



BLACKTOWN CITY CORPS NEWSLETTER

6th September 2015



Corps Officers—Captain William & Susanne Geracia

Visitors are always welcome at Blacktown. Please share in morning tea following the meeting.

HAPPY FATHERS DAY!!!

COMING EVENTS:

Thursday 10th September we are having a WILLS DAY at the Corps. More details to come, but for \$50 you can have your Will prepared by a lawyer.

12th September MENS BREAKFAST—8am. Don't forget to add your name to the list.

13th September National Servicemen's Sunday & Delve. Please join us as we celebrate the Dedication of Lucinda Mannix.

20th September Building Dedication Sunday & Sunday School Anniversary

27th September Major Colin Young will be leading our meeting and we will also have the Dedication of Emma Mills baby.

October 4th Captain Susanne

October 11th Majors Whitehouse will be leading the meeting—There will be NO DELVE this week).

The Next Subscription Concert is November 7th.

Captain Bill will be away from September 21st through to October 14th. Captain Susanne will be away September 21st through to October 2nd.

WOW registration forms are available from the back table.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD!!!! Is upon us again! Susanne has purchased shoeboxes this year to hand out to you if you would like to participate. Please see the flyer on the noticeboard for all the details.

NEXT Sunday 13th September, we will be showing a video on Ukraine and will be having a special offering. Please pray for Ukraine and plan now to bring an offering. Please see Betty for any further details.



HOME LEAGUE SYLABUS

8th September Maree Hill—'SPRING CLEAN'

15th September MISSIONARY MORNING

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER—MAJOR CORAL HODGES

Morning Tea	10 am
Service	10:30 am
Donation	\$5

All proceeds go to the Salvation Army's work in the Ukraine



Attention Gardeners!! If you have any pot plants that could be sold for HL Missionary Morning, September 15th, please see Mavis Humphreys.



Thank you to everyone who have donated to Our RED SHIELD FAMILY STORE, it is most appreciated. We are still in need of CLEAN PLASTIC BAGS and/or Newspapers. If anyone can assist please see Mark Andrews.

We are looking for a willing volunteer (actually 2 or 3 people) to do street ministry at Seven Hills Shops for 3 hours on Thursday and/or Fridays (10—1). Also Thursday nights at Westpoint. This is an important ministry for the Corps.

PRAY for our young folk who are sitting their HSC over the next few months. Maddie Muir, Whitney Kuiper, Jack Douglass.

Please PRAY for Lauren Mason & Hayley Grigg following the fire in their flat at Croydon Park. They are both safe and no harm to themselves—but lots of black smoke and water damage to their clothes and carpets. No electricity and kitchen completely trashed following the hot water service catching alight. To help them with the emotional side of the trauma, we say thank you to our Blacktown Youth Group and our Officers who spent their fellowship night helping Lauren & Hayley clean up and just being there for them.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for our Officers, Captain Bill & Susanne & their family as they minister to us.

Pray for Rena.

Pray for Kath Paddison as she will be having surgery on an ulcerated eye in Minchinbury hospital on the 16th September. This is a very painful condition and we pray for Kath as she awaits surgery and the following treatment.

Pray for Sandra Robinson

Pray for Phil Robinson who is not well at this time.

Pray for Sandra Tillson

Pray for Estelle Ring as she recovers from surgery.

Please pray for Cadets Paul & Jess Farthing along with their son Patrick as they prepare for their commissioning.

Pray for Steve & Vicki Banfield who are travelling overseas at the moment. Pray for Journeying Mercy and a time of refreshment.

Pray for Eddie—who is the brother of Joanne Douglass in your prayers. Eddie is in a coma in hospital in Victoria in a serious condition.

Pray for our Government that they will make wise choices in all they do.

Pray for our Country, for a Revival of the Holy Spirit and let the REVIVAL start with YOU!

This week pray especially for:

Doug Hardy, Larissa, Joshua, Benjamin, Chloe & Brooke Hardy, Preston, Kathryn, Lachlan & Claire Hardy, Freda Hill, Bela & David Heard, Maree & Kelvin Hill.

BOUNDLESS—The whole World Praying—are you still reading Gods Word on a daily basis?

GIVE THANKS TO GOD for the answers to prayers and for the many blessings he gives us daily. Thank Him for JESUS and for the change it has made to our lives.

ROOM TO RENT in the Penrith Area. Bond \$320. \$160 per week (includes water & electricity). Please phone 0418621475.



7th September Erin McCready

8th September Les Crowder

12th September Bev Masters

CONGRATULATIONS:

To the Youth Group and Timbrels on a job WELL DONE yesterday at Bunnings.

WEEKLY GIVING

Open Plate	\$ 115.65
Generous Life	\$ 1,985.00

If you would like to have your copy of the Newsletter sent to your computer, please email Gail Salmon at gail_salmon@bigpond.com to be included.

ANYONE DOING GOD'S WORK IN GOD'S WAY IS IMPORTANT IN HIS SIGHT.



RED SHILD FAMILY STORE - Mark Andrews Manager.

- Previously I worked as a Court Officer and then as a Chaplain in Aged Care, Drug and Alcohol Rehab and lastly as a School Chaplain before taking a position as the Youth Ministry Worker at Dulwich Hill Salvation Army Corps. In 2014 I took the position of Store Manager before moving to Blacktown Corps to take up the current position of Family Store Manager.
- I commenced at Blacktown in early February 2015.
- At that stage, the Store had been going through a rough period. The truck had not been out of the yard for 3 weeks. The battery had run flat as a result. The Store was being manned by a skeleton staff of 7 people taking turns across the 6 days of the week. A number of the shelves were bare and the clothes-sorting bays were empty as donations had run down. The back yard resembled a wreckers yard with various unrelated metal bed parts and mattresses thrown together in no orderly sense. The sales figures were down to \$100-\$250 a day. Staff morale and customer flow through the store were both low.
- I began by researching and making enquiries for casual truck drivers. I then sought more general staff from job-seeker agencies.
- I then appointed 5 of the original, experienced staff as "Staff Guides", to give directions to the group of new-comers.
- I approached other Family Stores and obtained immediate surplus donations of clothes and Bric-a-brac to supplement the off-the-street donations we were getting.
- I had Ivan Kelly, who originally set up the store, to come in and supervise restoring the Store racks and shelving to their original layout to maximise stock flow through the store. I purchased all the necessary Store needs to restore the Store to its original maximum working capacity. A number of Store infrastructure items had been sold under previous management, such as tools for repairing furniture, safety mats for the floors as required under WH&S regulations, and a number of other equipment. Thus there was a painful and expensive repair and renovation period for the Store through February to May.
- Having achieved maximum staffing and a weekly roster of truck drivers and assistants so that the truck could go out every day of the week, I updated and printed, and attached to the work area walls, all the Work Manual steps required for each work area. Hence my Staff Guides could refer new staff to the Work Instructions on the wall.
- To address staff morale I held staff meetings for 3 weeks to establish a Vision, Mission Statement and set of Values that we could all agree to and commit to. I also put on Bbq's for the staff for a week, so that we could all get together and acknowledge the Vision and Values we had all agreed to. Staff morale is now high and the Store is a joy to come to work to.
- A surplus of new stock - Mattresses and Bases had laid untouched in the back yard for many months. They hadn't moved by July, so I obtained authority to sell them at half price.
- I appointed Jamie as Research and Promotions Officer. Jamie's previous experience, running his own business before a debilitating car accident, brought valuable knowledge and expertise into the Store. Jamie has set up and promoted the Store on the following online promotional sites:
We are on:-
 - **Buy & Sell Community Pages;**
 - **Google Adwords;**
 - **Locantro;**
 - **Truelocal;**
 - **And we research priced for antiques and collector items online as well**
 - **And DO JOB APPLICATIONS for the staff, and assist them to update their Resumes.**
 - **Facebook;**
 - **Gumtree;**
 - **NABO;**
 - **Weebly;**
 - **Flyers and Brochures Local Newspaper Ads;**
 - **Hotfrog;**
 - **Pinterest;**
 - **Wordpress;**
 - **Youtube;**
 - **And growing...**
- By the current date, weekly sales figures are averaging \$500-\$700 a day, due largely to our increased 'audience' of online consumers. The Store has withstood the Staffing hiccup that happened when the PM abolished the job-seeker industry on 30/6/15 and replaced it with a whole new industry of new job agencies, requiring us to lose all our staff we had taken on and begin from scratch again recruiting drivers, staff and then training them up to speed again.
- We are regularly topping the \$1000 daily sales figure each fortnight. The Store is fully staffed and fully stocked. For the first time we have run out of clothes hangers because we so much stock on display. I sent the truck up to Windsor store and borrowed surplus hangers.
- Store traffic through the Store has grown greatly. The Store has enough staff now to even embark on a major marketing drive to target the new suburbs of Glenwood, Parklea, Stanhope Gardens and especially Kellyville, Rousehill and the Ponds. A marketing strategy of breaking free of the established circle of regular customers means that we can go forward excited about the possibilities for increasing sales numbers, sales stock turnover and even increasing prices on some lines, whilst still serving the Salvation Army's policy of providing necessary items at affordable prices for those who can't shop at main stream stores.
- * After we sold the old stock of mattresses, we were going to cease ordering mattresses, but since then and because of the exposure through Facebook and Gumtree and all the other online sites that Jamie advertised the mattresses, they are now selling like hot cakes even at full price.
- * More importantly, the staff morale including my own has grown as a result of getting the staff together each morning and having prayer before we start the day. Staff have even begun to ask for prayer for personal matters they are facing.

For me this has been a great period of personal growth, dealing with the particular challenges I was faced with. I have very much enjoyed and benefited from the support I have had from the Corps Officers and the Treasurer Doug Hardy, as well as from Ivan Kelly and from Jan Clarke of the Corps.