

Wills Update

News & stories from The Salvation Army Wills & Bequests team

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Labour of love leads to a gift in a Will



Blayney is a prime farming area located about 250 kilometres west of Sydney. Life can be tough for those who derive their livelihood from working the land in this area, especially as it often records the state’s lowest temperatures in winter. Managing a 1100-acre property single-handedly can be no easy task, yet Barbara, who had lived all her life in the country, loved the lifestyle and developed a deep love and understanding for the land.

During one particularly tough period, Barbara came into contact with The Salvation Army’s rural chaplains, Majors Bob and Estelle Strong, who offered support and financial assistance.

Barbara, once an active member of a church, soon developed a friendship

with the Strongs, who would regularly call in to visit.

Salvation Army link

As the years went on, Barbara developed her property further and became widely known for her expertise in training Arabian horses. Barbara lived simply and understood she was a steward of God’s creation. As a tithe, she would often instruct a butcher to anonymously donate a lamb to The Salvation Army in nearby Orange. She also boasted that her property paid its way, as she had contracts with two Australian universities in regard to re-forestation studies, in addition to the sale of livestock.

Towards the end of her life, Barbara made closer links with Orange Salvation

Army, with Major Greg Saunders and members of the congregation embracing her, particularly as she was suffering from an aggressive cancer.

It was because of this love and care that Barbara decided, after much thought, to bequeath her beloved property to the Orange Salvation Army, and requested that her farm continue as a working property.

When Barbara became too ill to give oversight to her property, a team from Orange Salvation Army swung into action. A few weeks before Barbara’s death, she reluctantly moved into The Salvation Army’s nursing home at nearby Canowindra, where it was the Army’s privilege to care and support her in her final days.

A 'Willing' supporter

“Growing up, we never had a great deal of money, and so it was always a matter of donating time.”

– Geoff Armstrong

Solicitor Geoff Armstrong says it is “a mystery” why nearly half of adults in Australia do not have a valid Will. “The cost to make a Will is relatively modest to ensure your life’s work is passed on to your chosen beneficiaries,” he says. “The process of making a Will is also relatively straightforward and not particularly time-consuming.”

Geoff, who moved to Australia from England in 2000, regularly donates his time and expertise to Salvation Army “Wills Days”. “I go along as a volunteer solicitor and make clients a Will on a professional basis and they make a donation in turn to the Salvos,” he says. “So I give my time, effort and expertise. People who need it get a Will and the Salvos get a donation for their work to help people in need. It is a great way of doing things!”

Also involved in Lions Clubs and a number of other charities, Geoff believes it is important to support people in need. He says: “It is something that has been with me since I was a child. Growing up, we never had a great deal of money, and so it was always a matter of donating time.”

Honoured friends

Geoff has also had a number of his private clients independently want to leave a legacy to the work of The Salvation Army, and has introduced them to the Army’s “Honoured Friends” program.



This is a program that recognises those who have generously remembered The Salvation Army in their Will. It includes pastoral care and the opportunity to visit or hear from beneficiaries of Salvation Army programs.

He says of his contact with The Salvation Army over many years: “I just think they’re fantastic. I’ve met many of their officers through the Wills Days and also through the Honoured Friends program and without exception I have found them dedicated, genuine people. Those I’ve introduced to the Honoured Friends program have been delighted with their reception.

“I have also been invited to a couple of Red Shield Appeal breakfasts,” he says. “The stories that hit home the most are the people who have come through programs needing help or shelter and are now putting time back into helping others in the same situations. That means that services and fundraisers such as Wills Days are an investment into our community on so many levels.”

Is it time to update your Will?

It is said that people, on average, update their Will six times in their lifetime.

Are you wanting to update your Will? Call The Salvation Army on 1800 337 082 to make an appointment at our next Wills Day (see dates below).

The Salvos offer a community service in which generous local solicitors prepare simple Wills in exchange for a \$50 contribution to our community work.

We encourage you to pass this information on to anyone you know who has not yet prepared a Will. Here are details of Wills Days planned for this year:

- 8 June** Ipswich (Qld)
- 21 June** Parramatta (NSW)
- 7 July** Canberra City, Tuggeranong and Gungahlin (ACT)
- 14 July** Wagga Wagga
- 29 July** Campbelltown (NSW)
- 17 August** Miranda (NSW)
- 9 September** Wollongong (NSW)
- 12 September** Caloundra (Qld)
- 13 September** Nambour (Qld)
- 20 September** Port Macquarie (NSW)
- 25 October** Newcastle (NSW)
- 25 October** Lismore (NSW)
- 1 November** Hurstville (NSW)
- November** Central Coast (NSW)
- Date to be confirmed

Our Future (Estate) Planning seminar in conjunction with Ipswich City Council will be held in Ipswich on 21 April.



Please remember The Salvation Army when you next update your Will

For credit card donations phone 13 SALVOS (13 72 58) or visit salvos.org.au | Letters and feedback welcome

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