



Homeless Voice

Encouragement for those on the street

inside this issue

- Homeless Voice
- Current Needs
- A Snapshot at Woolloomooloo
- Glebe Op Shop Blitz and Re-Opening
- Christmas Appeal

By Bryan McClelland and Brendan Wood

Since 1993 the Woolloomooloo Baptist Fellowship (WBF) and HOPE STREET Urban Compassion have been assisted by a number of suburban Baptist Churches to conduct 'Street Breakfast' at Tom Uren Place in Woolloomooloo. A central part of this weekly event has been the provision of breakfast to homeless men and women living in and around the Woolloomooloo area.

The breakfast fits into a larger program of response to homelessness in the city. It is one way of serving homeless people living in local hostels (particularly Matthew Talbot), in parks under the Eastern Suburbs railway, and in other places around the city. A number of local residents also attend the breakfast, making it a whole of community event.

continued page 2...

Practising
justice,
compassion
and hope
in the
inner city

Homeless persons program

- Long-term semi-supported accommodation
- Support and assistance for homeless people

Employment training program

- Cleaning service
- Job placement

Community development

- Direct benevolent assistance and food relief
- Op shops, drops-ins and community centres
- Aboriginal community work

Safe House for women sex workers

- Outreach, drop-in, and support

Inner city gambling counselling

- Individual counselling, support groups
- Deaf and NESB access

Church planting

- Glebe Community Church
- Relationship and individual counselling
- Woolloomooloo Baptist Fellowship
- Street Breakfast
- 2010 church plant

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The Sunday morning breakfast takes place within the context of a church service for the Woolloomooloo Baptist Fellowship. The regular Sunday worship for the church immediately follows the Street Breakfast. Members of both the housed and homeless communities in Woolloomooloo are part of the faith community. Church participants, and especially the pastors, use the opportunity to allow people to talk and be listened to, with the feedback suggesting this is highly valued.

Throughout 2007 the City of Sydney Council has been in the process of developing the 'Woolloomooloo Improvement Plan', a whole of life plan for this suburb as one of the local 'urban villages'. Extensive consultations have been conducted with all stakeholders, and eight 'key directions' have been identified. One of the key directions is 'homelessness', obviously an issue of concern for many residents and businesses in the area. Homeless people are not excluded from the discussion, yet none of them seem to be aware that it's taking place, nor do they feel confident to speak out.

In July of this year could provide the about issues that one another to was reflected in on starting a group achieve a number of goals. The name *Homeless Voice* was agreed upon, with the group launched and now meeting each Sunday since July 29th 2007.

"From little things big things grow."

Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody

WBF members and leadership felt a stirring that the Street Church gathering setting for something more. In particular, to enable homeless people to talk concern them. The dream was to create a forum where they could motivate address difficulties, and even take steps towards secure housing. This stirring one of the homeless men, Ken Hamilton (pictured below), who was keen for homeless people that would meet each Sunday during the breakfast to

The primary purpose of *Homeless Voice* is to encourage the homeless in the Woolloomooloo area to take an active role in identifying concerns and problems. Alongside this the group seeks to build a sense of community, and to establish a working relationship with the Woolloomooloo community and all service providers based on good will, sincerity, and the pursuit of common goals.

The most encouraging message in all of this is that the homeless community are feeling empowered and listened to. Long term they are hoping to address the wider understanding and concept of homelessness. Members of *Homeless Voice* also want to address the problems surrounding drugs and alcohol, gambling, mental health, housing, self-esteem, and restoring a sense of worth. They hope to do this through their own efforts and to be responsible for their own destiny.

What started as a little prompting is now leading to new hope and new opportunities for this marginalised and often ignored community. May you be encouraged to follow the stirrings in your heart also!



Current Needs at HopeStreet

Thank you for the generous response to our last newsletter which has seen HopeStreet take delivery of a fantastic digital camera. Our current needs include:

- A volunteer to assist with maintenance and upgrades of our computer network. Preferably trained in IT and available fortnightly for troubleshooting and development.
- A unique volunteer opportunity ideal for an active person; 3-4 hours at a set time each week supporting one of our key programs. Cleaners with a Mission (Employment Training Program) needs site cleaner/mentors to interact with the program participant, work alongside, & work solo when the participant is struggling. Further information contact Simon Cox on 0412 885 689. Would not need to be present every week.
- Computers that are minimum Pentium IV or equivalent with minimum 512 megabytes of RAM.
- A chest freezer, lockable metal cabinets, fold-away easels, and drying racks for artworks are all required as part of a make-over of the Creative Art Space in Woolloomooloo.

Please contact Brendan Wood on support@hopestreet.org.au or (02) 9358 2388 if you are able to assist with any of these needs.

Coming up at HopeStreet

2007

NOVEMBER

18 - Urban Orientation

30 - Business Networking Luncheon

DECEMBER

10/11 - Hamper Goods Drop-off Days

2008 - 25TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

MARCH

2 - HopeStreet Sunday

JUNE

20 - Annual Celebration

AUGUST

3 - Fun Run & Walk

Snapshot...

Woolloomooloo Community Development



"It's all worthwhile when you see positive changes from the work that you do. When I first started in my position I was asked if I would take on a young local man through corrective services; he had 400 hours of community service to complete. He communicated as little as possible, and trusted no one.

His vision for the future was to be a big time drug dealer like his dad and run the local brothel. Two years later he has given up the hard drugs (like Ice) and works as a cleaner. He communicates with me nearly every day and volunteers his time when he can. He cares for his sick mum and attends the local gym. Now he is beating his addiction to marijuana, and his mum is so proud of how far he has come.

I am amazed at his determination not to end up in jail or on hard drugs like his half brother and sister, or dead due to suicide like his brother. We are now planning to do literacy training and the Welfare Course at TAFE, and I believe he can do it!"

Fiona Simpson, Woolloomooloo Community Development Co-ordinator



Fiona Simpson (far left) with the other Recreational Workers from the key service providers in Woolloomooloo.



Glebe Op-Shop Backyard Blitz and Grand Re-opening

Glebe's recently renovated Op Shop at 133 Glebe St had the finishing touches applied by gap year students from Gateway Baptist Church Brisbane during their field trip to HopeStreet. Over two days the team reclaimed an urban jungle with a mower and whipper snipper, revived a herb garden, built a paved area and constructed a compost bin - turning an unused wasteland into a pleasant outdoor quiet area for local folk to enjoy. The Op Shop was reopened on Saturday 20th October, much to the delight of the volunteers and local community.



HopeStreet Christmas Appeal 2007

The inner city is home to an increasing number of people so the need for HopeStreet's services continues to grow – and with it our need for your support. Christmas is a time when our thoughts naturally turn to our family and friends. It's also a time to extend your goodwill to those in need.

Please include HopeStreet in your Christmas thoughts by sending your generous tax-deductible gift now. It's the best Christmas present you can give to people whose past is marred by misfortune. Your contribution will bring much hope.

Share the
joy of
Christmas

Please be
generous

This Christmas we are encouraging five options for giving to our special Christmas 2007 projects. Please consider options A through to E, and use the donation form below to indicate your area of support. Thank you for remembering the work of HopeStreet this Christmas.

- A. General donation** to where it is most needed
- B. Woolloomooloo Street Breakfast** - \$90 will provide the supplies and equipment required to operate one Sunday of the Street Breakfast program.
- C. Cleaners With A Mission** - \$125 will provide a week of support and assistance to a cleaner involved in the Employment Training Program.
- D. Back Shed Café Woolloomooloo** - \$250 will operate the Back-Shed café for a week, allowing our community development workers to connect with those needing support and assistance.
- E. The Terrace Homeless Accommodation Service** - \$490 will provide one week of accommodation and support for an otherwise homeless person at The Terrace.

Note: if one of the areas of support becomes fully funded any extra funds will be used where most needed within HopeStreet projects.

Christmas Hampers

Churches and businesses that usually support HopeStreet's Christmas Hamper Appeal can find all the relevant information on our website and by going to the News and Events page.

<http://www.hopestreet.org.au/newsEvents/documents/ChristmasAppeal.pdf>

Volunteers are also welcome on the sorting days (12th/13th Dec) and the packing days (17th/18th/19th Dec). Please call Fiona Simpson on 8353 9908 if you are willing and available to assist.



I want to offer hope this Christmas

Name Rev/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Daytime Phone Number.....

Email.....

1. I authorise HopeStreet Urban Compassion to automatically debit my charge card every Month Quarter for the amount shown, until I revoke this authority in writing to HOPESTREET - Urban Compassion

OR

2. Please debit my charge card with a one-off payment for the amount shown.

OR

3. Please find a cheque or money order made out to HOPESTREET - Urban Compassion enclosed for the amount shown.

A. General Donation to where most needed

\$30 \$40 \$75 \$100 \$200 Other \$.....

B. Woolloomooloo Street Breakfast \$90

C. Cleaners With A Mission \$125

D. Back Shed Cafe \$250

E. The Terrace Homeless Accommodation Service \$490

Total of pledges A through to E - \$.....

Visa Mastercard

Credit card number

_____/_____/_____/_____

Expiry Date __/__/__

Name of cardholder.....

Signature.....

DONATIONS OF \$2 AND OVER ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Please send this completed coupon to HopeStreet 91 Forbes Street Woolloomooloo NSW 2011 or fax to (02) 9358 4128.

To be taken off or added to the HopeStreet News mailing list please email support@hopestreet.org.au or call (02) 9358 2388.

