

■ OPINION

The songs of contagious energy that helped power the early Army

■ HISTORY ALIVE

Discover the remarkable at The Salvation Army Museum

■ SALVATION STORY

'The Salvos gave me the best gift ever at Christmas'

■ BIG PICTURE

A Christian take on holiday season movie blockbusters

others

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A time to celebrate our freedom.

WORDS SCOTT SIMPSON

A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, WHEN I WAS working on the then Australia Eastern Territory's *Pipeline* magazine, we featured a story about a young man named Mat. It was an incredible story of transformation.

Mat's life had been one of guns, extortion, violence, prison, drug-taking and drug-running. Then, in early 2014, he booked into a Salvation Army Recovery Services centre, handed over his life to Jesus Christ, and graduated to go into the world and make a difference for good.

We kept in touch with Mat after we ran the article, marvelling in his progress as a young Christian. His story appeared multiple times in secular media and he was given many public speaking invitations, each time unashamedly testifying to the remarkable transforming work of Christ in his life. And yet all the while there lurked in the background, unresolved issues from his previous life of crime.

In late 2015, Mat made a brave decision to confront his past head-on. Knowing that there were outstanding warrants for his arrest in Queensland, he flew from Sydney to Brisbane and gave himself up to police. After spending the night in custody, Mat, supported by two Salvation Army chaplains, fronted court to have his case heard. He was told to expect a conviction and a hefty fine.

A barrister, who was also a Christian, happened to be at the courthouse at the time. After hearing Mat's story, he offered to represent him pro bono. Remarkably, after considering the evidence, the profound transformation in Mat's life, the fact he had flown to Brisbane from Sydney, voluntarily

surrendered to police and had already spent a night in custody, the magistrate dismissed all charges.

Minutes after leaving the courthouse, Mat posted on Facebook, "Praise God, I am a free man!" It was one short sentence yet so multilayered. Mat had not only been able to finally break the shackles of his criminal past but had also experienced the freedom that comes from stepping out in trust and obedience to God. A heavy weight had lifted. Mat had handed his burden over to God who then worked another miracle in his life. Today, Mat is still regularly asked to share his story, both in Christian and secular settings.

So why am I recounting this story for you now? Well, Christmas is a time when we, too, can also celebrate being set free. It's a time when we celebrate the moment God, in his Son, Jesus Christ, came to live among us. A baby born in a lowly manger in the little village of Bethlehem. It was the moment when, as the Christian songwriter Ben Cantelon penned, "love came down and rescued me", bringing freedom from the power of sin.

It was for people just like Mat – for people like you and me – that God, in the person of his Son, Jesus, entered into our world. So amid all the busyness and excitement of the festive season, take the time to stop and in deep wonder and gratitude, exclaim, "Praise God, I am free!"

Scott Simpson is the
Assistant Editor-in-Chief.



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Others culture writer Mark Hadley offers a Christian perspective on the summer holiday blockbuster movie releases.



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VISION STATEMENT

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight, alongside others, to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

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"The Army must again live up to its call to be a mission-focused Army!"

t Brian Peddle

"Brilliant! Love the good news from around Australia."

f Peter Hobbs

"Awesome. God is doing a new thing in the hearts of people. Keep transforming lives in Jesus' Name." #livelovefight

o Belinda Spicer



Christmas story is the ultimate rescue mission.

Jesus' light paves way for the lost

WORDS JANINE DONALDSON

"THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD, AND CHRIST JESUS IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN BRING US TO GOD. JESUS WAS TRULY HUMAN, AND HE GAVE HIMSELF TO RESCUE ALL OF US" (1 Timothy 2:5 CEV).

While walking along the street recently, I overheard a lady speaking to a dog, which was bundled up and held under her arm. "I didn't even know I needed rescuing, but you rescued me," she said to her canine friend. Heartfelt and full of meaning, that sentence spoke to me, for it was a reminder that I, too, have been rescued, for I, too, needed to be rescued. I was spiritually lost; I was separated from God. In fact, I had lost things I didn't even know I had lost.

I don't like being lost or even just losing things. Having lived in a number of different countries, there have been times when I have been horribly lost while trying to find new places. And it wasn't just that I was lost, I was lost and frightened, upset and distraught. I was scared, desperate to find my way to a venue or home.

You value something a lot more when you have lost it. Scripture certainly points this out. The parables speak of the shepherd searching for his lost sheep (Luke 15:1-7), the woman searching for her lost coin (Luke 15:8-10), or the father running out to greet his lost son (Luke 15:11-31). What I love about these stories is that they all end with a wonderful party. It's like Christmas, because as John 3:16 reminds us, "God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost but have eternal life" (NCV).

Like the shepherd in the story of the lost coin, Jesus comes to rescue us, his people. We can't rescue ourselves, we need a saviour. When we know Jesus, we recover what we have lost, we find our way; his love gives us so much reason for joy and celebration.

God's gift is one of salvation. His rescue mission is to recover us, to give to us that which we didn't know

we needed or had lost. Jesus offers restoration in our lives. He doesn't come to point out our failures, he comes because he loves us and desires to bring us back to him; to give us peace, joy, new life and a promise of eternity with him. As we unwrap gifts this year, let's make sure we unwrap the gift of Jesus, the greatest gift of all.

Christian songwriter Michael W. Smith has penned these words:

*A child is born tonight in Bethlehem
His mother holds him close and sings a sweet lullaby
All the world lay sleeping unaware that God himself has come in the night*

*The shepherds tremble as the angels sing
And in their song the voice of God speaks peace to the world
A miracle has happened, God has come, and God has spoken
But the miracle has only just begun*

*And the God who spoke is speaking still
And the God who came still comes
And the miracle that happened still happens in the heart that will believe
And receive the miracle of Christmas*

*So, come to Bethlehem again and see
The one who's come to rescue us, our Saviour and King
Bring your past, the joy, the sorrow, all your hope to find tomorrow
And hear the words again, fear not and know that God is near
Believe the miracle of Christmas
Will you believe? •*

Commissioners Janine and Robert Donaldson are the territorial leaders of The Salvation Army Australia Territory.



Aussie officers around the world – Solomon Islands.

In Global Focus this year, *Others* is profiling the work of Australian officers and personnel serving around the world. This month, we take a look at the Solomon Islands, where Majors Robert and Vanessa Evans are serving as District Officers, based in the capital, Honiara. Robert shares some experiences of their first two years in this appointment.

Jeremiah 33:3 says: “Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” A little over two years ago, Vanessa and I called out to God in response to an international service opportunity that we thought was leading us to an appointment in Indonesia. What we didn’t know at the time was that God had other plans. As we sat at Territorial Headquarters, having just been asked to consider serving in the Solomon Islands, we could never have imagined the amazing journey ahead.

The past two years have simply been extraordinary. We have had the incredible privilege of leading a passionate group of local Salvationists in expanding the reach and impact of The Salvation Army in the Solomon Islands. In this time, two new churches have been planted, 12 invitations received from rural villages to expand our mission into the provinces, six Neighbourhood Fellowship groups established across Honiara, 59 senior soldiers and 48 junior soldiers enrolled



SOLOMON ISLANDS

throughout the district, six envoys commissioned, a coconut oil plant constructed, a Salvation Army Emergency Services team recruited and trained with two national deployments this year, two Learning Space programs set up offering literacy and English classes, and a brass band learners program introduced in partnership with the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Brass Band.

Among all this activity, The Salvation Army International Headquarters officially granted ‘District’ status to Solomon Islands Ministries in the Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands Territory, and we also hosted our first District Congress and Father and Son Weekend this year.

Serving and leading in a context of prolific growth is both exhilarating and challenging. We feel like we are surfing a massive Holy Spirit-driven wave, while learning how to surf as we ride that wave. On one hand we feel that God has been preparing us for this appointment throughout our entire officership, but on the other hand we are navigating

so many new cultural and leadership experiences that it almost feels like our first appointment.

The Solomon Islands has a rhythm of life and deeply entrenched cultural values that couldn’t be more different to what is familiar and natural to us. This reality creates a perpetual environment of cultural tension that stretches us on a daily basis. Even the simple things like shopping and driving in Honiara confront us with the lack of options that contribute significantly to the vulnerability of this country. This becomes even more confrontational when travelling beyond Honiara into the provinces, to visit our remote churches and to follow up new mission opportunities.

Our closest church outside of Honiara is a five-hour voyage on the crowded deck of a ship. Our furthest church can take anywhere from 24 to 38 hours to reach, depending on sea conditions and the volume of passengers and cargo on board.

Our churches in the provinces present us with the simplicity and beauty of village life. Between the sago palm-leaf roof panels and dusty, stony floors, seated on rough-cut hardwood benches, we’ve experienced a richness of worship unlike anything we have known in our modern, comfortable corps buildings in Australia. The simple sound of an acoustic guitar accompanying the melodic tones of Solomon Islander voices is truly a heavenly experience.

The worship is a natural extension of lives completely and utterly dependent upon God as Creator in a subsistence culture where survival is more closely connected to God’s creation than ours. Quite simply, in these remote villages if you don’t grow it, catch it or gather it, you don’t eat! In this context, there is a symbiotic relationship between God, community and environment that forms an organic atmosphere of worship that flows into and out of every area of village life.

As a family, serving in the Solomon

HISTORY

Work began in the Solomon Islands, out of the then-Papua New Guinea Territory, in 2010. An ‘Opening Fire’ weekend was held in November 2011 with territorial leaders from Papua New Guinea (Commissioner Andrew Kalai), Australia Eastern (Commissioner James Condon) and Australia Southern (Commissioners Raymond and Aylene Finger) participating in the celebrations. The work was officially recognised by The Salvation Army International Headquarters on 1 February 2011, with the Solomon Islands becoming the 123rd country in which The Salvation Army has an official presence.

Islands has come at a personal cost. Vanessa and I left our children in Melbourne right after they finished high school. Vanessa lost her father to heart failure six months before we left Australia and I lost my father to cancer a year after we arrived in the Solomon Islands.

Both our families and our children feel our absence deeply. Yet, we know that our children share our mission heart and support us unconditionally, making them genuine partners in mission. In this space, God constantly reminds us that “we must be about our Father’s business” and affirms that he has our children firmly in his hands.

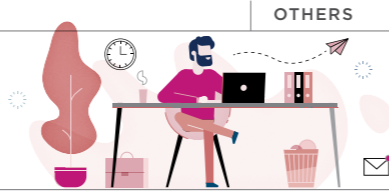
With a renewed work permit and residency visa approved in October, we look forward to another two years of God-glorifying mission and ministry in the Solomon Islands.●



Majors Robert and Vanessa Evans (either side of the flag) with corps/congregation leaders of The Salvation Army in the Solomon Islands.

Viewpoint.

Been thinking? We bring you a selection of opinion, critical thought and topical writing to get you engaging with the world around you. To read more go to: others.org.au/viewpoint



'What can we do?'

The answer is a game-changer

WORDS DANIELLE STRICKLAND

A LITTLE WHILE AGO, I SPENT A FEW days in Rwanda. It was incredibly challenging. Pretty much everyone knows Rwanda because of the terrible thing that happened there 25 years ago. More than 800,000 people were slaughtered in less than 40 days. In total, 1.2 million people perished in three months. It was the Rwandan genocide, and it's horrific to ponder even still.

That's not what was challenging me, though. I had read about the genocide and how it came to be. To simplify it, think about what would happen if you mixed poverty, fear, discrimination, colonisation, violence, abuse of power, global apathy, and deep-seated racial disunity and prejudice, over many decades. You'd have a recipe for the unthinkable. The overflow of all these factors is extreme violence, hatred and a massacre that decimated a people and a country.

I know, I know, it's Christmas and I'm talking about a genocide. Oh wait, I keep forgetting those are more related than we think. I forget how divorced the Hallmark glow of a happy Christmas is from the reality Jesus faced: unwelcome, global apathy, violence and fear, indifference and prejudice, disunity and poverty. It was a bloody entry for Jesus in a violent and cruel world. Can you picture all the children killed to try and stop him? Darkness trying its best to extinguish the light of the world.

To be in Palestine during Jesus' early childhood must have felt like the darkness won. That's how some leaders I met in Rwanda told me they felt post-genocide. The country was decimated, the leaders of all political parties were either dead, gone or guilty. And the only question they had to ask after they had 'cleaned up' and assembled a gaggle of young politicians to rebuild the country, was this: "What can we do?"

Now, it's important how you ask that question because it's related to how you will answer it. If you shrug your shoulders in an apathetic, "This is too hard!" and ask, "What can we do?", it will lead to more apathy, indifference, and a 'get you off the hook but change nothing' kind of reality. But if you ask it authentically, like you really want to get to the reality of what you can do right now to change things; to live, to make a future, to move forward – well, that's a dangerous question. And the latter is how they asked it: "What can we do?"

It's the same thing the Trinity might have asked pondering the ultimate condition of humanity without the sacred flame of Divine intervention and presence. "What can we do?"

When we get to that question, honestly and authentically and even vulnerably, it offers us so many opportunities – because there are things that can be done. In Rwanda, it turns out that refusing colonial 'naming' was one important thing. Gone were the divisive labels of Hutu and Tutsi and in came the 'one people' policy that ensured all Rwandans were equal, sacred, respected, united, precious and valuable. One people.

It seems that the first thing they could do was also the most radical thing to do: they didn't just change sides, they changed the whole game. Remind you of anything? Anyone? God did the same thing. Instead

of the never-ending cycle of retributive violence that fuelled humanity, instead of the increase in division between the sacred and the secular – the holy and the ordinary – Jesus entered humanity as one of humanity, one of the least of humanity. An oppressed, poor, peasant baby. One person. Sacred, equal, united, precious and valuable – not because he was God but because he was God in human flesh: The Human One.

When God entered humanity he didn't just respond to an 'us or them' paradigm that kept us perpetually suspicious of power and forever sceptical of love. He changed the whole game. "God with us" means exactly that. There is no longer a schism between the divine or human, us or them, male or female, slave or free, Hutu or Tutsi, white or black, king or servant – God is with us and we are with God. And that changes everything. *Everything*. The Apostle Paul puts it in this awe-inspiring question: "If God is for us who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

So, what can *you* do? If you face a lot of fear, if you are worried and anxious and feel like there isn't much left to work with, if you're ready to really ask, "What can I do?", the answer might just surprise and possibly delight you. You can join the new game. Stop fighting the old one of fear and violence, status and privilege, blame and shame. Lay your weapons down and embrace this new world where God is on your side. Let's stop fighting each other and spend all our energy fighting for a new world together.

That's just the first thing we can do. But to be sure, it's also the most radical thing to do. ●

Danielle Strickland is a Canadian Salvationist. She blogs at daniellestrickland.com



Worth Quoting.

"They gave our Master a crown of thorns. Why do we hope for a crown of roses?" – Martin Luther

Taking the harder road.

Being relational worth the sacrifice

WORDS PETER HOBBS

MUCH OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE provided in the name of compassion is done transactionally rather than relationally. Transactional is often focused on what we can deliver, do or give to people, which makes us feel good and accomplished at the expense of actually making genuine connection to the people we are sent to serve and support.

For example, when we engage in some kind of street ministry we can just hand out water, a tract, food or a lollipop, say "God bless you", and think we've really made a difference. But other than making someone feel good we may not have really engaged with the people we were sent to connect with.

There's usually good reason for this transactional approach. It's easier, superficial and quicker. It's measurable and makes us look and feel good with very little human sacrifice. But this approach often leaves the people we are serving feeling disconnected, sometimes used, and maybe even left feeling like they were a 'project'.

Usually this transactional approach doesn't lead to genuine relationship and it's in this approach that 'client' or 'church member' language is embraced. What's worse is if the 'client' doesn't like or appreciate the 'help' we have given them it can cause us to get offended, become angry and bitter, and start saying things like, "I don't

know why I bother" and then quit. This transactional approach to community development can easily become selfish, and is often where the term 'do-gooders' is derived.

The type of community development that actually makes genuine change and empowers relationship and community is a relational sacrificial approach. The focus is on listening, serving, genuinely getting to know people, long-term commitment to relationship and being vulnerable with people.

But this way is not glamorous and comes with a real human cost. It requires sacrifice, energy, authenticity and the risk of being hurt emotionally or even physically. It also requires long-term commitment to people and modelling the reality of Jesus in the good and especially in the bad times.

"... it's relational connection among people that makes a genuine difference; that sees lives genuinely transformed."

It's teaching people to turn to God when life hits the fan, modelling how to live when life falls apart. Modelling the fruit of the Spirit in the community. This means actually putting our faith into practice within community. We have to live practising what we preach.

Therefore, the transactional is easier; we know how to do this because it's easily measurable and is, therefore, the default method for ministry. However, it's relational connection among people that makes a genuine difference; that sees lives genuinely transformed. People don't care

how much we know until they know how much we care. To do this we need to be right with and secure in our motives and in ourselves. We need to be surrendered to the Trinity, and full of the Holy Spirit so we can be led and empowered by God.

One side note: Jesus tells us in Luke 10 not to invest in everyone. Instead, he tells us to invest in "seekers of peace". This means any people who actually want a relationship with us, and people who are spiritually open to a connection with a higher power – God. Jesus makes it clear that we should not invest our energies in people who are not seekers of peace. The seekers of peace will find Jesus as we model the reality of God to them in community.

Investing heavily in people who are anti-God and not interested in relationship at this time, is a waste of time and extremely painful. We should keep praying for those people and be kind to them, but be wise and invest all our energies into the "seekers of peace". If we stay in community long enough, the naysayers often watch and will see that we are the real deal and become seekers of peace in the end anyway.

Jesus modelled this and he is our motivation and example. Let's choose selfless, relational community engagement that actually brings genuine change and lasting effects, which starts a movement of change. Let's keep on sharing the love of Jesus one life at a time! ●

Captain Peter Hobbs is Corps Officer at Bellarine Peninsula



Worth Quoting. | “We can’t really tell how crooked our thinking is until we line it up with the straight edge of Scripture.” - Elisabeth Elliot

Songs of contagious energy.

Power source that drove the early Army

WORDS DAVID WOODBURY

IF YOU WANT TO GET INSIDE THE MINDS and ethos of early Salvationists, read the songs they wrote. The utilisation of military metaphors and military-style music marked them as being quite distinctive from the religious music of the day. There can be no question that early Salvationists possessed something of a unique and powerful ethos as they quickly encircled the globe. In its heyday, The Salvation Army was one of the most predominant religious movements of its time.

Many of these songs have fallen by the wayside in the contemporary Salvation Army. However, if we backtrack and try and see what possessed and empowered these early writers we may well recapture something of that fresh and unique energy that the early Salvation Army experienced.

In many of them, there is a common theme that flows and it can be primarily found in William Booth’s song ‘O Boundless Salvation’. In the third line, there is a key and an insight into the minds of these early Salvationists: “The whole world redeeming, so rich and so free” (509 *SASB*). His daughter, Evangeline Booth, picked up on her father’s theme when she wrote: “The world for God! The world for God! I give my heart! I’ll do my part!” (933 *SASB*).

Pioneer Salvationist William Pearson takes up the same theme in some of his

songs: “There’s salvation for the world” (904 *SASB* – v.1); “All the world to save, to battle we will go” (904 *SASB* – chorus); “Fierce is the battle, but victory will come” (949 *SASB*).

Not to be left out, George Scott Railton caught the theme when he wrote: “Salvation Army, Army of God, onward to conquer the world with fire and blood” (955 *SASB*); “All the world shall hear us, as fresh converts still we gain” (976 *SASB*); “Through the world resounding, let the gospel sounding” (978 *SASB*), while another early Salvationist Thomas Marshall was very clear as to how he saw the mission of the Army: “We’re the soldiers of the Army of salvation, that God is raising now to save the world” (942 *SASB*).

The same manner of mindset can be seen in much of the Army’s brass band music, with Eric Leidzen’s *The Invincible Army* and Arthur Gullidge’s *Unconquered*. There are many more in the same rich vein.

What are we to make of their literary and music sentiments? The aspirations expressed never really eventuated. The whole world was not redeemed in William Booth’s time, nor has it been since. Are we to see them as largely symbolic and some sort of poignant gesture? Were they just really poor deluded souls completely out of touch with pragmatic reality? Or could it be that these early Salvationists had discovered a unique energy source unlike any other that empowered this asset-poor organisation?

What they intrinsically knew was that an unpretentious belief in an ideal creates a powerful and contagious energy. It was that energy that allowed the early Salvation Army to achieve incredible feats around the world. When people believe in, and wholeheartedly commit themselves to, an ideal, they unleash enormous power and potential, an energy out of all proportion



to the size of their organisation. The truth is that the Bible deals in ideals, not current, human realities. The critics would say that is fairyland living and we need to face up to the real world! But ideals are important; they are uncontaminated and uncorrupted, and they give us a measuring stick against which we can evaluate human behaviour.

I notice a great emphasis today on hope, and every individual needs hope. However, while hope may lift the individual, it is that intrinsic and unswerving belief in an ideal that empowers and motivates organisations such as The Salvation Army. Perhaps we need to reach back into our history and re-read some of those early Salvation Army songs. In so doing we may catch and integrate something of that dynamic energy that empowered and drove the early Army. ●

Major David Woodbury is a former editor of Salvation Army publications. He blogs at woody1940.blogspot.com



Mailbox.

The article ‘Groundbreaking change to officership in Australia’ (*Others Online* 17 October) has drawn a wide and varied response. Below is a selection of comments:

Online

CORPS COULD SUFFER

In the distant past there were two streams of training in the United Kingdom – Social and Field. Numerically, more officers were trained for the Field as corps officership was high profiled and there were far more corps than social centres. From this article, the emphasis appears to be on training cadets to be social and community officers with no mention about the specialist training needed these days to provide leadership for a diverse portfolio of corps. My fear is that this change in officer training could encourage the trend of more corps closing and we end up with well-run social and community programs, but alongside a diminished corps ministry.

- Major Graham Mizon

Online

LIMITED EXPERIENCE

I’m not sure this is a good thing. These officers will be very limited in experience. Will these officers be eligible in their later career to be DCs (Divisional Commanders), TCs (Territorial Commanders), General, without experiencing the life of a corps officer? If so, how will they relate to those corps officers under their command when they have no experience? And will we be having special courses and conditions for those cadets who only want to work in an office as, say, an accountant, a public relations officer, in women’s ministry, in humanitarian sectors? I understand that officers (like us all) have special gifts, but these should be explored and developed

as they minister. I think this initiative is very limiting and may be taking things a bit far.

- Alison Briggs

Online

PROGRESSIVE STEP

This is a huge step forward! The world is changing so fast these days, and people’s needs are as well. I am glad for this move. When I served as an officer I often thought there were many situations and circumstances that I was not remotely trained for, but because I wore the uniform I was looked to as the ‘expert’. I believe this is a good move and I think it will go well!

- Rae L Baer

Online

HISTORICAL PRECEDENT

This was done back in the 1920s in England. There were two sections at the college: those who trained to be corps officers and those trained to be social officers. My parents-in-law were trained in a session like that in England. Great idea.

- Major Evelyn Sneller

The story ‘New format for commissioning of cadets’ (*Others Facebook* 22 October) also drew a wide and varied response, with a selection of comments below:

Facebook

COMMISSIONING MISTAKE

As well as commissioning and ordaining cadets, the big Commissioning service/

celebration was about celebrating the wins and encouraging others to step into officership (amongst other things). I personally think that moving away from this is a mistake. Sometimes you don’t know what you’ve got until it’s gone. Happy to recommend other areas where we could save money, but this one’s important and worth the investment.

- Bron Lithgow

Facebook

FAMILY CELEBRATION

To have this opportunity to share our commissioning with those from our home corps/state that have supported us on our journey is such a blessing. This has been such a long journey for us, and being able to give back to our regional home, which rarely has the chance to see this kind of event, is amazing. To have our friends and family who otherwise would not be able to attend due to distance and cost celebrate with us is beyond meaningful.

- Andrea Wayman

Facebook

NEW OPPORTUNITY

I find it intriguing that many people are expressing a sense of loss for the big gathering events. As someone who’s been involved behind the scenes in several, I haven’t seen this enthusiasm actually translate into widespread attendance (except to an extent by those already in the city/region where events took place). Certainly ‘gathering’ events are helpful, but in a country our size one single opportunity doesn’t really cut it. It will be interesting to see what new experiences might emerge to address this need in days to come.

- Louise Mathieson

Rural chaplaincy – being a presence with purpose.

Continuing a regular series looking at ways that The Salvation Army is engaging in mission across Australia

WORDS NICKY GANGEMI

The Federal Government has announced an extension to its Drought Community Support Initiative, with \$15 million earmarked for The Salvation Army to continue to support farmers and other affected individuals.

“The Salvation Army is in a well-established position to continue to support those who are drought-affected,” says Secretary for Mission, Lieutenant-Colonel Lyn Edge. “The work being done is truly collaborative. The infrastructure of our Strategic Disaster and Emergency Response Team and Doorways Team supports the local corps and rural chaplains as they deliver face-to-face help.”

At the conclusion of the first round of drought relief funds, the Mission Department’s research team compiled a report that found The Salvation Army’s involvement had a significant financial, social and spiritual impact on communities.

Rural chaplains support many people through their ministry. They visit country towns and speak with community members about the Drought Community Support Initiative. Chaplains are also invited to attend community events to conduct assessments for financial assistance. They spend hours driving to visit farmers on their properties, providing a listening ear and, in some instances, working alongside farmers doing day-to-day tasks, allowing for deeper relationships and a real level of practical assistance.

While the financial assistance available to those doing it tough is helpful, many farmers and community members speak of the emotional and spiritual support they have received from

chaplains. Rural chaplain Major David Pullen says the aim is “to be a presence with purpose”. The ministry of the rural chaplains is effective because The Salvation Army has developed long-term relationships with those on the land. The willingness of chaplains to stick it out with people through varied circumstances means they are trusted and respected by the community.

“Our ministry is a presence ministry, focused on pastoral care. We visit people, sit with them and talk to them. We speak with them about their life in general,” says Major Robin Pullen, Rural Chaplain Team Leader. “We can be a listening ear when many people don’t really have someone to talk to. Even when people do have a good support network we are able to be there as someone outside of their network to talk about what is going on with them.

“We are able to offer financial support and even refer people to services like the Rural Financial Counsellors and the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program, who can help them with specific needs.”

The support for farmers goes beyond face-to-face interactions. Many chaplains maintain relationships through phone calls and emails. One farmer responded to the work of the chaplains, saying, “I was very humbled by the prayer said for us; I felt blessed that we really mattered.”

While chaplains often do their daily work in isolation, they are not alone in their mission. Many corps support the chaplains:

- Dubbo Corps (NSW) has been partnering with rural chaplains through referrals and prayer support.



NSW/ACT Assistant Divisional Support Officer Major Sue Davies (centre) with rural chaplains Di and Rusty Lawson.

Mission in brief

- The Homeless Stream is participating in social labs with PwC to address housing affordability and homelessness.
 - The Alcohol and Other Drugs Stream has produced a AOD Model of Care that will provide the framework for operations nationally.
 - Two new long-term national research partnerships will start with the University of Queensland, in the areas of intervention for social isolation and loneliness, and faith and community services.
 - Over the past few months, the Policy and Advocacy Team has made a diverse range of submissions around the following: the Newstart Allowance, mandatory testing of welfare recipients, the cashless debit card, modern slavery, online gambling and pornography, drought relief, worker exploitation.
 - The Policy and Advocacy Team has met and corresponded with a number of ministers around specific programs The Salvation Army has an interest in, including Communities for Children, the framework for protecting Australia’s children and drought relief.
- Members of Bundamba Corps (Qld) travelled 534km west to Mitchell to distribute 50 hampers and also visit the local hospital and nursing home.
 - Tamworth Corps (NSW) partnered with its local community for the ‘R U Aware We Care’ campaign, which raised awareness and resources that were distributed to those in need by rural chaplains and the corps.
 - Grafton Corps (NSW) has been supporting chaplains by holding fundraisers, providing prayer ministry and collecting items to create care packages for farmers.
 - Chaplains have received knitted blankets and hats from Tuggeranong Corps (ACT).
- If you would like to help support the chaplains and those on the land they minister to, please continue praying for rain. Even if the drought were to break tomorrow, many farmers and local businesses would need five years to get back on their feet. Support is needed for a long time to come.
- Those needing assistance can contact the Salvos at:
- 24/7 Assistance Line – 1300 551 030
 - Online application – salvos.org.au/drought

Good news needs to be shared.

The General's Christmas message to the international Salvation Army

WORDS GENERAL BRIAN PEDDLE

"When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child" (Luke 2:17).

When you experience something good you just can't help talking about it. That may be a memorable meal, a good book, an enjoyable film, stirring music, dramatic theatre or beautiful countryside. Whatever the experience, it leaves such an impression on us that we want to share it with others. We have to share it! Good news needs to be shared.

These days, when people discover they are expecting a baby, many find creative ways to share the news; some hold parties to reveal the gender of the unborn baby; some have parties and – when the child is finally born – they announce it loud and clear.

Jesus' birth was announced through a new, bright star that appeared in the sky. An angelic choir burst into song to communicate the great news.

Unsuspecting shepherds were looking after their sheep, like any other night, when the sky lit up and they heard the most astonishing news in a most spectacular way. An angel appeared to personally deliver a message to the shepherds (Luke 2:9-12). This was a detailed message – the angel clearly described who Jesus was (v.11) and how they would find him (v.12). So the shepherds journeyed to the manger and found Jesus "just as they had been told" (v.20).

Such was the impact of their experience on the hillside and in the stable, they just had to tell other people about it. The news was so joyous and tremendous that they couldn't keep it to themselves. The news about Jesus brought light into the darkness of a shattered world. Like the shepherds, we need to realise that this good news is not just ours – it needs to be shared.

In my message to Salvationists and friends, employees and supporters this Christmas, I'm calling us to have a renewed confidence in the Gospel. John the Baptist preached a message of repentance and prepared the way for Jesus. God sent his one and only Son into this world to save it. Jesus then sent out his disciples to preach the good news, perform miracles and make disciples. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to share the Gospel in a myriad of languages and empowered the early Church to spread the story of the Saviour to new lands and new people.

The apostle Paul declared: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16). We are a Salvation Army – the Gospel is the saving message we preach in words and express in actions.

The good news of Jesus brings hope to those who are lost, light to those in darkness, joy to those in despair. It offers real transformation to the person who is caught in addiction, disillusioned by materialism or seeking purpose and direction. We share the Gospel because we have experienced its truth and power for ourselves, and we know, personally, the "author and perfecter", so we have confidence in the Gospel's transformative power on others.

This Christmastime and beyond, let us follow the example set by the angels and shepherds. Let us use every opportunity and every means possible to spread the word about who Jesus is while showing people where they can find him so that they, too, can have a saving, personal relationship with the living Christ. It's not just good news – it's the best news. Let's share it! ●

General Brian Peddle is the world leader of The Salvation Army.



If only God would show himself.

Evidence that demands a verdict

WORDS DAVID ROBERTSON

It is widely assumed by many people today that they would of course believe in God if only they had the evidence. Most people like to think that they are reasonable, honest people who, like the late great atheist philosopher Anthony Flew, will “go where the evidence leads”. The question then becomes, what kind of evidence would you accept? I have asked that question many times and often the question is met with a shrug of the shoulders. But for those who answer, the most common response is, if only God would show himself. Well, here is the surprise. He has. This is what Christmas is all about.

One of the technical theological terms for the birth of Jesus is ‘the incarnation’. That just simply means God come in a human body. In other words, the great promise of Christmas is that God *has* come to us. He *has* revealed himself to us. Jesus is Immanuel – ‘God with us’.

The Bible’s claim is that if you look at Jesus, you see God. If you hear Jesus, you hear God. And what Jesus does, God

does. The Bible says that, “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word” (Hebrews 1:1-3). It’s an extraordinary claim. But is it true? What is the evidence for it? Let’s ask some basic questions.

DID JESUS ACTUALLY EXIST?

In recent years there has been a developing myth promoted by people who are known as mythicists, that Jesus did not even exist. As a historian I find it really difficult to take this seriously, but in this post-truth world I find that people believe whatever they want to believe.

Even an anti-Christian scholar like Bart Ehrman declares that Jesus “was a real person and we can know some things about him”, and that the evidence for Jesus is “overwhelming”. John Dickson, ▶

a historian from Sydney, makes the point clearly: “Professors Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz of the University of Heidelberg in Germany – leading critical scholars and by no means advocates of Christian apologetic – write, ‘The mentions of Jesus in ancient histories allay doubt about their historicity.’”

Suffice to say that the main reason people will not accept the overwhelming evidence for the existence of Jesus is that they just really do not want him to exist. Let’s just assume and accept the overwhelming evidence for the existence of Christ.

WAS HE BORN OF A VIRGIN?

American television and radio show host Larry King was once asked who he would like to interview if he had his pick from all history. His answer? Jesus Christ. He was then asked, “What is the one question you would like to ask him?” His answer: “I would ask him if he was indeed virgin-born, because the answer to that would define history for me.” Surely Larry is right. If God really did come in human form in a woman’s womb, then the whole of human history is changed.

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The virgin birth of Christ is one of the key doctrines of Christianity and without it you do not have Christ. Christianity without the virgin birth of Christ is Christianity without Christ.

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I have to confess that I have never understood why the virgin birth has been seen as such a stumbling block. If human beings can manufacture a situation whereby a woman can become pregnant without the necessity of sexual intercourse, why should we consider it impossible for an Almighty God to do so?

The trouble is that people start with the presupposition that such a God does not exist and, therefore, a non-existent being cannot perform such a miracle. This is the ultimate in circular and irrational thinking. To claim that a virgin birth cannot happen because the Being who could make such a thing happen does not exist, really says nothing other than about the prejudices of the person making the claim.

G.K. Chesterton points out that, while Christians believe in miracles because we have evidence for them, atheists refuse to believe because they have a doctrine against them. I am *not* stating that merely claiming it did happen makes it true. However, I *am* stating that by definition it is not self-evidently impossible that an Almighty God could do this one small miracle!

CAN WE TRUST THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS?

There are a lot of myths that get around. Especially in this age of instant information (which is not the same as instant knowledge, instant wisdom or instant understanding) it is far too easy for people to have an opinion and then search Google for bits of information that confirm that opinion. It’s called confirmation bias; you filter out the information that does not confirm to your pre-judged bias and only accept that which does.

Which is why the myth has got round that, as one man put it to me, “There are hundreds of Greek, Egyptian and Roman myths about babies being born on the 25th of December, why should we believe yours?” This was something he had read on the internet, and it is complete rubbish. While there are ‘accounts’ of ‘gods’ giving birth to or creating humans, there is nothing that corresponds with the extraordinary story of the young teenage Jewish girl, Mary, giving birth to a child who then went on to perform miracles, teach as no one has ever taught, die and be raised from the dead.

It’s not just atheist unbelievers like the late Christopher Hitchens who argued against the virgin birth; there are many ‘sophisticated’ clergymen who are stuck in a 19th century paradigm of ‘miracles don’t happen’ and so do their best to dismiss it as untrue or unimportant.

Tony Jordan, a scriptwriter for the BBC series *Eastenders*, did an excellent mini-series on the nativity. He describes his experience in researching this: “I sat with these men of the cloth, these were organised religion. They were all explaining to me about the nativity and about how it never happened. And they were saying, ‘Well of course, Mesopotamia ... mumble, mumble – there was always the legend of the virgin birth.’ And I’m thinking, ‘What? Hang on a minute! You’re on the wrong side, that doesn’t work.’ So I despair of them” (Tony Jordan – interview in *Christianity* magazine March 2012).



The virgin birth of Christ is one of the key doctrines of Christianity and without it you do not have Christ. Christianity without the virgin birth of Christ is Christianity without Christ.

EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT

It all does make sense. So much so that there is an increasing trend among those who once thought sceptical atheism was the only way to fly, to turn or return to the fold.

A.N. Wilson was one of the most famous atheists in the United Kingdom. In 1992, he wrote a famous book entitled *Jesus: A Life*, in which he argued the conformist position of the time that the gospels were just legends. Seventeen years later, I was reading *The Spectator* when I had one of those ‘eureka’ moments. I almost shouted for joy to read an article by the aforementioned Mr Wilson, renouncing his atheism and his return to Christianity.

One of the early disciples, Paul, wrote a letter to a church in Greece (in Corinth) in which he described Jesus as God’s ‘indescribable gift’. At Christmas, when we give and receive gifts, perhaps we need to think about this indescribable gift.

What does it matter if the virgin birth is true? If

you read the Christmas stories in the gospels of Matthew and Luke you will find out why it is so important. Jesus was announced as the Messiah, the Lord. His name means the Saviour. He was given this name because he came to save his people from their sins. With the gift of Christ comes forgiveness, new life, eternal life and ultimately the renewal of the whole earth.

I was once giving a talk in a bookstore about who Jesus is and the love of God that was shown to us in him, when a lady stopped me and said: “David, I’m not saying that’s true, but if it is, then it’s the most wonderful thing I’ve ever heard!” She got it spot on.

If the Christmas/Easter story and everything in between is true then it is the most extraordinary thing you will ever hear and offers you the most incredible opportunity you will ever get. Why not investigate for yourself? Why not try and find out something more about the child in the manger and the man on the cross? ●

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David Robertson is director of evangelistic ministry Third Space in Sydney and blogs at www.theweefflea.com
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The Salvation Army has played a significant role in the life of Rabecka Stokes, who is now 'giving back' by preparing Christmas hampers for people in need. Photo: Duan Kereru

Embracing the past to empower the future.

Christmas and hope go hand-in-hand for Rabecka

WORDS BILL SIMPSON

Rabecka Stokes was only four when she, her slightly older sister and mother were forced to flee, terrified, from their home because of domestic violence. She was seriously assaulted in the incident. The little family found safety and security at The Salvation Army's unpretentious Bramwell House for women and children in Adelaide.

Life at Bramwell House was far happier than at home. Here, there were people who cared and kept the fractured family safe. There were other children impacted just like her. Christmas was wonderful, with presents provided and enough food for everyone. Rabecka, her sister and mum stayed at Bramwell House for almost a year. When they were ready, the family was able to move to their own home in the community.

Despite her hard start to life, Rabecka prefers to remember the good things; the times that brought happiness to herself, her mother and sister. And there were many of those times. Now the mother of four children, aged four to 16, Rabecka says she can look back with some positive thoughts about her childhood days.

"While I definitely have some horrendous childhood

memories, as hard as my journey has been, I am truly grateful, because it has shaped me into the woman I am today," she says. "As a child, I remember Bramwell House being so welcoming and it was such a beautiful place that has provided me with fond memories. To me, it was a place where I felt safe and it provided an avenue for us to feel like we were part of something.

"When we left Bramwell House and moved into our own home, my mum still struggled financially. We received hampers through The Salvation Army, even gift vouchers for setting up our home. I remember The Salvation Army was a place of hope for my mum, where she knew she could go whenever we really needed some support.

"I remember the feeling of excitement as a child coming home close to Christmas and seeing a basket on the doorstep full of food and a little doll inside for me. It was very exciting because I knew that we were going to have a Christmas and my mum didn't need to worry any more." Rabecka's mum died 15 years ago.

In her adult life, Rabecka studied nursing and has been a community services professional for more than 20 years. She is writing a book titled *Breaking* ▶

the Cycle about her experience and to help others deal with domestic violence. “It has taken me a long time to share aspects of my past,” she says. “I have invested a lot of time in my own personal growth and development over the years, which has opened my eyes to the importance of sharing my story and experiences. I now embrace my past and use it as a platform to create awareness, empower others and provide a sense of hope to those living in a similar situation to my disrupted childhood.”

Last Christmas, Rabecka and her family did just that. With gifts and other items, including food, donated by themselves and the community, they packed and provided 27 giant hampers and delivered them to Bramwell House. Rabecka knew, intimately, what it would mean to the children and their mums staying there. “It was the most rewarding and humbling experience, one that will stay with me for years,” she says. “No amount of money, recognition or reward could ever come close to giving me that feeling.”

Especially for Rabecka, it was also a very emotional and important aspect to have her own children

✓ Bramwell House chaplain Major Jennifer Anderson and manager Naomi Thiel are very appreciative of Rabecka and her family’s generosity. Photo: Duan Kereru

involved in the giving process. “It especially impacted my 16-year-old daughter. She was very moved, especially as she filled the hampers with gifts for teens. It was really beautiful for her to feel like she was making a difference.”

Rabecka and her family are already planning to provide more hampers this Christmas. For Bramwell House manager Naomi Thiel, the hampers from Rabecka’s family last Christmas were a “godsend”.

“We had had an extraordinary couple of months leading up to Christmas, with some extra complex cases and time got away,” Naomi says. “Then, out of the blue, we received an email telling us that Rabecka’s family wanted to donate the baskets, which were overflowing. They had been put together with such amazing thought. The staff were overwhelmed.”

“I wish Rabecka and her family could have seen all the faces. The children’s faces were beaming and the women were so incredibly grateful. They couldn’t believe a complete stranger would care about them and go to such an amazing effort to help make their Christmas brighter.”



“
I remember *The Salvation Army* was a place of hope for my mum, where she knew she could go whenever we really needed some support.

Many years earlier, Rabecka experienced the same emotion. She understood. This was personal. It brought back memories of when strangers did something special for her – then, just a little girl trying to understand life.

It’s personal, too, for Naomi. “No woman plans on having to be at a refuge,” she says. “While they are with us, we want them to feel safe, valued, loved and connected. I get to meet and know so many amazing, strong, courageous women. I watch a woman go from being broken physically and mentally, to being able to hold her head up, bruises healed, hair grown back, emotional wounds starting to heal.

“They start to have hope that their future can be different. And their children, so frightened and clinging to mum when they arrive ... it breaks my heart. But then we watch them transform into happy children, running around, playing, laughing and enjoying life. What a blessing.”

For Bramwell House chaplain Major Jennifer Anderson, what she does among the women and children is living *The Salvation Army* mission of demonstrating the love of Jesus. “We [*The Salvation Army*] are not there to judge. We are there to give the women somebody to talk to; to give them support and hope,” she says. “As chaplain, I have time to listen, while the staff manage the place.

“While I don’t push spiritual things at them, after they have been at Bramwell House for a while, they begin to have a better understanding of who *The Salvation Army* is and what we believe. It’s then that they ask questions around faith and we see some come to church.” •

Bill Simpson is a contributing writer for *Others*. He compiled this article in association with Naomi Singlehurst.



✓ Top: Raising her family in an environment of love and respect is a priority for Rabecka. Above: Rabecka (left), her four children and Lisa (from Bramwell House) volunteering to pack the Christmas hampers. Left: Salvos volunteer Peter with Rabecka on one of the Christmas hamper deliveries.



📍 Darwin city centre on Christmas Day 1974 in the wake of Cyclone Tracy.

Remembering Tracy.

Salvo family relives the day Darwin was destroyed

WORDS JESSICA MORRIS

Others writer Jessica Morris pieces together the story of her family as they recall their experiences of surviving Cyclone Tracy, which tore through the Top End of Australia in 1974

In 1974, my family had two Christmas guests – Commissioner Harry Warren, leader of The Salvation Army Southern Territory, and Cyclone Tracy, the devastating cyclone that ripped their city apart.

History shows that the cyclone took 71 lives, 30,000 people lost their homes and the damage bill was \$837 million. But the tragedy has recently become a little more personal. Since I was a child, this event has been Morris family folklore – the story of how my family, and The Salvation Army, survived a then unprecedented natural disaster and lost everything but each other.

Forty-five years after Cyclone Tracy displaced my family, I have asked some of them to tell me the story again. Gathered around a table with me are my grandma Wilga Morris and three of her four children – Winsome, Valerie and Duncan (my father).

At the time of the cyclone, my grandparents (Majors Hilton and Wilga Morris) were The Salvation Army's flying padres in the Top End. Tears well up as Wilga recalls the moment Commissioner Warren arrived to take control of The Salvation Army's emergency response. "It was Boxing Day, and we were in the city with the Darwin Corps Officers, Majors Alan and Margaret Walker, trying to figure out what to do next," she says. "Then we saw this man [Commissioner Warren] get out of this car, and he just came and put his arms around us. I still get emotional about it." ▶

Under Commissioner Warren's direction, The Salvation Army was one of the first response teams on the ground after Tracy hit. The story is told that Commissioner Warren "hitchhiked to the apocalyptic zone", and began working with the Army's two officer couples – the Morrises and the Walkers. Corps members and families came out to join them and the relief effort began. As the song says, 'Santa never made it into Darwin' that year, but the Salvos did, and they made their presence felt. My grandfather [Hilton] was promoted to glory in 2014, and Wilga now carries the legacy of their role in the relief efforts.

VIVID MEMORIES

I ask my family what it was like on the night the cyclone hit – Tuesday 24 December, Christmas Eve. They recall gathering in the corner of their kitchen, along with their oldest brother Brian, two cousins and the dog. For six hours they huddled together near the refrigerator, shivering as they sang choruses. Hilton monitored the wind strength using an old car mattress, and we laugh when someone realises the family still uses it today.

"We ran into the kitchen as the house began falling apart, and I remember Mum saying, 'We need to talk to Jesus,'" recalls Winsome (now Lieut-Colonel Winsome Merrett, Australia Territory Assistant Chief Secretary). "As soon as the name of Jesus was said, this enormous peace just came over me. As a result of Cyclone Tracy, I always believe that God is intimately involved in the lives of his people."

The details about that night go from terrifying to miraculous. Winsome tells me about the tree that went through the girls' room seconds after they ran downstairs. Valerie mentions how two potential shelters for the family – the caravan and stairs – were blown away while their corner of the kitchen remained standing. And Duncan tells me how a large piece of Masonite literally followed his brother Brian into the kitchen, sheltering them from 240km/h winds.

The Morris family emerged from the wreckage of their home at 6.30am on Christmas Day. More than 70 per cent of Darwin's buildings were flattened. There was no electricity, sanitation or clean water. Instead of caring for their own needs, the Morris family realised there was greater need – the city's residents needed the Salvos. Painting the word 'SALVO' haphazardly on the side of their car, they set up a point of operation at fellow Salvationists



“*We ran into the kitchen as the house began falling apart, and I remember Mum saying, 'We need to talk to Jesus'.*”

Ruth and Graham White's place. With the lower storey of their house still standing, it became a safe haven and focal point for the community. Ever the handyman, Hilton managed to get the car radio to work and locals gathered around the vehicle, listening to their only point of communication with the outside world.

The little group of Salvos did what they could on Christmas Day, then headed into the city on Boxing Day to see what remained of The Salvation Army corps hall. That's when Commissioner Warren pulled up at the curb. "Thankfully, by God's grace and the generosity of the community, help came quickly after that," says one of my family members. In the following days, the Salvos would acquire a donated rolling kitchen and start distributing food, clothes and water to hundreds of people.

One of the first buildings to rise from the devastation was a warehouse for the Salvos to conduct their operations – and Sunday meetings also resumed. "Some people have said that when the hall went, they thought there'd be no more Salvos in Darwin," says Valerie. "But people had no idea of the impact of the Army up there. In fact, that's when we became more active than ever."

I ask Wilga how she prioritised helping others and her family at the same time, and she is matter of fact. "Oh well, we had survived. And they were friends with all the other kids – they got busy [helping people], same as Hilton and I did," she says. Winsome adds, "We had a shared purpose because we had a shared experience."

LASTING LEGACY

The Morris family was welcomed into the home of Ruth and Graham White, who also had four children. The Whites worked for the Uniting Church, but had been enrolled as senior soldiers of The Salvation Army the Sunday before Cyclone Tracy struck. A unique community spirit developed throughout 1975 as more families linked with The Salvation Army, and a thriving Corps Cadet program was established.

Seven Corps Cadets from this time would go on to become Salvation Army officers, with some even returning to the Top End for their own appointments. Furthermore, it's fair to say that the cyclone facilitated the development of the Army's social work in Darwin. The Red Shield Hostel was soon built – the meeting point for Valerie and my



Top left: Brother and sister Duncan and Winsome look at on old *War Cry* that covered the Cyclone Tracy relief efforts. **Left:** *Others* writer Jessica Morris (left) with her aunt Valerie and grandmother Wilga. **Above:** Wilga peruses a page of photos in an old *War Cry* newspaper.

late uncle John Barker. And once Hilton's plane was replaced, the flying padre service was back in operation.

The disaster experience also stood the Morris family in good stead. Years later, when Hilton and Wilga were serving as corps officers in Geelong, they headed relief efforts during Ash Wednesday [16 February 1983]. In 2000, they were awarded the Order of Australia in recognition of their work.

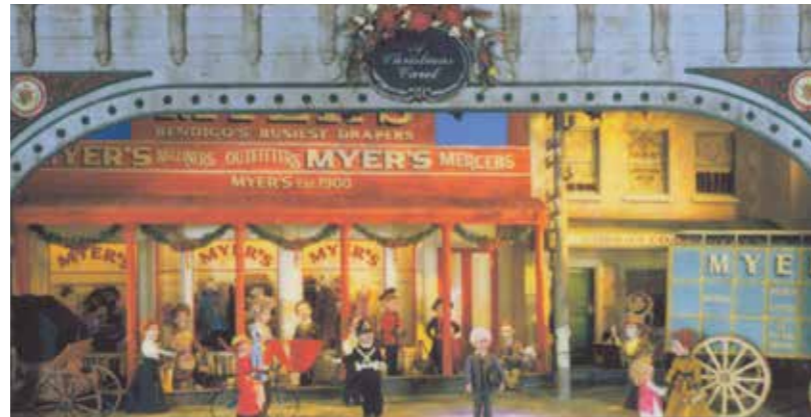
This seems peripheral in comparison to what I experience with my family today. And I realise the real fruit of their obedience is the healing and connection that takes place at the table in front of me. Wilga sums it up by saying: "God said to me after the cyclone, 'Don't you worry about what you've lost. You will have more than you've ever had in your life' and that's just what happened." And in true Morris fashion, it ends in laughter: "It's true," says Winsome. "We were given a dishwasher after that!"

Jessica Morris is a staff writer for *Others*.

Spirit of Christmas lives on in Salvationist figures.

Introducing a new occasional column in which we highlight some of the fascinating memorabilia on display at The Salvation Army Museum.

WORDS JESSICA MORRIS



30-40 artisans, they were viewed as part of the Myer Christmas Window Display in 2000 for six weeks. Over this time, hundreds of thousands of people bustled through the Melbourne CBD, readying themselves for Christmas Day.

While many display pieces were recycled, becoming iconic characters in the 2001 movie *Wind in the Willows*, John and his team decided these humble Salvo figures deserved some posterity. And, so, they were donated to The Salvation Army Museum.

The words of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* have transcended time, captivating the religious and secular world alike. Set in Victorian England, the image of Salvation Army bell-ringers, resplendent in full uniform, was appropriated by storytellers in the United States to accompany the tale of Scrooge and Tiny Tim.

At the turn of the millennium, we saw this intersection of Dickens' most famous work and The Salvation Army come to life in Australia, when Myer celebrated 100 years of its Christmas window displays in Melbourne with a stunning setting of *A Christmas Carol*.

The first window meticulously showed what the story would have looked like in Bendigo – the birthplace of Myer – at the turn of the century. And once you looked past the shrivelled face of Scrooge, you noticed two figures melting into the background – a woman and man dressed in Salvation Army uniform. A timbrel is poised in the woman's hand and a bell in the man's, as the pair seem to ask locals to support those in need over the Christmas season. Today, these two figures live in the storied shelves of the Salvation Army Museum in Melbourne – only a few hundred metres from their original home in Myer on Bourke Street. Crafted lovingly by production designer John Kerr of Stage One Production and



Today, they stand beside an exhibit of the flying padre, unwittingly drawing attention to themselves due to their craftsmanship and unassuming stance. While they celebrate the role of The Salvation Army in an iconic anniversary for the City of Melbourne, they also encapsulate the spirit of so many Salvationists who went before us, braving the harsh conditions of Victorian England to embody the true meaning of Christmas.

Just as Dickens' Tiny Tim did in the historic story when he was recounted as saying, "The people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see", these figures remind us that a traditional Christmas story finds its true meaning in the incarnation of our Saviour. •



The Salvation Army Heritage Museum is located in Melbourne and Sydney. The Melbourne site, at 69 Bourke St (floor 4), is open from 9am-4pm Monday to Friday, and 9am-4pm on the first Saturday of the month. The Sydney site, at 32a Barnsbury Grove, Bexley North, is open from 9am-2pm Monday to Saturday.



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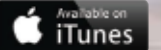


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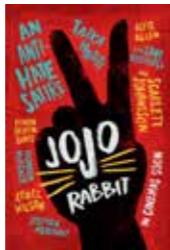
Mark Hadley applies a Christian worldview to the summer holiday movie blockbuster releases

THE RISE OF SKYWALKER

Release date: 19 December



The final chapter in the nine-part 'Skywalker Saga' has arrived. It's a year after the events of *The Last Jedi* and all the key cast members unite to battle what director J.J. Abrams calls "... the ultimate enemy". Emperor Palpatine, who appeared to have died in *Return of the Jedi*, reveals he has been playing a very long game indeed. But the good guys have their surprise appearances too. Lando Calrissian retakes the controls of the Millennium Falcon, Luke Skywalker returns as a 'Force projection' and Princess Leia has a starring role even though actress Carrie Fisher died in 2016. But be prepared. Disney is emphasising this will be the final battle for many characters in that galaxy far, far away. What, then, will survive? It doesn't seem to matter how many times the Resistance takes a beat-down, there's always a rag-tag group of freedom fighters ready to give it another go. "We're not alone," says once-stormtrooper Finn. "Good people will fight if we lead them." The suggestion is there'll always be people with a conscience prepared to stand up for what's right. In the *Star Wars* universe that 'right' is freedom to pursue your own destiny. Even if you can't get behind that particular moral, though, there's no doubt that in an age that praises individualism, yet requires increasing conformity, those who are prepared to speak their mind will be a rare but valuable commodity.



JOJO RABBIT

Release date: 26 December



Johannes 'Jojo' Betzler is a 10-year-old living in Germany during World War Two. A member of the Hitler Youth, he'd love to see his country's enemies "crushed into dust", but he can't seem to summon up the cruelty necessary to see the world the Führer's way. When asked to kill to show his commitment, he runs off, earning the nickname 'Jojo Rabbit'. Furthermore, the discovery that his mother is hiding a Jewish girl in their attic teaches Jojo some ideas are worth running from. *Jojo Rabbit* is a dark comedy brought to the big screen by Taika Waititi, who provides Jojo with Adolf Hitler as an imaginary friend and adds other comic elements courtesy of Scarlett Johansson, Sam Rockwell and Rebel Wilson. Don't mistake this as a lighthearted romp, though. The elements that help the young hero evaluate his worldview include suffering, disability and death. However, what emerges is something much more than a simple 'love over hate' message. Jojo learns that one of the bravest things we can do is admit we've been lying to ourselves.

JUMANJI: THE NEXT LEVEL

Release date: 26 December



In *The Next Level*, high school students Bethany, Fridge and Martha arrive at friend Spencer's house to discover he's once again disappeared inside the magical game. They mount a rescue attempt, but two extra players are sucked in as well. Spencer's grandfather Eddie (Danny DeVito) and his friend Milo Walker (Danny Glover) take on muscular characters, adding a 'cranky old men' vibe to the usual 'body switch' trope. *Jumanji* adds a dose of reality to our seemingly harmless pastimes. Consequently, it majors on humility. More confident characters have to rely on the young and unsure. Players who find themselves in bodies nothing like their real-world selves, learn what it is to be weak. In *The Next Level* that humility stretches across generations, with the younger competitors realising they can benefit from the older people they were so quick to dismiss. All up, it's a safe watch for the family with a swag of laughs and an easy lesson thrown in.

LITTLE WOMEN

Release date: 1 January

Start 2020 with a new version of an old story. Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* has been to the cinemas no less than seven times, including a modern American version this year. This eighth adaptation, though, takes a more traditional approach to the coming-of-age story of four young women, post American Civil War. Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy March are played by Emma Watson, Saoirse Ronan, Eliza Scanlan and Florence Pugh, and supported by Laura Dern and Meryl Streep – names that might provide enough reason to see the film. However, *Little Women* also provides an insight into measuring our ambitions

against our responsibilities. This film criticises the limited opportunities available to women in Alcott's time, as a sort of celebration of how far we've come. Yet as contemporary as that viewpoint is, it can't altogether eliminate the powerful theme of service the author had in mind. Marmee lays down her life for her daughters; Meg is happy to submit to the husband she loves; Jo sets aside her cherished novel to care for her sister; and Beth celebrates her family's successes even as her life ebbs away. All teach us how to love others above themselves.

CATS

Release date: 26 December



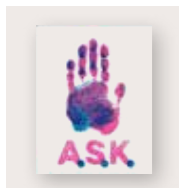
Cats is one of those rare stories that has spanned almost every medium imaginable. Beginning as a book of poetry by T.S. Elliot, emerging as a musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber, and enduring as a collection of Broadway songs, the story now has its debut on the big screen. In *Cats* the movie, director Tom Hooper seeks to inspire hope for a divided world. *Memory*, the song at the heart of *Cats*, is placed in the mouth of Grizabella, a once-glamorous feline, now withered by old age. She is shunned by the other cats for her mangy appearance and eventually uses the song to reflect on how far she has fallen, and to appeal to the younger cats for acceptance. *Cats* appeals to a world that has become enamoured with the talented and the beautiful at the expense of the awkward and the undesirable with the certain knowledge that we will all one day grow old. It offers a hope that if we can see ourselves in the shoes of those who struggle to belong, we will find a place for them in our hearts.

Mark Hadley is the culture writer for *Others* and is one of Australia's leading Christian communicators.

Read

DAVID ROBERTSON

A.S.K.



A.S.K. (Ask, Seek, Knock) is the latest book from the prolific pen of David Robertson. The book's subtitle, *Real World Questions/Real Word Answers*, explains more about its content. Every chapter of the book contains a real question from a teenager about life and faith, followed by an answer rooted in the Bible.

The 52 questions that shape the book cover an incredible range of topics. The first set of questions are around core Christian concepts such as who God is, the Bible, the Trinity and Jesus. Questions that young people asked around these areas included "I don't get the Trinity – do we worship three gods?" and "Why do Christians believe that Jesus is the only Saviour?"

Then there are questions that focus on problems young people are having in working out what their faith means. These include perennial questions such as whether animals go to heaven, and the question of suicide and salvation. Big world issues come next, one young person asking, "How would Jesus respond to North Korea?" Then there are ethical questions like, "Help! – my girlfriend is pregnant!" as well as questions about living as a Christian.

The questions that drive this book are clearly heartfelt ones from young people wrestling with faith, doubt, ethics and some very difficult personal situations. All of the answers that Robertson provides for the young people are short, punchy, biblical and engaging. As anyone who has read David's work before will know, his answers are not ambiguous or vague, but communicated precisely and

clearly. Also, when he doesn't know an answer, such as "When will the world end?", he's not afraid to say so, but admit that some things just aren't known.

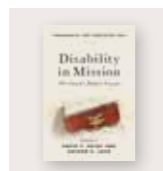
Although its 52-chapter format is obviously suited to reading a chapter a week for a year. I read the book in a couple of days and appreciated its direct, yet thought-through answers. This is a really useful book, nicely written and well presented. It deserves to be widely read.

A.S.K. is available at Koorong and online. – **Gavin Matthews**

Read

DAVID C. DEUEL AND NATHAN G. JOHN

DISABILITY IN MISSION: THE CHURCH'S HIDDEN TREASURE



When the words 'disability' and 'mission' are linked, the unspoken connection is often that people living with disabilities

or impairments are the recipients of ministry. This challenging book confronts that perception, advocating for truer inclusion of believers with disability as equal, active participants in all areas of Kingdom mission. Those with such life experience are not a mercy project but a mission force, offering unique insights and connection with the communities they serve. As described by one contributor: "Shared weakness was like a bridge that connected my heart to theirs, regardless of race or religion."

However, appropriate inclusion is most of all a matter of justice. The Church's understanding of disability is frequently weighted by a secular perspective and insufficiently aligned with Scripture. Followers of Christ believe all humans are created in God's image; being his

image-bearer is not dependent on our definitions of capacity, but his. Our God deliberately chooses "the foolish things of the world to shame the wise", the "weak things of the world to shame the strong" (1 Corinthians 1:27) – a God who hand-picked Moses and Paul for key leadership, despite clear evidence of what the world would term impairments.

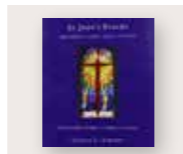
This book reminds us that God works *through*, not just *in spite of* disabilities, and those living with impairments remain equal partners in fulfilling God's purposes.

Disability in Mission: The Church's Hidden Treasure is available at Koorong. – **Louise Mathieson**

Read

LUCILLE L. TURFREY

ST JOHN'S PSALMS: RHYTHMS OF LIGHT, LIFE AND LOVE



The Gospel of John is given new life in Lucille Turfrey's latest offering, *St John's*

Psalms: Rhythms of Light, Life and Love. Eloquently taking us through 21 chapters of the Bible book, Lucille matches each story with a tune from The Salvation Army songbook, as well as an illustration to enhance personal meditation.

Part two provides a devotion for each story and song duo, with thought-provoking questions to take you deeper into God's Word. Add in some conversation starters for a Bible study, as well as a musical supplement, and this is everything you could need to study the Gospel of John in a new way. Available by emailing llturfey@bigpond.com

Salvos a welcome sight for firestorm survivor

AFTER NARROWLY ESCAPING A "phenomenal firestorm" that destroyed his home, Alex Harper said the sight of The Salvation Army at the Grafton evacuation centre in Northern NSW was "wonderful".

"At the evacuation centre the Salvos have fed us, we've got some vouchers, some work clothes, and some good moral support," Alex said.

"It's been good being able to talk to people and not having to worry about cooking and getting meals."

Alex said he felt "very lucky to be alive" after a bush-fire destroyed his home in Nymboida, about 50km southwest of Grafton, on Friday 8 November. He said his property was consumed in minutes.

"I was trying to do some spot-fire control burning on my property as the big fire was coming over," he said.

"My mate and I sheltered in the cellar, which was a safe haven for about 10 seconds, but then this phenomenal firestorm hit, just out of nowhere. Within three to four minutes the windows exploded, the back door blew out and the house started collapsing. We ran outside and jumped in the one vehicle that wasn't on fire. My dog ran back into the house and I couldn't get him, so sadly, Bodie was lost.

"I headed straight for my partner's property because I knew it was good there.



Salvation Army Emergency Services workers serve meals at an evacuation centre in NSW during the height of the fires last month.



Alex Harper at the Grafton evacuation centre where he received assistance from The Salvation Army.

Driving along, my mate and I couldn't see a thing with all the smoke, so one of us was

hanging out the passenger window directing when to turn left and right. Cinders were coming in and flying all over the place. We got to my partner's, who was helping rescue a neighbour who didn't have a car. We figured out where the fire was headed and took the back road into town [Grafton].

That's where Alex came across the Salvos who catered for his immediate needs.

"They've been wonderful," he said.

The Salvation Army supported hundreds of evacuees and emergency services personnel around Australia throughout November as

multiple bushfires raged across four states – NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

Major Topher Holland, General Manager Strategic Emergency and Disaster Management, said Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) workers did a "monumental job".

"Our teams have provided thousands of meals and cared for the emotional, physical and spiritual health of hundreds and hundreds of people – and will continue to provide whatever support is needed for the long term," he said.

– **Simone Worthing**

To read more of our bushfire coverage and other stories from around the Australia Territory, go to others.org.au

Sod-turning brings hope one step closer for Brisbane homeless



◆ Lieutenant-Colonel David Godkin (left) with former Brisbane Mayoress Anne Quirk and Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner and the \$650,000 cheque from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust for the Brisbane affordable housing complex.

A NEW APPROACH TO ASSISTING people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness in Brisbane began with the turning of the first sod at The Salvation Army's affordable housing complex at Chermside on Tuesday 29 October.

Twenty-six apartment-style homes will be constructed on the Gympie Road site – 21 two-bedroom and five three-bedroom residences – with work expected to be completed by mid to late 2021.

The complex will provide stable and long-term supported housing for both individuals and families with children, catering for up to 100 people at any one time.

"This site today is a place that represents hope," said Lieut-Colonel Sandra Godkin, Queensland Divisional Leader.

"We are excited about what is going to happen here to help solve the growing issues of homelessness and loneliness."

The project has been made possible thanks to a generous \$5 million donation from the Cory Charitable Foundation, long-term supporters of The Salvation Army.

The Cory Foundation founder, Doug Cory, spoke at the sod-turning ceremony, explaining that he, his wife Joan, and his family, had wanted to make a special, one-off donation to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the foundation, and were working alongside The Salvation Army to make this social housing complex a reality.

Doug announced that the Cory Foundation would give an additional minimum of

\$250,000 to furnish the apartments in the complex.

Brisbane Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Adrian and Nina Schrinner, are also supporting the project through a \$650,000 donation from The Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust. Former Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Graham and Anne Quirk, were instrumental in making this donation possible.

Lord Mayor Schrinner said he "can't wait" to see the site come to life and lives transformed.

"The land we are standing on now will be land where lives are touched, helped and changed," he said.

"The many families that we don't see on the streets who need shelter, safety and security will find it here."

– **Simone Worthing**

Brainstorming to better serve our communities

SALVOS AROUND AUSTRALIA are being encouraged to have their say on what Salvation Army mission should look like in the new territory.

Next year, every mission expression of The Salvation Army will be asked to develop a Local Mission Plan. The purpose is to help leaders and their teams work out how they can strategically engage in the mission and vision of the Army in their local area.

Secretary for Mission Lieut-Colonel Lyn Edge has emphasised that the creation of a Local Mission Plan should not be seen solely as the responsibility of leadership within the various mission expressions. Instead, she wants all Salvos to know they can be involved.

"I encourage people who would like to contribute to the mission of the Salvos to talk to your corps officer, corps leadership or mission expression leader," she said. "We are keen to develop Local Mission Plans that engage the wider Salvos community."

The intention of the Local Mission Plan is to be a statement of how local teams will work together to better fulfil the Army's Mission Statement of "caring for people, creating faith pathways, building healthy communities and working for justice", helping to realise the Vision Statement "to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus".

Go to salvationarmy.org.au/lmd/resources-collection (go down to 'National Strategy').

– **Scott Simpson**

Harmony group reunites for historic performance



◆ **Above left:** Salvation Army pop music group Harmony 4 plus 4 in the 1960s (from left) Merv King, Raymond Moore, Eric Moore, Barry Moore, Verna Gittins, Dorothy Moore, Coral Luhrs and Jocelyn Luhrs. **Above right:** Harmony 4 plus 4 members in 2019 (from left) Verna Gittins, Raymond Moore, Barry Moore (with the original tea chest bass), Dorothy Moore, Coral Luhrs, Merv King and Jocelyn Luhrs.

SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE original 1960s Salvation Army pop group Harmony 4 plus 4 recently reunited to perform pieces they had sung 50 years earlier.

Their presentation was part of a celebration of the group, led by Barry Moore, at a recent meeting of The Salvation Army Historical Society, Brisbane Chapter. Historical photos of the group, sound recordings

and moving images were also part of the celebration.

All members of Harmony 4 plus 4 came from Nundah Corps in north Brisbane. The original group consisted of the four female singers – Coral Luhrs, Dorothy Moore, Jocelyn Luhrs and Verna Gittins – and bandsmen Barry Moore (tea chest bass), Eric Moore (accordion), Merv King (cornet) and Raymond Moore (drums).

Half of the group comprised the Moore family, which included husband and wife Eric and Dorothy Moore and their sons Raymond and Barry.

In the 1960s, Harmony 4 plus 4 held concerts and also participated in meetings and open-air services. They performed at Parramatta and Campsie and recorded a session for the Christian Broadcasting Association in Sydney.

In Melbourne, they played at Hawthorn, Geelong, Box Hill, in the Plaza of the Southern Cross Hotel, appeared on the television programs *Time for Terry* and *In Melbourne Tonight* and played at Swinburne College. The group also performed alongside the Melbourne Staff Band and pop sensations including Col Joy and Little Pattie.

– **Garth Hentzschel**

Salvo Bigband to bring festive cheer to Federation Square

THE SALVO BIGBAND WILL host a free Christmas carols event at Federation Square in Melbourne on Saturday 7 December, and they want local Salvos to join them.

"The Salvo Bigband believes that a public Christmas event in the heart of Melbourne is the perfect way to share the joy, peace and hope that Christ offered the world through celebrating birth," said worship

leader Perri Winter-Barry. "Music not only draws a crowd, but unifies us quite literally through singing together. This will give people the opportunity to come together to glorify Christ, create community and celebrate with song."

The event, called A Gospel Christmas, will be run entirely by the Salvo Bigband, which will take the stage for a rousing set of carols, along with the

Melbourne Contemporary Gospel Choir, headed by Jason Simmons of Moreland Salvos.

A Gospel Christmas, to be held from 4-6pm, will also feature Emily Williams of the Young Divas and Justin Michael of Compliments of Gus. There will be an interactive nativity for passers-by, as well as face painting – and rumour has it that Santa may even make an appearance.



◆ The Salvo Bigband will fill Federation Square with the sounds of Christmas on Saturday 7 December.

Flo's Place a space of restoration in Ballarat



◆ RAMP (Recreation, Activities, Mentoring and Parenting program) coordinator Amber Byvoet (left), Child and Youth Services Team Leader Louise Jeffrey, landscape designer Helen Todd and SalvoConnect Western Manager Kellie Brown. Photo: Adam Trafford Courtesy of The Courier

FAMILIES STRUGGLING WITH homelessness in the Victorian city of Ballarat now have a safe and welcoming place of retreat after the creation of an outdoor garden space called 'Flo's Place'.

Initiated by SalvoConnect Western, the garden backs on to Parker Place, The Salvation Army transitional housing residence that accommodates and supports 120 single mothers and their children each year.

Flo's Place will benefit clients who live on-site, participants who attend the LARF (Life skills, Activities, Relationships and Fun) mentoring program, as well as participants in other programs run on-site by the Family Connections Program.

"Many of our families have experienced homelessness for a variety of reasons, including family violence, family breakdown and unstable housing,"

said SalvoConnect Western manager Kellie Brown.

"Some of the children who live here have experienced huge upheaval in their lives, punctuated by trauma and the grief of losing all that was familiar.

"It is anticipated that this area will aid in the development of a community where all our clients are welcome, will grow, and can feel safe and nurtured by the space."

After successfully applying

for an innovation grant from The Salvation Army this year, SalvoConnect partnered with community volunteers and local businesses to transform the once overgrown area.

It is a "child's wonderland", according to Kellie, containing a teepee, sandpit, outdoor mud kitchens, fruit trees, a vegetable patch, an outdoor street library and interactive spaces where families connect with nature.

"We are looking forward to

activities where we will take family portraits of clients in the garden and an outdoor musical group that will start in Term 4, but mostly we are looking forward to seeing and hearing children explore and play in this wonderful space," said Kellie.

The Parker Place property was acquired 12 years ago due to the generosity of late benefactor Bill Parker. Flo's Place is named after Bill's late mother.

—**Jessica Morris**

Laptops to make life easier for SalvoConnect staff and clients

FEW OF US ENJOY FILLING IN paperwork, but for the women and children at SalvoConnect Western in Ballarat, it can be life-changing. Hundreds of clients come through the doors of the Ballarat service every year and the team must chronicle every part of their journey.

Finding that participation in client feedback and

information gathering was low, the SalvoConnect team decided to reconfigure its entire communication process by introducing Notebook laptops, thanks to a Salvation Army innovation grant.

"It means we can capture a client's journey through images, videos and creative apps," said Sonia Lefevre, Team Leader

for the service that provides emergency accommodation for women with children who are experiencing homelessness.

"We find that the mother and children are often comfortable with screens, and it is a lot easier to collect information about clients who are non-English speaking or who have difficulty finding the language

to explain what they are feeling.

"We need to be able to collect information about a client's journey as easily and as unobtrusively as possible over their time with us (up to 12 months).

"In many cases, when a client comes in, their level of distress makes it difficult to process their crisis clearly, and additional paperwork is daunting."

Hurstville celebrates 120 years of 'great things'

HURSTVILLE CORPS CELEBRATED its 120th anniversary recently, with a focus on 'Even Greater Things' to come.

About 120 people, including NSW/ACT Divisional Commander Lieut-Colonel Miriam Gluyas, attended a high tea to commemorate the anniversary.

Guest speakers Majors Grant and Sharon Sandercock-Brown shared about their nine years of soldiership at the corps during which time their three children were born and dedicated.

Grant was bandmaster and Sharon led the timbrel brigade, and it was from Hurstville Corps that they entered the Officer Training College.

Captain Sean Li, Hurstville Corps Officer, said the lead-up to the anniversary celebration weekend on 26-27 October, as well as the celebration itself,



◆ Shirley Rimmer, the oldest member of Hurstville Corps' English congregation, and Xiaoxian Huang, the longest attendee of Hurstville Corps' Chinese congregation, cut the anniversary cake.

had been a "wonderful time" to reflect on the impact the corps has had on its community.

"It's a very marvellous history

... and now the Hurstville demographic has changed but Hurstville Corps hasn't been left behind; our corps reflects

our community demographic with both Chinese and English-speaking members."

Sean said corps folk were "overwhelmed" by the number of people in the community who wanted to celebrate the 120th anniversary with them. About 350 people attended a community lunch on the Sunday afternoon.

"The community's response was beautiful and unexpected," Sean said. "This was not just an internal corps celebration, this was a community celebration."

The luncheon involved young members of Hurstville Corps' Just Brass program, SAGALA, Kids Music, Chinese Dancers and the singing group.

"We are trusting God for even greater things in the future," said Sean.

—**Lauren Martin**

Totally Timbrels learners group takes off at Nambour Corps

AFTER SEEING THE SENIOR timbrel brigade perform at last year's Christmas concert at Nambour Corps in Queensland, the younger siblings of Just Brass program participants decided they wanted to learn to play this traditional Army instrument as well.

These children, who wait for their older brothers and sisters each week during Just Brass lessons at the corps, asked the timbrel leaders, Rose Campbell and Thelma Smith, if they could learn the timbrel during this time.

So, at the beginning of Term 2 this year, Totally Timbrels

was formed. This learners group began with seven students, aged six and above. They played in the Just Brass concert at the end of Term 2, which motivated other young students to join.

"At the End of Term 3 Concert, we had 13 beginners playing timbrels and a waiting list with even younger children wanting to join," said Major Karen Saunders, Nambour Corps Officer.

"Their parents are very supportive and most of them come to the concerts. Except one, all these children are from families not affiliated with the corps."



◆ Leader Thelma Smith (right) and the young learners in Nambour's Totally Timbrels program perform at the End of Term 3 Concert.

The students, both boys and girls, come in with their older siblings after school, sign in, have their lesson and practise

for 30 minutes, and then spend 30 minutes doing craft until Just Brass finishes.

—**Simone Worthing**

Enrolments

MAROOCHYDORE CORPS QLD



MAJORS GARRY AND SUE COX, CORPS Officers, enrolled one soldier and nine adherents on Sunday 3 November. The officers are pictured with new soldier Tania Walsh (far left), while the nine adherents (left) are (back row, from left) Vicki Lerch, Mary Lerch, Barry Jones and Kathleen Ward, and (front row, from left) Graham Luff, Lorraine Ashton, Patricia Fraser, Lorraine Kelly and Elizabeth Bom.

VICTOR HARBOR CORPS SA



MAJOR HOWARD TRENDELL, CORPS OFFICER, recently enrolled Josiah Shepherd as a senior soldier. Josiah is pictured with Majors Howard and Howard Trendell.

DELACOMBE CORPS VIC



MAJOR ALAN JENNER, ASSISTANT CORPS Officer, enrolled Rebecca Pilven as a senior soldier and accepted her husband Trent Pilven as an adherent on Sunday 10 November. Pictured (from left) are Major Jenner, Rebecca, Trent and flagbearer Captain Craig Farrell.

EASTLAKES CORPS NSW



AUXILIARY-LIEUTENANTS BERNIE AND TERRI Muendel, Corps Officers, enrolled two senior soldiers and accepted two adherents on Sunday 10 November. Pictured (from left) are Terri, new soldiers Betty Gray and Tangi Adams, new adherents Mark Fitzsimmons and Julie McLean, flagbearer Jill Gillespie, and Bernie.

TAMWORTH CORPS NSW



CAPTAIN MARCUS WUNDERLICH, CORPS Officer, enrolled Angela Van Den Oetelaar as a senior soldier on Sunday 1 September. Angela is pictured proudly holding her enrolment certificate alongside Captain Wunderlich.



LIEUTENANTS ASHLEY AND RITA BIERMANN, Corps Officers, recently enrolled three junior soldiers – Charlotte and Hayden Slocombe, and Sampson Rossow. They are pictured with the Biermanns and Junior Soldiers program leaders Lyn and Jenny Whybird.

CAPTAINS DEAN AND RHONDA CLUTTERBUCK enrolled two senior soldiers and four adherents in September. The soldiers (pictured far left) enrolled on Sunday 22 September are Carrol Ford (left) and Madison Clutterbuck. Holding the flag is Colour Sergeant Ross Paget. The four adherents (pictured left) enrolled the following week are (from left) Kath Pratt, Maureen Thornton, David Parker and Carol Parker.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS CORPS QLD



CAPTAIN MARCUS WUNDERLICH, CORPS Officer, enrolled Angela Van Den Oetelaar as a senior soldier on Sunday 1 September. Angela is pictured proudly holding her enrolment certificate alongside Captain Wunderlich.

IPSWICH CORPS QLD



LIEUTENANTS ASHLEY AND RITA BIERMANN, Corps Officers, recently enrolled three junior soldiers – Charlotte and Hayden Slocombe, and Sampson Rossow. They are pictured with the Biermanns and Junior Soldiers program leaders Lyn and Jenny Whybird.

TABLELANDS CORPS QLD



CAPTAINS JEFF AND SHARILYN BUSH enrolled Peter Fuller as the first soldier of the newly named Tablelands Corps in Atherton, Far North Queensland, on 27 October. Pictured (from left) are Sharilyn and Jeff, Peter, his wife Erica, and Corps Leader Miriam Gentle.

World leaders attend congress in NZ

GENERAL BRIAN PEDDLE and Commissioner Rosalie Peddle recently attended the New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa Territorial Encounter Congress in Wellington, New Zealand.

The visit included a traditional Māori welcome, time with officers and leaders from around the territory, and a 'Cultural Encounter' night.

During the mission conference on the Friday, the General sat in the 'hot seat' for a wide-ranging question-and-answer time, facilitated by Major Christina Tyson.

Young people, leaders and divisional officers were also able to share their concerns, challenges and 'wins' with the international leaders, who gave encouragement through their conversations.

The world leaders then visited the USA, with General Peddle speaking at a student chapel service at Asbury University in Kentucky. Commissioner



Commissioner Rosalie Peddle engages with young people at the Encounter Congress in Wellington, New Zealand.

Peddle, World President of Women's Ministries, met informally with members of The Salvation Army Student Fellowship under the leadership of Majors Paul and Alma Cain. The Peddles also visited the

USA National Headquarters of The Salvation Army in Alexandria, Virginia.

The Peddles both spoke at the special chapel service about the global work of The Salvation Army.

GLOBAL IMPACT

Last month we brought you a snapshot of international statistics that give a glimpse of how The Salvation Army is changing lives around the world. This month we bring you part two. In 2018, The Salvation Army:

- Rescued 12,268 survivors of human trafficking from their situations of abuse.
- Visited more than 153,000 prisoners.
- Helped more than 10 million people affected by disasters and emergencies.
- Provided practical, emotional and spiritual support to 28,380 refugees and internally displaced people.
- Employed 370 full-time doctors, 1095 nurses/midwives and 2884 other medical staff.
- Operated 2984 thrift stores, providing low-cost clothing and other items while supporting the ministry of The Salvation Army.
- Operated 13 driving schools.
- Supported 98,644 women in mother and baby homes.
- Trained just under 1000 cadets in 67 Salvation Army officer training colleges/schools - up nine per cent on 2017.
- Supported 16,996 officers and 109,691 employees worldwide.

Other stats:

- In the 100 years since its inauguration, 276 individuals have been recognised with The Salvation Army's highest honour - admission to the Order of the Founder.
- The Salvation Army's most recent opening was in Samoa in last August, where the ministry includes support for individuals with drug/alcohol dependency.

Anti-slavery lessons in Romanian schools

SALVATION ARMY WORKERS IN Romania have been invited to make regular visits to schools to educate students about human trafficking and child labour, and ways to recognise and prevent it.

In 2013, the Army launched its European Anti-Human Trafficking Network and appointed a liaison officer for the Romania/Moldova/Ukraine region.

PNG hosts partnership forum

THE SALVATION ARMY IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA RECENTLY HOSTED the 28th Forum for the Churches Partnership Program (CPP), held in Goroka, Eastern Highlands.

The forum's theme was 'Enhancing Partnerships, Crafting the Way Forward'.

The program is part of Australian Aid to Papua New Guinea, recognising that around 60 per cent of all development by way of health and education is delivered by the churches throughout the country. Other key focus areas for the CCP are gender equality and social inclusion, peace and prosperity, and disaster risk reduction (including the Army's restorative justice activities).

The CPP, including The Salvation Army, is the longest serving organisation in the country, and reaches every village and community, which is quite unique.

General prays with Pope during visit to Vatican

GENERAL BRIAN PEDDLE AND Commissioner Rosalie Peddle visited the Vatican last month for conversation and prayer with Pope Francis. During the visit, the accompanying delegation met with Cardinal Koch, Bishop Farrell and Father Avelino Gonzales of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity.

In a warm and open discussion, the prospect of continued conversations was discussed and General Peddle underlined the areas where The Salvation Army and the Roman Catholic Church shared common challenges in the mission to the poor and marginalised. The discussion focused on effective mission and evangelism and serving suffering humanity.

Following a time of sharing, the delegation then had an opportunity to meet with Pope Francis in the Papal Library. The General had a time of private conversation before Salvation Army representatives were presented to Pope Francis.



General Brian Peddle in conversation with Pope Francis

General Peddle presented his message and Pope Francis responded. The General then spent some time in prayer with the Pope.

"I am happy to have this opportunity to renew to you and to all the members and

volunteers of The Salvation Army my grateful appreciation for the witness you give to the primacy of discipleship and service to the poor," said Pope Francis. "I would like to thank The Salvation Army for all that you do in this city for

the homeless and the marginalised, of whom there are so many in Rome. I am also aware of your significant involvement in the fight against human trafficking and other modern forms of slavery. May God bless your efforts."

Former international leader promoted to glory



General Bramwell Tillsley led The Salvation Army in 1993-94.

BRAMWELL H. TILLSLEY, THE 14th General of The Salvation Army, was promoted to glory on 2 November from his home in Toronto, Canada.

He was elected as the Army's international leader in July 1993 and was in office until May 1994 before stepping down for health reasons.

Bramwell was born in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, on 18 August 1931 to Salvationists

Harold and Doris Tillsley. He married Maude Pitcher in 1953 and they entered the Toronto Training College in 1955.

Bramwell became Principal of the International Training College in London in 1981, Chief Secretary of the USA Southern Territory in 1985 and was promoted to the rank of commissioner when he was appointed as Territorial Commander to the Australia

Southern Territory in 1989. In 1991, he was appointed as Chief of the Staff at International Headquarters in London, UK.

On being elected General, Bramwell, together with his wife Maude (World President of Women's Organisations), travelled the world, nurturing Salvationists in their faith and highlighting the work of The Salvation Army. Maude was promoted to glory in 2014.

JOHN KIRKHAM



LIEUT-COLONEL JOHN Kirkham was promoted to glory on 24 September, aged 87. His funeral service was held at Inala Chapel, Blackburn South, on 3 October, conducted by Major Tim Lynn.

John Charles Kirkham was born to officer parents, Clarence and Mabel. He was the youngest of three boys. John entered the Officer Training College in Melbourne from West Preston (Vic.) in 1950 to join the *Standard Bearers* session, and his first appointment was to the Box Hill Boys Home (Vic.).

After 12 months he was appointed to Pingelly Corps (WA), where he met and married Shirley Davey, who also became an officer.

John was also appointed to Kellerberrin (WA), and then Gawler, Millicent and Burra (SA), before taking up a joint appointment with Shirley following their marriage at Waroona (WA). John and Shirley served in a succession of corps appointments, including Busselton (WA), Medina (WA), Ararat (Vic.), followed by Whyalla, Thebarton and Kaniva (all SA) until 1963 when they commenced a series of management and administrative appointments in the Social Services department.

Six months in the Public Relations department in 1972 preceded eight years as Special Efforts Secretary, including responsibility for migration and travel. John served as State Social Secretary in Tasmania from 1981-1984 and then returned to the position of Special Efforts Secretary in 1985.

John and Shirley entered retirement in January 1997. In retirement, John liked to read and research the history of The Salvation Army.

ALBERT KNOP



MAJOR ALBERT KNOP WAS promoted to glory on 15 September, aged 93. His funeral service was held on 23 September at Box Hill Corps, Melbourne, led by Major Winton Knop.

Albert Raymond Knop was born to Archie and Doris on 4 August 1926 in Ranelagh, Huon Valley (Tas.). He was the youngest of seven children. The children attended The Salvation Army Ranelagh Sunday school and as a 12-year-old, Albert made a commitment to follow Jesus. He attended the area school in Huonville before completing a trade in carpentry. Albert was self-employed as a milk vendor and carpenter, and with his family was heavily involved at Hobart Corps. In 1952, Albert married Doreen Smith and together with their three children – Warren, Winton and Annette – left Hobart Corps in 1957 to join the *Faithful* session at the Officer Training College in Melbourne.

After commissioning, the Knops were appointed as Corps Officers to Orbost, followed by Traralgon, Mordialloc, Ballarat West, Wangaratta, Geelong Central and Thornbury (all Vic.). In 1975, they left Victoria and took up an appointment at Perth Fortress (WA), followed by Norwood (SA) before coming back to Victoria for appointments as Corps Officers of Moreland and then Box Hill. Albert's final appointment was as Assistant Superintendent at Inala Village. He entered retirement on 1 January 1987.

In retirement, Albert and Doreen lived for many years in Mt Eliza, while continuing to soldier at Box Hill Corps. They moved to Hayville Village, Box Hill South in 2000, before Albert entered aged care in 2012 at Uniting AgeWell, then Livingstone Gardens.

IVAN UNICOMB

IVAN UNICOMB WAS RECENTLY PROMOTED to glory, aged 94. Born in Ballina, NSW, to officer parents Captains Abram and Martha Unicom, Ivan spent his childhood and youth in the numerous corps appointments of his parents.

In December 1942, Ivan enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force. Over the next two years, he served on aircraft maintenance at Ascot Vale, Narromine and Uranquinty, frequently playing in RAAF bands and in Salvation Army bands when on leave.

Receiving special leave from the Air Force, Ivan, then 21, entered the Officer Training College in Sydney in the *Fearless* session of 1945. Commissioned in January 1946, his first appointment was to Clermont in (Qld). Mid-year he was appointed to join Captain John Mansell on the Field Unit based at Longreach in the far west of the state. Appointments to the Bega Field Unit and Dalby Corps followed.

In December 1949, Ivan married Lieutenant Dorothy Bartlett. They had five children – Joy, Peter, Ruth, David and John. Appointments following marriage were Kingaroy (Qld), Barraba, Narrabri, Leeton (NSW), Bowen, Cairns, Mackay (Qld), Dubbo, Willoughby and Bexley (NSW). Ivan was then Red Shield Defence Services representative at Holsworthy Barracks. From 1976 to 1984, he was Migration and Travel Officer at Sydney Territorial Headquarters.

In 1986, Ivan married Captain Pam Byles. For some years, Ivan played in the Sydney Veterans Band and was maintenance officer at The Salvation Army Dee Why Men's Home. Until they moved to Macquarie Lodge just over two years ago, Ivan and Pam were soldiers of Sydney Congress Hall.

ABOUT PEOPLE

APPOINTMENTS

Effective 18 November

Auxiliary-Lieutenant David **Bruford**, Adults Ministry Secretary Tasmania and Inclusion Engagement Co-ordinator Tasmania (concurrent appointments), Mission Support Department, Office of the Secretary for Mission.

Effective 8 January

Major Brian **Saunders**, Corps Officer, Box Hill Corps, Victoria Division (Major Saunders is transferring to the Australia Territory from the USA Western Territory).

CANDIDATES

Nicole and Tony **Bezzina**, of Miller Corps in NSW, Crystal **Lee**, of Perth Fortress Corps, currently serving as Candidate Helper at Rockingham Corps in Western Australia, and Shaun **Featherston**, of Hobson Bay Corps in Victoria, have been accepted for training as cadets in the 2020 *Messengers of Reconciliation* session.

PROMOTED TO GLORY

Major Gwyneth **Edwards** on 23 October.

ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR

COMMISSIONERS JANINE AND ROBERT DONALDSON (TERRITORIAL LEADERS)

#30 Nov – Commissioning, Waverley Temple Corps.

*1 Dec – Commissioning, Capricorn Region Corps, Rockhampton.

8 Dec – Robert to preach at Wollongong Corps/Janine to preach at Tarrawanna Corps, Wollongong.

9 Dec – Retired Officers Christmas lunch, Wollongong Corps.
14 Dec – Community Christmas Lunch, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

15 Dec – Robert to preach at North Brisbane Corps/Janine visiting Inala Corps breakfast barbeque.

#Commissioner Janine Donaldson only

*Commissioner Robert Donaldson only

COLONELS JULIE (TSWM/GENDER EQUITY ADVOCATE) AND MARK CAMPBELL (CHIEF SECRETARY)

#30 Nov – Commissioning, Waverley Temple Corps.

*1 Dec – Commissioning, Capricorn Region Corps, Rockhampton.

14-15 Dec – Gladstone Corps, Queensland.

#Colonel Mark Campbell only

*Colonel Julie Campbell only

Tribute reports.

To have a tribute included in an issue of *Others*, please email your report of no more than 250 words and accompanied by a high-resolution (no smaller than 1mb) head-and-shoulders photograph of the individual, to others@salvationarmy.org.au

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The best Christmas present ever.

Salvos were God's gift to me

WORDS GARRY

FOR MOST PEOPLE, A REHABILITATION centre at Christmas would be the last place they'd want to be. For me, seven weeks into my second attempt at recovery from an alcohol addiction, being told my rehabilitation centre would close for two weeks over Christmas was devastating.

I'd tried rehab the year before and had relapsed the moment I got home. I didn't want that to happen again, so I asked the centre if there was any other option to remain in residential recovery over Christmas. Someone mentioned The Salvation Army might be able to help. A lady from the Salvos in Canberra got in touch and told me I could stay at their Recovery Services centre. Looking back, I believe it was a God thing. It was just such a coincidence that the rehab I was at closed for two weeks, and so I ended up at the Salvos.

My whole attitude to recovery changed after that. It was the spiritual side with The Salvation Army that made all the difference. On Tuesday nights they had family night, and if you had family in Canberra they could come in and have dinner with you. Then afterwards, you had chapel. The way Captain Amanda and Daniel (Ross) preached, the way they brought the Bible to life through the way that they spoke, was really uplifting.

I started to reconnect with my childhood faith. When I got to Canberra Recovery Services it was like a faith renewed, and I'm forever grateful. I'd lost two



● Garry at the Family Store in Griffith with Corps Officer Major Lyn Cathcart.

marriages due to my addiction, and also my job. I would go to work drunk, and then drink while I was there. I would have alcohol in the car, and I used to sneak out and have a drink. I couldn't live without it.

"It was the spiritual side of The Salvation Army that made all the difference."

But spending Christmas at the Salvos centre, sober, free and safe from temptation, was the best Christmas present I'd ever had. And it was the start of a wonderful transformation. I slowly learned to take responsibility. Before, when I was in my addiction, I had no responsibility. I was blaming everyone else, but at the Salvos centre I got better every day.

After spending nearly a year at Canberra Recovery Services Centre, then living for a few months at a Salvation Army transitional housing accommodation

service, which kept me connected with chapel and supported by my counsellors, I felt strong enough to return home to Griffith. The first thing I did was go to the Salvos.

I initially stayed in Salvation Army crisis housing in Griffith and I also began working 15 hours a week at the Griffith Family Store, driving the truck, making and picking up deliveries. I then found my own accommodation and at the end of October I got enrolled as a senior soldier at Griffith Corps.

The feeling of freedom from not having to feed my addiction is amazing. I've made new friends and reconnected with old ones, and I'm looking forward to undertaking further study in the community services sector so that I can give back to others, just as God, through The Salvation Army, has given me so much.

And I'll never forget the best Christmas present I've ever received – when I got to spend Christmas Day at a Salvation Army Recovery Services centre. ●

**As told to Lauren Martin*

Increase your impact for the 2020 Self Denial Appeal

Start planning your sacrificial gift today

Each year the Self Denial Appeal challenges you to give one week's salary on missionary service. But did you know you can pledge your gift as a yearlong sacrifice?

Giving your gift as a regular donation enables you to steward your finances throughout the year. It helps you build your generosity into your budget and transform lives on an ongoing basis.

Your donations are recorded and tallied prior to the Altar Service, so you know what you've given and what sacrifice you may still be able to make. You'll be able to participate in the Altar Service by marking your envelope as a regular giver.

God makes his will for the world come alive through you. Just imagine the impact you can have when your ongoing generosity is pooled with that of the international Salvation Army community.

In 2019 the Self Denial Appeal raised \$3.26 million for The Salvation Army's international work. Whether you choose to give a one-off sacrificial gift during the Altar Service or become a regular giver, your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Transform lives and offer God's love to a hurting world. Become a regular giver at www.selfdenial.info or call 02 9466 3152.



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