

CREATIVE

THE SALVATION ARMY • AUSTRALIA EASTERN TERRITORY • JANUARY 2015 • VOLUME 16 • ISSUE 1



the **BREAKING BUSY CYCLE**

MAKING TIME TO RECONNECT WITH GOD

FROM *the* WINGS

REHEARSALS UNDERWAY FOR BOUNDLESS MUSICAL



By VIVIAN GATICA and ANNE HALLIDAY

Rehearsals have begun this month for *Covenant*, the much-anticipated new musical which will premiere at the Boundless International Congress in London in July.

The work of creative collaborators, brothers Karl (script) and Kevin Larsson (music), and Commissioner Keith Banks (lyrics), the musical will feature inspiring stories from the The Salvation Army's history.

Karl, who is part of the information technology team in the United States Western Territory's headquarters, is co-directing the musical alongside Barbara Allen (pictured above), founder and director of the Pasadena Tabernacle Youth Chorus.

The stories featured in the musical are entwined with William Booth writing a covenant that he wanted everyone at his funeral to sign.

"Booth is wondering how the Army is going to be when he goes," Karl said. "He's sick, he's ill, he's coming to the end, and that's why he's working on this covenant. It was a way of people signing that commitment to the future of The Salvation Army. We want people to come to the musical to be entertained, but also to be inspired [to] hopefully sign some sort of covenant of their own."

While rehearsals are only just beginning for the cast of 55 performers, the audition process was completed more than a year ago, before the script was fully developed. The cast now have a five-month rehearsal schedule in the lead-up to the congress, which has its full title as Boundless - The Whole World Redeeming.

"We had to cast the play with only having a vague idea of what the characters were going to be," Karl said.

Covenant will be a multi-media experience, using technology and multi-media to enhance the drama unfolding on the stage.

"These stories are supposed to encourage the audience to be inspired and to go out and feel good about the Army and feel empowered and motivated to follow these great people."

The Larsson brothers, sons of retired General and composer John Larsson, last teamed up on a musical in 2012, writing *Spirit! II: Empire*, for the US Western Territory's 2012 congress, *The Gathering*.

Spirit! II continued the story of the early church, building on the very successful *Spirit!* musical, written by the late General (ret.) John Gowans and John Larsson in 1974.

Kevin is the Divisional Music Director, Southern California, and Pasadena's Salvation Army Tournament of Roses Band director.

Commissioner Banks, based in the United Kingdom, is a well-known Salvation Army composer and retired officer and is also a chaplain at Glasgow International Airport.

COVER STORY 08

BREAKING THE BUSY CYCLE

Making time to reconnect with God



Photo: Sue O'Grady

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COMMISSIONING CONCERTS HONOUR CREATIVE GOD



Photos: Carolyn Hide

Hearfelt praise, continual worship and vibrant celebration of God's work across the generations were the hallmarks of two different concerts held over the commissioning weekend, 29-30 November.

Both the South Queensland Divisional celebration and worship concert, held on the Saturday evening and The Movement, hosted by the youth of Queensland on the Sunday evening, featured creative dance, worshipful songs, musical presentations and snapshots of different programs and ministries across the Australia Eastern Territory.

The love of Jesus and the transformed life possible through him were evident as children and youth sang his praises, worshipped him through drama and dance, and spoke of how their lives were different, now that they had accepted him as their saviour.

Those who'd experienced alcohol addiction, domestic violence and hopelessness also shared their stories, openly praising God for the peace and healing they were now experiencing.

Different expressions of The Salvation Army showcased a range of programs that were active in local communities, creatively engaging with at-risk people, young and old, showing the love of Jesus and bringing hope to those facing enormous challenges.

Both events honoured God, through the creative worship and praise, and the spirit of love, gratitude and celebration that were evident in both presenters and congregations alike. – **Simone Worthing**

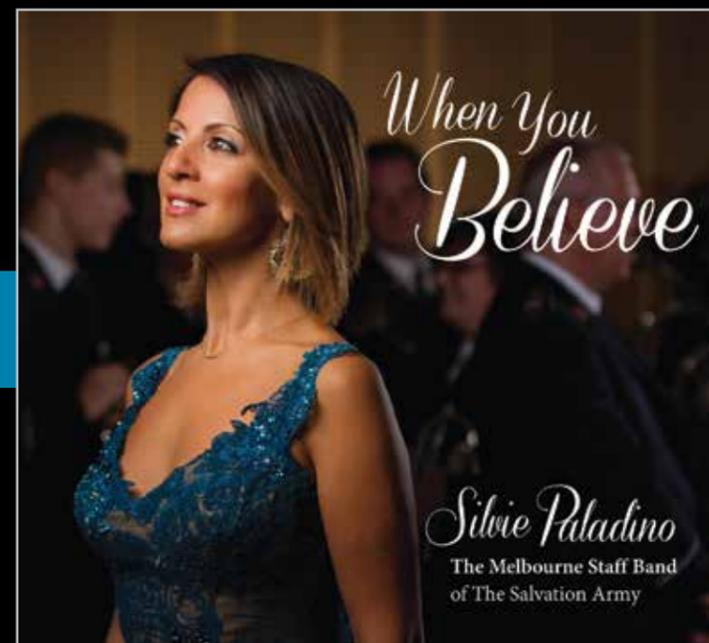
the **BIG**
picture



Something DIFFERENT

SILVIE PALADINO AND MELBOURNE STAFF
BAND CREATE AN INSPIRATIONAL ALBUM

By Merv Collins



Photos: David Cairns

The Melbourne Staff Band, with its stated commitment to making an old medium – the brass band – relevant to the modern era, has come up with a CD idea which could well be a world first.

The goal was to reach people beyond the church borders through a creative partnership between a musical star and the Melbourne Staff Band.

At Staff Bandmaster Ken Waterworth's instigation, one of Australia's favourite international musical theatre stars, Silvie Paladino, and the MSB, have combined to create a recording called *When You Believe*, a complete album of songs of inspiration and encouragement with brass band accompaniment.

It came about because of

Silvie's regular association with The Salvation Army over the past five years mainly through Our Christmas Gift, the Army's annual December Nativity event.

Silvie's contribution to Our Christmas Gift is noteworthy, not merely because of her great vocal ability and warm personality, but through the sincerity which rings clear as a bell through every spiritual song she sings.

Silvie is a committed Christian now, but she was a professional singer long before she gave her life and talent back to God.

She started in her very early teens. She won talent quests and was spotted by the local producer of the first Melbourne season of *Les Miserables* back in 1989. She was just 18 when she got the role of Eponine.

Two years later, she was invited

to star in the London West End production of the same great show – a peak only achieved by the most accomplished of dramatic vocalists.

Silvie can claim to be a part of this elite group; her CV has since become encrusted with all the great musicals both in Australia and around the world. She's been in, amongst others, *Cats*, *Hair*, *Chess*, *Mamma Mia* and *Miss Saigon* and it was while she was performing in the latter that her life changed. Some of the Filipino women in the cast were witnessing Christians and one, the well-known West End performer Joanna Ampil, played her Sandi Patti's great song *More than Wonderful*.

"That song planted a seed. I'd always believed in God," said Silvie, "but more in my head than in my heart." Her conversion was gradual.

"I always say that I opened the door to God but I kept the flyscreen there."

Eight years ago she was baptised and "God's been part of my life ever since."

It shows every time she sings and nowhere more than in her perennial appearances at Melbourne's Carols by Candlelight – an outdoor event which attracts thousands of people and a TV viewing audience of millions – where her Christian beauty lights up the stage year after year.

It was a no-brainer for Staff Bandmaster Ken Waterworth when he was looking for something innovative and effective for an MSB CD outreach.

"Silvie was exactly what I was looking for – someone who has the ability to reach those who don't

attend church," said Ken.

There are some tracks on the CD that everyone will know – *The Prayer*, Mariah Carey's song *When You Believe*, written for the Dreamworks film, *Prince of Egypt*, and *You Raise Me Up*. Others, like Silvie's testimony anthem, *Your Grace Still Amazes Me*, proclaim an unconditional and unapologetic Christian message. Silvie and the MSB recorded together.

"It's a hard slog as far as the voice and vocal chords go," said Silvie, "but it excites me and it excites the players. It gives it a real live feel."

Territorial Creative Arts Department Music Consultant and composer Brian Hogg did nearly all the arrangements and some professional musicians including former staff bandsman, Michael

Harding, on piano, completed the rhythm section.

It's a great line-up and everyone is excited by the results.

Silvie has said, and experienced for herself, that "music is so powerful; it's a direct line to the Spirit."

She and the MSB pray that this ground-breaking recording of inspirational songs will impact people's lives in the same way that a Sandi Patti song changed Silvie just a few years ago. □

Merv Collins is a Salvationist and freelance writer, who lives in Melbourne.

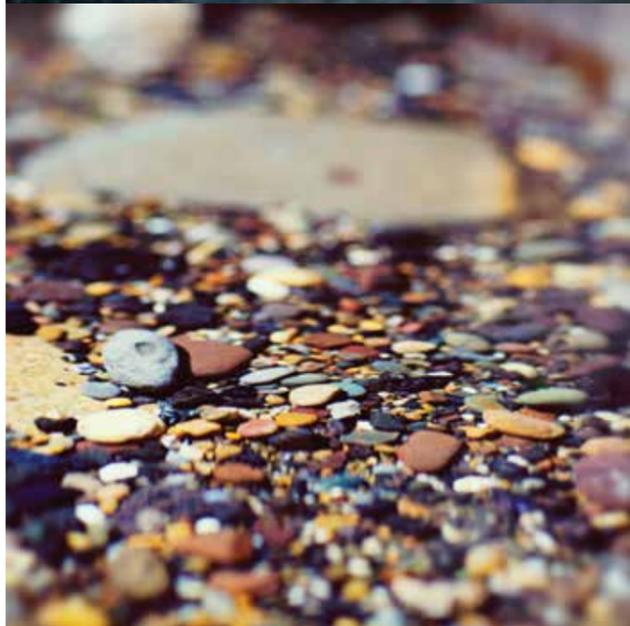
When You Believe is available at the MSB website salvationarmy.org.au/msb

A dramatic sunset or sunrise sky with a large tree silhouette in the foreground. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, red, and purple, transitioning to a darker blue at the top. The tree is a large, leafy deciduous tree, silhouetted against the bright light of the sun. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF A PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN FAITH

OUR CULTURE'S UNRELENTING DEMAND FOR PERFORMANCE AND THE DESIRE TO GIVE OUR BEST TO SERVE GOD CAN ROB US OF THE "ABUNDANT LIFE" JESUS PROMISED HIS FOLLOWERS. **MAJOR JO-ANNE BROWN** EXPLORES THE IMPACT OF MAKING TIME TO SIMPLY "BE" WITH THE ONE WHO DOESN'T NEED US TO "DO" MORE.

PHOTOS: **SHAIRON PATERSON**



CLEARING THE CLUTTER

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN FAITH

By Major Jo-anne Brown

Life in the 21st century is fascinating, exhausting, multi-dimensional, overwhelming, exciting – but mostly just plain busy. There is enormous pressure to perform, achieve and to “get somewhere” or “do something”. Many in the Church feel this same pressure to get things done for God, to be busy, and to be all things to all people – sometimes at the expense of our own spiritual well-being. After all, the need is great and it often seems the workers are few.

There are many people in need and we, in The Salvation Army, pride ourselves on being here for those who are homeless, hungry, in prison, or experiencing addiction. We are often engaged in ministry in areas that would otherwise be neglected or overlooked. This is what we are called to do. And this can be exhausting. There is always something more to be done, someone else to help, extra paperwork to be filled out. Our time with God in private and communal worship sometimes becomes just something else that needs to be done, or even worked at.

“SOMEHOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCKED INTO LIVING BY THE VALUES OF THIS WORLD INSTEAD OF KINGDOM VALUES”

As Pete Scazzero says in his book, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, we get to the point where we realise “Something is desperately wrong” (p.7). Somehow we have been sucked into living by the values of this world instead of Kingdom values. People ask us how we are going and we often say, “I am so busy”. It almost becomes a badge we wear so that people will know we are doing our part – but it doesn’t answer the question of how we are going. Perhaps we don’t dare to truly consider that question, let alone come up with the answer.

We know (and others recognise) that we are not going well when we are so tired that we lose patience with the very people we are trying to help, when we become so task-oriented that we fail to notice Christ in the person standing before us, and when we overreact to

small slights or differences of opinion. We are definitely not going well when opening the Bible or going to church feels more like a chore than a joy. Something is wrong when we realise we spend more time asking God to bless what we are doing than listening to what he actually wants us to do.

God has not called us to an either-Martha-or-Mary lifestyle. This is what we sometimes think: some of us are Marthas, and some of us are Marys. He has called us to follow him. He spent time in ministry with all sorts of people and he spent time withdrawing from the crowds, from the ministering, to spend time with his Father. And he spent lengthy periods of time with his Father, (Luke 5:16; Mark 1:35) and, in fact, began his public ministry with a lengthy period of “retreat” – 40 days in the desert.

Taking time out

This is what making time for a spiritual retreat is all about. Jesus regularly stepped aside from ministry to simply “be” with his Father. If anyone was under pressure to “do” more, to “perform”, to “meet expectations”, it was Jesus. He didn’t heal every sick person in Palestine at that time, or raise every dead person back to life. He didn’t solve every problem and fix everything. There was certainly a lot more he could have done – but he didn’t. He knew who he was and what his purpose was. I believe that spending lengthy periods of time with his Father helped him to be so sure of this.

Sometimes I am asked, “If I go on a spiritual retreat, what will I get out of it?” In some ways, this is a valid question – retreats cost money and time, and for many people these things are in short supply. If money is to be spent, and time found to go on retreat when there are already too many things to fit into the time we have, then our feeling may be, “It needs to be worthwhile”.

Perhaps it is a little like having a “date night” with your spouse. It may be enjoyable but at the end of the evening, other than simply having a good time, you may wonder if you have “got anything out of it”. But these regular times of connection and intimacy certainly strengthen a marriage relationship and deepen the joy each partner experiences in the other.

It isn’t about getting anywhere, achieving anything, doing anything. It is about simply being with my Father. One way to strengthen the depth and intimacy of that relationship. >>>

“We have good desires for a more intimate prayer life, or a deeper insight from God’s word; but we don’t always know how to get there. So we give up our pursuit, tired from wandering aimlessly, and end up feeling guilty and more distant from God instead of closer. On retreat you will have time, space and are guided in spiritual practices that will help your desire to become a reality.”

– Major Wendy Watts, Spiritual Life Development Officer, Newcastle and Central NSW Division

The whole of Scripture is a love story. It is the story of a gracious, compassionate Creator God wooing the ones he created into authentic, deep and lasting relationship with him. While relationship certainly involves a degree of "doing" (ie. loving actions, kindness, practical help, support, etc) at the heart of relationship is simply the desire to be with each other. This is the heart of Jesus' words when he says, "I am the Vine, you are the branches ... abide in me" (John 15:4-5).

Intimate connection

We are so easily lured into the trap of thinking that who we are depends on what we do, how well we do it and how well we meet the expectations of others. We still so easily seek our self-worth in achievement, approval or acquisition. Spending time away from our everyday lives gives us the opportunity to realise that we are valued and significant simply because we are loved and cherished by the Father whether or not we achieve, meet the approval of others or attain anything significant.

When I cease from activity (for a short time), I am free to simply enjoy being with my Father and listening to him without distractions and interruptions getting in the way – and without having to do my best or be better. Retreating is a gift that God gives us in order to clear our heads, refresh our spirits and rest our bodies. When we are away from the clutter of our lives we are free to hear his voice more clearly and simply rest in him.

We are called to follow Jesus and to live in union with him. This means doing whatever we can do maintain and deepen the intimate connection with him. For some it might mean a half-day a week set aside for prayer and reflection, for others it might mean a day each month, or a weekend or week each year. Some, like Jesus, will prefer to get up long before dawn and spend hours each day in communion with the Lord.

It doesn't really matter how we do this as long as we are finding ways to live out the truth that he is the Vine, we are the branches and we are to abide in him, instead of being so consumed with our busyness and our activities that we barely pay attention to the One we are serving.

Psalm 23 reminds us that he longs to lead us by still waters and green pastures and to restore our souls.

It is an invitation and a gift. □

"The theme of the retreat (run by Jo-Anne and Ross Brown) was 'Streams in the Desert',
A desert is quiet, still, isolating ... In the stillness, I reached out to Him from my heart.
I felt an incredible sense of joy and contentment, which has stayed with me (in my daily life, even after I left the retreat).
He surrounded me with His love, I was truly blessed."

– Denise Gittoes, retreat participant

RESOURCES

2015 Guided Retreats in NSW

Hartzer Park, Bowral – facilitated by Majors Ross and Jo-Anne Brown
contact: jo-anne.brown@ae.salvationarmy.org.au
Fri-Sun 10-12 April
Mon-Fri 7-11 September, (silent retreat)
Mon-Fri 2-6 November

St Josephs, Lochinvar (near Maitland) – facilitated by Major Wendy Watts
contact: wendy.watts@ae.salvationarmy.org.au
Fri-Sun 20-22 March
Mon-Thurs 20-23 July
Fri-Sun 23-25 October

Moree – facilitated by Major Julia Metcher and Captain BJ Moulder
Fri-Sun 14-16 August
contact: 02 66528777 or julia.metcher@ae.salvationarmy.org.au

Retreats are open to all officers, soldiers, employees and friends of The Salvation Army

Getting away on retreat

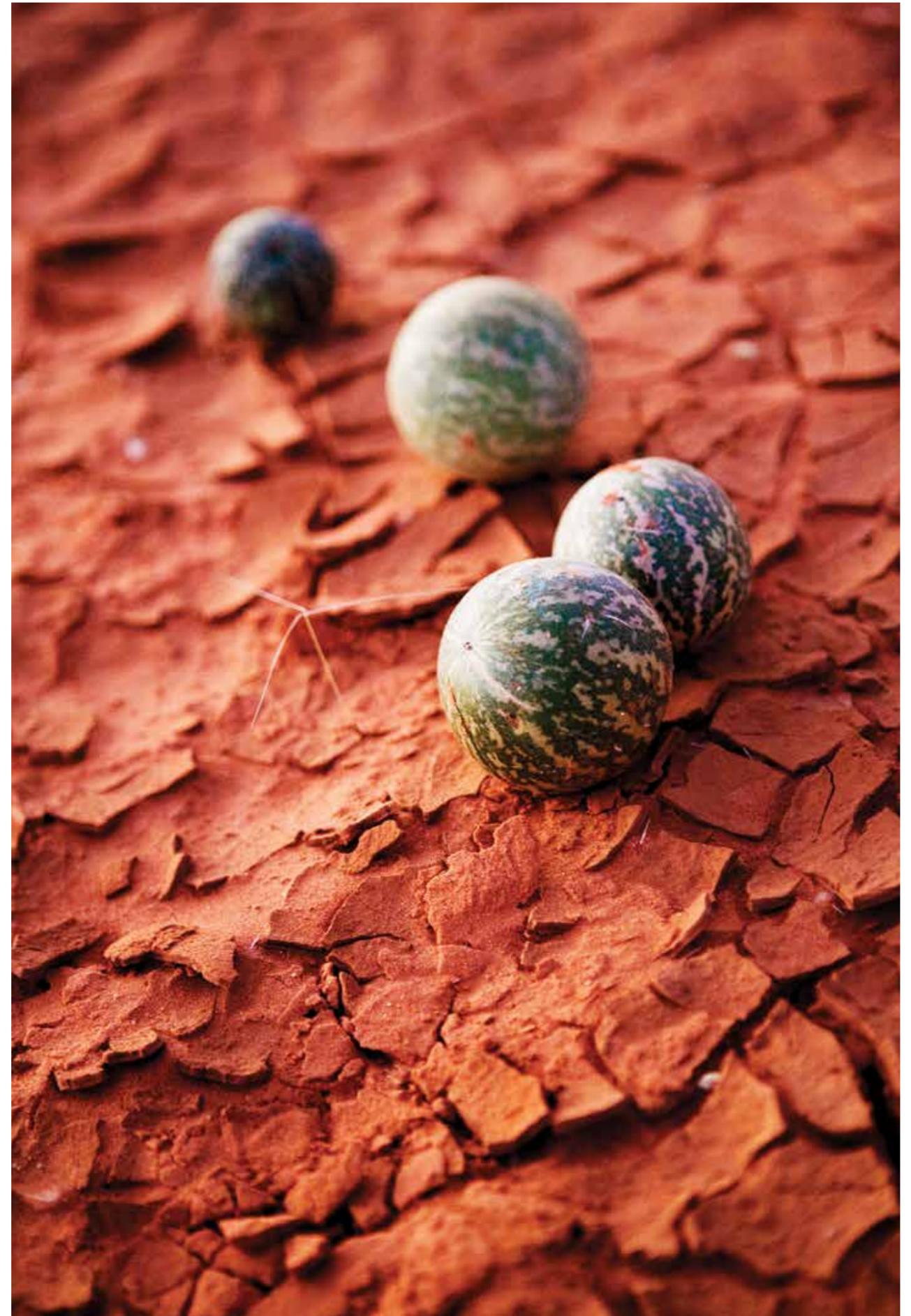
Sanctuary House is a small retreat centre located right in the heart of Sydney, directly bordering Lane Cove National Park, so it feels like you have escaped into the Australian bush. Sanctuary House offers soul care for individuals and couples, guided and self-guided retreats and guest accommodation for extended stays for up to six people. Please contact Jonathan Browning or Michelle Kay-Browning or go to sanctuaryhouse.net.au for more information.

Retreating in daily life

Majors Ross and Jo-Anne produce a monthly on-line retreat, with a link emailed to participants. To join the mailing list contact ross.brown@ae.salvationarmy.org.au

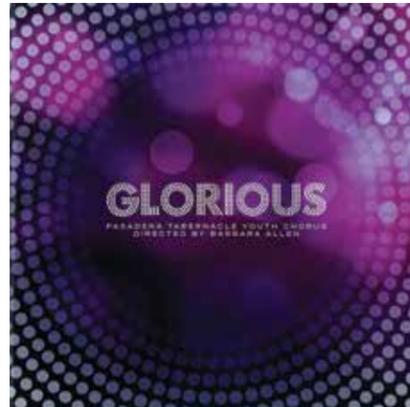
Further reading:

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that transform us, InterVarsity Press



Youthful energy

Glorious - Pasadena Tabernacle Youth Choir



Got a spare 65 minutes? If you've got somewhere to drive, some cleaning to do or even the commentary on the cricket is getting a little boring, then pop on *Glorious*, the latest album from the Pasadena Tabernacle Youth Chorus and you won't regret the decision.

Sixty-five voices of young people aged 13-30, all from the Pasadena Tabernacle Corps, come together to present 12 gospel tracks with one clear message shining through – simply "Praise".

The listener is treated to a selection of songs from renowned Gospel arrangers Kurt Carr and Kirk Franklin to modern takes on Salvation Army Classics by James Allen.

Sixty-five voices in full harmony singing "The presence of the Lord is here, I feel it in the atmosphere" is positively electric, but of particular note to me was the care taken over softer or unison lines, which resulted in sounding like fewer voices.

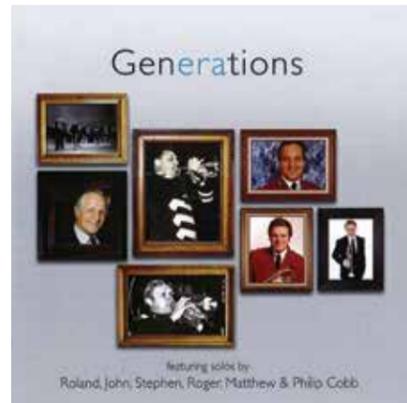
Not to be forgotten is the masterful accompaniment. Gospel music is well known for its intricate accompaniments and these tracks are no exception, rhythm section and horn lines executed with precision and groove all at the same time.

Any time you get a chance to listen to this album will definitely be the "Right time, right place to get a blessing from the Lord".

– Ash Sellers, deputy leader, Sydney Staff Songsters

Keeping it in the family

Generations – featuring solos by Roland, John, Stephen, Roger, Matthew and Philip Cobb



Reviewer
JOHN ALLEN

RIGHT:
International Staff Band Bandmaster, Stephen Cobb, one of the six Cobb family members to be featured on the album *Generations*.

Photo: Shairon Paterson

To anyone vaguely familiar with Salvation Army music tradition over the past six decades, the name Cobb will no doubt bring to mind the talents of this rather unique family.

Their collective contribution to the Salvation Army's musical terrain has been captured in the recently-released CD *Generations*.

From the early part of the last century to the present time, the Cobbs have been part of North London's Hendon Corps in the United Kingdom.

Fred Cobb became the bandmaster of the Hendon Corps in 1913 and held the position until his retirement in 1947. His son Roland and grandson Stephen succeeded him in that role for the next 50 years, maintaining a very high standard all through that time.

Generations explores this musical heritage even further, displaying the talents in performance of Fred's two sons Roland (cornet) and John (trombone), his two grandsons Stephen (cornet) and Roger (vocal) and his two great-grandsons Matthew and Philip (cornet).

Covering a period of almost 60 years, there is a noticeable difference in the quality of the recording techniques but this does not detract from the obvious skill displayed by all the participants.

In the 1950s and 60s, Roland Cobb was the inspiration to many aspiring instrumentalists (including this writer). His technique and quality of sound is displayed in two solos on this recording. *Wondrous Day* was written especially for him by Erik Leidzen and in this recording,



made in 1957, his impeccable musicianship and sound is portrayed. In contrast, his lyrical style is heard in *Love's Descent*, Bramwell Coles' lovely transcription of the old song of the same name.

John Cobb featured *The Eternal Quest* on a tour of America by The International Staff Band in 1957. This work by the late Ray Steadman Allen brought a completely new shape to solo writing. The technical skills demanded of the soloist along with the deeply moving arrangement of the song *Jesus Is Looking For Thee* brought to the soloist's repertoire a new challenge. The soloist, in a live recording, beautifully portrays the intended musical picture of a struggling soul finally coming to realise that "Jesus is looking for thee".

John enlisted with the RAF Central Band and, in a rare BBC recording of *The Acrobat*, his extensive skills and qualities shine through. In later life, his undoubted talent saw him in demand from several of the leading orchestras in the UK.

Stephen Cobb is renowned the world over for his skills as a brass band conductor. In 1978, he became the principal cornet of the ISB, a position he held with distinction for a number of years. He assumed the leadership of the Hendon Band after his father retired in 1979 and became the first non-officer bandmaster of the International Staff Band (ISB) in 1994 and still holds that position 20 years later. He will be touring the Australia Eastern and Southern Territories with the ISB in October next year. His light, sweet lyrical sound can be heard in the two cornet solos on this disc.

Crossroad by Stephen Bulla combines some strong contemporary scoring with a sensitive rendition of Major Joy Webb's poignant song *Come Into Our World*.

Stephen worked closely with the late Major Leslie Condon in the creation of *Sounds Of Singing*. Written in a free form, it provides a platform for creative

"... THE SOLOIST BEAUTIFULLY PORTRAYS THE INTENDED MUSICAL PICTURE OF A STRUGGLING SOUL FINALLY COMING TO REALISE THE SECURITY IN THE FACT THAT 'JESUS IS LOOKING FOR THEE'."

expression in Stephen's unique style. The basis of the solo is Gosta Blomberg's song *How I Love To Sing*, hence the title. Whilst not displaying a strong cornet sound, the sweetness of the rendition has the listener in no doubt that Stephen had aspects of his technique passed down from his father.

In a change from the brass, Stephen's younger brother Roger, a talented vocalist, provides three songs – *You Are Always There*, *Close To Me* and the old hymn of the church *Draw Me Nearer*.

Stephen's two sons, Matthew and

Philip, both display exceptional talent on the cornet. In a beautiful presentation of the old Welsh Folksong *David Of The White Rock*, Matthew displays a full rich cornet sound. In contrast to this he shows considerable dexterity and control in the old classic solo *Tucker* by Erik Leidzen.

The youngest soloist on this CD is Philip. He showed considerable talent on the cornet at a very early age and now occupies the lead trumpet chair in the London Symphony Orchestra. His first solo *Trumpet Call* by Dr Kenneth Downie displays a full trumpet style sound with precise articulation. The Cory Band, conducted by Stephen Cobb, provides the accompaniment to Philip's two solos.

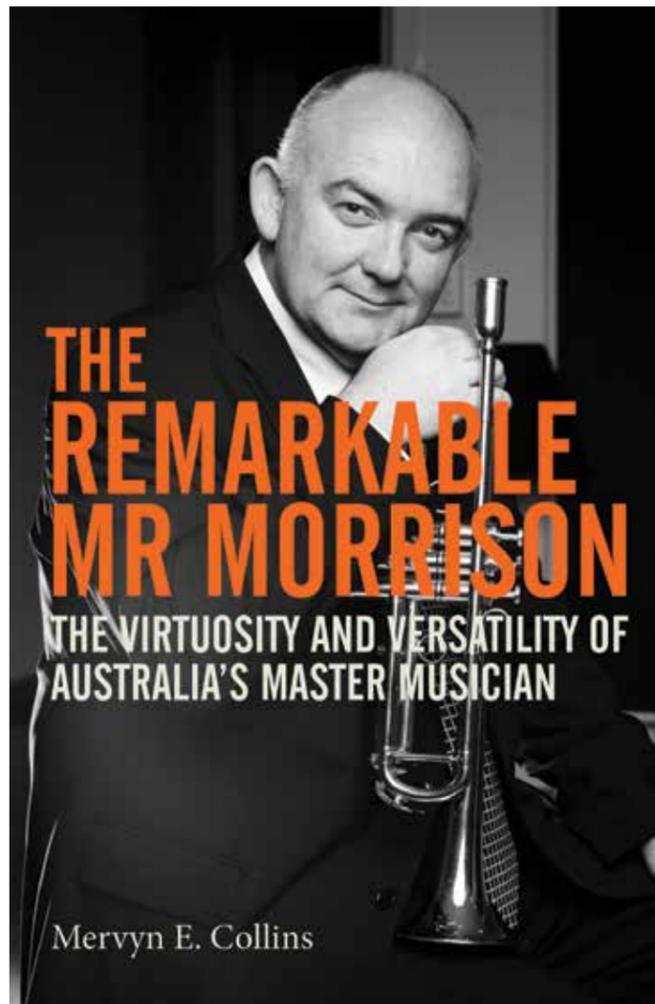
The final solo on this disc causes the listener to reflect on the talent of this amazing and committed family. A soulful rendition of the lovely song by Major Leonard Ballentine *Don't Doubt Him Now* brought assurance to the writer of the continuous love of God with the associated words:

"Don't doubt Him now
Don't lift your heart to sorrow
Though all around seems in such disarray
God's love is sure, sustaining
through tomorrow
Dispelling doubt that only brings despair
Don't doubt Him now, don't doubt Him now".

– John Allen made guest appearances for the ISB in the mid-1950s and was a member of the Melbourne Staff Band from 1988 to 1992.

The man behind the music

The Remarkable Mr Morrison – Mervyn E. Collins



The Remarkable Mr Morrison, written by Salvationist Mervyn Collins, is every music lover's guide to the musical genius that is James Morrison.

It follows his transformation from shy, country boy to internationally acclaimed performer, exploring the fascinating series of events that helped to raise him to such a professional standard.

Morrison never decided to be a musician; he discovered that he was one. Playing for worship in the local family church provided a firm foundation for him to build upon, quickly climbing the ranks through his school bands.

When he felt he needed new challenges, he would start his own bands. After dropping out of school in Year 10, Morrison applied to study jazz at The Conservatorium of Music. Although at age 16 he was two years younger than the standard admission age, James was accepted.

After completing his degree at age 18, he began to lecture in the jazz department, despite being younger than the majority of his students.

Soon, Morrison was bringing his ability to create instant "wow" factor to audiences all over the world, touring to the far reaches of the jazz community and playing with the best of the best.

When James eventually became the best of the best, he would tour with his own bands and record albums that would appeal to the entire music world, not just jazz enthusiasts.

I enjoyed the manner in which Collins writes, his excitement and passion for fine music is evident in his words of admiration for Morrison.

He creates a well-rounded picture of Morrison's life, drawing on the personal testimony of those closest to the musician and the press. Morrison's own words are intertwined throughout, validating and enhancing the perspective offered by Collins, who pays attention to every detail, allowing the reader to feel a part of Morrison's story themselves.

As a young brass musician, *The Remarkable Mr Morrison* has inspired me. Morrison's ability to achieve such a high standard of musicianship at a young age demonstrates that with hard work (and an incredible amount of natural talent), anything is possible.

– **Kimberley Douglass**
(Sydney Youth Band)

When The Joystings struck a chord

The Joystings – Lieutenant-Colonel Sylvia Dalziel

When The Joystings burst on the music scene 50 years ago, they were revolutionary. This unique, God-directed pop group was the result of a comment made by General Frederick Coutts in 1963 at his first press conference following his election: "It would be possible to take the gospel message to coffee bars with electric guitars if these proved to be an effective method."

When, after hearing this, the press wanted to meet such a group, several cadets were quickly gathered together.

The amazing story of what happened next is chronicled in *The Joystings*, a new book by Lieutenant-Colonel Sylvia Dalziel, a member of The Joystings. Most of the group were members of the *Proclaimers of the Faith* session and, following their commissioning in 1965, were appointed to the group for their initial years of service as officers. With their unique musical talents and desire to be an effective witness – combined with the initiative of Commissioner Clarence Wiseman, then training principal of the International Training College – The Joystings took the world by storm, bringing the gospel to places where it had never been heard before.

In *The Joystings*, Lt-Colonel Dalziel recounts the five-year history of the group, which included making recordings that hit the pop charts, appearing on television, meeting Queen Elizabeth II and travelling around Europe on whirlwind tours. The final chapter of the book comes from singer-songwriter Major Joy Webb, Order of the Founder, who was the multi-talented leader of the group.

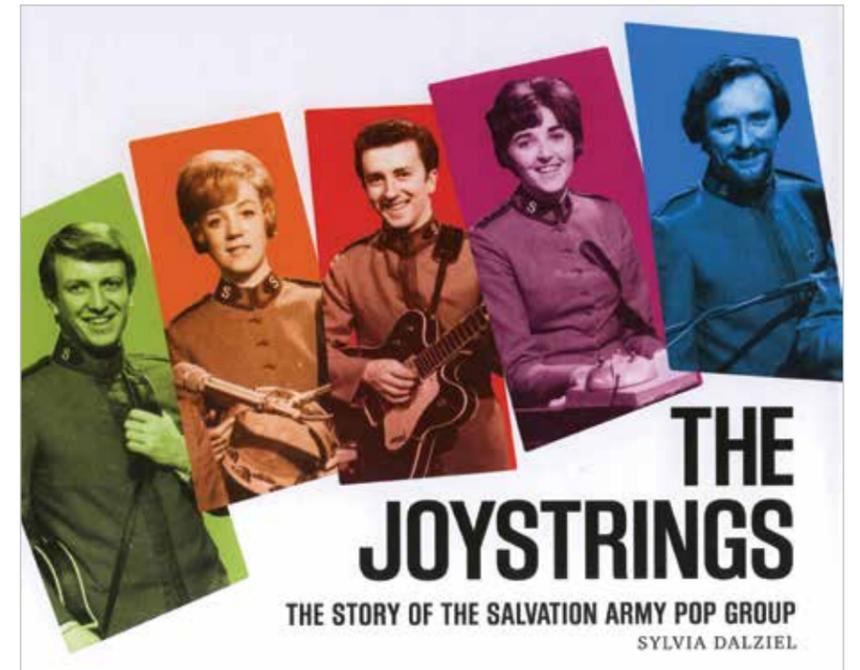
This innovative ministry did not meet with universal Salvation Army approval, but the group had courage in its convictions and the blessing of the General. As a result of their ministry, many people became Christians and committed their lives to the ministry of the gospel (some of their testimonies are recorded in *The Joystings*).

This coffee-table book has an attractive layout and contains many eye-catching photographs. The reader is left with no doubt that the group was a "God initiative," not only enthralled hundreds of people, but also changing many lives.

The Joystings is a must read.

– **Colonel Gwenyth Redhead**
(retired *Proclaimers of the Faith*
officer living in Canada.)

Reprinted courtesy of The Salvationist, Canada.



RIGHT: The Joystings' five-year musical career began with a vision to take the gospel to coffee bars.





SALVOS GET SMARTT ABOUT SELF DENIAL SONG

Chris Smartt feels strongly about social justice issues. It's the motivation behind the song he wrote for The Salvation Army's 2015 Self Denial Appeal – an appeal that raises millions of dollars for the Army's international work with the less fortunate.

"[I hope the song] helps people look at the Salvos mission and all we're doing [as something] they can be a part of," explains Chris.

"The ultimate goal would be for these communities to be supported and the projects go forward and people find Jesus."

Together as One will feature in the last week of the Self Denial video series that will be shown in corps across the

Australia Eastern, Australia Southern and New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga territories.

Basing the song around the appeal's theme, Hope Through Community, Chris says the inspiration came through watching The Salvation Army video team's footage of marginalised communities, which will feature in this year's Self Denial Appeal videos.

"The different characters that were portrayed in these videos, you kind of got to see their journeys and it put me in the right frame to write about this," he says.

Co-writing with music producer Michael Fatkin from Hillsong church, where Chris attends, Chris wrote the bones of the song before meeting with Michael to tweak it. Together they fleshed it out before producing the final product.

Chris hopes it will inspire Salvos to

support the appeal – "Essentially the song's about coming together and taking a stand – together we can make a difference, all united by Jesus."

In November 2013, Chris released his first EP, *Northern Winter*. Since then he has continued to sharpen his songwriting skills and has delved into writing different genres of music, moving away from just writing ballads to worship-style music.

Chris is working for the Salvos as part of the strategic change team who are rolling out the Army's new strategic plan. – **Esther Pinn**

For more info on Chris' music and performances, go to: [facebook.com/chris-smartt-music](https://www.facebook.com/chris-smartt-music)

At first thought, Connect might seem a strange name for a creative arts conference. Yet it perfectly captures the vision for bringing together creative people at work throughout The Salvation Army.

"Connect weekend just reinforces that the worship arts team doesn't consist of the four people who are actually employed at THQ [territorial headquarters]; actually the team is the body of artists within The Salvation Army," explains Franc Lipovic from The Salvation Army's Worship Arts team. "The weekend is about developing relationships for the purpose of ministry."

"Our theme is about connecting with God and connecting with each other. The success from last year was that people started to talk via Facebook and directly via email."

The weekend in November saw about 25 creative leaders from North Queensland to Canberra gather at The Collaroy Centre in Sydney. At the Saturday afternoon workshops,

Connect delegates split into groups and were tasked with developing creative ideas for Advent – the four-week period prior to Christmas.

"Drawing on all the resources you have within a group of artists rather than focusing on one particular element all the time. There was great value in that," said Franc.

Presenting as part of the weekend were prophetic poet Will Small, who is Youth Support Worker for Oasis Youth Network Wyong, International dance fellowship leader Mary Jones and Territorial Creative Ministry Coordinator Louise Mathieson.

"All the feedback we've got so far is fantastic," said Franc. "There are some people who are really passionate about Connect and what it offers them each year."

To keep updated about worship and creative arts events throughout the territory, go to the WorshipArts Facebook page: [facebook.com/salvos.worshiparts](https://www.facebook.com/salvos.worshiparts)

HEART AND SPIRIT AT CORE OF SONGSTERS' MINISTRY



The Sydney Staff Songsters are celebrating 25 years of ministry. Whether on tour or at home, the group is passionate about seeing the Holy Spirit transform others through their music.



Singing for the Sydney Staff Songsters is an affair of the heart ... and the Holy Spirit, according to Christine Plumridge who has been part of the group for nine years.

And while vocal talent is an important criteria for members of the brigade, Christine says ministry comes first.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2015, this has been the heart and soul of the Sydney Staff Songsters since its formation. The group doesn't visit a corps just to sing, they arrive filled with passion to share Christ's love through worship.

"We often see transformation in people's lives," says Christine. "It's not through anything we're doing specifically. It's the way the Holy Spirit works through us."

Formed in 1989, then Australia Eastern Territorial Commander, Commissioner L. Roy Lovatt, invited Dr Ron Smart, professional trombonist and conductor who is well known for his work with the Sydney Music Conservatorium, to lead the Sydney Staff Songsters.

Ron led the group until midway through 1995, when the Sydney Staff Songsters took an 18-month recess. In 1997, then-Commissioner John Gowans, who was the Australia Eastern Territorial Commander at the time, asked Graeme Press to reform the songsters.

In 2012, Graeme passed on the leadership baton to Graham Ainsworth, who has been part of the songsters for 13 years.

The Sydney Staff Songsters have performed on many national and international stages, including tours of the United States, Canada, Russia, New Zealand, China and most recently, the United Kingdom.

While performing on international stages brings an element of excitement for the Sydney Staff Songsters, deputy leader Ash Sellers says singing at smaller regional corps throughout Australia has impacted him the most.

"[They are] just craving good music ... what that can do for your spirit. There's been times where we have been singing songs about healing rain in country Australia, where they are in the middle of a drought, and it's begun to rain.

"We've been fortunate to travel all over the world and to sing in all sorts of different places but watching the Holy Spirit touch someone's heart as you sing is the kind of experience you can't ever forget."

Family is a common word that is used to describe the Sydney Staff Songsters. "There's a saying in the group that when a member of the group is hurting, we all hurt," says Christine.

Along with practising vocal parts, the Sydney Staff Songsters spend time in devotion and worship at their weekly rehearsals.

"The process of getting the notes right comes second," says Ash.

"If we are aware of something that is happening to someone ... the best thing we are able to do in a rehearsal is to stop and pray," adds Christine.

The Sydney Staff Songsters recently celebrated their 25th anniversary and families gathered for a fun day at Carss Park in Kogarah Bay on 15 November.

This month, Majors Alwyn and Deborah Robinson, who have sung in various songster groups, took up new appointments as the Sydney Staff Songsters' executive officers. – **Esther Pinn**

SUNFLOWER EXHIBITION TO HONOUR JAYNE'S CREATIVITY

Jayne Wilson's love for sunflowers is the inspiration behind sunflower-themed artistic displays at a memorial exhibition honouring her life in Wollongong this month.

Jayne, who passed away on Christmas Day, 2013, was instrumental in the creation of The Salvation Army's First Floor Program, a holistic drug and alcohol service, based at Wollongong Corps. She left a legacy that many, including her family, colleagues and First Floor Program participants are eager to celebrate.

"They [sunflowers] reflect hope, joy and potential, which Jayne exuded," explained Marilyn Dunn, First Floor Program Coordinator.

The idea for a memorial exhibition was developed to celebrate Jayne's flair for creativity. Her artistic abilities included drawing, painting, writing and storytelling and her creativity even spread to designs in her own home and garden.

"Jayne was a woman of vision and she loved colour. Often in her personal artworks she was frustrated by her inability to portray the reality of the colours she saw that reflected God's glory," she said.

People were invited to submit a creative artwork – whether a painting, photograph, mosaic, mixed media or creative writing – based around the sunflower theme. Each entrant was also required to write a short written piece explaining their artwork's relevance to the theme.

Along with being Jayne's favourite flower, sunflowers were chosen as they are a symbol used by one of the First Floor Program's support groups.

The artwork exhibition is being held from 22 January to 1 February. It will be judged in two categories – Youth (under 18 years) and Open (18 and over). Those who visit the exhibition will be able to vote. The two winners of the People's Choice award will be decided by the number of community votes.

Jayne's family will present the Wilson Family Award to the two entries that best represent Jayne – her personality, work and legacy.

"As well as being creative, Jayne was inclusive and passionate about community, so an exhibition of this type will serve to bring people together and celebrate her contributions to our lives," said Marilyn.

Entrants can nominate their work for sale and 25 per cent of the proceeds will go towards supporting the First Floor Program. Sunflowers will also be available to purchase and each sunflower will count as a vote towards the People's Choice Award winner.

Marilyn said they plan for this exhibition to be an annual event, every January, to keep Jayne's legacy alive. – **Esther Pinn**

For more information go to:
salvos.org.au/wollongong



(TOP) Marilyn Dunn says the memorial exhibition is a way to celebrate and honour the creative energy for which Jayne **(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)** was known. **(ABOVE LEFT)** One of Jayne's artworks. Photos: Shairon Paterson