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Soldiers of the Cross gather for 50-year reunion

By Lauren Martin

More than 20 members of the Soldiers of the Cross session, which graduated in 1976, gathered recently in Sydney for a reunion, some not having seen each other for decades.



The Sessional Flag worn by Majors Barry and Pam Grainger, Major Reta Brown and Lieut-Colonels Christine and David Rees.

With some session mates travelling from as far as Rockhampton and Brisbane and others from closer locations like Newcastle, the Soldiers of the Cross session mates (from the former Australia Eastern Territory) spent three days together in warm fellowship at Macarthur Corps, south-west Sydney.

One of the organisers, Heather Rose, said there was no time lost in getting to know each other again. "We enjoyed reminiscing and thinking about all the crazy things we had to do [at college] that they don't do now!

"I think it's both the good and the bad that binds us – and our love for Jesus, of course."

NEWS

Participant David Rees said it was "a joy" to be reunited with his session mates. "Despite all having different colour hair now, we recognised each other as soon as we saw each other!"

Another organiser, Reta Brown, agreed, saying, "The years just melted away, and all of a sudden, we were all back at 55 Livingstone Road again!" [The former Salvation Army Eastern Territory Training College.]

"It's been lovely to see some of these folk in our session that we have not really seen since we left college – a long time ago now!" said David. "It's just such a joy to be together and share lovely, warm fellowship again. A lot of fun and laughter, and still moments when we had deep thoughts of sadness because we all have different stories to tell. There's just a lovely comradeship."

Hazel Alley and her husband John said that the minute they found out about the reunion, they started planning their trip down to Sydney from Rockhampton. "We knew this would be a really

life-changing experience and very special," she said. "You realise that even though 50 years has gone past, it's just like you were back there.

"The bond that we have is around the fact that we are all in Christ," she said. "Hearing all the different experiences and hearing what people have done and where they are now – it's really good."

The reunion brought together decades of experience – including overseas service, alcohol and other drugs work, corps work and other programs. "Countless lives have been touched through God's work in us," said Heather.

Mid-week service meeting needs at Adelaide City Salvos

By Anthony Castle

Adelaide City Salvos are 'creating faith pathways' through a thriving Wednesday evening church service that is connected to their DUOs (Do Unto Others) program.

Ali Halls is the DUOs Coordinator at Adelaide City Salvos, facilitating The 5:17 mid-week worship service each Wednesday. Operating in partnership with the DUOs program, the new service has been providing community for those most in need at a point when times have been toughest.

"The 5:17 is born out of The Salvation Army's vision to create faith pathways connected to the DUOs program," explains Ali Halls. "DUOs is based around a Wednesday meal, but more importantly it's a space where we can build community, where people are accepted and loved. We cater for a vulnerable and diverse community, some with complex mental health needs."

DUOs (Do Unto Others) is a variety of programs and activities aimed at meeting the needs of the inner-city community, including men's and women's activity-based support groups, meals, and Bible studies. The 5:17 chapel service averages about 50 attendees each week, mostly attending from the DUOs events.

"The 5:17 is still church, even if it's not a Sunday service," explains Ali. "People ask for prayer; community members share their stories. We have a community member who runs worship, singing and playing guitar. We have had one person who is deep in alcoholism. He may not be doing great, but he's willing enough to share a poem he wrote. The service is called The 5:17 after 2 Corinthians 5:17: 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here'. It also starts at 5:17 pm."

A domino effect

Launching The 5:17 service last year was personal for Ali, who had come through rehabilitation herself in 2018. Ali's own journey saw her come to the Salvos in need, volunteer at the DUOs program as a result, and become an employee in 2021.

"It's about reducing stigma," Ali says. "I come from a paramedic and nursing background. Some things happened for me, and I turned to drugs. We're all one step away from something quite chaotic. We're



Ali Hall leads The 5:17 church service at Adelaide City Salvos on Wednesday evenings.

dealing with the complex nature of mental health, increased crime, incarceration, homelessness; it's a domino effect. If nothing changes for people, the worst thing that can happen is they die alone."

Crises in the cost of living and housing have seen an increase in need, with more and more turning to services for support. While these crises have impacted the country, Adelaide has experienced the sharpest inflation in food and non-alcoholic beverages over the past three years.

Impact of crisis

"There's been a lot of talk over the past year about the rise in the cost of living and the impact it's having on families and individuals," explains Major Mal Davies, Corps Officer at City Salvos. "We see clear evidence of this in the number of people presenting to us for the first time, meaning we also have to manage them carefully in terms of allowing for embarrassment and the fact life has humbled them perhaps unlike ever before."

City Salvos is based in the heart of Adelaide, offering the urban community a café space, Sunday meetings, small groups, and a range of support services. Doorways services offer emergency relief, financial counselling and general counselling.

"There's been little talk about the impact this crisis has had on people spiritually," Mal says. "I'm amazed at the number of people who have said that they've 'even turned to prayer' and they've 'even asked God for help'. The 5:17 is a relaxed, welcoming and casual worship service that doesn't intimidate non-believers and welcomes people with no faith."

The 5:17 has been running for eight months, with stable numbers in attendance. Now, Ali and Mal are looking at creating more pathways for those who are part of the chapel service, inviting them to connect with City Salvos more and to go deeper into faith.

Dale celebrates 500 community connections on the run

By Lauren Martin

Major Dale Murray may be the first Salvation Army officer to have crossed the finish line at a Parkrun event 500 times. For him, the achievement combines his passion for running with his love for connecting with people.

Dale is the Divisional Operations Manager in Queensland, and he and his wife Major Darlene (Officer Personnel Secretary – Qld) have been involved with Parkruns for more than a decade.

Parkrun is a weekly 5km run/jog/walk event held at different locations in local communities throughout the world.

Statistics are everything for runners, and here are some of Dale's:

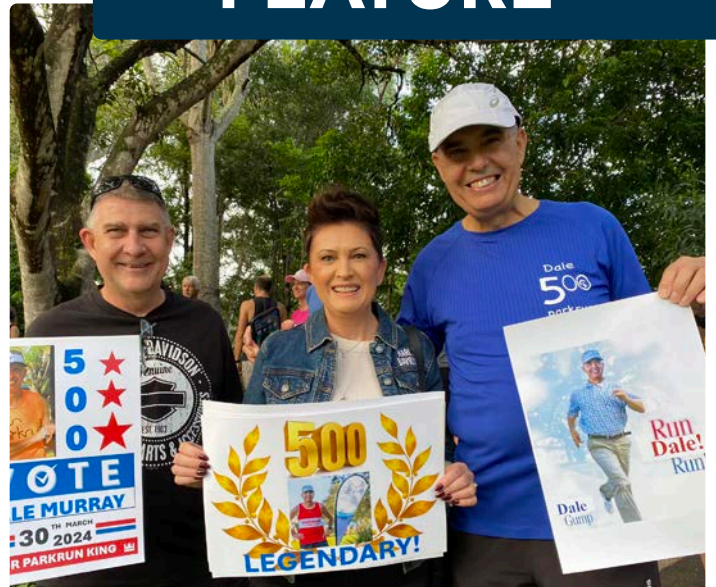
- Out of 5.7 million parkrunners worldwide, Dale ranks in the top 1000 for the number of events participated in.
- Since he began running Parkruns in 2013, he has run 2500km in 115 different events across four different countries, including the UK, France and Germany. (He has also run 25 marathons.)
- He has been on the Parkrun Australia board for two years and has helped set up 11 Parkrun events across Australia.
- He believes he may have been the first Salvation Army officer in the world to have crossed the finish line 500 times when he reached his milestone on 30 March this year.

Wow, those are some impressive stats! But behind the numbers lies the heart of Dale's passion for people and connection.

"What I love about Parkrun is that it's not a race; it's a run, walk or jog, and everyone's treated as a winner. It's a place of encouragement. I love encouraging people and seeing people do their best."

Dale runs because it connects him with God and is good for his mental and physical wellbeing. He also runs Parkrun because it gives him the ability to authentically connect with his local community.

"In all my involvement, I've never gone there specifically as a Salvation Army officer," he says. "But in my engagement, people have soon learned that Darlene and I are both Salvation Army officers, and through



Major Dale Murray (right) celebrating his 500th Parkrun event with his sister Rhondel and her husband, Bruce.

that, we have had the opportunity to speak into people's lives and support people."

Dale and Darlene have had multiple opportunities to pastorally care for fellow park-runners and share aspects of their faith and testimonies.

"It's been really helpful to be able to engage in that friendly, healthy environment," says Dale. "People are not just after physical wellbeing; people are also interested in their spiritual wellbeing as well."

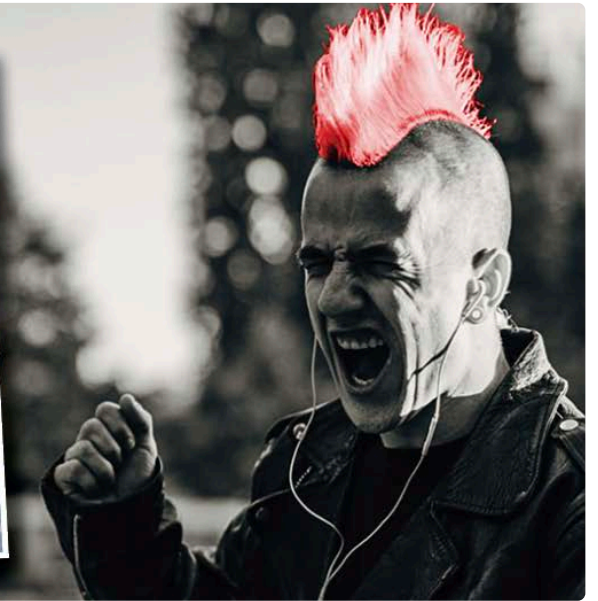
Dale encourages all Salvos across Australia to take part in community activities like Parkrun. He says that many churches spend a lot of time and energy creating programs and activities to invite the community to engage in when activities like Parkrun already have community engagement, and all Christians need to do is attend and shine the light of Jesus to people there through their lives and testimonies.

"There are so many lonely people in our communities in the world today, and Saturday is their time of connection with the community. Parkrun gives a real opportunity for Salvos to be involved and connected because there are over 450 events across Australia."

And for the non-runners, Dale says there's still a way to engage: "Some people don't run, they just volunteer – they attend to volunteer and connect. It's through these connections that people see Jesus in us.

"People say, 'Why are you different?' People ask, 'Why do you do what you do?' You can have these really spiritual conversations – you don't have to bring it up; people actually raise it with you. For us as The Salvation Army it's so important that we do engage with the community at that grassroots level."

VIEWPOINT



Marching to the beat of God's drum

By Major Mal Davies

When we judge others, we generally do so based on a lack of information. We see someone and immediately decide what sort of person they are. Have you ever done that? Have you ever summed someone up at a glance? And how do you feel when someone does it to you?

Many years ago, I marched in a Salvation Army band in an Anzac Day parade. The crowds that lined the streets were wonderful and supportive of those marching by. It was a beautiful Autumn Day, and I felt proud to be Australian.

I was on the outer line of band members, right near the crowd, and I could see and hear something of a commotion up ahead. It appeared that a rowdy group was having a right old yell and carrying on somewhat.

In the lead-up to the day, there had been talk of protestors attending Anzac Day marches and possibly causing disruptions, and, well, that's what seemed to be taking place right before my eyes.

Put in my place

I considered if I should say something when I reached them. I felt I should but then I also realised I was representing The Salvation Army, so I'd need to be careful of my own behaviour! I also figured it wasn't really my job; there were police present at intervals all along the parade route.

Finally, I decided that I just couldn't march by without saying something, so I composed some words of admonition to put them in their place.

As I got to these guys, I could more clearly hear what they were saying: "Good on ya, digger!", "Well done, mate", "You guys are legends," "Brilliant effort, lads." They were clapping hands and waving and cheering for the veterans more than anyone along the whole march.

Well ... that put me in my place. I'd seen them and assumed the exact opposite of what the reality was. They weren't jeering, they were cheering, and they were doing it with nationalistic pride and immense passion.

The Bible contains many warnings about judging others and, in one, Jesus says quite simply: "Stop judging by mere appearances but, instead, judge correctly" (John chapter seven, verse 24).

There is a story in the Bible of a man called Samuel, who was chosen to identify the man God had chosen to one day be king of Israel (plot spoiler: it was David). Samuel looked at David's older brothers and none of them seemed to be right, and then saw the small, younger brother. God seemed to say, "It's him."

Samuel wasn't convinced at first, but God said to him, "Other people judge on outward appearance, but I look at a person's heart" (1 Samuel chapter 16, verse seven).

Seeing as God sees

Most of us don't have x-ray vision or the ability to see into someone's heart, so how do we get to see what's in there? Easy – we get to know someone.

We spend time with them. We hear their story. We assess their personality and character. We observe how they treat others. We listen to their words and note their actions. We build up a character study that allows us to 'see' their heart.

I've judged a lot of people wrongly in my life, including some punks one Anzac Day; I pray that God teaches me to see as he sees.

Brigadier John McCabe – ‘our longest-serving Sallyman’

John McCabe joined The Salvation Army at the age of 20 and, within a few years, was serving as a ‘Sallyman’ supporting the Australian Defence Forces in the Middle East, Ceylon, Korea, Papua New Guinea and Australia.

He ‘enlisted’ on 28 October 1940, aged 26. In 1941 in the Middle East, he was attached to various units within HQ 6 Australian Division.

He returned to Australia in August 1942, but the following month was bound for New Guinea, where he quickly made his presence known with troops on the Kokoda Track.

In New Guinea, he was the only RSDS representative to cross the Kokoda Track and the Sanananda Track during World War Two. Recalling the events years later, he said: “At one stage, we existed for months on a daily ration of a 12-ounce can of bully beef and some dry biscuits. But we got through.”

John, who lost his father to World War One, also served in Korea for 12 months from 1951.

In his roles, in World War Two and Korea, John said he was often called upon to offer advice and counsel to diggers. In his words, “... a good counsellor needs to have big ears – needs to be a good listener. We relied upon God to help us in these matters, and I believe he did ... the advice given and referrals made were not done lightly, but under advice from him.”

John remembered he was sounded out about serving in Korea and was given a chance to decline, but “I was asked to go, and I went; I said yes. The fact was, it was a [kind] of service that I’d been in, and that I’d liked; so much so that, even after Korea, and when I finished my career, I finished back with the services. All told, I had close on 25 years working with troops ... I suppose it was something that I felt I could do.”

Although he could only occasionally give a short message, John’s men had the best kind of preacher with them. True to his own philosophy, John lived out his beliefs, and his actions spoke more loudly about the One he represented than any sermon could have.

When asked if he regretted anything about his service,



John gives a wounded Digger a drink on the Kokoda Track.

John admitted, “The ones who suffer are the ones that stayed behind. The biggest price for my service was paid by my wife (Elsie). While I was in Korea, we had two children at that stage, and she had all the responsibility while worrying about what was happening.

“A soldier is not actually in the frontline all the time,” he continued. “There are times when ... the biggest danger that he’s got to fight against is himself and the environment in which he finds himself; particularly in a foreign country.

“So, I think that the people who stay behind possibly suffer more; possibly, enough credit has not been given. As far as my wife’s concerned, she paid more, in terms of emotional, spiritual drain and physical drain, than I ever did.”

John later became a Salvation Army officer, serving in corps throughout NSW and Queensland, before retiring in 1979. In retirement, he continued to serve others, including working as a volunteer driver at The Salvation Army’s Riverview Gardens facility in Brisbane.

In early 2007, the 3 RAR Association presented John with a plaque honouring the work of The Salvation Army RSDS and for his work as a ‘Sallyman’ during World War Two and the Korean conflict.

In April 2007, the plaque was placed permanently in Concord Hospital’s Kokoda Memorial Garden in Sydney.

Brigadier John McCabe OBE was promoted to glory in July 2009, aged 96. He and his wife Elsie (who was promoted to glory in 2005) had five children.

In his book *Salvos With The Forces*, author Walter Hull concludes that Brigadier John McCabe OBE “represents all that is finest in a Red Shield representative.”

INTERNATIONAL



Ukrainian children draw their prayers

In the Kropivnitsky Corps in Ukraine, the children have been drawing some of their prayer requests.

These requests include an end to war, peace, The Salvation Army, family, friends, community, those who have lost loved ones, the future, and praise to God for love, joy and hope.

Check out the photos to see the drawings from these precious children. Please continue to pray for the war-torn country and Salvation Army personnel working hard to support suffering Ukrainians.

