

IN TOUCH....

The contact point of The Salvation Army Burton on Trent

March /April 2007

“...oh...and by the way, you're on the list to drive the Emergency Vehicle?” - Just another of those “...oh, and by the way's” which one gets used to as you move from Corps to Corps. “...oh and by the way, you do the pubs on Friday and Saturday night...”, “...oh and by the way, you “do” the “JAM” club on a Tuesday night”, (“...no, I didn't know what it was either! It means JESUS AND ME)...and “oh, by the way, the band meets outside the quarters at half past eight Christmas Morning...” and it really does cheer up the neighbours (not much), he forgot to add!

But my driving's not so bad is it? I'd been “behind the wheel” some 25 years then...and though I say it myself—not bragging, of course, or blowing my own trumpet, you understand....I'm a pretty good driver! Well - as good as anyone else...and better than most! Well..... at least /think so.

Oh, and then he added another one..... “oh, and by the way, you'll have to go to the Fire Station for some driver training...it's *their* vehicle we drive you see!”.

So one bright summer morning I duly, with two others reported to the Leicester fire station to be “trained”.

“Why haven't you checked all your mirrors?” quizzed the instructor, having silently climbed into the cab alongside me - “yours truly” being in the driving seat and having just “set off”. “Why are you driving so close to him in front? If he stalls you'll not get past him!” “Why are you doing 28 mph when it's a 30 limit...you should be doing 29.5...you've got to get there you know!” What make of vehicle is behind?”..... “What make of vehicle is in front?”..... “is the driver a man or a woman?”..... “Why are you looking at me when you answer? Your eyes should be on the road.”and on, and on, and on all the dreadful day long!

“What's the matter with *you*?” quoth she who is my other half, as I returned home later, rather humiliated by the whole “training experience”. The only consolation was that all those who experienced that day, felt exactly the same. The day's exercise had conclusively demonstrated that none of us were the advanced superb motorists that we considered ourselves to be!

They were only *little* things...speed, position on the road, when to indicate, when to change gear....oh and there were one or two signs which we seemed to have missed, and a further one or two whose identity had, after 25 years, escaped our collective memory!

Did it matter? Does it matter? Well, half a ton of metal travelling

at 60 mph. driven by a bad driver is a disaster waiting to happen, isn't it? And, the instructor on that day wasn't asking us if we were “drivers”, rather he led us into an understanding of *what kind* of drivers we were! Ask *ANY* driver the question and almost without exception *ALL* insist that they *are* good drivers yet half a day with a driving instructor from Leicester Fire Service would lead the majority into the gloom we felt as we returned home that night.

It's one of our duties of “Ministers of the Gospel”, to ask a similar question. Not, “Are you a Christian?”, but “What *kind* of a Christian are you?”.

“Isn't it sufficient just to believe?” you might say.

I contend that there is nothing more dangerous on the planet that a “bad” Christian. I believe we've all met them and some may have been on their receiving end! Congregations have been emptied by them, folk discouraged by them, folk disillusioned by them, folk, ultimately, turned away from Christ by them.

But who are they, these folk?..... At the table during the Last Supper, Jesus said “...one of you will betray me..”, and there was consternation among the disciples as each said.... “Is it I, Lord?” It was a good response, though, since each acknowledged that it was just possible that he *could* have been the “one”! Could it be possible that /am not as *good* a Christian as I think I am? And the answer is, of course, quite possibly.

Can anything be done about it? Well, yes. Remember that day you first set out, Gospel in hand, head high and a spring in your step, on your Christian Road...and you intended to be the best disciple you could be...well intend again, do what you did then, be what you were then..... Don't give up and “bury your talent” saying “I'll not bother and then I can't be to blame!”, for the gospel reminds us that that way leads to “weeping and gnashing of teeth”.....No, have faith in God, for he has Faith in you, otherwise he'd not have called you in the first place for “training”.

And remember this, the Leicester instructor wished neither to belittle us nor ban us from driving, but he needed to make us aware of the driver we *were*, in order to turn us into the drivers we *could* be. And in subsequent similar training days, we all improved and all became approved drivers of the Leicester Emergency Vehicle and took our place doing the Army's and the Lord's work among the Emergency Services of the city. And it did our day to day driving a great deal of good too! God bless You. Major Rudi Pilsel.



Diary Dates for March & April

Sunday 4th March 2007 is our Annual Self Denial Missionary Sunday.

From our position of undoubted relative abundance folk are invited to take part in our Annual Self Denial Missionary Appeal which helps to fund the work of the Salvation Army overseas which is expanding at a tremendous rate with many thousands of folk coming to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Much of the third world is Spiritually rich, but resource poor, and this Sunday presents us with the opportunity to make real difference to the eternal future of people hungry for the Gospel.

17th & 18th March

AG & Kate



For over 30 years Husband & Wife musicians, AG & Kate have answered God's Call to mission through music, to churches and to prisons in the United States and Europe. Presently, they tour the US for six months, the UK for three months and return to Ryen in Holland (which is their home) for the rest of the year. Accomplished musicians, their testimonies and stories of the folk to whom they minister, which includes up to 10,000 prisoners annually, many of whom will never know freedom again, are a

challenge and a reminder to us of the gospel commission of Matthew 25. Their music is "country" very different from that which we are used to. On **Saturday 17th at 7 p.m.** they will present a programme as they do to the prisons, and on **Sunday Morning 18th.** They will conduct our morning worship. There is no "admission charge" for either Saturday or Sunday but a goodwill offering will be taken up which will, we believe in faith, honour their ministry among us.

Visit of OAKENGATES YP BAND for the Young People's Annual Weekend .24th & 25th March

We look forward greatly to the ministry of Majors Steve and Mandy White (West Midlands DHQ) for this special weekend which will feature the young folk from Oakengates Corps under the leadership of Matthew Dukes with an

Evening Festival on Saturday 24th March at 7.00 p.m.

and the morning meeting on Sunday Morning at 10 a.m.

Sunday Evening Meeting at 4.30p.m. conducted by

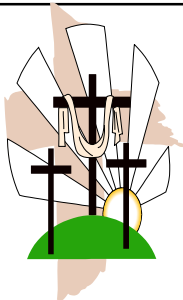
Major Steve White



Sainsbury's Flag Days

30th & 31st March

The Management of Sainsbury's Store in Burton have kindly given us permission to hold a Charitable Collection on Friday & Saturday 30th & 31st March. To make best use of the opportunity we hope to be able "man" the store from 9.30 a.m. to 6p.m. on both days! Sounds a lot but it's only six 1½ hour sessions on each of the days! We shall need willing helpers for both days. If you can (and I'm sure you *could*) spare an hour and a half on one or both days you'd be doing your bit for the finances, and you never know who you might meet! Never done it before? Push the boat out - you'll be ever so glad you did! Chairs if necessary if standing is difficult! We'll place a list in the hall for you to add you name.....the café's not bad either so I'm told!

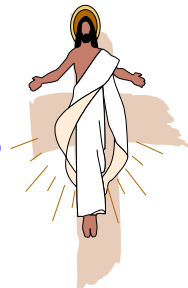


Easter at the Salvation Army 2007

Central to our understanding of the Love and Provision of God for mankind is the celebration of Easter. In the early church and into the middle ages it was the time when people to whom the revelation of God's love had become a reality were welcomed into the Church and the time when other folk, if, for any reason, they had not been able to attend the meetings, were invited to remember God's love and engage once more in fellowship with Him and his people. It was the time of confession, of reconciliation and celebration. Here in Burton at the Salvation Army the following meetings are arranged.

Thursday 5th April. 7.30 p.m. "Reflections on the Last Supper."
A Celebration of the Teaching of Jesus in his last meeting with His Disciples

Friday 6th. April 7.30 p.m. "Meditations Around the Cross"
A different kind of gathering in which ALL the congregation is invited to participate. Bring a special reading, give a testimony. Have you a special piece of recorded music? Would you like to request a particular song perhaps relating why it is special to you on this day? Is there a portion of Scripture you would wish to read or have read? It's entirely up to you but it can be a most special and fruitful time.



Sunday 8th April 10. a.m. & 6.00 p.m. "Christ is Risen"

A celebration of the Resurrection in Worship, Word,
Music and Song.

Naturally, everyone is invited to join with us for each and any of these meetings.

THURSDAY 26th April. Adult & Family Ministries Rally at Royal Leamington Spa

Full Details of the tickets and times for this Annual Event will be available from the C.O.'s or from Keith Adnams nearer to the event when we ourselves have the information.

**.....and don't forget to "don your boots" for the Fellowship Walk in Derbyshire on Saturday 21st April!
Again, full details of the location and times available from the Commanding Officers or from Mark & Christine Mortimer nearer the day!**





ProPerty Matters!

Following from Health and Safety Risk assessments which we are required to do for Headquarters, we have had a “visitation”. A Salvation Army appointed architect has done a thorough “once over” on the hall to give his assessment of its present state from the point of view of it being a public building. As we write we await his report on the hall for, as you know, we have a responsibility to ensure that all is as safe as it can be for those who use our premises.

What some might consider to be another example of the encroaching political correctness, hype, red tape, whatever.... derives from a real fear within the Salvation Army, of the “blame culture” so prevalent throughout our nation which has resulted in the Army paying out tens of thousands of pounds to claimants who have “had an accident in the last three years”.

It is over twenty five years since the present hall was refurbished. During those years it has been maintained in good order. It has excellent acoustics and, as most folk who come in affirm, it presents an impressive sight to folk as they enter in. It is, however, an old building which in many areas, seemingly, fails to meet today’s required standards for Health and Safety - Even prior to the publishing of his report, the visiting Architect made it very plain that bringing the building to an acceptable standard may cost many thousands of pounds, and, in respect of the Young People’s Hall taking into consideration the lack of a means of fire escape, no alarm system and access by stairs which could be potentially dangerous, his verbal advice at the time of his visit is that we can no longer use that hall for any public activity, the recommendation being that the stairs be “chained off” with a notice “NO PUBLIC ACCESS”.

There will, I am sure be much else which will be suggested and we must take into consideration his findings since the “Army” will, and the “transfer of responsibility” will take place from them to us, specifically to *me*, for anything which “goes wrong” after we have been furnished with a report from (without being disrespectful) “on high”.

Now in an ideal world we could, of course, wave a magic wand and rectify all the difficulties which are inherent in the present building. But wands don’t exist and we, ALL OF US need to give serious consideration to the building and its use.

Its location and its format have in former days been adequate in terms of the kinds of activity in which the Corps has been engaged. Its limitations in terms of location and access do however limit future programme opportunities. Does it, for example, present the possibility of extending our range of activities beyond that which we do or have done, to give us “pools of folk in which we can fish”? Does it present us with opportunities to fund raise, i.e. coffee mornings, charity shop, etc, in order that we might “pay our way” and not rely, as we do now on “handouts from headquarters” ? If the answer is “no” to these then the present plight of the present building might present us with a golden opportunity to consider alternatives and to actively pray, plan and prepare for the possibility of it really happening. We may never get another chance.

There is of course a “flip side” to this insofar as if we were to consider relocation

then there would need to be a *massive* injection of funding from Headquarters which, unless the “Army” has some kind of strategic plan for East Staffordshire, or indeed we, as a mission of the Army on the ground, present an over whelming case in terms of our vision for mission, then massive injections are unlikely! That being the case we must tailor our mission to that which we have, making safe any areas which might cause concern and particularly those which presently are quite heavily used and we need to continue to use, since these are non– negotiable in terms of our present mission.

I believe that we are a people called by God to call others to Him. I believe that the Salvation Army presents to the world a practical, hands on expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I believe that its mission is as effective as ever it was and have been privileged to serve in Army “mission stations” wherein conditions were far from ideal but where the mission’s effectiveness has been demonstrated by people getting saved and becoming involved. I believe with a passion that there is no reason why they shouldn’t here!

If we can obtain premises which would enhance the potential of our mission in Burton I’m all for it but we must maximize the potential we have *where we are* whilst taking on board the recommendations of those appointed by the Army.

There may be many recommendations with which we might not agree but can I ask that careful and prayerful consideration be given to the whole situation in which we find ourselves and that we devise the means of continuing all the good work which is done here whilst exploring with open minds, possibilities for the future.

In the meantime, the hall frontage needs a lick of paint and we need a team of folk to lick it! Sometime when the weather isn’t quite as miserable as it has been these last weeks!

Ever is the WAR CRY!

Alongside those sold at the hall, we sell a hundred copies of The War Cry each week in New Street.

The publication, now well over a century old, has been a means of blessing to many, and through its pages many men and women have come to faith in Christ. It is published across the world in formats relevant to culture and condition and it is still the Christian newspaper with the largest circulation in this country.

The right to sell newspapers in the Street is enshrined in Law and they are the only things you *can* sell on the street without a license.

Far from being “in house” as a publication, it is designed for a readership which will include a majority of folk who are not regular church goers. It has been and still is a personal pleasure of mine to be a “herald” of the Gospel through the medium of the publication. Along with “distributing Christian Literature” the selling of papers brings us into close contact with a large number of people each week, presenting us with an unparalleled opportunity to contact new people and over the years we have personally been privileged to see a good number of folk come to Christ as a result of contacts made! Let’s pray it happens here and if you would like to assist come on board!

Don’t forget your
WAR CRY, Kids Alive &
Salvationist.

Available from the Hall on
Sundays outside Julian
Graves in town on Friday
mornings or from any
Salvationist!



Miscellany

Bored with the prospect of nothing to do outside the Army at Easter? Here are some of the events on offer for the Season in addition to egg painting, egg rolling, egg eating and exhaustion.....

Easter Saturday, Britannia nr. Bacup, Lancs.9.00a.m.

Annual "Coconutters Dance".... Spectator event.....it does what it says on the packet!

Easter Monday, Hallaton, Leicestershire. All Day.

Hare Pie Scramble and Bottle Kicking. A spectator sport (for reasons of Health and Safety) wherein small barrels are fought over in an attempt to go over a touch line.... Very violent and not for the fainthearted.

Easter Monday World Coal Carrying Championships Gawthorpe nr. Wakefield Yorkshire. Non-discriminatory participatory sport for Ladies and Gentlemen. First to carry a hundredweight of coal over a course 1108¼ yards long, wins. Don't know about the Health & Safety implications of lugging coal!

Dwile Flonking in Suffolk (various venues). Participatory event in which the dwile on the end of a yew pole is flonked for the prize of a pewter trophy, a gezunder provided (and I kid you not) by Adnams Brewery! More details on request. **Happy Holiday!**

And in the meantime...let's not forget that in the Emerald Isle and in the US, on March 17th, there will be all kinds of high jinks as Saint Patrick's day is remembered. Lots of "legends" and stories about the Englishman—yes, he WAS English, but what is certain is that he and his followers brought the faith to Ireland in such a way that their whole culture was changed and in later centuries Irish missionaries brought the faith back to Europe after the Barbarian nearly extinguished the light in the Dark ages! Burton's St Modwen who founded the Abbey, was an Irish-woman! Now some folk have a problem with "saints". Personally I think we do well to study their lives because unlike Jesus who was not just a man like us but had a Divine Nature as well, and so we could conceivably excuse ourselves from that level of goodness, you can't really dodge the issue of it being possible to attain the same level of goodness as a slave, which Patrick was, or a fisherman which Peter was, or a tax collector that Matthew was, (not to mention the plethora of saintly ladies) can you?



In days of old, when knights were bold.....

An interesting cutting from a newspaper - the Oldham Gazette circa 1880... which gives an insight into attitudes on both sides of a fence at the time.....my, how things have changed.....

"Modesty and Humility used to be Christian Virtues, but these seem to have died out among the Salvationists. What can their conception of the meaning of words be when they talk about "storming Oldham"..... The language in which they describe their doings not that of fanaticism or frenzy so much as arrant folly, for which they have no Scriptural warrant. Fancy an Apostle telling of the Pentecostal outpouring in such language as this:-

"Oh how the devil must have quaked as the multitude, led by our band, sang praises to God! Real Holy Ghost time. Heavy guns directed with telling effect on the enemy. We wound up with over twenty souls in the fountain, streams of Glory ever since. Souls every night. Smashing times coming on!"

Bye and Bye the officers may sober down into sensible men and women. They would do quite as much good if the talked and wrote reverently".

William Booth is reputed to have remarked that at the time the Salvation army had "no reputation to lose"haven't things become dull since we got one!

And Finally...Around the Word...

"I don't believe in God," she said. That's usually the end of the conversation but I pressed it!

"Why not?," I asked.

"Well they've been up there, haven't they, and he wasn't there, was he?," she replied.

"Who has?" I said, thinking she'd had an out-of-body experience or been to a séance.

"Spacemen!" she retorted, ending the exchange. It got me thinking though - speculating. Just who might be "up there"! You know "little green men"! But why the stereotype. I began to speculate further. Why should they be "green", why should they be ugly why should they be aggressive, as "aliens" they always seem to be "on the telly"?

If there are other "beings" out there, some say, this will, of course, prove that our faith in a God who cares for mankind is mere folly. What, after all, makes us so special that we would be "singled out" and visited by God incarnate to do the Easter bit for us?

Perhaps there are others - little green men or shapeless blobs of jelly or perhaps even folk not dissimilar to ourselves, perhaps more good looking, more intelligent, whatever.... but God - well, He's quite big enough to care for all of us.

But we must avoid one trap though, whoever they are or might be, we must not assume that they would be morally inferior to us! What if, in other worlds with other beings, none of them had done an "Adam", but at that critical point in their history they'd told the old enemy to eat his own apple! And that of them all, we alone in all creation are the fallen race?

We do know this, irrespective of all else, that as sons of "Adam", (however you view our Genesis) in our natural state, we have what seems to be the commonly-inherited ability to consistently "give in"

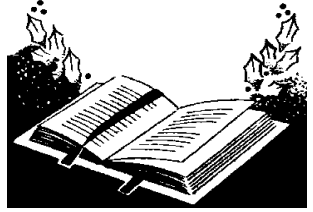
to temptation. Not the same temptations necessarily, but each to his or her own!

To the casual, albeit theoretical, alien observer, mankind would be a creature who evidently could be a deal better than he is. Indeed to a being who hasn't fallen, none of us, would stand up to much scrutiny! We would be simply appalling! Fit for the fire

And surely, if we have aspirations to share an eternity with God (and possibly folk from other worlds who didn't "fall") then, just to "fit in" with the rest, something would need to be done! Remember, the wedding guest at the feast who hadn't put on the right clothes? (Matthew 22:14) Well, yes, he was "cast out" by the servants but I don't imagine he felt "at home" anyway, as many would attest who have turned up to an event either under-, or over-dressed!

That God, into whose presence nothing defiled may enter, looked at us and saw us an our self-created mess and failed to get rid of us permanently, becomes all the more amazing; that he took on flesh and came and gave us the Good News of the Gospel is staggering, and that He made the path to open to "whosoever" through the events of Good Friday, when we patently don't deserve it becomes...well..... words fail me.

What could be His motive? Well, John 6:39 reminds us that the last thing that God wants for any of his Creatures is that they will be lost....."and this is the will of Him who sent me," said Jesus, "that I shall lose none of all that he has given me....." Could it be that He really does care about you and me? But do I care that He cares? And if I do, what am I doing about it? And if I'm not doing much, maybe it's that I did time I did? How about you? Easter's a good time to start! God bless you. Major Rudi.



**The Salvation Army
Burton on Trent Corps
Mosley Street
Burton on Trent
Staffordshire . DE14 1DR**

Corps Programme

**Sunday Meetings. Praise and
Worship Meetings
Bible teaching concerned with
the Christian life and how to live
it in Today's world and how to
prepare for what comes next!.**

**Morning Meeting 10a.m.
Evening Meeting 6.p.m.**

Sunday School 11.30a.m.

**Lunch Club
Tuesday 12 noon**

**Evergreens
Tuesday 2.00p.m**

**Home League
Wednesdays 11 a.m.
(Alternate Wednesdays, Phone for Details)**

**Bible Fellowship
Alternate Wednesdays 7.30 p.m.
at 31, Britannia Drive, Burton.**

Special Events as Advertised.

**The Corps and Officers at
Burton on Trent are also
involved in many other
activities including:**

*Emergency Provision of Food
Emergency Provision of Bedding
Dedication of Children
Weddings
Funerals
Home and Hospital Visitation
Christian Services in
Sheltered Accommodation
and we are a listening ear providing a
Christian perspective to all.*

Please Remember

**You don't have to be a "member" to
attend our meetings or indeed any
of our activities. They are open to
everybody.**



CONTACTS

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The Salvation Army is a mission of the Christian Church and a Registered Charity