

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**

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'The Priory@the Peak'

Darling Downs major fund-raiser at Preston Peak Winery
Story page 4. Pictured: Mrs Louise Sanderson with Chevalier Mark Osbourne



PRIOR CHARLES CLARK GCSJ MMSJ

From the Editor's desk

The pandemic continues to attract the main headlines as it spreads its ravages around the world, and while the early introduction of vaccinations has brought some calm, uneasy calm, it will be a long time before there are no spikes of infection and that distance travel can resume safely and conveniently.

Meantime technology is coming to the rescue, especially in methods of communication, while people being obliged to stay at home, work from home, and slow down, are discovering more of themselves and their immediate environment.

The arrival of a means of communicating virtually just at the right time is a god-send. People of

religious faith may take that term literally, spelled with a capital "G". Others will regard it as no more than a product and coincidence of a mass existentialism.

Virtual communication has saved many technical, or economic, medical, church, university, and club activities during periods of lock down and will continue to be a useful and cost-saving tool in the future. It has been used to good effect within the Order of Saint John in Australia and in the Sovereign Order around the world.

The Sovereign Council Meeting in September 2020 was conducted virtually to good effect, the physical meeting in Vancouver being cancelled. The Grand Priory

and Pories around Australia have conducted many of their meetings by virtual means.

I was privileged to take part in a Robbie Burns dinner a few weeks ago conducted in Glasgow by the Commandery of Glasgow of the SOSJ. It was attended by mostly Scottish folk, as well as some from England, USA, and Canada. I was the only Australian, and raised a smile as I pointed out that their start time of 7pm on Saturday evening was 5am on Sunday morning here, and it was strange to be eating something that represented haggis and drinking neat single malt Scotch at that time of the day, sitting in front of my computer.

The pandemic has also brought out the best in many people and communities. Acts of kindness and charity have developed and increased as more and more people become disadvantaged.

The Order of Saint John in Australia, though forced to slow down, did not come to a standstill, and raised and donated to charities more than \$51,000 during 2020, not a great amount, but significant under the circumstances. This issue of the Bulletin contains reports of events that have occurred and are planned for this year despite continuing restrictions.

To all our readers the Editorial team sends good wishes for 2021, and the hope that you will be active to serve "our lords the sick and our lords the poor", while staying safe and well. ✠



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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Deputy Commander appointed to the Gold Coast Commandery



The Prior of Queensland, Chevalier Charles Clark GCSJ MMSJ, appointed Chevalier Steven Goakes KCSJ as Deputy Commander to the Gold Coast Commandery in December 2020.

On Friday 11th December the Queensland Priory Chaplain, Chevalier the Reverend Dr David Pitman AM GCHSJ, conducted a short ceremony in the apartment home of Steven and Madelaine Goakes at Paradise Point.

It was attended by Members of the Gold Coast Commandery, including the former Commander, Chevalier Derek Murphy KCSJ, Commander Chevalier Ray James KCSJ and Dame Jill James DSJ, as well as Grand Prior Victor Feros GCSJ CMSJ and Dame Marion Feros DCSJ, and the Queensland Prior. Both the Grand Prior and the Prior spoke to the occasion.

Steven's wife, Madelaine, produced a tempting supper, and from lively discussion during the evening came the suggestion and the will for the Gold Coast and Brisbane Commanderies to join in social and fund raising functions, which will help to build up the Commandery so severely crippled when many of its members went to the Karadjordjevic group. ❖



Top Left to right. Dame Janelle Manders, Dame Jill James and Madelaine Goakes

Centre Left to right. Chevalier David Bonifant, Dame Jill James, Commander Ray James

Top Dame Janet Barrett, Grand Prior Victor Feros

Centre Chevalier Derek Murphy, Dame Marion Feros

Lower, left to right Chevalier Derek Murphy, Deputy Commander Steven Goakes, Commander Ray James, Grand Prior Victor Feros, Prior Charles Clark, Chaplain Dr David Pitman



PRIOR DR JEFFREY PREBBLE OAM KCSJ

The Priory@the Peak: a winery soiree raises \$30,000 for "Sunrise Way"

The Darling Downs Priory hosted an afternoon with entertainment and dinner at the Preston Peaks Winery



Titled "The Priory @ the Peak", the soiree on February 7 was a sellout with 180 attending. Guests enjoyed drinks and canapes on the lawn with musical entertainment before moving inside for a sit-down delicious dinner with fine wines.

The organising sub-committee of Dame Jane Tait, Dame Sheena Liley, Chevaliers Mark Osborne, Bill Barrett, Bob Kretchmann and Jeff Prebble were delighted with the event. They welcomed OSJ members from Brisbane: Grand Prior Victor Feros, Dame Marion Feros, Prior Charles Clark, Chevalier Ian Airey, Mrs Judeen Airey, Dame Suzanne Brooks, Mr John Brooks and Serving Sister Leith Robinson. The Gold Coast Commandery was represented by Chevalier Derek Murphy and Mrs Yoshiko Murphy.

Preston Peak Winery, a popular venue for wedding receptions and functions, is located just south of



Above: Guests enjoying dinner

Left: Presentation of a grand-sized cheque for a grand-sized sum. Mr Jaden Frame (Chair, Sunrise Way Board), Mrs Louise Sanderson (CEO, Sunrise Way), Prior Jeff Prebble, and Chevalier Mark Osborne

Toowoomba. Owners Chevalier Mark and Mrs Fran Osborne and their son, CEO and executive chef, Mr Rick Osborne, generously donated the venue, staff, all printing and all catering.

Over \$30,000 (including a donation of \$5,000 from Chevalier Clive Armitage and Mrs Conchita Armitage) was raised and donated to "Sunrise Way", the not-for-profit

residential rehabilitation service in Toowoomba for people with drug or alcohol addiction. The centre's Chief Executive Officer, Mrs Louise Sanderson, said she was "so appreciative of the generosity of Preston Peaks Winery and the organisation by the Order of Saint John." The money raised will be used to purchase much-needed new furniture. ✂

DAME COMMANDER LEANNE O'SHEA DCSJ

Brisbane finds joy in celebrating together

Brisbane Commandery celebrated Christmas with a most convivial luncheon and, as usual, at the Queensland Club on the 3 December 2020. I am sure that you will agree with me that 2020 was the year that we missed most of our usual OSJ events.

Apart from a very small celebration of the Siege of Malta, the Christmas lunch was the only event that we could celebrate together. Everybody enjoyed catching up with our fellow members and were particularly pleased that our Grand Prior Victor Feros and Dame Marion Feros could join us.

Our Prior, Chevalier Charles Clark, was also present and he further assisted by accompanying us in singing the Carol, *Once in Royal David's City*. This was part of the Christmas message which was delivered by Chevalier the Rev Bishop Emeritus Noel Noack. Our sincere thanks to both for setting a joyous tone.

The lunch itself was delicious and included a very tasty Christmas pudding. We had 53 members and family join with us for lunch. Not too far off our usual numbers. What we lost in the numbers we made up in the joy of being able to celebrate Christmas together.

Planning for events this year may be dependent to some extent on the COVID19 situation, but events are being considered. A cocktail party is planned for April after Easter, the Vigil and New Members' Night for Investees, and the Siege of Malta in September.

Let's hope 2021 will be a happier year! ❄️



Top Left to right. Prior Jeff Prebble, Serving Sister Leith Robinson, Dame Marion Feros, Grand Prior Victor Feros

Centre, above Left to right. Chevalier Mike Horan, Helen Horan, Prior Charles Clark, Chevalier Bill Barrett, Louise Barrett, Judith North, Randal North

Bottom Left to right. Adele Roberts, Dame Trish Power, Robyn Prebble



Above At the luncheon, left to right. Serving Sister Sandra Griffiths, Dame Prue Galley, Dame Dr Elaine Katte

VICE PRIOR ANTHONY HOWES KCSJ

Diary jottings from the OSJ in the West

Vice Prior Anthony Howes reports from Perth:

As I write these notes from the OSJ Western Australia, my kitchen radio a few rooms away is telling me that 81 homes have now been lost in the devastating fires in the Upper Swan Valley and the Perth Hills.

I am conscious, too, of the hundreds of men and women who are fighting the fires or caring for those whose homes have been destroyed and bringing calm to those who sit and wait for news of their possessions; and whether their means of living will be still in existence when all this is over. I realise that by the time you read this, these fires will have been at

least controlled, and the helping hands of many West Australians will be assisting, still with loving care and understanding. I am confident that the prayers of the Order throughout the whole nation for all who have suffered, will have been heard by our Lord; who decreed, "Behold, I make all things new".

In the WA notes for the final Bulletin of 2020, I wrote of the preparations for the production on December 16th, of "A Christmas Miracle" based on the unofficial front line truce on Christmas Eve of the first year of the Great War. The evening was a great success; and was dedicated to the memories of former Vice Commander Chevalier

Donald Leicester-Mackay and Chaplain the Reverend Chevalier Ken Williams. Jenny Davis OAM wrote the script for us, and Perth's newest theatre company, Theatre 180, staged the work using some of our city's best thespians and singers. Our conventual church, St George's Cathedral, and OSJ WA, jointly presented it, allowing every penny of ticket money to go to the designated charity. That charity? The Veterans' Transition Centre, Jarrahdale, set an hours' distance from Perth, in spacious grounds, where veterans in any sort of need are able to rest, or be free of a homeless situation, and be cared for in many ways.

Covid restriction only allowed us to seat 65% capacity for the performance – and, due in no small part to our honorary PR guru, Gina Church – we could have doubled our audience easily!

At the end of the evening, the Very Reverend Chris Chataway, the Dean, together with our Prior, Jamie, were able to announce that ticket sales amounted to more than \$7,000 and that a donation had also been made, which took funds raised to \$10,000! As producer of the event, I was able to sleep well that night! "A Christmas Miracle" was recorded, and replayed on Capital Radio 101.7 FM Perth on December 21 and 26; thus spreading its message beyond St George's Terrace.

Owing to an unexpected Covid alert, with a week-long lockdown of Perth and some southern regions of WA, one of our services of 'obligation' (for Candlemas, scheduled for Sunday 7th February)

Left: Two of the professional actors who gave of their services to OSJ WA: Rebecca Davis as the Nurse and Stuart Halusz as the Soldier in "A Christmas Miracle". Stuart is also the Artistic Director of "Theatre 180"





Commemorating the Lifting of the Siege of Malta: Prior Jamie Edwards and Vice Prior Anthony Howes lay a wreath, supported by members of the Perth Maltese Community.



was cancelled, much to the disappointment of us all.

Despite the uncertainty with regard to various Covid restrictions, a number of activities are being planned. In every case, thoughts of alternatives are considered.

On Sunday, 21st February in the evening, a Sundowner for Dames and Knights will be hosted by Dame Heather and Chevalier Nigel Rogers at their Claremont home.

March will see one of our popular 'Quiz Nights', which are always successful fund-raisers – 'Race Days', too. A day at the races in April/May is planned

A very warm invitation is extended to all Members and guests to join us for Investiture Week in April

Prior Jamie is very hopeful that state borders will not restrict Dames and Knights from across Australia considering visiting Perth during our important "Investiture Week" during April.

Thus far, the program sees the Aspirants' Vigil (with its opportunity for us all to restate our Vows) on Wednesday 14th April. This quiet service begins just after five pm and usually lasts under an hour. Five pm, Sunday 18th April, is

set for the Investiture of new Dames and Knights. Both the Vigil and the Investiture take place in St George's Cathedral. The Gala Banquet, which follows the Cathedral Service, takes place at the nearby Weld Club.

Again at the Club, the Priory Chapter AGM will be held the morning of Monday 19th April.

Anyone considering coming to Perth is very welcome indeed; please email Prior Jamie and let him know; confirmation and accommodation requirements, etc., are not necessary until closer to the date: jem.edwards27@gmail.com

Finally, and harking back to 2020, I think it important to record the deepening relationship between the Maltese community and the WA Priory of the Order, which underlines the quieter side of our work here in the West.

The State War Memorial was the scene of the first of two events to mark the Siege of Malta. *See pictures above.* Prior Jamie and I had the honour of laying a wreath, together with the Consul and senior members of the Perth Maltese Community. Then, later that evening, the Dean of Perth and the Prior welcomed the Maltese community to the Cathedral Service for the Siege, which in turn was followed by refreshments and conversations well into the night. Both heritage and practical relationships were topics of real value. ✠

Vale: Chevalier The Reverend Father James Byrne K SJ

Tributes have flowed for the greatly-respected Fr Byrne, who passed away suddenly in Ireland on the 11th December 2020 at the age of 82. Best known as the Parish Priest of the Sacred Heart Church in Toowoomba for more than 30 years, Fr Byrne celebrated 50 years of service as a priest in 2013. After being ordained in 1964, he ministered in Toowoomba, Quilpie and Warwick before becoming full-time military chaplain at Kapooka, Wagga Wagga, Enoggera, and Townsville between 1975 and 1980.

Along with his main role at Sacred Heart Fr Byrne was also the chaplain at St Andrews Hospital for 32 years and at Baillie Henderson Hospital for 20 years. He was integral to the foundation of the Police Chaplaincy in Queensland during the Fitzgerald Inquiry in the 1980s. Toowoomba Bishop the Most Reverend Robert McGuckin said Fr Byrne was beloved by many, and a faithful servant of the church.

Chevalier Fr Byrne K SJ was invested into the Order of St John of Jerusalem Toowoomba Commandery on 21st October 1995, and became the Commandery Chaplain.

After retirement from the active priesthood Fr Byrne retired to reside in Ireland. He lived for many years in Curraghamone, Ballybofey, Ireland.

Fr. James's remains reposed in the Church of Mary Immaculate, Stranorlar, on Monday, December, 14th with interment afterwards in Drumboe Cemetery.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory. ✠

Chevaliers Merv Bond KCSJ and Bob Kretchmann OAM KCSJ

CHEVALIER ROBIN KLEINSCHMIDT OAM KSJ

Chapter Meeting a positive start to a new year



Dame Jenny Cant and Chevalier Dr Mark de Wet

The curtailment of the 2020 program of events has not deterred the Sunshine Coast Priory in its plans for 2021, which will follow a familiar pattern. A positive start to the year's activities was made at a well-attended Chapter Meeting on 2nd February.

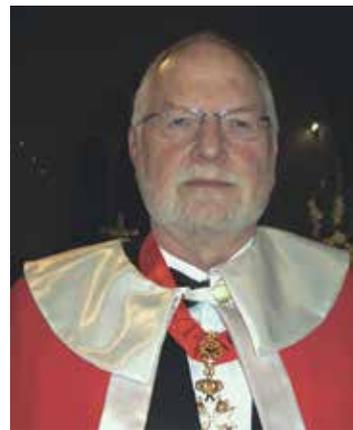
At the heart of the events are those associated with the investiture of new members. After the Priory Vigil in the Chapel of St Nicholas at Matthew Flinders Anglican College on 24th May, the Priory will combine with the Queensland Priory and its two Commanderies for the Investiture Service in the Albert Street Uniting Church on 11th June – the banquet will follow in the Pullman Hotel. On Saturday 12th, the Church Parade and Chapter Meetings will take place.

In September St Mark's Anglican Church in Buderim will be the venue for celebrating the Lifting of the Siege of Malta, with a luncheon to follow. It was intended that two major fund-raising events would support the selected charities. However, in view of the current public health environment it has been deemed wiser not to proceed with the True Blue Cocktail Party on the Green in March.

The Priory is still planning to raise funds directly to support the *One Roof* project, through which the Maroochy Neighbourhood Centre offers a range of important services to local homeless persons. Funds raised at a Garden Party on 17th October will support

VICE CHANCELLOR RODNEY SMITH KSJ

News from the Priory of Victoria



Newly appointed to the role of Vice Chancellor, Rodney Smith KSJ

At the first Council meeting since March 2020, owing to the Corona Virus, held on 12th December, Council observed a minute's silence to mark the passing of our former Prior, Chevalier Graham Michalanney, Knight Commander of Justice.

The Council lamented that we have missed our annual Christmas celebrations and luncheon, which culminates in our

major fundraising effort for the year. With that in mind, it was agreed by Council that we should appeal to the generous hearts of all Members and provide the opportunity to support once again our designated charities, Berry St and Mirabel Foundation.

The Prior announced that he has appointed Chevalier Rodney Smith KSJ to the role of Vice Chancellor.

Plans for 2021 continue to be subject to the variations from time to time due to COVID19, which makes the setting of definite dates difficult. However, events are being planned with the expectation that they will take place. The meeting looked at a proposed calendar of events for 2021 which included:

February – Afternoon Tea

April – St Paul's parade followed by lunch at RACV Club

Christmas Function – Date to be finalised. ✕

Cittimani, which offers home-based hospice and palliative care.

Social gatherings in the homes of Members have long been a feature of the activities of the Priory. Four such occasions throughout the year will continue this tradition. As usual, the year's activities will conclude in December with a Christmas Party.

The Priory has achieved a well-balanced combination of happy social activity with energetic support for its nominated charities, and plans to continue this in 2021. Visitors from other Priorities are always welcome, especially at the fund-raising events. ✕