



**The Ophthalmic Association of St John**  
*Partners in Expertise*



## **Christmas Report** **2019**

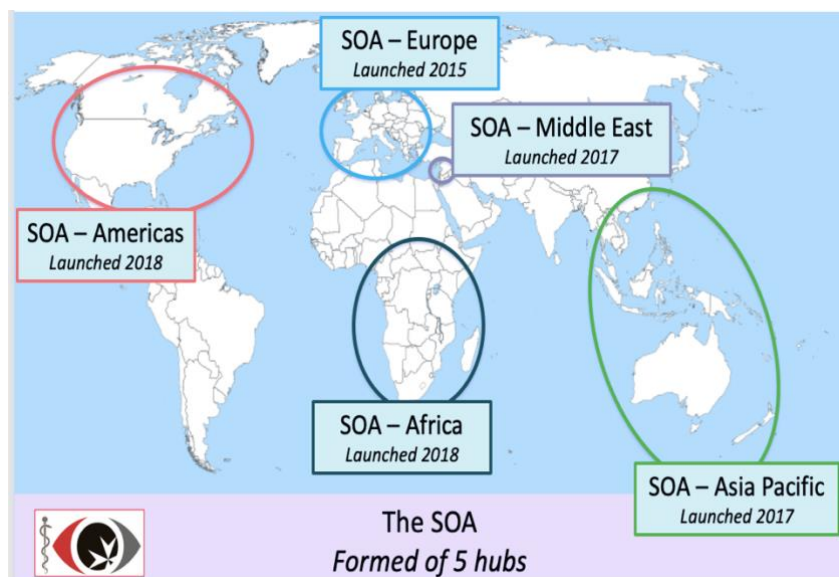
Welcome to our end-of-year Christmas report on the work of the St John Ophthalmic Association. We hope you find this news interesting, are enormously grateful to you All for your support.

### **The SOA 'Network'**

The SOA was established in 2015 with the dual purpose of supporting the postgraduate work of St John Eye Hospital Group (SJEHG) and raising St John's international ophthalmic profile.

Thanks to our donors, supporters and members, we have made great strides over the years. The SOA is now formed of 5 world-wide 'hubs': Middle East Asia Pacific, Americas, Africa, and Europe. In our first four years we have run 12 meetings across our Pories, and opened chapters and branches in Australia, Singapore, Africa, the Americas, Scotland, England, and Jerusalem.

Our structure and activities are described [HERE](#). Please click on any of the images for more information.



### **New Partnerships**



**Launch of the Swedish Branch of the European Chapter,  
with guests Dr Masri and Mr Hammouda from Jerusalem**

In 2018 a new professional partnership was formed with the Order of St John in Sweden. In May this year Dr Rajaá Masri and Mr Saddam Hamoudeh were hosted by the [Swedish Order at St Erik's Hospital](#). In April 2020 we look forward to welcoming colleagues from Stockholm to Jerusalem for a [Summit on paediatric ophthalmology](#), and the formal launch of SOA-Sweden. The Association is also hosting delegates from South Africa in Jerusalem in April, when we shall be running the first St John-wide optometry congress, led by SJEHG and the Priory of St John in South Africa.

## Sponsored Activities

The Association supports SJEHG through research (with 4 peer-reviewed publications to date), observerships and support for local meetings, medical symposia and congresses, and student visits.

In addition, where possible, local meetings on the work of St John are also held alongside national ophthalmic meetings across the various hubs.

A summary of these activities is given [HERE](#).



In 2018 the group sponsored a number of our Jerusalem doctors to attend the Hadassah centennial anniversary meeting, and also helped European medical students to visit Jerusalem.

With the help of our supporters, the SOA has sponsored the visit of [Dr Erekat](#), [Dr Batta](#) and [Dr Daraghmah](#) to Moorfields Eye Hospital, in addition to our Theatre manager Jamal Abu Hani. Without your generosity we could not have organised these visits.



Our first '[Hospital and History Summit](#)' attracted 55 medical professionals and supporters, and our [second Summit](#) this year, which included a visit to the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, was equally well supported, and included two medical students (their reports are given [HERE](#)).

## iYouth



We are proud to announce the new 'Young Professionals' group for SJEHG, called [iYouth](#). Their members include all students and professionals under the age of 35 years, and they will meet once a year under the guidance of our St John members in Ireland.

We wish this group much success in encouraging younger people from all disciplines to be more engaged with the Eye Hospital, and for taking on the vital leadership roles in the future in support of the Hospital Group and her staff.



## Recent Events

### **Neuro-Orbital and Skull Base Symposium**

In November the SOA launched its international [Masterclass series](#). The symposium was hosted at the Cavalry and Guards Club in London, and focussed on diseases which are co-managed by ophthalmologists, neurologists, skull base surgeons and interventional radiologists. More than 80 delegates and speakers from across the Priories of St John attended. The Faculty included renowned clinicians from Manchester, London, Harvard Medical School, and Russia, marking the first in a series of international courses run by St John.

The Masterclass was professionally recorded, forming the basis for future on-line educational material.



**Delegates at the first St John Masterclass in London**

### **Welcome to SOA-Scotland**

In September SOA-Scotland was launched. The event was led by the Scottish Hospitaller, and supported by the Prior of Scotland the Chair of the Hospital, and our CEO. It formed part of a larger Scottish Symposium, conducted in the Hospital Chapel, and itself part of the 2019 SOA Hospital and History Summit. The SOA is proud to have the Scottish branch formally part of the Association.



**Launch event, SOA-Scotland Jerusalem 2019**

### **Thank you, SOA-Americas**

Our sincere thanks to our friends and colleagues in SOA-Americas for their leadership and drive over the years. Following their [launch in 2018](#) at the AAO in Chicago, this group held its [second annual meeting this October in San Francisco at the St. Regis Hotel](#). Once again, the meeting was well attended, and culminated with an agreement in principle for specific events and actions to support the postgraduate work of SJEHG. Thank you again, SOA-Americas, for your leadership.



**SOA-Americas**

**Leading the way at the AAO, San Francisco, October 2019**

### **Thank you, SOA-Africa**

In November the [second annual meeting of SOA-Africa](#) was held in Magaliesberg, South Africa, following the annual meeting of the South African Oculoplastics Society (SASOPS). The SOA is grateful to SASOPS for their hospitality, and to our African branch of the SOA for leading on our Membership base. We look forward to our first SOA international business meeting at the World Ophthalmology Congress in Cape Town next June.



**SOA-Africa**

**Our second meeting, Magaliesberg, November 2019**

## Future Events

2020

### January

#### Jerusalem Symposium: Oculoplastics and Retina

On the 13<sup>th</sup> January a half-day symposium is being held at the Eye Hospital in Jerusalem. With local delegates and an international Faculty from London and elsewhere, this event marks the first in our series of 4-monthly postgraduate meetings in Jerusalem. Details are given [HERE](#).

### March

#### [3<sup>rd</sup> SOA-Europe meeting and dinner](#)

This event is held at St John's Gate in Clerkenwell, on Tuesday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2020, and is hosted by our Patron. We meet for reception drinks in the Gate's magnificent Museum, and continue with a series of presentations on our medical observerships, the work of the Eye Hospital Group, our exchanges with Sweden, and the recent Flight2Hope. We shall then enjoy a formal dinner in the Chapter Hall, built in 1504 and being at the very heart of the Order of St John.



### April

#### SOA-Sweden

The [launch of SOA-Sweden](#), a paediatric ophthalmology course, and our first optometry symposium takes place in Jerusalem next year.

### May

The [Royal College of Ophthalmologists](#) holds its annual congress in Birmingham, UK, and the SOA is pleased to be hosting a session dedicated to SJEHG, and to sponsor a colleague from St John.

### June

The [World Ophthalmology Congress \(WOC\)](#) holds its biannual congress in Cape Town, and the SOA is hosting a symposium on 'Evolving Humanitarian Programs', to include St John's work in Gaza and Soweto, with invited presentations on programs in Eastern Timor, Myanmar, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

2021

### January



Launch of the Singaporean Branch  
of the Asia Pacific Chapter

In January 2021 SOA-Asia Pacific is organising the second in our [Masterclass series](#), with a two-day congress on the ocular surface and its protection.

In addition to a program of lectures by renowned leaders in the field, the congress will also include corneal and cadaveric workshops.

The Masterclass is jointly hosted by SOA-Singapore, the Singapore National Eye Centre, and the Priory of St John in Singapore, and all profits will go towards our training program for our staff in St John. Details will be available in March 2020.



## Planning for the Future

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### **New Branches**

In 2020 and 2021 the SOA continues its development with new branches in Canada, Kenya, Sweden, and Hong Kong. In doing so, it provides St John with a modern professional network which spans the Pories and the European Alliance. Collaborating closely with our Priors and Hospitallers, as well as our regional partners in the Middle East, the network will provide rapid and effective communications on all matters relating to our academic and postgraduate work.

### **Subscription and Membership base**

Such a networked professional group is better able to support the needs of SJEHG, provide more focussed training opportunities, and guide research. To do this we shall be working closely with the Pories, and the South African Priory in particular, to build a comprehensive on-line membership base across the network. The membership is growing to include iYouth, optometrists, nurses, allied healthcare professionals and doctors. With modest, tiered subscription rates the Association will be able to cover its administrative costs, and plan its events with greater precision.

## Thanks and acknowledgments

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The work of the Association is only possible due to the investment and support of a [great many organisations and individuals](#). In particular, we thank our Lord Prior, our Patron, the Chair of SJEHG and the Board, our CEO and *all* his staff, the Pories of the Order who have supported this work from the outset, and our Priory Hospitallers. We are grateful to Moorfields Eye Hospital, and colleagues in St Erik's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and Israel, and to our website developer [Medisites](#), for their commitment to our work.

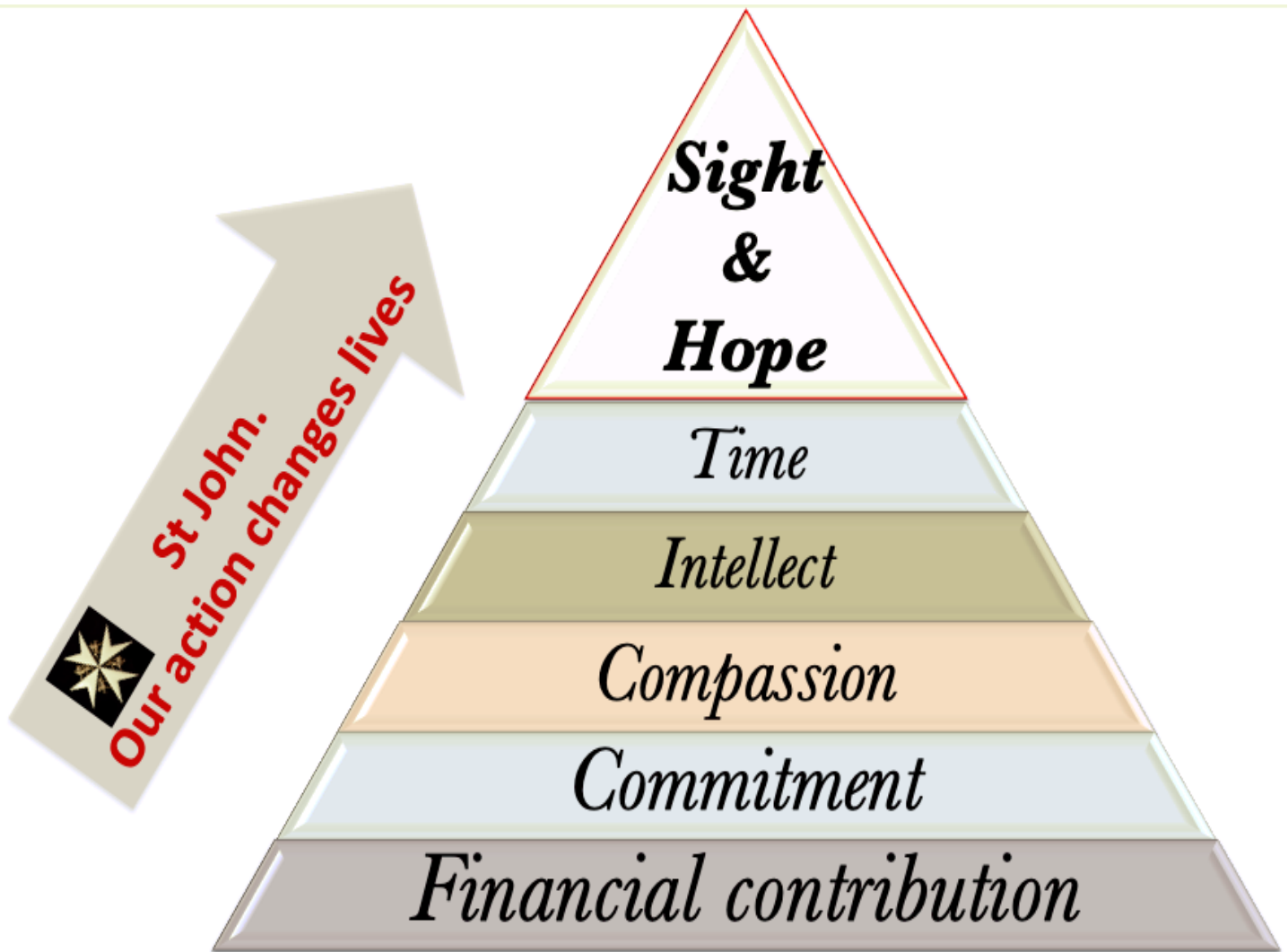
Finally, our sincere thanks to our nurses, doctors, allied healthcare professionals and academics across the Pories who freely give of their time, wisdom, and expertise to run the Association. This investment in the postgraduate future of St John Eye Hospital Group is thanks to their hard work, and your support.

Happy Christmas.



**David Verity, MD MA FRCOphth**  
Hospitaller, Order of St John  
Chair, SOA.

*For, and on behalf of, the SOA.*  
[www.SOA.global](http://www.SOA.global)



## A Pyramid of Hope