

HOPELINK AND CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION PARTNER TO BUILD THE GENERAL ARNOLD BROWN CENTRE



HopeLink President Bob Simpson, Canada High Commission's Phyllis Routt, Major Darryl Wilkinson and Construction Foreman David Faulkner, pictured in front of the High Commission in Bridgetown

Canadian boost for Salvation Army

AS THE LOCAL BRANCH of the Salvation Army tries to reach its objectives in the community, they have to received a major boost from a Canadian-based Christian, non-profit organization. In collaboration with HopeLink International and a number of local businesses, Caribbean Promise is about to enter the second phase of construction of a resource and training centre at Reed Street, Bridgetown.

Robert Simpson, president of Caribbean Promise, said they hoped the local building and its programmers would serve as a model for the rest of the region. There are plans to do similar work in St Lucia, Tobago, St Vincent and Jamaica next year.

"We want to start in Barbados because it has wonderful infrastructure and caring people. If we can get started here, we can instruct others how to do it in the other islands," he said.

"Stressing there were not "handout, but handups", Simpson said the Youth Centre would focus on five main objectives. It would provide healthy beginnings for young mothers, teach life skills, promote fitness through sports, promote literacy in the computer lab and, of course encourage the creative arts.

He said the idea for help centre at The Salvation Army was developed by Major Woody Hale about 12 years ago and they started raising funds, but he was transferred and it lapsed.

After working in the Caribbean for a number of years, he was invited by Phyllies Routt, wife

of speaker Ishmael Routt, of the Canadian High Commission, to work in Barbados and she also encouraged them to register as a local charity.

Last January, 30 people came down from Canada and built the foundation. They now want to get all the building materials and labour for the General Arnold Brown Youth Centre sourced by December so it can be finished by March next year.

Simpson has made an appeal to local resource people to provide donations in kind to offset the BDS \$387 000 project.

They have received a sizeable donation from Brown's daughter and a number of items were donated to raise funds at last night's auction.

Ralph Johnson of Harris Paints has donated the paint and labour; Central Bank of Barbados has donated the computers; the Australian High Commission has donated all of the software for the computer lab. Yesterday was the corporate golf event at Royal Westmoreland and a live auction. They are still trying to get help with the ceilings and windows.

Artist Gail Nesimiuk is playing her part with her art. She and her husband Rick live in Bangkok, Thailand, where they work with under-privileged children.

Remembering the story of the boy with the five loaves and two fishes as well as the widow's mite in **The Holy Bible**, she said the question was "What do you have in your hands to give to someone else".



Boy from Bridgetown's Reed Street assists Canadian volunteer team in work on the foundation in January 2003.

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Canadian High Commission Provides Signature
Grant of \$40 000 for General Arnold Brown
Youth Centre