

Wills Update

News & stories from The Salvation Army Wills & Bequests team

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Care for father inspires gift

“My sister Sue and I love The Salvation Army for all they did for our beloved parents,” says Annie Didcott. “Our mother remembered the Army in her Will and I am following suit.”

For so many Salvation Army Honoured Friends, a personal relationship with the organisation inspires their gift in Will. For Annie, it was her family heritage, plus the care given to her father, John, and later her mother, Ruth, at The Salvation Army’s Burrangiri Aged Care Plus respite centre in Canberra that prompted her decision.

A connection rediscovered

“My father was born into a Salvation Army family in 1913 and raised as a true and devoted member,” says Annie. “When he reached his late teens, both he and his older brother detached themselves (from the Army) and went in different directions.”

John went on to forge a career and have a family but, sadly, in his mid-70s he was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. According to Annie, her father eventually required “a lot of care”.

“Alzheimer’s gradually undermined his capacity to function independently and the time came when my mother really needed support in caring for him,” Annie explains. “This is when The Salvation Army came back into my father’s life.”

John was accepted into Burrangiri, a home that caters to the needs of frail elderly people in the community when their caring support team is in need of temporary relief.

“I am so grateful for the way in which my father was accepted back into The Salvation Army at the time of my family’s need,” says Annie. “He fitted into their



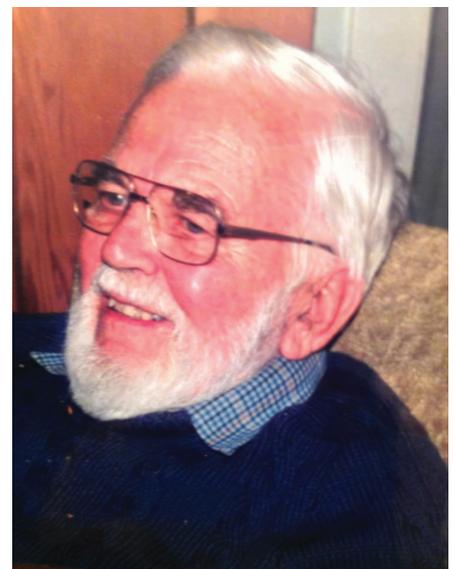
John and Ruth Griffith 1988

community from the word go and loved everything about it.

“Burrangiri’s care and concern was a godsend for our mother and enabled our father to be cared for until his end, when he died peacefully in his own bed at the age of 84. We all loved him dearly and didn’t want him to have to go into residential care.”

In the years to follow, Annie’s mother also spent time at Burrangiri.

“It meant everything to us,” says Annie. “And it meant everything to our mother – especially because my father was so happy there.”



New hope for the whole family

Tom realised he had hit rock bottom when his daughter discovered he had been stealing from her money jar.

Despite siphoning off his businesses, then his wife's purse, to feed his cocaine addiction, the look in his daughter's eyes filled Tom – a real estate agent and restaurateur – with shame.

Sharing his story at a 2017 Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal launch on the Gold Coast, Tom explained the depths of his addiction, which started as social use but ended with him hiding away at night snorting cocaine alone.

He went on to share how his stay at The Salvation Army Gold Coast Recovery Services Centre (Fairhaven) changed his life.

"I had heard about the Salvos and Red Shield Appeal before, but it didn't really make an impact on me," says Tom. "When I arrived at the centre, they embraced me with open arms."

Holistic healing

Expecting a sterile, hospital-like environment, Tom says the tranquil setting of the centre – which offers 56 long-term beds for up to 10 months, plus a detox service – became part of his journey of healing.

"The location, up in Mount Tamborine, is beautiful. It was a therapeutic community. I felt a massive weight lifted off my shoulders," he says.

"Without that place, I would still be where I was: without a family, no relationship with my wife, my kids wouldn't be speaking to me, and I wouldn't have any friends."



Tom, pictured with Fairhaven Assistant Manager, Captain Lyndley Fabre

The recovery service runs and is maintained with support from partners and donations including essential bequest funding.

"Donations and bequest funding add richness to the lives of our people," says centre manager, Major David Rogerson. "It enables us to do the extras that mean so much – provide upgrades, equipment, outings, even Christmas gifts – and add to the holistic approach to recovery."

In sharing his story publicly, Tom aims to help other people and show them that there is hope.

"I had lost my kids and I am getting them back. That means the world to me. The Salvation Army has helped me feel equipped to face life again."

"The Salvation Army's message is hope – [and] with hope you can do anything!"



Duncan, known as Tony, has a deep Christian faith and a strong desire to help others. Even at 90, he is an active volunteer at the local school. Leaving a gift in his Will to The Salvation Army is just another part of his willingness to give to others.

"We can give hope in many ways," he says. "Part of that plan [is that by using my gift in Will] The Salvation Army will be able to give more to people in need."

Stories by Naomi Singlehurst



Thank you for including The Salvation Army in your Will.

For more information, or to update your contact preferences, please call 1800 337 082 or visit salvos.org.au/wills

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