



Celebrating 150 YEARS Internationally

Reporter

SUMMER 2015
your support in action



150 years of changing lives

This year The Salvation Army celebrates 150 years of its existence internationally, as Kiwis pause to reflect on the lives they have changed.

In 1865 in England, a new Christian movement came into being, born of the conviction of William and Catherine Booth—who, displaying a progressive mindset, saw a need for the poor and working classes of the time to be cared for and supported out of poverty.

The work of The Salvation Army quickly grew over the following years, as the masses united under the Army and William Booth's leadership, making a name for itself as a champion of the poor and fighter of injustice. Despite the constant risk of persecution, in the early years they tackled poor living conditions, the establishment of worker's rights and the abolishment of child prostitution.

The Army rapidly expanded out of

England and into other countries, with Captain Pollard and Lieutenant Wright bringing The Salvation Army to New Zealand in 1883—which was in the grip of a severe depression, with high rates of unemployment, poverty and crime.

Upon their arrival, Pollard and Wright held meetings in Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin, with word quickly spreading about these distinctly-dressed Salvationists who wore badges in the shape of shields emblazoned with the words 'Blood and Fire, and who used female ministry—almost unheard of in the day.

Within 10 years, as word of their work with the needy grew, the Army was in every New Zealand town with a population of 1,500 people or more.

Today, the Salvation Army operates in 127 countries, with over 15,000 ministries spread around the world. Their aid is diverse and far-reaching, from drop-in centres and emergency

hostels to community programmes, education initiatives and hospitals.

In New Zealand, The Salvation Army operates 68 Community Ministries throughout the country, assisting over 120,000 people in need annually. This figure includes the distribution of 55,425 food parcels, the provision of 13,635 budgeting sessions, and 18,192 community meals being served.

Over 7,000 elderly and infirm people were provided with home support, 1,512 people received addiction treatment, and more than 133,000 bed nights of specialist accommodation were provided.

No matter how dark the times may be, The Salvation Army is there to provide help where it's needed the most.

In order to continue providing help to Kiwis in need, the Sallies depend on the continued support of the community. Find out more about how you can help at www.salvationarmy.org.nz

Inside:

Family Tracing:
Pulling at the
threads

Strong support for
14 Hours Homeless

Providing hope for
desperate families
at Christmas

Online foodbank a
first for New Zealand

Pulling at the threads



Vivienne Hill first came to The Salvation Army looking for her birth parent. She has now joined the service as its team leader. Vivienne describes her passion for re-connecting families.

'I have the best job in the world,' says Vivienne Hill, who earlier this year became team leader for the Salvation Army's Family Tracing Service, which helps to find missing family members.

As an adopted child herself, Vivienne knows the power of re-connecting with family. 'Finding my birth parents affected me so profoundly. I know how difficult it is, but I also see the huge benefits,' explains Vivienne. 'I absolutely knew I wanted to work here, because

it's so vitally important that in this disconnected age, we re-connect at a family level.'

After using her 'detective' skills when she was younger to find her birth mother, Vivienne turned to The Salvation Army's Family Tracing Service to find her birth father. The Service was able to track him down overseas so contact could be made.

Sitting in her office today at Family Tracing, Vivienne has come full circle. She is now helping others re-connect with lost family members, with the role being part-detective, part-counsellor.

Vivienne describes how they 'pull at every thread' in searching for missing persons, using internet searches and electoral rolls, as well as numerous other

searches within the confines of the Privacy Act. 'We may find out a person attended a Baptist church in Tauranga in the '60s, so that's a thread we follow up,' she says. 'So we start pulling at these threads, and more often than not one of those threads will lead to someone.'

“ No stone remains unturned. If they can be found, we'll find them! ”

The role also calls for a very careful touch and empathy for individual situations. The privacy of everyone involved is of utmost importance. There are also times when a person traced doesn't want to be found, and Family Tracing never judges or tries to influence that decision.

But with an 80 percent success rate, more often than not the service is a catalyst for restoring family relationships. Vivienne recalls many reunion stories that have touched her heart, including a father who recently re-connected with his son. He told them 'Thank you so, so much. All I wanted to do was hug my son. Thank you for finding him.'



Find out more about Vivienne and the work of The Salvation Army's Family Tracing Service at www.salvationarmy.org.nz/familytracing

Strong support for 14 Hours Homeless

More than 500 people voluntarily went homeless for a night for the second annual Salvation Army 14 Hours Homeless fundraiser on 9 October.

Teams at seven locations across New Zealand slept rough on cardboard and couches or in cars overnight, raising over \$80,000 for projects helping homeless people each day. The event also aimed to raise awareness of homelessness and was timed so participants woke up on World Homeless Day on 10 October having had a small taste of the homelessness that affects about one in 120 Kiwis.

Salvation Army Public Relations Director Shane Chisholm says he was particularly thrilled that the number of participants had doubled from last year.



Participants attend an event briefing as part of 14 Hours Homeless in Wellington.



Providing hope for desperate families at Christmas

The Salvation Army estimates that it will work with around 17,000 families in need across the country this Christmas.

This assistance is often in the form of hampers, gifts or extra food parcels. However, a big part of their work is also in helping families cope with the extra pressure and demands, which often involves social work, counselling and advocacy. Families are increasingly asking for help to cope with stress, violence and separated parental issues.

The Salvation Army's Secretary for Social Services, Major Pam Waugh, says stress can be a big factor for many families as expenses and the consumer pressures of the season intensify.

'Being able to help families with Christmas gifts and food means people can still plan and budget for other costs to avoid going into debt. This includes preparing for back-to-school expenses in the new year like books and uniforms.'

Major Vaughan says that many of these families are either coming to the Sallies for the first time, or haven't accessed the services for a long time. 'On average we're seeing 309 new families a week looking for assistance with food parcels, budgeting, counselling and more.'

Many families have presented with complicated debt issues that require in-depth work over a long period, with most having no disposable income for things such as Christmas, while other families are barely surviving on the income they receive and need extra assistance.

Housing costs and security are major concerns, and for many families their income is consumed by the cost of housing, electricity and other bills, so that food becomes the expendable cost.

In addition to providing short-term support, The Sallies focus on making long-term changes, via financial literacy and education - including helping people to understand the ongoing costs of

finance and debt and how to avoid it.

This year the Sallies have helped over 68,000 children through its work with these families, and Pam says that social inclusion for children is very important.

'Children need to feel part of their own social group, with happy memories and experiences from the Christmas season, and not feel excluded because their parents are poor.'

Because of this growing demand for support for families in need, this year's Sallies Christmas Appeal focuses on helping to repair these families lives.



Key Statistics - The Salvation Army at Christmas:

17,000 families accessing our services this Christmas

309 new families approaching the Sallies for help each week

68,000 children helped by working with these families

Online Foodbank a first for New Zealand

In a first for New Zealand, The Salvation Army has teamed up with Lucid Design Company and Countdown to launch www.foodbank.org.nz—an innovative online platform where donors can buy much-needed grocery items to help Kiwis in desperate need.

Initially launched in September as a three-month pilot for The Salvation Army's food bank in Royal Oak,

Auckland, the Foodbank Project has now been rolled out nationwide in December.

'All people have to do is visit the website, order from a range of grocery items, and make a donation to cover the cost' says Salvation Army PR Director Shane Chisholm. 'Countdown delivers the items to the food banks, and donors receive a tax-deductible receipt and thanks for their support.'

With demand for food parcels staying high—over 52,700 food parcels have been distributed to Kiwis in need by the Sallies in the past 12 months—the project helps address the challenge of sourcing nutritious food items for the food banks.



Visit the Foodbank Project at www.foodbank.org.nz to help Kiwis in need this Christmas.



Supporting families in desperate need

A change in circumstances threatened to shatter the lives of Amy and her family as they struggled to cope.

Joe, wife Tracey and their daughter Amy left Auckland for the Hawke's Bay, where Joe had landed a good job. They bought a country house, and life finally seemed to be going their way.

But after just their first year in the Bay, they were dealt a cruel blow. The company Joe was working for moved production overseas and he was made redundant. Joe struggled to find other jobs in the area, and Tracey says "When Joe lost his job, we were all in shock... overnight, everything changed."

They were left with no option but to sell up and return to Auckland for work. But in the time they'd been away, property and rent had skyrocketed and the family found it hard to find anywhere they could afford. They were forced to downgrade and although Tracey had found some work, they were living hand to mouth. Debts mounted and within a year they were forced to move three

times, each time to a house more cold and damp than the last.

Young Amy was shifted from school to school and her bright bubbly personality began to fade. Her one pair of shoes were almost worn through and a lack of warm clothes and bedding contributed to her constant cough.

For Joe, depression had set in and he was struggling to see any hope. It was a traumatic time for the small family, as Tracey explains. 'It was just so horrible owing money and never having enough to be able to get the basics. The pressure felt like we were being crushed, and the part that broke my heart was seeing the effect of the strain on our Amy. I would often cry as I saw this sweet bubbly girl become sullen and withdrawn.'

Tracey knew she needed to do something, so she called The Salvation Army—who immediately sought to move the family out of the damp, cold rental into emergency accommodation.

A Salvation Army budget adviser helped the family work out where their money was going and created a budget

that worked for them. Thanks to the community, the Salvation Army found Amy some much-needed shoes, clothing and stationery for the new school year, and enrolled Joe in a life skills programme to help with his depression.

With a bleak Christmas fast approaching, the Sallies organised the family a food hamper along with a present for Amy, something the family could not have afforded otherwise.

While the family still has some more mending to do, they are showing signs of a return to a normal life. Work prospects have improved for Joe with help from a Salvation Army-run Education and Employment programme, and that spark of joy that defined Amy has returned.

Says Tracey, 'People might think that it's only a little bit of money they're donating, but it was huge for us to receive help at Christmas from the Sallies. It was such a relief to have their support when we needed it the most. Thank you.'

** This story is a representation of the many families that seek support from The Salvation Army at Christmas.*



Te Ope Whakaora

Support our Christmas Appeal

Help repair the shattered lives of Kiwi families in need

This Christmas—Kiwi families who have fallen into poverty, need your help to piece their lives back together.

Please support our Christmas Appeal and help repair the shattered lives of Kiwi families in desperate need.

Three ways to support the Sallies ...

- Call 0800 53 00 00
- Give at salvationarmy.org.nz
- View our Gifts of Hope catalogue online at www.salliesgiftsofhope.org