

TRIBUTES TO ALLAN WALLINGTON

Introduction from Michael Baker

Allan and Viv have many friends at Camberwell Corps in Melbourne – as have Sue, Paul and the boys. When we went to live there in 2000 we were welcomed by many as “Allan and Viv’s friends” and soon they were our friends too. Many have sent e-mail messages. Viv – too many to read today in full but we will publish their tributes with our monthly newsletter.

Tributes have come from Ian Clark, Arthur and Marilyn, Yvonne and Laurie, Janet and Roger, Margaret and Ken Wright, Doreen and Bruce Maunder, Glenys and David, Margaret and Rodney, Andrea and David Barker, and George and Barbara Hynde. You were both godparents to Vicki and Diane, and Barbara recalls that when you were babysitting one night Diane would not stop screaming, so Allan popped her in the car and drove around most of the night to keep her quiet.

The tributes have recurrent themes:

- “Allan was a practical person who willingly applied his skills on behalf of friends in need.
- Allan’s friendship was special – he was an excellent waiter too.
- Thinking of Allan the word faithful kept coming up – so faithful to Viv, faithful to his friends, faithful to the Army, faithful to God.”

The tribute which you will hear this morning sums up Allan’s life and personality so fully - and is from your dear friend Pat. Pat and Philip (who sadly died in his 50’s) were close friends – more like family. This is what Pat says:

Tribute from Pat Straughan

Dear Allan – what can I say? It is so hard to condense a life and so many years of friendship into a few words, to reflect the lovely man he was. We have been friends for 37 years.

Who can forget the twinkle in his eyes, the chuckle, the lovely smile, the dry sense of humour, always the willingness to ‘go the extra mile’ and help anyone in need. The tool box always in the boot of the car! Allan was reliable, dependable, practical, hardworking and paid attention to detail – their garden beds and lawn at Sherlowe Crescent were a picture to behold! He could be a little stubborn too! but was a genuine ‘salt of the earth’ person who we have been privileged to call friend. He was absolutely devoted to Viv.

Uncle Allan – and Auntie Viv – have been part of our children’s lives since the day they were born. Alistair and Kerry are now 34 and 32. He was like a big cuddly teddy bear to them, and as soft! – Uncle Allan, the gentle giant.

Kerry says – “You always felt safe when Uncle Allan was around. There are people that get the title Uncle because you are born into that family. There are people that inherit the title Uncle because of the relationship they have with the family. Uncle Allan may not have been a blood uncle but he was definitely our Uncle in every sense. I will fondly remember sitting on the couch with Uncle Allan the day before he was to return to England. His arm around me. I felt comfortable, I felt safe and was thinking how much I would have loved them to stay and be here with us again. But that wasn’t to be. Uncle Allan – my Uncle Allan – Mr Fix It. Thank you for so many precious memories. You are greatly missed.”

We won't forget the hundreds of Sunday lunches shared together, picnics, swims in their backyard pool, Allan helping Philip – no, that's not right – Philip helping Allan build a decking on our house. Allan to the rescue when our old car kept breaking down, meeting or taking us to the airport on numerous occasions. A holiday at McCrae – and so we could go on and on. Actually Viv is the one with a fantastic memory and reminds me of many things I have forgotten about. In those years – when we were younger – there was great fellowship at the corps with countless hours of fun and laughter spent in suppers and parties at each other's homes.

Allan was a man who didn't want or like the attention of being “up front” – he worked hard, very hard, in the background. He always had to be doing something otherwise he would fall asleep in the chair! As some will know, he also never spoke on the telephone unless he really had to. The one time in the year I knew I would be able to have a good chat with him was on his birthday – then he **had** to answer the phone! He was a clever man but not an academic and we have a beautiful photo taken last year of Allan holding up Kerryn's Master's Degree which had just arrived in the post – laughing so much as he said “This is the only Degree I'll ever hold”. We remember Allan the gardener, Allan the chauffeur, Allan the golfer. Alistair was the grateful recipient of Allan's golf clubs when they returned to England. Allan the true Christian gentleman.

We are ever grateful that he and Viv came to Australia, and Camberwell Corps in particular, where he and Viv served for over 25 years. He was committed to his Lord in his service, in the band and the songsters over so many years with a particular love for the band. He was so faithful. He was also part of the catering team. But the pull of “the old country” proved too much and we were all saddened when they decided to return to England. It was such a delight when they came back for a holiday last year and caught up with so many of their friends in Australia again.

To dear Viv – my heart goes out to you. And to you, Barry and Joy, Sue and Paul, Nathan and Philip, Sarah and Hannah and extended family members – my prayer is that the memories and love of Allan will be forever with you and sustain you, that the support and caring of friends will uphold you and that the knowledge that he is with His Lord and Saviour, who he served so faithfully, will give you a sense of peace. May you each be aware of God's comfort, love and strength surrounding you in the days ahead.

Dear Allan, our dear friend, who will never be forgotten.

A few short tributes from other friends at Camberwell Corps:

From Ian Clark

Allan was always a person you could rely on. If Allan was able to assist, then he would, always there to complete the task given to him. Allan was a member of the well-known catering group of Camberwell Corps, and he made an excellent waiter. After a function he would never leave the hall until it was put back ready for the Sunday meetings. Allan's friendship was special and we thank God for his life and the 26 years that he served within the Camberwell Corps. Our Christian love and prayers are expressed to Vivien, Barry, Joy, Sue, Paul and all family members at this time of sadness.

From Arthur and Marilyn Currie

Marilyn and I have nothing but warm and positive memories of our association with Allan. His quiet, unassuming, gentle, fun-loving nature made it a pleasure to be in his company. Allan was a keen bandsman and songster who, over many years, maintained a high standard of consistent, loyal service to God and the Salvation Army. He was a practical, hands-on person who willingly applied his skills on behalf of friends in need. We will remember Allan as a devoted husband and a good friend. We pray that Vivien and the extended family will experience the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit in these difficult days.

Yvonne and Laurie Griffin

Allan was a friend who was always prepared to have a chat, show interest in what you and your family were doing. Involved himself in Army activities and was prepared to go the extra mile.

His service in the band was always 100% and he would help carry out any task required with diligence.

Being a fellow tradesman there were always stories and experiences to share and we will fondly remember our times of fun and laughter in their home.

We pray that the Lord will sustain and uphold Vivien and all family members in their time of sorrow.

Janet and Roger Timberlake

Both Roger and I have very fond memories of Viv and Allan during the many years here in Australia. They were very hospitable people and we often were invited to their home to share a meal with them. The thing we most admired, they were 100% committed to the work at the corps and often went out of their way to see that things worked as they should, especially in the Songsters. We missed them greatly when they returned to England and were so thrilled when they came for a visit last year. Our hearts are very sad at the news of Allan's passing and we send our ongoing love and prayers to Viv and the family.

Margaret and Ken Wright

Like many others at Camberwell we were very shocked and saddened to hear of Allan's sudden passing at such a comparatively early age. We have such pleasant memories of Allan's friendship, humour, energy for Army activities, and, along with Vivien's, his outstanding contribution to the musical sections of the corps.

When Vivien and Allan left Camberwell to return to the UK they left a gap that was hard to fill.

Allan and Vivien were excellent hosts and along with other members of the corps we spent a number of very enjoyable sessions at their lovely home. As English expatriates ourselves it was always good to share news of the "home country".

Allan was a good, hard-working family man and we send our deepest sympathy to Vivien, the Cole family, and other family members on their tragic loss. We pray that over the coming days God will support and be close to them all. To Allan, we say "thank you" for your life and contribution. It was a pleasure to have known you. Rightly we can say: Servant of God Well Done!

Doreen and Bruce Maunder

We received the news with sadness trying to understand how difficult it must be for Viv, Paul and Sue and other family members. The suddenness, no time for goodbyes. The great certainty that Allan has gone to Heaven with no disability, enjoying the presence of Jesus, and family and friends who have gone on before, is a wonderful promise, but there is still a great hole left here.

Thinking how we would describe Allan, the main word “faithful” kept coming up. So faithful to Viv, faithful to his friends, faithful to the Army, faithful to God.

We cannot say we were close friends, we did not visit, but we had a great respect for each other and did not need to wear masks. We could speak our minds to each other with courtesy and dignity, respecting the right of the other to disagree in a Christian manner.

We offer our deepest sympathy to Viv, Paul and Sue, and other members of the family unknown to us. Our prayer is that God will give you His peace, and an assurance of His presence in this most difficult time. Please hold on to 1 Peter Chapter 5 verse 7. It has been so true for us in our difficult times and will be for you too.

May God be with you.

Glenys and David Harvey

We are richer for having known Allan Wallington, a cherished friend and gentleman. Underneath that ginger beard was found warmth that resonated with us profoundly.

When we first joined Camberwell Salvation Army in Melbourne, Australia, Allan, along with Viv, who we knew from childhood, were amongst a special group of people who went out of their way to welcome us into the corps fellowship.

We were frequent visitors to Allan and Viv’s Viewbank home, and appreciated the opportunity on more than one occasion to tend their lovely rose garden when they embarked on holidays as well as sojourns to their original home in the UK.

Our sincere thoughts and prayers go out to Viv and the other family members at this time.

Whilst in an earthly sense we are saddened and shocked at Allan’s passing, we delight in the confidence that he is now at rest, in a better world.

Andrea and David Barker

We fondly remember Allan who helped organise cars on our wedding day, and was our chauffeur during the evening. He was a very good driver!

Our thoughts to the family.

Margaret and Rodney O'Neill

Allan – a true friend over many years. We are saddened at his sudden passing. He was a true gentleman, a fine Salvationist and, most of all, a true soldier of Jesus Christ.

Allan – it was a privilege to have known you – and to Viv our love and prayers.

“Clouds will change to sunshine, night will turn to day.
If you just remember God is not far away”.

George and Barbara Hynde

We first met Allan and Vivien when we immigrated to Australia in 1972. We all attended Camberwell Salvation Army and so began our journey of friendship, so much so that when our first daughter was born in 1973 Allan and Vivien became Vicki's godparents and then again in 1975 when our second daughter, Diane, was born. Allan was, and Vivien is, pivotal to our family as we have no family around us. They just loved our kids and would help us in any way that they could – babysitting, going out etc. I remember one night they had Vicki and Diane for the night, Diane was just a baby and would not stop screaming, so Allan popped her in the car and drove around most of the night to keep her quiet. Allan and Vivien were a very important part of our daughters growing years and gave them so much love, and so when Allan and Vivien decided to go back to live in England it was a tremendous blow to us as a family and we missed them so very much and still do to this day. They continued to love and support us from afar through some very difficult times and we appreciate their unconditional love and friendship.

It was wonderful when they came here on holiday this time last year and we shared together. It was such a beautiful time and we treasured every moment that we had with them. I am so glad that they were able to come and catch up with people they had not seen for 11 years. We have those memories to keep in our hearts.

Those of you who knew Allan well, will, of course, know that he was always very helpful and kind. Allan worked behind the scenes and did things that no-one knew about, things that needed to be done around the corps or just helping out their family.

Allan's passing was a real shock to all who knew him and he will be so sadly missed by so many people but none more than Vivien to whom he was a devoted and loving husband. To Vivien and all the family members in England, Australia and other parts of the world, our thoughts, love and prayers are with you now and in the months ahead.

May God be your comfort and strength, be assured of our prayers – we love you-

Barbara and George Hynde
Diane, Stef, Sarah, Chantelle, Emmalee
Victoria, John, Damien.