

CREATIVE

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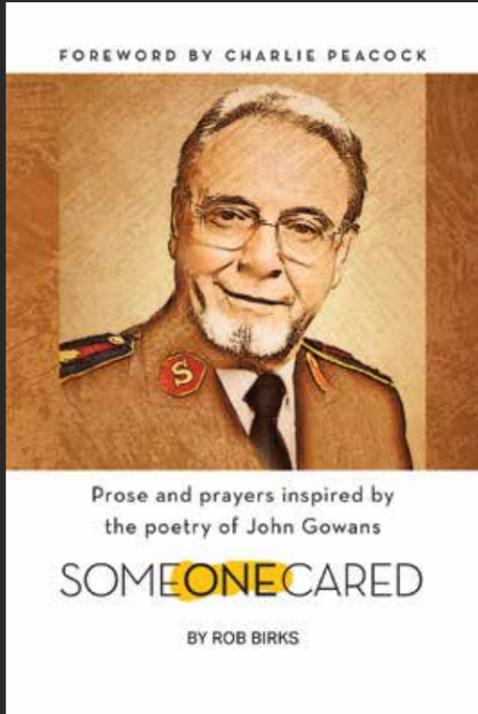
HIGHEST CALLING

*CHRIS BRINDLEY'S
SONATA ALLEGRO*



REVIVING THE SPIRITUAL HEART OF A CREATIVE GENERAL

Someone Cared – Major Rob Birks



Championing the rich spiritual legacy of the late General John Gowans was the motivation behind Major Rob Birks' desire to create his recently launched devotional book *Someone Cared*.

Birks, Golden State divisional general secretary, based in San Francisco (USA Western Territory), who knew Gowans growing up, has drawn together a compilation of poetry, Scripture, spiritual reflections and humour based on the former General's poetry.

Birks says he hopes readers can extract something valuable from *Someone Cared*, regardless of their

familiarity with Gowans' work.

"They're just really accessible lyrics or poems," he said. "What I've done is just one or two-page devotional thought on either, drawing from a news event or a historical event."

Birks corrals Bob Dylan songs and *Fiddler on the Roof* to provide cultural context on each topic, then relates it back to Gowans' words.

His previous work, *Orsbornagain* (Frontier Press, 2013), likewise revived the work of General Albert Orsborn, whom he calls the first poet-General.

"I didn't want Orsborn's words to fade away," he said. "I wanted some way to preserve them and champion them."

"I was talking to people in their 80s that grew up with those words having the same impact as me, so we have this cross-generation thing going on."

"Both General Orsborn and General Gowans were guys I looked up to as a kid because of their writing. Lyrics and poetry have always spoken to me in ways that were really meaningful and impactful."

While the two share certain qualities, Birks notes subtle contrasts.

"Gowans' work is more accessible, not less theological, but it's more accessible because it really centres on just the unmerited and unending love of God forever," he said.

"I hope what I've tried to do is make it just as easily if not more easily accessible for people who might not even know who he is," Birks said.

"Hopefully they'll be able to find something in there that will show them that someone cares for them."

The book is available through Salvationist Supplies.

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When Matthew Bradshaw took his first trip overseas to the Philippines in his early 20s, he was shocked by the poverty he saw. But he also saw something which surprised him – joy.

“I was touched by the people there because they were so poor but so generous. They were so happy,” he says.

Almost 10 years later and after two more overseas trips – to Thailand and China – Matthew’s heart burned with a passion for those living in disadvantaged circumstances. He wanted to help – and so he did.

Last April, Matthew formed a band, Three Hands, out of Rockdale Corps and produced an album called *Asylum + Refuge* to raise awareness and funds for The Salvation Army’s International Development Office (SAID).

The album, which was released late last year, has been selling well within The Salvation Army. While raising funds is important, the main purpose is to prompt people to make a difference. Matthew wrote all the songs, which were inspired by his experiences overseas. His songs motivate people to think beyond their situation to help the less fortunate.

Matthew says one of the songs, *A Town Called Young*, is an invitation to find a child-like belief, to step out of a negative state of mind and ultimately realise that we can make a difference.

“We have a false sense over here [in Australia]. I believe everybody would help if they understood that these people are people – they are not just a number or a statistic. That’s the message I want to get to people – these are families, children, mothers, wives, people’s grandparents and they need help.”

SEEKING GOD

When looking for a way to help, Matthew asked himself: “What can I offer?”

Matthew has been writing worship music and songs about his walk with God since he was 15. He says it seemed natural to use his musical gifts to bless those living in poverty. >>>

MATTHEW STRIKES A CHORD FOR POVERTY

words ESTHER PINN

photos SHAIRON PATERSON



Matthew Bradshaw, founder of the Rockdale band *Three Hands*, with his lead vocalist Renata Davies.

"Songwriting has been a massive part of my life. For me, it's a form of prayer and a form of worship."

Knowing how music has impacted his life, Matthew believed music to be a way to speak to people's hearts about the issue of poverty.

"Music ... it can go straight through to the soul without having to get caught up in thought or debate."

Matthew has been part of Rockdale Corps for about two years. After his last trip overseas, Matthew says he came back knowing he needed to seek God. He began to search for a church that lined up with his Christian values and his passion for philanthropy. He ended up at the Salvos.

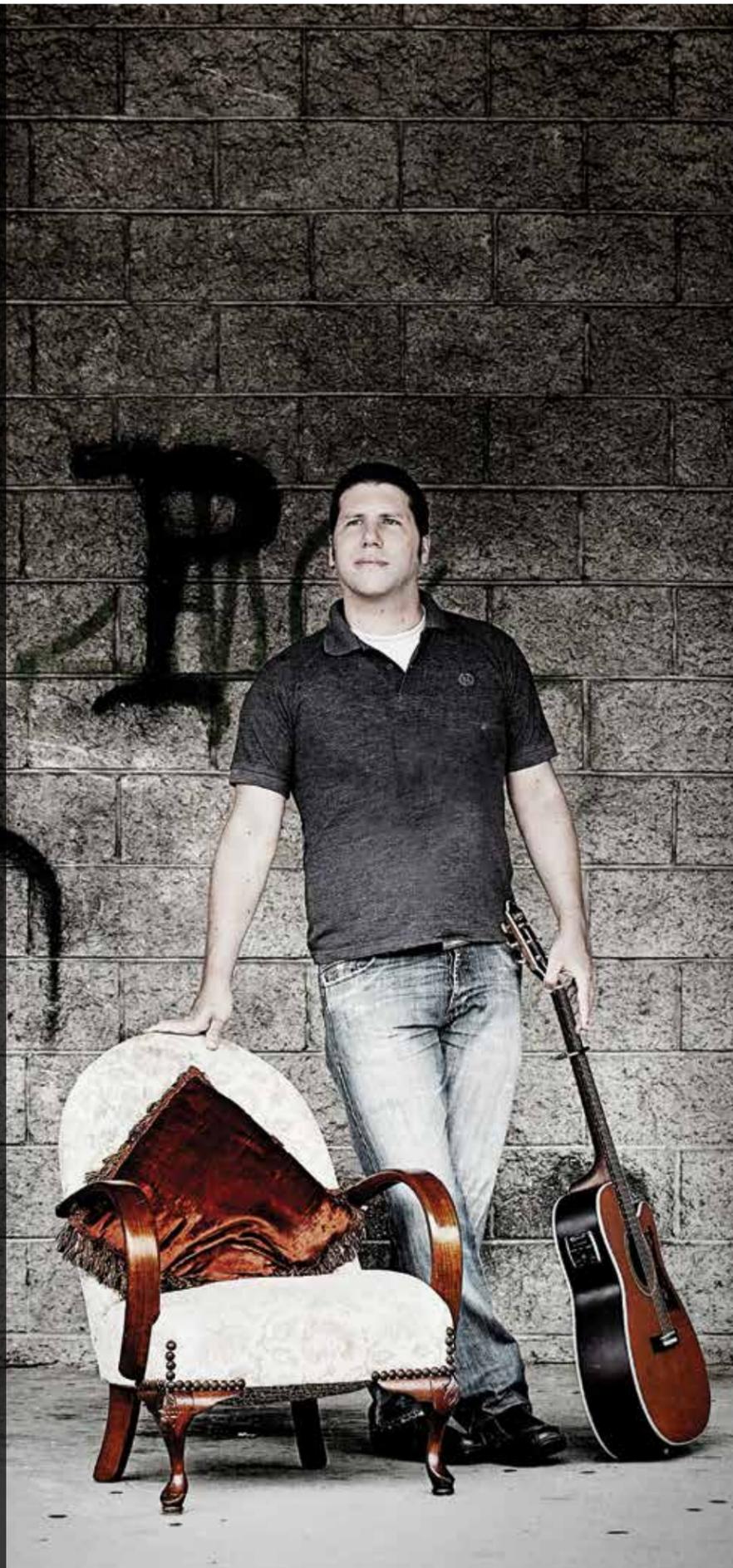
"I saw a great need and there's only so much you can do on your own. That's when I started doing research into charities ... and The Salvation Army stood out."

Matthew introduced the idea of a CD while sharing his testimony with the Rockdale congregation. He immediately received offers of support and prayer from corps members.

After the success of the album within the Army, together with his band, Renata Davies (vocals), Glen Lockwood (vocals and bass), Michael Bishop (piano), Thomas Cox (drums) and Sarah Bishop (album graphic designer), Matthew (vocals and guitar) hopes to create further awareness by taking the CD to the wider Australian community.

"This is the foundation of the beginning. I definitely want to do more," he says.

Asylum + Refuge is available for \$13 (including postage within Australia) or songs can be downloaded for 99 cents each. Alternatively, tax deductible donations can be made to the project. Go to salvos.org.au/rockdale



LEGACY OF A LEGEND

TALENTED YOUNG MUSICIAN **SAM CREAMER** REFLECTS ON THE LIFE OF SALVATION ARMY COMPOSER LIEUTENANT-COLONEL RAY STEADMAN-ALLEN, WHO WAS RECENTLY PROMOTED TO GLORY

To the average Salvationist, *Victorian Snapshots On Ratcliff Highway* could perhaps be the title of a holiday photo album. *Crown of Conquest* could be mistaken as a war-themed computer game, and the initials RSA would probably refer to our famous Red Shield Appeal.

To The Salvation Army brass musician, these phrases mean so much more.

Ray Steadman-Allen (affectionately known as "RSA") was a high-profile composer and Salvation Army officer, whose music has challenged generations of Salvation Army musicians both musically and spiritually. Over 200 compositions from RSA's pen have been published in numerous band and songster journals as well as a number of arrangements included in the current tune book.

The recent promotion to glory of RSA at age 92 has saddened many a brass band aficionado both within and beyond the ranks of Salvation Army banding. But it has also allowed us to reflect on the vast and profound legacy of the eccentric genius.

For much of his life, RSA was known as a "jobbing" composer who could set his pen to any form or genre. His versatility and innovation as a composer saw him continually pushing the envelope of the form, often writing well ahead of the times in helping to shape the future of brass band music.

His personal repertoire included high-quality music in a variety of styles for bands and songster brigades of varying size and abilities, blazing the trail for other composers to be mindful of the needs of varied ensembles.

Behind the pen, RSA was known as a very humble man who encouraged many up-and-coming composers and musicians. This was very evident in his role in the

music editorial departments when reviewing works for possible publication. He would never harshly critique any submitted works, but in a gentle and encouraging manner would empower composers to produce individual excellence. RSA's classic publication *Colour And Texture In the Brass Band Score* was first published in the 1980s (and reprinted several times) and continues to be embraced as a textbook by many composers active today.

Aside from his busy schedule as an officer and writing music, RSA was also a very devoted father to his two daughters and husband to his wife, Joyce. In his later years, RSA would still serenade his wife with a special melody on the piano every night before going to bed. Sometimes it can be incredibly hard to balance family, work and other commitments as a composer. Ideas can come to you at the most inconvenient times and you just need to get them on paper before you lose them. But in RSA's case his family always encouraged his work and were proud of his many achievements (including a Doctorate in Music and the Order of the Founder in 2005).

Combining his passion for the things of God with his talent and gentle, encouraging nature has helped raise the standard of Salvation Army music over many decades. The letters RSA at the top of a band chart are always a promise of something musically solid with a well-told story attached. His music and his manner is his legacy – the legacy of a legend.

Brisbane City Temple will hold a tribute concert to Ray Steadman-Allen on the 6-7 June long weekend.

Want to know more about RSA? Salvationist Supplies has the DVD *An Audience with RSA: a 90th Birthday Celebration and History, Harmony & Harmony: Ray Steadman-Allen: A Suite of Articles*.



HIGHEST CALLING

CHRIS BRINDLEY'S SONATA ALLEGRO

words SIMONE WORTHING

photos MATT SEAMAN

Sonata Allegro:

A typical first movement of a symphony, concerto, or sonata, in which the composer introduces musical ideas at the beginning, then creates excitement and surprise by playing around with the ideas. Later, in a sort of homecoming, the ideas return in their original form.

For Chris Brindley, the newly appointed Territorial Worship Arts Co-ordinator, God holds the baton in the unfolding sonata that is his life. From the first movement in childhood where his love of music and experimenting with sound began, to the pursuit of a highly successful scientific career, with his composing and arranging talents as a background theme, Chris traces the progression of God's leading back to his first passion.

You see, Chris doesn't measure success by conventional measures. He could though, given his internationally impressive curriculum vitae in engineering, business, teaching and music. What is obvious by his infectious enthusiasm and down-to-earth manner is this: the strength of his relationship with God, his family and people around him is what matters most.

"A piece which has followed me around for most of my life is *Just where He needs me, my Lord has placed me.*

I continue to pray for God's guidance in every decision, but it is rarely easy when the noise of life gets in the way of hearing a still soft voice," says Chris, who is will take up his role on May 1, based in Brisbane.

"I am involved with a whole range of things – with my family, solving problems at work, being creative with music and just trying to live life and encourage others – you can't completely isolate those things from each other."

"Success to me then, is drawing everything I do back together – being happy where I am in my relationship with God, with my family, and those I can influence positively. And I have to admit, I'm not always successful!" >>>



ABOVE: Chris with wife Crystal and daughters Caitlyn, 8, and Laura, 5.

Currently Brisbane City Temple Songster leader, Chris' passion for using music to spread the Gospel, positively influence people and encourage corps in creative ministry and worship is evident, and will be equally vital in his new appointment.

"My territorial role isn't about buying tune books or writing worship charts," he explains. "It's about helping people develop their worship art form into a powerful and pervasive expression of the freedom they have found in Jesus."

"My role is to deepen the culture of worship in the territory and I aim to build networks of leaders, champions and experts to develop each creative expression, including dance, drama, graphic design, animation, writing, painting and much more.

Making a difference

A microelectronic engineer, Chris leaves his role as a Strategic Development Manager at Corearth, which provides radiation safety solutions for the telecommunications sector.

"This career choice was part of wanting to start a family one day and being able to securely provide for them after seeing the struggle that my mum had in raising three boys by herself," he says.

But in the past six months, Chris says that "while the business and academic side of life (as Visiting Fellow at Griffith University) was going well, I couldn't find anywhere that I could be anything other than a name

on a piece of paper, locked away in a filing cabinet – I couldn't see that what I did made a genuine difference."

"To me, this is the highest calling. To know God, share my faith with others and help them do the same – and that is all the difference in the world."

Chris grew up in The Salvation Army – a fourth-generation Salvationist on his mother's side, and with a Pentecostal background from his Argentine father.

"My Salvationist heritage extends back to my great grandfather, George Milton Brindley, who was one of the first members of the Wollongong Salvation Army Band back in the early 1900s," Chris says. "My grandfather Envoy Milton Brindley recommenced the Boys' Legion in the Eastern Territory."

Chris was born into the Campsie Corps in Sydney and moved with his family to the Belconnen (ACT) Corps and then to the Campbelltown (NSW) Corps.

Chris has loved music for as long as he can remember. "Basically I like to play any instrument I can get my hands on," he says enthusiastically. "I also have a collection of unusual instruments including the duduk, a woodwind instrument native to Armenia; and a Jew's harp, an ancient instrument from Asia."

He became part of the Brisbane City Temple in 1998, joined the Songsters, band, and worship team and has led the YP band and worship team. In 2006 he took the position of songster leader. Chris also met Crystal, now his wife, at BCT and the couple has two young daughters, Caitlyn and Laura.

Composing music and writing words to go with his pieces, are special passions for Chris.

"I started writing for the Queensland Pops Orchestra – the first orchestra I'd written for, with encouragement from conductor Barrie Gott," he explains.

"It was incredibly challenging, but also incredibly rewarding. Creating original pieces, rather than arrangements is what I really love doing. To create a piece of music that no-one has ever heard before is the most amazing experience.

"Words for me are harder than the music and I really have to think about how they will be understood. Both the words and the music have to tie together to mean something and to convey a message. It's a real journey and challenge, particularly for a secular audience, to produce a piece of great value."

Setting challenges

Chris has also arranged two albums for Andre Rieu's star soprano Mirusia, one of which was so successful, she became the only classical artist with an ARIA No.1 Chart award. Over the past two years he has worked with the Melbourne Staff Songsters as a guest conductor and composer.

To everything he does Chris brings both intellectual rigor and a heart to live out his desire to be a devoted follower of Christ. He tells of the impact of meeting Eric Abraham, a 104 year old WWI veteran, who was a resident at an aged care facility where Chris was

presenting Christmas carols with The Salvation Army, back in 2002. "Eric looked at me straight in the eye and asked me, 'Are you a man of God?'," Chris recalls. "It was like God himself was asking me, and I knew Eric would be meeting him soon! I replied, 'Yes Sir, I am', and the experience of standing up for what I believe struck to the core of my being."

Last year Chris set a challenge for himself and the BCT Songsters.

"There were 12 rehearsals from the beginning of the year to Easter, so as part of devotions and music theory, we looked at the 12 semitones and intervals in a scale," he explains. "Each has their own personality, and to match that, each of these personalities was matched with a disciple that reflected this. This was also important for me personally as a significant component of my work has been with scientists, some of whom are outspoken atheists, or from a different faith background. Not only do I have to explain what I believe, I also have to state what solid facts this is based on. This is a privilege, but can also be scary."

"So, as part of discussing the characteristics of the disciples, I looked at the historical accounts and was able to justify that I not only know my Christian faith by experience, but also through research and analysis."

"If I can use music to spread the Gospel and help people grow in their relationships with God and more deeply understand their faith, then I'm following my calling," he says.



CAMP EQUIPS KIDS TO EXPLORE CREATIVITY



LEFT: Teggy Gomara (far left) with the group of PNG Salvationists who were sponsored for the Aged Care Walkathon last year and were able to attend EQUIP. Photo: Shairon Paterson

CALL TO BRING PNG YOUTH TO CAMP

Dance. Percussion. Ukulele. Stop Motion Lego.

EQUIP Kids is so cool, even the grown ups wish they could camp!

The Greater West Division's four-day creative arts and discipleship camp, EQUIP Kids, had a blast, bringing together more than 60 young people aged eight to 12 at The Collaroy Centre in Sydney earlier this month.

The electives were a chance to explore individual gifts and learn new skills. One of the more popular electives, Stop Motion Lego, gave kids the opportunity to produce videos, extending their creativity.

Along with creative exploration, the camp also focused on equipping kids with the skills to live a godly life.

"We want them to connect with God and to connect with each other ... what it means to be a Christian," explained Greater West Divisional Youth and Candidates Secretary, Captain Nicole Viles.

The camp's theme, "New", was based on the Bible passage 2 Corinthians 5:17, and the kids were challenged, in the combined Connect sessions and Connect life groups, about the ways God makes them new.

"[We looked] at what it means to be new - new heart, new mouth, new mind, new action," said Captain Viles.

This jammed-packed camp also included activities such as sport, craft, art, outdoor adventure activities run by The Collaroy Centre and visits to the beach. Each evening involved a themed activity, including a fancy-dress disco and a tribal wars night.

- Esther Pinn



ABOVE: EQUIP Kids enables primary school-aged children the opportunity to explore their creative talents and grow in their faith.

The Salvation Army's South Queensland Division is hoping to bring three young people from Papua New Guinea to Queensland's creative arts and discipleship camp, EQUIP, in July.

The success of last year's sponsorship program has led to another call for potential sponsors within the Australia Eastern Territory. Last year four young people from PNG and one from the Solomon Islands were sponsored by the South Queensland Division to attend the camp.

"I spent four years living in PNG as a child when mum and dad were first appointed up there so [I] have always loved Papua New Guinea and the people," said South Queensland Divisional Youth and Candidates Secretary, Captain Narelle Unicomb.

"I can see how young people engaging in EQUIP benefits the Aussie campers but it's also an amazing experience for those who come from Papua New Guinea."

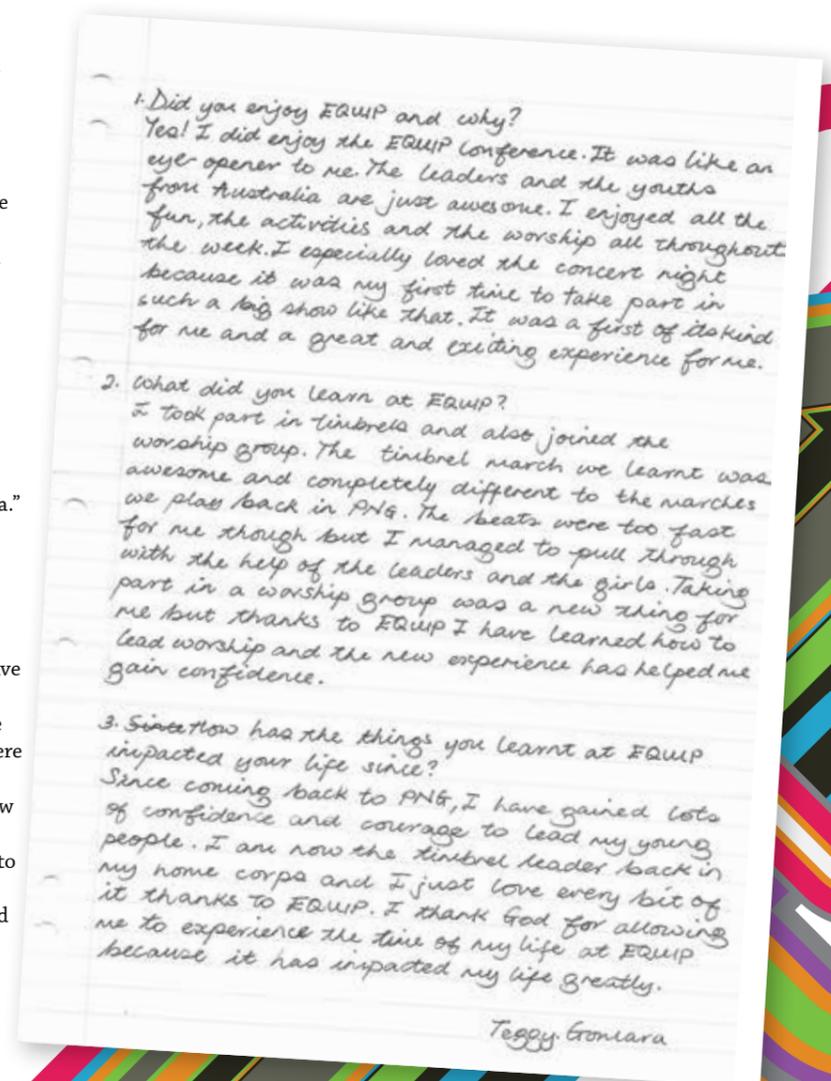
Another eight young people from PNG, who were sponsored by Aged Care Plus to take part in the Gold Coast Marathon, also attended the EQUIP camp last year.

Many of these PNG delegates have put it into practice what they learned at EQUIP last year. Some have been involved with a discipleship program called 12@4 since they returned to PNG. One young man rallied the youth at this corps to clean up their community and were thanked by the governor for taking pride in their city.

"They have taken their enthusiasm back and are now leading others," said Captain Unicomb.

To sponsor three young people, the division needs to raise \$4950 which will cover all costs including flights, visas, camp fees and sightseeing. Any extra funds raised will go towards sponsoring the EQUIP camp costs for this year's Papua New Guinea Gold Coast Marathon runners.

To donate, email Narelle Unicomb at narelle.unicomb@ae.salvationarmy.org



1. Did you enjoy EQUIP and why?
Yea! I did enjoy the EQUIP conference. It was like an eye opener to me. The leaders and the youths from Australia are just awesome. I enjoyed all the fun, the activities and the worship all throughout the week. I especially loved the concert night because it was my first time to take part in such a big show like that. It was a first of its kind for me and a great and exciting experience for me.

2. What did you learn at EQUIP?
I took part in timbrels and also joined the worship group. The timbrel march we learnt was awesome and completely different to the marches we play back in PNG. The beats were too fast for me though but I managed to pull through with the help of the leaders and the girls. Taking part in a worship group was a new thing for me but thanks to EQUIP I have learned how to lead worship and the new experience has helped me gain confidence.

3. Since how has the things you learnt at EQUIP impacted your life since?
Since coming back to PNG, I have gained lots of confidence and courage to lead my young people. I am now the timbrel leader back in my home corps and I just love every bit of it thanks to EQUIP. I thank God for allowing me to experience the time of my life at EQUIP because it has impacted my life greatly.

Teggy Gomara

passion for the spoken word



© Will Small, 2013
"first impressions"

Will Small is not your typical worship musician. He doesn't even use a musical instrument. Rather, Will worships using a pen to write poetry and his voice to share his words as a "spoken-word" artist.

Spoken-word is a part of the hip-hop music culture. While similar to rap, where an individual rhymes to a beat, spoken-word is less structured. Unlike rapping, spoken-word doesn't stick to a beat; rather it changes up the rhythm.

For Will (pictured above), spoken-word is an opportunity to not only worship, but share stories and express his opinion about a particular issue. He says his voice is all he needs to captivate an audience.

"With rappers, often people don't hear every word that they say ... where a spoken-word artist is heard. You can say something that's a real burning issue on your heart and actually have people listen."

Will has been passing on his skills for a few years now, helping young people craft their gifts as writers and spoken-word artists, and now he's using this talent for The Salvation Army.

SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

With this passion for words, Will first started running workshops for disadvantaged young people who struggled with their English studies at high schools in Canberra. Funded by the Australian National University, Will regularly visited local schools and held writing workshops, because he knew first-hand how therapeutic poetry writing could be.

"It's about helping them tell their stories and helping them build some confidence," says Will. "Life is pretty messy and just being able to take the whole mixed experience of it – the good, the bad, the ugly and just spend some time filling it out on a page. It might not always solve things or [you might not] come to any big conclusion, but it's about being able to put it out there and kind of sit with it."

Once a school term, Will would hold poetry slam nights, where students were given the opportunity to perform live poetry they had written as a rap or spoken-word performance.

"When you perform you get affirmation of people

responding ... that shared humanity around it."

Then, Will saw a new opportunity to fuse his two passions of writing and working with young people for the Salvos at the Oasis Youth Network Wyong on the Central Coast of NSW. For over a year now Will has been running a youth drop-in centre and meeting the needs of young people that come his way.

Will has been able to bring his passion for spoken-word to his role at Oasis. He runs workshops called Beats, Rhymes and Life in local schools across the Central Coast of NSW.

The program focuses on introducing young people to hip-hop culture, assists with their writing skills and teaches them to write poetry.

EMOTIVE WORDS

While these workshops are helping many marginalised youth, Will also targets these workshops at young people from all walks of life. Will believes that everyone has a story to tell and that there's power in expressing emotions through words.

"I help them think about what the mess is in their lives. We've all got a bit of mess in our life. So how could it be turned into a masterpiece? How could your scars be something that's turned into a work of art that's beautiful and can encourage others?"

Will first started listening to hip-hop and rap when he was a teenager and gained a love for music that weaved together rhyme and storytelling.

As Will got older, he began to compete in poetry slam competitions and quickly moved up the competition ladder, performing in two national poetry slam competitions and state competition finals.

Since working for the Salvos, Will has led workshops and performed at various Salvation Army events including EQUIP, a creative arts and leadership conference, Connect, a worship arts conference and at Bonnells Bay Corp carols. Will says he is passionate about using his gift to share the love of Christ. Will is also involved with hip-hop Christian group, Krosswerdz, on the Central Coast. He attends Narara Valley Baptist church along the Central Coast of NSW.

– Esther Pinn

Before you had formed an impression of me,
I had formed an impression of you.
An artistic impression; an expression like reflection
in complex sections like me.

- I am three

So I gave you mind, body, spirit
In a tangle of physics
And breathed into dust to make you.

Before you had formed an image of me
In my image, I had formed your image to be
The synergy, the mystery, deceptive simplicity
Under the illusion of serendipity
Before you had ever loved absolutely anyone
I had loved you absolutely, as if you were the only one
And if you were the only one, I'd still send my only son
To stretch his arms wide for you.

Before you had attempted scientific hypotheses
I had turned my hypothesise into a universe
And hypothetically do you understand what you are worth
To be loved first, by the one who is love?

Before you had ever struck a chord on a guitar
I had strung up the stars with a cord from my heart
I played the first improvisation solo

I conducted the first symphony

I was the first emcee, the first to play middle C

The first to dip toes into the depths of the sea

Before your hardened heart drifted apart from my art

Before you traded your spark for a share in the dark

I had reached into deep reservoirs

And pulled human hearts out of clay jars

And I am the one who can soften or harden

Who can punish or pardon

Who could melt down the stars and turn them into a garden

Before you examine me like you're some kind of expert

Why don't you flex first, and see if your muscles can stretch earth

Where were you when I laid the foundations of the nations?

I'll tell you.

You were somewhere in my mind's eye.

You were a blueprint in my 'iSky'

You were a twinkle of an idea

Long before you had arrived here

Before you had composed or created

Crafted clothes or debated

Felt exposed or naked, or enclosed or invaded

Before you had dreamed or wrote, or needed hope

Before you loved or shrugged or screamed or whispered

Before all things,

I existed.

You are here because I chose you.

Because I breathed life into your lungs

And I deemed light to flow from the sun.

And if you hear nothing else, then hear this:

Aspects of my being will remain to you mysterious

But you don't need to comprehend in order to experience

My

Love.

WITH **JOHN, KEVIN AND KARL LARSSON**

FOLLOWING IN THEIR FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS, KARL AND KEVIN LARSSON ARE ENERGISED BY THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING INSPIRING MUSICALS WITH A MESSAGE. THE BOUNDLESS CONGRESS, IN JULY, WILL PREMIERE THEIR SECOND MUSICAL, COVENANT, A TRIBUTE TO THE VISION OF FOUNDER WILLIAM BOOTH. CREATIVE INVITES THE BROTHERS AND THEIR FATHER JOHN TO REFLECT ON THEIR SHARED PASSION FOR INSPIRING OTHERS THROUGH STORY AND SONG



ABOVE: John Larsson (centre) with his wife Freda and their sons Kevin (left) and Karl (right), and their families.

John, what part did the creative work you produced with John Gowans play in your call to serve as an officer?

JOHN: Music has always been an extra in my ministry as an officer. But that extra has been fruitful. John and I have often commented that when we get to Heaven – John is already there – and look at the Book of Life, we will find that we have influenced more people through our songs than through our main appointments.

What are the dominant memories and emotions of creating and producing those creative works?

JOHN: The abiding memory is the thrill of creativity – the sheer exhilaration of giving life to new drama and new music. John and I were at our most creative during that span of around 20 years – from 1967 to 1990 – when we wrote our 10 musicals. Our first musical *Take-over Bid* stands out in my mind, perhaps because it was the first. John and I had to learn to write together – and that was fun. In the rehearsals we had to build the ship as we sailed in it. But within a few short months all was ready. The first performance was a private presentation to 1600 officers gathered for councils. When at the end of it that great crowd of officers gave the cast

a standing ovation, we knew that the time for musicals in the Army had arrived.

Did your sons show any interest in the performing arts or in your work as a composer of musicals as they were growing up?

JOHN: Interestingly, our two sons Karl and Kevin missed most of the era of the musicals because they were too young. But as they entered their teens they did catch up with the occasional performance of some musical. Kevin, our younger son, took off as a musician in his teens and went to music college. Since that time he has blossomed quite amazingly as a composer – to the extent that one of my repeated refrains to him is “I don’t know how you do it!” Karl has in more recent years revealed a remarkable gift for words and script writing. He has inherited the writer genes of his grandmother, Flora Larsson.

What was your response to hearing that Karl and Kevin were planning to write *Spirit II: Empire*?

JOHN: Absolute delight. That they chose to write a sequel to our original musical *Spirit!* added to our anticipation. Just like John Gowans and I, Karl and Kevin had to learn to work together creatively. They had the added complication of needing to call on

the services of a lyricist – a skill which was not in their joint gift-mix. Commissioner Keith Banks is the lyricist for *Covenant*, the new international congress musical. With our sons living in Los Angeles and Commissioner Banks living in Scotland, the team has also had to learn to work at long distance.

What was it like for you to be in the audience for its premiere?

JOHN: Even though I had no responsibility for the musical there was the tension common to all premieres. Will everything work? How will the audience respond? I suppose there was also some parental apprehension for we had never seen Karl and Kevin in these roles before. But, above all, was undisguised pride and joy in seeing them continuing the family heritage.

How do the new musicals differ from your own?

JOHN: They are very different. These are 21st century musicals and reflect the huge development there has been in the way modern musicals are written and staged. In the writing there is a greater reliance on the songs and music carrying forward the story, with some dialogue lines being sung. In the production the most recent technology is used. Soundwise the

accompaniment is pre-recorded by virtually a full orchestra and all members of the cast are fitted with wireless earset microphones. The sound is therefore way beyond anything we knew in our day. Visually the stage sets are built using computerised projection mapping, allowing for instant and spectacular changes of scenery. The lighting, too, reflects the ultimate in that field and is computer-controlled.

How do you see the future of musicals as a means of mission?

JOHN: Combining drama with music is a powerful way of communicating the Gospel. I understand that the script, music and backing CDs for *Spirit II* and *Covenant* will be available for local groups to present. Both these musicals are, of course, blockbusters. But there is also an immense scope for the staging of shorter musicals of between 20 to 45 minutes. There are many such Christian musicals on the market. I would like to see a new generation of Salvationist writers and composers taking hold of this medium. They could bring about a renaissance of the musical in the Army as a means of mission.

KARL AND KEVIN LARSSON Why did you decide to be involved with writing and producing *Covenant*?

KARL: Kevin started us on this journey back in 2008. He’s the Music Ministries Director for the Southern California division, and one of his projects was the Latino Chorus. He figured it would be fun to put on *Spirit* – in Spanish – and asked me to direct, as I had majored in film making at University.

My career ambition to be the next Alfred Hitchcock had stalled the day I graduated, and though I had been fortunate enough to stumble into the shiny new world that was the Internet, I still missed the creative arts, so I took him up on the offer.

It was a life-changing experience, and the sheer joy of seeing our Latino “family” come together to put on *Espiritu* is as fresh today as it was then.

The success of that show led to an invitation from the South America West Territory to put the same show on for their 2009 Centennial Congress, which again was a remarkable experience, especially as Kevin and I had grown up in Chile.

Many of our childhood friends took part, and we somehow put the whole thing together in two weekends.

From that, we were asked to put on a musical for our own territory’s congress in 2012. I had been writing screenplays as a hobby for a couple of years by this point, and Kevin was eager to compose his own music rather than arrange, so we figured

it might be fun to write a sequel to *Spirit!* from scratch – the further adventures of Paul. We turned to one of Kevin’s regular collaborators, Major Malcolm Westwood (UKT) for the lyrics, and dove in to the project without really realising how much we’d taken on.

It was terrifying and exciting all at once, but it all came together somehow.

When word reached us that the Congress Office were interested in a new musical, it was initially a touch overwhelming, but that soon turned to excitement at the privilege we had been granted.

How does the process work for you as a creative team?

KARL: With *Covenant*, I had more creative freedom as far as the storyline. These are true stories, but for many of them, there was only a loose outline of a story, so I had the chance to make stuff up – much more so than the Bible-based *Spirit 2*. That’s always fun, so I would basically write the script for a particular segment first, describing where I saw the songs, and what I needed the songs to achieve dramatically and musically, and Keith would then draft some lyrics. The two of us would then go back and forth on those until we were satisfied.

Once Keith and I are happy, we >>>



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hand the lyrics to Kevin who goes off and weaves his musical magic. It's always exciting to see an email pop up with his latest MP3 attached.

KEVIN: My part, which is the music, comes after Karl and Keith have done their work. Keith was a huge help in finding stories that we could use and Karl skilfully put them into the script, giving the musical a great flow and direction. The songs are all done but I'm still very busy writing and arranging as I have scored it for orchestra and tried to make it like a film score, with lots of underlying music and scene changes etc. I will, no doubt, still be writing and making changes right up to the end of April when we go to the studio and record the whole thing.

Is there a sense for you that you are following in your father's footsteps? What does that mean for you?

KARL: Dad's support and knowledge have been invaluable, but his legacy also presets people's expectations somewhat. The Congress Office described the musical as an "intriguing prospect" and I think that's a fair assessment. Gowans and Larsson were lightning in a bottle, and all we can do is reach upward and hope to get as close to them as we can. Hopefully that's intriguing enough to sell out seven shows!

KEVIN: I think in years to come, people will remember the musicals as my father's and John Gowans' greatest impact. The name Larsson will forever be associated with those musicals so there is definitely a sense that we are following in his footsteps and I am proud of that. I just hope and pray that in some way our musical will have an impact to those who see it, whether at the Congress in 2015 or in future performances.

COVENANT PREPARES FOR PREMIERE

By Vivian Gatica



ABOVE: The cast of *Covenant* has begun rehearsals for the musical which will premiere at the Boundless Congress in July.

Cast rehearsals have begun for *Covenant*, the musical production slated to premiere in London at The Salvation Army's international congress, Boundless: The Whole World Redeeming, in July.

"Up to this point, the musical has been more of an idea in our heads about something a long time off, but now we're dealing with actors, budgets, recordings and set design," said Karl Larsson, who is co-directing the musical with Barbara Allen in the Southern California Division of the USA Western Territory. Karl wrote the musical with brother Kevin (music) and Commissioner Keith Banks (lyrics). "This is where it begins to feel real."

Covenant is structured as a series of vignettes that parallels the funeral covenant of The Army's Founder William Booth.

"We'd always envisioned various self-contained stories connected loosely by an overarching story revolving around William Booth, and that's how it turned [out]," Larsson said. "General Booth knows his health is failing, and is worried about

the future of the Army. Will it survive beyond him? His solution is the mysterious 'covenant' we see him working on throughout the show. The contents of that covenant are revealed at the end, and our hope is that the audience will immediately recognise the connection between that very real historical document and the true stories they have just witnessed on stage."

Karl said that each scene in the musical is meant to reach every type of audience member.

"People like to shuffle their music these days, and this is in some ways a 'shuffle musical,'" he said. "It jumps through time and place, switching tone, mood and style, but underneath it all is this powerful, unifying concept of 'covenant.'"

For Commissioner Banks and the Larssons, the hope is that the audience grasps the evangelical message of the musical.

"Each vignette has a message. In some, the message is about commitment to Christ; in others it is about loyalty to Christ in difficult circumstances," Commissioner Banks said.



SYDNEY SALVATION BRASS TO MAKE ANZAC DAY DEBUT

ABOVE: The Salvation Army flag leading a band and timbrels is always a prominent feature of Anzac Day marches every year. Photo: Carolyn Hide

Sydney Salvation Brass will march through the streets of Sydney for the first time on Anzac Day. The newly formed band will represent the Australia Eastern Territory on 25 April. "It's a great opportunity to be visible in the community," said Sydney Salvation Brass bandmaster Major Keith Hampton. Leading up to the march, the band will play their first concert, alongside Blacktown City Corps band and timbrels, at Blacktown Corps on Sunday afternoon 19 April. To honour the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought and died during World War One, Sydney Salvation Brass will perform Sam Creamer's *Pack up Your Troubles* and *I*

Vow to Thee My Country. "On this special centenary year [100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landing], this concert is a way for the community to come together and pay tribute to those who served," said Major Hampton. Between two segments, each performed by the two bands, there will be an Anzac Day tribute. Traditional Anzac Day pieces, *The Last Post*, *Reveille* and *The Ode* will be performed at the service. Parramatta Corps chaplain Warren Freeman will then give Anzac Day reflections. Chief Secretary Colonel Richard Munn will also dedicate the new Sydney Salvation Brass flag at the service.

BRASS WITH A BIT OF CLASS AT DULWICH HILL

For the first time in Sydney, an innovative Celebration in Brass event will be held on 14 June at Dulwich Hill Corps. A similar event has been held at Brisbane City Temple Corps in previous years.

Celebration in Brass is an opportunity to salute brass ministry and inspire further brass ministry opportunities within the Australia Eastern Territory.

"The whole idea is to present brass and worship and celebrate," said Territorial Brass Coordinator, Malcolm Beeson. "It's also to promote the mission of the Army. To give people an opportunity to play at a concert ... and to make music and worship."

Salvation Army bands from Hurstville, Parramatta,

Blacktown and Belmore, and the Sydney Youth Band, will each perform a 20-minute set at Celebration in Brass. Each band is required to present a bright piece, a devotional song and a piece of music that extends the band beyond their comfort zone. "We want each band to be as innovative as possible - to do something different if they can. For example, along with their music piece, have an audio visual presentation," Malcolm said. The concert is open to Salvos and the Sydney-wide community and will be held at 3pm. There will be a \$5 door charge and proceeds will go towards a Salvation Army project. "We would like to see the hall filled," Malcolm said. For further information about Celebration in Brass, email Malcolm Beeson at malcolm.beeson@ae.salvationarmy.org



**ARMY EXPERIENCE
INSPIRES
SONGWRITER**

ABOVE: Peter Stanley says the inspiration for his latest album *Afterthoughts* came from his time working for The Salvation Army in Armidale.

Gifted songwriter Peter Stanley has utilised his musical skills to raise \$1000 for The Salvation Army in Armidale.

Peter penned a six-track album called *Afterthoughts* to raise funds for Armidale Corps' community kitchen ministry, called Café De' Light, that offers free meals to the community.

Peter's passion for The Salvation Army stems from his five-and-a-half years working for the Army's North NSW Division.

"I just wanted to acknowledge that the Salvos had reawakened my Christian faith as well as do something good with the gift that God has given me," Peter said.

"I sat down and collected my thoughts from the past few years and wrote songs pertaining to those moments [referring to his time working for the Army]."

Throughout December, Peter busked in the streets of Armidale and sold 250 albums.

The songs have a country gospel feel and aim to spread a message of positivity

as well as make a spiritual impact by pointing people towards Jesus.

Peter's musical skills are well-known within the Armidale community. When working for the Army, every Wednesday he would play at Armidale Corps' Café De' Light.

While his contract with the Army has finished, Peter still donates his time once a month to play at Café De' Light.

Afterthoughts can be purchased on iTunes and spotify, spotify.com for \$9.99.

PARRAMATTA BAND SET TO CELEBRATE 125 YEARS

Parramatta Corps will celebrate 125 years of brass ministry with two concerts on the weekend of 23-24 May.

"It's one of the oldest bands in Australia in terms of Salvation Army brass banding," Parramatta bandmaster Jim Muir said.

The Parramatta Band will be joined by Blacktown Citadel Band, Sydney Veterans Band and Parramatta City Band to honour Parramatta Band's long history of brass ministry to the corps and local community.

Having performed at well-known festivals such as the Orange festival, the band is also known for ministering to local nursing home facilities with their worship music.

To help celebrate, two guests, Barry Gott, Salvation Army composer and bandmaster for Brisbane City Temple and Ian Jones, composer and former member of the Melbourne Staff Band and International Staff Band member, will perform with the four bands present at the two concerts.

Including the bands members, Jim hopes for about 400 people to attend the weekend.

The Saturday evening concert starts at 7.30 and the Sunday afternoon concert begins at 2.30. Guests can give a \$5 donation at the door.

All funds will go towards covering the weekend's costs and a local community project.