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Auburn's newest soldiers sent straight into battle

By Dean Simpson

Auburn Corps in Sydney is adopting a kingdom-building approach to senior soldiership. Once enrolled, new members are officially appointed to ministry roles.



Adrian and Natalie Kistan (far left) and Major Robyn Black (far right) with the six new senior soldiers at Auburn Corps – (back row): Sai, Mathias and Meble, (front row): John, Maleeha and Indra.

Six senior soldiers were enrolled at Auburn on Sunday 19 May. Those enrolled were Meble, Mathias, Indra, Maleeha, John and Sai.

Natalie Kistan (Auburn Corps Leader) and Major Robyn Black (Area Officer) led the cohort through soldiership classes and also conducted the enrolment ceremony.

A focus of the classes was identifying each person's gifts and interests in serving in some sort of ministry capacity from the outset and identifying leadership capacity.

"We spoke to the new soldiers and our congregation about the importance of stepping up and stepping out into ministry for the Kingdom," Natalie said.

"This is a new thing we will be doing moving forward with any new soldiers – as they are being

commissioned as senior soldiers, they will be appointed to a ministry within our church.

"We talked about what it means to be part of The Salvation Army, God's army, and that is different to other churches, and what a privilege it is."

Some of the ministry roles the six new members will cover include being involved in the AV ministry team, the prayer and evangelism team, the worship team, the welcome team and the creative ministry team.

"Our Vision Statement says, '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'. What an honour! And that doesn't just happen without taking action; that doesn't happen by just sitting in your seats on a Sunday morning week in, week out.

It happens by getting up and doing something, being part of the church, serving, and giving back," Natalie said.

Corps member Adrian Kistan, the Army's General Manager of Ministry Resourcing and Support, said the enrolments also reflected Auburn Corps' cultural diversity.

"These newest soldiers come from Uganda, India, Pakistan and Fiji," he said. "And they embody what we are about ... a house of prayer for all nations with a mission to make disciples of all nations.

"A beautiful part of the service was when the soldiers signed their Articles of War. Many members of the congregation gathered around them and prayed.

NEWS

NEWS

Salvos Stores opens 400th outlet with plans for more

The Salvation Army's retail operation, Salvos Stores, this week opened its 400th store in Australia, with plans to open an additional 25-plus stores by the end of 2024.

The store on vibrant High Street in Northcote, Melbourne, was officially opened on Tuesday, 30 April. It is the 11th new store this year.

"It was an amazing day at Northcote," said Territorial Commander Commissioner Miriam Gluyas. "Huge congratulations to Matt Davis (Salvos Stores National Director) and his team.

"[The stores] are a front door for the Salvos, and I love how they unashamedly say and live who we are.

"[There's] great culture, real community, a key focus and true to our mission ... helping so many people. [We have] more stores than most major retailers, and we're still growing!"

In 2023, Salvos Stores raised more than \$44 million through sales to directly support The Salvation Army's network of more than 2000 community programs and services around Australia.



The cake ready to be cut at Northcote, Melbourne, to mark the milestone of 400 Salvos Stores across Australia.

Over the years, Salvos Stores have provided Australians with a diverse range of pre-loved treasures, from clothing and accessories to household items and furniture, all at accessible prices.

"We're absolutely thrilled to celebrate the opening of our 400th store in Australia," Matt said. "As we continue to expand our network across the country, we trust we can continue to offer local communities a great place to shop, donate and connect, all while making a difference to people and the planet."

Salvos Stores have been enabling reuse throughout Australia for more than 130 years. In the last year alone, the Australian community has helped Salvos Stores divert over 42 million items from landfill, which translates to a reduction of 583,800 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

Now, with 400 retail stores nationwide and an online store listing thousands of new items daily, Salvos Stores remain committed to providing great value, environmentally friendly products to communities around Australia.

"Our customers play a vital role in the circular economy, which is one of the many reasons why Salvos Stores believes in keeping the community at the forefront of everything we do," Matt said.

"Their contributions not only benefit the environment but also enable us to fund essential community programs that make a real difference in people's lives. We look forward to welcoming the community to our newest store to celebrate this incredible milestone together!"

To find your nearest store or shop online with Salvos Stores, visit salvosstores.com.au.



Major David Collinson, Commissioner Miriam Gluyas and Matt Davis at the opening of the Northcote Salvos Store.

Aussies serving overseas – Captain Kris Halliday

The Australia Territory has 32 Aussie officers serving overseas this year, one at International Headquarters in London but based in Australia, and 10 overseas officers serving in different appointments here. Over the coming months, *Salvos Online* will feature many of these officers – who they are, where they're serving, the joys and challenges they face and what life looks like for them in their unique corners of The Salvation Army world. We begin our series with Captain Kris Halliday, a corps and regional officer in Amsterdam, part of the Netherlands, Czech Republic and Slovakia Territory.

How long have you been in Amsterdam?

I arrived at the end of August 2023 and began my appointment as Corps Officer Amsterdam West on 1 September.

What were some of your first impressions of the city/country?

I instantly felt at home here. While serving in Sweden a few years ago, I had visited Amsterdam and participated in ministry activities in the city, and I have some friends here, so there was a sense of familiarity. The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated places on earth. The country is about two-thirds the size of Tasmania but has a population of 18 million people. You can feel that right away. There is no such thing as personal space (especially in the supermarket!), and you are instantly aware that there are always people around you. That said, you also notice that the city is set out well. Medium-density apartment living is common, excellent bike infrastructure makes transport easy, and shared public spaces, like parks and gardens, are numerous.



Local Muslim people, corps members and neighbours attend an Iftar dinner at the corps, organised by a young asylum seeker to build relationships and connections.



Captain Kris Halliday is Amsterdam West Corps Officer and Regional Officer for the city of Amsterdam.

What years were you previously in Europe?

My service in Sweden was in 2019 and 2020 – cut short by the pandemic. I was just about to take up an appointment in the Arctic Circle!

What has your appointment been in Amsterdam, and what does that entail?

For the past eight months, I've been Corps Officer at Amsterdam West. It is a large, traditional Army corps made up mostly of Salvationists from previously closed city corps. Almost all Sunday attendees are older, long-term Salvationists who travel from across the country for the service. We're situated in one of the most disadvantaged and youngest areas in the Netherlands – a majority Muslim area where 75 per cent of residents are non-Western migrants, and over half are under 45. The area is affectionately known as 'Little Ankara'. I'm often the only non-Muslim at the store or market. It's a fascinating place to be, a cultural immersion within a cultural immersion. Over the past few months, we've been on a journey as a corps to rethink our mission and ministry with a neighbourhood-oriented relational approach, asking big questions such as "What does it mean to be The Salvation Army in this area?"

What is your new (additional) appointment, and what will that look like for you?

From 1 July, I'll be the regional officer for Amsterdam, responsible for the corps and community centres in the region, identifying new mission opportunities, partnering with the social services as well as things like PR and corporate and government relations. There is a great legacy of incredible work among the most marginalised in Amsterdam, including well-known work in the red-light district, and across the region with people who are homeless, trafficked people and refugees. I'm looking forward to supporting and joining the ▶

FEATURE



Kris and volunteer Gloria on the market square with the coffee bicycle.

teams who are continuing and building on that legacy, working together on how we can, as Salvationists, best live out and share the values of God's Kingdom, stand with and for the marginalised and share the inclusive love of Jesus across Amsterdam.

How are you settling into your new roles and life?

You realise when you move to another country the things you take for granted. Speaking freely, using humour, making sense of the train system, or reading information at the store all start off as a challenge. You miss, too, the simple things like catching up with a friend or knowing where to go to wind down. When work is your main context and there aren't familiar histories or even pop-culture connection points, there is a process of working to remind yourself who you really are and how to 'be' other than in a TSA context. There have been some deep moments of connection with God these months. When everything else is stripped away, and you are left without the usual support networks, prayer and experiencing the love of God has been both important and incredibly special.

What does a 'typical' day look like for you?

It's been an intensive period of getting to know the neighbourhood, and the city, making connections with everyone from corps members, participants of our day programs, the local store owners, neighbours, other community workers and faith leaders. The corps is busy through the week with activities and meals for a wide range of people. I've tried to meet and hear from as many people connected to the corps as possible, especially important as we've begun this significant change process. Hearing people's stories and experiences over the past eight months has been a real gift, and I hope we can use everything I've heard and learnt, from the corps and the neighbourhood to create an impacting, sustainable,

mission-oriented, relationship-based corps for the next generation of its life.

What do you love about your new roles and home?

There is a fantastic, almost palpable energy and enthusiasm in The Salvation Army here. People are passionately sold out to seeing change in their neighbourhoods and connecting with the people around them. There are a lot of creative approaches to ministry across the country under the banner of 'Faith in the Neighbourhood'. Enthusiasm and opportunity are not in short supply, but officers are, so it's great to be here to support the great work happening in the Netherlands. I am loving the ability to connect and collaborate with people who are fired up for the mission and driven to seeing people, especially those who are often forgotten in society, cared for, welcomed, supported, included and affirmed. As corps officer, I get to share life with, and bring together, a most diverse range of people, looking for commonality and placing the love of Jesus at the centre of all we do. As regional officer I'm looking forward to supporting others and joining alongside them as they think about how best to share the hope, joy and love of Christ.

What are some of the challenges?

Even though the Dutch are known as the best non-English-speaking English speakers, and I'm doing a lot of Dutch language study, language can be a challenge, especially in pastoral conversations with older people. I'm a pretty fast-speaking guy, so the need to always go slowly and think about words, whether in English or Dutch can be a challenge (for me and the people I'm talking to!). A significant challenge for us is what does it mean to be a corps in a majority Muslim area. There are a high number of refugees in our neighbourhood and a huge social need. Most people around here, whether migrants or Dutch, either have had no connection with the Christian Church or have a negative view. In many ways, we need to go back to the beginning, showing that Christians, The Salvation Army, and us as Salvationists can be trusted, by participating in the community, meeting people where they're at and inviting people to participate in and feed into our corps who we may not otherwise have connected with. It's a long-term endeavour for the corps and while it's challenging to know I'll likely only be here for the start of the process, it's also a great privilege to be here for this part of this journey.

What do you miss about Australia?

Good coffee! But, of course, really, the distance is hard. To be so far from family and friends is tough. Thankfully in the age of FaceTime and Messenger it is possible to stay connected.

STORY OF HOPE

Thelmy finds a 'second home' in the Salvos

By Anthony Castle

Thelmy Manuputty is a volunteer with The Salvation Army, having struggled with homelessness just one year ago. Thelmy's journey has been one in search of a home on more than one occasion, first as an asylum seeker and more recently in need of emergency accommodation.

"I was stuck in Indonesia during COVID for over two years," Thelmy explains. "I went back to Indonesia to see my mother, then the lockdowns came. I was there for two years and eight months, having to survive and trying to get a job. It was like everyone for themselves. I saw a lot of people die. My visa ran out, and I had to organise the money to come back. I returned home to no home."

Thelmy returned to Australia to find her home and work gone, her children having been cared for by a friend. At her lowest point, she realised she needed help.

"I was couch surfing at my friend's place, waiting for Centrelink payments," Thelmy says. "My friend said to me, 'Lay down your pride and seek help'. So, I went to The Salvation Army, and I made an appointment to see the case worker. I started from zero again and was at a shelter for five and a half months."

Thelmy first came to Australia as an asylum seeker 24 years ago. She has faced the challenge of making a home in this country more than once, with significant hardship.

"I was a refugee," Thelmy explains. "I came to Australia by boat. I arrived after five days at sea and was picked up by the Australian navy. I was in an immigration detention centre for two and a half months (only spending 10 minutes outside each day). Back in Indonesia, there was war, with many attacks on Christian communities. My father was a pastor, so we left."

Thelmy and her father settled in Australia, but the process of fleeing war took its toll in the years that followed.

"I've been through war," Thelmy says. "I can tell the sound of a gun and where the bullets are coming from. I saw churches that were burned and identified the remains of family members. It's not normal. For the first five years in Australia, I was traumatised every time I heard a firework. New Year's Eve is scary.



Thelmy Manuputty says she has found a spiritual home in the Salvation Army and is working towards becoming a senior soldier.

My life is good now, I can laugh about it, but going through that process was massive."

After working with a Salvos caseworker, Thelmy was able to find accommodation, then housing, and employment again so she could support her children. Thelmy now volunteers at the Salvos each week, serving at the café.

"I look at my life before and now, and I didn't have this kind of peace before," Thelmy says. "We need more places like The Salvation Army. I've been at different services and The Salvation Army understands people's struggles more. They don't treat you like just a number. I am involved in the church. I can support myself [and] feel human again. It's my second home."

Thelmy has been in the process of becoming a Salvation Army soldier, learning more about the organisation and finishing recruits classes. She is ready to be a full member of the Salvos community and help others the same way the Salvos helped her.

"The reason I signed up to be a soldier was to really understand what The Salvation Army believes in," Thelmy says. "In the hard times, the Salvos are always there. I've been homeless and stood in those people's shoes. Six and seven months ago, I was homeless. When you go to The Salvation Army, you're not just a number. They treat you with respect, and you feel like you have dignity."

The Australian public's favourite appeal since 1965

By Major John Smith*

When the *War Cry* of 9 January 1965 reported that the first Red Shield Appeal would be held on 4 July of that year in the former Australia Eastern Territory, it was the beginning of an annual event that the Australian public has taken to heart.

The appeal went national for the first time in 1968 when the former Southern Territory adopted the doorknock campaign.

From modest and incremental increases in the early years, the Red Shield Appeal continues to be one of the country's most generously supported charitable appeals.

Enduring partnership forms

In September 1880, underneath the proverbial gum tree in Adelaide's Botanic Park, the seeds were sown for a partnership between the people of Australia and The Salvation Army.

At the conclusion of that alfresco evangelistic meeting, immigrant London milkman John Gore offered: "If there's any man here who hasn't had a meal today, let him come home with me." From that moment, an incremental dynamic relationship between the Army and the Australian public ensued.

Army history records that from the very earliest days, it was evident that money was required to support the burgeoning work and ministry of the Christian Mission in East London. Co-founder William Booth wrote: "God wants men and money to win the world for Jesus. Will you help Him?" At every opportunity, the Army 'took up a collection'.

Carolling at Christmas, or weekly open-air meetings and street and shop collections, harvest festival appeals were the norm.

The Self Denial Appeal, ingeniously introduced in England in 1888 and copied in Australia, became the face of the call to Salvationists to deny themselves of some little luxury annually for a week and devote the savings to the Army funds.

It was also the name of the annual Army fundraising appeal across the nations. The appeal proceeds were distributed to the Army's missionary program, social work and general funds. But as time went on and demand for Salvation Army services grew, so did the



Salvos promote the Red Shield Appeal in Victoria in 1968.

pressure to explore ways and means to find another source of funding.

Canadian model

In 1963, Commissioner (later General) Frederick Coutts appointed Major Charles Cross, of the Eastern Territory, to visit Canada on a fact-finding mission to study all aspects of public relations and fundraising activity in that territory. He was partnered in that survey by Major Don Campbell from the Australia Southern Territory.

Majors Cross and Campbell reported back to their respective headquarters on Salvation Army advisory boards, effective stewardship organisation among Salvationists, the need for effective public information programs, capital appeals and the manner in which Canada had, since 1942, conducted an annual national-wide 'blitz' and called it the Red Shield Appeal.

Appeal officially underway

A system of doorknocking was eventually decided upon, and trials were held in several Eastern Territory corps in 1964, including Dulwich Hill, North Sydney (now Chatswood), Hurstville and Parramatta Corps.

There was a favourable response, and in July 1965, the Australia Eastern Territory conducted its first official Red Shield Appeal doorknock, while in the Southern Territory, several Red Shield-type pilot appeals were undertaken over the next couple of years until it conducted its first official Red Shield Appeal in 1968.

From 1965 to 1967, efforts were promoted as The Annual Appeal, with the 1968 appeal effectively being the first nationwide campaign for the Army with the official name of the 'Red Shield Appeal'.

**Major John Smith worked as an information officer in the Southern Territory Public Relations Department from 1965-75. This is an edited version of his article that appeared in Hallelujah magazine*