

salvos

magazine

What's your story?

Getting started on writing your memoir



Vol. 004 | No. 40
28 October 2023
AUD \$1.00
PRINT POST APPROVED
PP100001474

salvosonline.org.au

FEATURE

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FAITH TALK

Not so pointless

MY STORY

Street 2 stage

**“The best classroom in
the world is at the feet of
an elderly person.”**

– Andy Rooney





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



The Salvation Army Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders, past, present, and future. We value and include people of all cultures, languages, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and intersex status. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and well-being of people of all ages, particularly children.

Salvos Magazine

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Press date 13 October 2023

Printed and published for The Salvation Army by Commissioner Miriam Gluyas at Focus Print Group, South Granville, NSW

 salvosonline.org.au

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Story time

Whether it's a book, magazine, oral tradition, podcast, artistic creation or social media post, everyone loves a good story. Some chapters, episodes, dances or yarns might be more compelling than others, but stories are a form of human communication that connect us to each other.

People's life stories – their experiences, reflections, dreams, struggles and more – are important to preserve for future generations. Writing your memoir is one way to do this.

In this edition of *Salvos Magazine*, Faye Michelson explores this topic and shares some tips to get your memoirs started.

Peter McGuigan covers the journey of one of Australia's best-known landmarks; Mal Davies reflects on the power of songs to point us to God; and Owen Davis shares his story of homelessness and how he now helps others tell their stories through screen media.

Jesus chose relatable stories to teach challenging concepts, capture people's imaginations and show them the heart of God. You can read those stories today in the Bible – still the world's best-selling book.

Simone Worthing **Editor**



What's your story?

Recording your journey for future generations

By Faye Michelson

What's your story? You have one – everyone does. Your life is made up of many chapters – times of triumph and failure, love and loss, joy and sadness, trauma and survival.

You've lived through different times and seen how technology has transformed the world. You can remember significant world events and how they changed your thinking, and you have deep memories of experiences that shaped you into the person you are today. You have stories about your family to hand down to the next generation, and your achievements and life's work to document. You have stories to tell.

“

Some stories are hard to write, and they are hard to read. But they are important stories to tell and must not be lost.

”

The idea of writing your memoir can be a little overwhelming, which is why it was great to be part of a group of 18 people who signed up to give it a go this year. We met on Friday afternoons



for three hours, some with laptops, others with notebooks, to start the record of our lives. I was the facilitator of our group, there to offer feedback on writing and structure, but mainly providing encouragement and afternoon tea. Writing is a discipline, and this weekly three-hour block was time we had set aside to reflect, remember and write.

Looking around this group of strangers during our first few weeks was fascinating. We all looked so, well, normal, sitting around the tables chatting pleasantly to each other. Everyone was a blank page; no one knew anything about anyone. But how that would change.

STRANGERS BECOME FRIENDS

The afternoons were mostly quiet while people worked on their stories. I had the privileged position as the facilitator to spend time with each person. I got to know all their stories as I moved around the tables to read what they had written, asking a question here or there to clarify something, discussing with them how they felt when this or that

happened and suggesting where they might like to add more detail.

Every now and then, little flurries of conversation would break out as someone shared a piece of their history, sometimes funny, sometimes poignant. Again and again, people marvelled at how, as they wrote, they remembered forgotten parts of their lives.

Don't be fooled, though; writing your memoir is not always easy. And part of the reason for that is because of the memories that surface.

Stories emerged that were joyful, triumphant, painful and heart-breaking. We talked about whether they should leave out parts of their story, sometimes because it was too painful to write, sometimes because it was too painful to read. It was their story; they could choose what they put in or left out, but as time went on, most decided to tell it how it was.

And that is why one of our writers typed with tears in her eyes, and why we read her story with tears in our eyes. At first, ►



she put down dot points to cover the years civil war changed her life forever, when she and the others with her were ill, starving, hopeless. She established a simple timeline of months in a labour camp and years in a refugee camp. At length, she felt able to put detail to the framework. Some stories are hard to write, and they are hard to read. But they are important stories to tell and must not be lost.

Writing down stories is a time-honoured way of keeping history and tradition alive in many cultures. The Bible tells the stories of God and his people, the Israelites, preserving the history of the Jewish people. God himself directed people to write down his words – when he protected the vulnerable Israelites from an attacking army, he told Moses to “Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered” (Exodus chapter 17, verse 14). The Bible also tells us the stories of Jesus and the early Christian church, stories that have been passed on for centuries. As 14th century English theologian and Bible translator John Wycliffe wrote, “The Bible is God’s voice

speaking to us, just as truly as if we heard it audibly.” The written word keeps the past alive. So, what’s your story?

START YOUR MEMOIR

There are many tools available to help you write your memoir. There is a wide range of online products to choose from, as well as books you can buy, with questions to prompt memories and provide a framework for writing.

“

The written word keeps the past alive.

”

Or you can just start! First of all, there are no rules. You can tell whatever part of your story you want to. The question you want to ask, and keep on asking, though, is “What do I want to tell?” Remember, a memoir differs from a diary or journal because it is written for readers other than yourself.

Do you want to tell your whole life (making it more of an autobiography), or a part of it? Do you want to have a reverse memoir, starting at your life now and then reflect on how you got there? Is your memoir going to start with a turning point in your life, or focus on a particular period?

Remember, you are the curator of your memoir. You don't have to – and shouldn't – write about every single detail of your life (if you want people to read it, that is). Be selective and mindful, write about the parts of your life that are important and that shaped you, and because of that, have shaped your family.

Two exercises that can be useful in getting started are creating a timeline and an outline.

MAKE A TIMELINE

If you're working on a computer, create a folder for each part of your timeline. If you're writing in a notebook, have dedicated pages or a folder with looseleaf pages and dividers. The headings can be whatever you want, a loose plan of what areas of your life you think you might like to cover, for example, early family life; school years; uni/early work history; marriage/family; career; interests.

As you start reflecting, you'll find memories will start to surface, so you'll be adding to it as you go. Into these folders you could also incorporate some of the societal changes you lived through. Once they are recorded in your timeline, they are there for you to refer to when you're ready to write about them.

MAKE AN OUTLINE

This is like planning a story, with a beginning, middle and conclusion. Keep asking yourself the question: What do



I want to tell? Is it how you came to Australia to start a new life? What led to that decision? What are your stories of loneliness and hardship but also hope? What do I want to tell? Is it how an accident or illness changed your life, how bringing up a child with a disability brought challenges and heartbreak but also triumph and pride. What do I want to tell? Is it how an encounter with God has changed your life?

You want your memoir to tell your readers about the experiences you lived through and how they impacted you. You want them to know you on a deeper level.

All you have to do now is start to write!



Scan here for more stories of hope.

Inventing an icon

Sydney Opera House turns 50

By Peter McGuigan

This month, Australia celebrates the 50th anniversary of its most recognised icon, the Sydney Opera House. On 20 October 1973, people packed Bennelong Point and the greater harbour foreshores as Queen Elizabeth II declared the magnificent edifice open.

Salvo Ron Prussing played in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's (SSO) trombone section in the first concert at the Opera House and has been its Principal Trombone for many years. "I was so privileged to be part of that night," Ron reflected recently. "I remember enjoying the spectacular nature of that incredible music. And it was that music that I ultimately fell in love with."

THE VISION TAKES SHAPE

The Opera House began as the vision of Eugene Goossens, who came to Australia in 1946 as guest conductor of the SSO. Goossens was surprised that the SSO's main performance venue was the Sydney Town Hall – that Australia's largest city was bereft of a specially appointed concert hall. He also found there were no theatres big enough to stage large or even medium-sized operas.

Goossens became Resident Conductor of the SSO in July 1947 and championed the idea of an opera house built on Bennelong Point.

In 1954 when, concerned that Goossens' continuing campaigning in the press could embarrass the state government, ABC Head Charles Moses suggested a

meeting with then Premier John Joseph Cahill. The meeting convinced Premier Cahill of both the need for an opera house and of its high priority.

“

People ... come to be taken, by the excellence of the gifts God has given some of us, to another level of human experience.

”

Late in 1954, preliminary planning began with the appointment of a committee to advise the government on building an opera house. Thirty-one sites were examined and Bennelong Point chosen. In January 1956 an international competition was announced for the design of the opera house. On 29 January 1957, Jørn Utzon, a Danish architect, was declared the winner. The judges stated: "We have returned again and again to the study of these drawings [and] are convinced that they present a concept of an opera house which is capable of being one of the great buildings of the world."

Premier Cahill ensured the project remained on track and in March 1959 construction began. The venture experienced cost blow-outs and there were



The Sydney Opera House took 14 years to complete and now welcomes more than 10.9 million visitors each year.

LEN STONE PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, CC BY 4.0 VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

occasions when the NSW Government was tempted to call a halt. In 1966 the situation reached crisis point due to arguments about cost and the interior design, and the Government withholding progress payments. Jørn Utzon resigned from the project. The building took a further seven years to complete.

CREATIVE POWER

Despite all this, today Australia has an opera house regarded worldwide as the finest performing arts venue anywhere. It welcomes more than 10.9 million visitors every year and more than 1.4 million people attend its 1800 performances.

Why do so many people come to this venue and other performance venues around the country? They come to be taken, by the excellence of the gifts God has given some of us, to another level of human experience.

Whether it be the beauty of a voice soaring, the intricacy of a symphony, or the drama or humour of actors in

the theatre round, these gifts express the deep longings of the human heart for meaning, understanding, justice and love.

Many of us can't put that longing into words or translate it into powerful drama or music or song. But we are certainly able to respond to a portrayal of love, grief, humour or tension that defines the state of the human heart.

Our lives and attitudes have the capacity to be challenged, even changed forever, by the power of a single performance. Thank God for these gifts. Thank God for Goossens' vision.

Major Peter McGuigan is Head of Government Relations for The Salvation Army Australia.



Scan here for more stories of hope.

Not so pointless

The relationships that make our lives complete

By Mal Davies

Some singers arrive gradually. They build a following based on live performances, often busking or playing in pubs, and then they do some self-funded recording and try to attract sales. Others arrive in a hurry and are famous quickly.

Lewis Capaldi is one of the latter. The Scottish singer-songwriter with the wonderful voice released his first single, *Bruises*, in March 2017. In November 2018 he released *Someone You Loved* ... and was nominated for a Grammy.

The song was the biggest selling UK single of 2019 and reached number one on the US charts.

Other number one UK singles followed – *Before You Go* in 2020 and *Forget Me and Pointless* in 2022.

Pointless is a lovely ballad; a man singing about how his partner and he care and provide for each other:

"I bring her coffee in the morning/ She brings me inner peace/ I take her out to fancy restaurants/ She takes the sadness out of me/ I make her cards on her birthday/ She makes me a better man/ I take her water when she's thirsty/ She takes me as I am."

COMPLETION

It's a song about a couple who seem to know and love and support each other, and he recognises the value of that when he sings, in each chorus: "Everything is pointless without you."

Most people have felt the same about someone else. Whether it's a romantic partner or your child or a best friend or a parent – there's someone we've known who helps make life complete. Without them, well, the rest just seems pointless.

Millions of people today say the same about Jesus. In fact, Christian writer and Oxbridge academic CS Lewis said, "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen; not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."

“

There's someone we've known who helps make life complete.

”

For Lewis, knowing Jesus gave life clarity and purpose; everything was pointless without him.

Someone well worth knowing, don't you think?

Major Mal Davies is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) in South Australia.



Scan here for more information on Salvation Army services.



From the streets to the stage

Owen finds his oasis in life through music

By Lauren Martin

Owen Davis credits music – and Jesus through the Salvos – with saving his life.

Twenty years ago, his life on the streets of inner Sydney was chaotic and dangerous, with The Salvation Army's Oasis Youth Support Network and its then manager, Major Paul Moulds, his only anchor.

Decades later, the musician and videographer has moved on, but he's never lost his passion for assisting others in the same position he found himself in as a teen, without a place to call home.

“

Jesus is the inspiration for what I do ... To see a better world, that's my dream.

”

In 2016, he was part of the Salvos Couch Project 'Street 2 Stage' tour of 12 high schools, raising money and creating awareness around youth homelessness. From that, Owen birthed a 'Street 2 Stage' (S2S) initiative that gained funding to work with young people experiencing homelessness, training them in music production and videography.

It was full circle for the young man, who took part in a similar initiative through Oasis more than a decade earlier. "I don't forget that," he says, his passion



Owen now helps others struggling with homelessness.

and faith running so deep that he continued anyway when funding ran out for the project.

STREET 2 STAGE INITIATIVE

The projects Owen developed, and runs, are the Street 2 Stage 'One Shot' and 'One Take' initiatives. One Shot focuses on music production, and One Take focuses on film production.

Owen connects with young people experiencing homelessness through word-of-mouth referrals or social media and invites them to be part of the eight-week program. They learn production, writing, recording, mixing/editing and mastering, and marketing/PR skills from Owen, who has qualifications in screen media.



Owen continues to volunteer for the Salvos, decades after his life was changed by their help.

"They can then use their skills in their life," says Owen. "They can go out and take steps forward like finding accommodation, finding a job and holding that job and doing some good stuff with their life. It 100 per cent improves their self-esteem and gives them concrete skills that transfer to many different job opportunities – not just in the music or film industry."

LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

One participant, Frank, says Street 2 Stage and his connection with Owen changed his life.

"Before it, I had no direction. My life [was] a mess, but through music and film, I feel like now my life is just awesome," he shares. "I can't explain it, but I have something to live for."

Frank has gone from experiencing homelessness, being in and out of jail, to now "happily living with my partner and my child ... and so lucky to be able to share my story on a stage. I truly went from the streets to the stage," he says.

Stories like Frank's are never instant, and Owen personally knows the value of long-term journeying with people,

having experienced it himself with his mentor, Major Paul Moulds.

Paul remembers meeting Owen as a teenager, saying, "He was very angry, but he always had a dream – even back then, you could sense it. Over the years, we have been able to help him. He has done all the work himself, but we have been able to help him find pathways to do that."

MUSIC FUNDING MISSION

Owen unleashes his creativity in his spare time through his rap characters – 'Fiction' and 'OE' – who both release music.

He also releases a music single every month, with 20 per cent of all proceeds from OE's releases donated to the Salvos. The music is released through all major streaming services and as an NFT.

"Jesus is the inspiration for what I do – not for fame or for money but to see a better world, that's my dream."



Scan here for more stories of hope.

Pineapple upside-down cake



Ingredients

Topping

30g butter, 1 tin pineapple rings, glazed cherries, 30g brown sugar

Cake

125g butter, 125g sugar, ¼ tsp vanilla essence, 2 or 3 eggs, 245g self-raising flour, 3 tblsp milk

Method

- Melt butter for topping, pour into cake tin.
- Arrange fruit in tin and sprinkle with brown sugar.
- Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add vanilla essence.
- Beat in half quantity of eggs, then fork in flour alternately with remaining eggs and milk.
- Spread mixture evenly over fruit and sugar.
- Bake for 1 hour at 180°C.

HAVE A LAUGH



What do you call a bear with no teeth?
A gummy bear.

I know someone who
collects candy canes.
They're all in mint condition.

What do you call a train loaded
with bubble gum?
A chew-chew train.

I'm trying to get over my chocolate,
nuts and marshmallows addiction.
It's been a Rocky Road.

SIGNING IN



Sudoku

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

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

Tum-Tum



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

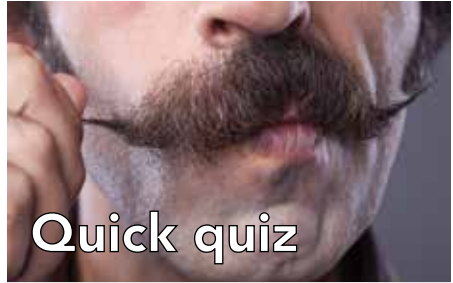
Bible byte

"Wisdom is found with the elderly, and understanding comes with long life."

Job chapter 12, verse 12
Christian Standard Bible

Quiz answers: 1. Moustaches 2. King of hearts 3. 600 4. Frida Khalo 5. Red 6. French

Tum-Tum: is hiding on the tablet screen on page 6.



Quick quiz

1. Movember is an annual event held in November to raise awareness of men's health issues by growing what?
2. In a deck of cards, which is the only king not to sport a moustache?
3. How many hairs does the average moustache have?
4. Who is the most famous female artist to have had a moustache?
5. What colour moustache does Yosemite Sam from Looney Tunes have?
6. The word 'moustache' comes from what language?

29 October 1863

Red Cross founded

Also known as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Red Cross is a humanitarian institution that has been a three-time recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

30 October 1908

First cross-country flight in Europe

French aviator Henri Farman flew from Bouy to Reims in France. The 14-mile (22.5km) journey took him about 20 minutes.

3 November 1954

Godzilla released

The Japanese science fiction movie starring a mutated monster of the same name became an instant hit.

ON THIS DAY

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

YOUR KIND HEART CAN KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER.

*"I'm so, so happy we have
a home. It was so great
knowing people were
helping mum and me"*
– Sienna*

*Name changed to protect privacy.

The Salvation Army provides struggling families with the friendship, comfort and practical support they desperately need to make it through Christmas and the months ahead. Together as one big, caring Salvos community, you can ensure nobody struggles alone this Christmas.



DONATE TODAY

salvationarmy.org.au/josie



**CHRISTMAS
APPEAL**