

HOPE STREET

Winter 2010 NEWS



Photography by Paul Fullbrook

HOMELESSNESS - BEING THE SOMEONE WHO WILL 'BE THERE'

The following is a personal reflection shared by one of the HopeStreet staff; it is just one picture of homelessness but it is also a wonderful reminder of how a life can be turned around when someone holds out a hand of help and is prepared to 'be there'.

The story of my brother:

My brother was 18 months old when he arrived in our family. He'd been uplifted by welfare services and placed in foster care with us. He looked similar to us - blonde with freckles but with one exception, the grade two burns on his little chest sustained from boiling water his natural mother had poured over him. His burns required constant care. The screams of a child who didn't understand what was happening when the dressings were changed are still etched in my memory; I was ten at the time. I realise now that it wasn't the cries of pain that disturbed me so much as the questioning, disoriented look in his eyes; one of being completely lost.

My brother was supposed to eventually return to his biological family. Attempts were made to connect, but without success. I remember the look in his eyes when his Mum failed to show up for planned visits. How do you explain this to a two year old?

I naturally loved my youngest brother. He was cute and charming when it suited him, but the word 'naughty' doesn't come close to describing his stubborn personality and his instinct for trouble and destruction.

One vivid memory I have is of Mum chasing and grabbing my brother, after retrieving a pot plant and broken bottle of milk from the toilet. It wasn't an embrace but more a grapple with the goal of containment. His little body thrashed around while Mum hung onto him tightly. It took every last ounce of her energy. Slowly, his aggression waned and he softened to a whimper, just small tears. It's funny, I realise now that I never saw him cry except for this moment, in our Mother's exhausted arms.

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With his face buried in Mum's breast, the weeping grew stronger and louder. His little fists unclenched and he wrapped his arms around her neck and began to really cry, finally allowing his pent-up grief to be expelled from his tiny body. It was a pivotal moment and also one of love, acceptance and security as Mum sat and comforted him while he sobbed and sobbed.

HOMELESSNESS ON THE RISE

In 2008/09 specialist homelessness services were sought by:

- 1 in every 105 Australians
- 1 in every 63 children and
- 1 in every 39 children aged less than 5 years old.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare April 2010

Recently, our family celebrated Mum's 60th Birthday. After a few speeches my brother, who now has his own beautiful family, stood up looked Mum in the eye and said simply: "Thank you for always," he stopped and shook a little, "thank you for always, always being there for me."

At HopeStreet, it is our desire to provide support on every level to offset the impact homelessness has on each person and then to help them explore opportunities to rebuild their lives and regain independence.

There are many ways to address the issues associated with being homeless and each one of us can play a part in the process. As you reflect on this story, consider what it would mean for you to 'be there' for someone experiencing homelessness.

RIDE TO THE TOP 2010

"Ride To The Top is an annual 625km fund raising bicycle ride from Sydney to Mount Kosciusko"

Ride To The Top began in 1995 and has been supporting HopeStreet with the funds

raised since 2004. The seven rides since 2004 have raised over \$80,000 with 2010 being the most successful fundraiser yet, \$20,650 has been received with more still to come. An amazing effort all round, thank you.

On Saturday 13 March, a peloton of 25 riders left Sydney and cycled south through picturesque countryside bound for Mt Kosciusko.

Along the way they enjoyed great autumn weather, a lot of fun and frivolity mixed with some very well earned overnight stops in Bowral, Goulburn, Canberra, Cooma and Jindabyne. On

Friday 19th they began the long climb through Kosciusko National Park to Charlotte Pass. This is the end of the ride but not the journey so after a nights rest, the team set off on the final leg, an 18km



return hike to the summit and across to Thredbo.

The ride is entirely self-funded by the riders and their support crew, and requires an enormous amount of time and energy from a committed organising committee. We'd like to say congratulations and thank you to all involved for your amazing efforts, you really are making a significant difference to the lives of people living in the inner city by supporting the work of HopeStreet.

CALLING ALL RUNNERS, JOGGERS AND WALKERS

If you're planning to participate in either the Sun Herald City2Surf or the Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival this year, please consider becoming a fundraiser for HopeStreet. If you're keen to be involved, set aside these dates so you can join in the fun:

Sun Herald City2Surf - Sunday 8 August 2010

Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival - Sunday 19 September 2010

For more info on registering as a fundraiser visit www.hopestreet.org.au

NEW FACES AT HOPESTREET

Meet Chris...

Chris joined the HopeStreet team in February 2010 as a gambling counsellor

I am a person who likes to challenge myself whilst also relaxing and having fun. I like to use my skills to really make a difference in people's lives. I am particularly interested in addictions and how people can become free from the sometimes devastating effects it can have on their lives. I am happiest walking my dog and spending time outdoors.

I heard about HopeStreet through a friend that worked in the women's space for a number of years. She advised me to check out the website and the rest just worked out.

I like the focus HopeStreet has in reaching out to the people who need help the most within the local community.

My current goal is to strive to become skilled and effective in the service I provide to gamblers who attend our service, in an effort to help them overcome gambling related issues.



Meet Kay...

Kay started with HopeStreet in January 2010 and is coordinating Women's Space.

I am a woman of color who believes in making things right with the community, people, society, the world really. I believe in empowering the people around me to find their purpose and calling, specifically my women of the world who I feel are still fighting for so much today. I am truly passionate about women's issues, human rights, social change, and on the not so serious side, I love the arts, music, travel, culture, poetry and observing life and people! People intrigue me. So if you catch me observing you, it's all good! It's because something about you is interesting to me.

I decided a little while back, that I would dedicate my life to working with women. I wanted to make a direct and positive impact in as many lives as possible, even if that means one woman at a time. HopeStreet has offered the opportunity for me to combine the two things I am most passionate about: God and Women.

The people I work with are amazing and truly care about the people and the work we do. It inspires me to continue to do what I do here.

My vision for Women's Space... more than anything, is to first help the women meet their basic needs and then empower them to give back to the community. I'm envisioning a program within Women's Space

and in collaboration with other organisations that will provide a safe space for our women to give back and assist others.

Meet Helen...

Helen joined the HopeStreet team at the end of February as the Relationships and Communications Manager.

Hi there,

My name is Helen, I live in the southern suburbs of Sydney with my family; husband, two daughters, two boarders, and two ragdoll cats.

I love life and am passionate about building and deepening relationships – with God, my family, friends and people I haven't met yet. I get a buzz out of seeing God at work through me (in spite of my inadequacies), this never fails to put a smile on my face.

Other things I love to do: sharing our home with people, walking along the beach or through the bush, gardening, cooking, snow skiing and camping holidays with my family and friends.

Someone once told me 'Where your gifts and talents meet the intersection of human need that is where you will find purpose'. I think God has led me to that intersection and shown me my purpose for this moment in time and I feel incredibly blessed to be serving God and his people at HopeStreet.



SUPPORTERS SPOT

NORTHSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH SUPPORTS HOPESTREET

A team of volunteers from Northside Community Church have been assisting with the monthly BBQ at HopeStreet Glebe since July 2009.

While the BBQ is the main focus of each event, the team now assists with other services for residents in the community, such as gardening, window washing, cleaning and visiting. We also make sure we give the OpShop's backyard a 'once-over' before the BBQ gets under way.

In this past year we have become familiar with some of the people in the Glebe area and are more open to meeting the needs that exist. Our volunteers are encouraged by the good work that is being done by HopeStreet and have been challenged by their experience to make serving others part of their daily walk. Many of us feel called to serve others at the level of the local community and this feeling is increased as we become more aware of the needs in our city.

There is now a strong momentum to Northside's involvement in the Glebe ministry and we are looking forward to how we can support HopeStreet into the future.

CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS

HopeStreet is blessed to have a committed group of volunteers that support our programs, primarily our cafe and op-shop. This is a wonderful group of people who give of their time generously and do a fantastic job. They are all locals doing their bit to strengthen their community.

The Woolloomooloo Community Development team recently hosted a lunch to thank our volunteers for all their hard work and to let them know just how much we appreciate them. Notes, such as the two shared below, suggest it was a great success:

- "I felt so humbled to be invited and part of your 'volunteer recognition' luncheon last Thursday as I have not put in anywhere near the hours that others have contributed over long periods. However, I can appreciate their dedication and loyalty, as Hope Street staff reach out with so much for so many both with physical and emotional support to those less fortunate".
- "It is a pleasure to be involved and THANK YOU for a delicious lunch and inclusion with the team."



From left to right: Zoe, John-Paul, Susan, Rupert, Poker

COMING UP AT HOPESTREET

June to August – Winter Appeal

Please show someone that you care by 'being there' for them and give generously throughout this appeal. Donate via the enclosed flyer, by calling 9358 2388 or online at www.hopestreet.org.au.

23 – 25 July – Mission Re-imagined conference

In an age of screaming, sound bytes and spin, what is mission? When the dominant Christian voices alienate as many as they welcome, who is a missionary?

If home is a marketplace for beliefs, if poverty exists on our doorstep, where is the mission field?

8 August – City2Surf

Raise money for HopeStreet while you run, jog or walk BUT don't take the joggers off just yet....

19 September – Sydney Running Festival

Tighten up those laces and we're off to run and raise again

Please call 9258 2388 or visit www.hopestreet.org.au for details about these events

