Statement of Significance Report

for the Brotherhood of St. Laurence Library

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67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy

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1. **Introduction**

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) is a non-government, community based organisation with a long history of working successfully for those in our community who are disadvantaged or in need of assistance. The Brotherhood of St Laurence was the vision of Fr Gerard Kennedy Tucker, a man who combined his Christian faith with a fierce determination to end social injustice. Major areas of the Brotherhood’s work currently include caring for older Australians, family and children’s services, assistance for job seekers, support for refugees and a dedicated undertaking of successful research and policy development in the promotion of social change for a fairer and more inclusive society.¹

An important aspect of the Brotherhood’s research contribution and policy development is its comprehensive library resource collection, which includes books, reports, articles, journals and electronic materials on Australian poverty and social welfare in general. In addition to this collection, the library maintains an archive collection of BSL materials, several photograph collections, audio-visual materials, historical material (journals, newsletters, personal papers and letters), objects and ephemera the majority of which are uncatalogued.

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence was awarded a Community Heritage Grant 2007 to undertake a Significance Assessment of its library collection in order to assist with the eventual development of a plan for appropriate conservation, preservation and management of its whole collection.

2. **Statement of Purpose**

A significance assessment is a practical and effective process that can assist an organisation to ‘articulate the value and meaning of objects and collections, and make sound judgements and good decisions about conserving, interpreting and managing them’.² Significance refers to the importance and meaning we place on buildings, objects and landscapes in the past, now and in the future. These values can be different depending on whether they are personal, family, community, national and/or international items.³ As outlined in *Significance – A guide to assessing the significance of cultural heritage objects and collections*, these assessments basically involve three tasks: analysing the object, understanding its history and context, and identifying its value for communities.⁴

The process of significance assessment allows an institution to define the meaning and value of an object or collection and establish its significance in relation to other objects or collections. This can assist in demonstrating whether or not an object is sufficiently important to be in the collection. ‘The process involves considering significance against a standard set of assessment criteria’.⁵ It provides a concise description of a collection’s

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¹ Brotherhood of St Laurence website http://www.bsl.org.au/
² *Significance – A guide to assessing the significance of cultural items*, Heritage Collections Council, 2001, p. 11.
⁴ *Significance*, p.11.
⁵ Ibid. The assessment criteria are outlined in the next section: Methodology.
value and meaning and will assist the library to identify priorities in collection management, conservation issues and even possible future exhibitions.

3. Methodology

The process undertaken to produce this report for the Brotherhood of St Laurence included the following:
1. Consultation with BSL Library staff regarding the collection, including
   - completion of preliminary questionnaire
   - discussions with library staff
2. Investigation of the library’s collection, in particular the historical collection
3. Identification of comparative collection/s
4. Research on site (approx 6 days)
5. Preparation of draft report for discussion
6. Final report after consultation with BSL Library staff

The following criteria for assessing significance is fully outlined in the Heritage Collections Council’s publication *Significance – A guide to assessing the significance of cultural heritage objects and collections* (available online).

The four primary criteria to consider when assessing significance are:
- historic;
- aesthetic;
- scientific, research or technical;
- social or spiritual.

In addition to these four primary criteria, there are five comparative criteria that are used in the evaluation of the degree of significance. These modify the main criteria and are:
- provenance;
- representativeness;
- rarity;
- condition, completeness or intactness and integrity, and interpretive potential.

Definitions of the four primary criteria are:

*Historic significance:*
An object or collection may be historically significant for its association with people, events, place and/or themes. This is the most common category of significance in most historical collections. Historically significant items can range from those associated with famous people and important events to objects of daily life used by ordinary people. They include objects that are typical of particular activities, industries or ways of living. Historically significant items may be mass produced, unique, precious or handmade.

*Aesthetic significance:*
An object may be aesthetically significant for its craftsmanship, style, technical excellence, beauty, demonstration of skill and quality of design and execution. It might include innovative or traditional objects from Indigenous or folk cultures or high art. Aesthetically significant objects may be unique or mass produced.

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6 Ibid. pp. 25, 28, 30 and 32.
Research significance:
An object or collection may have research significance if it has major potential for further examination or study. Objects and collections may have research significance if they are provenanced from a documented context and if they represent aspects of history that are not well reflected in other sources. This criterion can apply to documentary collections.

Social or spiritual significance:
Collections have social significance if they are held in community esteem. This may be demonstrated by social, spiritual or cultural expressions that provide evidence of a community’s strong affection for a collection and the institution that holds/houses/owns it, and of how it contributes to that community’s identity and social cohesion. This evidence can usually be found by consulting people and communities, but it sometimes becomes apparent only when the collection is threatened in some way. For example, the social significance of a collection is often demonstrated through public debate about its location, conservation or interpretation.

The significance of the collection is assessed against these main criteria. The degree of significance is determined by assessing the collection against what is known as the comparative criteria, which are defined as follows:

Provenance – the chain of ownership and context of use of an object or collection. Knowing this history enables a more precise assessment. Provenance is central to establishing historic and scientific significance.

Representativeness – an object may be significant because it represents a particular category of object, or activity, way of life or historical theme.

Rarity – an object or collection may be significant as a rare, unusual or particularly fine example of its type. It is possible for an object’s significance to be both rare and representative.

Condition – an object may be significant because it is unusually complete, or in sound, original condition. Objects or collections such as these are referred to as having integrity. However changes or adaptations made in the working life of an object do not necessarily diminish significance and are recognised as an integral part of the object and its history.

Interpretive potential – Objects and collections may be significant for their capacity to interpret and demonstrate aspects of experience, historical themes, people and activities.

Using these guidelines and criteria this report will assess the Brotherhood of St Laurence library collection located at 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, focussing primarily on the archival and historical material.

4. Assessment of Significance

4.1 Background and history of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence

Father Gerard Tucker founded the Brotherhood of St Laurence on December 7, 1930 in the Anglican parish of St Stephen, Adamstown in NSW - a working class suburb of Newcastle. Together with Guy Cox and Michael Clarke, Fr Tucker created an organisation that would play a vital part in the social fabric of Australia’s disadvantaged. In his memoir, Thanks Be, Fr Tucker reflects on his friends’ contribution stating ‘there could have been no Brotherhood of St Laurence were it not for their loyalty, enthusiasm and steadfastness.'
No words of mine can express the debt I personally owe to these men.\textsuperscript{7} The Brotherhood still takes pride in maintaining these ideals in its work with the disadvantaged of our society.

The organisation was originally established as a religious order of the Anglican Church, with members including priests and lay brothers. In 1933 it moved to St Mary’s Mission in Fitzroy in Melbourne to assist the poor in that area. At this time the Brotherhood provided a unique opportunity for young men who ‘wished to serve others in the name of the Church’, allowing them to test their vocation, living simply, studying, praying and helping the Brotherhood expand its social welfare activities.\textsuperscript{8} Although the religious order did not survive, the Brotherhood itself continued and expanded under Fr Tucker’s guidance.\textsuperscript{9}

As Fr Tucker vividly described, they arrived in Melbourne ‘during the darkest days of the depression years’ and they were ‘appalled at the conditions under which the people in the vicinity of the Mission were living’ and to make matters worse unemployed men and their families were coming from the better ‘suburbs, where rents were higher, to add to the already over-large population’.\textsuperscript{10} During its early days in Melbourne, the Brotherhood became active in the plight of the unemployed, beginning its social service work with only a weekly donation of ten shillings from one generous young man.\textsuperscript{11} The unemployment figures in Australia reached their peak in 1932 with almost 30 percent of Australians being unemployed and this was nowhere more apparent than in the inner city suburbs of Melbourne.

From these very meagre beginnings the BSL started to rent accommodation to help the unemployed, unmarried men. ‘With donations of used furniture which came as the result of letters in the press’ the Brotherhood started their work.\textsuperscript{12} Father Tucker describes these early days in \textit{Thanks Be}:

> By pooling their dole money they were able to live in some form of comfort. The idea caught the imagination of the public. Someone offered to pay the rent of the house next door to the original. This we improved and furnished in the same way as the first and more men were taken in. A third house in the terrace was ultimately rented and treated in a like manner.’\textsuperscript{13}

Although ‘money was pouring out to a far greater extent than it was pouring in’, Fr Tucker and the Brotherhood managed to expand their work. They first purchased three houses in James Street near St. Mary’s which were soundly constructed but in ‘a very bad state of repair.’\textsuperscript{14} David Anderson, a colleague from their Adamstown days, was sent a telegram asking would he come and repair the houses. Mr Anderson arrived, and was shortly followed by Mrs Anderson and the children. The Andersons would work loyally for the Brotherhood for the rest of their lives – ‘this couple, always put the work before personal convenience and material welfare… in a sense they, too, are founders of the Brotherhood’.\textsuperscript{15} After three years of being in Melbourne and with support from a public

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{7} Tucker, GK, \textit{Thanks Be}, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Fitzroy, 1954, p. 61.
\item \textsuperscript{8} \textit{A Brief History}, Handout, 1994, p.2.
\item \textsuperscript{9} After the war, there seemed little interest in expanding the Brotherhood as a religious order, much to Father Tucker’s disappointment. After the resignation of Rev. Frank Coldrake at the end of 1947, Fr Tucker as the Superior was the sole member of the order which then ceased on his death in 1974.’ From \textit{Brotherhood of St Laurence – An Introduction}, BSL, Fitzroy, 1988, p. 3.
\item \textsuperscript{10} Tucker, p.71.
\item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Ibid, p.72.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p.75.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid, p.75 and the memorial speech for Mrs Anderson, BSL Historical collection.
\end{itemize}
appeal the Brotherhood managed to raise £5,000 to purchase several properties in Brunswick Street, where the BSL has remained ever since.

As Australia’s society gradually recovered from the depression, there was less need for accommodation for unemployed men however, there was always need elsewhere. Many families had drifted into the inner city because costs were too expensive in the outer suburbs and the Brotherhood was keen to assist them. BSL wanted to acquire land a reasonable distance from the city and build cottages with garden space for growing vegetables, hoping to house some of these families. They knew the only way to start a project like this was to commence on a small scale which would hopefully would attract larger contributions and support. However, ‘there was no money even to do anything on the smallest scale’. It was at this time Fr Tucker was introduced to Mr G. J. Coles who would eventually help BSL realise its dream of the Carrum Downs settlement with an initial donation of £500.

Work on the settlement began in March 1935 when six unemployed men worked with a lay brother to clear the land. The first bungalows for student priests were built by David Anderson and were made of packing cases and faced a rectangular lawn with a small chapel at one end. After the war, the land was gradually redeveloped as a village for the aged, a forerunner to the retirement villages we know today. With each decade, new cottages or projects were completed, each catering for those groups that needed assistance at the time. Between 1986 and 1988, a Cottage Appeal was opened to erect 22 additional houses. This appeal was launched with a significant donation by one of the BSL’s benefactors, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch. Although Fr Tucker continued to work in Fitzroy and the inner city during his lifetime, he lived at Carrum Downs from 1948 until his death in 1974.

It is worth noting that in 1997, as part of the Frankston City (East) Heritage Study, the Brotherhood’s Carrum Downs Settlement was assessed as having regional historical significance as an important and successful charitable complex providing low-cost housing for the unemployed in the 1930s and from the 1950s for the aged poor. The complex was listed as historically significant for its associations with the Rev. Tucker, founder of the BSL and of the Carrum Downs Settlement. These associations are expressed through some of the surviving buildings (chapel, ‘packing case’ cottage), the layout, small detached cottage character and the mature ornamental plantings.

The Brotherhood continued to expand and grow, developing and improving services to help all those who needed them, expanding overseas with programs like the Food for Peace project which would become Community Aid Abroad. However, Fr Tucker always believed there was more to be done, he ‘believed in putting his Christian faith into action by campaigning for justice and social reform. Early on he used dramatic films to show others the awful living conditions of poor families and he stood up for what he believed in. On two occasions, he and others staged sit-ins to protest against unfair laws for tenants and landlords’. It is obvious from its ‘hands on’ approach that the Brotherhood played a key role in helping to abolish the unhealthy slums of inner-suburban Melbourne. However the BSL recognised that more was needed in order to make permanent changes in the situation of the underprivileged of our society – research and reporting were a vital part of the process of change. As early as 1943, the Brotherhood employed a social research officer to investigate the causes of poverty. Over the past fifty years, the Brotherhood’s

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16 Ibid, p.84.
17 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
reputation has grown with regard to its research and policy development work, continuing
the promotion of social change for a fairer, more inclusive society. The BSL library is a
vital component to this ongoing work. It is also the ad hoc repository for the historical
objects, papers, photos and ephemera of the association.

4.2 Description of the collection

4.2.1 History and contents of the collection

The research collection began as early as 1943, as described above, when a social
research officer was first employed to investigate the causes of poverty and assist in the
development of policy documents. Today, the BSL library prides itself on maintaining an
outstanding collection of research material on Australian poverty research, and social
welfare in general.

As BSL is a major contributor to both state and national research and policy development
in these areas, it is reliant on the Brotherhood’s library to provide an extensive research
collection. The collection is regularly accessed by BSL staff, in particular the Research
and Policy Centre, as well as researchers and students from outside the organisation. It is
very much a working library.

‘Major topics include poverty and social inclusion, employment and unemployment, labour
market programs, social entrepreneurship, income support and social security, welfare
reform, taxation, health, housing and homelessness, aged care, migration issues including
refugees and temporary protection, child and family services, community capacity
building, and social policy.’

The large catalogued collection of research material includes books, reports, articles,
journals and electronic materials primarily on these topics. This collection is made up of
some 25,000 items and is in constant use. Currently there is a large backlog of resources
waiting to be catalogued, due to recent changes in staffing. In addition to its research
library collection there is a reasonably large collection of catalogued archive material
(approx 3,500 items) catalogued in a separate database from the main collection, and
stored by year in the compactus.

In addition, the Library holds a large collection of uncatalogued historical material, which
consists of BSL correspondence and papers and other material donated by individuals
with both local and national significance (for eg. a folder of information and
correspondence regarding Rev. Coldrake; folder of correspondence regarding housing
issues during 1940’s, typed speeches of prominent members, etc.).

There is a large black and white photographic collection of BSL activities and staff
(including some by well-known photographers Maggie Diaz and Dyranda Prevost), various
eyear photo albums of Fr. Tucker’s (c.WW1), as well as other donated collections of
photos and photo albums. Some of the photo collection is subject indexed, for example
some have been filed in subject folders, however, most are just housed in protective
sleeves and/or stored in archive boxes in the library.

There are significant religious artefacts as well as a collection of ephemera (BSL pamphlets, posters, plans, events programs etc), which are also not included in any catalogue. 22

A collection of audio-visual materials including 16mm films, videotapes in various formats, slides and audiotapes also exists. These are currently being assessed and decisions will be made as to items to retain and catalogue. This process will encompass plans for ongoing maintenance and storage. Contact has been made with the National Sound and Film Archive (NSFA) archivist Rohan Lilley regarding this (It is worth noting that the NSFA has copies of many of the films already. 23)

There are various plaques and paintings which are located throughout the Brotherhood which should be included in the archive collection catalogue so there is an item description and a record of the item’s existence and whereabouts.

In addition to the material stored and assessed in the library, there is an unknown amount of archives in offsite storage, as well as personal staff collections and other material (such as archives from Carrum Downs) which are currently not available to be assessed.

The BSL Library is keen to develop a plan for appropriate conservation, preservation and management of its historical material. The library’s longer term plans include digitising some of their historical records and photos. This will result in improved access to the collection by staff and interested members of the wider community.

Currently there is no formal collection policy in place; however the library has quite clear informal acquisition guidelines. The development of a formal collection policy is a longer term goal of library management.

In addition, once the historical collection has been organised and catalogued, the BSL library could be in a position to accept historical documents/material on relevant issues or about local community that relates to BSL from outside BSL. This would need to be entirely at the library’s discretion.

4.2.2 Historical themes represented in the collection

As the main library resource collection is well catalogued, the historical themes and categories are well defined. As previously stated the Brotherhood is a major contributor to both state and national research and policy development in the areas of poverty and social welfare. Ongoing research to reduce the disadvantages of groups such as older Australians, children and families, job-seekers, Indigenous Australians, refugees and asylum seekers define the major themes/categories of the current collection.

The Brotherhood ‘is unique in its origins and has played an important role in the innovation of services and the development of government policy’ in these often neglected areas. 24 The Brotherhood is also one of the few groups which represents and provides a voice for those in our community who usually do not have this privilege. The importance of the Brotherhood’s collection is supported by an upcoming history that is currently being completed by Richard Trembath and Colin Holden called Divine Discontent. The authors have found both the catalogued and uncatalogued collections invaluable in being able to

23 Please see Appendix 1 for a list of BSL audio-visual materials currently stored in the BSL Library. Appendix 2 is a list of the audio-visual material currently held by NSFA with relevance to the BSL.
24 Holden, C. National Significance, Community Heritage Grant Application, 2007, p10 and co-author of the upcoming history.
bring alive an aspect of Australia’s less recorded history and more particularly Melbourne’s less represented history.  

Within the main library collection there are many books, articles and papers about various aspects of the history of the Brotherhood itself. These range from biographies and autobiographies of significant people associated with the BSL to the histories and discussion papers of all aspects and projects that have been initiated and maintained by the BSL, for example, Ben Bennett’s history of the Carrum Downs Settlement to Bill Deane’s early history of Community Aid Abroad. The Brotherhood has been instrumental in the beginning of many projects which often are taken over by a particular group once they are firmly up and running. This is an important part of the philosophy behind the organisation’s ‘fight for an Australia free of poverty’.  

These histories and biographies are important because they reflect how issues and concerns have changed over the years and how the Brotherhood has constantly reassessed itself to address the changes.

Example 1 of uncatalogued object in the historical collection

![Image of Book of Common Prayer, c. 1915.](image)

**Book of Common Prayer, c. 1915.**

Picture to be included.

Leather bound common prayer book, small gold crosses on spine, size.

This small prayer book belonged to Fr. Tucker. It accompanied him during his service in WW1 initially as an Ambulance driver and then as a Chaplain. It is inscribed “G. Kennedy Tucker, August 1915”. It also has Fr Tucker’s handwritten copy of ‘Scheme of Morning Prayers’, ‘Scheme of Evening Prayers’ and ‘Prayer for absent friends’ in the last pages of the book.

In his autobiography, ‘Thanks Be’, Fr Tucker describes his war experiences and how in his first major engagement with the enemy at Fromelles much effort went into tending the sick and wounded. After the ‘situation was somewhat in hand’ his ‘next task was to bury the dead’. ‘During the winter, when the ground was frozen hard as a rock, the grave digging became especially difficult. After the thaw it was like a quagmire. Now, nearly forty years after, I still have the Prayer Book I used during those days. The inside cover is still caked with earth as the result of my dropping the book while conducting a service. The pages on which is the service for burial of the dead are stained and thin with much use.’

### 4.3 Role of the collection in the community

There are few collections in Australia that have such a comprehensive coverage of material on the issue of poverty in Australia and social welfare in general. As previously stated the collection is used by the BSL staff and well as others outside the organisation who know of its existence.

The whole collection successfully demonstrates how ‘many current areas of community service provision have stemmed from BSL initiatives’. The archive collection and uncatalogued historical material support the main collection, giving a more comprehensive insight into the historical life of the inner city and problems and issues that that affect the

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26 Brotherhood of St Laurence website
disadvantaged in our society. Once the cataloguing process is completed the library will be an excellent resource for anyone working in this field and could be advertised more broadly.

At one stage there was a small museum room on the ground floor at the BSL office (67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy) which contained a display on the history of the Brotherhood including Fr. Tucker’s WW1 prayer book, his chalice, photos, postcards etc., however due to space requirements the material was returned to the library for storage in 2002. This type of display provides the community with the background and history to the association giving a sense of consistency of service and support and is a valuable reminder of the work that has gone before to both the community at large as well as those who work within the environs of the organisation. The relationship between the past and present is important and what we can learn from history can help us formulate the questions we need to ask for the future.

Example 2 of uncatalogued object in the historical collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chalice and Paten, c.1915</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Picture to be included</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liturgical vessels used to hold the wine and bread respectively at the Eucharist, silver, inscription around the base of the chalice reads ‘GKT from CRD &amp; MEHD August, 1915’</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This simple silver chalice and paten set was given as a gift to Fr Tucker in 1915 by Rev C R Dalton, the vicar of St George’s, Malvern and his wife (initials). As described in the Dictionary of Liturgy ‘since they were viewed as being characteristic of the ministry of priests, chalice and paten also became symbols of office solemnly given to newly ordained priests by the bishop at their ordination in the medieval West, a practice continued down to the present in the RC Church and in some Anglican churches’. 29 They travelled with Fr Tucker during his service in WW1. Fr. Tucker refers to them in <em>Thanks Be</em> where he says ‘the vessels had been given me by my dear friends The Daltons’. 30 Fr Tucker describes Rev Dalton as one of the most lovable men he has ever met, but also the best parish priest he had ever known. Fr Tucker was appointed to St George’s after his return from being the Curate of Roebourne in the Nor’-west in 1912 until he joined up with the Ambulance Corp, as he was considered to young, later becoming an Army chaplain. 31 Fr Tucker gave them to Michael Clarke, one of the original members of the BSL and close friend. Dick Kainey donated them to the BSL in 1998. He had served as curate with Michael in Dandenong and Michael Clarke had given them to him as a parting gift when he left Melbourne. 32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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30 *Thanks Be*, p.36.
32 Kainery, D Personal correspondence to BSL June 24, 1998, copy in BSL uncatalogued historical collection.
4.4 Fabric and condition of the collection

The catalogued collection is, for the most part, in good condition and well maintained. However, the collection is very closely packed and storage is an ongoing issue. As part of the overall assessment of its information collection and dissemination processes, the library is currently looking at its collection’s retention and disposal policies.

The National Library of Australia has no firm guidelines or standards for storage of library items. NLA currently has a policy of assessing its growth over a five year period and providing space for that growth. (eg. for monographs it currently leaves ¼ shelf to allow for this 5 year growth). A future Preservation Assessment may be able to best suggest how the library could plan for ongoing growth of the BSL collection.

The catalogued archive collection is in good condition, stored in archive boxes and in plastic pockets where appropriate and housed in the compactus.

The uncatalogued historical and archival collection is by and large stored in plastic pockets, folders and archive boxes. There are items that are just in folders or boxes stored in various locations in the library. Objects such as the prayer books and religious items are also stored in plastic pockets and archive boxes.

There are items or objects such as paintings and plaques in offices throughout the BSL in unknown condition and number.

The main photograph collection is filed under subject titles and stored in plastic wrap (not of current archival standard), and in folders filed alphabetically in a filing cabinet. Additional photo albums and photos (loose) are also stored in the cupboard. There are also boxes of slides in good condition stored in the cupboard, but not catalogued.

The 16mm film canisters and audio visual material are stored in the library cupboards. As mentioned previously these materials are listed in Appendix 1 and are currently being assessed. If the 16mm films owned by the BSL have deteriorated badly they will be disposed of. The ¾ inch, Beta, VHS tapes appear to be in good condition, however if they want to be accessed they will need to be assessed and then transferred to a digital/DVD format, and updated when the next format shift occurs, approx every ten years.

4.5 Comparative examples

The Salvation Army has a museum and a large archive collection housed in its city offices at 69 Bourke Street, Melbourne. It is a very comprehensive collection, largely due to its first curator who donated his quite substantial collection to the Army. The museum and archive collection is currently managed by Lindsay Cox. This collection is a museum and an archive, not a library, however it represents how important the Salvation Army values its history and how that is reflected in the community. The collection is continually updated and old formats are transferred to new formats (film and video).

Lindsay Cox has also created a travelling exhibition which he takes all over the state. Historical newsletters are a regular feature and currently a serialised history is being published (four sections have been published to date). The Salvation Army is a good example of what can be done in the way of meaningful exhibitions on a small budget, however this is only possible through the largely voluntary efforts of the small museum staff.

33 See Appendix 1 and 2.
The Salvation Army has a separate research library located in its training college in Parkville. In the past it was primarily used by students studying at the Melbourne College of Divinity, however now it is accessed more widely. Anyone can access the collection and items may be borrowed by joining the library for a small fee. The collection is tailored around the subjects studied at the college. Over the past few years the library has undergone an internal assessment resulting in a fairly comprehensive review its structure, catalogue and collection policy.

4.6 Assessment against criteria

The BSL working collection has research significance because of its specific focus on maintaining a highly representative research collection of items on Australian poverty and social welfare in general dating back to the 1930s and more comprehensively from the 1950s. It also has historical significance as the collection now includes a great deal of material that is associated with the origins and development of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence as an organisation, together with several biographies and autobiographies on the life of its founder Fr. Tucker and books from major contributors and supports of the association. It also has social significance as much of the material in the collection provides social comment and expression on the development of Melbourne’s inner suburbs, in particular the areas of Fitzroy and Brunswick, which Fr Tucker captured on 16mm film inner city living conditions during the 1940s.

The uncatalogued historical and archive collection has both historical and research significance. The BSL library’s collection of historical objects and items is also historically significant. The provenance of these objects is well documented and has interpretive potential to demonstrate historical themes related to the Brotherhood of St Laurence. Individual items such as Fr. Tucker’s prayer book (see p. 8) and early photo albums have individual aesthetic, social and spiritual significance with established provenance and are highly representative of items valuable to a chaplain working at the Front in World War I.

Black and white photos taken by well-known photographers Maggie Diaz and Dyranda Prevost are included in the photograph collection. Photos taken by them are historically significant as they visually reflect many aspects of the conditions of inner city living from the 1940/50s through to 1960s and 1980s. In the 1960s Maggie Diaz depicted Melbourne’s ‘battlers’ for a Brotherhood of St Laurence yearbook, while Dyranda Prevost had worked for the BSL early on, she later worked together with the BSL and State Library of Victoria to expand its collection on residential living in Victoria.

The BSL library is similar to other research collections such as the Salvation Army’s research library at Parkville, however with the collection’s strong focus on social history over many decades, it now contains a large body of research in this area that is perhaps quite unique and little known amongst the research community in Australia.

5. Statement of Significance

The Brotherhood of St Laurence Library is located at the BSL head office at 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy and has formally operated as a research library since the 1970s, although the collection itself would have commenced with the employment of the first social researcher in 1943. Although there is no formal collection policy, the library is primarily structured to meet the needs of staff within the Brotherhood who prepare policy documents, research papers and other publications on poverty and social welfare in Australia. The collection’s major themes are caring for older Australians, family and
children’s services, assistance for job seekers, support for Indigenous Australians
refugees and asylum seekers with a major focus research and policy development.

This collection is of national significance because of the unique role it plays in the
development and implementation of social welfare policy and practice. It is unique in its
origins and continues to play a major role in the innovation of services and the
development of government policy at both state and federal levels.

The existence of the Brotherhood of St Laurence is essentially due to its founder, Fr
Gerard Tucker. The history of his life and of the BSL in general is therefore important to
the library’s collection. The library houses many historical items connected to Fr Tucker
which are both historically and socially significant.

Both the library’s catalogued and uncatalogued collections contain historically significant
items which reflect on local, state and national issues and the developments that have
taken place over the past 80 years in a social history that is not always highlighted in our
major libraries and museums. For example, within the collection are many items which
display interpretive potential for Australia’s past, such as Fr. Tucker’s first hand accounts
and his photo albums of his WWI experiences, visual images and descriptions of the
depression in Melbourne’s inner city suburbs, and the BSL’s development of innovative
projects like low cost housing for the elderly.

The BSL library collection also has a strong connection to the area of Fitzroy, having been
located there and running programs in the community since Fr. Tucker first arrived in
1933.

6. Recommendations

1. Catalogues

The library has a series of searchable databases (in excess of 60). At present
these are being assessed and decisions are being made to rationalise the number
of databases.

Once this rationalisation has been completed, the uncatalogued historical and
archive collection including correspondence, papers, and photos could be
assessed and catalogued into the Archive database.

Historical objects (such as albums, bibles etc) could be listed within the catalogue
with details of storage or display location. The catalogue could eventually include
other items in the building such as plaques and paintings that are significant to the
history of the Brotherhood.

Once the catalogues are rationalised, the Brotherhood could advertise its library
collection more widely both within the BSL and externally such as through the main
university libraries and the State Library (which already holds a significant
collection on the BSL donated by David Scott, Fr. Tucker’s nephew and one of
BSL’s previous directors). This way research students and staff would know of the
collection’s existence and the extent of its material, which at the moment I think is
not widely recognised.

Access to the historical collection could possibly wait until such time as significant
items are digitised, rather than making all items available for viewing.
2. Develop a formal collection policy.

3. Funding

Further funding should be sought to assist with conservation of the collection. A CHG Preservation Needs assessment is the first priority as a way of determining how this collection might best be preserved. Once a preservation assessment has been carried out training could be sought for volunteers and staff via preservation and collection management workshops. For further information, please see 2008 Guidelines (pages 8-11) at http://www.nla.gov.au/chg/apply.html

The HCC is currently producing a new edition of its significance assessment guide – *Significance 2.0* – which is designed to incorporate refinements in the methodology, extending its relevance from primarily museums and galleries to cover archives and libraries. It will be available toward the end of 2008 and would be useful to the BSL when considering any future funding applications.

4. Historical display

I believe there is still a role for the inclusion of a historical display at the Brotherhood and, although in a charitable organisation this may not be seen as a priority, I believe it would give the organisation, its staff and the public a deeper understanding of the issues and fundamental beliefs that have sustained the Brotherhood over the past seventy-eight years. This may also be dependent on the whether the library stays in its present location.

If this is considered a possibility I recommend the purchase a copy of the Museum Victoria’s ‘Exhibitions: a practical guide for small museums and galleries.’ Authored by Georgia Rouette. An extremely good resource.

5. Future project/s

The BSL library is acutely conscious of the uncatalogued archives held in offsite storage, personal staff collections of material and the archives from Carrum Downs which will, in time, need to be assessed, catalogued and stored. This is a future project which the library would like to address when it has the resources to do so.
7. References

A Brief History, Brotherhood of St Laurence handout, 1994.


Community Heritage Grants, 2007 – Application by Brotherhood of St. Laurence, prepared by P. Newell, BSL.


Appendix 1: List of BSL Audio-visual items stored in the BSL Library

16mm films

Note: Where there are comments on the condition of film they are made by John Walker, ph. 9383 4554. All these films were inspected on 26.6.1997.

1. **Men of the Lightship** B&W 22 minutes
   The story of minesweepers during WW2 in the English Channel. Based on actual events.
   Condition: Light to heavy scratches over end titles. Missing noisy soundtrack with 'motorboating'; last 200ft generally fair.
   Inspected 26.6.97
   *This was apparently shown on the same program with BSL films

2. **It's a Small World** B&W 28 mins
   Travel documentary: Singapore, India, Pakistan, Cairo, Rome, England.
   Condition: Heavy running scratches emulsion side noisy soundtrack – track sprocket holes lightly nicked and strained all joins. Checked faulty joins replaced. Generally fair
   Inspected 26.6.97
   *This was apparently shown on the same program with BSL films

3. **The Australian Aboriginal** (Supreme Films Pty. Ltd)
   Content : ?
   Information on label:
   No.1193-70
   324 copy's
   Footage 14731
   Lab 7066 Dated 22/12/70

4. **Beautiful Melbourne (A)** B&W Silent 10 min 1947
   Melbourne’s Fitzroy slums are Fitzroy, Carlton, Collingwood
   Inspected 26/6/97
   Excellent print
   Condition: The scratches on this print are in the emulsion from the original

5. **Beautiful Melbourne (B)** B&W Silent 10 min 1947
   In canister, no reel. No information on condition

6. **Beautiful Melbourne (C)** B&W Silent 10 min 1947
   Inspected 26/6/97
   Fair print
   Condition: Light to heavy running scratches throughout entire reel on both sides – comment ‘this print is almost at the end of being able to be screened.

7. **These are our Children (A)** B&W 11 mins 1946
   Inspected 1997
   Fair print
   Condition: Light to heavy running scratches throughout, most of the sprocket hole damage caused by rough joins which have been repaired or replaced. Some sprocket hole damage at front of the film caused by film shrinkage and also improper handling.

8. **These are our Children (B)** B&W 11 mins 1946
   Inspected 26/6/97
   Poor print
   Condition: Main titles missing. Sprocket holes nicked and broken intermittently throughout light to heavy scratches throughout. Light oil patches.
   Do not use this film – beyond repair.
9. **These are our Children (C)**  B& W 11 mins 1946
   Inspected 26/6/97
   Excellent print
   Condition: Heavy running scratches sound track edge throughout also on picture edge
   sprocket hole side. The scratches on this print are from the original and not on the
   emulsion of this copy.

10. **Gaol Does Not Cure (A)**  B& W 8 mins 1946
    Story of attempted rehabilitation of a chronic alcoholic, this film should have a commentary
    sheet with it.
    Inspected 26/6/97
    Excellent print
    Condition: Very fine scratches and scuff marks, sound track edge 100ft end.

11. **Gaol Does Not Cure (B)**  B& W 8 mins 1946
    Inspected 26/6/97
    Poor print. Do not use.
    Condition: Severely damaged sprocket holes, do not project as it will only cause further
    damage.

12. **The Brotherhood Story (A)**  This copy says Colour 16 mins 1961
    Introduction by Father Tucker.
    Fair print
    Condition: Heavy running scratches throughout noisy soundtrack sprocket holes nicked
    and strained picture unsteady. Also says ‘beginning missing’.

13. **The Brotherhood Story (B)**  B&W 16 mins 1961
    Good print.
    Condition: Heavy running scratches mainly from original print noisy soundtrack.

14. **The Span Project**  Colour 16 mins 1981
    Elderly people teaching school children cooking skills etc. as well as woodworking
    workshop, handicrafts.
    Good print
    Condition: Intermittent heavy running scratches throughout.

15. **Brotherhood (A)**  Colour 17 mins 1985
    Founding of the Brotherhood and its activities within the community.
    Excellent print
    Condition: This print is OK to run.

16. **Brotherhood (B)**  Colour 17 mins 1985
    Founding of the Brotherhood and its activities within the community.
    Excellent print
    Condition: Heavy running scratch first 20ft.

17. Unidentified film reel in steel canister (ABC sticker addressed to BSL)

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1/4 inch/U-matic/betacam broadcast videocassettes

- Beautiful Melbourne/These are our Children - Betacam copy
- Adding Justice to Care, BSL 12 mins 1993 – Betacam copy
- Beautiful Melbourne Copy 1 : Not very good quality. Do not use for dubbing
- These are our Children Copy 1 : Not very good quality. Do not use for dubbing
- Brotherhood of St Laurence 1978 ‘Brotherhood Bin’ (5x 30/60 sec)
- The Span Project, BSL Copy 3
- Span Segment from “You, Me and Education”
Brothers and Sisters by Peter Green and Lyn Firminger (Commercial copy)
The Lost Generation, CES
Youth Employment “Swimming Pool” 10 mins
State of the Poor, Nationwide ABC, Interview Peter Hollingworth and Prof Henderson, c. 1981
Life from the Bottom; The Sharing Centre – CTA (Channel 9)
Survivors (ABC-TV)
Work (ABC Program or Sunday Magazine) 1981
We Built Great Ships (Whyalla Ships) Four Corners, ABC-TV
A Chance to Catch Up
Poverty in Australia/A Chance to Catch Up, HSV7, 1981
Boiled Rice and Vegemite, ABC TV
Boiled Rice and Vegemite / Tasmanian Women 1982 ABC V
Peter Hollingworth, Sunday Magazine, 1982
Brotherhood of St Laurence 1985 ABC-TV
Futures, ABC Program
No title ¼ inch video

VHS /Betacam tapes

Adding Justice to Care :
  1 Master VHS copy 11mins, 1996
  8 unedited betacam sp tapes (given to library 20.11.98
These are our Children/Beautiful Melbourne (Master VHS from NFSA)
These are our Children (Donor copy from NFSA)
These are our Children/Beautiful Melbourne [and other] 49 mins (Donor copy VHS from NFSA)
  other list says includes Gaol Does not Cure (need to check)
History video 1992 (master)
Youth and the legal system and Youth and the law, Action Resource Centre
Peninsula Appeal, 1986.
Island Project: Work Education
Poverty in Australia, Peter Hollingworth, 23 mins, 1985
Nobody’s Children Pt 2, Peter Couchman, ABC, 23 January 1987
Unemployed 16/17year olds, ABC 7.30 Report, December 1988
Homeless Children, ABC-TV, 22 Feb, 1989
Fair Share the Children, CTA, 30mins, 20 July, 1989
Promise the Children, CTA, 28 mins, 2 Aug 1989. (Master)
Archbishop Peter Hollingworth addressing the National Press Club, June 1992.

Please note there are also audio tapes stored in the library.
Appendix 2: List of BSL Audio-visual items at the National Film and Sound Archive.

Title No: 5821
Title: BEAUTIFUL MELBOURNE
Production Date: 1947
Produced as: Documentary
Media: Film
Summary: Film aimed to acquaint the public with the conditions of inner suburban housing which had almost certainly deteriorated since the 1937 report "Slum Reclamation: Housing for the Lower Paid Worker - First Progress Report" which was carried out by the Housing Investigation and Slum Abolition Board. This report resulted in the setting up of the Housing Commission of Victoria in 1939. WWII intervened and this was the situation ten years after the report. Opens with a series of inner suburban houses, back lanes, peeling paint, narrow streets, sagging out-buildings and verandahs. Kids playing in rubbish. Emphasis on children in streets, rushing traffic. Interiors - cracked and broken plaster, sagging ceilings, no wall linings, poor furnishings. Children around the home - laundry and backyard facilities, lavatory. Families mostly portrayed with young children. Rats, filth, lice, bed bugs. Finished on a Housing Commission Estate in Richmond. Children playing, bath time, cleaning teeth, getting milk and 'tender love and care'.
Country of Origin: Australia
Subjects: Child welfare; Poverty; Richmond (Vic.)
Credits: Cinematographer/Director of photography: J.G. Fitzsimons; Producer: J.G. Fitzsimons; Production company: Realist Film Unit (Aust.)
Sponsor: Brotherhood of St Laurence

Title No: 531399
Title: [BROTHERHOOD OF SAINT LAURENCE: SMALL NOTEBOOK CONTAINING INDEX TO FILMS]
Media: Paper
Summary: Handwritten notes pertaining to the content of the films.
Country of Origin: Australia
Language: English
Subject: Brotherhood of St Laurence;

Title No: 587839
Title: THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST LAURENCE
Production Date: 1985
Produced as: Documentary
Media: Film
Summary: This film was commissioned by the Uniting Church and shows the work of welfare organisation, the Brotherhood of St Laurence.
Duration: 00:22:00
Place: Melbourne
Country of Origin: Australia
Language: English
Subjects: Brotherhood of St Laurence; Fitzroy (Vic.); Melbourne (Vic.); Social welfare; Voluntary workers
Credits: Cinematographer/Director of photography: Keith Head; Director: Erwin Rado; Editor (Film): Keith Head; Scriptwriter: Erwin Rado Production company: Indiginata Filmnic

BSL Statement of Significance Report, September 2008
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title No.</th>
<th>47313</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>[BROTHERHOOD OF ST LAWRENCE : HOME MOVIES : C1934 - 1960S]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Date:</td>
<td>c. 1934 - 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produced as:</td>
<td>Home movies/recordings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media:</td>
<td>Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary:</td>
<td>See contents for a full listing.</td>
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<td>Australia</td>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>THE BROTHERHOOD STORY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produced as:</td>
<td>Documentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media:</td>
<td>Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary:</td>
<td>Documentary produced for the Brotherhood of St. Laurence, of the Church of England, and which came to Melbourne in 1930 to provide hostels for the people when there was great unemployment. The film shows the varied work of the Brotherhood's Social Services Bureau in providing counselling and assistance to the elderly, the youth clubs and the raising of funds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Place:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country of Origin:</td>
<td>Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language:</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits:</td>
<td>Photographer: Geoff Ogilby ; Production company: Cine Service Pty Ltd ; Publicist: Esta Handfield John Handfield</td>
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<tr>
<th>Title No.</th>
<th>633005</th>
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<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>[EYEWITNESS NEWS. C1982. ENG LIBRARY REEL NO. 0631, UNDATED]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast Date:</td>
<td>c. 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Date:</td>
<td>c. 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produced as:</td>
<td>Radio and TV news/TV news footage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media:</td>
<td>Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary:</td>
<td>Contents: 1. Poverty, Brotherhood of St Laurence. -- General note: Summary information is taken from the label on the box and may not accurately reflect the content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of Origin:</td>
<td>Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language:</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject:</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits:</td>
<td>Producer: TEN 10 (Television Station : Sydney, NSW)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title No.</th>
<th>7408</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>GAOL DOES NOT CURE : THE CASE OF THE CHRONIC ALCOHOLIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Date:</td>
<td>1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produced as:</td>
<td>Advertisements/Commercials/Promotional; Documentary; Instructional/educational/training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media:</td>
<td>Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary:</td>
<td>Aims to acquaint the community with the inadequacy of provision dealing with alcoholism in 1946 and to suggest alternative treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of Origin:</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects:</td>
<td>1940s; 1946; Alcohol abuse; Brotherhood of St Laurence; Social problems; Social welfare; Social work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits:</td>
<td>Cinematographer/Director of photography J.G. Fitzsimons ; Producer J.G. Fitzsimons ; Production company: Victorian Amateur Cine Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Title No: 6999
Title: HOME MISSION APPEAL FILM

Production Date: c. 1947
Produced as: Documentary
Media: Film

Summary: Brotherhood of St. Laurence can (2) two. Opening scenes from 'Beautiful Melbourne' -
views of Fitzroy and shot of a small child/Camp Peel and children playing/ travelling down the
road/blue stone church/church service/ outings from Camp Peel/indoor tennis/ kids
projects/outdoor tennis at Brighton Boys' Grammar School/St. Matthews Church and hall/ (Title):
'The Opportunity of Home Missions'-a scene from 'Beautiful Melbourne' /old people/various
churches /kids playing basketball/a lesson in how to knot a rope/a Reverend and his broken down

Country of Origin: Australia
Subjects: Fitzroy (Vic.); Melbourne (Vic.); Missions

Title No: 7000
Title: LONDON AND BRIGHTON, ENGLAND, 1930'S

Production Date: c. 1930
Produced as: Home movies/recordings
Media: Film

Summary: Brotherhood of St Laurence. St Paul's Cathedral / Trafalgar Square / double decker
bus / Marble Arch / street scenes / Tower Bridge / trooping of the colour / a deer park / Thames
embankment / a country castle golfing / Tiger Moth / small lake and gardens / mansion and castle /
stree scenes / beach with large hotels behind and little wooden change rooms on the sand / boat
and bathers / pier.

Country of Origin: Australia
Subjects: Deer; Parks; Tiger Moth (Training plane)

Title No: 17429
Title: MONDAY CONFERENCE. NO. 099

Production Date: 1973
Produced as: Current Affairs/Topical/Talk Programs
Media: Television

Summary: Episode from television current affairs series from 1973. Hosted by Robert Moore in
which he presents a guest to talk about a particular relevant social issue and answer questions
asked by the audience. In this episode, the social welfare scheme is debated and The Brotherhood
of St. Lawrence's role in the community. (53mins)

Country of Origin: Australia
Subjects: Brotherhood of St Lawrence; Social welfare

Credits : Compere: Robert Moore  Executive producer: Robert Moore  Producer: Bruce Allen
Production company: Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Title No: 267298
Title: A PLACE TO LIVE : [C1950]

Production Date: c. 1950
Produced as: Documentary
Media: Film

Summary: A documentary first made in 1946 and updated over time by the Realist Film Unit
examines the housing conditions of the working class compared to the "owners of industry".
Intertitles: Melbourne Financial Centre of Australia Homeless but not so the owners of industry
workers the producers of wealth builders of these homes live across the river. Playgrounds for
workers children 50 empty rooms ( Burnham lodge) Country homes for the evicted ( living in tent
city in the bush) This inequality must end. The workers must own the wealth they produce.
Cataloguers note: Footage of inner city dwellings appears to have come from John Fitzsimons
Brotherhood of St Laurence films, THESE ARE OUR CHILDREN and BEAUTIFUL MELBOURNE.

Country of Origin: Australia
Subjects: 1950s; Housing; Melbourne (Vic.)

Credits: Cinematographer/Director of photography: Ken Coldicutt  Bob Mathews  John Fitzsimons
Production company: Realist Film Unit (Aust.)