

FEATURE

Warming winter for rough sleepers

FAITH TALK

Always reliable

MY STORY

Breaking the cycle of abuse

The new faces of homelessness

Red Shield Appeal to focus on society's most vulnerable



SALVOS

MAGAZINE

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A young girl with dark hair is looking out of the window of a white car at night. She is holding a light-colored, fluffy stuffed animal. The background is dark with some blurred lights, suggesting an urban setting. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

*How wonderful it is that nobody
need wait a single moment before
starting to improve the world.*

Anne Frank



The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

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A lifetime of difference

Every year, tens of thousands of people find help and hope at the Salvos through the many and varied services we provide. As a result, the lives of individuals, families and communities, are transformed.

The Red Shield Appeal (RSA) is the Salvos' major annual fundraiser. It provides much of the income required to run these services and the ever-increasing demand on them. The annual RSA doorknock is resuming this year in a COVID-safe way, alongside our digital platform.

In this edition of *Salvos Magazine*, we focus on the RSA, highlighting some of the programs made possible as a direct result of funds raised through the appeal, as well as Megan's personal story of hope and healing after years of devastating domestic violence.

You, too, can participate in helping the Salvos help others. Your support of the RSA, however seemingly small, will have a big impact on those who need it most.

To read these and other articles, go to salvosmagazine.org.au

Simone Worthing – Assistant Editor

Friendship warms winter for Wagga Wagga's homeless

Salvos reaching out to those 'who feel forgotten'

WORDS LAUREN MARTIN



The crew getting ready to serve on the streets. (From left) David Hopewell, Ned Jones, Mat George and Errol, a local man experiencing homelessness.

It can get down to sub-zero temperatures in the south-west New South Wales regional city of Wagga Wagga. And while many people would say the city doesn't have a homeless population, if you know where to look, you will find dozens of people living in cars or sleeping rough.

One man who does know where to look is Mat George. The Wagga Wagga Salvos

member has a strong calling on his life to stand alongside people who feel 'unseen' by the world. In the lead-up to winter last year, he and the then leaders of Wagga Wagga Salvos, Captains Kara and Stewart Hartley, and fellow member Ned Jones, began to reach out to people experiencing homelessness in the community.

"A lot of people unfortunately think that all

homeless people are alcoholics and drug addicts,” says Mat. “It’s quite the opposite. Trying to afford to pay your rent and pay your electricity and have food and still have some sort of quality of life, just don’t all go together ... if you’re on Centrelink benefits.”

“

I like to show them that we actually do care.

”

Throughout winter 2020, Mat and the team would stock up the church bus with a full urn, some meals, snacks and clothing and other items from the Salvos Wagga Wagga Family Store. They drove the streets of the city, walking around parks, along the riverside and in other areas they knew of that people experiencing homelessness may take shelter. In the process, they formed friendships with people sleeping rough, living in their cars, camping and couch surfing. They were able to help with material items like swags, bedrolls and warm clothing. But just as important was the hot cuppa and a chat.

“For me, it’s about giving back to the community,” says Mat. “Those who feel forgotten and those who feel like no one cares. I like to show them that we actually do care and we do know you’re there. Going out pretty much rain, hail or shine because they’re still homeless [in whatever weather].”

There are currently no free shower or laundry facilities in Wagga Wagga, and Mat and the team would love to build a mobile laundry and shower trailer. “We take a warm shower for granted at the end of work, and clean clothes,

we just throw them in the wash and don’t even think twice about it,” he says. “These guys are washing their clothes under a tap and showering is something they don’t get to do often because you have to pay money in town at the local pool, which is a few dollars, which could mean dinner or a shower.”

In the trailer that’s being dreamed up would be a slide-out barbecue, so that instead of giving away pre-cooked meals to people, the team could cook up some dinner and sit down and share a meal with their new friends, enabling deeper conversations about life and faith.

MAT’S STORY



By his own admission, Mat hasn’t always been a “good Christian boy”. After the death of his mother, he found himself in a “pretty dark place”. He was only casually employed and was experiencing some of the issues with poverty that he now assists people with through his outreach. “I had a house, but at the same time I was struggling to make all the payments and was pretty much down to living pay-day to pay-day and struggling to put a decent meal on the table every night.”

Instead of hitting the streets, Mat made a ►

decision to head down to the Wagga Wagga family store and offer to volunteer, in order to “keep myself out of mischief”. Through volunteering, he began to attend Sunday services, got more involved in ministry and became a Salvos member. When a job came up as Family Store warehouse manager, Mat said he was “blessed” to have been successful in his application.

The Salvos believed in Mat and saw his potential. Now he’s looking to do the same for others. “For a lot of these people, no one has ever believed in them. No one’s given them the opportunity, so if you believe in someone they go, ‘Oh wow, that person has given me the opportunity,’ and they thrive on that and they push themselves to make themselves better.”

Mat feels God pulling him deeper into [a relationship with] Christ and plans to further his studies this year in order to better assist locals who are struggling with drug and alcohol addiction.

NED’S STORY



Ned is one of the founding volunteers of the Wagga Wagga Salvos’ street outreach ministry. Before he was a Salvation Army member,

Ned was involved in the occult. He describes that time in his life as one of “searching”. “I was searching for something. The meaning of life, I suppose,” he says.

“

For me it’s about giving back to the community.

”

He remembers that one day, the leader of his ‘psychic circle’ said, “We were doing this for God.” And it caused Ned to investigate. He had an old Bible at home he had been given by his mother as a child, but he’d hardly ever opened it. After the statement by his occult leader, Ned dusted it off and began to read about Jesus. “I found out what the Bible said about seeking out mediums and familiar spirits and things like that,” Ned says. “Once I read that I had to get out [of the occult].”

Ned became a Christian and a few years later felt called to join the Salvos in Wagga Wagga. He says he loves serving Jesus and jumped at the chance to be in the team that began the street ministry for people experiencing homelessness in the local area.

“We just stand and have a chat and talk about their life and where they’ve been and what they intend to do,” he says. “We show kindness and love to them and hopefully God can grow a seed in them from that.”



Scan here for more on homelessness

Moving home

Unique caravan park project breaks down the barriers to affordable housing

WORDS JESSICA MORRIS



A few of the Homelessness Services team, which played a key role in the project. Case Manager Luke Ollington is second from left.

A mammoth collaboration between the Salvos and other services in Victoria's Gippsland region has seen the residents of the Miners Rest Caravan Park and adjacent Capital Motel find a permanent home.

When The Salvation Army's Homelessness Services and Family Violence Services in Gippsland heard that the site, in the seaside town of Wonthaggi, would be redeveloped and residents moved on, they swung into action.

The role of the Salvos was to make sure approximately 92 residents across 67 tenancies found a safe and stable place to call home – within 10 months.

The work started in August 2019 when Bunnings purchased the site.

"The Salvation Army had ongoing conversations with council and developers prior, and when Bunnings bought the property, we said that we wanted to work with them," said Josh Baker, who worked as the project coordinator at the time, based out of nearby Leongatha Salvos. "And they wanted to be part of processes every step of the way."

The team started by doorknocking at the caravan park, and a seemingly mundane task used to collate information on how to best support residents became the pivot point for building community. Luke Ollington had been a case manager with the Salvos for five months and was on his first day of university placement when he joined the project. The savvy social worker was thrown well and truly in the deep end as he compiled and sorted through the ►

data, making sure that every number represented the needs, hopes and skills of residents.

“We found that this project shone a light on lack of affordable rentals in the area ... and the lack of crisis accommodation,” he said.

CASE MANAGEMENT

The Salvos team offered case management to every tenancy, with 60 taking up the offer.

The Open Door and Youth Homelessness teams explored the circumstances that brought residents to the park, whether they wanted to remain local, and what skills and work opportunities were open to them. The result was that residents found new homes, ranging from private rental, public housing and transitional housing to reconnection with family or another caravan park.



Given the lack of affordable housing in Gippsland, this was no small task. But, after meeting with residents, Josh and the team sought relationships with local real estate agents to break down stigma about potential tenants. In some cases, the Salvos were even able to supplement the original bond or rent. And, in other cases, residents were able to move or purchase their own movable dwellings using funding from the Salvos, the Department of Health and Human Services and Bunnings.

“We spoke to these agents to break down barriers and stigma,” said Josh. “We explained that there are some good people in a bad situation and need a leg up.”

“

There are some good people who are in a bad situation and need a leg up ...

”

Thankfully, most of the team’s face-to-face interactions happened before COVID-19 impeded their work and, by August 2020, every resident who had asked for case management was assisted. This meant that the project wrapped up with 46 tenancies for long-term accommodation. Some were even offered jobs by Bunnings! And residents were followed up in later months to ensure they had all the supports necessary.

“At the start of this project, we really wanted to focus on each individual resident,” said Josh. “We wanted to ask, ‘What are your ambitions and goals. Do you want to learn new skills to get a job?’ There was a genuine sense that Bunnings wanted it to work for the community and that made our jobs easier.”

So, could the project be replicated elsewhere? Absolutely – and the Salvos Open Door team is hopeful that its work could be the baseline for another community.



Scan here for more on homelessness.

Red Shield Appeal – how you can help



PHOTO COURTESY RED SHIELD APPEAL 2021

The Red Shield Appeal is The Salvation Army's signature fundraising drive and runs from 1 April to 30 June every year.

You can play your part in helping the Salvos help others through donating or volunteering to fundraise, or both.

There are two ways to fundraise:

1. Online through the digital doorknock
2. Volunteering in your local community as a doorknocker, or at a collection point

The theme for the Red Shield Appeal 2021 is homelessness.

The focus will be on the hidden face of homelessness and housing insecurity that has arisen from widespread financial instability and job losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 'Black Summer' bushfires and

the severe drought conditions of the past four years.

People already living on the margins and those who have never experienced hardship before need the Salvos now more than ever.

RED SHIELD APPEAL DOORKNOCK

Last year, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented Salvos from getting out to collect for the Red Shield Appeal. Instead, a digital fundraising platform was implemented.

This year, the Salvos will be back in the community, adhering to COVID-safe practices, as well as continuing innovative online initiatives.

To be one of the thousands of Australians who help the Salvos each year, visit [salvationarmy.org.au/get-involved/red-shield-weekend/](https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/get-involved/red-shield-weekend/)

Always reliable

Who can you count on these days?

WORDS MAL DAVIES

Reliability isn't as reliable as it used to be. Well, that's how it appears to me anyway. The notion of something being reliable seems to have altered in recent years.

What do you buy now that lasts? Growing up, I think we used the same potato peeler for about a decade. These days, as soon as you get to a potato that's too lumpy or just too hard, the peeler seems to say: "Nuh, not happening, buddy," and it just breaks. It decides that it's all just too hard and quits.

“

You might say, 'Thank God for the Salvos', but we say, 'Thank God for you!'

”

It used to be that if you bought a car, you not only drove that car for 15 years but then you passed it on to a child or grandchild and it became their first car. These days, you drive a car for five years and then you get tired of paying for constant repairs and maintenance and you just trade it in for a new car. Which you'll replace in five years.

My wife and I were holidaying in Europe once and visited a 15th-century cathedral in a country town. The building was massive and solid and imposing and beautiful. After looking



around and taking a few photos we walked out and, as we did so, I said to my wife, "How many buildings built these days will still be standing in 500 years?" Answer: not many, I'm guessing.

Even people seem to have downgraded the priority of reliability. If you invite someone to a party and they RSVP with an acceptance, does that mean they'll show up? No, not these days. It depends if a better offer comes along or if they simply forget (no one seems to keep diaries these days) or if they're feeling a little bit run down after walking the dog and might just stay home and watch a movie on Netflix while they recover physically and emotionally.



It raises the question: who or what can you rely on these days? When it comes to the crunch, when the rubber hits the road, when you get to the pointy end of the stick, who comes through for you without fail?

I hope you have some people you can rely on and that you yourself are someone others can rely on. Reliability is – or should be – still a priority when it comes to our dealings with others.

I recall once – when serving as an officer [pastor] at a Salvation Army church in a country town – hearing about a young family

that was doing life tough. Both parents were unemployed and they had two young children. They were good people but life had been hard for them. The man's elderly mother spoke to me and asked if I could possibly help them out at all.

I put together some boxes of food, added a voucher for fuel for their car and purchased some toys for their kids. After driving to their house, I knocked on the door and waited. The door opened and both parents were standing there. I smiled and said, "I've brought you a few goodies, I hope you don't mind."

Well, they burst into tears. They invited me in and were so thrilled to see me. They said that they were so desperate that they'd just been talking about ringing the Salvos when they heard a knock at the front door ... and I was there! The husband said, "I knew we could rely on the Salvos, that's why I was going to call, but you've beat me to it!"

The Salvation Army seeks to be a reliable source of help, but we can only do what we do in partnership with you. For well over a century, the Australian public has supported the Salvos with generous donations and by volunteering, because they recognise that the Salvos are genuine and can be relied on.

We do what we do not only for you but with you. You might say, "Thank God for the Salvos", but we say, "Thank God for you!"

Major Mal Davies is an Australian Salvation Army officer (pastor) serving as Editor-in-Chief for the Salvos in the United Kingdom.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Breaking the cycle of abuse

From domestic violence to homelessness, Megan is now firmly on the road to recovery

WORDS HOLLY REED

Like so many others, Megan* never thought it would happen to her. She never imagined she would need to escape a violent relationship; that her family and friends would turn their backs on her; or that she and her daughter would become homeless.



PHOTO COURTESY RED SHIELD APPEAL 2021

When Megan made the difficult decision to leave her violent partner, she had little choice but to couch surf between friends' houses. With nothing but the backpack she had in her possession the day she knew she couldn't return, she and her daughter were reduced to living in a single room, relying on the goodwill of others.

"It'd be a couple of weeks here, a few weeks there," says Megan. "I went from being in a house to being stuck in one room.

"When you're homeless and you're used to being in that one room, that room becomes your everything – your safety. And when

you're stuck in it 24/7 with your child, it can be very lonely."

HOMELESS AND ALONE

For Megan, seeking shelter at her family home was not an option. But offers of a spare couch or a room from friends often came with strings attached and Megan eventually knew she had overstayed her welcome.

"You try to please them so it's like another violent relationship – because you're walking on eggshells again, making sure you don't touch anything," she says. "I was a zombie, I had no soul – that's the best way to put it."

Full of shame and guilt and devoid of hope, Megan admits she was in a very dark place and struggled to see a way out. Feeling like everyone had deserted her, she and her daughter began living out of her car. She says there were times when it would be five days between showers, and she knew this was no way for her daughter to live.

"You start to question, 'Why me? What did I do to deserve this? I'm such a bad person'. Because you can't see any way out of that black hole until you're given opportunities like from the Salvos."

ACCEPTING HELP

Mustering up the courage to ask for help was Megan's turning point, but taking that first

step was hard. "When you first come into services, you're scared, you're thinking, 'I don't want them to know anything,' she shares. "What if they don't help me? What if my child gets taken off me?' ... you're in that panic."



PHOTO COURTESY RED SHIELD APPEAL 2021

Megan credits her Salvos case worker, Sharon, for showing empathy, listening and providing her with the advice she needed – even when it was tough. "She didn't tell me what I wanted to hear, she told me what I needed to hear," Megan says.

Sharon supported Megan from homelessness into transitional housing, where she and her daughter stayed for a year while waiting for stable permanent housing.

Megan had regular case management sessions with Sharon during this time and completed a range of programs to help deal with the trauma and connect with others who had similar experiences.

EMPOWERED TO HELP OTHERS

Now settled in stable housing, Megan and her daughter are still coming to terms with their ordeal. While the house they now live in has ample space, the time they spent cramped in a single room has had a lasting impact.

"I think I'm the worst because it's a security thing. It's a protection thing. It's a safety thing for me knowing my daughter is there. I will sleep because me and my daughter will touch feet. When she's not with me, I get up every hour and check on her. And that all comes down to being homeless."

For Megan, getting that transitional house changed her life and put her on the road to recovery.

Now further along that road, she has been inspired to use her experience to help others in a similar situation – volunteering as a secretary for an organisation supporting vulnerable women and studying for a Diploma of Community Services.

"Through all this, because I had great [case] workers, I've been inspired to get my diploma, because it helped in my recovery and I want to see it from the other side. I want to empower and inspire others."

Megan is incredibly thankful for the help she was able to get, all because of the kindness of donors. As she puts it, "Their donation gave me a new life for my kids. Everything that we own or what me and my kids have is because of donations. They gave me new life, new hope, a new beginning. Thank you!"

**Name and some details changed to protect privacy*

Holly Reed is a content specialist – Brand, for The Salvation Army Australia.



Scan here for more on family and domestic violence.

Potato and bacon soup



Ingredients

1 tbsp olive oil, 200g lean bacon with rinds left on, 2 medium onions, 2 tbsp plain flour, 4 medium potatoes, 1 tbsp chicken stock powder, 1 litre water, parsley to taste (fresh or dried), white pepper to taste.

Method

Heat oil in heavy saucepan, add chopped bacon and cook for about 3 minutes. Add chopped onions and cook a further 5 minutes.

Add flour, mix well and cook 2-3 minutes.

Add peeled and cubed potatoes, stock powder, water, chopped parsley and white pepper. Bring to boil, stirring well.

Simmer 25-30 minutes, until potatoes are cooked but not too soft.

Serve with hot bread.

Serves 4-6 people.

Have a laugh



I tried to sue the airport for misplacing my baggage.

I lost my case.

What's made of leather and sounds like a sneeze?

A shoe.

How do trees access the internet?

They log in.

Bible byte

"... he has told you what he wants, and this is all it is: to be fair, just, merciful, and to walk humbly with your God."

Micah chapter 6, verse 8
The Living Bible translation

6				1			5
		3	6				
	4			8		9	1
				3	9		
	6	2					
						8	4
2							9
					5		
8		1	7	5			

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tum-Tum

On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?



Answers: 1. 1965 2. Salvos social and community services. 3. The Red Shield. 4. 1880 5. Named after the tents, known as 'Red Shield huts' where Salvos chaplains ministered from in WW1.

Tum-Tum: is hiding in the van on page 4.

2	8	3	7	9	4	3	8	2
9	1	7	5	1	7	1	1	8
4	3	6	2	8	2	8	5	7
1	7	5	1	6	3	8	4	6
2	5	7	1	6	3	8	4	6
3	7	5	1	2	2	8	4	6
6	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
5	9	6	7	5	7	1	8	4
1	8	4	2	3	3	3	3	3
7	4	5	3	8	2	8	1	8
6	1	5	6	2	2	2	2	2
9	1	8	7	5	1	1	8	4
6	2	8	4	8	1	7	3	5

Quick quiz



1. In which year did the Red Shield Appeal begin?
2. What does the Red Shield Appeal fund?
3. Under what symbol is the Red Shield Appeal promoted?
4. When did The Salvation Army officially start in Australia?
5. Why is it called the Red Shield Appeal?

Did you know?

- Copper doorknobs are self-disinfecting.
- A group of hippos is called a bloat.
- Dragonflies have six legs but can't walk.

SHELTER

You should have a safe place to sleep

Most of us take for granted having a place to call home.

A safe place to sleep makes every other part of life easier. It is easier to do well in school when you have a well-lit, warm place to do homework. It's easier to perform well in interviews and at work when you have a place to shower and launder your clothes.

Homelessness is a widespread and serious issue in Australia. In 2016, on Census night, 116,427 people were counted as being homeless, an increase from 102,439 in 2011.

Children made up 15,872 of the total number of people experiencing homeless, which is 14 per cent of the total national homeless population. In 2017-18, roughly one in every six people accessing Specialist Homelessness Services were under the age of 10 (17 per cent or more than 47,700 clients). In 2018-19, a fifth (20 per cent) of all support periods provided by The Salvation Army homelessness services were for children under 10.

Homelessness can affect children in many ways. When a child has no safe place to sleep at night, it can become increasingly difficult to stay engaged in education.

Children experiencing homelessness also tend to experience emotional isolation and difficulty relating to their peers, along with difficulties making and keeping friends. Most importantly, experiencing homelessness has an impact on both the physical and mental health of children.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?



AS A NATION we can make sure there is a sufficient supply of homes that meet the needs of people who find themselves homeless. This will require national leadership and cooperation between different levels of government, the private sector and the not-for-profit sector.

AS A NATION we can also ensure that people have adequate income so that they can maintain private accommodation. A key way to do this is to ensure that Australia's welfare system provides enough income support and rental assistance to allow a person to keep a roof over their heads.

AS A COMMUNITY AND AS INDIVIDUALS we can acknowledge homelessness as a major issue and treat people who find themselves homeless with dignity and respect. For example, if you pass someone who is experiencing homelessness, acknowledge them and say hello. The Big Issue magazine is a fortnightly, independent magazine that is sold on the streets by people experiencing homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage. Consider purchasing a copy from a vendor and stop for a chat.