



You make Christmas happier

Alexandra and Derek walked out of the hospital, thankful that the urgent tests they'd been helicoptered to Melbourne for had shown their unborn baby was fine and healthy.

But suddenly, they realised they didn't even have a toothbrush between them.

They'd left in such a rush, they had little more than a few dollars on them - and no way to get home.

Happily, thanks to support from V/Line and individual supporters, Travellers Aid was able to help Alexandra and Derek out with a train ticket back to their home in northern Victoria.

These are the kind of emergencies Travellers Aid deals with every day.

People arrive at our services at Southern Cross and Flinders Street Stations, sometimes unable to get home, sometimes needing to flee to safety.

Some may just need a two hour Metcard to get home safely. Others may need a bus or train fare to the country or interstate.

If they have children with them, we usually slip them a little care package so they have some biscuits and drinks to tide them over during the journey.

It's the kind of care that reflects Melbourne's warm heart.

And at Christmas - especially just after Christmas, when tensions run high and money can be short - the calls on Travellers Aid increase enormously.

That's why we are so grateful to the individuals, trusts, foundations and agencies that so kindly support the work of Travellers Aid.

Thank you, and may you enjoy a happy, safe and healthy Christmas.

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A little bit of independence

TRAVELLERSaid



Lauren Hayes outside Southern Cross Station

Thanks to you, whenever Lauren Hayes needs to negotiate Southern Cross Station to get to and from her job in Melbourne's CBD, Travellers Aid is there for her.

Lauren is blind, and finding her way around Southern Cross Station is a challenge. It's especially difficult going home, because of course she can't see to read the signs that tell her when her train is due or what platform it is leaving from.

But throughout her 4 years at university and now with her job in the city, Lauren is met at her train by the Travellers Aid buggy or a personal guide to get her safely to her tram stop at the bottom of Bourke Street.

Coming home, she meets at a pre-arranged time to be guided

to the right platform and onto the correct train.

"It enables me to have that little bit of independence", Lauren explains.

"Southern Cross is difficult to navigate because of its high ceilings and vast open spaces. It really takes the pressure off going between trains or from one form of transport to another to know there are people around who can help you".

The Travellers Aid Buggy Service is run by a combination of paid staff and volunteers. It is funded by AssetCo (Southern Cross Station) and supported by gifts from individual donors.

Travellers Aid buggy and guidance service is available free of charge to anyone who needs assistance getting to and from trains, buses or taxis at Southern Cross Station.

To book go to:
www.travellersaid.org.au
or call (03) 9670 2071

Ambassadors - Our hidden heroes

Behind the scenes at Travellers Aid operates a secret weapon - a core of dedicated volunteers, many of whom have been volunteering with Travellers Aid for more than a decade.

These volunteers, known as our Ambassadors - are part of the heart and soul of Travellers Aid.

They speak at service clubs and other events to let people know what Travellers Aid does and provides.

Not-for-profit organisations like Travellers Aid depend on volunteers like this, not just for their work, but their commitment and selfless dedication.

A generous donation of \$4,000

The Board of Travellers Aid was very grateful to receive a generous cheque from the Ambassadors at the AGM in November, to the tune of \$4,000.

A lovely Melbourne treat

Need somewhere delightful to stay in Melbourne? The Country Women's Association of Victoria (a long-time friend and partner to Travellers Aid) has a lovely Bed & Breakfast available in Toorak

Where: 3 Lansell Road, Toorak

Phone: (03) 9827 8971 (BH)
(03) 9824 0239 (AH)

Contact: www.cwaofvic.asn.au



Medical Companion



Kate Stephen speaking at Travellers Aid AGM in November

One of Kate Stephen's earliest memories of motherhood is arriving at Southern Cross Station from her home in Kyneton. She would be pushing her baby daughter in a pram, and with the other hand be holding the handle of her guide dog's harness. You see Kate is blind.

It was a huge relief to Kate to discover Travellers Aid - a place where she could safely feed and change her baby, get help with directions and know that she was in kind hands.

Now, 17 years later, Kate and her husband (who is also vision impaired) are still using Travellers Aid. These days they use Travellers Aid's new Medical

Companion service that trains volunteers to take Kate and her husband to medical appointments.

The Medical Companion service, established in January 2011, trains volunteers to accompany people who need help getting to and from medical appointments.

The volunteers meet participants at their train at an arranged time, guide them to their medical appointment, wait for them, and then get them back to their train home.

"It's a comfort," Kate confided. "Especially for people already stressed about where to go and why they might be seeing a doctor."

Medical Companions are available to anyone who needs one, especially those from rural regional areas. Some people use the service because they have a physical or other mobility needs that makes it hard to get around. Others use the service because they are unfamiliar with the city or public transport.

"It's a comfort"

The first 15 months of the Medical Companion service has been by the Victorian Government's Transport Connection Partnership and supported by kind donations from individuals.



Medical Companion are available to anyone who needs one. Some people use the service because they have a physical or other mobility needs that makes it hard to get around. Others use the service because they are unfamiliar with the city or public transport.

Booking Service

Please call Travellers Aid on **1300 700 399**. Bookings are essential and 24 hours notice is required.

Thanks to you, Nirmala's children can now get to school

Nirmala was unbelievably grateful to get school travel passes for her five children.

She had arrived in Australia expecting her husband to join her when she got the news – her husband David had been killed in their homeland of Sudan.

Nirmala and her children were faced with the daunting prospect of establishing a new life in Australia without a breadwinner. She and her 16 year old son Samir

were faced with supporting the whole family.

Lack of money meant that the children had to attend the nearest school, rather than those a little further away that offered the special English programs they needed.

Samir thought he'd have to leave school, but with the help of annual travel passes provided by Travellers Aid, all five children were able to attend the school

best suited to their needs.

"I am very grateful" Samir told us, "Now I can finish high school and help my mother support my brothers and sisters."

The annual travel passes were provided by Travellers Aid's 'Pathways to Education' program which provides annual, six monthly and monthly travel passes to eligible students to eliminate travel costs as a barrier to education.

Contact details & opening hours

City Village (Head Office)	Southern Cross Station	Flinders Street Station
Level 3, 225 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000	99 Spencer Street Docklands VIC 3000	Flinders Street Melbourne VIC 3000
T: (03) 9654 2600 F: (03) 9654 1926 E: info@travellersaid.org.au	Under the Bourke Street Bridge opposite the Luggage Hall T: (03) 9670 2072 F: (03) 9600 1174 E: scs@travellersaid.org.au	Between Platforms 9 & 10 on the concourse level T: (03) 9610 2030 F: (03) 9614 1249 E: fss@travellersaid.org.au
Mon – Fri: 9.00am – 5.00pm	Mon – Sun: 7.00am – 10.00pm	Sun – Thurs: 8.00am – 8.00pm Fri – Sat: 8.00am – 10.00pm

Travellers Aid Access Service (TAAS)
Friendly and professional service offering support workers to assist people with disabilities and older people with personal care needs.

Southern Cross Station
Mon – Fri: 10.00am – 5.00pm
Sat – Sun: 11.00am – 4.00pm

Flinders Street Station
Sun – Thurs: 8.00am – 8.00pm
Fri – Sat: 8.00am – 10.00pm

Emergency Relief Assistance
This service is available at Southern Cross Station and operates via appointment. Please telephone prior to coming in.

T: (03) 9670 2873
E: er@travellersaid.org.au

Southern Cross Station
Mon – Fri: 9.30am – 4.00pm
Sat – Sun: 11.00am – 4.00pm

Visit us at:
www.travellersaid.org.au

or follow us on
Twitter and Facebook




Special Christmas Opening Hours

Date	Southern Cross Station	Flinders Street Station	TAAS at Southern Cross Station	Emergency Relief	City Village
23/12/2011	7am – 7pm	7am – 7pm	10am – 5pm	9.30am – 4pm	9am – 5pm
24/12/2011	7am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	11am – 4pm	12pm – 4pm	Closed
25/12/2011	7am – 10pm	Closed	11am – 4pm	Closed	Closed
26/12/2011	7am – 10pm	9am – 6pm	Closed	Closed	Closed
27/12/2011	7am – 10pm	9am – 6pm	Closed	9:30am – 4pm	Closed
28/12/2011	7am – 10pm	8am – 8pm	10am – 5pm	9.30am – 4pm	Closed
29/12/2011	7am – 10pm	8am – 8pm	10am – 5pm	9.30am – 4pm	Closed
30/12/2011	7am – 10pm	8am – 10pm	10am – 5pm	9.30am – 4pm	Closed
31/12/2011	7am – 10pm	9am – 8pm	11am – 4pm	12pm – 4pm	Closed
01/01/2012	7am – 10pm	9am – 6pm	11am – 4pm	Closed	Closed
02/01/2012	7am – 10pm	9am – 6pm	11am – 4pm	9:30am – 4pm	Closed

If you would like to request an accessible version of this newsletter, call (03) 9654 2600 or email: info@travellersaid.org.au.

This newsletter is also available on our website in alternative formats.