

CREATIVE MINISTRY E

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love thy
neighbour

Samuel Bacon and his heart for East Timor

Hot off the *Press*



Graeme Press
Territorial Music and
Creative Arts Coordinator

Sunday night meetings: To have or not to have? That was the question!

I have received letters, emails and overheard many conversations in the wake of the article that appeared in the last edition of

Creative Ministry (Jan 2008) regarding the “for and against” for holding a Sunday evening service.

It made me stop and ponder: Is the real question whether we have Sunday night meetings or rather, what are we meeting for and what is happening in those meetings?

My motivation for attending any meeting could be all about me ... if I let it.

“Hear my heart, Lord.

“Answer my request, Lord.

“Use me, Lord.

“Make a way for me.”

God hears our prayers but if my motivation for meeting with God is only about what He can do for me, then a desire for His power may continue to grow but a yearning for His presence will not. (You can read that sentence again!)

God deeply desires to hear our heart’s cry, our petitions, our needs but His greatest joy is to hear it flowing from the mouths of those who want Him more than anything else.

“I long for you in the night; yes, my spirit within me diligently seeks you.” (Isaiah 26:9). The yearning described in Isaiah comes from the heart and soul of a person who truly knows God, someone who can say with the

Psalmist: “I gaze on You in the sanctuary to see Your strength and glory.” (Psalm 63:2)

People who know God well, want God to be well-known. No-one has to force a person who is intimately acquainted with God to be a living witness for Him.

One of the things you learn on your spiritual journey is that the more you know God, the more you want to know God. The more time you spend with Him, the more you will seek to spend time with Him.

Maybe here lies the answer to our question. Instead of debating the merits of a Sunday evening service we should all be striving for more opportunities to seek the things of God and pursue many intimate moments with Him. And perhaps to take this moment to reflect again on the reason behind our coming together to worship. Are we earnestly and genuinely seeking an intimate encounter with our Saviour? Do we honestly expect to meet with Him in a fresh way, every time we gather together?

My motivation for writing like this is not to make anyone feel guilty, but rather to create awareness. Beth Moore says “awareness is always the first step to freedom”.

It was this awareness that led me in my own spiritual journey to seek an intimate relationship with and deeper love for Him. It’s probably my most consistent, sincere and heartfelt prayer ... to actually know Him.

“If you know me, you will also know my Father. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him.” (John 14:7)

Creative Ministry continues to tell the stories of those who genuinely seek to know Him. I encourage you to seek inspiration from these stories.



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A celebration of Salvation Army banding

Four Salvation Army bands combined (pictured) for a spectacular performance on the Saturday night of the recent 125th anniversary Congress at the Sydney Convention Centre.

A few hours earlier, the sound of traditional Salvation Army marches, opera, classical, jazz and Hollywood hits rang out as the four bands presented an afternoon concert.

Make a Joyful Noise was the theme for the celebration of Salvation Army banding at Sydney Congress Hall. The bands — Sydney Congress Hall (Justin Lingard), Sydney Veterans Band (John McComb), Sydney Youth Band (James Hill) and Brisbane City Temple (Stuart Lang) — entertained a capacity audience in a programme which spanned more than two hours.

Comper for the afternoon, Major Earl Ivers, reminded the audience of The Salvation Army's heritage of music-making, reflecting on the words of William Booth: "Soul-saving music is the music for me."

The sound of classic Salvation Army band marches including *Praise* (Wilfred Heaton), *Goldcrest* (James Anderson) and *Motivation* (William Hines) filled the air, while more compelling and thought-provoking works such as *My Comfort and Strength* (Brian Bowen), and *Reflections on Nature* (Robert Redhead), which reminds the listener of the powerful words associated with the hymn tune *Fewster*, "When Jesus looked over Galilee", were warmly received by the audience.

The Sydney Veterans Band had toes tapping and hands clapping with 76 Trombones, while Allan Ferrie's arrangement of *Time To Say Goodbye*, from a song made famous by world-renowned opera singers Andrea Bocelli and Sarah Brightman, featured a duet by John Arthur (cornet) and Bryon Stoodley (euphonium).

The Sydney Youth Band took the audience *Back To The Future* with its performance of the theme tune to the hit 1980s Hollywood movie, and toes were tapping again as *El Es El Senor* (Dean Jones) was expertly unpacked by the Youth Band.

Major Ivers, during his introductory remarks at the concert, acknowledged the importance of Salvation Army banding remaining relevant in modern society. While many challenges remain, Make a Joyful Noise helped to reassure that, in many ways, The Salvation Army is hitting the right note.



the **BIG**
picture



Photo: Adam Hollingworth

Samuel Bacon is happy to turn his hand to different types of jobs in East Timor, including this water system.



love thy neighbour

Samuel Bacon would love to see

The Salvation Army extend its mission to include East Timor. Until that happens, Samuel and his family are doing whatever they can to bring healing to a country devastated by years of civil unrest and hardship. By **BILL SIMPSON**

To Samuel Bacon, creative ministry is paying his own airfare to East Timor to fix a leaking septic toilet for a struggling aid agency. Consider this: “Was it a waste of time or expense? Could I have just sent the money that I used on plane tickets? I don’t think so,” he says.

“You see, contrary to western society belief, money can’t buy everything. You can’t buy a hug or a smile for somebody.

“Money comes and goes, but the encouragement you can give in going to help people lives on in their hearts and gives them strength; gives them hope.”

And consider this:

“I think The Salvation Army (soldiers) should be banned from wearing their uniforms unless they are actually doing something constructive for the Kingdom while wearing it.”

Ouch! Samuel Bacon leaves you in no doubt where he stands on commitment.

He’s not a Salvationist, but he does worship at The Salvation Army. He’s disappointed that The Salvation Army is not involved in East Timor, especially as it is one of Australia’s closest neighbours and its people have suffered years of civil unrest and hardship.

Nobody can accuse Samuel Bacon of intransigence.

Samuel is a school teacher, husband, father, and a “plain-speaking activist”. For the past six years, Samuel, wife Cynthia, eight-year-old daughter Serenity and two-year-old son Israel have attended The Salvation Army at Grafton, on the NSW North Coast.

Those who know him admire him. They tell you that “what you see is what you get”.

“Yeh, that’s pretty much it, he says. It’s not pretty; but it’s me.”

He’s more than a little concerned that readers will get the wrong impression of him from comments made so far.

“I am actually a nice, quiet sort of country bloke you just happened to catch at an emotional time,” he tells me.

While Samuel and Cynthia have not yet taken the steps to Salvation Army soldiery, they are mission-minded members of the Christian faith.

Their first trip to East Timor was four years ago. It was their personal desire to be involved in mission. Teaching children was good; so was 18 months voluntary work at a drug rehabilitation centre. But both knew there was more; there had to be. Samuel sensed that God was saying: “Do something for East Timor.”

“I think The Salvation Army (soldiers) should be banned from wearing their uniforms unless they are actually doing something constructive for the Kingdom while wearing it.”



Samuel with wife Cynthia and children Israel, 2, and Serenity, 8.

“Frankly, I went to escape the wrath of the mighty God who will cast his furious anger on a rich Australia for not helping our brothers and sisters a mere 500km away. Why shouldn’t He (be angry)? He tells us to help the poor. They are so close to Australia, yet are having so many difficulties. Half the children are severely stunted for lack of nutrition and one in eight die before the age of five.

“They have suffered bloodshed upon bloodshed, yet we in Australia seem to act as if nothing is happening. ‘It’s too hard’; ‘It’s too difficult,’ we say.

“People ask me if (going to East Timor) is dangerous. Of course it’s dangerous! Do you think the United Nations (forces) are there just for a bit of rest and recuperation?

“Excuse me, but I thought we were following the one who died for us. East Timor is less dangerous for us than Jerusalem was for Jesus. But He went. I’m following Jesus.”

Having sorted that out, Samuel and Cynthia consulted God about their desire to be involved in mission. The message, he says, was clear: “Stay close with your neighbour.”

South East Asia became the focus. They wrote to several missionary organisations. One wrote back from East Timor to say it had a problem with a leaking septic toilet. It probably wasn’t quite what the Bacons had in mind!

Although a teacher, Samuel had grown up on a farm. He’d give the septic toilet his best. So, he and Cynthia went. Serenity, at four, went, too. They put their house on the market and set off with just one job in mind — fixing a septic toilet somewhere in East Timor.

“We fixed the septic,” Samuel says, “with a few miracles along the way. And then we fixed drainage problems, leaking roofs, water supplies to missionaries, shelving, water tanks, screen doors, and provided first aid, prayer support and some children’s ministry.”

They formed a close relationship with Rosaria Martins Da Cruz, a local woman who was trying to formalise an organisation she had started to assist children with malnutrition. Rosaria, according to Samuel, was involved in a frustrating fight for acceptance. She was a single mother with three children, spoke little English and, as a result, struggled with convincing anybody, especially big international aid organisations, to help with funding.

A car she had managed to get to transport dead children from hospital to their village home for burial was taken over by another aid group. A small office she used at the hospital was constantly broken into.

She lived with her three children in a makeshift lean-to attached to her sister’s



Rosaria Martins Da Cruz

home. She was not paid for her work.

“With tears in her eyes, Rosaria said to me: ‘God does not love me’,” Samuel says. “I told her that God did love her and that I would see what I could do.” He gave Rosaria \$50 and told her not to give up. He also provided stationery,

“Maybe one day The Salvation Army will be in East Timor. I hope so.”

a laptop computer and printer, a fan and torch. He bought a padlock and put it on her office door to deter intruders.

“Now, really, I think that spreading God’s love is as simple as that,” Samuel suggests.

Three months later, the family was back in Grafton raising funds to further assist Rosaria. They raised enough for Rosaria to buy her own vehicle.

Still aiding malnourished children referred from hospital, she now works from two shipping containers converted into an office and has six staff. Her organisation also supplies food supplements to families and

conducts education sessions for parents on hygiene, nutrition and family planning.

The next step is construction of a building to accommodate children and parents during the education process, before sending them back to their villages.

Samuel went for a second visit last October. The visit lasted three weeks. He arranged even better office space and “encouraged them to look to Jesus in all their difficulties”.

“So what is it that I really do over there?” he says. “I walk with them and laugh with them and share God’s love with them, while helping in whatever practical way I can. I make mistakes and they have a laugh at me. That’s OK.

“I don’t have a title and I’m not there to represent any Australian organisation, although I would love to go representing The Salvation Army. Maybe one day The Salvation Army will be there in East Timor. I hope so.”

He wants to see the Timorese people trusting God and forgiving each other for years of hurt.

Samuel, Cynthia, Serenity and Israel returned to East Timor at the end of January. They don’t know how long they will stay this time. They have one-way airplane tickets.

“I suppose my main job in going back this time,” says Samuel, “will be to help build a malnutrition centre. But, you know, for me, this (building work) just provides a way into

the lives (of East Timorese) so that I can encourage them personally and spiritually.

“Life is more than food or lack of it. It’s about more than clothes. It’s about love and friendship and knowing Jesus — the truth. I want them to know that.

“I think I have always loved to tell people about Jesus, but have been unsure how to go about it. I know that I can do the practical stuff, but even that came only through practice and trial and error. So, maybe I should put more practice into evangelism.

“I have learned more about practical ministry for the poor, which has evolved over the years into a hunger to be more involved in talking about Jesus.”

So, an airfare or two, \$50, fixing a leaking septic toilet, friendship and a few other things later, Samuel Bacon (and family) has shown Rosaria Martins Da Cruz and East Timor that God really does love them.

That is creative ministry.



Bill Simpson is a former staff writer for *Pipeline*.



Samuel, wife Cynthia and a friend dig a trench in East Timor



The Greater West Worship School course will be held over 10 consecutive Tuesday nights, commencing on April 29.

Venue: Fairfield Salvation Army

Time: 7- 9.30pm

Cost: \$150 and includes all resources and materials

Speakers include Dr Alan Harley, Dr Mark Evans, Jan Craik and Michelle Kay.

For more information and to register please phone The Greater West Corps Mission and Resource team on (02) 9687 2580. Alternatively, you can email Michelle Kay (michelle.kay@ae.salvationarmy.org) or Cheryl Drayton (cheryl.drayton@ae.salvationarmy.org).

"I came expecting to be taught the logistics of leading a worship team, but instead have been led on a personal journey of worship and challenge in my personal life." - Jacqui Cocking

"This course has all the right elements to bring us to the challenge of being a people of worship, to take our minds off the distracting and destructive issue of our 'style of worship' and to refocus on the God who causes our hearts to overflow in a response of worship." - Captain John Unicomb

"I learned so much about how God speaks, what He wants me to share, and how He wants me to share it. I encourage you to be part of this. I learned so much and was able to apply so much truth." - Major Miriam Gluyas

SCHOOL OF PROPHECY

"Developing your ability to recognise and minister the voice of God"

Speakers include Chris Webster, Nicky Dodds and Major Lynden Spicer.

For more information and to register please phone The Greater West Corps Mission and Resource team on (02) 9687 2580. Alternatively, you can email Michelle Kay (michelle.kay@ae.salvationarmy.org) or Cheryl Drayton (cheryl.drayton@ae.salvationarmy.org).

The Greater West Prophecy School course will be held over 10 consecutive Tuesday nights, commencing on April 29.

Venue: Fairfield Salvation Army

Time: 7- 9.30pm

Cost: \$150 and includes all resources and materials

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

The Blood and Fire message is once again resounding around Toowoomba. By FLAVIA CARABALLO

Twenty years ago, the Toowoomba Corps Band would be out in the community bright and early every Sunday morning. Crowds would gather to listen to music and readily accepted the invitation to go back and worship at the citadel. On they would march through the streets, the Army and the community, heading to the corps to worship together.

Eventually, as the town of Toowoomba developed and the volume of traffic on the roads grew, the safety of the band and people who joined them became a concern and the musical outreach came to an end.

Now, however, with the formation of the Blood and Fire band, the Army tradition of taking the Gospel to the people of Toowoomba has been reborn.

The vision

Blood and Fire founders Shane and Liz Staunton first started going to The Salvation Army's Toowoomba Corps in July 2006. They were enrolled as soldiers less than a year later.

Both Shane and Liz believe they have a calling to music ministry so just a month after being enrolled, Shane shared his vision for Blood and Fire with Toowoomba Corps Officers Captains Mark and Jo-Anne Bulow.

Shane's vision became a reality and he began recruiting. Toowoomba Corps Worship Band was his first target but surrounding corps, such as Lockyer Corps Band, were also in his sights.

Each musician chosen for the group, Shane says, had to demonstrate three key criteria: "a strong commitment to outreach ministry, Christian character, and musicality and ensemble sensitivity (listening to and supporting fellow players/singers)."

The music makers

Both professional musicians, Shane and Liz also feature in the band. Shane plays drums and Liz sings and plays keyboard.

Shane has been earning an income from music since he was 16. He's worked in music studios in the United States as well as Australia. Liz has a Bachelor of Music from North Western University, Chicago.

Incorporating Latin and Calypso rhythm, jazz and rock as well as the more traditional Army brass sound, Blood and Fire caters to a wide range of musical tastes.

"We are having a musical conversation with the audience, raising spiritual matters in an unthreatening, non-judgmental way," Shane says.

"Performed considerably, it is a 'giving' medium, and less likely to provoke defensive responses. It creates wider opportunities, too. Following performances, people have approached us to play at tourism venues, etc."

The message

To the Stauntons, music is a key part of their ministry. It doesn't mean, however, that the ministry ends when the final note is played.

Each member of Blood and Fire takes the opportunity to share the Gospel with people, both on and off the stage. After each performance they talk and pray with the audience.

Psalm 19, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul", is central to Blood and Fire's message.

"The content of the songs and short messages and introductions focus on communicating the law of God. It is the Holy Spirit that softens their hearts and helps them hear what God may be saying to them," explains Shane.

Blood and Fire is well received and has the full support of the

Toowoomba City Council and local businesses. They gave their first performance for TOM-net (The Older Men's Network, Toowoomba) in September last year. They also had a prime spot in late January, for the Summer Tunes series at the city's Picnic Point.

"Rehearsing for our first venture out, I was a bit uncertain how we would be received by the unchurched, so the enthusiastic response from TOM-net was a great relief and assured me that we were going to be able to communicate effectively. God is faithful," Shane says.

The future

Looking forward to taking Blood and Fire wherever God leads, the future looks bright and Shane is keen to work with other corps.

"Unity begins at home, so we recommend collaborating with other corps and have fun creating occasions to rally the troops for a musical outreach outing. Our experience has been that the council was keen for The Salvation Army to play in the parks," says Shane.



Blood and Fire performs during a recent outreach event in Toowoomba.

LOVE IN A WORSHIP TEAM

Based on 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

By Karen Lattouf

If our music and singing were exquisite, enough to make people and angels stop in their tracks and listen, but we didn't love each other more than we love the music, we may as well be bashing repeatedly on a gong; we'd be as empty as the crash of a lone cymbal on an empty stage.

If I created the most awe-inspiring PowerPoint presentations, and knew all the ins and outs of making the computer work, and could find the delicate balance of the graphic equaliser in the most acoustically challenged room, but do it without putting love for my fellow worship team members first, such creativity, skill and technology falls into a void.

If I give all I have and all I am in leading others to worship Jesus, but it is not my love for him that motivates me, I give nothing, and no-one gains anything.

Love is patient when the sound is not balanced. Love is kind when it takes a while to learn a new piece of music. Team members who are loving don't envy each others' gifts and abilities, they don't boast about their own, and they don't get puffed up about a really good gig. They aren't rude to each other when they don't like the music style someone chooses and they try to keep the bigger perspective of a whole life of worship to God, rather than getting caught up in their own agendas.

Love doesn't anger easily when others in the team don't "get" the music, the message or the meaning, and love doesn't go from rehearsal to rehearsal remembering all the difficult moments from the previous rehearsal.

A loving worship team member doesn't focus on the negatives, but constantly finds ways to encourage others in their worship, their skills and their gifts. A loving worship team protects each other from criticism, trusts members to bring out the best in each other, hopes to strive for excellence for God's glory and is committed to working at it for as long as God wants.

Love in a worship team is what is reliable. Music styles come and go, computer programs are constantly being updated and technology is on a continuous evolutionary journey.

We are individuals who are part of a team and what we do together is only a part of the bigger picture. But what happens when God is in it, is that our individual gifts are transformed and the message we bring leads to God himself as we fade into the background.

When we first were a team together, we did things simply — a piano, a microphone and a projector were all we used. We've now given those ways up — they've been transformed as we've learned and developed together and what we do as a team is much more mature.

But even now, what we do, and as good as it can be sometimes, is only a dim reflection of what an eternity of worshipping God is going to be like.

But it is a foretaste of eternity, and we will keep allowing God to transform us into his image as we worship and love Him and as we love each other. He knows us inside out and loves us anyway. The more we get to know each other in our team, the more we will love each other.

And so we have faith in the one we worship, we have hope for a life of eternal worship, but the greatest thing of all is to love the one we worship and to love those with whom we worship.



Karen Lattouf is Worship Team Leader at The Salvation Army's Wagga Wagga Corps

To Be or Not To Be ...

In the business world people are increasingly being promoted to leadership roles on merit rather than seniority. Should The Salvation Army be open to adopting a similar approach?

yes

Underlying this debate is another, more fundamental question: How do we decide who is the right person for the job?

One of the key features of the early Salvation Army was “innovation”; the willingness to adapt and change to circumstances for the sake of the Gospel. This saw the Army send people with little or no experience to commence the work wherever it was needed. New corps in new areas and indeed in entirely new countries, were frequently launched by people as young as 18.

How can this happen today? Can The Salvation Army, now in 113 countries and with leadership structures infinitely more intricate than the Army of the 19th century, still empower leaders who do not have “seniority” listed on their resumé?

I believe we can. In fact, I believe we must for the future survival of The Salvation Army. We need to recapture the “innovation” of the early Army and this includes empowering the right person, for the right job, at the right time, regardless of the epaulettes on their shoulders or the amount of grey hair on their head.

For example, should an officer with 20 years’ experience but no qualifications be chosen for a key finance position over a less-experienced officer (or indeed soldier) who has an MBA, simply because of their “seniority?” Should a captain be held back from divisional leadership simply because they’re not yet a major?

At the same time, however, seniority should not be ignored. We must remember we’re not actually running a business, that The Salvation Army is participating in God’s mission to redeem the whole world to himself. This means any question on leadership in The Salvation Army is about spiritual leadership.

Henry and Richard Blackaby provide a helpful definition in their book *Spiritual Leadership*. They say it is “moving people onto God’s agenda”, and suggest qualities of spiritual leaders:

- Move people from where they are to where God wants them;
- Are dependent on the Holy Spirit;
- Are accountable to God;
- Can influence all people, not just God’s people;
- Work from God’s agenda.

These are the qualifications we should look for when choosing people for any leadership role in The Salvation Army. These principles apply regardless of the candidates being considered; young or old, many years of experience, or new to the mission field.

If we seek to know and move people onto God’s agenda for the Army, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, then it will follow that we will have leaders who are the right person, in the right job, at the right time.



Captain Adam Couchman is a Training Officer at The Salvation Army’s School for Officer Training in Sydney

no

I can remember a senior officer being challenged about a change in attitude to a particular situation he’d been quite vocal about.

His response was that you make the decision according to the chair you sit in.

As an almost-ready-to-retire officer, my attitude to the question of seniority versus merit is probably different now than it was, say, 25 years ago. Back then, if allowed the indulgence of ambitious thought, there was possibly no job in the Army that I couldn’t have tackled and handled as well, or even better, than any other person who held, or had held the position.

However, as a younger officer I was grateful for those who were in positions of authority who could, by reason of their experience and godliness, provide counsel and guidance that a much younger officer might not have done. More recently, I have had the opportunity to help younger officers — with guidance based on the experience and, I hope, godliness I have gained along the way — as they walked through difficult situations where inexperience had caused more trouble than help.

We have many fine young officers who bring enormous qualifications and qualities to officership. The gifts they bring will make them possibly more effective than us who are nearing retirement. In the same way, we probably brought to officership greater skills than our forebears.

I can see that I would handle some situations differently now than I did, or would have, as a younger officer, simply because of what the years have taught me about myself, others and the Army.

Merit can be rewarded where the task doesn’t necessarily require pastoral experience. There are some appointments in the Army where skills and experience brought from life prior to officership are needed and can be put to good use by younger officers. However, when it comes to leadership, seniority brings a certain something that youth cannot match.

Some biblical examples of experienced men in leadership roles are:

- Moses needed his older brother Aaron to stand by him when he went to Pharaoh.
- Moses trained Joshua to take over from him, giving him the experience he would need to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land.
- Elijah and Elisha — the older man and the apprentice. Elisha learnt his trade working with Elijah so that he could take up his mantle when the Lord took his mentor home.
- Paul and John Mark, where the young and experienced John Mark didn’t cut the mustard as far as Paul was concerned and was sent home.



Major Brian Holley is Assistant Chief Secretary (Administration) for The Salvation Army’s Australia Eastern Territory

Creative Ministry wants to hear your views on this subject. Write to us at: PO Box A435 Sydney South NSW 1235, or email: eastern.editorial@ae.salvationarmy.org



Clockwise from top left: Max Percy (baton in hand) with the Auburn Male Voice Party in 1948; with his trombone in the 1950s; playing with Auburn Band in 1949; and with Maisy Wiggins, principal trombonist with Halle Orchestra.

The perfectionist

The name Max Percy has become synonymous with Salvation Army banding in Australia. **MERV COLLINS** looks back at the musical career of a man renowned for his pursuit of excellence





Three former Sydney Congress Hall bandmasters; Bill Scotney, Ron Prussing and Max Percy.

The legend grew each time I heard the story. Max Percy, the long-serving bandmaster at Sydney Congress Hall was once so unhappy with the band's performance of *The King's Minstrel* that, according to Max Orchard, his principal cornet, he rehearsed the 12-minute piece seven times straight through without saying a word. When his wife told the tale, it became 17 times and his old banding mate, Bill Scotney, stretched it out to 20!

But the point was made — Max Percy was a perfectionist and nothing less than the best would do in Salvation Army music.

This pursuit of excellence showed itself early. Max played his first public solo on the trombone at the age of six but he said he “made such a mess of it” he didn't play again for four years.

“I think I took that trombone,” he laughs, “belted it up and buried it!” A successful second start led to a lifetime commitment to Army music as a soloist and conductor. He had little in the way of formal tuition, though at Petersham, his junior band was under the leadership of the virtuoso trombonist, Harry Berry. Max also took up the violin

and became a very proficient player, again largely self-taught. Bill Scotney said: “Even now, when Max plays a simple melody on the violin, it's so musical, it can make you cry.”

In the 1940s, Max was very happy playing solos in Army programs on both trombone and violin.

“In those days,” he says, “bands were out every Saturday night. I never gave much thought to becoming a bandmaster. It was just thrust upon me at North Sydney.”

For the next 30 years, at North Sydney (now Chatswood), Sydney Congress Hall and finally Gold Coast Temple, Max was rarely without a baton in his hand. Between 1978 and 1980, he was Territorial Band Inspector working alongside Colonel Ray Steadman-Allen, whose music, along with Eric Ball's, Max deems the Army's best.

Nowadays, when brass bands are less evident in Army worship, it's important not to underestimate the significance of banding in the spiritual and social life of a corps

during the '50s, '60s and '70s. This was particularly true at Sydney Congress Hall — CH to its members — where the band was the de facto staff band seen as the Army's representative musical force in state and civic ceremonies and celebrations.

Max Percy was the ideal man to lead such a combination with his high principles and his steely determination to obtain the highest quality music from himself and his charges.

“In rehearsal,” says Bill Scotney, “he was terrific, — perhaps in the sense that ‘terrific’ derives from the verb ‘to terrify!’ He only had to look at you and his eyes would shrivel you up!”

Outside the band room, Max was the most humble and placid of men with a love of Army history, the Manly Rugby League Club and bodysurfing. Max spent many an afternoon surfing and studying scores at his favourite Harbord Beach seeking to interpret the composers he loved for the benefit of his listeners.

There were many memorable concerts and meetings. Max recalls particularly a trip to Leederville (now Floreat Park) Corps in Perth with North Sydney Band in the 1950s and the month-long international campaign to New Zealand, the United States, Canada and Hong Kong with CH in 1971. He knew, too, the importance of the regular Sunday night city open-air witness which attracted large crowds, some of whom would follow the band back to the hall.

Max and Norma, his wife of more than 60 years, “retired” to the Gold Coast in the late 1980s. Max, inevitably, took charge of the Gold Coast Temple Band for a couple of years until a health setback slowed him down.

Now in his 87th year, he gave up bodysurfing only last year and still plays in the band. So the career of a dedicated Army musician continues. Max Percy taught many young men to play instruments, guided many others in doing it better and always presented music of the highest quality as a soloist and a conductor — all to the glory of God and the benefit of The Salvation Army he loves.

His favourite song sums up a lifelong pledge, *Let me love Thee, let me serve Thee, every consecrated hour*. Bandmaster Max Percy, The Legend as they sometimes called him at CH, has remained true to that promise.

**“Even now,
when Max
plays ... it's
so musical, it
can make
you cry.”**

Korean band leads anniversary celebrations

Just two years old and numbering 20 members, the majority being young people, the Sydney Korean Corps Band featured heavily in a Sunday afternoon concert as the corps marked its 12th anniversary on the weekend of February 16-17

Chaired by Corps Officer Captain Kang Jeong-gil, the concert was given over to a celebration of the corps, with the minister and some of the congregation from the nearby Korean Presbyterian Church joining in the festivities.

The band contributed a number of items across a variety of musical genres, reflective of the varied congregation.

Considering that at its founding only one of the band members could play a brass instrument, the fledgling group performed admirably.

A special acknowledgement was also offered to Captain Hai-du Kim, Territorial Music Director (Korean Territory), who had spent almost two weeks at the corps helping prepare its musical sections for the celebration.

In an afternoon diverse in contributions,

a feature was a multimedia presentation capturing the early days of the Belmore Corps, and the emerging ministry of the present corps band.

Of note was the far-reaching ministry of the band taking in the local community, other churches, and wherever there is an opportunity.

Countering the contribution of the band was the musical interpretation of *How Great Thou Art* by a percussion band made up of drums, water canisters and kitchen implements. The presentation engaged the congregation, at times causing it to break into spontaneous praise in support of the group.

The afternoon concluded with a blessing sung by the congregation. Language proved no barrier as God's presence was felt throughout the building.

Earlier in the day, Territorial Commander Commissioner Les Strong, as special guest for the weekend, commissioned seven local officers during the Sunday morning meeting.

The corps band provided music for congregational singing during the service

also brought a message to the meeting.

Commissioner Strong, supported by Lieutenant-Colonels Ian and Marilyn Hamilton (Divisional Leaders), was able to commend the corps, local leadership and the commanding officers for their service. Building on that experience he spoke of the confidence that they could have in moving into the future.

He prayed God's blessing over their lives before challenging all to focus on growing God's kingdom.

The Sydney Korean Corps is definitely an exciting place to be.

There are many young people in Salvation Army uniform who are very active in the life and the ministry of the corps. At present, there are five soldiers applying for officership (two for next year and three for 2010).

There is a prayer meeting every morning, except Monday, from 6am to 7am, while each night there is a prayer meeting from 7.30pm to 9pm. The corps has 80 soldiers on its roll and on most Sundays there are more than 100 people worshipping at the corps.

Korean Corps Band and singing group perform at the Sunday afternoon concert



New Zealand tour

Carina Corps held a pre-tour concert at their corps on Sunday 23 March, as a final dress rehearsal ahead of its 10-day trip to New Zealand this month.

Under the theme *Ignite The Kingdom Life In You*, the corps band (Stephen Stein), singing group Harmony In Song (Aaron Buckner), timbrels (Diane Christelow) and music group Ransomed (Matt Ivers) will visit the North Island centres of Hamilton, Taupo, Rotorua, Whakatane and Tauranga from 11-21 April.

Carina Corps Officers Captains Gavin and Wendy Watts were previously appointed to Tauranga and it's through this association that the tour has been organised.

The pre-tour concert attracted a capacity audience. Some of the music from the band included *The Way We Were*, *El Es Senor* and *Time To Shine*. The singing group Harmony in Song featured *Hosanna*, *Lift Your Light* and *Cast All Your Cares* (singing group); while the timbrelists played *William Tell Overture* and *Jubilee* and Ransomed performed *Your Love Feeds My Soul*.

Captain Wendy Watts described the style of music they will be presenting during the tour as "relevant".

"We like to think that what we do is not about being contemporary, it's not about tradition, but it's about being relevant to the people you are ministering to," she said.

The *Ignite The Kingdom Life In You* theme has been adopted from *The Message* translation's paraphrase of Matthew 3:11.

Repertoire weekend

On February 9 and 10, the Sydney Youth Band held its repertoire weekend in Wollongong.

The band is made up of 44 members aged between 13 and 30, who are passionate about brass banding.

The weekend was held at Wollongong Surf and Leisure Resort and the band would like to publicly thank the centre for its generosity.

In total, the band rehearsed for more than eight and a half hours. By the end of the weekend all were well and truly blown out (that means exhausted for all you non-band readers).

The band is working on recording its first CD in June, and is also planning a tour to Melbourne, before finishing off the year with a concert with James Morrison and On Fire Big Band.

As well as rehearsing over the weekend, the band had plenty of time to get to know one another through free time in the afternoon. Many would spend their time in the pool or spa and some even took on each other on the tennis court.

The Sydney Youth Band has been operating for more than five years and, with the support and enthusiasm like we have seen over the repertoire weekend, the band is looking forward to a long and successful future.



The Sydney Youth Band

Christmas In The Park

The true spirit of Christmas abounded in the North Queensland tablelands as 2007 came to a close, with the Atherton Corps hosting Christmas In The Park for local children.

On December 17, Atherton Corps Officers, Captains Jeffrey and Sharilyn Bush, had what they described as "the awesome privilege" of providing a fun-filled day of entertainment for the children of Atherton and the surrounding region.

Planning for the big day began only a couple of months earlier when a local bus driver approached the corps with an offer from a local woman. The lady concerned had a deep desire to see something positive done for the local children and was willing to provide funding if the Army could organise the event before Christmas.

"Despite having reservations about things such as the limited time frame and the possibility of wet weather, we felt a definite leading from God to agree," said Captain Sharilyn Bush.

With their faith in God's provision, the planning began and the result was Christmas In The Park complete with face painting, craft activities, games, rides and a jumping castle.

Sunny weather completed the package and 250 children, their parents and leaders from the corps, enjoyed a wonderful day. The event gave an opportunity for community outreach, showing the people of the region that The Salvation Army is a church that provides more than social welfare and a place to worship.

"The outcome was a day when the corps had great opportunity to build relationships with the people of the community and to make known that The Salvation Army is a church that desires to serve and minister to children and their families," Captain Bush said.



Santa arrives at Christmas In The Park

Staff Songsters at Menai

The Sydney Staff Songsters visited Menai Corps, in Sydney's south, on Sunday 2 March.

Leader Graeme Press, with the Staff Songsters, commenced Sunday morning worship with the songs *How Can I Keep From Singing* and *This is Your House*. The congregation then joined in, singing *All The Earth* and *Still*.

Graeme then interviewed a member of the Songsters, Lesley Newton, as she shared her testimony.

The service concluded with the group performing the powerful songs *Give Me Jesus* and *Jesus, What a Mighty Name*. The Staff Songsters blessed the congregation at Menai through their music. It is evident that this ministry is a blessing to not only The Salvation Army, but also the wider community.

PICTORIAL

Korean Corp 12th anniversary

