



# ON A MISSION

Your Wellington City Mission Magazine

Issue 1 2020



## The Mission turned my life around

My childhood was extremely hard. My parents left me when I was three, so I lived with my aunty and uncle. I was treated differently from their kids, and it was an abusive situation. I felt bad about myself every day. My behaviour got worse and worse, I was getting into fights and wagging school. At 14 I ran away, staying on friends' floors and couches. I was desperate, so I started stealing to survive. I soon got expelled, and no one else would accept me. I thought I was a goner, like I had completely stuffed my life up.

Then Mission for Youth (MFY) offered me a place. Honestly, my whole attitude was pretty bad at first but I kept going in for the free meals. I started hanging out there more, doing group activities and playing sports. I

was having fun, and I felt motivated to be in a positive environment. It was a relaxing space where we could be open and honest, and I appreciated being treated like an adult. The staff spent time with us one-on-one. I could tell that they cared about me, and I began to seriously focus on where I was heading. I walked away from negative influences and mischief – it wasn't in my mindset anymore. I owned up to the police about my past as well.

*"Who knows where I would be if The Mission hadn't been there at one of the worst stages of my life."*

I put my head down in class, and worked towards getting my first NCEA credits. I left MFY with NCEA Level 2. They helped me

land my first job at McDonald's, and enrol in a panel beating course at WelTec. After becoming qualified, I ended up getting work with a flooring company. I've been in the industry for nine years since then.

Now I live with my partner and two sons. We just want to get ahead, so this year we are focussing hard on saving to buy a house. I want to set a positive example for my kids, and give them the best start in life because I came from the absolute bottom. Being a good father is most important to me – especially seeing as my oldest son is not my biological son. He calls me Dad, and that's how I treat him. I make sure that he doesn't feel like he's any different.

Who knows where I would be if The Mission hadn't been there at one of the worst stages of my life. I can't really say any more than thank you. Those two years turned my entire life around.

Empowerment. Transformation. *Fullness of Life.*



## Murray's Message, Wellington City Missioner

Welcome to 2020. Although we are already two months in, it still feels like a new year with all the excitement, anticipation, hope and possibly anxieties that this season of our year brings.

As I reflect back over the early days of 2020 for me and my wider whānau, I get a sense of how dynamic life can be and the

extent of changes that go on in people's everyday worlds: for us - we have had illness (some temporary and some more serious), job losses, moving houses; mixed in with holidays, celebrations, family gatherings and times of joy.

We all experience changing circumstances in our lives and what is really important is how we cope with, and respond to, those changes. The City Mission works with many people through some of the difficult changes that they face, and hopefully equip, empower and support them to respond well and move forward with confidence.

You will read about some of these people and their situations in this newsletter and how our wonderful staff have walked the journey with them so that they end up in a better place.

Wellington City Mission itself also has lots of changes going on as we plan and work on how to be most relevant and supportive

to those who need us. There are lots of things happening in the Mission and I look forward to sharing these with you as the year progresses.

Thank you for your interest in and support of the City Mission. We can do more when we do it together. I wish for you all, a year of hope, happiness, blessing and encouragement.

*"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."*  
Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

Murray Edridge  
Email: [murray@wgtncitymission.org.nz](mailto:murray@wgtncitymission.org.nz)



## Britannia House gives me a new lease of life

At 19 years old, I found myself homeless. I was dealing with mental health issues, depression and anxiety. I wasn't doing much at all, and I was becoming more and more alone. I had a very negative outlook on life, and had no aspirations or hopes for my future. After five years of living on the streets of Wellington, I found my new home – Britannia House (The Paa).

When I first got to The Paa, I was really nervous, but everyone gave me a warm welcome. It was all very overwhelming at first, but the positive atmosphere really helped me get settled in quickly, and I began to feel good about life again.

The comradeship is one of my favourite things about this place. It feels like a family. There is a lot of support available inhouse, like social work, counselling, advocacy, and health services. All the staff are here for you as well. They keep motivating you and pushing you to succeed. I've never seen this level of personal support anywhere else.

*" My whole outlook has completely changed."*

Each day is usually filled with appointments, chores, house meetings, and hanging out with the other kainoho (residents). I'm also proud to be studying Te Reo. It's a beautiful and powerful language, and learning something new reminds me that I am capable, and there are opportunities out there for me.

Everything I'm doing is helping me deal with my issues and get my life back on track.

My whole outlook has completely changed. I am still a little unsure of exactly what's next for me, but it's empowering to know that there are people backing me. All I can do is be open to giving new things a go, and try my best.

I'm excited about starting the next chapter of my life, and just being a regular person again. I'm looking forward to getting a job, finding a house, and one day having a family. I want to say thank you so much to everyone here. You are doing seriously good work!

*We've seen a massive transformation in Aiden. The life really returned to his eyes as he became more engaged in our community. He has shown amazing leadership skills, and you can see how much he loves being here. We are delighted to have offered Aiden a Kaitiaki (Caretaker) role. The next step will be training him as a Hoa Aropaa (Peer Support Person).*

Empowerment. Transformation. *Fullness of Life.*





## We've found our way

A year ago, life was pretty tough for my son Lockie and I. He has a number of conditions – dyslexia, developmental delay, ADHD, and Autism Spectrum Disorder – so home and school life can be a challenge. At the time he was moving from his primary school to intermediate, and it was a complete disaster. I felt I wasn't being communicated with, and the lack of learning support was taking a toll on Lockie. It was a full-time job for me keeping him on track and participating in school. On top of it all, I was dealing with devastating domestic violence.

I had reached out for help, and lots of different people were getting involved, but nothing was changing. I was unable to get

the support we needed to improve our situation. It was so stressful, and we were going around in circles.

*"She gave us a voice."*

One day, in the second term at his new school, Lockie was excluded. It was a terrible shock – it happened so quickly and without warning. Oranga Tamariki was even brought in to assess our situation, which was extremely daunting. That's when I was first introduced to Mission for Families, and my social worker Ruth.

Ruth got to work straight away. She gave us a voice. She helped me through all the complicated processes with the various specialists and agencies. She knew exactly what we needed, and how to make progress. She also supported me with

Lockie's transition into a more suitable school where he has begun working with a teacher aid. He's improving and Ruth's personal guidance through everything has been massive. I was able to get out of my relationship and put that part of my life behind me. Thankfully, we were removed from Oranga Tamariki's system as well.

Our everyday life has become a lot more stable, and it's been great for me to be able to get back to work part-time. There are still challenges ahead, and I am already planning for Lockie's transition to college next year. I still work with The Mission for now, as they help me keep everything on the straight and narrow.

Having amazing people on our side has lifted a huge weight from my shoulders, and I can get on with being the best mum I can be for my son.

## Running with a purpose

We first met George Henderson in July 2019, when he came into The Mission and told us that he not only planned on running the length of New Zealand, but that he also wanted to use this as a fundraiser to raise money for us. George called this 'Run Te Araroa' and in early December, after months of training and preparation, George set off from the Cape Reinga. 49 days later (record time), George ended the run in Bluff, having travelled 3006 kilometers by foot, raising a whopping \$17,000 for The Wellington City Mission.

George shares his story and some insight into his journey:

### When did you decide to run Te Araroa?

I had the idea in the back of my mind early in 2019 but it wasn't until March/April that the idea became more real. It was a light bulb with a dimmer switch that gradually got brighter.

### Why did you choose The Wellington City Mission as your charity partner?



I love Wellington (the place and people) and I'm inspired by The Wellington City Mission's heart for serving those in need. I knew that The Mission were the right charity to partner with.

### How did your faith and spirituality keep you going on this journey?

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me", "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit" are just two of many verses and stories that really helped keep me going. Knowing God was for me and with me was a great comfort. If I had a big day of mountains ahead, I would

remember that the God who made those mountains was with me, and nothing is impossible for Him. After remembering this, the mountains no longer seemed like an issue.

### What was the most fulfilling aspect of running the journey?

There were many fulfilling aspects. A big one was that so many people donated, and the amount raised doubled my expectations. I'm also happy I managed to complete the run in record time. Going from the top of New Zealand to the bottom gave me a new sense of what's possible which I find fulfilling.



# OUT & ABOUT



## Everybody's Christmas Lunch

Christmas Day saw over 300 people descend upon Newtown School grounds to share a special Christmas Day lunch, with over 100 volunteers giving up their time to also help out. Everybody's Christmas Lunch was supported by the Newtown Residents' Association, Wellington City Council, St Vincent de Paul, The Salvation Army, New Worlds' Island Bay and

Newtown, St Thomas' Church and the Newtown Collective. Community Development Manager, Raymond Tuffin says, "Everybody's Christmas Lunch was about allowing people to connect and feel a part of a community, as well as providing a meal to those who may have gone without one on Christmas Day." Feedback was positive, with many people believing that the festive feast was not only food for the soul, but that the sense of community meant it felt like everyone was one big family.

## Creating Opportunities through Sports

Last year we officially launched our Community Sports Bank initiative which looks at breaking down the barriers to sports by opening sports banks across the Wellington region. We've been actively working with Upper Hutt, Hutt City, Porirua, Kapiti-Coast District and Wellington Councils to address the cost of subs and fees, and access to equipment and transport.

With five of our Community Sports Banks already open, we've been able to distribute over 1,000 sports items and equipment which otherwise

would've gone to the landfill. 90 per cent of these items have been single items such as balls, boots, runners, cricket bats, softball gloves, hockey sticks and many more. We also received 1,000 mouth guards as sponsorship from Ricoh.

The donations that we receive goes a long way to future proofing our Community Sports Banks so that we're able to continue providing opportunities for children, young people and families to participate in sports and meaningful activity.



## 5 Cans for 5 years

In what has been a longstanding partnership with LFC Wellington Yellow Fever and the Wellington Phoenix, we once again joined forces to hold another Phoenix game-day collection in October 2019. While crazy winds and torrential rain put a damper on the previous year's collection, this time we had better luck at our October collection.

The theme for the collection was 5 Cans for 5 Years, which

was an acknowledgement of the five-year anniversary of our partnership and encouraged people to bring along five cans to fill our foodbank. Once again, Wellingtonians were incredibly generous and helped to fill three large bins with cans and we collected just over \$1,000 in donations.

Thank you to everyone who donated on the night, or who dropped donations off at Four Kings and The Backbencher. Your generosity and support makes a huge difference.



# LOOKING FORWARD



## Wondering how to spend your retirement? Your help can lift kids out of poverty.

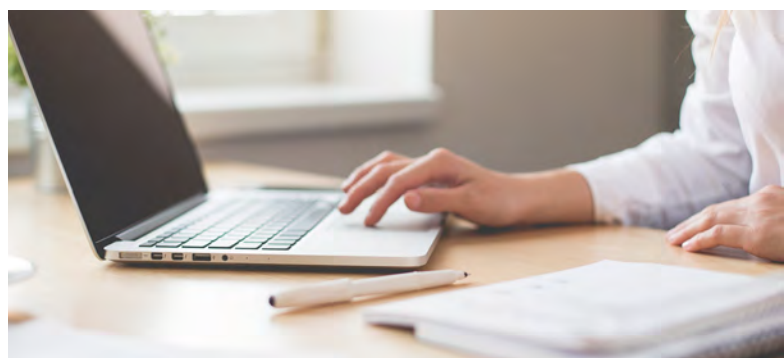
Spend My Super is helping generous Kiwis to make a difference for children and families in need across our country. Through Spend My Super you can donate part or all of your Superannuation to selected charities, including The Wellington City Mission, so that together we can help more of our children have a fair chance to succeed and thrive.

If you're interested in donating part or all of your Superannuation to The Mission, then we encourage you to visit [spendmysuper.org.nz](https://spendmysuper.org.nz) to make a donation or set up regular payments today.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with our team by emailing [enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz) or by calling Vivienne on 04 245 0845.

## Reminder: The 2019-2020 Tax Year is ending soon!

The end of the tax year is fast approaching, so please keep in mind that any donations you make before 31 March 2020 can be immediately included in your tax rebate application. You can visit [wellingtoncitymission.org.nz](https://wellingtoncitymission.org.nz) to make a donation at any time. Thanks for your support.



## WHAT IT MEANS

**Liam**  
Social Worker  
Mission for Families



*As I look forward to the year ahead, I'm reminded of how the experiences of working with people from such varied backgrounds is a rare opportunity not afforded to many. Every day I see and meet people and whānau who face complex challenges. Working alongside them in a supportive and engaging manner, helping them to address and overcome their challenges, achieve goals that are important to them and watch them grow and thrive makes my job all the more worth it. This year I'm excited to continue encouraging the resiliency of people and whānau so they can feel empowered and transformed, and experience fullness of life.*

Mission for Families provides early intervention for families through advocacy, education, support and guidance, equipping families to better manage their own circumstances.

**Tu**  
Senior Youth Worker  
Mission for Youth



*Being able to serve, make a difference and a positive change for rangatahi who come through our programme is an awesome part of my job. Every day I work hard to teach our rangatahi to take ownership, and I think this goes a long way in helping them to find that lightbulb moment. We teach them values and help them find the positives. We help to plant a seed that will one day see them grow as a person – spiritually and culturally, and be good citizens. There is a saying; it takes a village to raise a child. That is why the support we receive is so important and keeps me going in my role. We're all on a collective journey to making a difference, and that is certainly a key factor for me and my role.*

Mission for Youth is a comprehensive Alternative Education programme for youth who have disengaged or been excluded from mainstream schools, providing a place of belonging, life-skills, and new opportunities.



## A Farewell Word From Fay – Manager, Mission for Youth

As I look back on my ten years working at The Wellington City Mission, what has provided me with most satisfaction is seeing past rangatahi return, and hearing their success stories. Hearing their come-back stories, the life lessons learnt, how they've upskilled and started families, and taken on new opportunities has given me belief in my role each and every day.

Those sorts of things keeps me grounded, and it also gives me hope knowing that all the students that come through our programme go on to achieve great things.

I've seen the harsh side of poverty, and it has been the one challenge that I've remained committed to over the last ten years. Helping our rangatahi and their families access services, and ensuring they're given a hand-up and not a hand-out has seen us turn lives around. Every day we work hard to ensure that all rangatahi can access services they need.

The support we receive from our family of supporters and donors is important, as is the support of organisations like Evolve who we partner up with. Together, we're able to break down the complex needs of rangatahi so that they can grow to be successful individuals and don't fall through the cracks.

I've also learnt that so many rangatahi and whānau who come through our programme are so vulnerable and often too scared or shy to ask for help. That is what we're here for. To build their self-confidence, and resilience.

I still remember to this day, getting a phone call from a parent one afternoon at 4pm. The father was struggling with his daughter, and was looking for help. I pledged my support to him, and Mission for Youth began a journey alongside the father, providing him and his daughter with guidance and wrap-around support.

Soon after I received a text message from his daughter saying, "my dad just told me he loved me!". She now has two young children of her own and her relationship with her father is stronger now more than ever before. Stories like these are a constant reminder of why we do, what we do.

We plant a lot of seeds, and it gives us great satisfaction to see the seeds grow and flourish. Making sure our children know they are cared for, and loved, is at the heart of our work at Mission for Youth.

As I reflect on my ten years here, I leave having enjoyed every minute of every day. I have a deep appreciation for the amazing work that takes place throughout all our Mission programmes, as well as the generous support from volunteers and our family of supporters and donors who make our work possible, and the impact tangible. Your support means that we're able to continue knocking down barriers to get better outcomes for our rangatahi, so that we're giving them the best start in life.

*Fay Fruean-Va'ai has been with The Wellington City Mission for ten years, and is leaving us to pursue a new opportunity. Fa'afetai (thank you) Fay for your alofa (love) and tautua (service) over the last ten years.*

## THANKS TO YOUR HELP...

### Oct - Dec 2019 Key Statistics



Mission for **Families**

**390**

Our Social Workers carried out 390 home visits to families



Mission for **Youth**

**16**

16 students took part in our MFY programme



Mission for **Independence**

**1,361**

Volunteers & staff served 1,361 meals in our Drop-in Centre



Mission for **Seniors**

**167**

Staff made 167 contacts with clients



Kemp Home & Hospital

**706**

Kemp provided 706 bed nights of accommodation

## DONATE NOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### WAYS TO DONATE

Website:  
[wellingtoncitymission.org.nz](http://wellingtoncitymission.org.nz)

Phone:  
(04) 245 0845 to make a donation.

Internet Banking:  
To our Bank account 03 0547 0296036 17 (Ref: 1A20/21)  
Email [donations@wgtncitymission.org.nz](mailto:donations@wgtncitymission.org.nz) with details if you wish to receive a receipt.

## CONTACT US

Call in, or contact our Newtown office and Drop-in Centre:  
19 Gordon Place, Newtown, Wellington  
PO Box 7477, Newtown, Wellington 6242  
T: (04) 245 0900 E: [enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz)

## E-NEWSLETTER

To sign up to our quarterly e-newsletter, please email us your details [enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@wgtncitymission.org.nz) or call 245 0845.



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# HUGO'S LETTER

*I have been talking with Santa lots about things I would love for Christmas.*

*I hope he gets me a jet pack.*

*He doesn't talk back so I'm not sure if I will get it. I also told mummy just in case and she said that Santa doesn't give out real jetpacks to little boys that don't have licences yet so I said maybe a back pack with pretend flames is ok.*

*It makes me sad that some kids don't get anything for Christmas, it's not fair.*

*So I was thinking, can we do something together?*

*Instead of any money that you would spend on buying something for me can you show me how you have helped little boys and girls who don't get anything?*

*I am going to buy a little present with my money for a little boy, and mummy is going to give it to her work as they do that sort of thing.*

*I know food and water is most important to families but I also think books are very important, because I love them.*

*My mummy and daddy are going to help me buy a box of groceries so I can help with the food bank donations at school with yummy Christmas food.*

*When it's time can you send me a picture of something you have done for Christmas using any money you would have spent on me as that will make me happy.*

*I can't wait til Christmas.*

*Love Hugo.*

**We received this lovely and thoughtful e-mail from Hugo last year, reminding us of the importance of peoples' generosity at Christmas. Turn the page to see how we helped children and families last Christmas.**



# YOU WERE SOMEONE'S STAR!

THANK  
YOU

wellington  
citymission

WITH YOUR SUPPORT & GENEROSITY, WE:

600

Distributed over 600 Christmas  
Star Boxes to businesses and  
organisations to fill with food,  
goods and gifts

3,000

Provided Christmas food  
parcels to feed over  
3,000 people

2,000

Gifted new toys to over  
2,000 children for Christmas

55

Supplied 55 community  
service agencies throughout  
the Wellington region with  
Christmas food and/or gifts

100

Gave out more than 100  
special Christmas Day  
Hampers on Christmas Eve



# THANK YOU!

Thank you for helping to make a difference, and for supporting those in need at Christmas. The support of every individual, family, business, organisation, team and group meant that we were able to make Christmas both special and memorable for individuals and families across Wellington.





*Father Des*

**Wellington City Missioner, 1994 - 2011**



## A Tribute to former Wellington City Missioner, Sir (Father) Des Britten, KNZM

The Wellington City Mission and our local community are mourning the loss of our former City Missioner of 17 years, Sir Desmond Britten, KNZM, who recently passed away.

On behalf of The Wellington City Mission whānau, we extend our sincerest and heartfelt condolences to Sir Des' family, his two children and friends.

Sir Des (also known as Father Des) was an iconic Wellington trailblazer. He was Wellington City Missioner from 1994 to 2011, and was well known for bringing his own unique flair and flavour, vibrancy and energy to the role. He was a well-known Wellington figure, with a flamboyant personality.

His love for Wellington started right back from when he used to run the Wellington Coachman Restaurant and bring in warm meals on the weekend to feed those in need.

I know that he was very proud of the structured programmes he introduced to The Mission, and at the very heart of his work, was his unwavering desire for The Mission to be a "real force for good" in Wellington.

He was immensely passionate about helping those in need, and has laid down a legacy that he can be proud of. May he rest in peace knowing that his legacy will be remembered and continued.

Sir Des was previously vicar at St Barnabas Church, Roseneath. He ran the Wellington Coachman Restaurant for 28 years, was a columnist for The Dominion Post for 14 years, a television chef and radio host, and was author of several cookbooks. Sir Desmond received a Knighthood for services to the community in 2011, and was appointed as a Canon Emeritus in the Diocese of Wellington in 2011.

At this very sad time, we remember his family, two children and friends. We thank you for sharing him with us, and we thank Sir Des for his years of unwavering passion, commitment and service.

E te rangatira, moe mai, moe mai, moe mai ra.

Murray Edridge  
Wellington City Missioner

***"We've just got to keep focused and think of others, because if we don't it's going to be a very sad world in which we live."***  
***– Sir Des Britten, 2011.***