

Larney's passion to help others in pain

"The Salvos' role in my stability was huge! Without that support there's a real possibility I would still be on the streets and I wouldn't have my son. He would have definitely been removed." – Larney

Recently employed in a **Salvation Army** human resources role, and starting on a career path she hopes one day can profoundly impact others who are suffering, Larney has battled for years to beat the pain and destructive patterns of her past.

It is a battle she has fiercely fought, she says, for the sake of her most "precious gift" – her young son.

Larney says her life is the most stable it has ever been. This is due to ongoing support from mentors at the Rockdale (NSW) Salvation Army, through accessing a range of Salvation Army Services, including emergency crisis accommodation and welfare support, and through finding a transforming Christian faith.

Horror home life

Her home life, Larney explains, was "horrific". Eventually, when she felt her life was threatened, she fled.

With some connection to the Rockdale Salvos, she went straight to the



SHARON PATTERSON

AFTER A CHILDHOOD OF EXTREME SUFFERING, LARNEY (PICTURED WITH HER SON) HAS NOW FOUND STABILITY AND HOPE.

centre (after reporting to the police), and was helped into short-term emergency accommodation.

However, after moving out, a turbulent period followed. She made multiple suicide attempts and, following the only patterns she knew, entered a violent relationship.


She says, "I was 15, living out of home, no stable income, no stable accommodation, with a baby growing inside of me. I knew I had to get my life sorted out."

Breaking free

In 2013, Larney renewed her connection

with the Rockdale Salvos. Through a court process, they helped her to break free of the violent relationship haunting her. Rockdale Salvos continue to support Larney, both emotionally and spiritually.

"It's really hard when you're in that kind of situation to find someone who will not only believe you, but will support you," Larney says. "I got that from the Salvos – just complete and utter understanding and compassion."

She hopes in the future to study psychology and law and says, "I now just want to help others the way I was helped." 

Boost for struggling students

Disengaged students in Queensland are receiving extra support from The Salvation Army's Sunshine Coast Individualised Learning and Support Program, thanks to a \$250,000 grant through the Department of Education, Training and Employment. The service, which operates in Caloundra and Maroochydore, actively supports students who are at risk, or who have already become disengaged from mainstream education. It also gives them the opportunity to enter a school re-engagement program or an alternative education program.

Premier honours Manly team leader

Captain Louanne Mitchell, team leader of The Salvation Army's New Life Community Centre at Manly (NSW), has been named Local Woman of the Year in the 2014 NSW Women of the Year Awards. Captain Mitchell was nominated by the local member for Manly, Mike Baird MP, who has since become NSW Premier. The award recognises Captain Mitchell's 24-year contribution to The Salvation Army and her work in helping the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in her community.

Walking against the trafficking of women

Hundreds of people in Newcastle (NSW) recently walked to say "no" to people trafficking. Organised by Northlakes Salvation Army, the walk is in its fourth year and in that time has raised \$30,000 to support anti-trafficking organisations, including The Salvation Army's Trafficking and Slavery Safe House.

Supporter story Mrs Verne Sheather

An extraordinary cup of tea

A recent letter from Salvos supporter Verne Sheather shares the deep and life-long impact that a "Sallyman", also known as Red Shield Defence Services personnel, had on her father and why she supports the work of The Salvation Army. She says:

I am writing in response to your invitation in 'On The Scene', to share the story of why I support **The Salvation Army**.

My story is about my father, and an extraordinary cup of tea.

My father, Jack Thomson, served with the 2nd AIF (14th Australian Field Regiment, 54 Battery), in World War II. Like many returned servicemen he didn't talk about the horrors he would have encountered; he only spoke of the mateship and recalled only a little of his experiences. One of those recollections, told to me as a child, has stayed with me through the years.

In early September 1943, my father's artillery unit landed in the north-east of New Guinea in support of an offensive against the Japanese who held the township of Lae, on the Huon Gulf. Dragging 25-pound guns, they needed to cross three rivers in the approach to Lae. As my father and others clambered up the banks of the second of those rivers, the Burep, they were greeted by a sign – "Wobble Inn".

Here were the Salvos in the middle of the jungle, with billies boiling, serving the most welcome cup of tea ever tasted!

My uncle, now 90 years old, who served with dad, recalls he was focused on the threat of sniper fire as he emerged from the waters of the Burep. To be met by the Salvos instead of bullets ... well, I can't imagine how that felt. Although the Salvos were most likely under the protection of the infantry, who were in advance of the artillery, it still took exceptional bravery to just be there for the troops.



JACK THOMSON

I will always remember my father's gratitude and admiration for the Salvos, and the bravery of those who served that special cup of tea. That is what motivates me to give.

(With special thanks to my uncle, George Begg, who filled in the finer detail of that young girl's memory, as my father passed away in 1997.)

Yours faithfully,
Mrs Verne Sheather

Red Shield Defence Services (RSDS) personnel or "Sally" men, (and later also women) have supported Australian troops for well over 100 years. The ministry began in the Boer War in 1899.

During World War I, Salvos chaplains such as William McKenzie (1869-1947) who was later awarded the Military Cross, famously supported troops.

It was recorded that: "Chaplain McKenzie made Christ real to thousands of men. Up and down the fire-swept ridges he followed them, carrying food and water; tramping miles for their mail; by night cutting steps over treacherous patches which the boys must travel in the morning; praying with them; helping them to live; supporting them as they died. Burying literally hundreds of brave lads fallen in battle, he spent far into the night in his dim dugout, writing to their relatives."

This same spirit carried forward and during World War II, RSDS representatives offered comfort and support to troops, with "Hop In" tents and canteens set up in training camps in Australia, and near battlefronts including on the Kokoda Trail.

Today Salvation Army Red Shield Defence Service Representatives continue to support Australian defence personnel and their families.

We would love to hear why you support The Salvation Army. Tell us what motivates you to give and you may feature in our next edition of On the Scene Email generosity@ae.salvationarmy.org

Transformation from terror



AFTER GRADUATION FROM “MOONYAH” HIMSELF, JASON HAS STAYED TO SUPPORT OTHERS BATTLING ADDICTION.

“The weekend I decided to end my life, I woke to helicopters flying above my place. I thought they were after me. I started running down the street. I rang my boss to say I wouldn’t be back. I threw my phone into the ocean. I was scared.” – Jason

Jason is a cheerful, prayerful, encouraging presence and unofficial mentor to the 100 or so men he feeds at **The Salvation Army’s** Brisbane Recovery Services Centre (also known as Moonyah).

Jason says he loves to encourage participants to go the distance in the recovery service’s residential program, despite the hard times and struggles.

It is especially meaningful to Jason, because before he was employed as the Moonyah chef, he was a resident of Moonyah himself. His life before the program was a dark tangle of extreme-drug and alcohol-induced paranoia.

Jason’s parents split when he was nine and he became a difficult young man for his mum to manage.

Addiction and paranoia

He left home at 16, moved in with

like-minded mates and the next 20 years became a cycle of moving towns, changing jobs and getting drunk. By his early 30s, he was heavily drinking, drug-taking and extremely paranoid.

He thought people were following him and he had lost all sense of reality.

“I didn’t want to live like this anymore and thought that death would be a good option,” he says.

“The last thing I can remember before help finally got to me was cutting crosses into my face with a razor blade. If I didn’t get help, I would have been dead for sure by now.”

Jason was hospitalised and his doctor suggested his addiction was most likely the source of his paranoia. His mum drove him to Moonyah and, nine months later, he graduated.

Transformation and freedom

The courses, the counselling, the groups and watching the transformation of others, all had an enormous impact, but he says he believes his true turning point was also spiritual.

“I think that handing my will over to the care of God was the turning point

The Salvation Army Recovery Services offers a number of long-term residential treatment facilities to help people find freedom from addiction. It also offers a range of non-residential services, including out-client case management services and youth services, through Salvation Army Corps (churches) and centres, and provides residential withdrawal management services (commonly referred to as detox). Around 3600 people are supported in residential services in NSW, ACT and Qld each year.

In recent years, the Salvation Army Recovery Services has won a number of prestigious awards, including the 2010 University of Wollongong Vice Chancellor’s Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research Partnership; the 2012 National Drug and Alcohol Awards Excellence in Research; then in 2013, the ‘Treatment and Support’ award as well as the ‘Significant Contribution to the Therapeutic Community movement in Australasia by a Program, Service or Intervention’.

in my journey. I started attending The Salvation Army’s Carindale Corps (church) in the first week at Moonyah and I have never left,” he says.

Jason says he loves sharing his story with others because he knows that although it is not an easy walk, there is hope for all.

“I get so much encouragement out of seeing people change. I know that my life changed from being selfish to being full of gratitude,” he says.

“Jesus says in the Bible: ‘Follow me’. I did and I have come out of the awful darkness into this beautiful new life.”

By Bill Simpson



We’re about people finding freedom.

My contact details

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Given name

Surname

Address

Suburb

State

Postcode

Phone ()

Email

Supporter ID

Appeal Code

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Gratitude for drought appeal funds

The Salvation Army has distributed well over \$2.3 million of the \$2.5 million raised earlier this year through appeals such as the We're for the Bush appeal, the Woolworths Rural Assistance Program, the 'Weekend Sunrise Dollar 4 Drought' and the 'New England Drought Relief Appeal' offering support through distribution of Woolworths, IGA, CRT and EFTPOS vouchers (or cash grants for farmers in remote locations).

The Salvation Army Rural Support Services' Pam Wilkes says, "We're working to cover the worst affected areas with systematic farm visits. We also have up to 10 new farming families a day contacting us."

While there has been some good rainfall in some areas, Pam says many places are still in drought. Even those who have had rain, still have had to struggle with little winter grass, plus many are finding it difficult to afford to buy seed or to replace breeding stock sold off at the height of the drought.

"The financial effects of drought will be with us for a long time to come and the assistance will continue to be necessary," Pam says.

She says the support has been great encouragement to farmers.

"We're dealing with a demographic that traditionally is very resilient – they're the last people to put up their hands and ask for a handout, but many had reached breaking point," Pam says. "I regularly have tough farming men and women sobbing with gratitude! So many say, 'please thank the companies who ran the appeals and the people who donated'."

Help is still available through a call to Salvos Care Line **1300 36 36 22**.

Support when the world comes crashing down

Geoff was always very active, but he now has brain damage, gets very forgetful, plus he gets very, very unsteady on his feet." – (Wife) Val

Val and Geoff had both always worked full-time, Val as an accounts clerk and Geoff in manufacturing. Then, in September 2012, Geoff collapsed with a subarachnoid haemorrhage, a class-five aneurism and a number of strokes. Val says, "Geoff's sickness just absolutely rocked our world".

Today Geoff has speech difficulties, decreased concentration and short-term memory loss. He can no longer drive or work. He is unsteady when he moves and has little use of one arm.

Val explains that it was a particularly stressful time in her life. "My mum had died in England in the March, Geoff collapsed in September, he was in hospital all October and my dad died in November. I got to see mum, but couldn't afford after Geoff's illness to return home to say goodbye to dad."

After Geoff's collapse and surgery, Val had no choice but to become Geoff's full-time carer, effectively losing her income as well.

The couple had always paid their bills, but Val says once their income stopped, the bills began to mount up with startling speed. Then the bill collectors began phoning relentlessly.

Moneycare support

Told about The Salvation Army's Moneycare service, Val contacted a financial counsellor in a Queensland office. The counsellor then contacted all the creditors to say he would be the only contact point from that time on.

"It was a time of horrible stress, so that was a big relief," Vals says.




VAL, WHO HAD TO GIVE UP WORK TO BECOME FULL-TIME CARER FOR HER HUSBAND GEOFF, SAYS WITHOUT MONEYCARE SUPPORT, THE COUPLE MAY HAVE LOST EVERYTHING.

She says the most important thing Moneycare offered in the early days was "breathing space" and negotiation for release from a number of debts.

Negotiations were also made with the finance company to keep the couple's car until a very small inheritance (just enough to pay off the car) came through from Val's mum's estate.

With ongoing medical treatment at the hospital and Geoff unable to walk any distance, Val says life without the car would have been incredibly difficult.

"It was just amazing," Val says.

"Without Moneycare, we probably would have had everything taken from us by now. That's how I was imagining our future." 

The Salvation Army Moneycare is a leading provider of financial counselling and financial literacy education in Australia, conducting in-depth case work with about 5,000 clients per year. It conducts around 250 community education sessions per year. The service also operates a centralised no-interest loans program (Salvos NILS) and to date has provided more than \$1 million in loans for essential goods and services to people in need.