



Museum of  
THE ORDER OF  
**ST JOHN**

Cadet Oral History Project 2022

A guide to the Cadet Voices archive  
collection

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## Project Overview

In 2021, the Museum of the Order of St John was successful in gaining funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and the St John Fellowship to undertake an intergenerational oral history project to explore, record, and celebrate the contributions made by young people to the work of St John Ambulance from 1922 to the present day, as part of the Museum's celebration of the Cadet centenary in 2022. The project, designed in collaboration with current and former Cadets, involved training and supporting a group of Cadets from across England in capturing the experiences of ex-Cadets from the 1940s to the present day. The resulting oral histories would then be shared publicly in an online exhibition and accessioned into the Museum's Archive to ensure their future accessibility and long-term preservation.

The project aimed to benefit current Cadets, by connecting them with the heritage of their organisation and the stories and experiences of their predecessors, developing their skills through training, and increasing the wellbeing of participants by encouraging cross-generational interactions and a shared sense of achievement. The project aimed to benefit St John Ambulance heritage, by preserving history that is at risk of being forgotten, enabling the Museum to better reflect the lives and experiences of young St John Ambulance volunteers, and delivering the Museum's first national heritage project. The project aimed to benefit the Museum by raising awareness of its collections, building new staff expertise, acquiring equipment and materials that can be used for this purpose and for future oral history projects, and by acquiring important archival records to document the St John Ambulance story.

The Museum undertook 35 oral history interviews with ex-Cadets as part of the project, carried out by 17 Cadets, with support from the Museum team. The interviewees shared their experiences from across eight decades, and the Archive has acquired the full-length oral history interviews, transcripts of the full-length interviews, and photographs and photocopied records that the interviewees donated to the Archive to accompany their stories.

The following pages contain summaries for each of the oral history interviews captured as part of the Cadet Oral History Project and key information about the interviewees. Researchers and visitors may listen to the full-length oral history interviews and read the transcripts at the Museum's Archive through pre-booked appointments.

## Oral history interview with Jean Davey

Title	Oral history interview with Jean Davey, 2022
Interview date	13/05/2022
Interview location	Interviewee's home
Interview length	01:26:03
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/017

### Interview summary

Jean (JD) about the training and fun of bandaging practice. She talks about receiving her Grand Prior's Award, reflecting on the usefulness of the Hygiene and Home Nursing courses. JD talks about her experiences of Cadet camp. She recollects her experience of duties and responding to real life first aid situations. JD talks about her life in St John Ambulance as an adult and introducing family to the St John Cadets.

**Starting year:** 1946

**Starting Division/Unit:** Preston Nursing Cadet Division, West Sussex

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Jean's oral history interview are photographs of Jean as a uniformed Cadet attending events in Brighton.

## Oral history interview with Celia Streeter

Title	Oral history interview with Celia Streeter, 2022
Interview date	07/06/2022
Interview location	Interviewee's home
Interview length	01:26:03
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/018

### Interview summary

Celia (CS) started as a Junior before becoming a Cadet with the Winchester Nursing Cadet Division. CS talks about competitions she participated in and how the local Areas and Divisions were divided up for the purposes of the competition. CS talks about courses and exams undertaken for her Grand Prior's Award, and the challenging nature of the learning process. CS recalls in detail her Cadet uniform and its changes over time. CS recalls attending the opening of Chichester Theatre, attended by the Queen Mother, and parading for Princess Margaret. CS talks about the different roles she undertook as a youth member and later as an adult member of St John Ambulance, and goes on to talk about the awards she received. CS talks about meeting her husband through the organisation.

**Starting year:** 1953

**Starting Division/Unit:** Winchester Nursing Cadet Division, Hampshire

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Celia's oral history interview are photographs of Celia as a Cadet and at her wedding with a Cadet guard of honour.

## Oral history interview with Dennis Parker

Title	Oral history interview with Dennis Parker, 2022
Interview date	10/06/2022
Interview location	Interviewee's home
Interview length	01:31:06
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/020

### Interview summary

Dennis (DP) talks about enjoying drill and his previous experience as an Army Cadet. He talks about attending local and national duties, treating D-Day casualties, and working in hospitals. DP describes traumatic incidents and injuries, and provision of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. DP talks about his life with St John as an adult Ambulance member in training Cadets for competitions and taking them to Camp. DP talks about running Cadet and adult Divisions, and the different roles that he undertook within the organisation. He goes on to talk about fundraising for the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem. DP talks about the awards that he received, and his familial connection to St John outside of the organisation.

**Starting year:** 1941

**Starting Division/Unit:** Grays Brigade Cadet Division, Essex

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Dennis's oral history interview are photographs of Dennis as a Cadet and adult member of St John Ambulance.

## Oral history interview with Michael Lambell

Title	Oral history interview with Michael Lambell, 2022
Interview date	11/06/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance National Headquarters, London
Interview length	00:55:56
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/021

### Interview summary

Michael (ML) describes his wanting to be 'in uniform' influencing his joining the Cadets and later adult life. ML talks about his Cadet uniform, its impracticalities and changes over time. He talks about attending duties, particularly at a first aid hut next to the beach. He reflects on being the County Cadet of the Year and receiving various awards. ML talks about his time as an adult member of St John, running a Cadet Unit, and undertaking a range of roles across the organisation. ML talks about a particular building fire which had trapped 35 people that he attended. ML discusses the awards and honours he received. ML talks about his familial connection through introducing his daughter to the St John Cadets.

**Starting year:** 1958

**Starting Division/Unit:** Torquay Cadet Division, Devon

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Michael's oral history interview are photocopied records, including certificates and photographs of Michael as a uniformed Cadet and adult member of St John Ambulance.

## Oral history interview with Suzanne Squirrell

Title	Oral history interview with Suzanne Squirrell, 2022
Interview date	11/06/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance National Headquarters, London
Interview length	01:40:22
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/022

### Interview summary

Suzanne (SS) planned to go into nursing and talks about the skills taught to the Nursing Cadets in preparation for working on hospital wards. SS talks about her dislike of her first Cadet uniform and later changes to the uniform. SS describes first aid courses, competitions, and talks about Cadet camp in England and overseas. SS talks about important celebratory events she attended, and meeting members of the Royal Family. SS discusses her adult life with St John and working with its young people. SS talks about meeting her husband through the organisation, and her long-standing connection to St John.

**Starting year:** 1984

**Starting Division/Unit:** Ilford Nursing Cadet Division, London



## Oral history interview with Gill Tanner

Title	Oral history interview with Gill Tanner, 2022
Interview date	12/06/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Brighton
Interview length	00:38:01
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/023

### Interview summary

Gill (GT) talks about being encouraged to join the St John Cadets as she was interested in nursing. GT talks about subjects she completed towards her Grand Prior's Award. She talks about attending duties and putting her first aid training into practice. GT describes going through three different styles of Cadet uniform. GT talks about taking on responsibilities for a St John Badger Sett, and goes on to talk about the different roles that she has undertaken within the organisation. GT describes attending memorable events and celebrations. GT talks about the awards and honours that she has received for her work with St John, and her continuing work with the organisation.

**Starting year:** 1987

**Starting Division/Unit:** Willingdon Cadet Division, East Sussex

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Gill's oral history interview are photographs of Gill as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Ryan Russell

Title	Oral history interview with Ryan Russell, 2022
Interview date	14/06/2022
Interview location	Museum of the Order of St John, London
Interview length	01:00:31
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/024

### Interview summary

Ryan (RR) talks about his first Cadet Unit meeting and goes on to talk about the Cadet activities and working towards his Grand Prior's Award. RR describes the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Unit, and the changes in how Cadet Unit meetings were held. RR talks about working through his leadership course and the different roles he held as a Cadet. RR describes attending special events and taking part in a District Cadet of the Year competition. RR talks about attending residential training courses. RR is very passionate about St John's empowerment of young people. RR talks about the pride and sense of belonging he feels in wearing his uniform. He talks about his continuing work with St John as an adult member.

**Starting year:** 2018

**Starting Division/Unit:** Dunstable Cadet Division, Bedfordshire

## Oral history interview with Brian Porter

Title	Oral history interview with Brian Porter, 2022
Interview date	14/06/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance National Headquarters, London
Interview length	00:46:38
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/025

### Interview summary

Brian (BP) talks about first noticing St John Ambulance at the funeral of Winston Churchill. BP talks about his early Cadet memories and the courses he undertook towards the Grand Prior's Award. He describes his Cadet uniform and its impracticalities. He talks about putting first aid training into practice and undertaking duties. BP talks about the skills he learned and how they were useful when caring for his wife when she developed cancer. BP describes attending memorable events and celebrations. He talks about his connections with the international St John family and visits to connected organisations overseas. BP talks about his time as an adult member of St John Ambulance and his career in health and safety outside the organisation.

**Starting year:** 1967

**Starting Division/Unit:** C13 East Ham, London District

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Brian's oral history interview are photographs of Brian as a uniformed Cadet and adult member, and photocopied records, including, programmes for events, and newspaper cuttings.

## Oral history interview with Janet Basso

Title	Oral history interview with Janet Basso, 2022
Interview date	16/06/2022
Interview location	Museum of the Order of St John, London
Interview length	01:25:23
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/027

### Interview summary

Janet (JB) joined St John as one of the last Juniors, then as a Cadet. JB talks about her Cadet uniform and its changes over time. JB describes weekly games, and the variety of courses she undertook. She talks about Cadet camp and opportunities to meet other Cadets. JB talks about taking part in competitions, and duties, going on to describe an award she received for her commitment to her duties. JB talks about putting her first aid training into practice and attending real life first aid situations. JB talks about attending big memorable events and celebrations in London.

**Starting year:** 1985

**Starting Division/Unit:** Malden and Coombe Nursing Cadets, London

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Janet's oral history interview are photographs of Janet as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Matthew Thomas

Title	Oral history interview with Matthew Thomas, 2022
Interview date	17/06/2022
Interview location	Museum of the Order of St John, London
Interview length	00:54:01
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/028

### Interview summary

Matthew (MT) talks about working towards his Grand Prior's Award and undertaking a range of courses for the Award before joining the Royal Navy. MT recalls his Division had a band who went on parade. MT talks about going on Cadet camp and gaining responsibility for camp fires and tents. He goes on to recall attending an international Cadet camp. MT talks about duties and putting first aid training into practice. MT describes being the first Welsh Cadet to receive the Grand Prior's Award. MT talks about the range of roles and responsibilities he held within the organisation as a Cadet, and also later in life as an adult member. MT describes being a St John Volunteer Vaccinator during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Starting year:** 1968

**Starting Division/Unit:** Shaftesbury Division in Newport, Wales

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Matthew's oral history interview are photocopied records and photographs of Matthew as a Cadet.

## Oral history interview with James McNulty-Ackroyd

Title	Oral history interview with James McNulty-Ackroyd, 2022
Interview date	17/06/2022
Interview location	Museum of the Order of St John, London
Interview length	01:14:48
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/029

### Interview summary

James (JMNA) joined St John Ambulance as a Badger and then as Cadet. JMNA talks about joining the Cadets because he wanted a career in the ambulance service. JMNA describes his Unit's connections to other Divisions in Devon. He talks about attending Cadet camp. JMNA talks about his Cadet uniform and the feeling of equality that came from girls and boys wearing the same uniform. He talks about putting his first aid training into practice and undertaking duties. JMNA describes attending lots of courses and gaining responsibilities as a Cadet. He goes on to talk about his life with St John as an adult member and the roles he has taken on during that time. JMNA talks about joining St John's Cycle Response Unit. He talks about the awards and honours that he has received from St John.

**Starting year:** 2000

**Starting Division/Unit:** Braunton Division, Devon

## Oral history interview with Tracy Kane

Title	Oral history interview with Tracy Kane, 2022
Interview date	22/06/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Stevenage
Interview length	00:24:39
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/030

### Interview summary

Tracy (TK) talks about joining a St John Cadet Division where her mother was the Divisional Officer and led the Cadet Division. TK talks about her Cadet uniform and its impracticalities. She talks about attending duties and putting first aid training into practice as a Cadet and later as an adult member. TK talks about attending memorable events and celebrations. She describes challenges in attaining her Grand Prior's Award. She describes leading her own Badger Sett aged 16. TK talks about her time with St John Ambulance as an adult member when her intended career did not come to fruition. She goes on to talk about the awards and honours she has received from St John. TK talks about her familial love of St John and the family members who are also part of the organisation.

**Starting year:** 1981

**Starting Division/Unit:** Hitchin Nursing Cadets, Hertfordshire

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Tracy's oral history interview are photographs of Tracy as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Kobie Biggs

Title	Oral history interview with Kobie Biggs, 2022
Interview date	26/06/2022
Interview location	Museum of the Order of St John, London
Interview length	00:20:07
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/031

### Interview summary

Kobie (KB) joined the St John Ambulance Cadets with her sister. She talks about running the Cadet meetings whilst still being a Cadet, and the game and activities they did. KB talks about the focus solely being on Cadet training and goes on to describe some of the training she received, and completing her Grand Prior's Award. KB talks about going to Cadet camp in England and to an international camp in Germany. KB describes her Cadet uniform and the changes to it over time. She goes on to describe feelings of pride when wearing the uniform. KB talks about attending duties but not having to give practical first aid. KB talks about her continued connection and work with St John Ambulance as an adult alongside her career in childcare.

**Starting year:** 1898

**Starting Division/Unit:** Gravesend Cadet Division, Kent

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Kobie's oral history interview is a photograph of Kobie as a uniformed Cadet.



## Oral history interview with Keith Schnaar

Title	Oral history interview with Keith Schnaar, 2022
Interview date	26/06/2022
Interview location	Museum of the Order of St John, London
Interview length	01:06:13
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/032

### Interview summary

Keith (KS) joined the St John Ambulance Cadets in 1952. KS talks about the Divisional meetings where Cadets learned first aid and played sport. He goes on to recall particular practical training that he enjoyed, and civil defence training following the Cold War. KS talks about attending memorable national events. KS describes his Cadet uniform and the feelings that he got from wearing it. He talks about the differences in the organisation of Divisions when he was a Cadet. KS describes attending regular local duties and giving practical first aid. KS talks about staying in St John Ambulance as an adult and going on to lead Cadet groups. He goes on to talk about the different roles and responsibilities that he has held within the organisation. KS talks about teaching the St John Duke of Edinburgh scheme, founding the St John Fellowship, and belonging to the St John Historical Society and the Hospitallers' Club.

**Starting year:** 1952

**Starting Division/Unit:** Hither Green Division, London

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Keith's oral history interview are photographs of Keith as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Andrew Hayward

Title	Oral history interview with Andrew Hayward, 2022
Interview date	08/07/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Norwich
Interview length	01:12:05
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/033

### Interview summary

Andrew (AH) joined St John Ambulance as a Junior 1968, then later as a Cadet. AH talks about his Cadet meetings and the local ambulance service in Devon which was run at the time by St John. He goes on to talk about going on duty with the ambulances. AH talks about participating in first aid competitions and compares the competition scenarios to real-life situations that he attended to. AH describes his local seaside first aid hut and the injuries that were attended to there. He talks about working towards his Grand Prior's Award and undertaking training for cliff rescue situations. AH talks about his Cadet uniform and how it changed. AH describes representing England at a Cadet camp in New Zealand to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and goes on to talk about the more realistic scenarios in the New Zealanders' first aid competitions.

**Starting year:** 1968

**Starting Division/Unit:** Exmouth Cadet Division, Devon

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Andrew's oral history interview are photocopied records and photographs of Andrew as a Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Enid Patient

Title	Oral history interview with Enid Patient, 2022
Interview date	05/08/2022
Interview location	Interviewee's home
Interview length	01:38:23
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/034

### Interview summary

Enid (EP) joined the St John Cadets in 1948. She describes the first time putting her first aid training into practice. EP talks about not being allowed to attend duties as a Cadet but goes on to describe participating in first aid competitions as an individual and in a group. EP recalls going to a rally in Hyde Park to parade and receive her Grand Prior's Award from Lady Louis Mountbatten. She describes helping out with work on the ward at the local hospital. EP talks about her career in childcare and life in St John as an adult member. She describes taking Nursing Cadets to a camp with the Boys' Brigade.

**Starting year:** 1948

**Starting Division/Unit:** CN630 Walthamstow Nursing Cadets Division, London

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Enid's oral history interview are photocopied records and photographs of Enid as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Judith Morris

Title	Oral history interview with Judith Morris, 2022
Interview date	09/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Birmingham
Interview length	01:42:40
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/035

### Interview summary

Judith (JM) joined the St John Cadets by training as a 'casualty' for bandaging practice. JM talks about her uniform, the particular way it had to be put on, and the pride she felt wearing it. JM describes events and opportunities for duties in her local area. JM talks about a flu epidemic in 1969 which led to Cadets being allowed to work at some hospitals due to a shortage of nurses. JM describes the Medical Comforts Depot in Halesowen which was run by her Division, and how the public could loan and make use of the medical equipment. JM talks about her love of participating in first aid competitions and recalls meeting Princess Anne at one of them. JM talks about her time as an adult in St John Ambulance, and describes the different roles and responsibilities she has held within the organisation. She goes on to talk about receiving her MBE from Queen Elizabeth II.

**Starting year:** 1959

**Starting Division/Unit:** Halesowen Nursing Cadet Division, Dudley

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Judith's oral history interview is a collection of photocopied Cadet records and photographs of Judith as a uniformed Nursing Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Marjorie Riley

Title	Oral history interview with Marjorie Riley, 2022
Interview date	09/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Ossett
Interview length	00:52:20
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/036

### Interview summary

Marjorie (MR) joined the St John Ambulance Cadets after meeting other Cadets at a New Year's Eve party. She describes going straight into first aid training. MR talks about her Cadet uniform and that all of the Division's Cadet uniforms were made by their Superintendent. MR describes taking part in first aid competitions. She goes on to describe the 1953 Cadet coronation camp in London that she attended, where lots of first aid competitions took place. MJ talks about achieving her Grand Prior's Award and the subjects that she completed in the process. MJ talks about the lasting impact of the Second World War and the challenges she faced as a young girl. She describes performing first aid on a neighbour. MJ recalls meeting Princess Anne and Princess Margaret during Cadet events. MJ talks about staying on in St John as an adult, and the variety of roles that she took on.

**Starting year:** 1946

**Starting Division/Unit:** Dewsbury Nursing Cadet Division, West Yorkshire

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Marjorie's oral history interview are photocopied Cadet records and photographs of Marjorie's uniformed Cadet Division.

## Oral history interview with Michael Jackson

Title	Oral history interview with INSERT NAME HERE, 2022
Interview date	10/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Ossett
Interview length	00:47:30
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/037

### Interview summary

Michael (MJ) joined the St John Ambulance to follow in his father's footsteps. He talks about his different start as a Cadet in joining a Nursing Cadet Division before joining a new Division for Ambulance Cadets. He goes on to talk about achieving his Grand Prior's Award, and the different subjects he completed along the way. MJ talks about his Cadet uniform in detail and the challenges in keeping it clean. MJ describes going out on duties with the adult members and goes on to describe the range of local duties that he attended. He describes the occasion when he put his first aid training into practice at school and received a commendation. MJ talks about attending first aid competitions and regularly being successful. MJ explains that Divisions within his local area were integrated and trained together; he goes on to describe the lasting friendships he made. MJ talks about staying with St John Ambulance as an adult, and his rise through the various ranks and roles available to him. MJ talks about becoming a member of the St John Fellowship after retiring.

**Starting year:** 1967

**Starting Division/Unit:** Dewsbury Ambulance Cadet Division, West Yorkshire

## Oral history interview with Freda Pickard

Title	Oral history interview with Freda Pickard, 2022
Interview date	10/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Ossett
Interview length	00:36:12
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/038

### Interview summary

Freda (FP) joined the St John Cadets during the Second World War after being encouraged to join an organisation. FP describes her Cadet uniform and goes on to explain the method of acquiring it using rationing coupons. FP talks about her training and the female Superintendent of her Division. FP talks about duties the Cadets were allowed to do to assist with passing communications. FP describes attending and participating in first aid competitions, and enjoying the challenges and opportunities to socialise and learn from other Cadets. FP talks about gaining her Grand Prior's Award and describes the different courses that she completed in the process. FP describes her time with St John as an adult member, and the work that she did in inspecting Divisions.

**Starting year:** 1942

**Starting Division/Unit:** Dewsbury Nursing Cadet Division, West Yorkshire

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Freda's oral history interview are photographs of Freda as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Shirley Cox

Title	Oral history interview with Shirley Cox, 2022
Interview date	10/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Swindon
Interview length	01:00:33
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/039

### Interview summary

Shirley (SC) was introduced to St John Ambulance by her father, and she recounts the strength and numbers of her Division. SC talks about her Cadet uniform, and the challenges it brought when working during bad weather. SC describes the work that Nursing Cadets performed at a local hospital in caring for elderly patients, and how her uniform suited the work. She goes on to describe the first time she put her first aid training into practice in dealing with a collision between a lorry and a pedestrian. SC talks about participating in first aid competitions, and working towards her Grand Prior's Award. SC talks about attending lots of memorable duties at big events in London. SC describes her life after being a Cadet, and goes on to describe her roles in leading various Divisions as an adult member of St John Ambulance. SC talks about her long service with the organisations, and her investitures with the Order of St John. SC talks about her involvement in the organisation's vaccination programme during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Starting year:** 1953

**Starting Division/Unit:** Stratton St Margaret Nursing Cadet Division, Wiltshire

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Shirley's oral history interview are photocopied souvenir records, newspaper cuttings, and photographs of Shirley as a uniformed Cadet, and at her wedding.



## Oral history interview with Michael McHardy

Title	Oral history interview with Michael McHardy, 2022
Interview date	11/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Derby
Interview length	00:36:01
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/040

### Interview summary

Michael (MMH) describes the many kindnesses he received from his Officers who understood his family's financial constraints, which enabled him to attend a range of events and Cadet camps. MMH describes the first time he put his first aid training into practice and the reward of being treated as an adult. He also describes attending first aid competitions, and real-life competition scenarios involving the local fire brigade. MMH was part of the Isle of Sheppey Band and describes a challenging situation during a competition against other organisational bands. MMH talks about his career and life after Cadets. He goes on to talk about re-joining St John Ambulance as an adult, and the lack of welcome which led to him focussing on recruitment for the Unit. MMH describes his fondness for St John and the impact that the organisation has had on his life, and the skills it has given him.

**Starting year:** 1985

**Starting Division/Unit:** Isle of Sheppey Ambulance Cadet Division, Kent

## Oral history interview with Dr James Burton

Title	Oral history interview with Dr James Burton, 2022
Interview date	12/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Sheffield
Interview length	01:04:15
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/041

### Interview summary

James (JB) attended Cadets in a school hall and describes the regimented Cadet meetings and thorough training. JB talks about going out on local duties with the adult members of the Division, with particular reference to attending a Remembrance Day parade. JB describes his Cadet uniform and the challenges it brought in staying dry and warm in adverse weather. JB talks about working towards his Grand Prior's Award and the subjects he passed in the process. He talks about the friendships he made as a Cadet, and later on as an adult member of the organisation, and how the friendships were helpful in starting his career in insurance outside of St John. JB describes a change of career to move into medicine, and the process he took to get there. He goes on to describe the physiology learning that he gained and took to his Division to share with his fellow Ambulance Division members. JB talks about the official roles he held within St John, and the awards and investitures that he received for his service and work.

**Starting year:** 1950

**Starting Division/Unit:** C450 Chingford Ambulance Cadet Division, London

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying James's oral history interview are photographs of James as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Chlöe Hunter-Rea

Title	Oral history interview with Chlöe Hunter-Rea, 2022
Interview date	12/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Bristol
Interview length	01:30:01
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/042

### Interview summary

Chlöe (CHR) joined St John as a Badger in 2005, a Cadet in 2011, and talks about the excitement of reaching the age to transition into Cadets. CHR describes her Cadet Unit meetings and the activities and training the Cadets took part in. She talks about the range of talks by visiting healthcare professionals which helped to shape the Cadet experience. CHR describes how her passion for youth and first aid led to her contacting MPs in the Legislative Assembly to petition for mandatory first aid training in schools. CHR describes her Cadet uniforms, its changes and the pride she felt wearing it. She describes taking part in competitions in first aid and for the Cadet of the Year. She also describes attending residential training for Cadet leadership. CHR talks about the positive friendships she has gained through St John. She talks about the influence her time as a Cadet had in her career in healthcare. CHR stayed in St John as an adult, and describes leading a Cadet Unit, taking on other leadership roles within a Unit, and being part of the First Aid Society at Southampton University.

**Starting year:** 2011

**Starting Division/Unit:** Dundonald Cadet Unit, County Down, Northern Ireland

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Chlöe's oral history interview is a colour photograph of Chlöe as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Maria Marsden

Title	Oral history interview with Maria Marsden, 2022
Interview date	13/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Birmingham
Interview length	01:08:12
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/043

### Interview summary

Maria (MM) recalls a vibrant youth Division, and that the adult Division was originally a local steelworks Division. MM describes her first Cadet meeting and coming to enjoy the subjects she worked on. She describes the building that the Cadets met in, and its other community uses. MM talks about her Cadet uniform and its impracticalities, but the positivity she felt when wearing it. MM describes putting first aid training into practice and looking after a gentleman who was having a stroke. She also describes first aid competitions. MM describes Cadet camps in Braunston and finding ways to communicate with the Ambulance Cadets. MM talks about meeting the Duchess of Gloucester and Princess Anne. She talks about attending The Great Party in Hyde Park in 1987 for the St John Ambulance centenary and escorting the Duke of Edinburgh around the event. MM describes the challenges of being a Cadet and learning to speak out. She goes on to talk about the positives of her time and making lifelong friends. MM stayed in St John as an adult and talks about the various leadership roles she undertook, and honours and awards she received.

**Starting year:** 1981

**Starting Division/Unit:** Irlam and Cadishead Nursing Cadet Division, Greater Manchester

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Maria's oral history interview are photographs of Maria as a uniformed Cadet, commemorative items, publications, and certificates.

## Oral history interview with Craig Wood

Title	Oral history interview with Craig Wood, 2022
Interview date	13/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Manchester
Interview length	00:53:47
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/044

### Interview summary

Craig (CW) recalls finding out about St John Ambulance by accident. He recalls his Cadet training and courses as part of his Grand Prior's Award. He describes a special training event at Manchester Airport, which involved a real plane set on fire. CW describes his uniform and white haversack. CW talks about attending residential training courses and playing tricks on the adults and goes on to talk about leading residential courses as an adult and encouraging the Cadets to do some mischief. CW recalls the centenary celebrations for St John Ambulance and the activities in Hyde Park. CW talks about his strong and happy memories with St John. He describes about staying in the organisation as an adult and meeting his future wife. CW talks about setting up the Covid-19 vaccination centre in Manchester, and became a Volunteer Vaccination lead. He goes on to talk about the other leadership roles he has taken on within the organisation, and the honours and awards he has received.

**Starting year:** 1982

**Starting Division/Unit:** Whitefield Quadrilateral Division, Greater Manchester

## Oral history interview with Elizabeth Srogi

Title	Oral history interview with Elizabeth Srogi, 2022
Interview date	15/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Durham
Interview length	01:03:02
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/045

### Interview summary

Liz (LS) joined St John as a Junior in the Murton Division when she was eight. She describes wanting to emulate her father and recalls her early days with bandaging and resuscitation training. LS talks about the Division's meeting place and the uniform the Cadets wore. LS describes attending memorable events, meeting other Divisions, and meeting Princess Anne at Stockton racecourse. LS describes her biggest regret as not getting her Grand Prior's Award. LS talks about opportunities to perform first aid demonstrations and presentations, and using the resuscitation dummies when they first became available. She describes having an extended stay in hospital during her childhood which resulted in her wearing a caliper and goes on to describe and taking on further leadership roles.

**Starting year:** 1959

**Starting Division/Unit:** Murton Colliery Combined Cadet Division, County Durham

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Liz's oral history interview is a photograph of Liz and another Nursing Cadet in their uniform at the Murton village fair in 1963.

## Oral history interview with Lauren McMaster

Title	Oral history interview with Lauren McMaster, 2022
Interview date	16/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Newcastle
Interview length	00:24:34
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/046

### Interview summary

Lauren (LMM) joined St John Ambulance as a Junior Cadet in a new Unit. She describes the atmosphere and first few days of learning first aid basics. She recalls team building evenings with games, parties, and exploring ambulance equipment. LMM describes her first Cadet uniform and enjoying the identity it gave her. LMM talks about undertaking duties, dealing with injuries, and putting her training into practice. She describes an event at the Stadium of Light and her responsibility for completing casualty documentation. LMM talks about attending St John's Day and meeting Princess Anne. She talks about obtaining her Grand Prior's Award. LMM describes her confidence challenges and completing a Leadership course to boost it. LMM talks about the friendships with St John Cadets. She talks about staying with the organisation as an adult and becoming a Badger Youth Leader.

**Starting year:** 2010

**Starting Division/Unit:** Wallsend Unit, North East Tyne

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Lauren's oral history interview are three photographs of Lauren as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Marion Sharrock

Title	Oral history interview with Marion Sharrock, 2022
Interview date	18/06/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance Headquarters, Southport
Interview length	01:00:22
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/047

### Interview summary

Marion (MS) talks about her father being an inspiration. She describes the building that her Cadet group met in and its unique feature of a ballroom. MS recalls Cadet social events taking place in the ballroom. MS describes her Cadet uniform and feeling really proud when wearing it. She describes having to provide her own bag to put her first aid kit in. MS talks about the duties she did as a Cadet. She recalls that the Cadet life was not all first aid, and that Cadets were often responsible for looking after lost children. MS talks about participating in first aid and nursing competitions as a Cadet and also later on as an adult. She describes attending camp and the strict rules about separation of the genders, and piped water from a nearby farm. MS recalls working towards her Grand Prior's Award. She describes attending memorable events and meeting the Duke of Edinburgh and Princess Anne. MS talks about joining the adult Nursing Division and taking on leadership roles with responsibility, and the influence that St John had on her choice of career.

**Starting year:** 1954

**Starting Division/Unit:** Southport Nursing Cadet Division, Merseyside

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Marion's oral history interview are two photographs of Marion as a uniformed Cadet, and one photograph of Marion as an adult member.



## Oral history interview with Nicholas Evanson

Title	Oral history interview with Nicholas Evanson, 2022
Interview date	18/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Exeter
Interview length	01:30:17
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/048

### Interview summary

Nicholas (NE) describes receiving training in basic bandaging and using wooden splints. He recalls his Division building was also a full-time ambulance station, and that the Division provided a full-time evening service. NE describes his Cadet uniform and the pride he felt wearing it. He goes on to reflect that the modern green uniform looks more professional. NE talks about attending duties in Torquay. He talks about attending a conference in Devon, sleeping outside in an ambulance, and playing with first aid equipment. NE describes attending a camp for people with disabilities and acquiring skills in providing care and support. NE talks about attending the St John Ambulance centenary party in Hyde Park in 1987 and seeing royalty for the first time. He describes a particularly memorable event in Australia covering the Sydney Olympics. Nicholas stayed with St John in an adult Division and talks about the leadership roles he went on to have and receiving a Service Award.

**Starting year:** 1983

**Starting Division/Unit:** Torquay Ambulance Cadet Division, Devon

## Oral history interview with Chloe Hobson

Title	Oral history interview with Chloe Hobson, 2022
Interview date	19/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance Headquarters, Preston
Interview length	00:51:56
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/049

### Interview summary

Chloe (CH) originally joined a waiting list for the Badgers but came of age to join the Cadets before becoming a Badger. She recalls her first days grouped with older teenage girls and meeting in a church room. CH describes her Unit meetings. She describes her Cadet uniform and having to wear her own cardigan because it was too big. CH talks about having her own full first aid kit and Cadet manual because she was so involved in her Unit. She describes taking part in Cadet competitions, the scenarios, inspections, and winning a competition. CH describes attending residential courses in drug education awareness, leadership, and first aid. CH talks about her Unit winning Cadet Unit of the Year. She goes on to talk about winning Young First Aider of the Year and meeting Princess Anne at the reception at Buckingham Palace. CH describes the process of regionalisation, where the structure of the organisation changed, and how it affected the socialising opportunities open to Cadets. She talks about her time after being a Cadet, being a Youth Support Worker for the NHS Cadet programme, and how her Cadet experiences gave her confidence for her career in nursing.

**Starting year:** 2007

**Starting Division/Unit:** Heywood Cadets, Greater Manchester

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Chloe's oral history interview is a collection of eight photographs of Chloe as a uniformed Cadet on duty and at events.

## Oral history interview with Kevin Pacey-Bartlett

Title	Oral history interview with Kevin Pacey-Bartlett, 2022
Interview date	24/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Kettering
Interview length	00:38:58
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/050

### Interview summary

Kevin (KPB) had been a St John Badger and progressed to becoming a Cadet. He describes being interested in Cadets because his grandfather had been a medic during the War. He recalls feeling overwhelmed in his first days as he got used to a new group of people. KPB describes the building which the Cadets met in and the rumours of tunnels linking it to the nearby Peterborough Cathedral. He describes his Cadet uniform and the very particular way in which he had to wear his beret. KPB describes a monthly uniform inspection with a financial incentive for the Cadets to participate and describes feeling proud when wearing his uniform and volunteering for St John. KPB recalls minimal communication between the Cadets outside the Divisional meetings. He talks about the first time he put his first aid training into practice and taking full control of the situation and goes on to describe other opportunities while on duties at the East of England Show. KPB talks about obtaining his Grand Prior's Award and meeting Princess Anne at Buckingham Palace. He describes being Cadet of the Year for Peterborough. KPB stayed in St John as an adult and talks about opening his own Cadet Division in Bretton, and the further responsibilities he took on for his Division. After a break from the organisation, Kevin describes his latest role, and how a re-structuring of the organisation led to the creation of that role.

**Starting year:** 1989

**Starting Division/Unit:** Peterborough HQ Ambulance Cadet Division, Cambridgeshire

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Kevin's oral history interview are three photographs of Kevin as a uniformed Cadet.

## Oral history interview with Stephen Fox

Title	Oral history interview with Stephen Fox, 2022
Interview date	16/08/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance, Newcastle
Interview length	01:25:35
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/051

### Interview summary

Stephen (SF) joined a new Combined Cadet Division. He describes the hut that the Cadets met in, and the layout of the building, and how the content of the weekly meetings changed once the Cadet Division had been formed. He provides a detailed description of his Cadet uniform and the white haversack that Cadets carried which could make the boys a target for teasing from non-Cadets. SF recalls putting his first aid training into practice on a number of occasions, describing in particular a situation of looking after a neighbour who had broken her ankle. He also describes the documentation process that had to be done to record the patients that were attended to. SF talks about taking part in first aid competitions in teams and pairs, and how the competition would work. He recounts an inspection of a Cadet rally attended by Princess Margaret. He later goes on to describe a sail training cruise that he took part in through St John, run by the Sail Training Association. SF describes the process of obtaining the different subjects for the Grand Prior's Award and how they were taught. He describes the different kinds of relationships that were formed at Cadets. SF talks about an event for young adults in St John called The International Training Convention for Young People, where he met his future wife. He goes on to talk about leading his own Cadet Division, and taking on more senior roles.

**Starting year:** 1969

**Starting Division/Unit:** Felling Combined Cadet Division, Gateshead

## Oral history interview with Amie Hampsheir-Gill

Title	Oral history interview with Amie Hampsheir-Gill, 2022
Interview date	05/11/2022
Interview location	St John Ambulance Headquarters, Swindon
Interview length	01:11:18
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/052

### Interview summary

Amie (AHG) describes her initial training for the Membership Award. She describes a typical Unit meeting and training for the Grand Prior's Award and recalls lots of opportunities for additional socialising through adventuring. AHG describes changes in her Cadet uniform, as she joined when the uniform was changing. She describes the enjoyment of having a uniform bag which she could hide snacks in and being taught to take care of her uniform. AHG talks about the first aid equipment she would encounter and kit that Cadets would keep in their bags. She also describes being taught to use a new automated external defibrillator. AHG was selected to represent England in the International First Aid Championships in Hong Kong in 2016, and talks about the event and experiences that she had there. She goes on later to talk about running her own treatment centre at the New Year's Day Parade at the age of fifteen. AHG recalls attending residential training courses she attended. AHG met Princess Anne on three occasions, and describes the situation that led to their regular meetings, and being the Honour Guard for Archbishop Desmond Tutu. AHG talks about a number of situations where she had to put her first aid training into practice and the emotions that she had to deal with when witnessing a fatal cardiac arrest. She goes on to describe that support was on offer, and the different kinds of support that were available to her during and after these kinds of situations. After being a Cadet, Amie stayed with St John in a voluntary and paid capacity, and talks about these roles and leading her own Cadet Unit.

**Starting year:** 2009

**Starting Division/Unit:** Uppminster and Hornchurch Cadet Unit, London

## Oral history interview with Alan Sharkey

Title	Oral history interview with Alan Sharkey, 2022
Interview date	03/12/2022
Interview location	St John's Gate, London
Interview length	00:29:37
Interview reference	ARC2023/011/053

### Interview summary

Alan (AS) talks about the unusual way in which he became a St John Cadet, and describes some of the varied duties that he took part in. He describes attending a road accident where an injured cyclist looked horrified to see a young boy attending the scene to provide first aid. AS talks about the hut in which his Cadet Division met, and the format of the Cadet meetings. He describes his Cadet uniform and first aid kit, and the lack of warm clothing in cold weather. AS participated in first aid competitions and describes a competition scenario he took part in. AS stayed with St John as an adult alongside a career in the civil service and talks about his time with the organisation as an adult, and the awards and honours that he has received.

**Starting year:** 1961

**Starting Division/Unit:** Branksome Heath Ambulance Cadet Division, Dorset

**Accompanying records:** Accompanying Alan's oral history interview is a collection of photographs of Alan as a uniformed Boy Scout and a uniformed adult member of St John Ambulance, and photocopies of some of Alan's first aid certificates.

## Accessing the Cadet Voices archive collection

The oral history interviews, transcripts, and accompanying material can be accessed online through a dedicated website, or in person at the Museum by booking a research appointment.

### The Cadet Voices website

One of the outcomes of the Project is the creation of a website, 'Cadet Voices' to showcase the oral history project. The website features extracts and accompany transcripts taken from the participants' oral histories grouped into the themes of joining, training, uniform, events, competitions, delivering first aid, camp, and impact, with an additional theme to showcase the 'behind the scenes' of the project and hear from the Cadet interviewers. The website also includes a timeline following the history of the Cadets from their inception in 1922 to 2022.

The website has been designed with easy access and accessibility in mind and can be accessed through the URL link here: <https://sjacadetvoices.org.uk/>

### In-person research appointments

The full-length oral history interviews, full-length transcripts and accompanying material donated by some of the interviewees can be accessed through in-person research appointments at the Museum at the address below:

Museum of the Order of St John  
St John's Gate  
St John's Lane  
Clerkenwell  
London  
EC1M 4DA

Research appointments can be booked Monday-Friday between 10:00-16:30 excluding Bank Holidays. Appointments must be booked in advance with a minimum of two weeks' notice and subject to the availability of Museum staff to supervise the visit.

Research appointments can be booked over the phone by calling the Museum on 020 7324 4005, or by e-mailing [museum@sja.org.uk](mailto:museum@sja.org.uk).