

A community hope realised



MAJOR Nancy McLaren and Major Phillip McLaren sit in the Chevy that was originally registered to the Salvation Army in 1949. The car is now owned by Jac's Auto Electrics.

BY ASHLEY SWAIN

SATURDAY marked the celebration of community generosity and spirit – the opening of the Salvation Army's Hope House.

Hope House is a community facility, brought about by the idea from Major Joy Wilson, that community members needed somewhere to turn in times of need.

Hope house offers a range of facilities and services, including programs for newborns and mothers, carers, school children and anyone in need of a helping hand, support or friendly advice.

Co-ordinator of Hope House, Major Joy Wilson welcomed special guests and visitors to the official opening of the Salvation Army Hope House, on Saturday.

Major Wilson thanked Homes North Community Housing for their generous approval in allowing Hope House to be formed in one of their houses.

"We wouldn't be in this house unless we were given the approval by Homes North Community housing," Major Wilson said.

"We are grateful to have it's CEO with us this morning to help us celebrate the opening."

Shenhua Watermark Coal gave the Salvation Army a significant grant to commence Hope House's upgrade and to bring the house up to where it is today.

Representative from Shenhua Watermark Coal, Melanie Layton was invited to speak on behalf of the company.

Mrs Layton was overwhelmed with the further generosity of the community and the hard work put into Hope House and was delighted to be a part of it.

Whitehaven Coal Mining donated the fort and sandpit and Tim Muldoon accepted a token of thanks from Major Wilson.

Zonta Club of Gunnedah donated crockery and cutlery to the house, with Deputy Mayor



MAJOR Phillip McLaren looks on as Melanie Layton, Marie McKenzie, Major Joy Wilson and Mayor Adam Marshall cut the ribbon to mark the opening of Hope House.

Colleen Fuller accepting the gift on the club's behalf.

Active Minds gave Hope House a barbecue and microwave and also contributed towards a lounge – Jim and Gloria Coombs attended the opening.

The Rotary Club of Gunnedah, worked to lay the grass and contribute to two tables for the house, President Rodger Lucas was awarded an appreciation gift.

Santos contributed to children's indoor equipment, including table and chairs.

Jac's Auto Electrics kindly provided the sausage sizzle for the opening and featured an old chevy which in 1949 was originally owned by the Salvation Army in Gunnedah.

Major Wilson also thanked the Salvation Army Divisional Headquarters for their contributions.

"Sometimes we forget to say

thank you to our own, often times we simply expect them to do it because it is their job, however I want to thank the divisional headquarters, who were so helpful in all areas of Hope House," Major Wilson said.

Major Wilson said it wasn't only kind donations that make places like Hope House work and she presented a few inspiration gifts to people in the Gunnedah community who have impressed her over the years with their thoughtfulness.

"The first is Marie Hobson, whose grace and character contribute in a positive way not only in her work as a journalist but in how she carries herself – we have named the sitting room after Marie," Major Wilson said.

Lisa Warren's name occupies the common area.

"I haven't known Lisa for

long but her passion for helping young people is amazing, she goes out of her way to try and bring assistance to all who she is made aware of.

"Another room is named after Judith Law, she is a great woman with a strong sense of social justice, I certainly value her courage," Major Wilson said.

One of the meeting rooms is named after the late Peter Lockwood and wife Hazel.

"Although Peter is no longer with us, his influence still lingers in the minds of many, while Hazel is a woman of grace and uses her skills in the ministry of women and children.

"The last couple I have known since coming to Gunnedah who are an exception and consistent in quiet kindness – they are Max and Eve Corbett and we have named another meeting room after them," Major Wilson said.

"There are so many people who need to know that they are beautiful, not defined by what negative messages they have received from people, that they are courageous and not defined by errors of judgement.

"I hope those who enter the Hope House doors will know that they are important."

Major Phillip McLaren the Commander of Northern NSW Division Salvation Army was invited to cut the ribbon with support from Homes North Community Housing, Shenhua Watermark Coal, Major Joy Wilson and Mayor Adam Marshall.

"Today a hope has been realised," Major McLaren said.

"It has been a challenge, many obstacles had to be overcome – a time line that kept getting longer but Major Wilson never lose hope that this day would arrive.

"It is very appropriate that in Hopedale Avenue the Salvation Army opens and dedicates Hope House to be a place of hope to the community in this region," he said.

Hope House is located at 38 Hopedale Avenue and all members of the public are welcome.



Department of Primary Industries Catchments & Lands

Application For Membership To A Crown Reserve Trust Board

The Trust Board of the Boggabri Showground & Public Recreation Reserve Trust currently have vacant positions, and to ensure continuity of management, the Department is inviting applications from persons interested in becoming a member of the Trust Board who manages the affairs of the Boggabri Showground & Public Recreation Reserve.

The role of a Trustee is voluntary, however, people who have the enthusiasm will find being a Trust board member a valuable experience, with the reward of contributing to the local community and working to manage and preserve this important public asset. The term of the trust appointment will be for a period of 5 years.

The NSW Government is especially committed to the encouragement of women and people from non-English and Aboriginal backgrounds to apply for positions on Government boards and committees and encourages community members from the above backgrounds to consider making application to be a member of this trust board.

As a member of the Trust Board of the Boggabri Showground & Public Recreation Reserve, successful applicants will be responsible for the overall care, control and management of the Reserve in a voluntary capacity and will also be required to attend regular meetings that may be outside business hours.

Information and application forms may be obtained and lodged at the Crown Lands office, 25-27 Fitzroy Street (PO Box 535) Tamworth NSW 2340, or phone (02) 6764 5100.

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PICTURED at the opening of the Salvation Army's Hope House on the weekend, were important members of the community who contributed to the house's official opening, from left, Mayor Adam Marshall, Salvation Army Major Joy Wilson, CEO of Homes North Community Housing Marie McKenzie, Representative from Shenhua Watermark Coal Melanie Layton, Representative from Whitehaven Coal Tim Muldoon and Commander of Northern NSW Division of the Salvation Army, Major Phillip McLaren.