

On the Scene

AUTUMN 2006 NEWS & STORIES FROM THE SALVATION ARMY AUSTRALIA EASTERN TERRITORY

INSIDE OUR HISTORY • FRIENDLY FACES ON LONELY DAYS • FROM EXECUTIVE LIVING TO DESTITUTION

Feeding the hungry – shared dreams become reality

“Both my wife’s and my parents were Holocaust survivors and they always told us that the worst thing, on top of any cruelty, was hunger.

JOHN LANDERER CBE AM LLB HON LLD (MACQ)

The dreams of two very different people – **Salvation Army** Captain Robbin Moulds and businessman John Landerer – to feed Sydney’s most marginalised, were travelling upon parallel paths until a meeting brought their talents and passions together.

For many years, Salvation Army Captains Robbin and Paul Moulds, together with members of their church, have worked with people who are mentally ill, drug and alcohol dependent, frail aged, homeless, hungry and poor in inner-city Sydney.

The Salvation Army Sydney Streetlevel Mission provides 400 subsidised meals each week to those who are either homeless or on the knife-edge of homelessness living in local boarding houses. The mission has also been able to provide limited food vouchers to those in need.

Robbin Moulds knew how many of those who came through the centre were “food insecure”, not knowing where their next meal would come from. She believed that handouts were not the answer. Robbin dreamt of doing more ...

Her dream was to establish a wholesale food market within the Streetlevel centre, where those assessed as being in greatest need could obtain subsidised/donated food whenever they needed. At the same time, they could be case managed and taught to budget and put together nutritious meals.

The service was not going to be about



ABOVE THE OPENING OF THE SALVATION ARMY STREETLEVEL FOOD MARKET WAS A DREAM COME TRUE FOR CAPTAIN ROBBIN MOULDS (MAIN) AND JOHN & MICHELLE LANDERER (INSET)

giving away free food. Everyone, Robbin believed, had some gift and a barter system would create avenues for people to use their gifting in exchange for support and help. However, the funds to set up such a cooperative never seemed available ...

Meanwhile, Solicitor and Company Director of Landerer and Company, John Landerer, who already supported The Salvation Army, had, with his wife Michelle, always dreamt of supporting a specific project to alleviate hunger in the area.

John Landerer says: “Michelle and I grew up hearing of our parents’ suffering during the Holocaust. We carry the baggage of having been often reminded that hunger is the worst thing in the world. They impressed upon us how horrible it was to wake up hungry and to go to bed hungry.

“These lessons from our parents motivated us to help others who may be experiencing hunger. I also wanted to create a bridge between the Jewish and Christian faiths for the purpose of providing these benefits. For that reason I approached The Salvation Army with the idea that

I wanted to do something food-wise.

“Robbin Moulds sold me on the idea of establishing a cheap supermarket where people could obtain fresh food, and maintain a sense of integrity. I liked the idea a lot. I knew The Salvation Army would be able to attract donations of food far more than we could. I’ve also admired how frugal and modest and hardworking they are, and I thought ‘they’ll drive the dollar further’.

“And so Robbin’s dream matched my dream.”

The Salvation Army Streetlevel Food Market is now a reality, after opening on 21 October 2005. As well as food, the centre will offer recipe cards, cooking classes and case management.

John Landerer hasn’t stopped dreaming yet. He said: “My ambition, if this succeeds, and I certainly hope it does, is to be in partnership with The Salvation Army in other areas too. But anyhow,” he smiles, “one step at a time.”

Read more about The Salvation Army Streetlevel Food Market at www.salvos.org.au/foodmarket.

focus

We need you!

Red Shield Appeal doorknock,
27-28 May

Volunteer for the Red Shield Appeal doorknock and you'll be helping The Salvation Army to "shield those in need", not to mention the personal reward of feeling good about helping others.

Better still, organise a team of friends to volunteer with you! The doorknock is lots of fun and will only take a few hours of your time – lots of people make it a social get-together with a barbecue afterwards. To volunteer, simply ring **13 32 30** or visit our website, www.salvos.org.au



Salvo Care Line

Salvo Care Line Sydney will be relocating to an improved facility in Sydney's inner west during 2006. To enquire about volunteering as a telephone counsellor, call (02) 9331 1440 or visit www.salvos.org.au/volunteering

The next volunteer training course commences in February.

Salvo Idol

An administrator for The Salvation Army Employment Plus's community work programs, 22-year-old Anne Robertson was a finalist on *Australian Idol*. A strong Christian who was raised in the church, Anne says her definition of an Australian Idol is: "Talent, personality and a good role model." Idol hosts complimented Anne, "You and Guy Sebastian are the nicest two people on the planet." (EXCERPT FROM *VENUE* MAGAZINE, NOVEMBER 2005)

Help us keep our history alive!

As The Salvation Army celebrated 125 years of service to God and the Australian community during 2005, an exciting project was conceived to capture the Army's rich history in Australia and the South Pacific.

During the next three years, the "Keeping it Alive" project aims to produce an innovative history of Salvation Army ministry since 1880. It will include the development of the Army's extensive social service network and its ministry of presence and reaching out through some of the region's most tragic times.

"Keeping it Alive" will present The Salvation Army history using a range of contemporary communication media including video/ DVD presentations, a comprehensive CD ROM (to satisfy the needs of historians and archivists), a coffee table book, a website and a variety of material suitable for children and youth. 



How you can help

You can be involved in helping us to keep our heritage alive.

Community participation is invited in two ways:

- 1 By sharing photographs, film, information, artefacts, stories/ anecdotes/ memories and any other material you have that is of historical significance to The Salvation Army.
- 2 By becoming a voluntary member of our research teams. No special skills are needed, just a desire to help us unearth the treasures of our history. To enquire or register your interest, please contact:

- **Major Ken Sanz**
PO Box A435, Sydney South, NSW, 1235
Phone (02) 9266 9699 Fax (02) 9266 9600
Email ken.sanz@aue.salvationarmy.org
- Visit www.salvos.org.au

Friendly faces on lonely days

For 86-year-old widow, Jane, The Salvation Army Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre in inner-city Sydney is much more than a place to purchase an inexpensive meal.

This is not to undervalue the provision of nutritious, home-cooked food to this community. One of the main services provided by the centre is a subsidised two-course midday meal (\$3) every weekday at lunchtime, plus an evening meal on Tuesday nights. As manager Doug Smith says: "Most of our visitors are living by themselves in pretty sparse accommodation. They often wouldn't cook for themselves or look after their health. In fact, in some cases, I suspect this meal may be what keeps people alive."

However, for most of the elderly pensioners, the majority of whom live alone in high-rise Department of Housing flats, it's not just about the food. "It's also about the sense of community and friendship," explains Doug. "When you live alone, something simple like being able to sit with someone else while you have a meal becomes very important."

As Jane, a regular visitor to Waterloo, reflects, "It's the friendliness of the place, the companionship when you have a meal."

Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre was established by The Salvation Army Sydney Congress Hall (church) in the inner city to offer a comfortable, relaxed and safe environment for locals to "drop-in".

It is managed by Salvationists Doug and Jackie Smith, who are responsible for feeding 40 to 50 people a day, many of them extremely poor, marginalised and/or lonely.

Doug says: "We provide a resource in an area where loneliness is a great problem. We are located directly opposite a number of up to 30-storey Department of Housing blocks of flats, with at least 2000 people living within 100 metres of the centre. They are mainly single occupant flats.

"The bulk of the community living in those flats is in the older category and most would be on a pension of some sort. Many of our regulars fit this category. Of our floating population, who come in and disappear quickly, around 30 to 40 per cent have psychiatric problems of one sort or another," he says.



ABOVE JANE'S FRIENDS AT WATERLOO NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE ARE LIKE FAMILY TO HER NOW

Jane explains: "Waterloo is a reaching-out centre, whether you're a regular or not. The Sallies and the volunteers seem to make everyone welcome and they treat everyone the same.

There's a lot of happiness here – everyone has a smile and a joke.

"I'd be lost without the Sallies, I really would," she says. "These people are family to me now." ○

Others share Jane's memories of Waterloo...

Many readers may have received The Salvation Army Christmas Appeal letter last year featuring Jane (pictured) who planned to spend Christmas Day with The Salvation Army at Waterloo in inner-city Sydney.

It seems Jane's story about a man named Mr Flucker* who used to play his concertina in the streets of Waterloo when she was a child has connected with some of our readers. Here are excerpts of correspondence we received:

"My father was the Mr Flucker which she refers to in your letter. He was in the Sydney City Mission as a missionary for 25 years.

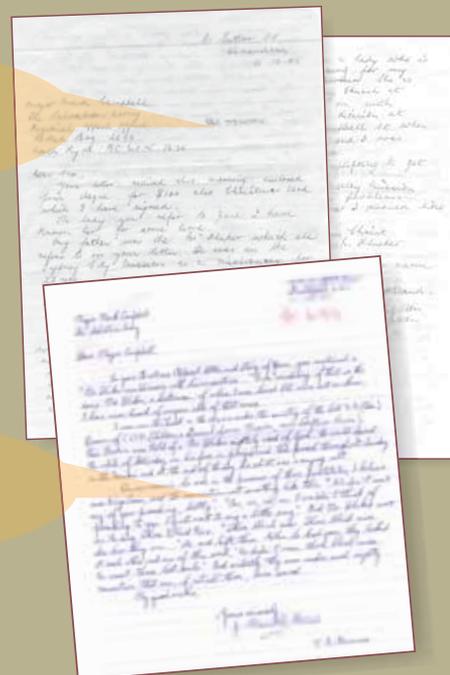
I used to walk around Chippendale and later Surry Hills singing with him.

I am now 88 years of age ..."

Another letter read:

"In your Christmas Appeal letter and story of Jane, you mentioned a 'Mr Fluker would arrive with his concertina...' I am wondering if that is the same Mr Fluker, a Scotsman, of whom I once heard but never met or knew. I have never heard of anyone else of that name."

*FLUCKER IS THE CORRECT SPELLING, PRONOUNCED FLUKER.



From executive living to destitution – no-one is beyond the risk of homelessness

Elizabeth* is now in her early 40s. Her working life saw her climb from success to success at a young age. Outwardly, it seemed a glamorous existence, involving the excitement of overseas travel with a multinational firm and regularly hosting glittering special events.

However, the reality was that Elizabeth's work owned her and the demands of the job caused incredible levels of stress. She turned to prescription medication to cope and ended up having a complete breakdown.

Her marriage eventually fell apart, with her husband winning custody of their young daughter.

Elizabeth had few family support structures, having migrated to Australia a number of years earlier as a young married woman. Her friends, in reality, turned out to be little more than business colleagues.

After having so much, Elizabeth found herself caught in a whirlpool of health issues, unemployment, lack of support structures and finally into homelessness ...

According to manager of **The Salvation Army** Pindari Womens Service in Brisbane, Christine Tuohy, the stereotype of an older homeless woman – possibly with alcohol addiction, pushing a trolley and living on the streets – is far from reality. She says: "We have accommodated around 600 women in the last year, and maybe two of them have fitted that cliché.

"Most of the women we have seen



recently have been very typical women, aged 25 to 35 years, and a few – like Elizabeth – were executives before becoming homeless.

"Many people are absolutely stretched in their budgets, and if their job or health is threatened, they can lose everything very rapidly. Some experts estimate the majority of us are only a few pay packets away from homelessness. It could happen to any one of us," says Christine.

"Financial crisis is not the only factor contributing to homelessness. Many women are in dangerous domestic situations involving violence. There is also very little support for women with mental health issues.

"We often observe that almost all the women who come here are really the nicest of people. Time and time again, others have taken advantage of that, and

really used and abused that niceness."

The Salvation Army's Pindari Womens Service first opened its doors on 30 June 2004 due to increased demand in the community for emergency accommodation for women. Pindari is operated by qualified welfare and support staff who provide case management, life skills courses and activities, plus assistance with finding medium to long term accommodation for clients who can stay up to twelve weeks.

Christine Tuohy explains:

"Elizabeth's case was not an isolated one. She was just so grateful to be offered a place where she was welcomed and accepted for who she was, not what she did. Pindari gave her a safe place where she could start putting plans in place to get her life back together again." *O*

* NAME AND SOME DETAILS CHANGED



If you would like further information, please tick the relevant boxes and return by mail to: **The Salvation Army, GPO Box 9888, Your Capital City.**

Or fax to: **02 9266 9805.**

- Worship and church programs
- Community services
- How I may become a member of the Red Shield Club (our donor association)
- Wills and bequests

My contact details

Title Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Dr

Given Name

Surname

Address

Suburb

State

Postcode

Phone ()

Email

I would like to donate \$ _____ by _____

Cheque/ money order payable to The Salvation Army

Credit card Visa Bankcard

Mastercard Diners Amex

No

Name on card

Expiry / Signature

Please be assured your details remain confidential. Donations are tax deductible. Donate by credit card now by phoning **13 32 30** or log onto **www.salvos.org.au**

Letters & feedback welcome!