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St John of Jerusalem
Eye Hospital Group

JERUSALEM SCENE

Summer 2023
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**YOUR SUPPORT
KEEPS OUR VITAL
SIGHT-SAVING
SERVICES RUNNING**

CEO UPDATE: 2023 SO FAR...

DR AHMAD MA'ALI CStJ, PhD, MPH, BSN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Welcome to your summer edition of Jerusalem Scene and thank you for your support so far this year!

Since January 2023, there has been a noticeable escalation in the level of violence in Jerusalem, the West Bank and to a lesser extent in Gaza. Sadly, due to increased security risks, we were forced to cancel some outreach visits over the past few months.

In terms of Hospital Group activity, we are generally on target in almost all clinical settings and are projected to achieve our planned annual clinical activities for 2023. Between January and March this year, we conducted almost 35,000 patient visits, which is a 3% rise compared to the same period of 2022. As for major surgeries, almost 1,700 surgeries were performed at the Group which is almost 10% more than the same period of 2022. In terms of training at the Hospital Group, fifteen students have successfully completed our Ophthalmic Nurse assistant training, a six-month course based in Gaza. This short course is sponsored by Love Must Act Foundation and delivered by our Nurse Manager, Fadi Ejleh, and the Head of the School of Nursing, Nasrallah Khalilia.

Students on our one-year, hands-on Post Graduate Ophthalmic Nursing Diploma commenced their training in September 2022 in Jerusalem and completed their course at the end of May 2023. We opened the doors to our Kufor Aqab clinic on a full-time basis in October 2022 and so far, in the first quarter of 2023, 1,450 patients have been seen at the clinic and 365 of these patients were referred to the main Hospital for further diagnostic procedures and surgery. Based on these figures, the clinic is on

target to treat 6,000 to 7,000 patients by the end of the year. Due to the increased demand for subspecialty services, we will commence paediatric/orthoptic clinics once every fortnight at the Kufor Aqab clinic.

We have found a steady upward trend in all our clinical activities within the Gaza Hospital during the first quarter of this year. This is an increase of 10% in outpatient intake in comparison to the previous year, with cataract surgery up almost 44% compared to last year. In contrast, there has been a downturn in all other surgeries by around 16% as we have been able to perform far more cataract surgeries than before which has led to a reduction in long waiting lists as well as moving more complex surgeries to the Jerusalem Hospital. Despite having been able to perform far more surgeries and cut down waiting lists, the issue remains with even more demand for cataract surgery due to the increased referrals from UNRWA. Currently, there are 550 patients waiting for their surgery, most of whom are refugees. Previously our patient makeup was mostly people from the northern parts of Gaza but now the UNRWA has begun to refer most of their refugee patients to us. Due to this, we have decided to undertake two additional surgery sessions on Saturdays to maintain a 3-4 month wait period. I would like to take this time to thank the generous campaign led by the US Priority in 2022 that will now cover the costs of 520 cataract surgeries.

Despite all the highs and lows, we have faced so far in the year we are very grateful for your continued support of our vital work.

Between January and March 2023, we conducted almost

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1,700
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1,450
patients have been seen at the clinic



By David H Verity KStJ, MA (Oxon), MD (Lon), BM BCh, FRCOphth

Our vision is to be recognised as the leader in the provision of quality eye care in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group is recognized as the leading provider of ophthalmic care in these areas, where it is the largest single provider, and the only charitable provider, of such care, covering all specialties except oncology.

At St John Eye Hospital Group, we realise the importance of sharing knowledge of ophthalmology and continually developing our staff. For this reason, we hold annual symposiums aimed at sharing knowledge between our staff in the Middle East and professionals from elsewhere in the world, including Canada, the UK and Italy. The purpose of these conferences is the continuous education and development of our Ophthalmologists across the SJEHG network in Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank. In addition, this conference is a great chance to exchange experiences through connecting clinical professionals from England, Canada, Italy, and of course hospitals in the middle east.

The St John's Ophthalmic Association (SOA) was first established in 2015 to support the postgraduate activities of the St John Eye Hospital Group, uniting professionals from all

walks of life. Through the SOA we have close links to the prestigious Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, and we have been lucky enough to have visits from consultant surgeons, sharing their knowledge with us.

In 2022, we had regional meetings in both Jerusalem and Gaza as well as online virtual training, all themed on 'Challenging the Ophthalmologist'.

The St John's Ophthalmic Association (SOA) was first established in 2015 to support the postgraduate activities of the St John Eye Hospital Group, uniting professionals from all walks of life.

Our Gaza meeting was supported by three international surgeons as well as over 100 colleagues across the Hospital Group and focused on 'anterior segment' topics (front most region of the eye including: cornea, iris and lens) well as retina and oculoplastic surgery discussions. Meanwhile, our Jerusalem meeting also focused on similar topics as well as paediatrics.

Across SJEHG and the Pories, the SOA also runs a quarterly on-line programme, known as the St John Ophthalmic Case Series (SOCS). Meetings include a summary of St John Eye Hospital's recent work in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, and talks on the work of the 'Hosting Priority'. The SOCS program has been running since 2020 and previous 'Hosting Pories' include England, Canada, USA, Australia, Sweden and Africa. Topics range from oculoplastics, glaucoma, anterior segment, paediatric ophthalmology and ocular injury.

Teaching and training is vitally important to the development of staff and the services we are able to offer across our sites. If you would like to support teaching and training specifically, please contact: info@stjohnseyehospital.org or for more information on the programs, contact: info@SOA.global.



Eleven-year-old Malik was born in Gaza with a squint, which his father, Ahmad, noticed when his child was 6 months old. A squint is an eye condition in which the eyes point in different directions and is particularly common in young children. One of the eyes may turn in, out, up or down, while the other eye looks straight ahead.¹

Sadly, Malik's squint caused him to suffer continuous neck pain because he subconsciously tilted his head in order to keep up with the teacher and read or copy notes from the board in school. Ahmad, Malik's father, said that "Malik has 7 siblings, but he is the most enthusiastic, in spite of the fact he keeps bending his neck as a result of the squint, he makes a lot of effort to get excellent grades at school."

In his local neighbourhood, Malik was a victim of bullying due to his squint and at school, although teachers were very supportive, the other children kept making fun of Malik's eyes; to the point where Malik even brought black sunglasses to cover his eyes.

Malik was referred to the St John Eye Hospital in Gaza for treatment, where Dr. Ahmed Al-Halimi diagnosed him with a squint. In July 2022, Malik received his second corrective surgery, which was very successful. It is very fortunate that Malik's squint was diagnosed and corrected as any vision problems resulting from a squint may be

permanent, if they are not treated at a young age.

"Despite the hard humanitarian and medical situation in Gaza, St. John Eye Hospital provides a wonderful and distinguished service that contributes to changing our lives. Without the presence of St. John's Eye Hospital in Gaza, I would have faced great difficulties to treat my son's eye, I am grateful to Dr. Ahmed Al-Halimi and the entire team" Ahmad's father exclaimed.

Malik's neck pain has now disappeared - he is so thankful and said, "this surgery changed my life; nobody is bullying me anymore!". The staff at St John Eye Hospital inspired Malik and he considers 2022 as a new start - "I will now work harder to get excellent grades at school to become a successful Optometrist who changes lives and help more people see the bright side of this world."

About

5 IN 100

**children aged 5 years have
a squint (strabismus)***

*Patient Info: Squint in Children (patient.info)



US Priory Gaza Cataract Initiative

Restoring vision for patients in the Gaza Strip by way of the US priory subsidising 520 cataract surgeries for five months between October 2022 and February 2023.

We are proud to say that, in 2022, St John Eye Hospital Group reached 142,876 outpatients and performed 6,916 major eye surgeries within our hospitals, clinics and mobile outreach units in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

The St John Eye Hospital Group first established its Gaza base in 1992 and has since prioritised aiding the population there, providing all levels of eyecare, given the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the region. There are eight recognised refugee camps spanning the Gaza Strip, some of which are among the highest population-dense areas in the world. Sadly, due to escalating poverty, the number of refugees relying on the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) food handouts has increased from fewer than 80,000 in the year 2000¹, to more than a million people today. The region also faces ongoing power shortages and only 5% of the population have access to clean water.

In 2022, the high demand for cataract surgery in the Gaza Hospital meant that waiting lists reached a staggering 532 cases per month. As we grow older, the usually transparent lens in our eye can develop cloudy patches, which can become bigger over time, causing blurred vision and blindness if not treated. Cataracts are

a very common disease for the older generation and may cause trouble for people carrying out everyday activities, like reading.

Between October 2022 and February 2023, the US Priory kindly funded an initiative to reduce patient waiting times through subsidising 532 cataract operations, amounting to over \$200,000 in funding. St John Eye Hospital Group prioritises patients who are most in need of surgery, including those suffering from reversible blindness as well as severe and moderate visual impairments. In December 2022 alone, this initiative decreased the cataract surgery waiting lists by a rate of 12% in the month.

83-year-old Mariam is one of our many success stories. Mariam lives in the Deir El-Balah refugee camp, which is the smallest refugee camp in Gaza, located on the Mediterranean coast. The name of the camp, Deir El-Balah actually means 'Monastery of the Dates', referring to the many date palm groves in the region.

Mariam suffered from very poor vision, facing difficulties taking medication for other chronic pains as well as trouble recognising faces and seeing her family. When Mariam visited

the UNRWA healthcare facility at the camp, she was referred to St John Eye Hospital for further examination by one of our sub-specialist ophthalmologists, Dr. Walid Mohamed. In August 2022, Mariam was diagnosed with a posterior sub-capsular polar age-related cataract in both of her eyes, requiring surgery to improve her vision.

Due to the long waiting times for cataract surgery in Gaza, Mariam's surgery was originally scheduled for March 2024, well over a year from the time of her original appointment. Thanks to the generous funding from the US Priory, Mariam received cataract surgery on her right eye in December 2022, reducing the waiting time from 19 months to just four months.

Post-surgery, Mariam's visual acuity significantly improved, and she is now able to carry out everyday activities and move easily inside her home, being able to see clearly.

Mariam is so grateful to the US Priory for their benevolent funding as well as our staff, she said "St. John's staff were very kind and amazing; I am really thankful for all efforts of St. John Eye Hospital staff".

¹ <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip>



We at St John Eye Hospital Group pride ourselves on having some of the most hard-working, dedicated, and talented staff across the board. Though we are proud of all our staff, we wanted to award those who have gone above and beyond in their work. In May we held our Staff Awards ceremony in which our Board of Trustees flew in specially to attend and present several awards. Ms. Diane Corner, the Consul General, graciously hosted the Board and Senior Management Team. The awards ceremony was held the next day after a busy morning of meetings and preparation.

The ceremony began with opening words from CEO Dr Ahmad Ma'ali followed by giving awards, which our Board was delighted to present to the honoured staff. Below are the recipients:

Presentation of Service Medals to Members of Staff who have Provided Dedicated Service to the Hospital and its Mission for the Past 10 Years

Presented by Mr David Verity, Order Hospitaller

Naser Lutfi	Murad Amro
Dr. Mohammad Daraghme	Mahmoud Zayed
Samer Hidmi	Omar Shawamreh
Dr. Raja' Al-Masri	Firas Burghal

Presentation of Gold Bar to Members of Staff who have Provided Dedicated Service to the Hospital and its Mission for the Past 30 Years

Presented by Ms. Diane Corner, Trustee

Dr. Humam Rishmawi	Rima Zaben
Nawal Abu Sneineh	

Presentation of 3rd Bar to Members of Staff who have Provided Dedicated Service to the Hospital and its Mission for the Past 25 Years

To be presented by Mrs. Helen Dodds, Trustee

Saleh Al-Qadi	Ahmad Amer
Nadia Abdel-Jawwad	

Presentation of 2nd Bar to Members of Staff who have Provided Dedicated Service to the Hospital and its Mission for the Past 20 Years

Presented by Mr. Jamie Ingham Clark, Trustee

Reem Shaheen	Suzan Nassereddin
Hani Asali	Dr. Abdallah Abu-Hantash
Hani Abu-Haija	

Presentation of 1st Bar to Members of Staff who have Provided Dedicated Service to the Hospital and its Mission for the Past 15 Years

Presented by Mr Herbert von Bose, Trustee

Dr. Marina Doulani	Shadi Yassin
Dr. Salam Eriqat	Peter Khoury
Mohammad Wahdan	Sami Jazzar
Dr. Alaa Talbishi	Nader Kudsieh
Rima Rjoub	Mahmoud Saayreh

Presentation of Ophthalmic Nursing Diplomas to Staff Nurses who Have Completed the 2023 Ophthalmic Nursing Course of Al Quds University

Presented by Ms. Avey Bhatia, Trustee

Reem Abedrabo	Georgina Rizkalla
Ala Issa Elyan	Mohammad Ibrahim
Aya Ismail	Omar Deif-Allah Qandeel
Amani Thweib	

Presentation of Internal Ophthalmic Fellowship Training Certificate

Presented by Mr David Verity, Order Hospitaller

Dr. Raja' Al Masri, Oculoplastic Specialist

BOARD VISIT AND STAFF AWARDS

Presentation of Ophthalmic Medical Residency Training Certificates

Presented by Dr. Umaiye Khammash, Trustee

Dr. Abdel Qader Al Murr, Resident

Sheenah Davies R.R.C. D.L. (Davies Plate): for Nursing Excellence

Presented by Mr. Timothy Jones, Trustee

Mrs. Suhad Istiban, Nurse Technician

Strudwick Prize for Member of Staff who has Contributed Most to The Hospital Over the Year

Presented by Mr. Paul Hackwood, Trustee

Mrs Dania Omari, Executive Assistant

St. John Eye Hospital Award to Member of Support Staff who has Contributed Most to The Hospital Over the Year

Presented by Mr. Chris Hoult, Trustee

Mr. Nader Kudsieh, Driver

Magauran Cup: to the Doctor Who Has Made the Most Contribution to The Services Provided by The Medical Department During 2023

Presented by Mr. John Macaskill, Trustee

Dr. Mohammad Daraghme, Paediatric Specialist

The Professor Saul Merin Memorial Award

Presented by Mrs. Ismat Levin, Trustee

Dr. Amjad Abu Shams, Resident

Victoria Sheffield-Pyle Cup for Research

Presented by Mr. David Pyott, Trustee

Mr. Ayham Slimi, Staff Nurse

The SOA 2023 Prize for Dedication & Commitment to the work of St John

Presented by Dr. Ahmad Ma'ali, CEO

Dr. Yehya Sweiti, Retina Specialist

SOA Prize for Gaza: Dr. Fawzi Al Jalhoum, Ophthalmologist

We would like to congratulate all the recipients again and thank you for all they have done in service to the Eye Hospital.



Top Image Our Board (left to right): Dr. Umaiye Khammash, Mr Herbert von Bose, Miss Helen Dodds (Helen Forsyth), Mr Timothy Jones, Mrs Avey Bhatia RGN, MPA, Mr Chris Hoult FCA, Mr Jamie Ingham Clark CStJ FCA, Mr David H Verity KStJ, MA (Oxon), MD (Lon), BM BCh, FRCOphth, Mr Paul Hackwood, Mr John Macaskill OStJ, HE Diane Corner OBE, Mrs Ismat Levin, Dr David E.I Pyott CBE, OStJ and Dr Ahmad Ma'ali CStJ PhD MPH BSN PGCE ENB - CEO of SJEHG

Second Image Firas Burghal receiving his award from Dr David Verity

Third Image Ophthalmic Nursing Diplomas to Staff Nurses who Have Completed the 2023 Ophthalmic Nursing Course of Al Quds University



TRAINING ORTHOPTISTS AT THE HOSPITAL BY JUDITH MUSSALLAM

Before 2005, the demand for our orthoptic services exceeded the capacity of St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group and there was no orthoptic training available in either Israel or the Palestinian-occupied Territories. Orthoptics is the diagnosing and treatment of defects in eye movement and problems with how the eyes work together. The incidence of squint, which causes irreversible poor vision in one eye if not treated in early childhood, is high in the Palestinian population. An Orthoptist plays a major role in this treatment, which is important in a society where the incidence of blinding ocular trauma in childhood is high, and therefore the need for two 'good' eyes is even more necessary.

To tackle this and to enable us to meet the demand for our orthoptic services, Jane Tapley, a British Orthoptist and external examiner at Sheffield University in England, created the SJEHG Orthoptic Course curriculum. Jane also spent 6 months working at St John in 2000 as a Locum which included not only clinical and teaching sessions in Jerusalem but also regular visits to the Gaza clinic.

The first students on this course were Ruba Sayyeg and Younes Abdel Jawwad, two SJEH Licensed Practical Nurses with around 12 years of ophthalmic working experience, who began their training in 2005. We delivered an initial three-month basic orthoptic course, and a six-week advanced orthoptic course six months later and gave them constant one-to-one practical teaching in the orthoptic clinics. Jane Tapley examined them formally and we considered them adept to practice under supervision in the clinic after two years.

They completed the three-month Orthoptic Assistant module in December 2005. This was supported by a further six-month practical consolidation period and followed by a six-week advanced Orthoptic course in July/August 2006. They worked (one to one) under the supervision of the Head and Senior Orthoptists in Jerusalem, in the Satellite clinics, and with the Outreach Team, and do so to date.

Ruba and Younes have gained a basic knowledge of the diagnosis and treatment of squint and have reached an impressive, safe standard of understanding of basic Orthoptic principles. They are competent to test babies and children of 6

months and older, diagnose amblyopia (lazy eye), begin a program of patching treatment, and monitor the improvement of vision which results.

St John Eye Hospital has a strong commitment to clinical governance. Unfortunately, the course that Ruba and Younes undertook is not recognized by the Israeli Ministry of Health and consequently, they were unable to register as independent practitioners. Therefore, a safety protocol was compiled for the Orthoptic Assistants to practice under the jurisdiction of a Registered Orthoptist or Ophthalmologist of St John.

Ruba and Younes are hard-working, adaptable, competent members of our team who have proved that Orthoptic Assistants are valuable assets to an Orthoptic Department.

The Orthoptic Assistants (OA) of St John Eye Hospital have successfully passed an examination of Tel Aviv University (TAU) which gives them credibility to apply for professional registration in Israel.

On Friday 22nd November 2013, Ruba Sayej, Younes Abdel Jawwad, Rima Zaben and Huda Abu Aleis accompanied by Femi Oni, volunteer orthoptic tutor, and I left Jerusalem at 6:30 am for the final examination in TAU. This was their first experience of a major examination with unfamiliar examiners in a new environment and they were full of anticipation and excitement.

Our SJEH students were examined by the Head of the TAU course, Professor Yair Morad, who is also the Head Paediatric Ophthalmologist of Assaf Harofeh Medical Centre in Tel Aviv, and Dr Hadas Meshulam, of Hadassah Hospital. I was invited into the examination room to observe; an interesting experience but occasionally intensely stressful when the students struggled to answer what was required! Each student was questioned for thirty minutes; to diagnose and discuss the management of a variety of orthoptic patients. They were questioned on orthoptic theory and practice and asked to justify each of their responses. Though an intense exam they impressed the examiners and passed with flying colours!

The limitation to our success was that our course was not accredited by a university, so the Palestinian Health Authority

would not accept our new OAs for professional registration. I, therefore, remained responsible for all orthoptic cases seen; our clinic turnover was around 10,000 orthoptic patients a year.

In 2008, the late Professor Saul Merin, an Israeli Medical Retina Specialist was then helping at SJEH. He was also on the Israeli Medical Committee and had been consulted by the Israeli Minister of Health who had suddenly realized that most of the Israeli orthoptists would soon retire, and they needed to create a course in orthoptics urgently. Professor Merin urged me to respond, so I told them about our course which was already running. Unfortunately, they rejected our news because they had decided to train optometrists to practice orthoptics in ophthalmic units in hospitals. The idea of mixing the two professions has to date caused professional unrest internationally! However, their course began in October 2010 and the two-year diploma created by TAU was accepted as the standard for orthoptic education in Israel.

I contacted the International Orthoptic Association, and they encouraged collaboration between our two courses to try to unify and standardize orthoptic education in the region. Persistent persuasion by Professor Merin and my contact with Dr Irene Anteby, Head Paediatric Ophthalmologist at Hadassah Hospital and co-organiser of the TAU course, resulted in three of the twenty-five TAU students coming to SJEH for their three-month internship in orthoptic practice: Ruti Weisrose, Vered Brucker and Ahuva Ravid-Saffir. It was very successful, and we were glad to hear that all three students qualified as orthoptists from TUA also.

Our students will look forward to receiving their certificates and will then formally apply for professional registration with the Ministry of Health. We wish them every success in the future.



SABAH'S STORY

Three years ago, 66-year-old Sabah lost her husband and now lives with her two sons and grandchildren in Jabalia Al-Balad in Gaza. Sabah's sons and four other daughters are all married and mean everything to her.

Sabah faced a lot of difficulties with her vision; "In addition to weak eyesight, I felt a sudden pain in my eyes, but the most severe pain I felt, was not being able to see my grandchildren's facial features." Due to the energy crisis, there are constant power cuts in Gaza, which made it very difficult for Sabah to move around the house at night – due to her poor vision, she had to do this purely by memory. In her own words, Sabah told us; "My children help me move around the house, however, my movement at night is very limited. My memory of the details of my house is my only way out of darkness, I move between rooms based on my memory, slight vision, and tactile sense."

Sabah was sure something was wrong with her sight as it was getting worse, and this prompted her to visit St John Eye Hospital, where she underwent all necessary tests and was diagnosed

with cataracts in both eyes. Our staff at our Gaza Hospital were very reassuring to Sabah that the cataract surgery and lens implants are very safe and the result after surgery would be wonderful.

"The presence of St. John Eye Hospital in Gaza is very important as visiting a private clinic would be a high cost that I can't afford. At St. John Eye Hospital, the cost is very reasonable, and the medical staff are equipped with a breadth of experience in treating eye diseases."

The cataract surgery was very successful, and Sabah is now able to recognise everyone around her very easily; she can also walk more comfortably round the house and moving around is no longer a burden. Sabah was so pleased and told us, "My life has changed; I didn't lose my sight!". Helping people like Sabah, is what our staff over in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza do every single day and we are so grateful for the generosity of our donors, who allow us to continue our work.



St John Eye Hospital-Jerusalem in Partnership with Al-Quds University Postgraduate Diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing 2022

The St John School of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group remains both the oldest and only provider of expert Ophthalmic Nursing Training in the Middle East. Since its establishment in 1998, over 160 Specialist Ophthalmic Nurses have graduated from the school. Training nurses is a vital part of St John Eye Hospital Group's mission to develop professional expertise. All graduates of our nursing programme contribute to eliminating blindness across the region and are committed to our mission of providing expert eye care to all patients regardless of ethnicity, age, sex, religion, or the ability to pay. Our 2022 cohort has successfully completed their first semester of our "Postgraduate Diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing 2022/2023", accredited by Al-Quds University in Jerusalem. They have gained advanced skills in ophthalmic nursing and became more independent in caring for patients in the outpatient clinic, inpatient wards, and operating theatres. As part of the second semester of the course, our students are currently undertaking more advanced ophthalmic training before they complete their ophthalmic nursing programme in early June 2023.

Here are some quotes from our students, reflecting their enjoyment of the course so far and ambitions for the future.

Mr. Omar Deif-Allah Qandeel: "The scholarship by St John Eye Hospital has fulfilled my professional ambitions to study higher education in ophthalmic nursing. My enthusiasm has enabled me to cope with the theoretical and clinical aspects of the programme. I successfully passed the first semester of the teaching program. Currently my clinical placement is in the operating theatre, I am demonstrating the role of the ophthalmic theatre nurse under the supervision of my mentor. The operating theatre is very collaborative, and I am finding myself part of the team."



Student Omar in the Operating Theatre

Ms. Georgina Khader Rizkalla: "Having a university degree in Ophthalmic Nursing strengthens my professional status and job opportunities as a leader in ophthalmic nursing. So far, I have become competent in providing certain nursing skills and can independently provide many nursing care aspects. I am very grateful for St John staff who are very supportive and made me very keen to complete the course."



Georgina demonstrating the use of Slit Lamp

Ms. Ala Ilian: "I find ophthalmic nursing very challenging but worth doing. I am happy that I have become an ophthalmic nurse student and provide eye care to those helpless patients who need my expertise. I am a person who values volunteering and therefore, I will absolutely do lots of volunteer work in the ophthalmic field to help my community regain sight and see the world better."



Student Ala proving patient education

Mr. Mohamad Ibrahim: "I think it was the best decision I have ever made since I really find St. John Eye Hospital an excellent place for professional growth. The future of ophthalmic nursing in Jerusalem and in Palestine is very wide and expanding, I am looking forward to working in an ophthalmic centre and applying the knowledge and skills I have gained. I will be proud to alleviate patients' eye complaints and improve their vision. I am doing well in the course and already have gained lots of information and skills. I am eager to be a nurse leader in ophthalmic nursing."



Mohamad learning to use the slit lamp.

Ms. Ayya Ismail: "Becoming an ophthalmic nurse has many values and will open new horizons for me as a female, the course not only enables professional growth but also it strengthens the status of women in society. This opportunity will allow me to be the first ophthalmic nurse in my village, and therefore I will do my best to raise eye health awareness in the area. It is amazing to see that a simple eye surgery can turn a blind person into a well-sighted and productive person, making a big change in quality of life for the patient. I like the hospital and staff who continually support me with the course. I would like to say that I very much appreciate the accommodation and the allowance provided by St John."



Student Aya training on Slit Lamp use.

Ms. Amani Thweib: "Currently, I find myself settling well into the course and achieving my learning objectives, also the course opens new professional work opportunities for me to develop in nursing. I now can provide ophthalmic nursing in all departments at the hospital. I always strive to contribute to help people to see the world better. Thank you very much to the hospital team who provide all means of support to students and strive to teach them."



Student Amani preparing the eye drops in OPD (Outpatient Department)

Ms. Reem Abdrabo: "I am proud that I passed the course entrance exams and have become an ophthalmic nursing student. My biggest ambition is to show the community the how advanced nurses can be and how nurses are vital to save the sight of people. Currently, I am enjoying my professional and social time at St John and would like to thank the hospital team who provide all kinds of support and help student nurses to cope with their new life at the hospital."



Student Reem in theatre

Mr. Hamid Maali: "I am interested in Ophthalmic Nursing and worked in an ophthalmic centre before I enrolled onto the ophthalmic nursing programme at St. John Eye Hospital. I understood the value of ophthalmic nursing when I first worked in the ophthalmic field, where I realized the severe shortage of ophthalmic nurses in the country. My main objective is to go back to my region and contribute to ophthalmic nursing care for the local community, where there is a high percentage of people who have diabetic retinopathy and cataracts. So far, I have passed all my theoretical and clinical assessments for the first semester and am currently working on the completion of the second semester."



Student Hamid in CSSD (Central Sterile Services Department)

Ophthalmic Nurse Assistant Course/ Gaza

Gaza has been under a stringent blockade since 2007, which makes it very difficult for Gazan students to travel to Jerusalem into to undertake the ophthalmic nursing diploma provided by St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem. To tackle this, we run a short course in Gaza, training registered nurses from Gaza to become Ophthalmic Nurse Assistants, who can provide evidence-based ophthalmic nursing care in hospitals and community settings. Building sustainable and qualified ophthalmic nursing teams absolutely impacts the elimination of avoidable blindness in Gaza, which is one of the most economically and socially devastating places in the world. The course comprises both theoretical and clinical components - it is a six-month course and more than 30 Ophthalmic Nurse Assistants have graduated since 2013.

Our 2022 Ophthalmic Nurse Assistant Course is funded by Love Must Act, a not-for-profit organization, based in the USA. The 2022 cohort of the Ophthalmic Nurse Assistant course began their training in August 2022 and students completed their course requirements in February 2023. All students successfully passed their theoretical and clinical assessments and therefore they were formally graduated. The course was delivered by our nurse Manager, Fadi Ejleh, and Head of School of Nursing, Nasrallah Khalilia.



Fadi Ejleh delivering a lecture to students



St John of Jerusalem
Eye Hospital Group

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025



STRATEGIC PLAN

In April 2023, St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group released its Strategic Plan for 2022-2025, which has been developed through the collaborative efforts of the SJEHG's Board of Trustees, the senior management team, and staff. The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide strategic, operational, and financial priorities to guide the St. John Eye Hospital Group over the next three years and will be reviews periodically within this time.

This Plan draws heavily on the contextual factors that influence SJEHG's service delivery and was strongly based on the community needs outlined by the Hospital Group's Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) survey conducted in 2018-2019. RAAB studies are conducted by the Hospital Group once every ten years and therefore, the available data from 2018-2019 remains both relevant and valid for the purpose of the SJEHG Strategic Plan for 2022-2025.



Our SJEHG Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 is a public document and can be downloaded from our website here: [Our 2023-2025 Strategic Plan - St John Eye Hospital](#)

If you would like to specifically request a hard copy, please contact: Info@stjohnseyehospital.org

MORE DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN THE SJEHG STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2022-2025, HOWEVER HERE IS A LIST OF OUR OVER-ARCHING AIMS:

Service: Provide eye care that is of the highest quality, accessible and patient centred.

People: Become the employer of choice in our community.

Finance: Ensure financially sustainable services.

Technology & Data: Integrate secure technology and data governance with all core aspects of the Group's clinical and administrative work.

Clinical Developments: Lead ophthalmic education, research, and innovation.

Good governance & partnership: Lead ophthalmic education, research, and innovation. Lead ophthalmic education, research, and innovation.

SNAPSHOT OF 2022

SNAPSHOT OF 2022

Jerusalem Hospital

We treated almost 54,600 patients in our East Jerusalem Hospital and performed over 3,300 major operations. 180 staff members including 115 medical, allied health professionals, and nurses.

Anabta Clinic

We treated almost 16,000 outpatients at our Anabta Clinic and performed 22 major operations. 16 staff members including 11 medical, allied health professionals, and nurses.

Gaza Hospital

We treated almost 39,000 outpatients and performed over 2,900 major operations. 45 staff members including 36 medical, allied health professionals, and nurses.

Mobile Services (Gaza)

Our outreach services reached over 5,000 patients via our Mobile Outreach Programme.

Muristan Clinic

We saw 1,200 patients in our Old City screening programme and Muristan Clinic.

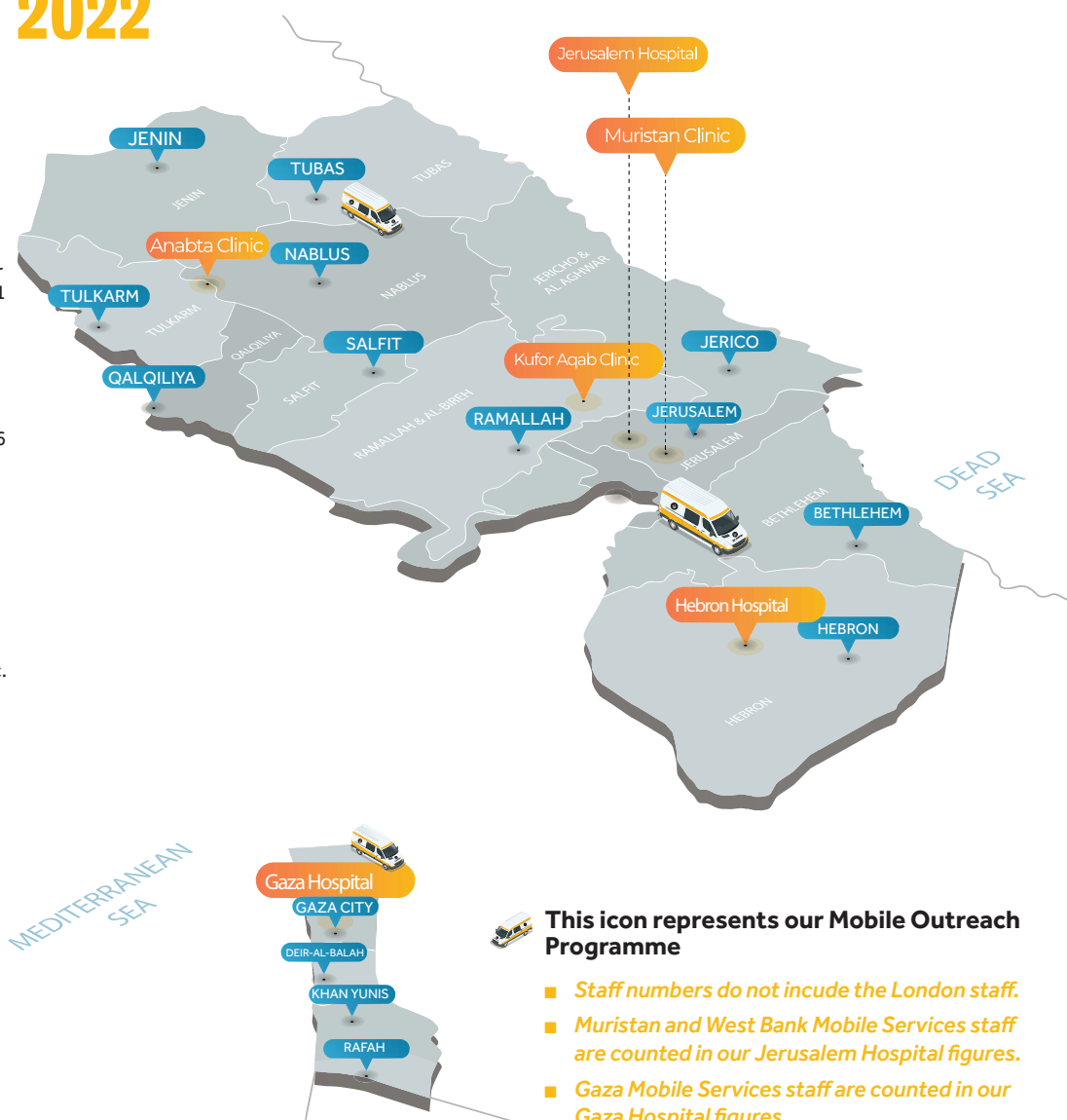
Hebron Hospital

Our Hebron Hospital saw over 14,000 patients and performed over 550 major operation. 19 staff members including 15 medical, allied health professionals, and nurses.

Mobile Outreach Programme

Our Mobile Outreach Programme and our new Kufor Aqab Jerusalem. Outreach Clinic screened almost 13,000 patients. Our outreach services reached over 5000 patients via our mobile outreach programme.

We reached almost 142,876 patients, performed over 6900 major surgeries, and employed 260 people across Palestine.



This icon represents our Mobile Outreach Programme

- Staff numbers do not include the London staff.
- Muristan and West Bank Mobile Services staff are counted in our Jerusalem Hospital figures.
- Gaza Mobile Services staff are counted in our Gaza Hospital figures.

A photograph of three people standing in front of a plaque. On the left is a man in a grey suit and tie. In the center is a man in a light-colored suit and tie. On the right is a woman in a black floral dress and a red necklace. The plaque behind them is dark with gold lettering.

THE PRIORY OF SCOTLAND AND THE ST JOHN EYE HOSPITAL

Article by Angus Loudon

The Priory of Scotland was founded in 1947, and its association with the Eye Hospital (or, as it was then known, the Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem) goes back to those very days, as it is noted in the Priory Report for that year that the sum of £272 15s 8d was raised and donated towards the work of the Hospital. That may seem a small sum to us now, but it is the equivalent of £13,600 then, and this at a time when the Priory was establishing itself in Scotland and requiring to raise funds to establish its own Foundation Hospital in Glasgow.

Donations to the work of the Hospital have flowed from Scotland to Jerusalem for the 75 years since, along with the desire and willingness to do so; in 1972, the Hospitaller (JH Calder Macleod) noted in his annual report that 'The first duty of members of the Priory of Scotland is to support Priory Headquarters and the work of the branches in Scotland, but it is hoped that all members will contribute something to the Ophthalmic Hospital and Research Fund in Jerusalem'. His plea was clearly heeded, as in 1974 we donated the equivalent of nearly £15,000. In fact, in every year since our foundation we have, through the good offices of some eleven Hospitallers and the continued generosity of our many members, managed to make substantial donations on an annual basis, often through fund-raising efforts at a local level in Scotland.

Despite steady donations from the Priory of Scotland for the first 50 years of its existence, the 21st century saw an uptick in collaboration between it and the Hospital, driven by three dedicated Hospitallers with a real passion for the Hospital and its work – the late John Calvert, Ian Wallace, and John Ferguson-Smith. Each made frequent visits to the Hospital to see the work it did and the effects of our contribution, to

learn how our assistance could be of even greater benefit. With the full backing of the incumbent Priors and Chapter, this resulted in more targeted support and in the past 15 years, with the annual contribution of St John Scotland hovering at around £100,000 per annum, we have funded such costs as the salary of the Medical Director; those of a consultant and junior anaesthetist; and, more recently, those of the mobile Outreach Clinic, while also contributing to the running costs of and additions to the excellent Hospital Library. Expansion of the Hospital outside Jerusalem in the second decade of this century saw St John Scotland pay for the substantial fitting-out costs of the new clinic in Hebron and, most recently, providing funding towards equipping the new clinic in Kufer Aqab. St John Scotland was also at the forefront of donating to the emergency fund that was set up in 2019 to assist with the running costs at a time of significantly depleted income caused by a range of factors beyond the Hospital's control.

Our link with the Hospital is not only confined to financial donations. The current Receiver General of St John Scotland, Michael Cook CStJ CA, was the Chief Executive of the Hospital 2000–2003, a

period which coincided with the Second Intifada, which saw significant violence in Israel in general, and Jerusalem in particular. His experiences and resulting knowledge of the Hospital are invaluable to our decision-making when it comes to grants and donations, he retains strong friendships to this day with the staff he worked with, and visits when he can.

The St John Eye Hospital is very much part of St John Scotland and is embedded in our DNA, almost being one of our own Areas. Our members take a deep interest in it and its work, and take great pride in our association with its world-class facilities and treatment, which are provided in never less than challenging circumstances. We are proud that our name is on the wall of the clinics in Hebron and Kufer Aqab, and that our logo is on an Outreach vehicle that travels round the West Bank.

The next step in our long association with the Hospital is a planned series of Electives, whereby medical trainees from Scotland will spend time at the Hospital to help develop their interest and skills in ophthalmology, and staff from the Hospital will have the opportunity to visit the Eye Pavilion in Edinburgh to observe 'best practice' and take it back to Jerusalem. This collaboration of professionals, funded by our Prior's Fund and supported by the Order Hospitaller and a consultant ophthalmologist in Edinburgh, will further strengthen the links we have with each other, all for the benefit both of patients and the next generation of ophthalmic surgeons.

Our Order's motto of Pro Utilitate Hominum is alive and well!



Picture 1 (from Left to Right) – Ian Wallace (Hospitaller), Mark Strudwick (Prior), and his wife Sue Strudwick at the Clinic in Hebron in 2016

Picture 2 (from Left to Right) – Millie Garrett-Cox, Sue Strudwick (Millie's grandmother), John Ferguson-Smith (Hospitaller) and Angus Loudon (CEO) at an Outreach clinic in the West Bank in 2022.

OBITUARIES

Norman Gareth Gooding

Norman Gareth Gooding was born on 14th August 1938 in Croydon, where he lived with his father and mother. During wartime, Harry Edgar Gooding, Norman's father was taken up to the Northwest as a sound engineer for the BBC. Norman and Rosa May, his mother, went back to Cornwall where she came from. Norman's parents got together again after the war, but later separated so his education was in Croydon and at a Grammar School in Fowey, where Norman returned many times for summer jobs and stays with his mother.

Norman was drafted and served in the Royal Air Force from August 1957 to September 1959, mostly in the UK, and became a Clerk Progress.

Norman then studied for three years to become a Qualified Teacher and taught mostly at a Secondary School in New Addington, just on the border of the London Borough of Croydon. He and a close colleague, Gordon Barker, who played the organ at Norman and Jean's wedding, did a five-year set of evening classes, and gained a University of London BScEcon. Norman became a Senior Teacher and also managed the entry of students as Head of Year 1. Not long after taking early retirement, Norman was asked to help in the Education Department of the Croydon Borough, working in Education Administration in Taberner House in Central Croydon, before retiring again happily.

Norman and his wife, Jean, met in late September 1968 when Jean was teaching an Evening Class for the Extra Mural Department of the University of London in Coombe Cliff. Norman, as a member of one of the teacher's unions, was running a Bar on the ground floor of the house, for local teachers as well as staff and students of the local Evening Classes. Jean and Norman met on the first evening of Jean's 24 evening sessions and married the next summer on 26th July 1969. Norman and Jean had a long and happy life together.

Sadly, Norman was taken ill after a fall on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral on 1st April 2022, he continued to have bouts of illnesses for the rest of the year, and on 28th December 2022, he passed away in Jean's company in Croydon University Hospital.

Norman had an extensive medal collection, with a particular interest in Medals for Women. Norman was passionate about the work of the Order of St John, especially the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital. Norman and Jean both relished the History of the Order and went on a magnificent three-week trip to experience the history of the Order and of the Hospital in Jerusalem.

Special thanks to Jean Gooding for this record of memories and support for St John Eye Hospital.



Mr Tony Morgan

Tony was born in Wales, attended Clifton College, then went to Caius College, Cambridge to do medicine. Following this he went to St Thomas's Hospital and said he thought was accepted because he was a good rugby player. He met his wife Sue there who trained as a Nightingale nurse. He joined the RAF to do his national service. After this he stayed in the RAF, was in Lincolnshire, and then Australia where he decided to specialise in Ophthalmology.

When he returned to England he was posted to RAF Halton. From there he was sent to St John Eye Hospital Jerusalem in 1963 to gain experience in Ophthalmology. The hospital was quite new at the time and he and his family had a flat there. He returned to England and continued ophthalmology in the RAF and had postings in Singapore and Cyprus. He went back to England and settled in Haddenham near Ely.

He was posted to Germany but in 1979 became the temporary Warden of St John's. He particularly noticed the beautiful gardens that had grown over the years. He loved St John's and was delighted to be made permanent Warden in 1983. Sue his wife worked in CSSD. His family lived in the Warden's house.

I remember Tony telling me he used to go to Rafa, Gaza to do cataracts on a Sunday morning as did Dr Tuck Tuck one of the senior Palestinian surgeons. Sunday is a day of work in Gaza. This was before there was a St John Eye Clinic in Gaza City and later a wonderful St John's Eye Hospital was built. Tony always enjoyed this time, having Nazar Bannyan as administrator and Pauline O' Donnell as matron.

He left St John's in 1989 and went home to practise ophthalmology there. He always enjoyed reading medical journals and history. He would return to the Hospital when help was needed, for short periods.

I first met him when I was working there as Chief Surgeon in the 90's. He was an excellent, caring doctor. He would often be one of the first doctors to arrive in the outpatient's clinic and would stay until the very end. We had a good time when he was there, many doctors and nurses were living on the compound, and we would get together after work sometimes playing tennis and socialising.

He will always be remembered in the Hospital by staff and many patients. He and his wife were very good friends of mine. Denise Magauran.



Mrs Susan Morgan

It was with great sadness that the staff of the St John Eye Hospital over the past 50 years received the news of the death of Sue Morgan. Sue first arrived at the hospital in the mid-sixties with her Ophthalmologist husband and three small children. Tony Morgan was seconded from the RAF for a year at the hospital and their eldest daughter, Mandy, recalls how she and her brother traveled daily to the Friends School in Ramallah, and how they sensed the air of war before the 1967 six-day war, looking out of the windows at the movements of Jordanian soldiers in East Jerusalem, which was very much a part of Jordan at the time.

Fast forward some twenty years and Sue found herself back in Jerusalem living in the lovely Warden's House and taking up the role of Warden's wife when her husband took up the post of Warden. Dinner parties for local and visiting hospital dignitaries, leading fundraising activities, and helping to promote the hospital was also part of her role.

As a trained nurse, Sue was even called upon to take charge of the Central Sterile Supply Department when we ran short of Sisters. As 'one of us' she joined the group of expat Sisters leading the Nursing Department as well as continuing her important role as the Warden's wife.

When the patients from Gaza found great difficulty getting to Jerusalem, it was decided to send a team to Gaza every Saturday to perform Cataract surgery on half a dozen patients weekly. The clinic was set up on the Egyptian border, in Rafa and the staff took part on a voluntary basis on their days off. Tony Morgan led the Surgeons and did most of the surgery himself. Sue came along to help us prepare the patients. There is now a new purpose-built Eye Hospital for St John in Gaza as the area remains cut off from the rest of the world.

After Sue and Tony left for a well deserved retirement, they stepped up once again in the Nineties filling in as locum Warden for six months and thereafter they volunteered for a month every year, with Tony working in the Outpatients and Outreach. Sue's role in supporting her husband was outstanding, and she continued back in the U.K. with regular fundraising lunches.

Sadly gone but definitely not forgotten.

Jacqueline E Jaidy. MBE. Dame of the Order of St John
Nursing Director - 1996 - 2009



Norman Gareth Gooding



Mr Tony Morgan

FUNDRAISING SPOTLIGHT

Bishop's Waltham Garden Fair

The 20th Bishop's Waltham Garden Fair got off to a flying start with visitors thronging into the grounds of Wintershill Hall ready to enjoy themselves. There were plenty of exciting stalls to tempt everyone, with those selling plants being particularly popular as people were keen to stock up their gardens in readiness for summer. Entertainment was provided in great style by Wickham Morris, with Cuff Billett's New Europa Jazz Band and Falcon High birds of prey flying displays also a great hit.

As well as providing first aid cover, St John Ambulance kindly gave resuscitation demonstrations and instruction, a most useful skill to have.

It was altogether a most successful day and all funds raised will go to St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital. St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital group would like to say a special thanks to Jenny Dixon, Joan Ferrer and everyone else involved in putting together such an excellent event.



Beetle Drive

Sue Farmer organised a raffle at the Rotherham Unit Beetle Drive to raise money for St John Eye Hospital Group. The group raised a fantastic £128.05 for the Eye Hospital! Thank you Sue for your efforts!

iYouth

On Tuesday 21st February, iYouth held its 2023 Meeting at St John's Gate, London. The iYouth is an international Youth Group which promotes and supports St John Eye Hospital Group. Their activities include regional meetings, fundraising activities, and visits to the Hospital and its clinics in Jerusalem, Gaza and The West Bank.

The evening was attended by a number of young professionals from various backgrounds who are interested in supporting the Eye Hospital. The meeting was addressed by Sir Andrew Cash KStJ, SJEHG Chair, and Mr. David Verity KStJ, Order Hospitaller. The guest speaker was Mr Jordan Moss who, having overcome serious illness, completed a sponsored walk in aid of St. John Eye Hospital.

Today we celebrate iYouth's 3rd Birthday – the iYouth was founded in Dublin on February 21st, 2020!



EVENTS



Service of Commemoration

On the 24th June 2023, we celebrated St John's Day in the annual service of Commemoration and Re-dedication held at St Paul's Cathedral London with many other St John's organisations. Pictured is our Hospitaller Mr David H Verity KStJ, MA (Oxon), MD (Lon), BM BCh, FRCOphth, and fellow trustee Mr Jamie Ingham Clark CStJ FCA holding the Eye Hospital banner. Over 1000 people were involved in the service and it celebrated all that the Order of St John does in England and the Islands.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Royal Parks Half Marathon

8th October

Entry fee: £35

Suggested Sponsorship: £300

Why not join us for one of the most scenic half marathons in London? The legendary Royal Parks Half Marathon takes participants on closed roads around four of the capital's Royal Parks – Hyde Park, Green Park, St James' Park and Kensington Gardens.

Sign up now to help us raise vital funds for our amazing charity!

[Run For Charity - Event Registration Page](#)

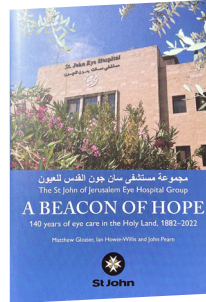


MERCHANDISE

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St John Eye Hospital Silk Tie
£25



'A Beacon of Hope: 140 years of eye care in the Holy Land, 1882-2022' Paperback
£36



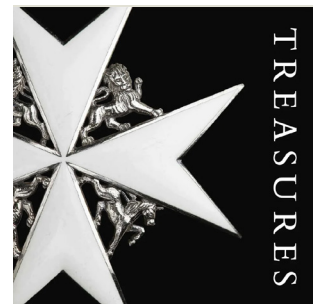
SJEHG Pen
£5



Swift Tree Cards (pack of 5, blank inside)
£3.50



Cream Tote Bag
£3.50



'Treasures' by Tom Foakes
£50



Unisex SJEH Tshirt (White) S/M/L available
£15



Unisex SJEH Tshirt (Gold) S/M/L available
£15



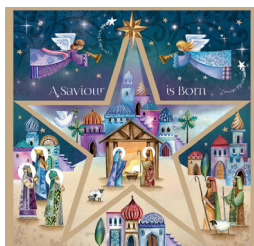
Lapel Pin badge
£5

CHRISTMAS CARDS

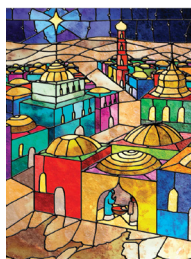
£5 FOR
PACKS
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If you would like to know the greeting inside each card, please check our website or contact the London Fundraising Office.



A Savior is Born



Stained Glass Nativity



Golden Kings



Festive Robins



We Three Kings
of Orient Are



We wish you a Merry
Christmas



Topiary Robin



Stained Glass Window



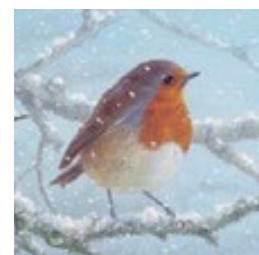
Anemones and Holly



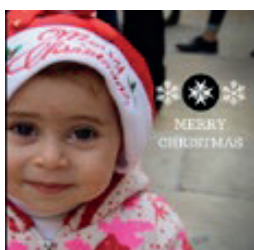
A Child is Born



Lamb of God



Robin



SJEHG Card 'Merry
Christmas'



Visiting the
New Born King



Santa's Helpers



The Adoration



Bethlehem Evening



Winter Village



SJEHG Card 'Season's
Greetings'

Item	Cost Per Unit	Number of	Total (£)
Christmas Cards			
Christmas Cards - A Saviour is Born	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Christmas Dove	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Golden Kings	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - We Three Kings of Orient Are	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - We wish you a Merry Christmas	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Topiary Robin	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Stained Glass Window	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Star over Bethlehem	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - A Child is Born	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Lamb of God	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Robin	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - SJEHG Card 'Merry Christmas'	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Visiting the New Born King	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Santa's Helpers	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - The Adoration	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Bethlehem Evening	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - Winter Village	£5 pack of 10		
Christmas Cards - SJEHG Card 'Season's Greetings'	£5 pack of 10		
SJEHG Branded Items			
SJEHG Silk Tie	£25		
'A Beacon of Hope: 140 years of eye care in the Holy Land: 1882-2022' Paperback	£36		
SJEHG Pen	£5		
Swift Tree Cards (pack of 5, blank inside)	£5		
Cream Tote Bag	£3.50		
'Treasures' by Tom Foakes	£50		
Unisex SJEH Tshirt (White) S/M/L available	£15		
Unisex SJEH Tshirt (Gold) S/M/L available	£15		
Lapel Pin Badge	£5		
		Total	

Please consider adding a small donation to your order to cover the costs of postage.

Please return to: St John Eye Hospital Group, London Office, 4 Charterhouse Mews, London EC1M 6BB

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☐ Please tick if you would like to receive information about Legacy or In Memory Giving

☐ Please tick and complete your details if you do not want to receive future issues of Jerusalem Scene

Thank You very much for your support

I will pay by Cheque/Card (delete as applicable)

Cheques to be made payable to 'St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group'

Mastercard ☐	Visa ☐	Switch/Maestro ☐	Valid From	Expiry
Card No.			Issue Number (Switch/Maestro only)	Date



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St John of Jerusalem
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2 Gift Aid

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate.

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3 Here is my donation of: £20 ☐ £80 ☐ £150 ☐ Or my preferred amount of £

I enclose my cheque/postal order payable to St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group
or please debit my Maestro/MasterCard/Visa (please delete as appropriate)

☐ Maestro only

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Expiry Date

Issue Number (Maestro only)

Signed

Date

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