

**NEWS**

Supporting firefighters in WA

**FAITH TALK**

The freedom of letting go

**MY STORY**

God really is there

# Meeting people at their point of need

Salvo teams respond to emergencies and long-term trauma care



# SALVOS

MAGAZINE



**“You are braver  
than you believe,  
stronger than  
you seem, and  
smarter than  
you think.”**

**Author A.A. Milne,  
from *Winnie the Pooh***





## 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

# Salvos Magazine

**Founders** William and Catherine Booth

**General** Brian Peddle

### Territorial Leaders

Commissioners Janine and Robert Donaldson

**Secretary for Communications and Editor-In-Chief**

Lieut-Colonel Neil Venables

**Publications Manager** Cheryl Tinker

**Assistant Editor** Simone Worthing

**Designer** Ryan Harrison

**Cover Photo** Mark Foyle

**Editorial ph.** (03) 8541 4562

**Enquiry email** [salvosmagazine@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:salvosmagazine@salvationarmy.org.au)

**All other Salvation Army enquiries** 13 72 58

**Press date** 18 January 2021

Printed and published for The Salvation Army by  
Commissioner Robert Donaldson at Focus Print Group,  
Rowville, Victoria

Some photos in this magazine were taken prior to the  
COVID-19 pandemic.



[salvosmagazine.org.au](http://salvosmagazine.org.au)



[04]  
Feature

Meeting people  
at their point  
of need

[10]  
Faith Talk

The freedom  
of letting go



[12]  
My Story

A sceptic  
transformed



## Ready to respond

Thankfully so far, the bushfire season has not seen a repeat of last year's Black Summer, with its loss of lives, homes and land in multiple locations across the country. There have, of course, been serious and destructive fires in several places, with the threat of further outbreaks ever present. Drought is also ongoing in many parts of the country, as well as destructive storms and flooding.

The Salvos' emergency services teams have been providing crucial support to those on the frontline of disaster response, and people impacted by those disasters, for many years. Most of the team members are highly trained volunteers, who work alongside professionals to provide that support.

In this edition, you can read about this dedicated group of people and the work they do, usually at short notice and in challenging conditions, to bring help and hope to those facing some of life's toughest times.

There is also some insight into both the short and longer-term assistance the Salvos provide to those facing disasters and emergencies.

For all these stories and more, go to  
**[salvosmagazine.org.au](http://salvosmagazine.org.au)**

Simone Worthing **Assistant Editor**

# Meeting people at their point of need

Salvo teams assist those impacted by traumatic events

**WORDS** HOLLY REED

As General Manager of The Salvation Army Strategic and Disaster Management unit, Major Topher Holland oversaw the widespread response to the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires that covered more than 290 locations at evacuation centres and fire-grounds during the disaster.

Reflecting on that intense season, Topher says the response to the ever-changing situation had to be incredibly fast due to the speed at which the bushfires were moving.

“Our initial response was to assist people who had been through an incredibly traumatic event – an ongoing event – and a part of that was in our evacuation centres and serving the combat agencies,” he says.

“The saying that we always use is that we meet people at their point of need. That need changes as time goes on. So, initially, it’s food, shelter, clothing, and then it’s ‘Right, what do I do from here – has my house burnt down? What’s actually happening here? And what is the support I need now to move forward?’ So, there’s always ongoing care.”

With years of experience working in disaster management, Topher understands that, for many people, it takes time to be ready to rebuild – not just their homes, but also their lives.

“The Salvation Army makes the statement, ‘We’re there for the long haul’ but we don’t want that to mean that we hold back resources. We want to do the journey with



Major Topher Holland oversaw the Salvos' response to the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires.

people. So, we meet people at that point of need and, moving forward, that need changes as people go through that recovery and rebuild.

“In a sense, it’s highlighted in (the Bible) in Psalm 40, verses 1-3 – where there’s this great need we come alongside and help people, we lift them up, we set their feet on solid ground and then we do the journey with them on their recovery and rebuilding their lives. Some people aren’t going to recover, so their lives have to be rebuilt around a new normal.”

### UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION

The sheer scale of last season’s bushfires has been described by many as ‘unprecedented’, and so was the response by The Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) and recovery teams. As blazes moved across the affected states, activated teams would relocate to cater to first responders, while recovery teams set up in towns where the fires had passed through.

With the situation shifting and developing constantly, large-scale and simultaneous response and recovery coordination was required to tend to the changing needs of communities. Topher says the first response in a disaster is always about basic needs – food, shelter, clothing and emotional care.

Once that is covered, the team starts thinking about what the need is going to be moving forward and how they can help. With multiple agencies, government and privacy issues involved, there is much to consider.

“There was a variety of need that happened – people that owned their house, people who completely lost their house, people who lost everything in their house, people who were incredibly fearful of what was going on. Those kinds of things were very important

to try and get a balance on how we actually address the variety of need.”

With many people impacted by multiple disasters, that variety of need was immense. Dedicated Salvation Army rural chaplains had already been providing support to drought-stricken communities – only to see the same community ravaged by fire and then flood.

“

**There’s no pit so deep that  
love can’t reach you and  
hope can’t help you.**

”

The financial assistance provided has been a lifeline, but so has the human connection of an encouraging phone call or visit offering emotional, psychological and spiritual support.

“One of the blessings of The Salvation Army is that while we’re nationally focused, we are embedded locally,” says Topher. “Our connections and referrals to all our ministries is an amazing thing we have.”

### A HEART TO HELP

While Topher is moving on from his role, he says the highlight for him has been working in a team of people who are committed to serving others.

“They have a heart for people. A heart to serve. A heart to provide effective and efficient assistance to people following such a serious and disturbing event. They’ve punched above their weight really and they’ve got a strength about them that really ▶



Tophier Holland (right) coordinated the Salvos' response to the 2019 floods in Townsville.

wants to support each other, but also support people in the local community."

The NSW Government has since recognised members of the Salvos, SAES volunteers and volunteers from other non-government organisations across the state for the significant contribution they provided during the bushfire crisis.

"It is really important to me – and I encourage my team – that we want people to understand this, 'There's no pit so deep that love can't reach you and hope can't help you,'" says Tophier. "We get people to understand that's what we try and do; we want to say in this time of despair and this time of incredible challenge and difficulty and trauma that that pit, that challenge you're in, the Salvos want to come alongside and give love, give hope."

**CONTINUED CARE**

Tophier and his wife Major San Holland, will be taking up new roles with the Salvos this month, covering the ACT and NSW South

Coast. Tophier is also developing a national critical incident peer support team.

"From time to time, people can be subjected to a crisis, an emergency or a disaster or a stressful incident, which is sudden, unexpected and overwhelming. The reaction to such an event is what we call 'critical incident stress'. We want to help where people are exposed to such an incident that would place great strain on their capabilities of coping. My heart is to see people come from this place of despair to a place of recovery and hope."

To read the *Bushfire Disaster Appeal Report*, go to [salvationarmy.org.au/about-us/news-and-stories](http://salvationarmy.org.au/about-us/news-and-stories)

*Holly Reed works as Content Specialist (Brand) for The Salvation Army.*



Scan here for more on disasters and emergencies.

## Salvos part of firefighting operation in Western Australia

WORDS LAUREN MARTIN

It was 'all hands on deck' as soon as 2021 began, with Western Australia's Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) teams called out on 1 January to support emergency services personnel involved in a search operation for a missing person. The next day, a bushfire at Baker's Hill, west of Perth, saw volunteers serve 1000 meals. That same day, teams were called to support efforts to contain a large fire burning in remote bushland and national park north of Perth.

"We were going into our third week of temperatures over 33 degrees," said Warren Palmer, Public Relations Secretary for the Salvos in Western Australia. "We got the hot easterly [wind] off the desert and effectively we had that for a week and a half."

More than 10,000 meals were served in the first 10 days of January at the various incidents, with hundreds of hours of volunteer service. Warren said new equipment purchased and built in 2020 through the support of a generous bequest and The Salvation Army's partnership with Woolworths, had been invaluable in providing such a high level of support for emergency services crews.

"At one stage we had three major [bushfire] incidents we were called out to: One north of Gingin, one out at Wundowie, which is around about 70km east of Perth, and one south of Perth at Kwinana. So, having that ability to be able to respond to multiple incidents was extremely valuable."

Warren said a shipping container that was



Warren Palmer paid tribute to the many Salvo volunteers serving first responders.

converted into a mobile catering facility in 2020 allowed the SAES to cater for the large number of emergency services personnel over the long-term incident, providing nutritious meals.

The Salvos' Beacon homelessness service in Perth also partnered with the SAES to provide a number of pre-cooked meals. A number of local businesses, like Nando's, were also supportive.

Warren paid tribute to the dozens of volunteers who have served in the remote locations, some travelling up to two hours just to show their love and support to those tackling the blazes: "They have hearts of gold, they are so committed. Many volunteers did multiple shifts during the week. These people are extremely committed to providing the best ►



The Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) in Western Australia distributed 10,000 meals in the first 10 days of January.

service we can for our first responders.

"They are the heart and soul of our organisation, a great heartbeat to who we are."

One of those volunteers has been Ann van Gaalen-Prentice, from the Perth Fortress Salvos. When she heard a call-out for more volunteers, she didn't hesitate to sign up for a shift, having been trained with The Salvation Army Strategic Emergency and Disaster Management team in Melbourne, before moving to Western Australia a year ago.

"I felt really embraced by the emergency services team, which I think is incredible ... that's exactly how it should be as part of The Salvation Army," she said. Despite a chronic pain condition, Ann served in soaring temperatures alongside other volunteers, whom she said were beautifully inclusive. "It's difficult when you have physical differences, because I walk with a walking stick normally. The fact is that they [the SAES team] completely saw past that, but at the same time they were considerate enough to say,

'Look, do you need this while you are in the kitchen?' and things like that.

"They were willing to accept me as I was, and that, to me, spoke volumes."

Ann said serving people at their point of need is a way that she can show God's love in a practical way. "I've always had a passion for emergency services and being there when someone needs you. It's a more tangible way of showing God's love to someone, to be able to give them some food or clothing if they need it.

"A lot of the time people only know us through emergency services or when they're having the worst possible time, and that's when we need to be able to come alongside people and be there for them in a practical way."



Scan here for more on disasters and emergencies.



## Paper Champions

WORDS JESSICA MORRIS

We all relate to the story of the underdog – and in the Aussie comedy *Paper Champions*, this is taken to a new level. Filmed in Geelong, Victoria, this is a small-town story about a small-town man

– but it translates beautifully onto the big screen cinematically and into the heart.

Married actors Luke and Erin Saliba produced *Paper Champions* through the pandemic of 2020. And, while the story of Rey, a young, directionless office worker, carries the same lovable, dry wit all Aussie cinema holds, its sense of authenticity is what makes it so endearing.

Staring Luke Saliba as Rey, and boasting the likes of Gary Sweet (*The Doctor Blake Mysteries*), John Tui (*Solo: A Star Wars Story*)



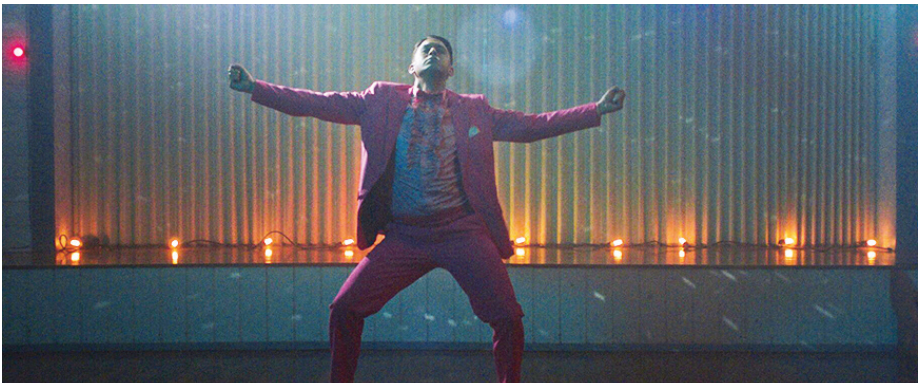
and Tessa de Josellin (*Home and Away*), genuine banter between the cast and uniquely Aussie humour highlight why it has done so well at film festivals across the country.

As a character study, Rey is every man who must overcome his own awkwardness and inferiority complex to, well, live. By tracing his heritage through the pursuit of his ‘mana’ (a power or life force ascribed to people and living beings in Melanesian and Polynesian cultures), we are reminded how diverse Australian culture is. All the while, Rey has the goal of getting the girl and becoming a wrestler – and it’s about as awkward and hilarious as it sounds.

Meanwhile, interactions with his family and work colleagues poke fun at social norms and political correctness. Yet the cast don’t allow the audience to become jaded, but instead use comedy to show why kindness, diversity, integrity and equality are necessary in Aussie culture.

For a family-friendly movie night, filled with dry humour and moments of belly laughter, you can’t go past *Paper Champions*.

*Paper Champions* is streaming now on YouTube and is available at JB Hi-Fi.



# The freedom of letting go

Decluttering the house and heart

WORDS BELINDA DAVIS



PHOTO BY BRANDABLE BOX ON UNSPLASH

A few weeks ago we moved house. This means that, for a number of weeks, we had boxes in various states of 'packed-ness' around our house. I don't like packing and moving, and so am in the worst job for that. Since becoming a Salvos minister, this is the 14th move I have undertaken.

The packing process is quite cathartic and distressing at the same time. It affords the opportunity to purge my life of things that have become less useful than they first were. It may be clothing I have outgrown or that doesn't suit my taste any more, craft supplies for an activity I no longer do, gifts I have never used or surplus makeup.

It's amazing just how much stuff I can accumulate and hold on to 'just in case'. It turns out that often, when the 'just in case' moment arrives, I have forgotten that I had said item and buy another one. It is not uncommon that during packing, I come across things and say, "Oh, I forgot I had that."

My rule tends to be, unless there is a high sentimentality about it, if I haven't used it since we moved in (usually between three to five years), then it is not essential to my life and existence so it can go.

This isn't as easy as it sounds. I find it extremely difficult to part with those things that have a strong association attached, but that I have never loved enough to use or have on display. It's helpful to have to explain to another person why you are holding onto something, which is where the opinion of my husband is helpful (and sometimes annoying).

What I have discovered, however, is that by holding onto the things that stay tucked away in boxes and at the back of cupboards, that they can add to the burden of what needs to

be packed, transported and then rehoused. While each 'thing' might only be small, together they become a significant weight.

It's not rocket science to draw parallels between this practical example and what can also go on in our emotional life. There are plenty of thought processes and practices that might have served us well at some point, but that do not really fit what we need to exist well in life now. There are also memories of pain and betrayal that we store away, not willing to forgive and let go of 'just in case'. These things can literally be a burden that can weigh us down in life.

Discarding them is quite freeing and worth investigating in order to live a life that is fuller and more meaningful. There is freedom in letting go, in releasing what clutters your heart and mind. It is not an easy thing to do, but a short period of discomfort can bring such high rewards. In the Bible, Jesus, when talking about himself, said, "If the son sets you free, you are free indeed" (John chapter 8, verse 38). Including God in the process helps in the identification of what to let go, and helps with the healing.

Just as in a house, there is a limit to how much stuff you can hold onto before it becomes too restricting. It can actually stop you enjoying life to the full. Take it from me, it is worth having a sort through from time to time and letting go. You gain a life better lived.

*Major Belinda Davis is a Salvation Army officer (pastor), who has just moved to Adelaide, South Australia.*



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

# A sceptic transformed

Zoe counts her life a miracle from God after surviving abuse, suicide and addiction

WORDS ZOE FAITH-ESPERANCE



If I look at my life in a rear-view mirror, things have been unbelievably difficult. I had a traumatic childhood and wasn't treated well by some members of my family.

One of the hardest things I've ever experienced in life was when I lost my surrogate daughter on the same day my husband died by suicide. I don't know how I got through that day.

There have been times when I tried to die, but I was rescued. I remember seeing Jesus' face before the police came and kept me alive. God wanted me here.

Before I found Project 614 [The Salvation

Army Melbourne in inner-city Bourke St], I was having a bad time living on the streets. I was hungry and mentally unwell, and I was being pushed around. I ran into Salvation Army 614 street teams, and I asked them, "Where's God? I can't find him!"

I had no shoes, my feet were very sore, and I ended up in hospital. One day, I found myself outside the 614 building and met Sandra [Major Sandra Nottle, Project 614 leader]. I asked Sandra if she worked there and she explained who she was and what she did. She has become a good friend and means so much to me. It is a joy now to know that when I walk into a room at church, people are excited and happy to see me. Sandra is always like that.

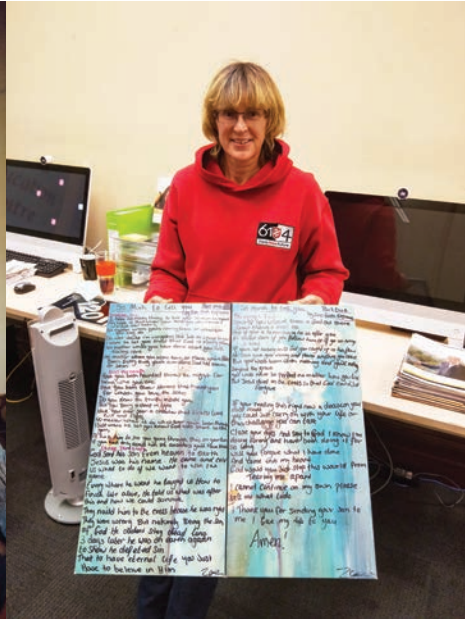
I was led to faith in Jesus at the Benwerren Retreat for women and children, in Yarra Junction, about five years ago.

Before that, I'd had some very rough teenage years, and I found it hard to trust. I used to do sex work, and I had a chunky ring I'd wear to protect myself. I gave my ring to Sandra because I trusted her, and I decided I would not be working on the street anymore. That was the same day I decided I wanted to become a Salvo.

I think God is amazing. On the day I became a Christian I wrote a poem that said, "I have so many things to tell you ... God is really there, no matter what you've done ... no matter what you've been through ..."



**Left:** Zoe, with her puppy Jessie May, is living proof that God is really there, no matter what your life looks like.



**Right:** Major Sandra Nottle holds the poem Zoe wrote and painted the day she became a Christian.

God has helped me heal parts of my life. He got me off drugs; I was using ice. When I went off it, there was a week when I just wanted to sleep. I have relapsed in the past, but I am on a good run.

I have learnt never to count my chicks before they hatch. You have to be realistic in life, protect yourself and listen to your instincts. But that doesn't mean you have to write God off.

I coped well with the COVID-19 lockdown. I have been doing it a bit hard financially but for a good reason – I have saved up and bought a Shar-Pei puppy. I have called her Jessie May.

Life is fantastic. I just turned 40. I do miss the chance to get out to 614 and sing soprano and alto with their choir. I also sing in the With One Voice choir, run by Creativity Australia. I love singing; it lifts my heart.

I feel part of the 614 family, and even though we are absent physically [through COVID restrictions], we can still call and be thinking of each other.

I was sceptical about God, but it's amazing I am still alive, considering the life I have lived. I encourage people to take small steps with God until they are comfortable with the big picture. It's worth it.

*As told to Barry Gittins – Marketplace Coordinator, Melbourne Project 614*

**If you have thoughts of suicide, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14.**



Scan here for more on addiction.

## Mac 'n' cheese cups



### Ingredients

230g dried pasta, 50g butter, 2 tbsp plain flour, 1½ cups milk, ⅔ cup grated cheese, 100g shaved ham (chopped), 2 spring onions (chopped)

### Method

Cook pasta in salted boiling water. Drain well and transfer to a large bowl.

Melt butter on medium-high heat until it bubbles. Add flour, stirring for a minute or so. Remove pan from heat and gradually stir in milk. Return pan to heat and cook, stirring, until mixture comes to the boil. Boil for a minute or until mixture thickens.

Add ½ cup of the cheese and stir until smooth. Add sauce to pasta.

Preheat oven to 200°C. Line muffin pan with two paper cases per hole to prevent sticking.

Add ham and spring onion to pasta mixture, season with salt and pepper (optional), and mix well. Divide mixture into paper cases. Sprinkle with leftover cheese.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until golden. Let cool for 5 minutes in pan before transferring to a wire rack. Serve warm or cold.

## Have a laugh



**Working in a mirror factory is something I can totally see myself doing.**

**I once got fired from a canned juice factory.** Apparently I couldn't concentrate ...

**I've been bored recently so I've decided to take up fencing.**

The neighbours said they will call the police unless I put it back.

## Bible byte

"I did not give up waiting for the Lord. And He turned to me and heard my cry."

Psalm 40, verse 1

*New Life Version Bible translation*

# Wordsearch

C G Q I C T R O P P U S D E R  
 A O F T F Y E X R N D E I N E  
 T G M I D P C G N O K R S I S  
 E T R M R S I L O R A I A L T  
 R N L A U E R L O S T F S T O  
 I I T I N N F E S N G H T N R  
 N Y W Y U T I I E H E S E O A  
 G Z N X Z B S T G T P U R R T  
 N S T R A T E G Y H N B S F I  
 I N F R A S T R U C T U R E O  
 L Y C N E G R E M E R E L V N  
 A O C H A P L A I N S B R O B  
 E E N O I T A U C A V E R S V  
 H I D X P E R S O N N E L B K  
 K B W J P I H S D R A H T M P

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| ASSISTANCE    | FRONTLINE      |
| BUSHFIRES     | GRANTS         |
| CATERING      | HARDSHIP       |
| CHAPLAINS     | HEALING        |
| COMMUNITY     | INFRASTRUCTURE |
| CYCLONE       | PERSONNEL      |
| DISASTERS     | REBUILT        |
| EMERGENCY     | RESTORATION    |
| EVACUATION    | STRATEGY       |
| FIREFIIGHTERS | SUPPORT        |
| FLOODS        | VOLUNTEERS     |

# Quick quiz



1. Which is the only continent that doesn't experience bushfires?
2. Four of the five deadliest fires recorded in Australia have been in which state?
3. What impact does climate change have on bushfires?
4. Approximately how many volunteer firefighters are there in Australia?
5. What does traditional Indigenous fire management involve?

# Tum-Tum



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

**Answers:** 1. Antarctica 2. Victoria 3. Creates conditions for more frequent and severe fires. 4. 195,000 5. 'Cool' and patchy burning early in the dry season.  
**Tum-Tum:** is peering out from behind the box on page 10.

# Did you know?

- Octopuses have three hearts.
- The British royal family isn't allowed to play Monopoly.
- Sea otters have a pouch under their forearm to store their favourite rocks.



## Salvation Army disaster assistance provides support in three stages:

1. **Emergency response during the crisis and in the immediate aftermath.** Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) teams are activated at evacuation centres to respond to needs on the ground. Meals and refreshments, care packs, bedding, referrals, counselling and financial assistance are just some of the ways we help.
2. **An initial assessment and provision of emergency funds.**
3. **Recovery.** This is the longest stage where more financial support is provided for those who have been severely impacted by the disaster.

For more information, go to [salvosmagazine.org.au/find-help/disasters-and-emergencies/](http://salvosmagazine.org.au/find-help/disasters-and-emergencies/)

