 raised at the Tour of the Toowoomba City Hall and Toowoomba Art Gallery in March has

which hindered firefighting efforts last summer. It holds 1,000 litres of water, has a petrol driven pump, hosing and storage containers.

Built by HMF Engineering in Crows Nest, Queensland at a cost of \$20,000, it features signage on each side acknowledging the Order's donation.

On Friday 18th September Vice-Prior George Fox and Prior Jeff Prebble joined members of the Eastern Downs Rural Fire Brigade in Crows Nest for an official handover.

Mr Wayne Schefe, the Group Officer, Eastern Downs Rural →

The Sovereign Council

Priory Meetings

been presented to "Sunrise Way".

Donations from the annual oblation amounting to \$2,590 were given to "Hear and Say". The Eastern Downs Rural Fire Brigade received \$5,000 from our Priory. This was added to the donation of \$5,500 from the Sovereign Order of Saint John for the purchase of a water tanker trailer.

Members approved the usual donation of a hamper of Christmas gifts to the Toowoomba Hospice and the provision of \$200 vouchers for twelve needy families in December. Members also endorsed the suggestion to donate \$7,500 each to MS Queensland (who are constructing a residential facility in Toowoomba) and Clifton Community Hospital.

Forthcoming events include our Christmas meeting on 19th November, to be followed by a Christmas dinner organized by Chevalier Rod Maclean and Mrs Jane Maclean.

Next year, we are planning a social fund raising function early in the year and our Investiture on the 16th October 2021. ✂

Fire Brigade expressed the surprise and delight at receiving the generous donation.

He thanked both the Sovereign Order of Saint John and the Order of Saint John for their contributions and spoke of the great usefulness of this equipment in fighting future fires. ✂

The Sovereign Council Meeting of the International Sovereign Order, with whom we in Australia have the Memorandum of Understanding, was originally planned to be held in Vancouver in September this year.

Covid19 meant that the planned assembly of formal meetings, the social occasions including a Cathedral Service and Investiture, and post conference tours, all had to be cancelled. Constitutionally, the Sovereign Council must meet, so business meetings were held over two days, 18th and 19th September, using Zoom.

They brought Members and Observers together from all areas.

From Australia, the Grand Prior, HE Bailiff Victor Feros OAM GCSJ CMSJ, was invited to attend as a delegate, and Priors Jeffrey Prebble and Charles Clark attended as observers.

Others who registered, but did not attend sessions were: Chevaliers Garry Page, John Postle, Richard Barton, and James Haire. Attending from Australia required some stamina, because a starting time of 8:00 am in Vancouver demanded that we be in front of our computers at 1:00 am.

The Grand Prior delivered a report to the Sovereign Council on behalf of the Order in Australasia: it is reproduced here, on page 10. ✂

Coming to life again

After the constraints of this past year, planning is being made optimistically for a brighter future. Here is notice of some events.

Priory of the Darling Downs

A social fund raising function is being planned for early in the year.

The Investiture has been postponed to Saturday 16th October 2021.

Priory of Western Australia

A Christmas 'Sundowner' on the 4th December.

A Christmas Miracle'. In St George's Cathedral on the 10th December at 7pm.

'Festival of Lessons and Carols' at St George's Cathedral on the 23rd December.

Some further dates tba for next year, a quiz in March and a 'Raceday' at Ascot Racecourse in April.

Priory of Queensland

Investiture probably Friday 11th June.

Brisbane Commandery Christmas Lunch at the Queensland Club on Wednesday, 2nd December.

Brisbane Commandery is planning a fund raising social function for later in the year.

Priory of the Sunshine Coast

Cocktail party 27th March

Garden Party 17th October

DAME COMMANDER LEANNE O'SHEA DCSJ

Brisbane and Gold Coast commemorate the Siege of Malta



BRISBANE AND GOLD COAST COMMANDERIES JOIN IN COMMEMORATING THE SIEGE OF MALTA

Dame Commander Leanne O'Shea DCSJ writes:

Many Knights and Dames have commented to me that this was a wonderful celebration. We commenced with a Service held at Nazareth Lutheran Church, Woolloongabba led by Chevalier Reverend Noel Noack GCHSJ. The service was particularly moving in

recalling the role of our forbears in defending their faith and their Community and our joining together for the first time since the COVID 'Invasion' has changed our lives.

Our lunch followed at the Greek Club, South Brisbane. The atmosphere was upbeat as we met with our dear friends whom we had not seen since last year. Chevalier

Michael Halliday KCSJ delivered the address on the original Siege and this was received with genuine appreciation. Many members commented to me and other members of our leadership group how much they enjoyed the event.

Thank you to all who attended and made this a wonderful entry to resuming our normal activities. ✝



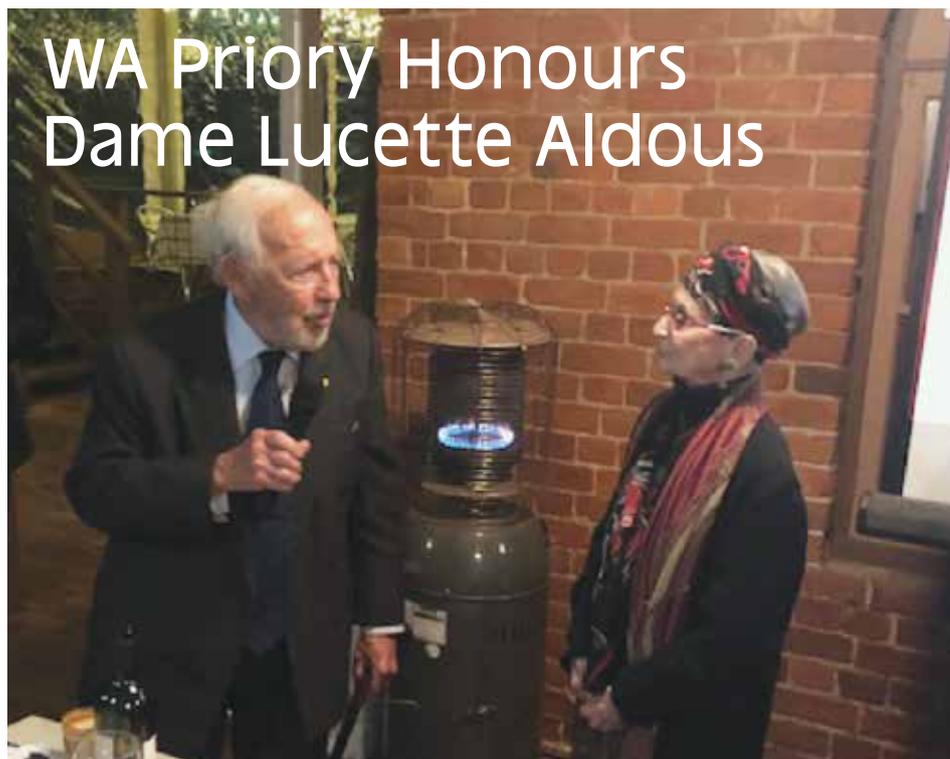
LEADING THE SERVICE



DELIVERING THE ADDRESS



GIVING THANKS



WA Priory Honours Dame Lucette Aldous

The National Trust's "Woodbridge House" on the Swan River at Guildford saw a dinner to honour Australia's premier retired Prima Ballerina, Dame Lucette Aldous AC, DSJ, D'Litt (Hons).

Guests, on Friday October 2nd, included members of the Royal Overseas League, whose Chairman is Vice Prior, Chevalier Anthony Howes, who, in the absence in the State's north of Prior Jamie Edwards, was host.

Dame Lucette's international standing was underlined by the presence of special guest Sir William Heseltine, former Private Secretary to Her Majesty the Queen. Sir William proposed the Toast to Her Majesty, as this occasion was used to mark HM's 'Unbirthday' as the pandemic had disallowed the usual Birthday Dinner.

Grace was said by the Dean of Perth, the Very Reverend Chris Chataway and Dame Lucette's considerable achievements as one of the world's leading ballerinas were related by Chevalier Anthony Howes. Dame Lucette was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by Sir William. Then, following the meal, a beautifully restored video of Dame Lucette, partnered by Rudolf Nureyev, and also featuring Sir Robert Helpman in "Don Quixote", was played.

The evening concluded with a vote of thanks by Chevalier Bob Nicholson. Knights and Dames had planned to honour Dame Lucette for some time, and were grateful that WA's relatively few pandemic restrictions finally allowed this. ✘

Image: At Woodbridge House, from left, Sir William Heseltine and Dame Lucette Aldous

A Christmas Miracle

Since 2012, a volunteer troupe of actors, musicians and technicians have given their time to present a play to raise funds for people experiencing homelessness.

This year, in association with St George's Cathedral, Theatre 180 presents "A Christmas Miracle", a special charity event to raise funds for the Veterans Transition Centre in Jarrahdale. They are the only site in Western Australia which accommodates homeless veterans.

At Christmas 1914 in the trenches of World War 1 in France, Allied and German soldiers disregarded their orders and laid down their arms for a brief time of truce, singing carols and exchanging greetings and gifts. The magic of the peace and goodwill message of Christmas affected them all and created one of the most memorable moments of their lives and a memorable moment for humankind.

A Christmas Miracle by Jenny Davis, and produced by Tony Howes, features a stunning ensemble troupe. Choir director Sarah Menogue along with some of Perth's finest performers: Stephen Adams, Alinta Carroll, Rebecca Davis, Stuart Halusz, Courtney Pitman and Stephen Sherwood.

Join us for an inspiring and uplifting evening to begin your Christmas celebrations for 2020 and celebrate the power of the human spirit.

The Veterans Transition Centre <https://www.rnrcentre.org/> will use the funds to upgrade their duplexes which accommodate homeless Veterans.

This is the time to support those that supported us and experience "A Christmas Miracle". ✘

GRAND PRIOR VICTOR FEROS OAM GCSJ CMSJ MSSJ

Australasian Report

The Report of the Grand Prior, Grand Priory of Australasia, Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller to the Sovereign Council Meeting, Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller 17–19 September 2020



Your Most Eminent Highness, Your Excellencies, Chevaliers, Dames, Sisters and Brothers in Saint John, distinguished delegates, dear friends.

Thank you for inviting me to address you at your Meeting of Sovereign Council. Greetings from Australia – warmest wishes from the Grand Priory of Australasia, the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller.

Our Grand Priory is hierarchically structured according to historical convention, currently comprising five Priories (Queensland, Victoria, the Darling Downs, Western Australia and the Sunshine Coast) with two Commanderies (Brisbane, the Gold Coast) attached to the Queensland Priory.

Our membership comprises more than 250 Knights and Dames. The level has been held consistently over the last several years. Regrettably, no Investitures have been held in this (2020) calendar year owing to COVID-19 restrictions.

We are in sound financial health and maintain a level of charitable giving, notwithstanding the Pandemic and our inability to fundraise as we would like.

Addressing matters of internationality, some five years ago a course of events, not of our instigation, witnessed profound disengagement in our international setting as an Order of Saint John Knights Hospitaller. Necessary changes to our Australian Constitution and Regulations as required by Australian law were formally enacted, as a consequence

of which our Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller (ACN 147 338 501) was asserted to be a lawful, independent entity which recognises and remains loyal to the 1st October 1963 Charter of his late Majesty, King Peter II of Yugoslavia.

We adhere to the view that we have retained constitutionality with respect to the 1964 King Peter Constitution throughout. In so asserting our chivalric authority, morally and at law, we continue in every respect as the Order of Saint John Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller, with the Grand Priory of Australasia autonomous within the Order.

In seeking to restore to our “home” in Australia, a sense and purpose of “family”, of “internationality” to our Order, after considerable research and consultation, following a meeting in March 2016 in San Francisco with HE Grand Commander Owen Brown and Bailiff William Stein and then in September 2016 in Cleveland, Ohio, a Memorandum of Understanding was duly signed, which acknowledged the respective common origins of the Grand Priory of Australasia, the Hospitaller Knights, and the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, founded in the United States of America more than 100 years ago, presently headquartered in Vancouver, Canada.

This Memorandum of Understanding committed our respective Orders to develop a closer relationship. This state of affiliation was further confirmed in Tampere, Finland in 2018.

In recognition of this special relationship, we were graced by the presence in our midst of three senior-ranked members of the Sovereign Order, HMEH Grand Master William Stein GCSJ MMSJ (San Francisco), HE Conventual Bailiff Grand Commander Ian Reid GCSJ MMSJ (Vancouver) and HE Conventional Bailiff Grand Hospitaller May Storrie CBE GCSJ MMSJ (Glasgow), who paid an official visit to Australia in July 2019 and attended formal events at Brisbane, the Sunshine and Gold Coasts, Toowoomba and Melbourne.

A series of consultations were also undertaken, seeking the realisation of ultimate unification of the Sovereign Order and the Order in Australia, so restoring our Order to family, to internationality.

The Order was established in Australia, in Brisbane in 1969 at the request of the then Prior of Malta, Professor Gaston Tonna-Barthet MBE, father of our esteemed Honorary Member of the Priory of Queensland, HE Bailiff Emeritus René Tonna-Barthet GCSJ, GCMSJ (Gold Cross) CMSJ and Bar (Silver Cross) MMSJ and we were honoured to have our special guests from the Sovereign Order celebrate with us, in the Queensland Club, in Brisbane on 6 July 2019, our 50th anniversary in Australia.

The occasion was marked by the striking of a special medallion commemorating this signal achievement, distributed to all members of the Order and to our special guests, in kindred spirit.

We walk with our Brothers and Sisters in Saint John in the Sovereign Order, as we continue our journey – a work in progress, in pursuit of our coming together, ever mindful of our commitment to Serve our Lords the Sick and our Lords the Poor.

Victor Feros OAM GCSJ CMSJ MSSJ
Grand Prior, Australasia ✠

The following article is Part 2 of former Grand Conservator H. E. Bailiff Emeritus René Tonna-Barthet, discussing the validity of Tsar Paul I as the 71st Grand Master of the Order of St. John. Part 1 was published in the August 2020 Bulletin.

TSAR PAUL I

Continuing the first part of the Four Criticisms aimed at Tsar Paul I, showing unacceptability of his Grand Mastership, which although is grudgingly accepted, and shown as de Facto, and not as de Jure. In my previous article, I had countered the first of these criticisms, namely:

- 1) That not all languages were present at the Tsar's election, and
- 2) That a Schismatic Tsar could never be the head of a religious and Catholic Order immediately subject to the Pope.

We now come to the third point:

- 3) namely that the Tsar was only an Honorary Grand Cross, even though he was Protector, and therefore was not a full member of the Order.

The Treaty made and signed by Grand Master De Rohan Polduc, at the behest of Pope Pius VI, and which was also signed later by Grand Master von Hompesch on the one side, and by the Tsar on the other, was a Treaty between two Sovereigns, (the Order was Sovereign) and consequently Paul I was by all rights a full member of the Order, quite apart that the Tsar was a *Fons Honorum* in his own right.

This counter argument demolishes completely the rejection of Paul I as a person who had no right to be elected Grand Master. It must also be pointed out that at that time Pope Pius VI, was seeking some form of protection against the invading forces of Napoleon, and that is why the request was made to the Tsar in the first instance. It must also be obvious to all observers, that the Tsar would not have accepted such a position if he considered possible that his decision to accept his election could be attacked and debated.

- 4) The fourth criticism is that Paul I was a married man, and could therefore never have been the head of a religious and Catholic Order and taken the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, which have always been

the essence of religious Knighthood.

Professor Harrison Smith and Bailiff Storage, in their book "The Development of the Order from 1798 to 1970" quote a variety of historians and reasons why these four points are not valid criticisms. The answer to this last point, was given by the Tsar himself in his declaration of 24th November 1798, and specifically when he said "We do not pretend in any degree as Emperor of all the Russias, to the smallest right or advantage which may threaten any of the Powers, our Allies." And whilst accepting the Grand Mastership, he did not divest himself of the Sovereign Rights which were inherent in him *Jure Sanguinis* according to International Law, and "therefore whether as Protector or Grand Master, when he approved his election, held on 7th November 1798, the proceedings were ipso facto legal. Furthermore, these proceedings became valid and legitimate, because as an autocrat, his rule was absolute" (Harrison Smith)

It is to me unbelievable that such detailed examination has been indulged by those who want to protect other Orders, whilst trying to destroy ours, and in so doing detracting from the election of Paul I and which process was, finally, started by Pope Pius VI himself. The Pope at that time was under unimaginable stress due to the Napoleonic invasion of Europe, and growing influence against the Roman Catholic Church and was desperately looking for some Protector who could be strong enough to withstand Napoleon, and which process was finalised by Grand Master de Rohan Polduc.

It must also not be forgotten that this election by the Knights who went to Russia, after having been ousted from Malta, was according to the Bulls and decrees of Popes Paschal II (1113

a.d.), Pope Anasthasius IV (1153 a.d.) Pope Gregory XIII (1572 a.d.) and Pope Urban VIII (1634 a.d.) and which state inter alia "In case of thy death, no man shall take possession of thy place as Chief and Master by underhand subtlety or by violence, unless duly elected by the professed brothers, with the help of God..." Furthermore, by the decree of Anasthasius IV (1153) and the Bull of Urban VIII (1634) both decreed that a Grand Master had to be elected from amongst his peers. This certainly could not be said of the "Nomination" and Appointment" by Pope Pius VII, of the so-called 73rd Grand Master, Tomassi di Cortona, which appointment was carried after acceptance by Napoleon, and without any semblance of an election whatsoever.

Having said all the above, however, we must not lose sight of the political scenario of Europe and indeed the Holy See itself at that time. We know that Napoleonic forces entered Tuscany on March 25th 1799, and after his arrest, Pius VI was carried out of Florence on the 27th of the same month, and he succumbed to his bad treatment and died on the way on 29th August, 1799. Pius VII was therefore elected against this scenario, and several historians amongst whom are Peirrerredon, Poitvin and Harrison Smith, say that Pius VII ordered that the validity of this "nomination" ought not to be examined too closely in view of the events of the time. Some of these historians point out that Pope Pius VI neither agreed or disagreed with the election of Tsar Paul I, and certainly put up no objections, other than a very slight protest. In the archives of the Venerable Order of St. John there is a document "unpublished Manuscript" by Edmund Frazer and edited by Major HA Balbi, which deals with this problem. It is stated therein that Pius VII had suggested that one must not be too critical of the norms and forms in difficult times in reviewing the action of September 1802. Pierre Varillon, in his "L'Épopée de Chaevaliers de Malte" gives Pius VII's specific language with

continued page 12

Vale, Dame Benise Lady Killen

Dame Benise Lady Killen DSJ was born on September 26, 1946, and died on October 29, 2020.

Benise Killen was a lady in all senses of the word ... a Lady by virtue of her marriage to Sir James Killen and a lady of dignity and charm in her own right.

One of her favourite quotations was from Samuel Johnson "A man should keep his friendships in constant repair". And that she did.

Benise and I met as young members of the Central Branch of the Liberal Party in the early 70s. Since then our paths crossed constantly...through St Johns Cathedral, the Queensland Irish Association, the Ansett Golden Wings Lounge, and then Jim Killen for whom I had been Research Assistant when he was Minister for Defence.

Born Benise Atherton, she grew up in Wavell Heights where she was one of the early students at the new Wavell High School. Her only brother Geoff would become a doctor and he and his wife Christine cared lovingly for Benise through the months of her final illness.

Their father had been a Methodist minister and theirs was a strong Methodist family. Her early contact with the life of service may have contributed to her strong commitment to community involvement and roles in a variety of organisations and on committees

After school, she held a number of secretarial roles here and in Melbourne. As secretary to the Fashion Director of Myers she organised fashion parades and liaised with fashion agents. As secretary to surgeon Dr Arthur Crawford, the Member for Wavell in the Queensland Parliament, she assisted with minor surgical procedures as well as his electorate



work. But it was as secretary to the State Manager of Ansett Airlines in the 80s that she was able to combine all her special skills of organisation and hospitality and her qualities of elegance and grace.

She set up the Golden Wing Club Lounges in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne which were the first Frequent Flyer lounges in Australia. Other airlines followed with similar lounges. Benise's career with Ansett was to last until the airline's collapse in 2001, when she held the role of Customer Services Manager Airport Facilities.

Through these years she continued her community involvement. She was on the Committee of the Save the Children Fund, of the Friends of St John's Cathedral, and Honorary Secretary of the Royal Commonwealth Society.

There was fundraising for the Liberal Party and projects with the Queensland Irish Club. One of these projects was the Irish Club's Rose of Tralee contest, where she had shared the judging role with Sir James Killen since 1996.

Benise had known Jim and his first wife, Joy, who died in 2000, for

many years through the Liberal Party, St Johns Cathedral, the Royal Commonwealth Society, and golf.

Benise came to share Jim's interest in and love of racing and together they would be frequently at the track.

They married in 2001 and as Benise would say "My life with him was deeply rewarding, fulfilling, eventful and most entertaining". Australians will remember him as a great orator and raconteur. "His death in 2007 left a hole in my heart which will never be replaced." Benise said in one of her speeches.

He left her a legacy of more community involvement which include The Sir James Killen Foundation, the Sir James Killen Debate, and the Sir James Killen Award for Excellence as part of the Moreton (Jim's electorate) Australia Day Awards. She was a member of the Lady Musgrave Trust and on the Committee of the Order of the British Empire Association.

Benise was invested in the Order of St John on June 13, 2014 and promoted to Dame of Grace on July 5, 2019. ✠

Sallyanne Atkinson

continued from page 11

regard to ignoring these rules.

Pierreredon and AF Artaud de Montor say that Pius VII, on the appointment of Tomassi, is stated to have said "that the candidate was to be considered as if he had been "elected" by a general chapter of the Order." This if true, and according to these historians, is of course a tacit agreement, that the whole process of this appointment was incorrect. However it must also not be forgotten that the Pope is *Fons Honorum* in his own right, and he has every power to create validly and legally, his own Orders, of which he has some three or four, and of which the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM) is one.

H. E. Bailiff Emeritus René Tonna-Barthet. GCSJ, GCMSJ, CMSJ & Bar, MMSJ ✠