

# brotherhood action

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## 50 years for people

## 1930-1980

### Active Elderly at Carrum Downs

In 1935 the Brotherhood of St Laurence rented a farm at Carrum Downs as part of a bold and imaginative social welfare project. The plan then for this 45 acre (16.8 hectare) property was for a farming settlement where unemployed workers from the inner city could be self-employed on the land. When full employment came at the end of the second world war it was turned into a settlement for the active elderly of limited means, one of the first such ventures in Australia.

Today it is called G K Tucker Park in memory of its active founder. There are now 216 residents, who live in 140 self contained cottages and flats. Everyone has their own home and garden in among the gums and winding streets.

What this adds up to, and makes Carrum Downs more than just an equation of people and houses, is a real self-managing community that is active in an amazing number of ways. As Alwyn Hind, Carrum Downs Manager puts it, 'It started as a settlement for the active elderly, and new residents realise just how true that is!'

Laurence Club, the residents' social club, arranges visits for groups coming into Carrum Downs and organises their own group, 'The Entertainers', to visit others in the community.

The group recently entertained residents at the Association of the Blind Institute in Brighton. Day excursions and organised holiday trips are another regular feature.

The painting group, pottery cot-



*Mrs Gladys Rolls leaves her cottage at G K Tucker Park to do some shopping. Mrs Rolls and her husband Allen moved to the park from Caulfield in 1975.*

tage, craft cottage and general workshop also provide residents with a wide and interesting range of creative activities. The plant nursery now sells to the public, together with the 'Op Shop' and Old Curiosity Shop. Residents also organise their own mail distribution.



*Mr Jack Thomas has a well fitted out workshop at his cottage at G K Tucker Park.*

Other facilities include a general store, library, halls, a communal dining room where residents can have their main meal if it suits them instead of doing their own cooking, a chapel, special hostel units for the frail elderly and a hospital.

The hospital is the latest new development. In the early days one building was allocated as a sick bay. As the settlement grew this building was extended to the stage of a mini-hospital with 8 beds. Last year extensive brick renovations were made to modernise it and 4 additional beds were added.

One of Tucker Park's major annual events is the Fair which this year will be held on Saturday 25th October, from 11 a.m. This is an opportunity for those who have never visited the settlement to buy some bargains, have a barbecue lunch and enjoy at first hand the Park's friendly atmosphere.



## Dear Friends and Supporters of the Brotherhood,

Fifty years ago, Fr Tucker used to say that we should be trying to build fences at the top of the cliff, rather than providing ambulances at the bottom to catch the victims after they have fallen.

We should ask today whether this country has been able to get out of bandaid ambulance work to provide programs which prevent problems.

Our success has been mixed. Although the numbers seeking emergency relief is growing, at the same time emphasis has also been placed on programs of prevention. Family planning programs, Infant Welfare Centres, home maker services, marriage and family counselling, child guidance, day nurseries, kindergartens, tenancy advice, community health centres and special school education programs are but a few important examples. There have been serious efforts to plan and integrate these personal services, making them more available to people close to where they live.

As we enter the austerity of the 80's, with a possible reduction in public funds, important programs of prevention are being challenged.

Some argue that the best and most efficient way of providing social services is to give people a guaranteed minimum income, but make heavy cuts in personal welfare services.

This looks attractive but ignores the fact that the best welfare services strengthen people's capacity to manage their own lives, improve family stability and raise flagging self-confidence. Many low-income people who are in unstable circumstances require income security and personal welfare services if their problems are to be prevented.

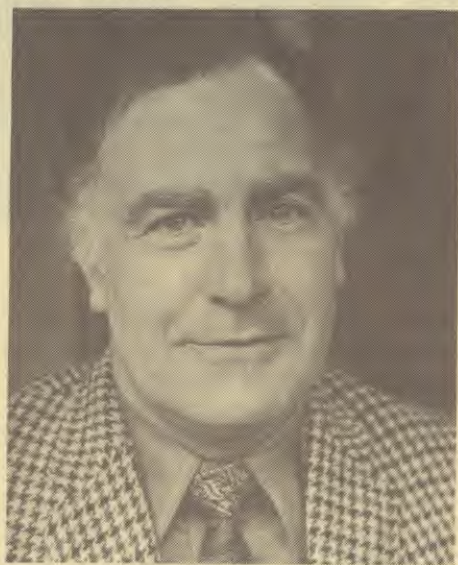
The Brotherhood believes income security and job programs require immediate and urgent attention. This does not mean we believe integrated personal welfare services are unimportant.

We have made a considerable contribution with innovations like Family Planning, Family Day Care, Limurru Cottage, the Family Centre, SPAN, and the Home Improvement Service. In time we will have a new look Material Aid Centre called Share which will emphasise mutual support, co-operation and self-help,

which will take it beyond ambulance work.

All these are modern examples of trying to build fences across the top of the cliff to stop people from falling into the chasms of despair.

Thank you once again for your loyal and generous support in helping us to run these programs. We need all the help we can get in these difficult times.



Peter Hollingworth,  
Executive Director.

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### *From 'B.S.L. Notes,' written by Father Gerard Kennedy Tucker for the Friends of the Brotherhood of St Laurence.*

1935

The BSL settlement.

This is at Carrum Downs, on the main road between Dandenong and Frankston. We have taken a farm of fifty acres which we are working on a communal system with men from our hostels (for unemployed men). Those on the farm share the profits of their work. Our chief aim is to give them an aim in life and to enable them to become self-supporting.

We have taken what we maintain should be the first step towards slum abolition. There is no reason why unemployed men and their families should pay 15/- a week in rent for poor houses in the slums when they could live in the country. We are renting forty acres of land near our Communal Farm, for which we are paying 12/6 a week. Before long we hope to have at least three cottages . . .

As things are at present many of these people are living aimless and hopeless lives in poor dwellings in the

city. Folk living under such conditions help to fill our overcrowded hospitals and asylums, and alas, our gaols too. We wonder how long the community will continue to spend thousands of pounds a year on ambulances at the

bottom of the cliff, when hundreds of pounds would maintain a fence at the top.

I want you to realise that you are part of a movement that is doing a very valuable piece of social service.



A cottage at G K Tucker Park, Carrum Downs, in the 1940's.



## Government Should End Sale of Commission Homes

The Brotherhood has urged the Minister of Housing, Mr Brian Dixon, to stop selling Commission houses at least until there is a much larger stock of rental housing available for low-income people.

The Commission has built 28,000 houses in the metropolitan area but now has only 6,800 available for rental. There are 16,000 flats for rent, but many of these are now regarded officially as unsuitable for families.

The housing situation for many

low-income people is critical as a result of the 50% reduction in Commonwealth funds for public housing and the continuing sale of Commission houses.

Rents have risen rapidly in the private sector and it is no longer economically able to construct dwellings for rental to low-income people.

The Brotherhood favours home ownership for those who wish and are able to purchase. It would like to

see more money, particularly State Savings Bank home loans, reserved for low-income purchasers at terms as liberal as those offered by the Housing Commission.

It is strongly opposed to an excessive concentration on home ownership at the expense of the growing number of people, many on pensions and benefits, whose rental needs can only be met by the Housing Commission.

## Jubilee

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Brotherhood on 8th December, 1930, a number of events and activities have been planned.

On Sunday 7th December, at 7 p.m., a special service of thanksgiving will be held at Christ Church, South Yarra. Christ Church has always been of great significance to the Brotherhood, as it was there, as a young man, that Father Tucker first dreamed of his Brotherhood.

The Archbishop of Perth, the Most Revd Geoffrey Sambell has agreed to preach at the Service, which will be a Eucharist. Archbishop Sambell was the Bursar and later the Director of the Brotherhood from 1947 — 1969.

Attendance at the Service will be by invitation and members of all denominations are very welcome. If you would like to receive an invitation, please write to or telephone Merron Rusden at 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, Tel 419 7055 by 29th August.

The cover of ACTION this time includes our Jubilee slogan, also available as a car sticker.

A Jubilee photographic display will be shown in various locations in Melbourne, Geelong and Frankston.

If you would like a car sticker or more information about the Jubilee, please contact Alleyn Best at the above address.



*David Green, recently appointed as Associate Director, Social Services, talks with Material Aid Service staff Glen Alderson (centre) and Claire Moore.*

## Second Poverty Inquiry Conference

A two day conference to examine the extent to which recommendations from the 1975 Commission of Inquiry into Poverty have been implemented and to review the current situation of poor people in Australia is being organised by the Brotherhood of St Laurence. It will be held in Melbourne on 22nd and 23rd September, 1980.

Three members of the Commission of Inquiry, Professor Ronald Henderson, the Chairman, Professor Ronald Sackville and the Revd George Martin will address the Conference which will be attended by representatives from 80 community and Church organisations.

The second day of the meeting will concentrate on action by organisations to make unemployment and poverty priority issues, for all the political parties, employers, trade unions and welfare organisations.

The Conference is part of the Brotherhood's 50th anniversary celebrations.

## Silence-A-Thon

Form 8J at Presbyterian Ladies' College, Burwood worked hard for their social service contribution to the Brotherhood — a whole day's silence. Their restraint earned \$251 in sponsorship for our child care services.

'We wanted to help by giving up something we really enjoyed' said class member Sarah McConchie, aged 13 years. 'We didn't speak all day except when the teacher asked us a question and we got paid so much for every half hour'.

## Can You Help?

Our shops in Sunbury, Heidelberg, Parkdale and Clayton urgently need voluntary helpers. If you have some time to spare and would like to help, please ring Mrs Thelma Tuxen on 419 7055.



# Spanning The Generations

'A grandparent generation inside the school is very much needed. A lot of our children have grandparents overseas and sometimes this is the only time they see older people,' said Miss Diane McLean, Headmistress of the Holy Spirit Primary School in Northcote. Members of SPAN, the Brotherhood's community project for older people and Miss McLean have together started several craft groups for 6th grade children at the school.

'The older people are particularly good with children. They're always coming up with new ideas too,' said



Jack Stewart teaches George Kallomanos (centre) and Tony Destounis how to use a hammer at SPAN.

Miss McLean. 'Some of our boys were at a bit of a loose end at the weekends and the Saturday group has really helped them. The children just love going to SPAN.'

Each week SPAN member Jack Stewart teaches carpentry skills to some of the boys; a group of girls come to the SPAN house to be shown knitting and crocheting; and another team of older people go to the school, only a few doors away, for toymaking. So many boys were keen to do woodwork that another group come now, on Saturday afternoons.

One SPANner, Mrs Melva Sweeney, from Alphington, has become so interested that she has joined a woodwork class herself at Northcote Technical School. 'We can really communicate with the children and get their viewpoint on everything,' she said. 'Ida is going to Italy for the first time to see her grandparents and she's told me all about it.'

Each week you can see they're more interested,' said another SPANner, Mrs Chris Dingle. 'I think they mix with us good, they treat me like their own age. I tell you what, they must like us as much as we like them. They're so enthusiastic — goodbye Chris, see you next week Chris.'



Mrs Joan Stannus helps Holy Spirit Primary School student Mary Louise Santa with her knitting at SPAN.

## brotherhood gift

Send to Brotherhood of St Laurence, 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, 3065.

I enclose my gift/subscription of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards

Family Services  Social issues and Research

Services for the Aged  General

Please tick here if you do not require a receipt.

Name (Mr. Mrs. Miss).....

Address .....

Postcode..... Office Use Only.....

--- CUT OUT AND MAIL YOUR GIFT

### New Shop

Two new Brotherhood shops were opened recently, at 101 Burgundy Street, Heidelberg and at 286a Clayton Road, Clayton. Both shops have good stocks of clothing, and small household goods.

### Subscribe to Action

All donations of \$2 and over include a subscription to ACTION. ACTION is published bi-monthly and contains information on Brotherhood activities including all new publications. Editorial responsibility is accepted by Dyranda Prevost, 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.





Father Tucker at Lara 1960



# FRIENDS AND BROTHERS

a Life of Gerard Kennedy Tucker (1885-1974),  
Founder of the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Community Aid Abroad

by JOHN HANDFIELD

To celebrate the Brotherhood's Golden Jubilee Hyland House will publish in November 1980 FRIENDS AND BROTHERS, the life of its founder. John Handfield relates Gerard Tucker's story from his happy childhood in the South Yarra parish of Christ Church through many disappointments and setbacks to the foundation of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, one of Australia's great welfare organisations.

The day it was founded at Adamstown, New South Wales, 8 December 1930, the Brotherhood of St Laurence had four members living frugally as celibates on a single salary (£ 250 a year), its only asset a dilapidated secondhand Chevrolet tourer. Fifty years later the organisation, centred in Melbourne, has 450 full-time and part-time staff members and an army of 1,500 regular voluntary helpers. More to the point (or Father Tucker's point) the Brotherhood has helped countless thousands of low income families, unemployed and elderly citizens, giving hope and even life itself to those in need.

The son and grandson of clergymen, Gerard Tucker never wanted to be anything other than a priest and yet he was handicapped by a stammer and examination nerves. The courage and obstinacy that sustained and inspired him through his long and dedicated life are faithfully portrayed by John Handfield. After Father Tucker died a handwritten note was found on a small slip of paper in a little cash box among his few material possessions:

'I have fought the good fight,  
I have finished the course,  
I have kept the faith.'

Friends and Brothers will be 256 pages long, 8.3/4" x 5.3/8" with 12 pages of photographs and it will be hand bound with a full colour jacket.

## SPECIAL PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER

for the Friends and Brothers who subscribe to Brotherhood Action

To: Hyland House Publishing Pty. Ltd.,  
590 Little Bourke Street,  
Melbourne 3000

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