



# Wills Update

News & stories from The Salvation Army Wills & Bequests team

## Grazier's legacy reaches our most remote



The new Salvation Army chopper, making work easier for Flying Padres Simon and Natalie Steele

**"During the floods people were airlifted out of their properties, but couldn't stay away, with stock to care for. So they had to go back to incredibly remote properties, often hundreds of kilometres from the nearest neighbours, with no services. There was no electricity because generators had been flooded, no fridges, nothing. We were able to get in and help fix up trucks and tractors, and clean the thick mud out from the rooms.**

**"Many people have told us that knowing someone cares makes the biggest difference."** Simon Steele

The work of The Salvation Army's Mt Isa-based Flying Padres, Envoys Simon and Natalie Steel, takes them over an 800,000 square kilometre area throughout Queensland, from Weipa in the Gulf of Carpentaria to Birdsville on the South Australian border.

Their work, which includes supporting State Emergency Services as counsellors, assisting with emergency

food and medical drops, and providing a listening ear, a helping hand or welfare support and referrals to those in need, was recently made even more effective with the purchase of a four-seat Robinson 44 helicopter.

The chopper replaces a series of fixed-wing planes, operated by the service since 1965, made possible through a bequest to The Salvation Army by the late Queensland pastoralist Keith 'Wild Horse' Dawson (acknowledged on the side of the chopper).

Simon says: "The wet season is in force four months of the year and many of the roads are often cut-up and cut-off. The new helicopter means we can land on small patches of elevated ground. We can also get out to the people when they feel completely isolated and get the fresh fruit and vegetables or mail in, help with fencing, and check stock is not stranded and at risk of dying.

"To see the joy on people's faces when you arrive is very rewarding."

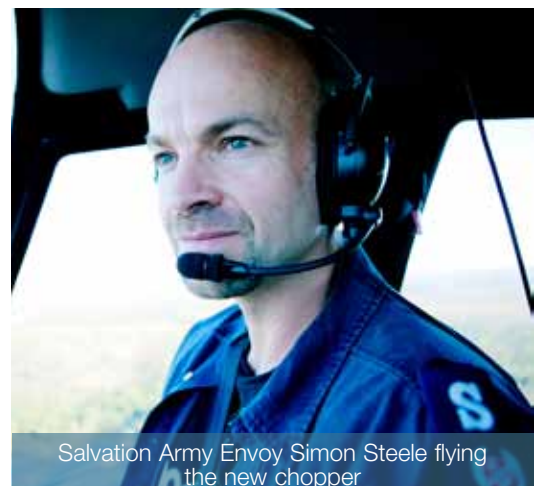
Pam Forster is Manager of the Dangi Bush Resort, located at Urandangie, around 200 kilometres south-west of Mount Isa in remote western Queensland – a town suffering extreme isolation, high living costs, and lack of power, water, housing and transport.

She says: "We recently had one couple whose child had passed away and it was so good to be able to ring Simon and Natalie for help. They were here in the next two hours.

"They are lovely people and (their care) lets locals know that they're not forgotten."

Queensland Governor, Her Excellency Ms Penelope

Wensley AO, officially launched the new helicopter earlier this year. During the launch, she said: "...for the most personal and difficult issues in our lives - the joys and the sorrows - there is no substitute for the human face, present and available. That is the core of what the Flying Padre offers - that personal touch, the individual care and concern..."



Salvation Army Envoy Simon Steele flying the new chopper

## Sir Richard serves breakfast and hope

Every night, 55 homeless young people find shelter at The Salvation Army's Oasis Youth Centre at Surry Hills (Sydney). Many have suffered physical, sexual, emotional and substance abuse, and may have no immediate or extended family support.

Hundreds more find ongoing support through a range of Oasis services including short term emergency accommodation, alternative schooling, and vocational training and traineeships. Thousands of others are assisted through the wider Oasis network throughout NSW, Queensland and the ACT.



Sir Richard Branson serving breakfast at Oasis in Surry Hills

Recently, a number of young people, supported by Oasis, were served a breakfast barbecue at Oasis Surry Hills by Virgin group founder, entrepreneur

and philanthropist, Sir Richard Branson, along with Virgin staff.

Sir Richard visited The Salvation Army centre (which received much-needed refurbishment two years ago through the generosity of bequest funding) to launch a range of initiatives.

One of these initiatives was the launch of a new Virgin Active fitness centre at Oasis, funded by Virgin and other partners. One of Virgin Active's partners, PT Academy, will now be closely involved with training people to use the Technogym-supplied equipment, as well as providing a scholarship for an individual who engages with the fitness programs and wants to pursue a career in personal training.

Sir Richard was also invited to become an Oasis 'Champion', a new advocacy program developed in partnership with Oasis and Virgin Unite (the Virgin Group's non-profit foundation).

The program, funded by Virgin Unite, aims to equip a team of business people, youth workers and young people from Oasis to become spokespeople for the cause of youth homelessness. John Harris, Oasis Foundation explains: "These youth have accessed the services and programs and now want to become part of the solution and be a voice for this generation."

Teagan, an Oasis 'Champion', who sat with Sir Richard at the launch, found stability and support through Oasis after years of homelessness from the age of 16.

She says: "It's hard ... when you see 12-year-olds living on the streets. They should be having fun, being normal 12-year-olds, and they can't do that. It's really heartbreaking. It's a big issue in Australia and around the world."

## Centenarians help open new Macquarie Lodge

Three residents, each aged over 100 years old, assisted The Salvation Army's Commissioner Linda Bond, Territorial Commander Australia Eastern Territory, officially open a new 90-bed wing at Macquarie Lodge residential care, in April. They were among the first to officially enter the new three-storey building at Arncliffe (NSW).

Nellie Cato, 105, said she was looking forward to officially moving in. "The view will be lovely," she said.

The new building, complementing the existing independent living on site, includes three levels and a basement. In a written message, Federal Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliott said: "This new multimillion-dollar home incorporates The Salvation Army's core beliefs that every person deserves the utmost in dignity, choice, respect and understanding in every facet of its construction and operation."



The new courtyard at Macquarie Lodge

Jason, who left school in year nine, believed he had nothing to look forward to in life. However, after reading Sir Richard's autobiography, Jason was inspired.

"He dropped out of school when he was 15 as well," says Jason. "After reading his book, I was like 'wow, I can actually make something of myself...'"

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