

WOMEN In touch

Young

Women in Touch

A social justice Christmas
Brooke Fraser's new CD

Christmas

the centrality of Jesus

An adventure in prayer

Joy:
To
rejoice
is a
choice

He doesn't fit

Growing up in Canada, one never gets past the love of the idyllic Christmas scene – a light falling snow on Christmas Eve. The moon and the street lights just accentuate the beauty. Christmas and snow go together. Or at least I thought so. You can only imagine the cultural shift when I was introduced to Christmas in the southern hemisphere – the red suited Santa Claus enduring the summer heat and the festive wreaths beside palm trees.

Well, the weather would not deter me. Snow or no snow, my house would show every sign of the sacred season. Decorations galore! And my favourite? Nativity scenes. Over the years, I seem to have gathered a collection of them. I have one in ebony from Kenya and one in white china from western Canada. Several came as gifts. Different sizes and different poses of the first Christmas morning. They come out for the occasion and then back they go into storage, all except one or two.

The year-round Mary and Joseph are Lladro figurines. You may be able to find an inexpensive set on e-bay these days but these were a gift and an expensive one at that. Lladro is the finest handcrafted porcelain from Valencia (Spain). I couldn't afford them. Mary and Joseph, however, came with no baby Jesus. So I checked out the piece that would complete the set. Well! The one I saw was a naked little boy curled up, over-priced and over-sized. For those reasons, I went for one that fit, a small Precious Moments' baby, cheap and clothed.

Reflecting on the reasons for rejecting the Lladro baby Jesus, I realised there were deeper truths. It was more than being ashamed about a naked souvenir. I wondered if we are sometimes ashamed of the living Christ. Does his birth-name, Jesus, sometimes catch in our throats when we are in the presence of any who would think us religious fanatics? Or are we cautious and silent in case others would be offended at the suggestion that he alone is the universal Saviour?

Is he over-sized? The Mary and Joseph figurines seemed dwarfed by him. He just didn't seem to fit. And that's true in life, isn't it? When he is the centre, things change. Perspectives are different. Prominence must give way. John the Baptist realised that. When Jesus came to him to be baptised, John knew the Jesus must increase and he must decrease. The song writer, Theodore Monod, penned it as a journey: *All of self and none of thee, some of self and some of thee, less of self and more of thee, none of self and all of thee.*

But the most painful truth was that he was too costly. An imitation was preferable. This is far deeper than figurines or dollars. The real Jesus calls us to place him at the very centre of our lives and to do so, we must give all. If he could only be content with our Sunday worship or an occasional \$20 in the corps envelope, or a random act of kindness, then giving would be easy. But worshipping him, following



Photo: Shairon Paterson

him, living for him can never be tokens. It's us he wants. And in giving all, we receive all!

The nativity scene must be more than a Christmas decoration or a year-round ornament. It calls us again to think deeply about the centrality of Jesus.



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WOMEN In touch

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About this issue – from the editor's desk

“If Jesus came to our planet so that all who would listen could be restored to relationship with the Father and enjoy the heavenly emotions of love, joy and peace, why do Christians commonly feel as if we are alone in the world and burdened by the earthbound feelings of anger, depression and anxiety?”

These are challenging words from Christian psychologist Gary Moon, perhaps especially so at this time of the year. So many of us are facing difficult and challenging circumstances with no solution or end in sight and yet, as the articles in this issue reflect, as Christians we can experience genuine, deep and lasting joy, despite our circumstances – through Christ alone. Our circumstances may not change, we may face multiple and complex challenges but, as Major Dean Clarke discusses in his article, joy is a choice we can make as well as a gift we receive.

In our busy lives, we can often allow many distractions to take our focus off Jesus and the joy that is a deep and integral part of an intimate relationship with him. In our story on prayer retreats on pages 10-11, Major Lynn Whittaker shares her experience with the power of silent or partially silent retreats in reconnecting with God, hearing his voice and joyfully allowing him to take us where he wants us to be.

The importance of solitude and quiet times with God is again reflected in Major Christine Unicomb's story on doors. Major Christine writes about going into our “heart” space, a place where we can be acutely aware of God's presence, so he can lead us into or away from the various doors we encounter in our life's journey.

Continuing the theme of reconnecting with God, Lieutenant-Colonel Pam Hodge shares how the Lord used a morning at the beach to refresh her communication with him – in a most unexpected and joyful way.

In other articles, two very special ladies who have just celebrated their 100th birthday share their amazing stories of trusting God and following him for a century, and retired Commissioner Raemor Pobjie shares some of her worldwide journey as an officer.

For our young women, we have articles on celebrating Christmas with a focus on social justice, a review on Brooke Fraser's latest CD, *Flags*, and an interview with Jarrod Newton on some ways to become involved in helping people and transforming society.

We pray that you will find a message of help, hope and encouragement within the pages of this issue, and that God will bless you and your loved ones with a joyful Christmas season as you worship the one whose birth we celebrate.



Simone Worthing,
Editor

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To rejoice is a choice

Major Dean Clarke reflects on Paul's letter to the Philippians and the practical instructions there on how to live life with joy, no matter what the circumstances.

Joy to the world,
the Lord is come!
Let earth receive
her King;

Got a favourite carol? One of mine is *Joy to the World*, and I always make sure we sing this carol every Christmas. This Christmas it has added meaning as throughout the year my major sermon series was entitled: "Rejoice is a Choice" based upon Paul's letter to the Philippians. Paul wrote this letter from a difficult situation yet it radiates a central theme of joy.

As I sing *Joy to the World*, I reflect on the Letter to the Philippians and its practical instructions on how to live life with joy. Here's a few of the key principles from Philippians chapter one that are worth considering, not only this Christmas, but as we enter into 2011 and whatever the new year holds for us.

- **Living with joy means to focus upon the things you're thankful for**

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy. (Philippians 1:3-4)."

When Paul thinks about the Church

at Philippi, his mind recalls reasons to be thankful and his heart experiences joy. Interestingly, not everything about Philippi in Paul's past would be cause for celebration. Paul first visited the city on his second missionary journey (Acts 16) and on the Sabbath went to a prayer meeting on the river bank. After he spoke, Paul had the joy of leading Lydia and others to give their hearts to the Lord. He also healed a possessed slave girl but her owner charged that Paul was troubling the city by teaching customs unlawful for Romans. A mob formed and Paul and Silas were stripped and beaten before being thrown into jail. After discovering that Paul was a Roman citizen, the magistrates went to the jail and pleaded that Paul leave, not only the jail, but the town as well.

If it was you, and you were asked about your time in Philippi, what part of the story would you tell? As we come to the end of the year, which are the stories you recall and tell about your experiences in 2010? Are they the celebration of thanks or the tales of woe?

When Paul reflected on the past, he doesn't recall those who threw him in prison or bashed him. He doesn't keep recalling the bad memories or ill feelings. When Philippi crosses his mind, he breaks into thanks and joy.

Paul focuses upon the things he is thankful for. He recalls with joy those who were saved. They are not only those whom he calls brothers and sisters in Christ, but they are his friends whom he cares for deeply.

- **Joy deepens with deep friendships**

"For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ" Philippians 1:8 (KJV).

When I asked my congregation what "the bowels of Jesus Christ" meant, I didn't get too many answers. In case you too are a little confused, allow me to give you a very quick history lesson: In the first century it was believed that the intestines, the stomach, liver, and even the lungs, held the most tender parts of human emotions. What Paul is saying is: As I share with you my feelings, I open my whole inner being to you and tell you that the level of my affection is deep and tender.

Deep communication

One of the key activities I do in my pre-marriage counselling sessions is try to help couples learn how to communicate on a deeper level. Most friends talk only at the cliché or fact reporting level. Some move into the third area of sharing ideas and judgments, which does take courage.

I try to teach couples how to go up another level, where they share their feelings. Author John Powell, in describing the five levels of communication says of level four feelings, "If I really want you to know who I am, I must tell you about my stomach (gut-level) as well as my head. The feelings that lie under my ideas, judgments and convictions are uniquely mine..." (*Why Am I Afraid To Tell You Who I Am*, 1969). Some say that less than 10 percent of us ever communicate on that "feeling" level. Yet there is still another depth to the level of communication.

Again from John Powell: "All deep and authentic friendships, and especially the union of those who are married, must be based on absolute openness and honesty... Among

close friends or between partners in marriage there will come from time to time a complete emotional and personal communion.” That’s real bowel level affection. It is out of this deep level of friendship that Paul is able to pray meaningfully and specifically for his friends: “And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ...” (Philippians 1:9-11).

In my relationships I can express feelings and be sincere. I can love and be loved, know and be known. With this depth of friendship there is also deep joy.

So, joy comes by focusing upon the things we are thankful for, choosing positive memories and choosing to have deeper, richer, more meaningful friendships with others. Are you picking up that joy is a choice?

- **Joy is an attitude**

As you read these next few verses, see if you can identify what Paul isn’t saying: “Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly,” (Philippians 1:12-14).

Did you read about Paul’s problems? Hear his thoughts on prison food? Does he complain about being restricted from travelling and how miserable is it to be chained to a jailer? No! Paul chooses not to focus on the negative, but on joy.

To better appreciate the significance of Paul’s decision, we need to understand the events that preceded him writing his letter to the Philippians from jail. Chuck Swindoll gives a good summary in his book *Laugh Again* (p.52): “Paul wanted to go to Rome as a

preacher in order to testify of his faith before the emperor, Nero. Instead, he wound up in Rome as a prisoner. Prior to this, Paul was illegally arrested in Jerusalem, misrepresented before the court, incorrectly identified as an Egyptian renegade, entangled in the red tape of political machinery, and finally granted a trip across the Mediterranean, only to encounter a storm and be shipwrecked. When he finally arrived in Rome, he was incarcerated and virtually forgotten for two years.”

Not much joy or reason to give thanks for in that journey! But our circumstances don’t determine our attitude, we do.

Joy is ours when we focus on those things we are thankful for, develop deep friendships, and choose an attitude of joy.

- **Joy in spite of circumstances**

There’s an Australian who stands out in my mind for his attitude of joy. During the 2002 Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, skater Stephen Bradbury had made the final of the 1,000 metre short track speed-skating race. He was trailing the other competitors when everyone in front of him fell over and, with only a turn or two to go, Stephen Bradbury glided past to win the gold medal.

Every time I think of how he won that race, a smile comes to my face. However, I’m more impressed with what happened leading up to that moment and Stephen Bradbury’s attitude along the way. Bradbury had been racing for 12 years and had competed in three previous Olympic Games. In 1995 another skater’s blade sliced right through

his right thigh and through all four of his quadriceps muscles; he lost four litres of blood and needed 111 stitches. It was 18 months before his leg was back to full strength. In 2000 Bradbury broke his neck in a training accident, and doctors told him that he would not be able to take to the ice again. In 2002 he went to the Olympic Games to race the 1,000 metres as the second oldest competitor in the entire field. Steven Bradbury became the first person from any southern hemisphere country to win a winter olympic event. Combined with his amazing perseverance is an attitude of joy in spite of his circumstances.

Most of us know something of what it is like when circumstances or events don’t go the way we want or expect them to and how, when we find ourselves in such an environment or situation, joy seems to fade. Reflecting upon the life of Paul, I wonder if the key to finding joy in our circumstances might have something to do with the negative or positive type of question we ask ourselves: “Why did this have to happen to me?” Or, “How has this brought some benefit that God had in mind?”

Paul answers the positive question. Instead of seeing the soldier next to him as a restriction to the gospel, Paul saw him as a captive audience. He shared Christ with soldier after soldier, who in turn took the gospel message back to the barracks and soon others in the palace guard heard the gospel message as well. Instead of feeling frustrated and victimised, Paul found a unique opportunity. Paul sees his circumstances as an opportunity to advance the Gospel.

It’s not a Christmas movie but I do like to watch *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. At the end of the roller coaster story that is Joseph’s life of favouritism and blessing, betrayal, slavery, opportunity, false accusations, imprisonment, position and power, his brothers inquire of Joseph’s attitude towards them because of their negative role in his life’s journey. Joseph’s



answer shows that he had overcome his circumstances and decided to choose an attitude of joy: “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives,” (Genesis 50:20). Joy is ours when we focus on those things we are thankful for, develop deep friendships, and choose an attitude of joy. Our joy in this process is enriched when we know Jesus.

- **Real joy is found in Jesus**

Christ is enough, no matter what happens: “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain,” (Philippians 1:21).

Joy is found by having a Christ-centred, Christ-controlled life. Jesus himself said, “I came to give life – life in all its fullness,”

(John 10:10 ICB). This doesn’t mean a life without trouble or difficulty, as the lives of both Joseph and Paul demonstrate. Our circumstances though, don’t determine our joy. Christ is our joy.

The life of joy is the choice of the mind made real by the presence of Christ in the heart. Christ is enough.

Which takes me back to my carol:

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And Heaven and nature sing.*

Major Dean Clarke
Corps Officer, Gold Coast Temple





Trusting God's plan for our lives

Colonel Robyn Maxwell took up her new appointment as Territorial Secretary for Women's Ministries in November. She spoke recently with *Women in Touch*



Colonel Robyn Maxwell.

Photo: Shaaron Paterson

Can you give us a brief background of your history with The Salvation Army?

My great-grandfather on my mother's side was a coalminer in the northern English village of Spennymoor. He was also a heavy drinker. One night he stumbled into a Salvation Army meeting and was saved. He never touched alcohol again. My great-grandmother knew he was changed because every week he would give her his full earnings for the week.

He became a Salvationist. The family has served in The Salvation Army ever since. My mother, then Betty Woods, with her parents and siblings, sailed to Australia in 1926 on a ship leased by The Salvation Army.

What appointments have you served in and where?

Our first appointment was to the Maclean Corps in northern NSW, followed by Unanderra (Wollongong), Townsville, Menai and Dulwich Hill corps'. Following an appointment as the Divisional Women's Ministries Secretary in the Greater West Division, we served as divisional leaders for four years in the North NSW Division followed by six years in the South Queensland Division.

What are some of the major lessons God has taught you through your service to him?

I have learnt that God is sovereign! In Job 23 it says: "But he knows where I am going..."

He controls my destiny." Being in this new role at this time was not on my agenda – but it was on God's. I just need to obediently step up and trust God for his sovereign plan for my life.

I have learnt that spending time with the Lord is what inspires and energises me in my life and ministry – I can't do it without him!

I have learnt that my identity is in Christ. It is not found in anything else.

I have learnt that to the best of my ability to "always show grace". People are ultimately responsible to God for their own attitudes and reactions and I am responsible to God for mine.

What do you enjoy most about women's ministries and how can it benefit women and girls?

One of my life's passions is to see women and girls reach their potential and know their value and identity in Christ. Women's ministries potentially offers this to women of all ages.

I believe women's ministries exists to reach women and their families with the gospel and nurture them in the faith by providing programs that will develop them as a whole person and enrich family life.

What you are looking forward to in your new appointment?

I believe that women are designed to be influencers and shapers and are chosen to play key roles in God's strategies. I am looking forward to journeying with the women of the

territory as together we embrace all that God has for us. I am looking forward to speaking into and encouraging women and girls of the Army to excel and walk well in God's plan for their life.

Who has been the greatest influence in your life?

The greatest influence in my life was my mother. She raised me to love God and love the house of God which for me was expressed through The Salvation Army. Her life was truly a gift to me. Mum was promoted to glory in May this year. She was not only my confidante but also my best friend. There isn't a day that passes where I don't think about her and appreciate her influence in my life in some way. She truly was a Proverbs 31 woman.

Would you like to share something of your own family?

We have four children. Jonathan is a graphic designer and works part-time for his church. He is also developing his own design business in Rockhampton. Joel is married to Alyce and works for The Salvation Army Indigenous Ministries at North Ipswich. Corinne is a television journalist with WIN TV in Rockhampton, and Benjamin is studying for a double degree in law and arts at the University of Queensland in Brisbane.

We also have two amazing grand-daughters; Unity is 23 months and Madelyn is 4 months. Our children and grandchildren are a delight to our world.

Christmas recipe:

Healthy Christmas logs

½ cup chopped apricots
¼ cup orange juice
2 tbs honey
½ cup skim milk powder
¼ cup chopped almonds
1 tbs toasted sesame seeds
1 tbs grated orange rind
½ cup sultanas or currants
¼ cup coconut
raw toasted coconut (extra)

Place apricots, orange juice and honey in saucepan. Simmer on low heat for 10 minutes, until apricots are tender. Do not drain. Blend in milk powder. Add sesame seeds, almonds, grated orange rind, sultanas, and coconut. Mix well. Leave to cool slightly.

Roll mixture into a log shape and roll in toasted coconut. Roll up firmly in aluminium foil and store in the fridge.

When mixture has firmed, cut into slices and wrap each piece in foil and coloured cellophane, tying each end with Christmas ribbons; or make smaller logs and wrap for Christmas!

Submitted by Captain Kay Nelson
Court Chaplain – Southport

Canadian Christmas Snowballs

2 cups of plain flour
1/2 tsp of salt
3/4 cup of butter
1/2 cup of sugar
2 tsp of vanilla
1 egg
1 cup of chocolate chips
icing sugar

Cream butter, sugar, egg and vanilla. Add flour, salt and chocolate chips. Shape into 1 inch (2.5cm) balls. Place on greased cookie sheet. Bake in a moderate oven (180) for 15-20 minutes.

While the cookies are still very warm, roll them in icing sugar.

Submitted by KerryAnn Berrisford
St Albert Corps, Canada



Christmas gift suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect."

– Oren Arnold (American editor and writer, 1900-1980)

Private Atmosphere: meditations on everyday life

Retired Colonel Margaret Martin's long-awaited book, *Private Atmosphere*, is now available for purchase through Salvationist Supplies (www.salvosuppliesyd.com) for \$19.50.

"It's a book of meditations taken from everyday life," said Colonel Margaret. "I first started writing back in the 1980s, so the meditations go back over a long period. They indicate things that God was teaching me at the time and are taken from books I was reading, Scripture, events that happened that God spoke to me through, and thoughts that I had. Each meditation is linked with a Bible verse.

"That's the way I hope people will read it and be challenged in their own Christian journey.

"I'm a little bit excited about it," she added.

Colonel Margaret had never really thought about compiling her meditations into a book. "My late husband Jim always said I should do this, it was his idea," she said.

Many of her meditations were published in the *War Cry* in the 1980s and 1990s. Others were published in the *Officer* and *Veteran* magazines.

Captain Mark Everitt, Corps Officer, Tuggeranong, assisted Colonel Margaret in preparing the meditations for publication, suggesting key verses and scriptures to accompany many of them. Amanda Herring worked on design.

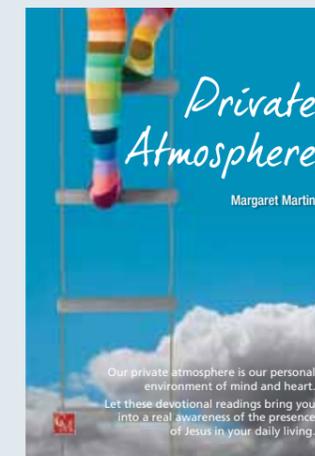
"I completed the editing and am grateful to the Lord and all those that helped me, that it's now available," she said. "It's part of my ministry for the Lord. It's my prayer that God will use it and speak to people through it."

Colonel Margaret served as an officer of the Australia Eastern Territory from 1957-1997, and continues her writing ministry to the present day.

"I've always found it easy to express myself," she said. "Even as a little girl I would scribble ideas into a notebook. I work on a computer now."

Colonel Margaret took a writing course in

1986 when she stayed home for a year with her daughter, Elizabeth, who was suffering from osteomyelitis. "I saw the ad for the course and felt strongly that I should do it," she said. "I did, and that was the beginning. It's amazing how God uses things that happen in our lives."



Prayer retreats:

Hearing the most precious voice

Every day we are bombarded by voices coming at us from every direction; family, work, church obligations and the media all jostle for our limited attention. With phone calls, emails and Facebook messages constantly harassing us, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. How can we make space in a busy world to hear the voice that's the most precious, and often the most easily missed?

Major Lynn Whittaker, Territorial Prayer Ministry Consultant for the Australia Eastern Territory, has found an answer – silent and partially silent prayer retreats.

Major Lynn's journey began when she took part in a 24-hour silent retreat at Brengle in 1999. "I saw there was so much value in it," she said. "The more I read about it and thought about it, the more I realised that it was something that was so desperately needed."

So, with the prompting of the Holy Spirit, Major Lynn started to explore what prayer retreats might look like in The Salvation Army. In 2001, together with Lieutenant-Colonel Frank Daniels, now Secretary for Personnel in the Australia Southern Territory, Major Lynn hosted the first of what would be a long line of retreats with just 4 "retreatants".

"My retreats have evolved in the course of the journey," Major Lynn said. "My firm belief is that a retreat should mirror a rhythm of life. There are times of corporate worship, times to play, rest and pray."

For many of us, a reprieve from the distractions that prevent us hearing from God might be just the thing we need, and that's what Major Lynn has in mind during her prayer retreats. "Being on retreat allows you a chance to look at where you are in your journey to God, and to be more aware of your journey and of the loving God with whom you journey," she said. "But we're not just learning or hearing *about* God, we are *experiencing* God by learning to spend time in his presence and bringing him into every aspect of our lives. We tend to compartmentalise our lives, but prayer retreats are about the idea of praying continually, bringing God into everything we do."

Personal time

One delegate went to a recent retreat with an open mind, wanting to spend personal time with God. "The theme was set on the very first night with evening prayer," she said. "As we prayed, 'into the warmth of your presence we come Lord God', God was with us."

Retreats can be completely silent or partially silent, with talk allowed during meals. "If anything should come up for anyone during the retreat, I'm happy to listen," said Major Lynn. "Delegates can break silence

to ask questions, or if they're going crazy or need someone to talk to, I am available at all times as a listening ear."

Major Lynn tries to provide an atmosphere where delegates can connect with God, saying that she doesn't see her role as that of a leader, but of a facilitator. "I ask them to ask God to take them to where he wants them, and I give them the space to do it. Delegates will often say that they came with a certain place in mind, but God took them somewhere else instead."

Another delegate had in mind what she wanted to get out of her first retreat and what she wanted to know from God.

"However, God had His own plans," she said. "I think that next time I attend a retreat, I will keep in mind that God might want to do something other than what I plan. I don't want to miss God's moment simply because I am fixed on my own plan."

Major Lynn shared one highlight from her time facilitating retreats. She had been doing silent day retreats with a Chinese couple, and they asked her to do a day retreat with their 11 year old son. During the day, the boy learned to pray through art.

Just as that 11 year old boy found his own way of worshipping God, so a prayer retreat offers those who attend a chance to explore their own unique way of connecting with God. "A retreat experience is essentially an experience of meeting God personally," said Major Lynn. "We can spend time in prayer, meditation, reflective writing and communing with nature."

Another delegate commented on "how wonderful it was to come and rest with God, to ponder the blank page in the journal, have space with God and to not have to watch the clock and hope time hadn't run out."

Common fears

"The word 'retreat' is bandied about too easily," said Major Lynn. "These days, every camp and conference is labelled a retreat. They are different."

In modern church culture we're so used to attending conferences and events that are programmed down to the minute, with every bit of spare time filled with noise and chatter. It's natural that we would feel apprehensive at the idea of attending an event where the usual program is replaced largely by silence and solitude. A delegate who attended a retreat with a group from her corps, said, "It's taken me so long to learn how to really, purposefully be alone with our God in the way our Saviour Jesus demonstrated."

Major Lynn recognises that silence can be difficult for some people, but she encourages them to give it a try. "I also suggest that if someone wants to come and is really unsure,

then begin with a partially silent retreat and see how that goes."

As Lynn illustrates in a story she shared at the beginning of this year's retreats, some time away from the distractions of everyday life can be just what we need:

Satan calls worldwide convention

In his opening address to his evil angels, Satan said, "We can't keep the Christians from going to church. We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth. We can't even keep them from forming an intimate, abiding relationship experience in Christ. If they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken."

So, let them go to their churches; let them have their conservative lifestyles, but steal their time, so they can't gain that relationship with Jesus Christ. This is what I want you to do, angels. Distract them from gaining hold of their Saviour and maintaining that vital connection throughout their day!"

"How shall we do this?" shouted his angels.

"Keep them busy in the non-essentials of life and invent innumerable schemes to occupy their minds," he answered. "Over-stimulate their minds so that they cannot hear that still, small voice. Entice them to play the radio or cassette player whenever they drive. To keep the TV, VCR, CDs and their PCs going constantly in their homes and see to it that every store and restaurant in the world plays non-biblical music constantly. This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ."

Ultimately, prayer retreats are about getting in touch with God and giving him time to move. "It's fine-tuning our listening skills to hear God's voice again," says Major Lynn.

As I was writing this article, it didn't take me long to start dreaming of taking my own retreat – of running off to some peaceful spot, away from the noise and busyness of everyday life. In fact, I hadn't been sitting at my computer for more than ten minutes before I'd started hunting through my favourite travel websites, Facebooking my friends for holiday recommendations and Google searching secluded bed and breakfasts where I could hide away from the bustling distractions of everyday life. Oh, the irony. Maybe a retreat would do me good.



Mel Cotton
MySalvos Web Content
Manager

The power of DOORS

Have you ever stood at a door, wondering? Maybe it was a solid closed door and you wondered what was behind it. Possibly you needed to unlock the door and did not have the key. Maybe it was a glass door and you wanted to enjoy what was on the other side.

On other occasions you may have shut the door to keep someone or something out. And then there might have been the time when you wanted to peek through a partly open door but were not quite courageous enough.

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you” (Matthew 6:6).

This is about going into our inner room – our heart space - and having a place of solitude and quiet where we can be with God and be especially aware of his presence.

Once I am in this place of solitude, I may encounter other doors.

The closed door

I may come across a closed door and need to ask – What is behind it? Is anybody there? Perhaps this is a door that I have closed to keep God out of that area of my life. Perhaps it could be a door that God has closed saying this is not the right place for you, or now is not the right time.

Maybe your closed door is very small and you don't think you will fit through it – like Alice in Wonderland when she was large and the door was small and she could not get through. Maybe your closed door is so large you wonder how you will ever open it – like the women who went to the tomb of Jesus and wondered how they would move the stone, only to find it had already been rolled away.

As you think about your relationship with God, are there closed doors that need to be opened to God? Are there doors God wants you to walk through but you haven't made the time, or you have avoided, or perhaps you don't know how to open?

Are there open doors that need closing - things, people, situations that God is asking you to move away from? As you ponder these

questions, what do you need from God to enable you to enter, or to close, a door?

Knocking on the door

I need to knock on doors to let those on the inside know I am there. At other times friends and visitors knock on my door. When I think of knocking on doors I wonder how hard I will need to knock, for how long, whether anyone will hear me, and whether I am at the right door?

Jesus told a story in Luke 11:5-13 about responding to knocking, giving an assurance that God will hear us and respond. A person was knocking at their neighbour's door at midnight. The person was in need because a visitor had arrived and they were not able to offer the hospitality that was expected. Jesus said that the neighbour would answer and provide what was needed because of their friend's persistence. I see in this story an encouragement to keep on knocking - to be persistent.

In Revelation 3:20 we read where God stands at the door of our heart and knocks. He is waiting for us to respond and let him in – are we listening, or does the noise of our daily life drown out the sound?

The open door

Part of our journey is coming to an open door – do I want to go through it, do I have the courage to venture forward, or am I ready to let God come into all the space in my life?

“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open...” Revelation 3:7-8.

I am reminded of Mary Lennox in the story *The Secret Garden*, where she discovers an old door in an overgrown garden, and finds the key. She enters the neglected garden and invests her energy into restoring it to a place of beauty. Christ, the lover of men and women stands and asks entry to the garden of our hearts and wants to transform it into a place of beauty. Will you let him in?

Major Christine Unicomb
Director, Counselling Service Sydney



AN ADVENTURE IN PRAYER

I had felt for a while that my prayer life had hit a dry patch. I persisted in my prayer times but still the dryness was there, so I prayed that God would help to bring refreshment to my communication with him.

I have regularly enjoyed a Sunday morning quiet time walking along the beach near our home, and a recent Sunday morning found me there again. The bay was still, the morning perfect and so I sat at the edge of the water and tried to have my peace restored.

I remembered a part from the book *The Shack* by William Young, where “Mack” had sat on the end of the jetty with Jesus and just chatted. So I decided I would like to do just that sitting there on the beach. I launched into my “conversation” – as I often do – then realised that I hadn't consciously invited Jesus to come and share the conversation, or even acknowledged his presence. First then, I invited Jesus to come and sit with me on the beach.

I “prayed” the words of the song *Power of Your Love* (by Geoff Bullock): “Hold me close, let your love surround me. Bring me near, draw me to your side.”

I allowed Jesus to do just that for me. The

peace came and I stayed there for a while in lovely companionable silence with my Lord.

It was time to move and so I asked Jesus to walk with me. I remembered that Jesus was very familiar with the water and beaches and bays. The water looked so inviting and I wished I'd worn my swimmers. I did the next best thing and took my sneakers and socks off and Jesus and I paddled.

The water was so refreshing and I paddled a little deeper. We walked together the length of the beach, sometimes in silence, sometimes chatting. The water was so lovely it simply called to me to “come on in”! I wasn't appropriately attired and, after all, I should “act my age” and yet ...

So I threw caution to the wind and just dived in clothes and all! The water was still and warm and so much fun as I “frolicked”. What sheer joy to feel the water covering me and just being completely immersed in it.

I left the water as I had entered it, careful that no one was around. I walked home dripping but with such a sense of joy and love, and having truly spent time with my Lord. I explained to my husband the reason that I had come home dripping and, except for wanting to share what I had done with

my grandson (thought it would bring forth a smile in response), decided that this would just be my secret.

I have, however, been challenged to share the experience. The temptation to pray by rote, out of duty or in automatic mode is a very real and convenient temptation, but communion with our God can be such a wonderful experience – to really commune with Jesus is a whole other world!

I have on my bedside table a shell which I picked up from the beach that day. It is a reminder that:

- my Jesus is real and alive;
- Jesus wants to walk and talk with me;
- and that on a certain Sunday in 2010 we had such fun on the beach together.



Lieutenant-Colonel Pamela Hodge
Director, Salvation Army International Development Office (SAID)



MRS MAUD DOVEY

Don't worry about things but pray about them; be patient; and always be friendly, are the biggest lessons Mrs Maud Dovey has learned in her 100 years of life.

Mrs Dovey turned 100 on 26 November, and invited 100 people to her party at the Redcliffe Salvation Army hall.

"People came from as far away as London, Riga in Latvia, Longreach, Melbourne, Townsville and all places in between" said Major Glenys Anderton, (ret.) Mrs Dovey's daughter. "That's just reflective of how people are attracted to Mum because of her positive attitude and kindness."

Mrs Dovey will receive tributes from Queen Elizabeth II, General Shaw Clifton and Commissioner Helen Clifton, and has already heard from the Prime Minister of Australia, Governor of Queensland, the Queensland Premier's department, her local Member of Parliament, and friends and family around the world.

Born in Hamilton, Brisbane, in 1910 Maud is one of 8 children. She grew up in Sunnybank where her father, William Woodward, owned a poultry farm. Mr Woodward accepted Christ during one of General William Booth's meetings in Brisbane during 1900.

As a child Maud, with her parents and

siblings, attended the local United Protestant church. Salvation Army officers from the Woolloongabba Corps participated in the preaching roster there and always shared a meal at the Woodward's home.

Active in the corps

The young Maud married Ernest Dovey on 20 April 1940, and had four children; Raymond (now deceased), Mervyn, Glenys and Isabel. Renewed contact with The Salvation Army occurred when her youngest daughter Isabel was born. The Doves asked the Woolloongabba Corps Officer, Captain Cyril Bugler, to conduct the dedication service. From then on, the family attended the corps each Sunday. Mrs Dovey became a Salvationist in 1951. Her husband, Ernest, became a committed Christian soon after, and joined her as a Salvationist. Maud's brothers Roy and Aubrey Woodward and their respective families also followed and became Salvationists.

Mrs Dovey was happy to do whatever she was called upon to do and served as corps pianist, flag sergeant, Young Peoples treasurer, a Company Guard and each Sunday decorated the hall with flowers from her garden. "As a family we were part of everything, it was our life!" said Major Glenys.

Today, her children rise up and call her "Blessed"! "Mum is a quiet and unassuming lady who is content to fill a little space if

God be glorified," said Major Glenys. She is a member of the Order of the Silver Star as the mother of three officer children in the Australia Eastern Territory – Major Glenys Anderton, Major Isabel Beckett and Captain Mervyn Dovey. Major Cecil Woodward is her nephew, and her brother Roy, aged 92, served as an envoy at the Tara Outpost (west of Dalby) for almost 40 years.

Today at 100 years of age, Mrs Dovey is in good health and can still on occasions attend the Redcliffe City Corps. She has six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



Commissioner Raemor Pobjie, recently retired, shares the highlights of her officership with *Women in Touch*



MRS BRIGADIER MARY MAXWELL

"I never thought I'd see 100, but it must all be part of the plan," said Mrs Brigadier Mary Maxwell. "I have a clear mind and enjoy a lot of things, and am very thankful for that."

Photo: Shairon Paterson



Mrs Maxwell turned 100 on 28 November. Family and friends celebrated with her at a party at Caanan, Riverview Farm, where she and her late husband were stationed as managers of the Boys' Home in 1943.

One hundred years of life has taught Mrs Maxwell many lessons. "I've learned to be patient with people and I'm still learning that every day," she said. "I've learned to forgive myself, to look for the good in people, and the importance of trying not to worry. My tomorrows are all in God's hands, so I've learned to leave them there. I know I can always cry out to God, and that gets me through."

Little nudges

Mrs Maxwell retired as a Salvation Army officer in 1972 and lived with her daughter, Rosemarie Watts, and family until 2008 when she moved to Riverview Gardens, a Salvation Army Aged Care facility near Ipswich.

"I'm happy here, and I know this is where God wants me," she said. "He is still giving me the 'little nudges' he has been giving me all my life when he wants me to do something. Sometimes I get a feeling about someone having a real battle within themselves, or being sick, and I write them a letter and send a prayer card. I have six big

books filled with special readings and prayers to give to people."

Mrs Maxwell arrived in Australia from Lochgelly, in Fife, Scotland, when she was 10. The family moved to Cessnock, and then to West Maitland where they were active in The Salvation Army.

Mary answered God's calling to officership and was commissioned as a Salvation Army officer in 1931, out of the Blazers session.

After appointments in Five Dock and Gilgandra, Mary married Captain Earle Maxwell and the couple was appointed to Cowra. They had five children; Earle, Graham, Marjorie, Douglas and Rosemarie.

Mrs Maxwell has faced great pain and loss in her life. Her little daughter, Marjorie, died when she was 3 years old, her 11-year-old son Douglas drowned, and another son, Graham, passed away after many years of sickness. "God gave us an understanding of great sorrow so we could help others," she said softly.

Brigadiers Earle and Mary Maxwell spent 20 years in social appointments and 20 years as corps officers.

Mrs Maxwell has seven grandchildren (six are officers), 13 great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren.

Can you give us a brief overview of your officership?

I have been an officer for 39 years and served in Australia, New Zealand, Eastern Europe and at International Headquarters in London.

My appointments have been a corps officer, in youth work, at the Officer Training College, in the Personnel Department at Territorial Headquarters and Women's Ministries appointments at divisional, territorial and International Headquarters.

What are some of the most difficult challenges you have faced in your officership?

I think most married women officers face the challenge of fulfilling their calling while at the same time fulfilling their role as a wife and a mother. I married when I was 31 years old, having been an officer for eight years. I became a mother to two children aged 4 and 10 the day I married, so those early years were years of intensive learning and adjusting. I was blessed in that my leaders were sensitive to my situation and appointments were made with our family circumstances being carefully considered. I was blessed also with a family who welcomed me and were gracious and forgiving.

There is no doubt that my most difficult challenge was the move to Russia. Nothing was the same! We had to learn to live differently, shop differently, speak differently and think differently – in fact, do everything differently. However, I would have to say that no other experience has added as much to my life as those years in Russia.

Among the many things that I learned

was the important lesson of total dependence on God. As the old song says, "When we reach the end of our hoarded resources, the Father's full giving has only begun".

What were some of the highlights of your officership?

If Russia was my most difficult challenge it also has to be my greatest highlight. I don't think I would have chosen to go if given the opportunity to choose, but I would not swap the experience for anything.

Another highlight has to be the time spent at International Headquarters where my husband and I were appointed as International Secretary and Zonal Secretary for Women's Ministries both in the South Pacific and East Asia Zone and then for 12 months in the Europe Zone. In the last three years we were privileged to travel to 30 different countries and see what God was doing through The Salvation Army. It was humbling, exciting, challenging and enriching. We hope that we were able to bring encouragement and blessing to those people and their leaders and we tried to represent them well and be their voice at IHQ.

What was one of the most unexpected aspects of your officership?

If I look at my officership as a whole then I would say it would be the enormous gains and the gifts in blessings and experiences that have come to me through living in obedience to God's call on my life. When I initially said 'yes' to God and applied to enter Training College, I was not a happy camper. Although I felt a sense of peace in surrendering to God,

at the same time there was a lot of turmoil as I struggled with those things that I believed I would have to sacrifice.

As I reflect on my life, those things that I held dear and considered were costly to surrender now seem so unimportant and of little account. And when I look at the enormous privileges and opportunities that have been mine, it is just amazing.

My life has been enriched and I have been truly blessed above and beyond anything I could have imagined. Whatever I have given or shared has returned to me a hundred-fold.

What are you enjoying the most about retirement?

I am so enjoying not packing a suitcase every other week. I love being home in Australia. It is so good to see our family regularly and being able to say goodbye knowing we will see them again soon, rather than in three years time (except for our daughter, Sandra, who is living in the United States but we will be able to visit her next year).

I have lived in apartments for the last 11 years so I am really enjoying the garden. I have lots of projects planned which include the garden, sewing, writing, reading and getting our home set up the way we want it. I am truly blessed!

Editor's Note

In our next issue of *Women in Touch*, Commissioner Raemor writes on preparing for overseas service, and what we can do to reach out to women in developing nations.

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

The results are final, the study notes have been burned and there are finally no more schedules to adhere to, you are now free to do whatever you want, right?

After thirteen years of being told what to do, it's an exciting but daunting time when you walk out of school for the last time.

So, how do you deal with this new freedom as you enter a new chapter of your life in 2011? Don't panic!

Like many before her, Kate Culshaw, a second year university student has found herself in this exact situation. She shares her reactions with *Young Women In Touch*: "The idea of this whole new life, this new independence, took a while to sink in," Kate says.

Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose Driven Life* (Zondervan, 2002) believes that God

doesn't expect you to reach maturity straight away. "He [God] loves and enjoys you at every stage of your spiritual development."

So, take the pressure off and try out the advice below when you start your new journey over the coming months.

Ask God

"I've already asked and God didn't tell me." Sound familiar? As hard as it is to hear this, God's timing isn't always your timing. Have a look at Matthew 7:7. God promises that if you ask, seek and knock, the door will be opened to you.

Not knowing that she wanted to study at university straight away, Kate had to seek God when making decisions about her future after finishing school.

So, like Kate, you need to keep knocking on that door because God has a plan for you and he will share it with you at the right time.

Follow your dreams

Receiving 10 marks below her required UAI score to be accepted into university, Kate was shocked when offered a place to study

psychology at Wollongong University. When things don't go your way and you're unsure of what to do next, hold onto Jeremiah 29:11. It's worth pursuing your dreams when your Creator is looking out for you and has your future secured in his hands. So, keep dreaming.

Trust God

"But I just want to know what's going to happen." While it is easy to be impatient, Rick Warren says, "God is never in a hurry, but he is always on time."

Knowing this statement all too well, Kate has found that trusting God has given her the peace of mind she needs when faced with the unknown. Remember – you don't have to have your life all figured out at once.



Esther Pinn
Journalist, Pipeline and supplements

RANDOMLY SPEAKING

was set down on a San Francisco street, becoming the first Salvation Army collection kettle.

If you received all of the gifts in the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas," you would receive 364 gifts.

Holly berries are poisonous.



A SOCIAL JUSTICE CHRISTMAS



Well, Christmas is just around the corner.

Some of us would have already finished, or at least started, our Christmas shopping. We'll be thinking about what we're getting others and what we want. Our minds will be consumed with thoughts of Christmas parties, family dinners and amazing food. We will be stressed with the crowds at the shopping centres and trying to find Jesus in the commercialism.

When you stop and think about it, it's all a bit crazy.

God's gift

It can be difficult to keep our minds focused on what Christmas is really all about – God's gift to us in the life of Jesus. And Christmas is also about love – the love of God for mankind – and the love of family and friends.

But there is one aspect of Christmas and love that we can often neglect, or fail to even recall -- thinking of those who do not enjoy all the things we have. These people could be the homeless within our community, the elderly within our church and neighbourhood, the lonely, the orphaned and the widows, and the families who are struggling to put food on the table. And don't forget all the countless millions of families around the world suffering from hunger and disease.

Although many of these people suffer and face hardships throughout the year, if Christmas is about love, Jesus and family and you don't have any of that – Christmas can be incredibly painful.

I believe God is calling each of us to have a social justice Christmas where we think about others and spend our money on things that are going to show God's love for others.

There are many ways to do this, including:

Gifts that keep on giving

We all have too many things. We don't need any more dust collectors or clothes or DVDs, or any of the countless other things we give and get for Christmas. Why not change a life through gifts that keep on giving?

This is a Salvation Army program where you can choose to buy an item such as a mosquito net, a school package, a goat or cow, a well or something bigger. You then receive a card explaining the gift. You can write in the card and give it as a gift. The receiver then knows that their gift has changed the life of someone in a developing country. For more info go to <http://salvos.org.au/said/donate/gift-catalogue-shop/>

Child sponsorship

Sponsorship is life changing. Why not sponsor a child as a family? I have personally met three of my sponsorship daughters and have seen first hand how life changing it is – what an opportunity! For more info go to <http://salvos.org.au/said/sponsorship/>

Fairtrade Gifts

If you really would like to buy a gift for someone, choose Fairtrade. You can buy beautiful toys and other gifts from the most amazing companies – companies that teach people in developing countries a trade so they can earn a living, send their children to school and give them a future. Take a look at:

- Oxfam <http://www.oxfamshop.org.au/>
- Klong Toey Handicrafts <http://www.handicrafts.org.au/klongtoey/>
- Tribes and Nations <http://www.tribesandnations.com.au/>
- Ethical gifts <http://www.fairtradegifts.com.au/fairtrade-jewellery>

Open your home

Open your home to the lonely, the elderly or single parent families. Invite the homeless or people in your church, neighbourhood or community who don't have family or are away from loved ones. You can change someone's whole perception of Christmas and show the love of Jesus by simply inviting them to your home for Christmas dinner. Keep your ears and eyes open during the season so God can show you the people with whom he wants you to share Christmas, and his love!

Give a helping hand

Help out at your church or community Christmas dinners, or at a soup kitchen or nursing home. Take a group of friends and some chocolates and visit people who are lonely. Maybe even do some Christmas singing.

Help out in your corps as they prepare toys and food hampers for the local community. And look out for other local organisations that hold Christmas parties for others including children with disabilities or the homeless. Do it as a family! Get your children involved and start instilling in them that Christmas is about sharing God's love.

I pray that at this amazing and beautiful time of year you will remember the lonely, the lost and the broken. And that you will open your heart and your home to these people. Think outside the box and allow God to show you how you can have a social justice Christmas.



Leah Robinson
Social Justice Coordinator
Central and North
Queensland Division



Trends

CHRISTMAS ACCESSORIES

It's time to celebrate as parties are happening all around with both Christmas and New Year coming up. So, what's your look this Christmas?

If you're one of those girls who likes to get into the Christmas spirit of things, with Santa T-shirts, reindeer ears and tinsel in your hair – then go for it! Otherwise, for those who are not so keen, try adding one festive piece to your outfit – such as a green cardigan or gold brooch.

Whether you fancy white, red, green or black as your Christmas party outfit choice, it is important to accessorise with the right colours.

Matching with the Christmas theme, I'd suggest gold to be the perfect colour to dress up your Christmas outfit.

1. Accessories: Whether you're wearing white, black, green or red, a gold bangle and long gold dangling earrings should do the trick. Otherwise, stick with a long bold necklace of pearls and match with a white flower in your hair.
2. Eye make-up: Let your eyelids shimmer in the light with a sparkling shade of gold or bronze. Complement with black eye-liner and mascara. If you're game, you could even try some fake eye lashes to spark up your look!

Esther Pinn

music review

BROOKE FRASER

Flags – Brooke Fraser

If you were a fan of Brooke Fraser's previous albums, *What to do with Daylight* (2003) and *Albertine* (2006), then get excited – her new album, *Flags*, is finally here!

Featuring 11 tracks, Brooke's new collection combines uplifting melodies, mellow, soothing tones and folk-like sounds – think Sarah McLachlan. This New Zealand artist is back on the radio with the release of her single, *Something in the Water*. Opening the album with this single, *Something in the Water* is an alternative-pop, up-beat, romantic song that is complemented with quirky sounds of hand claps, whistles and backing choral voices – don't forget to check out this song's film clip.

While Brooke does not spell out her Christian faith as loudly as in her previous albums, she tells a series of stories that display her beliefs, faith, and desperation for those who have been treated unjustly in our world.

The last track of the album, *Flags*, is the perfect example of Brooke's stance upon injustice in our world. The soft, mellow tones of this song place you deep in thought and meditation.

In between all the serious tracks there are some relaxed songs such as *Coachella* and *Here's to You* that would be fantastic background music for an afternoon tea party with the girls.

Flags is selling at the retail price of \$19.95 and can be purchased at your nearest CD store.

Esther Pinn

FIND YOUR MISSION

<http://salvos.org.au/findyourmission/>

Jarrold Newton, Youth Resource Coordinator, talks to *Young Women in Touch* about an exciting new website.

WIT: Why was the findyourmission site created?

JN: There are so many youth and young adults around Australia who really want to be involved in helping people and transforming society, but sometimes it can be really difficult to know how to go about that. We think The Salvation Army has a really exciting role to play in helping people get involved. There are plenty of places you can go to receive training or to be educated, but not quite so many places where you can go and get your hands dirty. People see the Salvos as 'Christianity with its sleeves rolled up', and findyourmission.com.au is all about helping other people get in on the action too.

WIT: Who is the site aimed at?

JN: The site is mainly for young people who aren't already connected to the Salvos. We hope it serves as an entry point that introduces people to what we do and how they can get involved.

WIT: What is the site hoping to achieve?

JN: There's two things we'd love to see happen. Firstly, we obviously want to see young people involved doing practical things to benefit their community. There's also still a perception out there among young people that the Salvos are a bit daggy and old-fashioned. We'd love to show them a different perspective and help them see that the Salvos are actually on the cutting edge of mission and social action in Australia.

WIT: Why should young people think about mission?

I think one of the challenges is that young people have been given heaps of opportunities to THINK about mission, but haven't always had the best support when it comes to doing something! It is important to get trained and educated on issues, but at the end of the day your training and education doesn't change someone's life... we've got to put it into action.

Jarrold Newton is Youth Resource Coordinator - Territorial Youth Ministry Team



Women refreshed at weekend

ACT and South NSW Division

Beria Manor situated at Bowral in the Southern Highlands was the venue once again for our Refresh weekend this year.

Captain Christine Ellis, Launceston Corps Officer, was guest speaker and came with enthusiasm and a wonderful sense of humour. Captain Christine connected well with both young and old as she shared the things God had placed on her heart.

The 97 ladies in attendance appreciated her development of their 2010 divisional women's ministries theme, "Inward, Outward, And Upward".

"Black and White" was the theme for the Saturday evening formal

dinner and all the ladies came dressed for the occasion.

Major Rod Ainsworth (Divisional Commander) was guest musician for the night.

After dinner some chose to attend a mentoring elective conducted by Captain Christine, while others chose to watch a movie.

Sunday morning provided opportunity for the women to spend time alone in meditation, reflection and prayer before coming together for our final session.

Many women made significant decisions over the weekend as God moved in the hearts and lives of all attending.

Coming together in Jesus

Central and North Qld Division

Over 80 women gathered at beautiful Lake Tinaroo in the Atherton Tablelands for the divisional Refresh weekend, 22-24 October. "We prepared to be challenged, stretched and reminded about being Kingdom women," said Leah Robinson, divisional Social Justice Coordinator.

Major Julie Campbell, divisional Director of Women's Ministries for the South Qld Division, was guest speaker for the weekend. "There were many challenging and moving messages," said Leah. "Major Julie reminded us that we need to be set apart and to reflect God's love throughout our families, communities and churches."

Thirty two women officers and local officers from the Papua New Guinea Territory joined the ladies for the weekend. "Their ministry to us caused many women to experience a life changing touch from God," said Leah. "Many women's faith and passion for God was re-ignited by seeing the love these women have for their Saviour. We could not help but be moved to tears as they sang, danced and challenged us through drama. It was also a pleasure to laugh and to try and dance with these women!"

The women also enjoyed crafts, free time, and an auction that helped raise money for the territorial mission project, Worth, in Malawi. "We danced our way, African style, to the front to give our offerings to God that he may use it to change the life of women in Malawi," said Leah.

"It was wonderful seeing women from different cultures coming together and finding commonality in our love for Jesus. What a privilege to be 'Kingdom Women'."



Out of the box

Greater West Division

Approximately 90 ladies attended the recent Anya day at Auburn Corps.

Anya days are focused on creating a space in which God can work in women's lives so they can come to know how much he loves them.

"Anya out of the box" was the theme for the day.

Guest speaker, Captain Sue McGuigan, spoke on how we try to put God in a box that suits us - a message that challenged many women.

Huge gift boxes decorated the hall, and the upstairs gallery had been transformed into a "pampering" area where ladies could choose a back, foot or hand massage.

Throughout the day the women played minute games all relating to boxes - an activity that brought much fun and laughter.

After lunch the ladies broke into small groups for electives including: Boob in a Box - Faith, Hope and Breast Cancer, Mission Outside the Box, Prayer in a Box and Decorating a Box.

The ladies also raised over \$1,000 to support a client from Samaritan House who has cancer and no support or family in Australia.

Captain Sue again challenged the ladies to write down what they needed to bring to the cross. The gift boxes on stage had been changed to form a cross, and many ladies brought their requests.

The ladies each took home a box of goodies. One lady has already asked when she can register for next year!

Since the Anya day, many ladies have deepened their commitment to God and a couple of ladies have given their lives to him for the first time. Praise God!



A polished affair!

Sydney East and Illawarra Division

At the recent Single Mums camp at The Collaroy Centre on Sydney's northern beaches, a great group of women and kids became 'team mates' for a week. Every one of those mums told stories of being thrown curve balls and how they had never felt celebrated or successful in their lives. "As leaders for the week, it was our job to love them, to care for them, to speak truth into their lives and to 'carry' them as we all cheered," said Captain Tracy Briggs, Divisional Youth Secretary.

"What a privilege I shared with Major Glenys Domrow as, for a short time, we were able to allow these women to see love, to feel love and to know that they deserve to be loved. I am blessed beyond measure to know the love of God in my life and delight in sharing God's love in this way."

The week was a roller coaster ride of emotions, tears, laughter and learning. "This year we had the pleasure of Janet Staines join the team to show us love and hope through art therapy," said Captain Tracy. "The ladies were each given a table top, broken coloured tiles, glue and cement. We all had to tell our stories of hope through the mosaic pattern we put together."

After applying the cement, the ladies had to constantly polish the tiles to bring out their colour and shine. "This was very healing for the mums as they shared with each other," said Captain Tracy. "I observed a change in all of them as they set about polishing their

tables and saw how this simple exercise of working at cleaning away the yucky grey cement to reveal the bright colours underneath spoke volumes to them about their own lives. Many of them later spoke about how the process sparked in them a brighter hope for the future.

"We cheered them on and celebrated their successes with strawberry cream parfaits! God is good!"



Stories of hope: women from the camp show off their beautifully polished mosaics.



International Guest Speaker:
Lieutenant Colonel Janet Munn

Women's Conference organised by
Territorial Women's Ministries Department
Registration forms will be available in October

When:
Day conference - Sydney Congress Hall
12th February, 2011
Weekend conference - The Collaroy Centre
18th - 20th February, 2011

Floriade rally inspires

ACT and South NSW Division

Over 180 women and men from around the division came together for the Floriade Rally, on 22 September.

Nicholas Szabo, a graduate from Canberra Recovery Services, shared his journey and sang *Amazing Grace My Chains have Gone* which was met with a standing ovation.

Captain Fran Everitt, Tuggeranong Corps Officer, led a time of Worship in Song. Territorial Commander, Commissioner Linda Bond, featured as guest speaker. Her message from John 15 was powerful and challenging, reminding delegates how essential it is to remain connected to the vine, to Jesus.

Following the rally, many delegates travelled the short distance to Commonwealth Park to enjoy this year's spectacular Floriade display.



Captain Laura Gittins, Nicholas Szabo, Commissioner Linda Bond and Major Leonie Ainsworth after the Floriade rally.

Reflecting God's love

ACT and South NSW Division

Greenhills Camp and Conference Centre on the outskirts of Canberra was the venue for the annual women's camp, on 18-21 October. Major Helen McClimont, Divisional Director of Women's Ministries for the Tasmania Division attended as guest speaker.

The theme for the camp was "Reflecting God's Love". Major Helen reminded the ladies of Proverbs 27:19, "As a face is reflected in water, so the heart reflects the real person" (New Living Translation).

Major Helen also challenged delegates to be women who reflect God's light and purity and to live lives that display his holiness. "We

are also called to reflect the face of God," she said. "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in each of us."

Delegates felt the close presence of God throughout the camp. The praise and worship sessions were inspirational and many women came forward for prayer.

During the camp the ladies enjoyed a day at Canberra Zoo, a movie night, and craft and music electives. A concert evening showcased their many, and sometimes, hidden talents and was a night of much fun, laughter and fellowship.

One day at a time...

ACT and South NSW Division

The Bateman's Bay corps has recently launched a new social networking group to help lonely and grieving women meet and offer emotional support to each other.

The group's coordinator, Veronica Newson, and Captain Emma Johnson, corps officer, are calling on women of any age to join and meet others trying to cope in similar circumstances.

"Women often become depressed and lonely after their partner dies, a divorce, work-related separation or addiction," said Veronica. "They are often forced to live on their own at this time, which makes

the experience even more difficult."

The group, called One day at a time encourages grieving women to do just that.

"Grief is an issue," said Veronica. "For example, there are women in their 70s, 80s and 90s still grieving for the husband they lost 10 years ago. And what's happening in older women is also happening for younger women as well.

"Groups such as One day at a time can help ease depression and loneliness.

Unwrapping the gift

South Queensland Division

"Every day God gives us his amazing grace, and opportunities to unwrap, appreciate, share and celebrate this extravagant gift," said Commissioner Jan Condon (then Territorial Secretary for Women's Ministries), guest speaker at the recent divisional Women's Ministries camp.

Almost 90 women from all over the division attended the camp, including a group of women from Brisbane Recovery



The now Commissioner Jan Condon (third from left) celebrates the giving of gifts with ladies at the camp.

Services (Moonyah) who brought an added dimension of joy and reminder of God's grace and love. The camp continues its impact on these ladies, with one "busting" to do the Alpha course, the increased confidence of another and the enthusiasm of all to keep attending camp after their graduation next year.

Sheldon and Louise Mattieson led praise and worship to commence the camp. Captains Mark and Cathryn Williamson entertained and delighted the women in a session on gift ideas and a gift wrapping demonstration; and electives included card and jewellery making, singing and creative movement.

The ladies from Moonyah and Streetlevel opened the evening concert with their vibrant singing. A number of corps also presented different items, as did groups from the day's electives.

A special auction raised over \$1600 for the Territorial Women's Ministries Project - the Malawi women's WORTH program,

Colonel Robyn Maxwell (then Divisional Director for Women's Ministries), and Major Julie Campbell (then Divisional Women's Ministries Secretary) led the camp, held at the QCCC Brookfield Conference Centre in a forest park setting on the outskirts of Brisbane.

PNG women share training and development

Central and North Qld Division

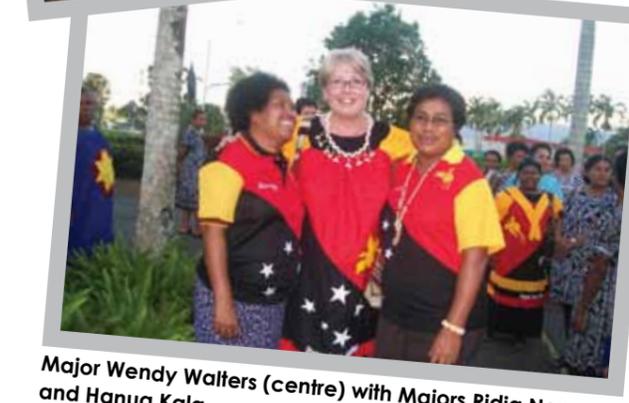
The Division recently welcomed 32 women officers and local officers from the South Central and South East divisions of the Papua New Guinea Territory to share together in a week of training and further development. Major Wendy Walters, Divisional Director of Women's Ministries for the Division, led the Cairns-based week, supported by officers of the Far North Queensland Cluster and the Division.

Each morning a delegate from PNG lead a time of worship and devotion. Sessions on a journaling method of studying God's word and hearing from him followed. "Using Ephesians and a chosen Psalm each morning we allowed God to speak to us as we looked at Scripture, then observed, applied, prayed and journaled it along these lines," Major Wendy said.

The training consisted of different sessions including: being a Galatians 5 woman, mentoring other women, reaching our full potential, preaching and communication. The PNG ladies also enjoyed a surprise trip to a local gym where the ladies had their first Zumba class!

Creative classes gave the ladies ideas to take home, as did Shirley O'Shane's class on ribbon dancing. "Shirley taught the ladies to make their own 'ribbon sticks' and then how this beautiful expression of worship brings blessing and honour to God," said Major Wendy.

Joy and excitement on the Kuranda train trip.



Major Wendy Walters (centre) with Majors Ridia Nenewa and Hanua Kala.

Once Major Wendy and her team discovered that most of the PNG women had never seen a train, they organised a trip on the Kuranda Train that brought great pleasure and excitement!

Leah Robinson, divisional Social Justice Coordinator, was guest speaker for the women's rally. Leah has recently spent considerable time in Africa and spoke about the Worth project in Malawi, for which the Australia Eastern Territory is raising money. The PNG ladies delighted everyone with their special singing and dancing.

That night, a staff member from the local Sizzler's restaurant where the group had been the night before, came to see the PNG ladies in concert. "We gave thanks to God when we saw her return to share in worship at the corps on Sunday morning," said Major Wendy.

For Sunday morning worship, one group travelled to Atherton Tablelands to lead and share in worship at the corps there, while the remaining group lead the meeting in Cairns.

"During their brief stay with us, our friends from PNG shared their testimonies of God's faithfulness and provision, their own personal stories, and their obvious love for God and his Army," said Major Wendy. "Our division counts it a real privilege to have hosted these beautiful sisters in Christ."

Women's Ministries Territorial Project 2010

Our sisters in
Malawi

Women's Literacy and Savings project provides an
Oppportunity to empower women and
Reduce poverty through
Training in literacy and business management skills, bringing
Hope and Health

Our goal - \$90,000

... but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Saviour – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!

Luke 2:10, 11 – New Living Translation

