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Sydney City Salvos to develop fresh ministry space

By Lauren Martin

The Salvation Army is partnering with a major property developer to revitalise its mission space at 140 Elizabeth Street, right in the heart of Sydney.

The site in Sydney's CBD has been home to The Salvation Army since 1926, serving as Territorial Headquarters for what was then the Australia Eastern Territory and as a worship space for the Sydney City Salvos, previously known as Sydney Congress Hall.

For some time now, The Salvation Army Property Department has been assisting the New South Wales/ACT Division in exploring redevelopment options for the site.

After an extensive selection and vetting process, The Salvation Army has chosen to partner with property developer Investa.

"This redevelopment partnership will provide the Army with a continued presence at this site now and for the generations yet to come," said NSW/ACT Divisional Commander Major Robyn Black.

The redevelopment will transform 140 Elizabeth Street into the new central hub for Sydney City Salvos' fully integrated mission, which will also function from various satellite sites throughout the city. This will encompass multiple Salvation Army services and possibly other partner services designed to meet the needs of individuals in the inner city.

NEWS



The Salvation Army site on Elizabeth St in inner Sydney.

"The redeveloped site will become the home and launching point for ministries, programs and activities that happen across the city," said Robyn.

"With new, purpose-built missional spaces, the potential is huge for us having greater impact for the Kingdom of God in our city. We look forward with expectant hearts to what this will mean in seeing more lives transformed with the love of Jesus."

Investa will deliver this vision for The Salvation Army along with multiple levels of studio living accommodation units for its investment fund.

The Salvation Army says it will continue working with Investa to progress this vision and hopes to announce more details as the project progresses.

DIVISIONAL NEWS

New divisional leaders installed in Tasmania

By Kirralee Nicolle

Majors Dean and Vicki Clarke have been officially installed as the new Divisional Commander and Area Officer, respectively, for the Tasmania Division of the Australia Territory.

Officers, Salvation Army leaders and Salvationists gathered at Hobart Citadel on Sunday 16 February to welcome the couple to the state and to their leadership roles. Dean preached at the service on the High Priestly Prayer in John 17.

Bruce Edwards, from Kingborough-Huon Corps, spoke on behalf of soldiers and friends of The Salvation Army from across Tasmanian corps and centres.

He reflected on the beauty of creation in the state, the kindness of the Tasmanian people, and the slower pace of life compared to mainland Australia.

"We warmly welcome both of you to this state," Bruce said. "Tasmania is a great place to live ... We are confident you will love being here."

He spoke of difficult times for both the broader church and the Army and said that by following Scripture, the couple would lead well amid challenges.

"The Army has appointed you to lead us, and we, in turn, want to support you and work with you in your

leadership, as we each play our part in seeking to strengthen The Salvation Army in this state," Bruce said.

"Be assured of our prayers and our good wishes for you as you take up your appointments."

Major Angela Rawlings, representing the officer team, quoted Micah 6:8, in which the prophet Micah encouraged the people of Judah to "act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly" with their God.

"I can't say it any better," she said. "Be just. Be fair to other people. Act justly with right judgment, doing what is fair and right for other people. Love. Diligently practice kindness and compassion. Show mercy and lovingkindness. Be compassionate and loyal in your love. Walk humbly with your God, setting aside any overblown sense of importance or self-righteousness. Live humbly, and in obedience to God's laws and leadings. Don't take yourself too seriously; take God seriously."

"In following this wisdom and advice as you carry out the duties of your appointments, I believe you will see God's influence through your impact on this division."

Territorial Commander Commissioner Miriam Gluyas praised The Salvation Army in Tasmania for its creativity and ability to try new things as a division. "Tassie, you go!" Miriam said. "These are good people; your God is with you, bless you."

Vicki then spoke, describing her and Dean's lives together and their many years of service.

"We've been officers for 38 years," she said. "That's a long time, isn't it? But you know what, we've never said no to God. We come here to Tasmania following His leading to come and serve here."

Miriam then carried out the installation, providing the couple with two passages from friends who had been praying for Dean and Vicki from across the country. One of these passages was from Exodus 14:21-22, where Moses parts the Red Sea.

"May that be so in your ministry," Miriam said. "That he would drive back the waters so that you will walk through and stand on dry ground, knowing that he is with you."



Territorial Commander Commissioner Miriam Gluyas (centre) with Majors Dean and Vicki Clarke at the installation service.

Narwee Salvos experiencing revival and growth

By Lauren Martin

A community garden at The Salvation Army in Narwee, in Sydney's south, is bringing local residents together in a meaningful way to connect with nature and each other.

In December last year, as part of its Christmas party celebrations, Georges River Councillor Christina Jamieson officially opened the Narwee CCC (Coffee, Chat, Connect) community garden.

The garden project had been months in the making. Materials were purchased through a local government grant and volunteers spent many hours creating the space at the back of the former Narwee Corps hall, which is shaded by a beautiful gum tree.

Narwee CCC is a Salvation Army Community of Hope, connected to the nearby Hurstville Corps, that began in 2024 under the leadership of Captain David Delany. Situated in the heart of a public housing estate, the ministry is reviving the former Narwee Corps, which closed its Sunday services many years ago.

Residents gather on Wednesdays and Thursdays to connect over a cuppa, play games, enjoy a sausage sizzle and purchase low-cost groceries and fresh produce through a small Salvos pantry in the centre. Now, they can also access fresh vegetables and herbs grown in the community garden.

"We wanted to create a community garden at Narwee CCC because we saw it as an opportunity to bring people together meaningfully," says David.

"The idea was to have a space where people could connect – with nature and each other. It's about more than just gardening; it's about fostering relationships, building community resilience, and addressing practical needs like access to fresh produce."

There are more than just vegetables and herbs growing at Narwee CCC. The Holy Spirit is growing his church in this place, raising up local leaders and blowing fresh hope into an area where many residents feel forgotten.

"For me, the garden symbolises growth," says David. "Not just of plants but of the bonds we share as a community. It's a place where people can share experiences, support one another, and feel like they're part of something bigger."



Captain David Delany says God's spirit of growth and transformation can be felt at Narwee CCC.

"For many, it's a peaceful spot to recharge and find a sense of calm in the middle of busy lives."

Every volunteer role at Narwee CCC is filled by members of the local community, who are invested in and passionate about having the old corps back open as a space where they can connect and make new friends in a safe, supported environment. From cooking the barbeque to serving cups of tea to tending to the garden, these emerging local leaders are on a beautiful discipleship journey as they learn about God and The Salvation Army.

David says those who gather on a Wednesday or Thursday will often break into praise or prayer in response to a community member's needs or news. A formal Bible study and a 'Boost' craft and chat group have started, focusing on proven, positive ways to improve wellbeing.

"Looking ahead, I'd love for the garden to become an educational hub where we can host workshops on gardening, composting, sustainable living and healthy eating," says David.

"I want it to be a space where we can share knowledge, learn from each other, and grow together in every sense of the word. But beyond the practical side, the garden is also a space for people to gather, relax, and reflect. For many, it's a peaceful spot to recharge and find a sense of calm in the middle of busy lives."

FEATURE

Sandra's 15 seconds of fame in a coffee shop

By Dean Simpson

When Auxiliary-Lieutenant Sandra Mortimer met a work colleague for coffee at a cafe in the Northern Territory town of Katherine, little did she know she'd end up in a music video!

Sandra had arranged to meet with Sally Courtney, The Salvation Army's Communications Manager for the Northern Territory, to discuss work-related projects.

It didn't take long for Sandra and Sally to realise that something unusual was happening around them.

"Sally, being a super PR operator that she is, made the observation that by default, we were sitting right amongst a film set in the Coffee Club!" Sandra recalls.

Sure enough, the well-known Katherine local and nationally renowned country music singer-songwriter Tom Curtain was there with a cameraman. They were in the midst of filming his new single, 'Be Kind'.

"It became apparent that they needed another person to step into a scene for the music video!" Sandra said. "After Sally informed me who Tom Curtain was, I was happy to help."

Sandra volunteered to play the role of a paying customer whose credit card fails to work and is 'rescued' by another kind-hearted customer. She 'stars' in the video for 15 seconds!



Country music singer Tom Curtain.



Aux-Lieut Sandra Mortimer (left), playing the role of a cafe customer, gets a hug from a kind-hearted fellow customer in a music video for country singer Tom Curtain.

"Little did we know that the music video would also feature, in a much larger part, brother Barry Fletcher, a regular worshipper and a recent addition to the leadership team at Katherine Corps. Barry plays the part of a grandfather, and he is that, too.

"Overall, it was a great experience and great to meet some more inspiring locals achieving remarkable things.

'Dolly's Dream' charity

"[During the filming] we also learned the reason behind Tom's new song," Sandra added.

"'Be Kind' was produced in support of Katherine family, the Everetts, and their charity, 'Dollys Dream'. In 2018, Dolly's Dream was established by Kate and Tick Everett after their beautiful 14-year-old daughter, Amy Dolly, tragically took her life after experiencing relentless cyberbullying.

"Kate and Tick's ongoing efforts in spreading the anti-bullying messaging and to be kinder soon led to Dolly's Dream having a remarkable impact nationally, with the couple receiving widespread media coverage and fundraising support."

The Everetts now hold an annual 'Do it for Dolly Day'. They also offer a phone counselling support service, and their website features a Parents Hub that supports families with children experiencing bullying, along with numerous resources and programs for schools, sporting clubs, and cyber safety apps for parents. (www.dollysdream.org.au)

To watch the music clip (with Sandra appearing 43 seconds into the video), go to YouTube and search for 'Tom Curtain Be Kind'.

What to do when the world seems to be falling apart

By Danielle Strickland*

Mass disappointment in systems, structures and leaders has led to an easy invitation to despair.

These are dark times. Wars are raging, economies are struggling, nationalism is on the rise across the world, many Christian leaders we thought would bring light and hope are tainted, their light extinguished as their complicity with darkness is exposed. We are left wondering what to do, where to go, how to find our faith – if it even matters.

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It's in this world and time that we are called to be a non-anxious presence – secure in the Hope of eternity and the promise of God's Kingdom come on earth as in heaven.

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Mark Sayers wrote a small, weighty book a few years ago called *A Non-Anxious Presence*. He explored era shifts in history and explains that between eras exists a 50-year gap often called 'the grey zone'. Basically, this 50-year window in time is when all hell breaks loose due to chaos and crisis the shift causes.

Everything that used to work doesn't anymore, but the new ways are not yet fully here. This leaves people confused, scared and left to try and find their own way, identity, meaning and purpose in the absence of certainty and a seemingly inevitable flurry of panic.

It is within this space and time that Christians have a unique opportunity to

be a sign of a Kingdom that is deeper than our fears and cultural identities, wider than our divides and inclinations to self-preservation, and more reliable than any system or force past or present. It's in this world and time that we are called to be a non-anxious presence – secure in the Hope of eternity and the promise of God's Kingdom come on earth as in heaven.

It's a word.

I think Mark is right. Somehow, it helps to locate our anxiety and uncertainties, it's good to be honest about our fears and disappointments. And it's also right and true and good to be thankful that in this exact space, our prophetic imagination will help us discover the way our lives can be a sign of the sure hope of God's presence and purposes for this time.

That's what I'm giving myself to these days: being a grateful, non-anxious presence, displaying the beauty and goodness of God 'with us' and 'in us' right now, co-creating new ways of working that honour the sacredness of each other, demonstrating the wonder of collaboration over competition and nurturing faith-filled witnesses to the ways of Jesus. In the bleak backdrop of our shifting world, I've never been more thankful or hopeful.

This is a miracle.

**This is part of an article that first appeared on Danielle's blog, Right Side Up, in November 2024. Danielle is a writer, communicator and former Salvation Army officer based in Canada.*



It's in this world and time that we are called to be a non-anxious presence, Danielle Strickland writes. Image: Unsplash

ARMY ARCHIVES

When Salvos 'Drunkards Brigades' went on rescue missions

By Barry Gittins

From the first time the Reverend William Booth preached outside The Blind Beggar pub in London's East End in 1865, 160 years ago, a mainstay of The Salvation Army's mission has been supporting people experiencing alcohol addiction.

Seeing the negative impact of alcohol addiction on their converts' lives led the early Salvationists to make abstinence from alcohol a condition of full membership (soldiership) in the movement.

As the Salvationists spread their message, new members often came from in and around the pubs, hotels and gin joints scattered across the world. The pioneers didn't mince words, forming 'drunkards brigades'. (We've stopped using such terminology, but we still help many people struggling with addiction and substance use disorders.)

These days, drunkards' brigades and 'pub booming' – engaging with patrons, drinkers and diners to solicit donations to The Salvation Army and sell TSA publications – no longer happen as they once did. But these were once practices observed from Perth to Sydney, Hobart to Darwin.

In the Regulations for Field Operations (1962), a methodology for chasing drinkers was meticulously laid out. The drunkards brigades existed, the book

explains, "to seek and rescue habitual drink-slaves and others in danger of becoming alcoholics".

It takes a thief to catch a thief, goes the old adage, and the Salvos instructed that "former drunkards, usually, prove exceptionally useful" in the



An illustration that appeared in an early Salvation Army publication showing the Army's fight against the 'drink demon'.



(Left) The cover of The War Cry in 1914, depicting The Salvation Army's fight against alcoholism. (Right) A Drunkards Brigade brassard, worn on the arm of officers who would 'seek and rescue' those suffering from addiction. Images: The Salvation Army Museum archives

work, with men "seeking after men and women soldiers after women [with] wisdom, patience and love".

The first group targeted were to be "any persons formerly connected with the Army who have become backsliders through drink". Thereafter, the Drunkards Brigades were to target anyone in or around public houses, "brothels, gambling-dens, night clubs and similar places, in order to rescue habitués".

Members of the brigade were encouraged to "loyally and enthusiastically cooperate in any special drunkards' raid or similar effort the CO may organise".

Salvationists were to engage in sincere conversation above the din, to offer prayer and to sing, as a "well-chosen and earnestly rendered solo may be most effective".

"Good results may be achieved by ... calling upon a drunkard when he is awake and sober," the Regulations also noted.

While Salvationists were instructed to prepare "a room to which people can be taken and cared for until sober, [located] on Army property if possible", they were also told that some people wanting to change their lives would need to be "removed to other neighbourhoods, out of the reach of old companions and surroundings".

"Special care will be needed," the instructions continue, "on pay-days, holidays and other times of unusual temptation."

Working with people in the grip of the 'drink demon' has been professionalised now for decades, and The Salvation Army is still heavily engaged in this sector.

The Salvos, as always, are there to help.