

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**SOCIAL SERVICE, SOCIAL JUSTICE OR A MATTER  
OF FAITH?**

**THE PALMERSTON NORTH  
METHODIST SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRE  
1963-2000**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts in History,  
Massey University, Palmerston North**

**Helen Dollery  
2005**

## **Acknowledgements**

There are always debts incurred in the process of researching and writing a thesis, and I would like to acknowledge the people whose expertise, knowledge and patience I have drawn on over the past sixteen months.

Staff in the History Department at Massey University have been helpful and supportive in many ways. I would particularly like to thank Dr James Watson for material assistance to attend a Melbourne conference; Dr Kerry Taylor for keeping me facing in the right direction; and my supervisor Professor Margaret Tennant for her breadth of knowledge and suggestions on how to improve the text. Its faults, however, are all mine.

Archivists have also greatly aided my progress. I thank Lesley Courtney at the Ian Matheson Palmerston North City Archives, and Marcia and Fred Baker at the Methodist Church Archives in Christchurch. Marcia and Fred's ability to call to mind and hand a wondrous diversity of information, and their warm hospitality, are greatly appreciated.

Everyone who I spoke to at the MSSC was helpful and generous. My thanks especially to Graham Pritchard, who found documents and answered questions with commendable patience.

Profound debts of gratitude extend to my family, who kept faith when I found it hard to do so, and continued to love me at my most unlovable; and to my friends, who became skilled at guessing when it was OK to ask how it was going – and when to just keep going.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the sustained and often unheralded efforts of community volunteers, including those of the MSSC, without whose work and commitment we would all be the poorer.

**Abbreviations:**

<i>AJHR</i>	Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives
CSC	Community Services Council
MSSC	Methodist Social Service Centre
NZCOSS	New Zealand Council of Social Services
NZCCSS	New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services
NZFVWO	New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations
NZJH	New Zealand Journal of History
NZMSSA/MSSA	New Zealand Methodist Social Services Association
NZPARS/PARS	New Zealand Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society
PNCC	Palmerston North City Council/Corporation



# **Table of Contents**

**Acknowledgements**

**Abbreviations**

**List of photographs**

**Introduction** **1**

## **Chapter 1: The 1960s:**

**‘Steady does it’ meets the ‘explosive sixties’ – New Zealand in the 1960s** **17**

**Antecedents and Mission Development** **20**

**Founding principles and establishment of the MSSC** **22**

**Community Development** **24**

**Education** **25**

**Programmes and Initiatives** **26**

**Summary** **30**

## **Chapter 2: The 1970s:**

**‘The right to fully participate?’: New Zealand in the 1970s** **31**

**The Palmerston North context** **33**

**The MSSC** **35**

**Programmes and Initiatives** **38**

**Funding** **40**

**Education** **43**

**Community Development** **46**

**Summary** **48**

**Case Study One: West Street Hostel** **50**

<b>Case Study Two: The Home Support Service</b>	<b>60</b>
 <b><u>Chapter 3: The 1980s:</u></b>	
<b>From Muldoon to monetarism: New Zealand in the 1980s</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>The Palmerston North Context</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>The MSSC</b>	<b>78</b>
Funding	79
Programmes and Initiatives	83
Education	89
Community Development	90
Summary	93
 <b><u>Chapter 4: The 1990s:</u></b>	
<b>The Social Laboratory continued: New Zealand in the 1990s</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>The Palmerston North Context</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>The MSSC</b>	<b>107</b>
Community Development	109
Programmes and Initiatives	112
Education	119
Funding	121
Summary	125
 <b>Conclusion</b>	 <b>127</b>
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>148</b>

## **List of Photographs and Images**

- Page 29: George Baber and Ann Olsen with Christmas hampers  
Source: Baber, *Towards Wholeness*, p.10
- Page 53: West Street Probation Hostel opening.  
Source: Baber, *Towards Wholeness*, p.35.
- Page 60: Bertha Zurcher reading with children.  
Source: Baber, *Towards Wholeness*, p. 26.
- Page 64: Bertha Zurcher with Home Support caravan.  
Source: Baber, *Towards Wholeness*, p. 25.
- Page 108: MSSC Building at 663 Main Street.  
Source: IM Palmerston North City Archives: A25/191, Box 3.
- Page 118: National Action on Poverty rally poster.  
Source: Methodist Archives, Christchurch: PN Parish Council Reports, 1990s.

## INTRODUCTION:

The Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre ... was created as a means of Christian outreach by providing skilled counselling services and practical help to people in any type of need...without any regard to religious affiliation or profession.

...The aim is to give service in the community as widely as possible, therefore we seek FRIENDS from every part of the community, who will give support to the work.

'Friends of the Social Service Centre' pamphlet, MSSC, 1969

The Methodist Social Service Centre has been seeking, and making, friends in the Palmerston North area for over forty years. Its reasons for doing so, its actions and their consequences, are at the core of this study, which argues that a process of mutual benefit has resulted from the ways in which the Centre has chosen to present itself to its community of users and supporters. The Methodist Social Service Centre (MSSC) was established in 1963 as a formal extension of the pastoral and welfare work of the Methodist Church in Palmerston North, as its founders considered that government and other voluntary agencies were not meeting the demand for family-based services in the city. In following decades the MSSC has broadened its range of services to the surrounding community in response to changing societal needs and the increasingly professional basis of welfare provision. Its staff has a strong history of involvement with many other community-based agencies, and the Centre has been active in helping to establish and support other groups working in the city and region. Throughout changes of style in leadership of the Centre, changes in the programmes and social work avenues pursued and changes not of their own making in the wider community, the Centre's staff have maintained a strong sense of who they are and the values they deem important in their work. The Centre has consciously remained relatively small and has generally avoided large-scale capital developments, preferring to focus on flexibility of service to meet changing welfare needs and demands. This ethos has provided staff and management committees with not only the base to continue and develop their work, but with a platform to develop and foster community initiatives and strong links with other welfare and government agencies. Perhaps more importantly, it can be argued that it has resulted in a wide acceptance of the centre as an important part of the wider Palmerston North community.

An examination of motivations and actions, and a chronology of the Centre's development over time will, then, provide one aspect of this study. This will include examining programmes and services for elements of continuity and

change – how and why adaptations were made, and the context of increasingly specialised and divergent demands by welfare users. Chapters will be divided into approximate decades, with sections on national, local and MSSC levels of influence and interactions. Within the chapters, case studies of collaborative programmes developed with local and central government agencies will be examined for what they portray about changing welfare needs and responses over time, including how expectations of partnerships worked in practice. Chapters will include analysis of how the actions of the MSSC as a voluntary welfare provider fit into the wider historical understanding of welfare provision.

The 1960s chapter will consider antecedents to the Centre including the earlier models of City Mission work in larger centres, and the philosophical and physical parameters for the establishment of the new Centre. The role of influential individuals and the timing of the Centre's establishment will also be considered. The chapter will also examine the importance of changes in post-WWII Methodist social service orientation and the contemporary social work context, influential individuals, and the early development of network-building policies for the Centre and the city.

For the MSSC the 1970s was characterised by an outward-looking focus: the increasing professionalisation of social work, new partnerships and initiatives and the consolidation of staffing, programmes and community links. This was a period of considerable diversification in demands upon welfare services, reflecting societal changes where groups asserted their identities as distinct from the 'male breadwinner, nuclear family' model. Two case studies of programmes launched in the 1970s illustrate the roles that voluntary welfare agencies played in the development and implementation of probation hostels and home care services, and the complexities of interactions with state policy makers and public servants.

The 1980s, often referred to as a watershed period in New Zealand history, brought increasingly rapid societal change due to economic recession and radical government policies affecting social policy areas. For the churches involved in social service provision, this resulted in a more fractious relationship with government, criticism of government policies and priorities throughout the decade, and the beginnings of a more overt social justice imperative finding voice. For the MSSC, this was a decade of coping with the social consequences of large-scale unemployment and ideologically driven policies that severely affected many of the

Centre's users, whether by its work in establishing a foodbank, or in collaboration with other local agencies to develop local community development strategies.

Policies introduced in the 1980s by a Labour government were further expanded in the 1990s, resulting in a clash of values as many welfare and church groups strongly reacted to the National-led government's neo-liberal philosophy. Voluntary welfare agencies were increasingly compelled to adapt to business models of welfare partnerships as a condition of government contracts for services, which had ramifications for the type and quantity of work required of both paid and volunteer staff. The MSSC also took part in, and sometimes initiated, social justice campaigns critical of central government, although tried to maintain cordial relationships with local state welfare agencies working in its immediate community.

An important facet of the study sets this particular organisational history into the wider context of welfare history in New Zealand. While earlier historical studies have emphasised the dominant, and sometimes predominant, role of the welfare state in New Zealand, it is now recognised that other welfare providers have also played a significant role in the overall mix of policy and provision. In addition, state and non-state have co-existed in a more fluid and changeable relationship than has previously been acknowledged. The 'mixed economy of welfare' concept has encouraged researchers to examine subtleties of interactions between, and within, welfare sectors, including the role of the voluntary sector. This study of the Palmerston North Methodist Social Service Centre is an example of how the relationship between government and voluntary welfare providers has ebbed and flowed over a period of pronounced social and political change. In this period the literature provides evidence of both willing engagement on both sides, and of some caution by voluntary agencies faced with the risk of losing their ideological and financial autonomy through contracting relationships with government departments. It also shows the tensions between the values and methods employed by voluntary agency staff and public servants when working in partnership arrangements. Placing this study in a local context, where paid and volunteer staff of a faith-based organisation interact with members of a provincial city community, allows for examination of a series of negotiations throughout the centre's history. From its beginnings, the MSSC has consciously negotiated its position as a social service provider in this community, in cooperation with other

church and community groups, local government and central government agencies.

Social service is fundamental to the Centre's ethos, but the importance of social justice issues cannot be denied. Social justice rhetoric and consequent public campaigns that overtly questioned or criticised government policy were not new to church social service groups in this period. City Missioners in the 1930s were also vocal and politically active in their push for social change in a period of economic crisis. For denominations at the liberal end of the New Zealand theological continuum like the Methodists, social justice remained an important complement to their social service work throughout the period of this study. The development and embedding of a neo-liberal ideology by the fourth Labour government, and the National government that succeeded it in the 1990s, provides an opportunity to examine ways in which the MSSC worked towards social change, and responses to their actions.

In addition, there is the element of faith as a central 'character' in this study. In this, as in other areas of its operations, the Centre negotiated its position with its supporting parishes and parishioners, maintaining personal, spiritual and financial links, at the same time that it worked in an increasingly professional capacity as a welfare agency. Church-based centres like the MSSC provide an interesting counterpoint to other providers of social services, sharing aspects of common thought and practice with other agencies – both state and community-based – while maintaining the Christian focus that is central to their motivation for the work. This 'faith-based' foundation, together with a strong volunteering ethos, provides an interesting focal point for questions surrounding the supply of, and demand for, local welfare services. Although the central Christian philosophy behind the establishment of the MSSC has remained constant, it is interesting to consider whether changes in societal values and government ideologies over this period have resulted in an increasingly overt political stance by centre staff and volunteers. If this is so, then to what degree is political advocacy an extension or reflection of the Christian faith that motivates the Centre's paid and volunteer staff? Any consideration of this must come with an awareness of individual differences in perspectives within the Centre's paid and volunteer staff, with some staff articulating the imperative towards social change at the same time as others maintained their comfort with social service provision roles. As the title suggests, social service, social justice and faith have all been important ideological



motivators for both paid and volunteer staff through periods of profound change in New Zealand's political and social climate. The concepts of 'mixed economies of welfare' or 'moving frontiers of welfare' between state and voluntary sectors can also be applied within sectors. Bronwyn Labrum has drawn attention to the mixed economy operating within the state sector, and the voluntary sector, with its diversity of functions and groupings offers similar opportunities.<sup>1</sup> Within the MSSC, the relative mix of social service, social justice and faith over time adds further interest to this concept. The key question, then, examines the relationship and interactions between faith, social service and social justice for the MSSC's paid and volunteer staff in their operations, and the political ramifications of their actions in the public sphere.

### **Literature:**

There is a wide-ranging literature on various aspects of voluntary activity, welfare provision, religious faith and its public expression, and organisations that involve some or all of these elements, in New Zealand and overseas. Two things quickly become apparent in perusing these works: firstly, most of the literature relating to voluntary welfare, in whatever capacity, has been written in the last twenty years - quite a lot of it in the last five years. International interest in voluntary contributions to civil society is currently high, after many years of scholarship in which it was the poor relation when compared to the nature of states and how they provided for their citizens' needs and desires. Secondly, and directly relevant to the motivation for locating this study in a provincial centre, is the paucity of academic studies or published histories of provincially-based welfare organisations in New Zealand or of provincial branches of national bodies. There is currently little to compare the MSSC with. There are provincial studies of community attitudes and interactions, many relating to earlier time periods – Caroline Daley's Taradale study is an example<sup>2</sup> – and there are organisational histories and studies of religious and welfare organisations, set in main centres. Where local welfare or community organisations have written histories, they are often brief or written by insiders, for a non-academic audience. Although not analogous to the MSSC in every respect these studies can provide points of comparison: what constants are evident in churches' provision of social services throughout the twentieth century, and what is peculiar to differing geographical and temporal sites of activity?



Most of the relevant literature can be broadly grouped into two categories – that relating to, or intersecting with, voluntary welfare and that relating to religion and faith-based welfare.

### **The Voluntary Sector:**

Writing of the British voluntary welfare environment in 1985, Maria Brenton articulated the difficulties inherent in attempting to develop a useful understanding of voluntary activity:

Enough has been said...about the extreme diffuseness and complexity of the voluntary sector to indicate the near impossibility of quantifying it or estimating the quality of its activities. To talk about the 'voluntary sector' is in itself, although a necessary shorthand, to ascribe a homogeneity and unity to this vast range of activities that is totally artificial and misleading. The voluntary sector's pluriformity and lack of clear boundaries do not lend themselves to the definitions and classifications upon which statistical methods are based. The data available therefore are incomplete and patchy, based either on sample surveys or on studies of localities.<sup>3</sup>

It is a feature of research into 'the voluntary sector' that twenty years later, and throughout the world, the nature of people's voluntary involvement in their communities of interest is still being contested, quantified and assessed.

Most of the literature relating to the voluntary sector, both overseas and in New Zealand, is relatively recent. Such informal work has not always been acknowledged or recognised as filling a significant role in civil society, and the interest in it as a subgroup of civil society coincides with closer examination of the roles of 'state' and 'non-state' in meeting the needs of citizens. As democratic governments throughout the twentieth century assumed more responsibility for welfare provision previously pioneered and developed by voluntary or charitable organisations, changes in the nature and role of the voluntary sector became apparent. State-run welfare programmes did not wholly obviate the need for complementary services, nor were they always intended to, and the voluntary sector developed and adapted to many changes throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

As this is a relatively young field of academic study, much of the literature contends with problems of definitions and typologies: what constitutes voluntary activity; in what fields does it operate: how can it usefully be defined for future researchers? Although the majority of the literature relates to the voluntary sectors

in the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States, enough commonalities in theoretical perspectives exist to aid in broad definitions. What is common to studies of this kind is the awareness of great diversity within the voluntary sector. Even naming this activity for the purposes of studying it can be problematic. Some researchers refer to the non-profit/not-for-profit sector, others the voluntary sector, while the term 'third sector' is sometimes used to differentiate organisations working in this area from the other two civic sectors, the state and the market (or, alternatively, the state and the household). In preference to 'non-profit', which indicates an 'other' separate from profit-making enterprises this study refers to 'voluntary', as the primacy of volunteering is consistent with the ethos of the organisation studied even though the MSSC also has paid staff. David Robinson, writing about values in the voluntary sector in New Zealand, considered that there were three main principles: independence – freedom of association; altruism concern for others; and collective (community) action.<sup>4</sup> It is also appropriate to consider the use of 'community' as a concept. In this study, the concept of intersecting communities of interest is consistent with the working definition used in the Working Party Report into the relationship between communities/iwi and government (*Communities and Government – Potential for Partnership, Whakatapu Whakaaro*, 2001):

The term 'community' is generally used to convey the idea of individuals sharing a network of relationships and forming a common identity either on a basis of a shared locality, common cultural and historical identity or through shared interests. 'Community organisations' are, therefore, primarily characterised by a sense of mutuality or 'common interest'.<sup>5</sup>

International research groups have used data from many sources to attempt some generalisations about voluntary activity, mostly in the last two decades. British researchers Kendall and Knapp's evocative description of the voluntary sector as 'a loose and baggy monster'<sup>6</sup> indicates the inherent problems in trying to define a sector that is as notable for its disparities as for its similarities. Their five 'structural/operational' criteria, which posit that an organisation should be 'formal, self-governing, independent of government, not profit-distributing (and primarily non-business) and voluntary' are useful markers for the further development of typologies, and for a working definition, although the inclusion of 'voluntary' (meaning non-compulsory) as part of the criteria formulated to define it indicates the slipperiness of the concept. Kendall and Knapp also note the mitigating factors that may result from contracting arrangements between voluntary agencies and governments and the potential for blurring of boundaries between them. The

Wolfenden Committee, inquiring into voluntary organisations in Great Britain, referred to the 'voluntary movement' as

a living thing....There is nothing static about the scene. This means that we have not been able to look at a timeless framed picture, but rather a particular 'still' in a moving film.<sup>7</sup>

The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project initially covered twelve countries in a wide-ranging empirical and comparative analysis of the voluntary, or non-profit, sector, and is currently expanding the range of countries covered. It addresses the perceived invisibility of the voluntary sector, and seeks to provide empirical evidence of its size and importance politically and economically. The subsequent literature is significant for the breadth of its work internationally, and the subsequent growth in 'third sector' research.<sup>8</sup>

A relatively recent proliferation of academic journals relating to the voluntary sector illustrates debates on the changing nature of volunteering, and interactions with governments, while others provide a forum for papers on functions and motivations of volunteer agencies e.g. *Voluntas*, *Voluntary Action* and the Australasian journal *Third Sector Research*. An article in *Voluntary Action* by Lukka and Locke, 'Faith, voluntary action and social policy: a review of research', addresses the implications of intersections of faith and voluntary welfare work in modern political economies.<sup>9</sup>

Recent work on the voluntary sector in Australia is also useful for the elements it shares with the New Zealand context, and for the differences between the nature and development of volunteering in each society. *Volunteers and Volunteering*, edited by Jeni Warburton and Melanie Oppenheimer, examines elements of voluntary activity in Australian society, from both historical and contemporary perspectives. The chapter 'An overview of the voluntary principle in Australia: Why the past matters' asserts that we need a 'good understanding of the long-standing relationship between the state and the voluntary sector'<sup>10</sup> and its historical underpinnings, in order to inform public debate. She argues that, in addition to recognising, articulating and valuing voluntary work for its own sake, it is necessary to grapple with the considerable complexities 'being created by the shifting boundaries of the relationship between governments and the voluntary sector, and how this is affecting volunteers and volunteering.' This engagement with the political forces affecting contemporary volunteering is evident in many other recent academic texts, as is awareness of the fluidity of the changing relationship between the sector and government. It provides an interesting

complement to opinions expressed by those researching, or working in, the voluntary welfare sector in New Zealand, particularly since governmental 'contracting out' of services became a major issue in the 1990s. Researchers on both sides of the Tasman, and beyond, have expressed some disquiet about the effects on voluntary agencies of contracting relationships with governments, referring to agencies in evocative terms as being 'little fingers of the state' or 'government agents'.<sup>11</sup>

New Zealand literature on the voluntary sector shows strong historical evidence for sustained links between the state and voluntary agencies, particularly in welfare provision, although the emphasis has generally been on the role of the state. As in overseas research, work focussing primarily on the voluntary sector in a New Zealand context is relatively recent, although there is a range of organisational histories and biographies of significant individuals. These vary in relevance and usefulness for this research. Published histories like Ann Trotter's *Mary Potter's Little Company of Mary. The New Zealand Experience, 1914-2002*, Jessie Munro's *The Story of Suzanne Aubert* and Michael Belgrave's *The Mater: A History of Auckland's Mercy Hospital, 1900-2000* provide background information on the histories of voluntary religious organisations that were involved in aspects of health and welfare provision, and fluctuations in their fortunes and relationships with church administrators and government funders of those services.<sup>12</sup>

Many histories of voluntary organisations and institutions relate to operations in the main centres of New Zealand, and where national histories exist, relatively little attention is given to the nature and operations of provincial branches and how they may differ in focus or operations. Well-established national organisations like the Foundation for the Blind, IHC, The Plunket Society and Barnardo's are more likely than smaller entities to have published histories, and their histories are generally written by professional writers, researchers or academic historians.<sup>13</sup> Provincial organisations tend to have histories written on a more parochial scale, often by those inside the organisation. While quality and contents vary, there is often a tendency to detail lists of activities culled from annual reports, office holders and capital works. Of the local studies, Sheryl Hann's history of the Palmerston North Women's' Refuge, shows awareness of changing social climates in which voluntary welfare groups operate.<sup>14</sup>

Margaret Tennant's chapter 'Mixed Economy or Moving Frontier? Welfare, the Voluntary Sector and Government' in the volume she co-edited with Bronwyn Dalley – *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History, 2004*<sup>15</sup> – addresses the need for research that focuses on the voluntary sector in New Zealand, rather than the state. Her central assertion, that reappraising the growth and retreat of the welfare state in connection with the voluntary sector offers some new perspectives on each, is highly relevant to this topic and this topic is indicative of the burgeoning of academic research into the interface between voluntary organisations and government agencies. Tennant's chapter follows from an earlier article in the Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, 'Governments and Voluntary Sector Welfare: Historians' Perspectives' in which she outlines the contestability of concepts and manifestations of voluntary welfare, both in New Zealand and internationally. The picture drawn is of a nuanced welfare sector – or sectors – in which both government and voluntary welfare change over time. Peter Lineham, in 'The Voice of Inspiration? Religious Contributions to Social Policy', discusses the moral contribution that the churches have made to social policy debates, and often marked differences between denominations, time periods and governments' willingness to listen.<sup>16</sup>

Another main source of information on the voluntary sector in New Zealand is reports and scoping studies undertaken on behalf of government departments or interest groups, and census information specifically aimed at determining the extent of non-paid work in the community. (Census data has the potential to provide useful and insightful revelations on levels of formal and informal volunteering although changes in questions asked in successive Censuses, and problems related to cultural perceptions of unpaid work, reveal the difficulties inherent in capturing this kind of data.) Examples of recent national studies include 'The Changing Face of Social Service Volunteering: A Literature Review' from the Ministry of Social Development in 2001, and 'Counting for Something. Value Added by Voluntary Agencies' from the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations in 2004. These studies were commissioned by government and volunteer organisations respectively and indicate the growing awareness of volunteers' contributions to New Zealand society. In addition, the 2001 Working Party on the Voluntary and Community Sector/Government Relationship called for more historical studies in this area, including life cycles of voluntary institutions and studies focusing on religious provision.<sup>17</sup> There is a general sense of needing to define and quantify voluntary work, although the



perspectives of the commissioning bodies vary, and the wider picture on which they focus does not always provide particular information about particular regional variations or conditions. Historians David Thomson and Margaret Tennant have both called for a longer-term perspective on New Zealand's welfare history, in order to gain an understanding of change, and constancy, over time. This, they argue, would provide a reference point for current developments in welfare policy, provision and funding.

Although there are intersections between literature relating to social policy, the voluntary sector and welfare history, there are some sources that are primarily written by those working in the field of social work and social policy in New Zealand. Aspects of this literature can add to an understanding of the development of government policy as it affects the operations of organisations like the MSSC throughout the period. Gwen Ellis's chapter 'Social Work in Voluntary Welfare Agencies' in *Social Work in Action*, discusses a practitioner's view of the changing relationship with government agencies in the 1990s 'contract culture' environment.<sup>18</sup> *Social Policy in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Critical Introduction* similarly grounds social policy in a New Zealand context, and has provided an appreciation of the different lenses used to analyse material.<sup>19</sup> In addition there are recent historical surveys of aspects of state welfare policy and provision in New Zealand that provide valuable information on the overall welfare context. Of these, two published in 1998 have been particularly useful: Bronwyn Dalley's *Family Matters. Child Welfare in Twentieth Century New Zealand*; and Margaret McClure's volume, *A Civilised Community. A History of Social Security in New Zealand 1898-1998*. McClure's work traces the chronology of the welfare state in New Zealand, including some information on voluntary agencies and how they complemented or partnered state provision. Her work illustrates the close connections between the making and implementation of social policy, connections increasingly recognised by social policy researchers and historians alike. Dalley's child welfare history charts shifts in welfare policy as well as the underlying constructions of 'family' and changes in what were deemed appropriate measures to deal with their crises. Both works are illustrative of the fluidity of responses to welfare needs over time.

## Religion:

Generally, much of the literature relating to religious organisations refers to their 'faith-based' nature, yet this, like voluntarism, is hard to define as the range of motivations, theological bases and expressions of faith are diverse. Recent academic works have ranged from those that attempt a typology of religious organisations, to those that discuss the role of religion in welfare provision in secular societies. There are several published volumes of New Zealand religious history that provide some insight into the development and positioning of denominations in NZ history, and also the role of the church – in general, and in its interactions with the state. *God and Government: The New Zealand Experience* outlines the role of churches in New Zealand's increasingly secular society.<sup>20</sup> A recent article by Stenhouse is combative in its assertion that many New Zealand historians have neglected or understated the religious element in New Zealand society, instead strongly favouring the 'secularisation' model of decline in influence of religious values and active faith. Stenhouse refutes representations of religion as previously important to some groups in New Zealand's earlier history, but having since 'retreated into the private sphere, where it allegedly ceased to have much wider social, cultural, intellectual or political significance', drawing on examples of 'diffusive' or 'implicit' Christianity as still influencing New Zealanders' values.<sup>21</sup> An article by Peter Lineham on social policy and the churches from the 1990s onward backs up Stenhouse's assertion of the continuation of religious influence within society; Lineham comments that 'it is rather astonishing to find the sheer scale and extent of Christian engagement with the state and in policy debates in the 1990s, at the point at which many commentators assumed that Christianity had been thoroughly sidelined. The secularisation thesis works to a point, but clearly at times Christians have been able to show that they remain a very significant segment of society.'<sup>22</sup> Peter Lineham's chapter, 'Government Support of the Churches in the Modern Era', is particularly pertinent to this study, with its discussion of the churches as lobby groups intersecting with a secular state. His examination of the nuances of these interactions concludes that church and state have maintained a close partnership in the post WW2 era, despite some uneasiness on either side at different times. He summarizes John Evans' thesis on discernible phases in the church/state relationship from the 1940s, and offers as an alternative interpretation his own impression that churches are/were 'fundamentally seeking to cooperate with the state, but uncomfortable when the government treats them as compliant.'<sup>23</sup> This concurs with evidence of MSSC staff expressing their strongly

felt desire to retain organisational autonomy whilst receiving government funding, but not rejecting working with governments in theory or practice.

Other literature in this area includes studies of religious orders, many written by members of the denominations involved, and theses relating to aspects of church history and political involvement. Many of these studies deal with nineteenth century mission work, or with earlier twentieth century periods than this study, as with theses written by Jacqueline White and Graeme Ball on types of charitable or mission activity in Auckland.<sup>24</sup> While not directly comparable to the time or location of this study, they provide perspectives on denominational attitudes to, and manifestations of, faith-based welfare work. Edwina Watson's 1994 thesis on the impact of welfare state restructuring on voluntary welfare organisations in west Auckland provides contemporary information directly related to voluntary activity, and patterns of interactions in a larger centre.<sup>25</sup> Other New Zealand literature relates to church and clergy responses to the ideological basis for government policy in the late 1980s and 1990s, often specifically focussed on social justice issues, or the Social Justice Statement released by a group of church leaders in 1993. Illustrative of the rhetoric expressed in such works was a symposium summary that stated, '[All contributors] share the conviction that adherence to Christian beliefs involves a commitment to social justice, and that this must be expressed in both deeds and words', while noting a diversity of views on what constituted a just society.<sup>26</sup> This debate was significant within the Methodist Church, and within their social service centres.

Most of the published literature available on Methodism in New Zealand relates to the theological basis of the Church, or to individual parish histories. Peter Lineham's book *New Zealanders and the Methodist evangel: an interpretation of the policies and performance of the Methodist Church of New Zealand*, although short, is good source material for an understanding the historical development of Methodism in the New Zealand context.<sup>27</sup> In the area of Methodist social service literature, there are published histories of the Methodist Church in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin that include some brief sections on city mission work, and also some specifically on this topic. Donald Phillipps' 2001 volume *Mission in a Secular City: Methodist Mission Northern, 1851-2001* covers a broad range of urban social service work over 150 years, providing some valuable context for a study that falls within this period. In contrast to the MSSC, building and maintaining institutional care facilities was a



strong organisational focus of this Mission. Individual biographical studies of, mainly, City Missioners show their personal convictions about social service work, and their modes of operating, often using their forceful and charismatic personalities to provide support and funding for their services. Ball's study of Jasper Calder and the Auckland City Mission and Leah Taylor's study of Leslie Bourneman Neale (in Christchurch and Auckland) illustrate the qualities found in churchmen committed to evangelism and social service. There are also some brief biographical studies of those involved with social service work, in *Meet the Methodists: Postwar Personalities and Perspectives*, which provide relevant background detail to the development of Methodist social services. It notes, 'Between 1950 and 1965 everywhere in N.Z. Methodism the emphasis was shifting from evangelistic effort to social service, which was something obviously useful, whereas mission preaching of the old type was out of fashion.'<sup>28</sup> It goes on to discuss the ramifications of this for the church, and for the Missions, when political conditions changed. There are also theses that include the Methodist Church in a wider focus on Church attitudes: John Evans' 1992 thesis on *Church-State Relations in New Zealand 1940-1990* which focuses on the Methodist and Presbyterian churches is useful for its analysis of liberal theology and interactions with central government. Archival material from the Public Questions Committee of the Methodist/Presbyterian Churches provides evidence of increased awareness of national lobbying from a liberal Christian perspective, which fits with the liberal theological ethos of the MSSC.

There is scant data on the provision of Methodist welfare services in provincial areas: this tends to be briefly summarised under 'Pastoral work' in more general parish histories. *The Last Ripple: A Century of Methodism in the Manawatu*<sup>29</sup> which summarises the development and general history of Methodism in the Manawatu, offers little insight into the social service focus of the Church locally, although it does note women parishioners as active in supporting missions at home and abroad, but is useful as a background into the relationships between parishes in the wider circuit. Most of the published material available has come from authors writing on behalf of the Church in some capacity, and the quality varies. Two books relating directly to the MSSC, and published in the 1980s-1990s, provide interesting and useful 'insider' perspectives on the work and motivation of the Centre: Florence Baber's *Beyond Wholeness* is a brief history of the first twenty years of the Centre, and Loyal Gibson's *A Stitch in Time* records the establishment and operation of the Centre's recycled clothing shops in Palmerston

North.<sup>30</sup> Both have been written by people with long associations with the MSSC, and offer insight into the Centre's work, and the people who shaped and contributed to it. In addition, there are a number of papers written either by MSSC staff, or in conjunction with other local organisations or local government agencies, which are useful for their contemporary perspectives on the changing economic and social climate in which the MSSC has functioned. Retrospective summaries of their times as Directors, by Roy Bowden and Philip McConkey, provide a clear sense of the orientation of the Centre under these leaders, and their impressions of how future work may be developed in a changing welfare environment.

The influence of New Zealand's first Bachelor of Social Work course, established at Massey University in 1976, is evident in the authorship and content of many local studies, some commissioned by the MSSC while students were on placement at the Centre. These research reports focus on the local situation, providing Palmerston North's planners, local politicians and welfare practitioners with contemporary information on how policy made at national level affected welfare users. An example of this cross-fertilisation of ideas is a report entitled *The Provision of Personal Social Services in the Manawatu. A Report to the PN Office of the Department of Social Welfare*, which was written by Massey academics in conjunction with DSW, PNCC and one hundred and nine local non-statutory organisations.<sup>31</sup> Looking at aims, services and personnel in welfare organisations in the early 1990s, it found a 'significant increase' in provision by non-statutory agencies. The 1983 'Surviving on the Breadline' report, documenting local low-income families' financial difficulties and their consequences, was influential in the MSSC's decision to establish the Palmerston North Foodbank that same year, and to continue supporting it to the present day.<sup>32</sup> There is a plethora of reports from the early 1990s, written to demonstrate ways in which ideologically driven government policies fundamentally affected social welfare provision. Some of these papers are aimed at ascertaining existing levels of need and support in the local community, while others are more overtly aimed at advocacy for clients, and/or exerting pressure on government policies. As many relate specifically to the work of the Centre and to elements of the motivation behind it, they are particularly useful. There are also primary sources, both internal documents and those intended for public consumption - annual reports, minute books, committee reports and planning documents, copies of speeches given to local organisations by MSSC staff - that provide excellent examples of consistency and change in the direction and energies of both paid and volunteer staff. Two interviews with Merv

Hancock, in edited volumes, supply useful background material for his considerable input into local community development and the professionalisation of social work, the operations of the MSSC and professional mentoring of its staff.<sup>33</sup> In addition, taped interviews and correspondence with significant individuals who have had long involvement with both management and hands-on delivery of MSSC programmes will enrich this study, and properly locate it at the level of committed local people working in and for their community.

When the MSSC applied for lottery funding to research and write a history of its thirty-year-old Goodwill Stores operation, the Director approached the city's archivist for a letter of endorsement for the project. His letter noted that 'voluntary agencies such as the MSSC play a vital role in our community, but their heavy workload usually prevents them from systematically recording the history of their activities.'<sup>34</sup> This study of the Palmerston North Methodist Social Service Centre is a contribution to the recent call for more studies on voluntary welfare provision in New Zealand. It fills gaps in three particular areas of our welfare historiography: time, location and focus. It is situated in a time period not well covered by existing studies in this area, yet a time in which there were significant changes in the demand for, and provision of, welfare in New Zealand. This Centre was established in the 1960s, and while it followed some established guidelines for Methodist social service, it developed its own ethos based on contemporary social work principles, rather than adapting from earlier models. Geographically it moves away from the majority of studies based around the main centres and City Missions, providing a counterpoint to their coverage of the concerns of both providers and users of welfare in larger cities. It cannot always be assumed that provincial centres will follow patterns set by large cities, or that their populations will develop similar relationships with the Centres in their area. The lack of detailed studies based in provincial areas has not, so far, provided a strong basis for comparison. In addition, the foundation and particular expression of faith as a central tenet of the MSSC, and its relationship to the other two elements of time and location, has much to say about how the Centre has developed, negotiated and maintained its position in its provincial community, in a period of declining Methodist, and overall, church attendance. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this is a history of the people who have worked for the MSSC in many capacities, often volunteering their time and energy over decades to help others in their Palmerston North community.

## THE 1960s

### **‘Steady does it’ meets ‘the explosive sixties’: New Zealand in the 1960s**

General histories of New Zealand in the 1960s refer to two broad and conflicting bands of popular thought and practice - change and stability. The early 1960s period, and Keith Holyoake's National government, was predicated upon maintaining the orderly patterns of life and government enjoyed – or endured – in the 1950s. The state 'leviathan'<sup>35</sup> reached into most areas of New Zealanders' lives, the welfare state was in its heyday, and the post-war baby boom peaked in 1961. National's 1963 election slogan 'Steady does it' indicated a disinclination for sweeping change. Considerable change came anyway, from external sources as well as those within New Zealand. While economic change was forced upon the country as the result of declining markets<sup>36</sup>, other international influences were often willingly accommodated in the form of popular culture. Television and greater access to international travel provided access to new forms of entertainment, ideas and perspectives. In the latter half of the decade movements incorporating youth and protest cultures increasingly questioned prevailing values and claimed individual rights to self-expression. This included more liberal interpretations of sexual morality, exacerbated by the greater availability of contraception and women's assertions of rights to determine their own choices.

The seemingly sacrosanct nature, and importance, of the family was also questioned, with implications for both policy makers and morals guardians. Migration from rural to urban areas, fuelled by economic hardship, disrupted established patterns of family and community support, which then necessitated discretionary state involvement. Merv Hancock, reflecting on his involvement with both state and voluntary welfare over decades of social work practice, considered that 'the more Maori families moved, the more Pakeha families moved, the more chances there were of difficulties emerging. The services that I was first involved in during the early 50s presumed a fair degree of stability...it was only when that stability was unsettled, that intervention by the state was necessary.'<sup>37</sup> State intervention, in the form of discretionary welfare provision, spanned the Social Security, Child Welfare and Maori Affairs departments. Voluntary and community welfare agencies were also active in meeting an expanded range of needs,

illustrating the breadth of the mixed economy of welfare within the state sector and within the wider community.<sup>38</sup>

State welfare provision assisted the middle classes through family benefits, which could be capitated for private housing, and older New Zealanders through old age pensions, but social security beneficiaries' base incomes did not keep pace with wider prosperity. Supplementary and discretionary benefits increased throughout the decade, as new groups of welfare recipients like single parents asserted their desires to live at a level consistent with that of 'civilised people'.<sup>39</sup> Overseas reports of 'pockets of poverty' within seemingly affluent post-war democracies, and indications that New Zealand was comparing unfavourably with other welfare states nibbled at public and government complacency.<sup>40</sup> Social policymakers were compelled to consider how - and what - to provide for increasingly divergent needs of groups within society, and the philosophical basis upon which policy would rest. Based on the assumption that there was no longer an imperative to feed the hungry the Royal Commission to Inquire into Social Security, convened in 1969, was predicated on the contemporary notion of 'relative poverty'<sup>41</sup> - that in an affluent society it was no longer acceptable to provide citizens with meagre but adequate financial resources if it meant that a reasonable expectation of full participation in society remained unfulfilled. The report asserted the right to belong 'as a full member of the community', and pointed to the introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit in the early 1970s.

For the churches, the dissemination of more liberal social attitudes, and an undeniable decline in church adherence represented threats to their understanding of their place in society, and their influence upon its moral direction. Responses to these threats depended on degrees of conservatism or liberalism of (and sometimes within) denominational groups. In Protestantism, debates centred around a new body of literature that radically reappraised traditional Christian theology in light of societal change and perceived secularisation, and attempted to repackage Christianity for such times. Bishop John Robinson's *Honest to God* and Harvey Cox's *The Secular City* were representative of an international movement that questioned the validity of traditional patterns of Christian worship for contemporary patterns of living.<sup>42</sup> In New Zealand, the furore that accompanied Presbyterian theologian Lloyd Geering's provocative published opinions was indicative of the alarm felt by some churchgoers over what they saw as an attack on the fundamental tenets of their faith, from within Christianity.<sup>43</sup> While some



sought to retain the comfort of established theology and practice by reiterating fundamental theology, others used the debate to reconsider their place in the changing social order:

...Christianity has to reshape itself to speak to a new age. We owe an enormous debt to the Scriptures and to our fathers in God. We cannot go beyond them. But there is a task of reinterpretation and readjustment for which we are hardly yet ready.<sup>44</sup>

Methodists, with their non-conformist background and for whom 'the world is my parish'<sup>45</sup>, were more liable to influence by the social environment arguments of liberal theologians in this period, in terms of orienting efforts towards social service work in their communities, than those inherently conservative denominations for whom evangelism was then more important.<sup>46</sup> Writing of Methodist responses to 'the explosive sixties' Eric Hames noted that the Church's Public Questions Committee had produced 'careful reports on a wide variety of subjects' and had 'sought to be present where the argument was hot.' The Methodist Church, he further contended, had left behind the old 'wowser' image.<sup>47</sup> Yet despite its efforts to confront changing conditions, the Methodists, like most other mainstream Protestant denominations in the 1960s, experienced continued losses in membership and adherence and Hames regarded membership statistics as 'dismal and alarming'. The proportion of New Zealanders identifying themselves as Methodist showed a steady decline from 8.1 percent in 1951 to 6.4 percent by 1971, when 5.6 percent of respondents ticked the 'no religion' box.<sup>48</sup> Fewer children born into the church were remaining as active members, so many parishes were faced with aging populations, and in this period those dying were not being replaced by new members. Opportunities for the Church to enter into new hospital and prison chaplaincies were compromised by a 'steady succession' of resignations from young ministers, who often entered other avenues of social service.<sup>49</sup> At the same time that Methodism was expanding upon some of its traditional social concerns and seeking new avenues of service<sup>50</sup>, the increasing propensity for the public to pick and choose elements of religious belief was bemoaned:

Society is glad to accept certain practical offerings although it is deaf to the deeper words of the Gospel. The hypothetical average man approves of social work though he sees no reason to listen to the Gospel which quickened charity in the hearts of men.<sup>51</sup>

The overall picture is of a Church relatively open to reorienting itself to new needs, cognisant of the need to do so for membership maintenance, but still struggling with maintaining a mix of belief and expression that was relevant to the New Zealand public.

## **Methodism and Social Service Mission development**

In order to place the Palmerston North centre in context with its predecessors, a brief history of Methodist social service mission development in New Zealand is necessary. The development of Methodist Mission social work in New Zealand can be traced to the evangelical revival of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with which John Wesley and the Methodist movement were associated, and later to pastoral work associated with nineteenth century evangelical missions, and then more directly to the establishment of City Missions. Graham Bowpitt connected the idea of 'charity as a means of changing the lives of others' (rather than primarily spiritually benefiting the giver) with Wesley, arguing that

What was distinctive here was the revival of the New Testament resolution of the conflict between faith and good works for an evangelistic purpose. The doctrine of 'justification by faith alone' was central to Wesley's preaching. However, good works were not an optional response to having been justified by faith, but an *essential* characteristic of the life lived by faith. Thus faith and charity were bound together as fruits of that act of transformation in a believer's life wrought by divine grace. Moreover, in pursuit of an evangelistic purpose, charity was not only a feature of the redeemed life, but an instrument in the redemption of others.<sup>52</sup>

Early Methodist social service ventures were primarily evangelistic, although awareness of also meeting material needs was evident. The Helping Hand Mission in Auckland's Freeman's Bay, established in 1885, was dedicated primarily to the spiritual needs of the surrounding community, but as with other congregations 'reacted to what [it] found outside [it's] doors'<sup>53</sup>, providing aid where needed. W. H. Smith, then Superintendent of the Mission's Sunday School, stated that 'the objectives of the Mission were to win souls for Christ but also to provide 'suitable and healthful amusements for young people' and 'to supply the wants of the indigent.'<sup>54</sup> A community focus was evident then, and developed in later mission activity dedicated as much to supporting people through economic and physical hardship as meeting their spiritual needs. Regional Methodist responses varied due to existing conditions and the presence – and strength – of other church agencies. Although Auckland Methodism had had a social service presence in the nineteenth century, it did not develop as a Mission until the appointment of Reverend Colin Scrimgeour in 1927.<sup>55</sup> The Dunedin Methodist Central Mission was established in 1890; the Christchurch Methodist Mission in 1939<sup>56</sup>; and Wellington's Wesley Social Services in 1950. In each of the main centres, other denominations also operated Missions and various other social service operations

in addition to parochial care, with degrees of complementarity, cooperation and competition for resources.

The 'Social Creed' of the Methodist Church, which came to the fore in the 1920s, began: 'Recognising that great changes are necessary to bring society within even measurable distance of the Christian ideal, and desiring to make our position clear to all classes of the community...' It then detailed ten clauses related to labour conditions, 'the removal of root causes of poverty', the centrality of the Gospel to the reconstruction of society, and 'Christian citizenship to promote good ethics and government.'<sup>57</sup> In the Missions this creed found its natural environment. The Methodist Missions in Auckland and Dunedin responded to crisis conditions in the 1930s depression, marshalling community resources to clothe and feed those most affected by high unemployment. Central, and local, government support was meagre and often grudging, and City Missioners became vocal advocates for not just immediate relief but structural societal change as a Christian imperative.<sup>58</sup> They were ably assisted in practical social work by Deaconesses working in Mission activity<sup>59</sup>. Lineham notes that 'in the City Missions efforts were made to relate social and evangelistic issues and they were quite successful during the depression years when institutional religion was hard hit.'<sup>60</sup> In both the Auckland and Dunedin Missions, strong and visionary leaders of long standing were significant factors in shaping public perceptions of their Missions, and subsequent financial support.<sup>61</sup> Although of lesser duration, the input and public profile of Colin Scrimgeour was also important. His iconoclastic brand of 'accidental Methodis[m]'<sup>62</sup> was not always comfortably accommodated in the Methodist Church, but his orientation towards those needing assistance, and his open, populist, criticism of government policy, garnered much public support. Such actions at this time provided a precedent for later combinations of faith, social service and social justice manifested within Methodist church welfare agencies confronted with unpalatable government ideologies and policies.

City Mission histories detail the strong pattern of institutional care facilities built and administered by church agencies for much of the twentieth century. Missions, and other voluntary welfare organisations, worked alongside state providers in personal social services in established niches of care, although the growth of the state in mid-century altered the balance of provision. Central governments subsidised Methodist homes for old and young<sup>63</sup>, and much of the social service activity of City Missions was directed at financial provision for



buildings as well as caring for their inhabitants. Church services on Mission premises maintained the direct religious connection between faith and social service, although evangelism became less of a priority in the post-war period.

### **The Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre: Establishment and founding principles**

Man must find his salvation within the context of the secular world, and indeed his salvation should be an aspect of the healing of that world.

(Minutes of Conference, Methodist Church of New Zealand, 1968)<sup>64</sup>

While the Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre shared the same genetic antecedents as its main centre City Mission relatives, it was clearly a child of the 1960s. Time and place were both significant elements in its adaptation of earlier models: it came from the same Methodist foundation as the City Missions, yet it was the Church's first provincial initiative as a dedicated social service centre and developed to suit the particular community it served. It was established, and developed, in a time of re-evaluation of patterns of church welfare provision, rather than as a response to economic crisis, as in the significant increase of church welfare provision in the 1930s. Elaine Bolitho, writing of the post-war period of government expansion of the 'social security blanket' and the Methodist Church's willing engagement with it through government subsidies for programmes and capital works, quoted Hames in her summary of the relationship:

Between 1950 and 1965, "[e]verywhere in N.Z. Methodism the emphasis was shifting from evangelistic effort to social service, which was something obviously useful, whereas mission preaching of the old type was out of fashion." The shift expressed, on a larger scale, the move to pastoral theology, which fostered a client-centred focus and encouraged counselling. Ministry students graduated "wanting to love people, not just be academics." Thus, the Rev Eric Hames observed in 1972: "The amount of social service property erected or acquired since 1945 must compare with that provided for the worship and teaching of the church."<sup>65</sup>

The Methodist Social Service Centre in Palmerston North grew out of this post-war adaptation to the welfare environment. The pre-conditions for its establishment came, in part, from central government expansion of welfare services; from the reorientation of the Methodist Church towards community-based social initiatives<sup>66</sup>; and from a confluence of people with the vision, skills and commitment to develop such an initiative in the Manawatu area. It was, then, an example of the fluidity of the 'mixed economy' of welfare, as state, church and voluntary organisations responded in different ways to social welfare needs.

The core group of men responsible for the establishment of the MSSC in 1963 represented a cross-section of welfare workers: George Baber, a lay Methodist with experience of both state and voluntary welfare provision<sup>67</sup>; Reverend George Goodman, Minister of Trinity Church and Chairman of the District for the Methodist Church; and Merv Hancock, a lay Methodist and social worker with extensive experience in state agencies, at that time the Manawatu District Child Welfare Officer. Their Christian commitment to meet welfare needs for families and individuals in the Manawatu came from their perceptions of gaps in the existing welfare network that were being filled by neither state nor voluntary agencies locally. They possessed not only the will to act, and the motivation of their faith, but knowledge of their local community and of the social work network within it. Merv Hancock, recalling his preliminary meeting with George Baber, spoke of Baber's personal qualities, practicality and theology - 'His theological position, that God is for everyone, no one is excluded and that every offering of Christian commitment should always be without strings' - as being significant factors in initiating moves to establish a social service centre in the city. 'The combination of all these things convinced me that some action was needed, that as far as I was concerned we were in action from that time on. There was such a fit between what he was offering, what I believed the church needed to do and what I believed the social conditions of the time required.'<sup>68</sup>

After consultations with the MSSA, and the quarterly meeting of the Trinity Church, with which the Centre had a close physical and spiritual relationship, the Methodist Social Service Centre was established in August 1963, with George Baber as the foundation Director. A Management Committee convened in 1964 included, in addition to the three founders, Miss Bertha Zurcher, a medical social worker and parishioner; Sister Shirley Ungemuth, a Deaconess; and Mr Hay Rogers, the District Maori Welfare Officer. Representatives from the wider district, who had a 'keen interest in social work and [the] ability to give time and thought to developing the work, especially in their own churches'<sup>69</sup> were recruited in 1965. Early casework involved families living in close proximity to the Centre and Trinity Church. These entailed material aid solicited from the Circuit, assistance in dealing with state health and welfare agencies and the judicial system, and long-term practical help to develop coping strategies. Interactions between the Centre, the Circuit and the city's welfare networks were quickly established, and set the patterns for future work and cooperative community liaison. In 1964 the Vice-President of Conference gave an address to the Management Committee and other

clergy on the Church's perspective on social service, in which he detailed five principles for service provision:

1. The Gospel for the whole need of men.
2. The community as a setting for the work
3. Local enterprise, using the Centre's own resources, integrated into the overall work of the Church
4. The ultimate aim of helping people to help themselves
5. Pioneering work that may be applicable in other areas.<sup>70</sup>

Elaborating on whether such work should remain under Church supervision, or be out in the wider world, he considered the possibilities of programmes growing to the point where either Church resources may become inadequate, or the Church's role as pioneer has been filled, and services could be handed over to such other agencies as the Probation Service. He also noted that there might be some people unwilling to accept help from the Church.<sup>71</sup> The Centre consequently worked to counter any potential antipathy to its religious foundation by offering its services 'without strings': although those offering services did so as an expression of their own Christian faith and principles, they did not use the contact as a basis for evangelical outreach. By establishing this principle at the Centre's beginnings, in conjunction with awareness of contemporary social work practice and working non-judgementally to facilitate change within client families, the founders evolved an original contemporary model of family-oriented, church-based community welfare provision.

## **Community Development**

Building bridges in the community was, of necessity, an early feature of the Centre's development. Within the Church much effort went into eliciting interest and support from Methodist circuits and congregations in the city and outlying areas for the social service programme, involving interested members in voluntary support, and encouraging congregations to refer cases to the Centre. Outreach by lay members into community service organisations was encouraged, and many Methodists associated with the Centre were active in Marriage Guidance, service clubs and Samaritans.<sup>72</sup> Publicising the Centre in the wider community involved developing links with state and other voluntary welfare agencies, and awareness of the MSSC's areas of service. Interestingly, in its early years, the MSSC was the recipient of financial aid from another voluntary welfare agency. Birthright, working in conjunction with the MSSC, paid for four families to have a week's

holiday, and through the Centre financed seven children to YMCA and YWCA Summer Camps.<sup>73</sup> Management Committee minutes detail the targeting of the city's legal profession. The aim in so doing was, firstly, to offer the Centre's help to lawyers' clients 'in need'; and secondly to 'publiciz[e] our work and the opportunity it affords for bequests and legacies.'<sup>74</sup> Other areas of community development involved state agencies, and associated voluntary organisations who were then seeking more community interaction and voluntary support: links with the New Zealand Prisoners' Aid Society (NZPARS)<sup>75</sup> and the justice system built upon the experience of the Director and Management Committee members; and interactions between Lake Alice (Psychiatric) Hospital staff and patients and the Centre developed after Dr John Weblin, the Senior Medical Officer, requested help with recently discharged patients.<sup>76</sup> Regular voluntary help came from members of the Trinity congregation in both cases, and in the case of Lake Alice, Trinity parishioners hosted visits in an ongoing 'caring relationship'.<sup>77</sup> The Christian Youth Movement Methodist (CYMM) also made regular visits to the Hospital.

## **Education**

'Goodwill' wrote Florence Baber, 'was evident and heart warming, but because goodwill is not enough, the Centre began its continuing educational programmes providing training for staff, for voluntary helpers, for the community and for those with specific needs and interests.'<sup>78</sup> The Centre's education role in the 1960s encompassed speaking engagements to community groups and seminars aimed at other church agencies and voluntary welfare groups in the area. Other local welfare providers, both voluntary and state, were involved in discussions and seminars centred on the changing welfare environment and contemporary social work theory and practice. These seminars were recorded as being well-attended and sometimes over-subscribed. Following on from the Centre's work with Lake Alice Hospital, a seminar on 'Mental Health' held there in March 1969 attracted one hundred and forty representatives of seventy church groups and services clubs, indicating widespread voluntary community interest in supporting the state's work in this area. As the prospect of deinstitutionalising mental health provision gained ground, the need for contemporary knowledge of the area became apparent in order to meet individual needs of patients returning to the wider community.

Speakers addressed developing areas of social work and ways in which agencies could complement each other in meeting clients' needs. Examples of

seminar topics organised by, and for, Centre staff reflect the changing welfare environment in which they worked. In 1964, Hay Rogers, the District Maori Welfare Officer spoke on 'Welfare work with relocated Maori families', reflecting growing Maori urbanisation and the particular problems encountered by new arrivals to the city.<sup>79</sup> A 1968 address entitled 'The Problem of the Unmarried Mother' provoked 'lively discussion and questions of concern' from the floor. The necessity of counselling for the mother; 'the anguish of deciding between adoption, foster care or to struggle alone to keep baby'; the needs of the unmarried father; and how to encourage interest ('financial and otherwise') in meeting this 'grave social problem' were all considered.<sup>80</sup> In 1969, in keeping with the its family-focussed work, the Centre organised a seminar on fostering children, attended by eighty practising and potential foster parents, and a number of practising child care social workers. The seminar's aims were fourfold: to support foster parents; to discuss children's and foster parents' expectations; to promote short term fostering; and to study children's reactions to such placements.<sup>81</sup> That the Centre was actively engaged in gathering and disseminating knowledge of contemporary social policy concerns indicates its position as both provider and willing learner in such a fluid milieu. The guidance offered by Merv Hancock, then in private practice, in a professional supervision role to the Director, provided George Baber with weekly consultation and mentoring to further develop along contemporary social work practice guidelines.

### **Programmes and Initiatives**

Areas of service for the new Centre initially echoed those of earlier City Missions, as the Director and his voluntary supporters addressed the need they found outside their door.<sup>82</sup> Two sets of folders were distributed: the first to households in the immediate vicinity of Trinity and the MSSC, offering help; and the second to congregations outlining the social service intentions of the Centre, and suggesting ways in which church members could offer their own service. There was considerable overlap between education and provision in this decade, and George Baber took services in local Methodist churches aimed at 'not only spreading the gospel of social service, but enabling volunteers to be more effective in their helping roles and to know themselves to be a vital part of the work of the Centre.'<sup>83</sup>



An area of provision that received strong voluntary support from church members was the casework support role that the Centre filled for Homeleigh Children's Home in Masterton. In 1966 George Baber, along with Brian Duxfield from Wesley Social services in Wellington, was appointed as a part time caseworker for Homeleigh, dealing with temporary and permanent placements, fostering and the needs of the children in these situations. Within children's residential care provision generally, changes in central government social policy were evident: writing of the 1950s-1960s from a Methodist perspective, Eric Hames considered that

...[t]he climate was changing. The emphasis of the Child Welfare Department was now upon adoption, or arrangements for the accommodation of the child in a family environment....There is a place for our Children's Homes still, but the pressure has shifted somewhat as the provision made by the State has improved.<sup>84</sup>

In this period the role of Child Welfare officers developed to encompass changing notions of desirable environments for children unable to live in their own families. Their numbers and workloads grew markedly, as they were required to negotiate caseloads related to rising numbers of ex-nuptial births, adoption, the family homes model and fostering.<sup>85</sup>

While the Centre's Management Committee policies encouraged community-based options for children's care, and worked to support families in ways that prevented removal of children if possible, they also recognised the value of material and professional assistance to Homeleigh. Volunteers were requested to help by bottling fruit – 100 dozen jars in 1967<sup>86</sup> – and by providing holiday foster homes for children when Homeleigh closed down over the summer holidays. The foster holiday home scheme provided Homeleigh residents, and some city children, with experiences of family living and different environments for up to six weeks.<sup>87</sup> Carefully matching up children with town and country families was 'an arduous task', but feedback from host families and families of children accommodated indicated that the service was valued. The church family who wrote to the Director, 'we enjoyed having ..... very much, and we are sure that we got as much out of it as he did' clearly felt that this was a useful avenue of service that they could offer to the Centre.<sup>88</sup> Other reports note the 'challenging' nature of this work.<sup>89</sup> For the Centre, holiday placements served a three-fold purpose. They provided a change of environment for a child in need, and some respite for stressed parents, but also provided local congregations with opportunities for involvement. In addition to taking children into their homes, other individuals and community groups provided the children with pocket money.<sup>90</sup> By the end of the decade more

local children than Homeleigh residents were being placed, many from single parent households under stress. Other church members throughout the wider region offered their homes to adults in need of respite from their domestic situations: 1969 minutes note correspondence from 'a Waipawa lady of 70 opening her home to someone needing a rest.'<sup>91</sup>

Counselling and preventive work with 'families at risk' aimed to deal with immediate problems, but also to provide strategies to help family members cope with further 'marital conflict and family disharmony'. 1969's Annual Report recorded 1127 interviews conducted with people who presented as 'alcoholics, disturbed teenagers, unmarried expectant mothers, rehabilitat[ing] Mental Hospital Patients, Men out of Prison' as well as those requesting marital and family counselling.<sup>92</sup> Of the total number of interviews 435 were home visits to vulnerable families, aimed at positive intervention to prevent crises.

As the Centre operated as a general welfare agency, meeting need as it arose, reports displayed a wide variety of requests. The MSSC responses to them indicate that even in this early period of service, the Centre's community development and education initiatives were paying dividends in wide networks of association and received aid. The Director's report to the Management Committee for May 1968, showing his work over the previous ten weeks, demonstrated the Centre's growth over five years, and its negotiated niche as a general welfare provider within Palmerston North's welfare network:

New clients: 48

Existing clients: 196

Professional contacts: 39 professional and 35 [voluntary agency] helpers = 74

Total number of interviews = 318

Special cases:

5 families helped – arriving in Palmerston North without money, home, work

5 families in crisis helped re. involvement with Police

2 referrals from Lake Alice (Maximum Security Block)

5 families referred to Lions Club for firewood

7 children of one family temporarily placed in foster homes

22 children placed in holiday foster homes (May holidays)

2 boys – Magistrate's Children's Court

4 expectant mothers – 1 permanent foster home placement

Miscellaneous – gave out quantities of furniture/second-hand clothing, including large numbers of new clothes from two manufacturers; veges/fruit from four Church harvest festivals; 605 jars of preserved fruit to Masterton.<sup>93</sup>

The list illustrates the particular local mixed economy of welfare in which the Centre operated at this time, in particular the range of interactions between state

agencies and local voluntary organisations; varying levels and manifestations of voluntary support within the wider community; and levels of community need beyond the scope of governmental welfare provision.



*Social worker Ann Olsen and Director George Baber in amongst Christmas hampers being prepared for local families. Although this project started as a Trinity congregation initiative it was expanded into a community project, with assistance and donations from churches, service clubs, businesses and local residents.*  
Source: MSSC.

A 1967 Trinity Congregation and Sunday School venture to distribute Christmas hampers to families and 'elderly folk' associated with the Centre was an example how a concept could be initiated by a local group and developed over the years by the MSSC and other community groups. Forty three hampers, made up of goods donated by Trinity families, were distributed in 1967. The following year the MSSC and St. Vincent de Paul society organised the project, with help from the Palmerston North Rotary Club, and women from seven church groups. Toy donations came from local banks. In subsequent years, more community groups became involved and 'the community response to public appeals for toys and goods was overwhelming'.<sup>94</sup> By 1970 there was a strong element of public ownership to the hamper scheme, with local radio appeals for goods and an interview with the Director of the MSSC. More publicity came from local newspapers and from the Mayor. Collection points in the city included Christmas trees at 2ZA, the Public Library and local banks and businesses. The foundation of public goodwill and



giving that supported this scheme was a forerunner of the Centre's later involvement with foodbanks and annual Christmas food drives to stock them. Florence Baber, in her short history of the MSSC commented that it should not be surprising that the scheme was supported – 'there is so much goodwill in most people, if only opportunities are given, for them to turn goodwill into generous action.'<sup>95</sup> The Centre's role in this initiative was to provide the locus for this to happen. The MSSC's work in this first decade, of fostering church and community awareness of social concerns, and developing networks of care with a local flavour, showed in the wider community endorsement of such a project.

## **Summary**

The development of the MSSC along non-institutional guidelines, working as a community-based welfare organisation, reflected changing attitudes toward what the state could and should provide for its citizens in this period. The 1960s is generally seen as the last decade of the 'classic' welfare state, where provision was still predicated upon supporting a nuclear family comprised of a male breadwinner and dependent wife and children. This, in turn, was dependent on sustained levels of low unemployment and economic stability. This was the case for much of the 1960s. State welfare provision assisted the middle classes through family benefits, which could be capitated for private housing, and older New Zealanders through old age pensions, but social security beneficiaries' incomes did not keep pace with wider prosperity. Supplementary and discretionary benefits increased throughout the decade, as new groups of welfare recipients like single parents asserted their desires to live at a level consistent with that of 'civilised people'.<sup>96</sup> Assumptions that earlier welfare battles against material poverty had been fought and won and that no one need go hungry were not always borne out by the experience of voluntary and church agencies. Overseas reports of 'pockets of poverty' within seemingly affluent post-war democracies, and indications that New Zealand was comparing unfavourably with other welfare states nibbled at public and government complacency.<sup>97</sup> This led to the convening of the 1969 Royal Commission and the basis for re-evaluation of 'relative poverty' and 'entitlement' that shaped the next decade of welfare provision.

## THE 1970s:

### **'The right to fully participate?': New Zealand in the 1970s**

Politically, the 1970s represented a range of ideologies. John Marshall's relatively benign National government was replaced in 1972 by what Michael King described as the 'warm positivism' of the Norman Kirk Labour government era, characterised by a confident nationalism and liberal social attitudes. This was followed in turn by the 'defensive negativism' of Robert Muldoon's National government.<sup>98</sup> Political attachment to the welfare state remained high from both parties, with increased spending in areas of families and aging New Zealanders. 'Oil shocks' in the mid 1970s, Great Britain's entry into the EEC and the subsequent downturn in the national economy threatened domestic spending at such high levels. Unemployment continued to rise, placing strain upon both state and voluntary sector agencies to cope with its economic and social consequences.

Social change was a marker of the decade. 'In the early 1970s,' wrote Michael King, 'two broad but powerful forces coalesced from social and ideological seeds released in the late 1960s: the counter-culture and women's movements.'<sup>99</sup> Children of the post-war baby boom, 'disenchanted with the very things that their parents had sought to establish after World War II – the security of the nuclear family, suburban mores, lifetime jobs, conformity, predictability', contributed to a youth culture that led to re-evaluations in policy and provision of welfare, as in other aspects of society.<sup>100</sup> Women also sought to influence social policy, firstly by gathering in small 'consciousness-raising' groups and then by combining with other women's groups to effect legislative change. A series of biennial National Women's Conferences received wide media coverage and made the women's movement more visible to the wider community, although disparity rather than cohesion of views was noticeable by the end of the decade. As women re-evaluated their place in society the family as a structure also came under scrutiny, and social policy reflected this. The introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit in 1973 provided single parents with 'clear entitlement'<sup>101</sup> to financial support from the state, removing the discretionary decision-making function of welfare officers and enshrining in policy the right to fully participate in society heralded by the 1972 Royal Commission Report on Social Policy. Participation, however, became more

problematic as groups and individuals asserted their own, often disparate, needs against those of a 'one size fits all' welfare state.

For church welfare groups this was a period of grappling with both the political and moral nature of such policy development, negotiating niches in welfare provision that supplemented or complemented those of the state. Not all churches were interested in social policy or welfare provision, although most felt compelled to speak out on moral issues. The role of the Church as a public guardian of values and conduct was under scrutiny, and census figures showed a continuing trend of declining adherence to most mainstream denominations. Successive Censuses showed Methodist adherence falling, from 6.4 percent in 1971 to 4.7 percent a decade later.<sup>102</sup> With secularisation perceived as an increasing trend, finding an effective way of maintaining Christian principles at the forefront of public life remained a significant issue for churches. Church statements about sexual morality were common throughout the 1970s, as Parliament debated abortion, homosexual law reform and censorship. Amongst those denominations that were most active in social service there was also an awareness of economic imbalance in society, even in times of relative prosperity. Russell Marshall, a Labour Member of Parliament and former Methodist minister, reflected liberal Methodist theology and his denomination's attitude to societal poverty in his assessment of church priorities when he wrote:

When we think in the Churches of moral issues, we think usually of matters related to sex...and perhaps of race relations and war. But I believe that moral issues are much more comprehensive than these. Our Lord, you may recall, spoke more about the trouble that love of money and possessions can bring than probably any other subject.<sup>103</sup>

Methodists increasingly came to be publicly associated with liberal social and political attitudes and collaborated with the Presbyterians in raising social concerns about poverty. Although the election of Methodist Labour politicians like Russell Marshall and David Lange, a lay preacher, heightened public perceptions of the left-wing leanings of the Church, not all of their followers held such left-leaning views personally.<sup>104</sup> Lineham refers to the second National government (1960-1972) as 'relatively sympathetic' to churches, and the period under John Marshall's National government and the third Labour government (1972-1975) as 'a heyday for the liberal churches', in accord with these governments' social policy aims.<sup>105</sup> Churches at the liberal end of the theological continuum, like the Methodists, did not fare so well under Muldoon's government, being the target of some

'acrimony'.<sup>106</sup> Yet despite some strong criticisms by churches of government, and of churches by government, both groups displayed strong support for the welfare state. Church welfare agencies endorsed the expansion of the welfare state to meet changing needs, and recognised their relatively minor role in supplementing it. Addressing the 1972 Conference of Central Missions in Auckland, Reverend Arthur Preston of the Melbourne Central Methodist Mission noted that despite economic and technological developments social problems still existed and some issues, that required new responses, became apparent. He contended that governments would continue to look to voluntary agencies to supplement their own activity and to pioneer new fields of welfare provision. The value of church welfare services, he suggested, lay in their non-statutory nature, allowing them more flexibility of operation, and their sensitivity to a 'humanising' element: 'In these days of bureaucratic organisations the church has a special role in the area of personal care'.<sup>107</sup> The implication was of government departments' bureaucratic indifference to people as individuals, compared to the centrality of people in church welfare agencies. To illustrate this, he quoted Australian Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies' perception of the ideological position of such agencies: 'There is no "do you come within the rules and statutes?" but "do you come within the human heart?"'<sup>108</sup> Preston, while endorsing this traditional view of Christian compassion as a positive feature of mission work, argued that for such agencies to maintain credibility in a professionalising environment, quality of service and staff training had become more important. The argument for churches occupying a special place in welfare provision as compassionate adjuncts to an emotionally distanced state bureaucracy was not new, and suited both state and church partners. What was changing, however, was the need to incorporate professional training and development into the existing pattern of church welfare services.

## **The Palmerston North welfare context**

Community organisations in Palmerston North, as elsewhere, mushroomed in this decade, as individuals and groups asserted their own identities and welfare needs as separate and distinct from those of a single comprehensive welfare state. A 1982 survey of non-statutory welfare organisations in Palmerston North found that sixty five percent of respondent bodies had been in existence for ten years or less,<sup>109</sup> and a 1973 Town Planning Department report wrote of Palmerston North's 'proliferation' of social welfare agencies: 'Where a need is perceived, citizens have

banded together to meet [it].'<sup>110</sup> The report's authors argued that local co-ordination of services across and between voluntary and state agencies was essential, and that it was timely to consider a reorientation of services to better reflect the Palmerston North community. (City Council involvement in this process was seen as preferable, although reluctance from some councillors to move into this area was noted.)<sup>111</sup> The Minister of Social Welfare's indication that central government would support local social service providers directly indicated that local government would have to develop its own programmes to support its community.<sup>112</sup> The PNCC had already taken some initiative in this area: the Community Services Council (CSC) was established in 1971 at the behest of local groups, with the cooperation of both local and central government agencies, and the PNCC provided an annual grant for administration costs. There was support for this kind of resource centre from within Council and from the wider community: a letter written by Merv Hancock in June 1970 advocated for the development of a social service department within the council;<sup>113</sup> that same year Councillor Joyce Dunmore set up an informal advice centre in council buildings, advising on aspects of social welfare and housing; and the appointment of the city's first City Planner, Jim Park<sup>114</sup>, later in 1970 provided the foundation on which to develop the CSC. Merv Hancock's letter was indicative of wide community group support for this body, at a time of strong growth in the city's voluntary sector, and Management Committee minutes indicate close contact with the Mayor and some councillors in this growing area of Council and community cooperation.<sup>115</sup> Merv Browne's Community Worker's report to the Management Committee described his activities with the CSC since his last report as comprising 'work, meetings, session with the Mayor'. The CSC, PNCC, and churches worked at developing wider networks of welfare agencies throughout the decade, as interested parties in interdenominational negotiations, and strengthening links between new and established agencies.<sup>116</sup> In 1974, the Council further demonstrated its support for this work by appointing the first Community Service Director, Mike Smith, to facilitate better coordination between agencies and therefore better public provision and access. Voluntary agencies were seen as valuable, and worth supporting, not only in terms of their relative autonomy to act locally, but also for their community development potential through individual participation.<sup>117</sup>

Of the voluntary groups surveyed in this time, broad categories of interest were discerned: those that targeted the needs of a particular group of people (single parents, women and children in need of refuge, people with disabilities);



those that worked on particular problems (housing, health); a minority that offered general welfare services, like the MSSC; and service clubs that supported welfare organisations. Throughout the decade, changing social and economic conditions provoked change in social welfare provision at all levels. Locally, coordination of these community-based groups provided a base from which to ascertain new areas of need. Established general welfare providers like the MSSC found that they were compelled to reassess the services they offered in the face of changes in the needs, and wants, of their clientele, and of their ability to adequately staff and fund such programmes.

## **The MSSC**

While the 1960s represented the establishment and 'bedding-in' phase of the MSSC, the 1970s were marked by conscious efforts to develop and strengthen networks of interest and involvement throughout the city and wider region. Two developments were particularly significant for the Centre's orientation: the internal changes effected by the amalgamation of Methodist circuits in the city; and the Centre's close connections with the development of a social work degree course at Massey University. By the end of the decade the Centre had become integral to local non-statutory welfare provision, and had strong links with both local and central government agencies, and with the burgeoning community group sector in Palmerston North. Growth, interaction and adaptation characterised the Centre's response to the conditions it faced throughout the 1970s: 'The Centre cannot settle into one pattern for helping people. People change and we must change too.'<sup>118</sup>

In 1972 the Palmerston North Methodist Parish was established, combining the former Trinity and St Paul's circuits and the MSSC into a single unit. This was seen as a 'major change' in orientation, 'giving new focus and impetus to the Church's task of Social Service in the [wider] district.'<sup>119</sup> Meetings between Parish Councillors and Centre staff maintained regular contact at an organisational level and voluntary input from parishioners remained high. In this decade the Centre appointed its first lay Chairperson and Director, yet remained committed to the Christian basis for its work.<sup>120</sup> Parish support for the ethos of the Centre was evident in the responses to a questionnaire circulated in the period between the resignation of Roy Bowden as Director and the appointment of his successor, Philip McConkey. The questionnaire sought information on the kind of Centre



parishioners wanted, its relationship with the Parish, and criteria for appointing a new Director. The majority of respondents endorsed the community-based nature of the Centre, and its professional links with other welfare agencies. A slightly reduced majority supported the Centre's freedom to 'represent a Christian point of view on matters of public concern', although some drew distinctions between 'Christian' and 'political'. Social Service Centre staff involvement with the congregational life of the parish was deemed at least 'helpful'<sup>121</sup>, reflecting concern that personal and theological connections be maintained between the two groups. Similarly, the priorities accorded criteria for the new Director suggested that parishioners valued both 'Christian commitment' and social work skills, although not necessarily those gained through professional training. Of eight criteria listed, parishioners ranked professional training as the least important attribute, behind those that involved teamwork and partnerships with the Parish.<sup>122</sup> This suggests that many parishioners in this period were comfortable with traditional patterns of church social service provision and willing to be involved in supporting them, but were not then as committed to the Centre's increasing orientation to professional social work methodology and practice.

Respondents' high ranking of personal faith as a desirable quality may also have related to Roy Bowden's move away from his ministerial background into a less denominational theology, and his subsequent distance from the congregational life of the parish. The Centre's 1977 Annual Report summed up his ideological stance by saying, 'He has refused to be cast in 'orthodox' roles either by church or society, yet at heart has remained a follower of Jesus in being a great lover of humanity...' Roy Bowden later considered that 'the parish people were understanding of my fairly radical position and supported me well....My role was to take care of the social services arm of the church and...[to] attend to church people's interests by ensuring there were 'social service Sundays' which were well attended.'<sup>123</sup> Also apparent was the Parish's continued desire for a close relationship with the Centre, as part of a team, although it was suggested that this would involve 'retraining' church people to meet the changing needs of the Centre for volunteer workers. Examples of the work previously undertaken by volunteers, and no longer needed to the same degree, were temporary homes for unmarried mothers and holiday homes for 'Homeleigh' children. Changes in practical orientation for local parish volunteers were, then, a consequence of nationally determined social policy like the introduction of the DPB and deinstitutionalisation of children's homes.<sup>124</sup> The Centre worked outside the traditional pattern of

Mission involvement with a predominance of institutional care, and the kinds of volunteer activity associated with community outreach work evolved throughout this period.<sup>125</sup>

While parishioners and most MSSC staff made direct connections between their faith and its expression through the Centre's work in the community, and valued such work as the manifestation of Jesus' teachings on the social gospel, such adherence from their clients was not a condition of help given. Annual reports throughout the 1970s continued to assert that 'affiliation with a church is not required or stressed when people come for assistance, and an introduction to church activities is only made if the person seeking aid requests [it].'<sup>126</sup> This principle remained constant, despite Methodist misgivings about declining church membership. The Centre's role as part of Palmerston North's welfare network demonstrated 'that there is a distinctive role for a Christian agency in a time when the church has felt "phased out" in certain areas of life', and that this was a valuable avenue of service for both paid and volunteer staff. The Centre's 1977 Annual Report, marking the end of Roy Bowden's Directorship, noted that ...like the Salvation Army which from the beginning was unorthodox in taking the good news to people untouched by the traditional church, Roy has found himself working with a great multitude of those in society who have little contact with the church, and people have responded, for they felt they were in no danger of being 'sucked in' to an organisation and made to accept certain creeds, yet they were confronted with the strength and challenge of Christian love.<sup>127</sup>

In later correspondence, Roy Bowden made a direct connection between the Centre's non-judgmental ethos and community support, saying, 'If we had been evangelical we would eventually have destroyed the role of the Centre. This was Christianity without strings and was successful because of that. Many clients came to the Centre and saw a Christianity which offered realistic guidance without wanting to capture hearts, minds and finances.'<sup>128</sup> A combination of a religious philosophical foundation that neither judged nor preached, 'presence' ministry that modelled faith in action, allied with contemporary social work theory and practice, expanded the Centre's potential user base, and thus aided its outreach into the local community. Mutual benefits accrued from this stance in the form of positive attitudes from the wider community towards the Centre.

## **Programmes and initiatives**

The MSSC, with its focus on family services, introduced programmes that reflected changing family structures throughout this decade. Some existing areas of work, developed in the 1960s, continued to grow in response to community need while others, like the Centre's involvement with the Homeleigh Children's Home in Masterton declined, reflecting changing modes of welfare delivery. The numbers of people seeking counselling increased throughout the decade, as this work became more well known to health and welfare agencies, and to the general public. Other areas of interest adapted to meet changing community needs. Child care, largely based around supporting the children and staff at Homeleigh in the 1960s, became more locally-based in the 1970s, reflecting both the move away from institutional care and increasing numbers of women entering the paid workforce. The Centre's general welfare foundation, knowledge of its Palmerston North community and openness to adaptation made it well placed to meet changing welfare needs, and innovative programmes developed. Some of these programmes were initiatives developed by MSSC staff to meet their criteria of pioneering programmes that could, in time, conceivably be handed on to other agencies. Of these, two areas of provision were significant: Bertha Zurcher's concept of intensive in-home support for families under stress led to the introduction of the Home Support Scheme in 1974, aimed at sustaining children through periods of familial crisis; and a joint partnership with the Justice Department, to establish and administer a probation hostel for young offenders, aimed to rehabilitate youths into society by supporting them and their families using the strengths of both agencies. Both of these programmes are presented as case studies that examine the nature of the Centre's interactions and partnerships with government departments, and the actuality of how the programmes were envisaged and manifested.

Counselling's further development as a significant part of the MSSC service programme throughout the 1970s related to the leadership and staffing of the Centre, its recognition locally, and to wider societal shifts in the economy and family structures. Roy Bowden's strong personal interest and ongoing training in the counselling field ensured that the Centre continued to gain professional experience and knowledge, which was recognised by various health and welfare agencies throughout the city. The relationship developed between the MSSC and the Palmerston North Hospital's mental health unit (Manawaroa) arose from Roy

Bowden's work in this area when enrolled at Victoria, and was valued by both partners. Bowden later noted that 'the counselling field was in its infancy' in the 1970s, and that in the absence of tertiary counselling training courses, 'we were training people to be counsellors through Samaritans and Youthline by focussing on a very practical approach.' Theological training was still a basis for development in the counselling field: 'I was asked to be Samaritan Director, train Youthline counsellors and be a supervisor for Marriage Guidance all on the strength of my initial training in Theological College under Doctor D. O. Williams during the 1960s.'<sup>129</sup>

Annual reports show a pattern of sustained growth in both new and existing client contacts, the 1975 report stating that 'the Centre is one of the few agencies in Palmerston North that can provide relatively long-term counselling for individuals, couples and families' and that 'we have to be careful how much of this work we do as it is easy to accept too many requests for assistance and work superficially with people'.<sup>130</sup> Referrals came from Manawaroa, general practitioners, Health Department staff and social workers at other city agencies, and increasingly people sought help directly from the Centre. Volunteer 'befrienders' from the parish, attached to and trained by the Centre, helped the paid staff to maintain more regular contact with people who presented needing counselling and other forms of assistance. Clients' reasons for seeking help reflected a wide range of societal problems, including, in 1970, 'marital stress, acute family discord, alcoholism, unmarried expectant mothers, financial worries, accommodation, disturbed teenagers [and] rehabilitating mental hospital patients'.<sup>131</sup> By 1976 the main need discerned by the Centre's counsellors was for marriage counselling, with many cases referred on from Marriage Guidance whose staff were struggling to cope with the demand for couples counselling, with stress due to changing family dynamics and economic constraints as factors in this increased demand.<sup>132</sup> The MSSC provided a service that was used and valued by other agencies and the public, at a time when counselling of this kind was not widely available: when social worker and counsellor Jeanella James left the Centre in 1979, the Director noted that although other agencies were doing some work with separated women and their families, her departure left a gap in the city's counselling resources.<sup>133</sup>

## **Funding**

Funding was a perennial issue for the Centre's management committee, and for the Parish Council that supported it. Although annual accounts show that funding in this decade expanded in many directions, so did the Centre's operational expenses and directions of work. As with other voluntary organisations, the MSSC was compelled to target financial resources where they were considered most effective, and could not meet all of its clients' needs.<sup>134</sup> Income and expenditure were very close throughout the decade due to careful accounting and a strong reliance on the large pool of committed volunteers, although there were years when reserve funds were needed to cover shortfalls. Inflation became a significant factor in the second half of the 1970s. The MSSC's Annual Report for 1976 noted that it had been a 'difficult year with inflation running high in New Zealand' that affected 'both the Churches spending and the people's giving'.<sup>135</sup> Following the pattern of the previous decade, supporting parishes in the Manawatu area donated variable amounts of money based on their parishioners' ability and inclination to endorse the work of the Centre. The 1972 amalgamation of the MSSC with the Trinity and St. Paul's Circuits, following a similar structure to City Missions, pooled their collective resources to provide one social service base in one parish for the Methodist Church in Palmerston North. Fundraisers like Parish Fairs and fashion parades, as well as donations from other denominations whose congregations supported the Centre's social service work, supplemented annual grants from the Parish. Consultations with local Methodist groups also considered alternative methods of funding: how to broaden the donor base; the possibility of opening a child care centre that would address community need as well as provide income; and whether the Centre should charge market rates for professional services. This last option was not philosophically acceptable to the Centre at this time, but was readdressed in later decades.<sup>136</sup> A 'Friends of the Centre' scheme solicited regular donations from committed supporters, within and outside of the Parish, and direct funding came from the Social Service budget of the Methodist Church, through the MSSA, on the same basis as that received by the Central Missions.

Financial support, in both monetary and material forms, came each year from members of the public and from community groups and businesses. Donations ranged from small donations - \$23.33 to enable a child to attend a holiday camp, received from the Linton Army Camp HQ staff<sup>137</sup>- to larger cash



donations from local businesses and banks.<sup>138</sup> Service club support remained strong throughout the decade, whether manifested in cash donations for particular projects or in time and materials; when the Centre purchased a new van with funds raised by the Parish, Palmerston North Lions and Rotary clubs jointly outfitted it for a range of uses.<sup>139</sup> After outfitting and signage had been completed, the new van was parked in the Square for a week to advertise the Centre's social service activities.

Local and central government agencies financially contributed to the Centre in a number of ways. The Management Committee reaffirmed its founding principle of maintaining its independence, both financial and ideological, in dealings with government departments. Throughout the 1970s, annual reports detail monies received from philanthropic grants, church and community donations and note that the bulk of the Centre's income came from Highbury House funds. Government funding is not mentioned, other than for 'partnership' expenses: the Justice and Social Welfare Departments provided subsidies and payments for work undertaken in the probation and child care areas<sup>140</sup>, although when the Centre applied for direct funding for the Home Support Scheme in 1975, the Social Welfare Department declined, preferring to apply discretionary Home Aid Scheme funding to families using the service. The PNCC subsidised the Centre through trusts, such as the Community Chest and the PNCC Civic Trust, set up to support charitable community organisations in the city.

Private trusts were also a consistent supplier of funding for the Centre. Annual reports gratefully acknowledged the support of both national (Todd Foundation, Sutherland Self-Help Trust, McKenzie Trust) and regional trusts (Dudding Trust, T. R. Moore Trust). Social service was a specified area of support for all of the trusts, and some noted that a religious element was a desirable quality for applicants. Bequests of money and occasionally property were also received from parishioners, providing valuable reserves against shortfalls or delays in government payments, a particular source of frustration and financial juggling throughout the decade.<sup>141</sup> Awareness of the need to publicize the Centre's work in order to attract regular funding was evident in annual reports, with acknowledgements of donors' generosity as well as requests for their continued support. The Centre's Christian base and community standing were used as a basis for trusts' 'investment' in social service: 'No-one can tell you what the percentage gain will be, but there can be no higher return, in terms of real values.'<sup>142</sup> Trust



administrators were thus assured that their financial commitment to the MSSC would be matched by its commitment to promoting and maintaining desirable social goals.

### **Highbury House**

The Highbury House 'opportunity shop', established in 1969 and supported by a large pool of committed volunteers, provided the Centre with the majority of its funding for programmes and initiatives throughout the 1970s and beyond. It followed precedents set by other church-run second-hand clothing shops, variously termed 'goodwill', 'charity', 'opportunity' or 'thrift' shops. These Christian virtues provided a foundation for the collection and sale of donated clothing to people for whom retail prices were out of reach. Early clothing distribution by City Missions was without financial cost, on a charitable basis. Graeme Ball notes the Auckland City Mission's 1927 decision to nominally charge for clothing was, ostensibly, to 'remove the stigma of charity', and so preserve recipients' pride, although significant income for the Mission was generated from the enterprise.<sup>143</sup> The Goodwill Stores operation is illustrative of an initiative taken by the Centre that has filled many functions in the Palmerston North community: annual reports refer to the goodwill required to sustain the operation from volunteers who provided the service; and from 'people from a wide area, who generously respond to the appeal for saleable goods', as well as meeting a community need for affordable clothing.<sup>144</sup> Merv Hancock recalled some personal ambivalence about opening a shop, as the energy needed to sustain it could 'deflect support from other aspects of the Centre's work.' In retrospect, he acknowledged both the financial success of the venture and the value of it as a focus for voluntary activity: '...many people saw this as their real avenue of service, the one thing they felt they had the ability to contribute.'<sup>145</sup> Loyal Gibson, who proposed and initiated the Highbury House project, considered that three factors were significant in the shop's early success: firstly, an experienced group of women to do the work; secondly, the fulltime work of one volunteer to coordinate others' work; and thirdly, the 'very clear decision' to offer only good quality goods for sale. The practical nature of the work, from preparing clothes for sale to meeting needs of people in the community, appealed to a large group of volunteers 'motivated by Christian compassion'.<sup>146</sup> Although the work could be arduous, many volunteers spoke of the mutual satisfaction of customers and staff when the 'right' garments were matched to new owners. The initial shop provided a valued community service for those needing affordable clothing and household goods, and an informal interface between the Centre and members of

the Highbury/Takaro community, providing the Centre with a base from which to expand social service work in this part of the city.<sup>147</sup>

The shop was also the public face of an extensive textile-recycling programme. Workshop volunteers sorted donations and processed garments unsuitable for resale into rags, and this labour-intensive work supplemented the funds generated in the shop. Organised rosters of approximately one hundred volunteers<sup>148</sup> for clothing collection, garment preparation, sorting, rag-cutting and shop serving allowed the Goodwill operation to channel most of its income back into the MSSC's programmes. The growing commercial expertise of long-term volunteers, who developed their knowledge of the 'rag trade' and customers' wants and needs, added to the Goodwill operation's profits. In its first ten years, Highbury House generated \$94,289 in income, and of that \$77,333, or eighty two percent, was directed to MSSC accounts.

## **Education**

Professionalisation of social work was a significant factor in this decade, and this was reflected in the qualifications and ongoing professional development of the MSSC's paid staff. MSSA reports from the 1960s and 1970s state the need for training funds to support young Church people through university social work courses, thus maintaining the presence of a Methodist/Christian perspective on social service, and adding to the pool of qualified practitioners.<sup>149</sup> Roy Bowden, an ordained Methodist minister who joined the Centre as a social worker and researcher in 1970, received Conference approval and funding to complete a two-year Diploma of Social Science from Victoria University. Upon completion, he became the Centre's second Director following George Baber's retirement. Professional training for both the Centre's paid and voluntary staff was notable throughout the 1970s, with a continuation of the 1960s policy of seminars aimed at developing the knowledge base of those connected with the Centre, and those of other church and welfare agencies, to deal with new expressions of community need. In 1970, the *New Zealand Social Worker* reported that 'Ten percent of all social workers in New Zealand had the Diploma of Social Science in 1969 [and] of this number only 3.5 percent were in non-state social work.'<sup>150</sup> MSSC annual reports in the 1970s show an early orientation towards qualified staff, and most of the paid staff and Management Committee had professional or university qualifications. Areas of expertise included nursing and medical social work;

university degrees and diplomas in Social Sciences and Science; government training in social work through 'Tiromoana'; professional accounting qualifications; and ordained ministries and divinity qualifications. Management committee members were selected not only for their Christian commitment to social service work, but their combined expertise in governing and administering such an agency.<sup>151</sup>

One of the most significant developments for the long-term direction of the Centre was the strong relationship between it and Massey University. The introduction of New Zealand's first Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree course at Massey University in 1976 provided the Centre, and the city, with a rich source of contemporary social work theory and practice, student work placements, research into local welfare needs and trained social workers.<sup>152</sup> The MSSC had a particularly strong connection with the Massey course through Merv Hancock, who was instrumental in the establishment and development of both the MSSC and the Massey BSW course. Ephra Garrett, the other course founder, was also involved with the MSSC in its early days, running seminars related to the Centre's work with Homeleigh Children's Home and fostering of children. Director Roy Bowden worked with the Extension Department of Massey University in 1976, assisting in courses related to counselling practice and community work, and his successor, Philip McConkey, also supervised BSW students on practicum placements.

The MSSC's commitment to ongoing professional development, and the ongoing professional mentoring that Merv Hancock supplied to Directors, provided this centre with more professional opportunities in this area than other agencies of its type. A 1975 request from a Palmerston North Social Workers Association sub-committee that the Centre consider appointing social workers from other organisations to the MSSC reflected the Centre's standing in the local social work community, but raised questions of philosophy for the Management Committee. The importance of a founding principle - that the Centre should not expand beyond its own capacity to cope with the demands upon it - was reiterated, as was the distinct character of the Centre. The centrality of faith, particularly the Methodist faith and its expression through social service, was considered sacrosanct. There was also the potential for tension arising from differing emphases between the Centre's staff and those from other agencies. Discussions over the possible expansion into an interdenominational welfare agency, in conjunction with the CSC, simmered in the mid-1970s. After considerable debate

at parish and Centre levels, the proposal was eventually discarded in favour of the status quo. That such approaches were made from professional social work agencies, and from other church-based agencies, was perhaps indicative of four strands of MSSC operations in this decade: its policy of developing community networks; its general welfare basis, which encompassed many interactions with other welfare providers in the city; the absence of other agencies filling this role; and the local regard in which the Centre was held at this time.

The Centre's staff had many opportunities for both receiving and supplying further training throughout the 1970s, the 1971 Annual Report affirming that 'it has always been [our] policy to secure for the staff every available source of training in social work practice'.<sup>153</sup> In addition to university courses, other staff attended Tiromoana (the State Services Commission facility for training government social workers), and attended courses and study tours sponsored by government departments.<sup>154</sup> Philip McConkey, who was appointed to the Director's job in 1978, had trained at Tiromoana and was, after protracted negotiations, released from his bond to the Department of Social Welfare to take up the MSSC position. The successful negotiations with three different government departments, and then with all three collectively, was seen as a mark of the Centre's standing as a social service provider at the time. Volunteers to the Centre and interested church members in other small neighbouring towns, were also given opportunities to develop skills in 'befriending' to supplement the care offered by the paid staff in welfare provision. Circuit seminars on social service work were incorporated into congregational worship throughout the region, encouraging parishioners to find avenues for such work in their own communities.<sup>155</sup> One such seminar, 'The Challenge of a Needy World', looked at voluntary social service agencies in New Zealand and overseas. It involved other agencies – CORSO, Volunteer Service Abroad, Manawatu Home Budgeting Service, and Samaritans – and offered parishioners many avenues of service, in keeping with Methodism's post-war focus on social service as an expression of faith. A booklet written by Roy Bowden entitled 'A Friend in Need: a booklet for those who wish to care for others' contained guidelines for befriending individuals and families who were receiving help from the Centre, or those for whom preventive befriending may prevent the need for professional intervention.

The Centre also provided other community groups with educational opportunities in social work practice and theory throughout the 1970s. Seminars

and training courses run by the MSSC attracted groups of clergy from 'the southern half of the North Island, and various denominations'<sup>156</sup>, social work and health professionals and volunteers from contributing parishes and other community groups. Many of the courses were aimed at extending the wider community's knowledge of social issues<sup>157</sup> and publicizing those areas of work that could benefit from voluntary support. The Centre's philosophical position on its education outreach complemented its work with families in crisis. Developing knowledge and strategies to cope when faced with conflict or trauma provided a preventative element to their holistic view of community-based social work. Professional speakers were brought in to supplement the knowledge of the Centre's staff, in areas as diverse as drug education, fostering children, mental health and listening skills. 'Social education' was also available to groups of students at intermediate and high schools, and with Massey students.

### **Community Development**

Looking back, and looking forward, the Centre's tenth annual report opened by stating that it had over the last decade 'sensed the need for persons and families to grow and change', and that allied with this was 'the need for the community to grow, and the staff of the Centre have been involved with sensitive persons who wish to make community life more vital.'<sup>158</sup> The Centre's outreach policy of working in its local and regional communities incorporated work aimed at developing strong networks of interest and support between voluntary groups, local government and state agencies and, by extension, strengthening the wider community.

In addition, the Centre became a locus for other welfare groups' training and resource co-ordination, running seminars and providing office facilities for smaller organisations. Until the formation of the Citizens' Advice Bureau in 1975, the Centre operated as an informal community information centre, fielding many queries about accessing local services. Members of the staff were also closely involved in the establishment of the Community Service Council in 1971, providing the first Chairman and many Council members in subsequent years. This close involvement was consistent with the goal of developing community welfare networks through closer cooperation between the Palmerston North City Council and local voluntary agencies.<sup>159</sup> Youthline, a telephone counselling service for and by young people, also began in 1971 with the MSSC providing initial planning and



training for successive intakes of volunteers to run the service.<sup>160</sup> The need for such a service at this time was evident in the public response, with numbers of those seeking help matched by corresponding numbers of volunteers willing to provide it. MSSC staff and associates were also active in the establishment of local branches of CARE and Volunteer Service NZ in the early 1970s, and were represented on a range of community lobby and support groups that developed to meet new areas of need, such as the Unemployed Support Centre. After his appointment in 1978 Philip McConkey quickly became involved in many community welfare groups, chairing the Unemployed Support Centre, maintaining the Centre's strong representation on the CSC, and acting as secretary for Community Volunteers (Palmerston North) Inc in his first year. In 1979, along with representatives from other local welfare groups, he supported moves to establish a Women's Refuge in the city, at a time when women throughout the country were working towards greater awareness of domestic violence and new initiatives.<sup>161</sup> In addition, informal relationships were developed where the MSSC worked with lobby groups i.e. Women's Liberation representatives met with the Centre in the early 1970s to advocate for the needs of unmarried mothers.<sup>162</sup>

Ecumenical cooperation was a feature of the Centre's community development work in the 1970s, fostering stronger links between the local churches active in social service. In 1974, the Palmerston North Council of Churches established a pilot committee looking at 'ways of joint cooperation in social service',<sup>163</sup> to which the Centre contributed its intent to continue in its role as a general welfare agency, with an emphasis on family services, and to work around already established areas of activity. Other denominations were then active in providing aged care institutional facilities and children's homes, and complementary - rather than competitive - provision of local welfare was the pattern. Cross-referrals between church welfare agencies, to best meet individual needs, reflected the generally cooperative nature of inter-church relations, and the MSSC was often better placed to provide a range of welfare services to individuals and families. The Presbyterian Church, whose regional social service operations were Wellington-based, approached the Centre in 1976 to consider appointing a Presbyterian minister to the MSSC, with the intent of supporting the Centre in this work rather than competing with it, but also making it more ecumenical in nature. Although negotiations took place over the next year the proposal lapsed, due to difficulties in reconciling management styles, finances and identity.<sup>164</sup> Having earlier established relative autonomy to act locally from the Methodist Church's



regional administration, the Management Committee was loath to dilute any further the Centre's Methodist affiliation or independence, preferring to maintain friendly and cooperative links with other denominations while retaining their own established identity. Regular meetings between church agencies were, however, fostered by the MSSC in order to strengthen the relationship between local faith-based welfare providers. Seminars and discussions on the 'special' nature of faith-based welfare providers emphasised the similarities, rather than the differences, between denominational agencies. Roy Bowden and Philip McConkey, as Directors, both fostered these ecumenical links, and Philip McConkey was instrumental in establishing the Church Social Workers Group in 1978.

Annual reports throughout the decade list the broad range of welfare agencies with which the Centre worked, reflecting their awareness of an increasingly complex welfare network in their area and nationally. In the 1974 report, the Director detailed a wide range of state health, education and welfare agencies, voluntary organisations, local providers and service clubs that the Centre worked with.<sup>165</sup> Remarking about the value of such links, he continued 'We are also becoming more and more aware that social work activity is also dependent upon those who are responsible for Guest Houses, public services, accommodation facilities, educational institutions, leisure-time activities, community action and the news media.'<sup>166</sup> Awareness of the relevance of wider community structures to their work with individuals and families echoed traditional Methodist concern with societal change as well as amelioration of individual distress, and was a publicly noted forerunner of social justice issues that became more prominent in the motivations and actions of MSSC staff and programmes in later decades.

## **Summary**

Developments in the range of community organisations and new initiatives within the MSSC's sphere of influence in this decade reflected national and international patterns of social service re-evaluations. This was an expansive period in New Zealand's welfare history, and was reflected in the proliferation of new initiatives developed by local government and community groups in Palmerston North. It was also a period of consolidation for the Centre, as it built on its 1960s foundations of service while at the same time looking outwards, as its staff consciously encouraged new and established groups to work cooperatively in

their local environment. Professionalisation of social work, including the new Massey University BSW course, presented the Centre with new challenges and both paid and volunteer staff were encouraged to undertake further professional development in their roles. By working so closely with other agencies and communities of interest, and by continuing to build a strong public profile, the MSSC positioned itself as a focal point for local non-statutory welfare provision. Openness to re-evaluation of priorities and services was shown in the partnership the Centre had with the Justice Department, from which the MSSC withdrew; and in the development of the Home Support Service, which the Centre developed as an independent initiative to meet a perceived need. Continuity and change nudged at each other throughout the decade: the Centre maintained a family focus for its services, although the nature of family units was evolving; there was evidence of less religious adherence in wider society, yet the faith of those working for the Centre retained its place at the centre of the work; and state and voluntary welfare providers negotiated changes to the 'mixed economy' of welfare. In the next decade, fundamental changes in governmental ideology had significant ramifications for voluntary welfare providers and their clients.

## **CASE STUDY 1: 'AGENTS OF REHABILITATION' – THE WEST ST HOSTEL PROJECT 1968-1978**

In November 1968, the Management Committee received a letter from Mr Alistair Maule, District Probation Officer, inviting the Centre to discuss a joint project with the Justice Department to establish and manage a Probationers' Hostel in Palmerston North. His letter suggested the regard in which the Department held such partnerships with church-based organisations:

It has been our Service's experience that in the successful operation of those Hostels, a major factor has been the use of Church's personnel and Social Services as the link with the community – by their representatives in continuing liaison with the Probation Service and in appointing the right type of warden.<sup>167</sup>

'Lively interest and discussion' followed and the confident consensus was that the project was 'challenging and worthwhile and one which possibly the Centre was the best equipped agency in Palmerston North to handle.'<sup>168</sup> This initial assessment was based on the extent to which the original proposal fitted the focus of the Centre's work, with its emphasis on community development and pioneering activity, and the clear need for such a service expressed by the Justice Department and local social workers. The Director, George Baber, and Merv Hancock's experience in working with young offenders provided additional insights into the issues involved in such a project. This case study investigates the process of the MSSC working on a joint project with a government department: the original intent, how it was manifested and how it actually worked for the Centre.

Annual reports of the Justice Department throughout the 1960s increasingly asserted the worth of community-based residential care, where, in conjunction with church social service groups, some young offenders could be rehabilitated in a 'disciplined environment' in which they may 'gradually assimilate socially acceptable behaviour'.<sup>169</sup> There are two interesting elements to this position: firstly, explicit governmental endorsement of the positive role that the churches could, and should, play in such work; and secondly, that such work could have its best results in a community setting. Writing of the role of 'The Informed Community' a 1964 Justice Department publication contended that

The best safeguard in our community against the possibility of criminal behaviour is in possessing spiritual resources. It has become rather too commonplace to write down the contribution of the churches in the field of prevention against delinquency. The church rarely fails in this respect with those it is able to care for. That many of our young people have no religious background is not only a tragic personal loss but a social danger.<sup>170</sup>

In addition to positing the general benefits of spiritual sustenance, the chapter also noted the worth of churches as institutions working in this area. Churches 'as an organised section of the community [have] been more aware of the need for change in the treatment of offenders than any other social grouping'<sup>171</sup>, actively supporting the establishment of probation, pre-release and post-release hostels, as well as voluntary organisations like the New Zealand Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society (NZPARS).<sup>172</sup> For NZPARS this was an 'exciting [period] in which the Department of Justice played a vital role. Penal policy was moving toward more community-based sentencing, and this needed to be sold to the wider public.' Justice supported the Society to become more active and professional in its approach, and strongly endorsed 'the rhetoric of "partnership"'.<sup>173</sup> The Justice Department's annual report in 1974 affirmed the 'close liaison between probation officers and other social agencies, both statutory and voluntary' and expressed gratitude 'especially [to] the voluntary organisations which cooperate with probation officers in such special areas as alcohol and drug addiction, financial problems, home and family problems, accommodation and employment, and mother and child placement homes. Without their assistance the Probation Service would not be able to operate as efficiently as it does.'<sup>174</sup> In a period of increasing urbanisation and attendant social problems, church and other voluntary agencies' social service networks and community knowledge provided a useful adjunct to that of public servants.

Community-based programmes and centres were deemed a more constructive alternative to incarceration in borstals, which reached its peak in 1971, and declined thereafter.<sup>175</sup> Penal reform in New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s was guided by able and liberally-minded government officials, whose willingness to consider the rehabilitative as well as the punitive functions of the justice system led to expansion in the probation and periodic detention areas. This was consistent with a move towards community-based social work programmes and deinstitutionalisation in other areas of welfare provision, although the fundamentally compulsory nature of incarceration in penal institutions remained. Youth offending was clearly a concern to the government: forty eight percent of prisoners in New Zealand penal institutions in 1964 were aged twenty five and under; by the end of the following decade the percentage had risen to sixty three percent.<sup>176</sup> A Justice Department publication, *Crime and the Community*, argued for early intervention for youth offenders: 'The younger the offender, the more urgent is the task, since it is less likely that he has grown the hard shell of the older

criminal. That is why the area of our most intense activity must be in the 15-20 age group, where the peak incidence of crime now occurs.'<sup>177</sup>

The first hostel of this type was opened in Auckland in 1963, in partnership with the Presbyterian Social Service Association (NZPSSA). At the same time as the Palmerston North hostel was mooted, a similar enterprise for young men was planned for Whangarei.<sup>178</sup> The Justice Department also opened a hostel for women in Auckland in 1971, staffed and administered by the Department. A sub-committee of the MSSC's Management Committee met with Justice Department officials to negotiate the financial and staffing responsibilities for the hostel. Although the MSSC would staff and administer it, the hostel would be built and maintained by the Justice Department, who were also liable for underwriting operational losses up to an agreed figure. This was then consistent with other jointly run hostels. The MSSC appointed its first Warden, Merv Browne, in 1971, considering his experience as a conscientious objector jailed in World War Two, and his long-term involvement with the Riverside Methodist community in Nelson excellent grounding for the communal rehabilitative atmosphere that they envisaged developing. Considerable delays in establishing building requirements and land, along with budgetary constraints, meant that the Minister of Justice, Martyn Finlay, finally opened the Palmerston North hostel in March 1973. In the intervening time, Merv Browne worked through the Centre as a Community Worker, developing his links with the Probation Service and community organisations. The joint vision for the future of the hostel, expressed in a commemorative pamphlet, detailed three strands of development: that the Department would continue to maintain adequate accommodation at a reasonable cost to occupants; that the Church, through the Warden and his family living onsite, would provide a stable and rehabilitative environment in the Hostel; and that the Church, through the MSSC, would use its community support links to further develop occupants' 'understanding and friendships' outside the Hostel environment.<sup>179</sup>



*The opening of the West Street hostel, with representatives from the MSSC, local and national government: Minister of Justice Martyn Finlay with warden Merv Browne. Behind them are Roy Bowden, MSSC Director and the Palmerston North Mayor Brian Elwood. (Source:MSSC)*

The reality, for much of the decade of planning and involvement in running the hostel, was that each group had some concerns about the methods of the other. Although nationally the Justice Department endorsed the involvement of church social service groups in establishing and running hostels like West Street, and in providing good role models for the young residents, local Probation staff were seemingly ambivalent about allowing any overtly pastoral input into their rehabilitation. In part, this may have been due to a lack of written goals and procedures at the beginning of the project, when the District Probation Officer (DPO) and Centre staff were in accord about the wider possibilities of the hostel as a centre for active rehabilitation. Individual character and vision were significant factors in the interactions between Department and Centre: Alistair Maule, the DPO responsible for initiating the project, and Cedric Radcliffe, representing the MSSC, both left their positions and the first Warden noted this as a point from which the effectiveness of the hostel diminished.<sup>180</sup> This dependence upon goodwill and mutually agreed parameters between individuals was a significant point of weakness in this joint venture. It was indicative of wider tensions between those who developed Justice Department policy, those who were responsible for implementing it at a local level, and their respective understandings of the value of



churches' as partners in probation hostels. The clear endorsement that churches received for their involvement from senior Justice Department officials was not always understood or valued by local Probation staff, and differences in professional and philosophical orientation became evident over time. Merv Browne understood the respective responsibilities of the Justice Department and Centre as complementary and interactive: that the Justice Department would, in addition to financially supporting the hostel, maintain its commitment to it as a 'positive alternative to incarceration', by placing those who had a good chance of rehabilitation early enough to maximise the effects of the 'benign' environment. The MSSC would, for its part, provide administrative and professional support for the Warden, and encourage church and community involvement with the probationers.<sup>181</sup>

From both sides, expectations of the benefits that would accrue from involving the residents in the home and family lives of parishioners were largely not met. Historically, only a small, but committed, proportion of volunteers in New Zealand had elected to support prisoners and their families, an 'unpopular clientele' with little public approbation for the work.<sup>182</sup> This was also true of parish involvement with the West Street hostel, which did not develop as the MSSC and Justice Department had hoped. Although support did come through churchwomen collectively bottling fruit for hostel consumption, and 'several citizens and community groups' donated recreational equipment and electrical goods, the number of personal contacts with probationers was relatively small.<sup>183</sup> Parishioners 'did not warmly respond' to appeals for outreach of this kind in Merv Browne's time as warden, and his successor<sup>184</sup>, Charles Haar, a Lutheran by faith, found that neither his own parish nor the Methodists were keen: 'people feel threatened by this type of individual...they place themselves at some risk [and] had probably never come across this bawdy, undisciplined type.' He also suggested that 'the apathy of our present age...suggests if you have a building and staff things are OK', negating the need for sustained human interactions.<sup>185</sup> Wardens' roles and workload, as both housekeepers and moral guardians of the probationers, stretched their personal resources, and it became hard to retain and recruit suitable and competent hostel staff. The first two wardens, Merv Browne and Charles and Nathalie Haar (a joint appointment), who remained at the hostel for the longest periods, both had strong personal faiths that motivated and sustained their involvement: the Haars wrote that 'We feel that we would not have been able to carry on as long as we did without our faith, or trust in God's call; the assurance

of the Holy Spirit's power to change attitudes and the love and care of our dear Methodist friends.' <sup>186</sup>

MSSC assessments of the role of the Probation Office in their financial and professional support for the hostel pointed to three main, connected, areas of contention: finance; differences in perceptions of the hostel's role, and the input of each partner; and tangible support. Finance remained problematic for the duration of the partnership, which stretched the MSSC's capacity to financially juggle its own limited funds to cover shortfalls. Payments to the Centre for costs incurred were often late due to bureaucratic delays, and the basis for funding altered from the Justice Department initially underwriting most of the hostel's running costs to providing a negotiated subsidy annually.<sup>187</sup> (At the time that the West Street hostel was established, other existing hostels already ran on the subsidy model; West Street followed within its first two years.) This became significant when Probation Officers failed to refer appropriate youth offenders in sufficient quantities to cover the Centre's costs. The hostel then opened its doors to boarders, mainly from the New Zealand Electricity Department<sup>188</sup>, to supplement income received from the Justice Department. The suggestion to fill empty beds in this way came from the Probation Department, responding to departmental budgetary constraints. These occupancy issues exacerbated MSSC concerns that the hostel was not being used for its original purpose and that local Probation Officers were not committed to its rehabilitative potential.

Annual reports of both the MSSC and the Department of Justice refer to close liaison and a good working relationship between the Centre and the Probation Service, but internal documents from the MSSC question the extent to which local probation officers supported or valued their involvement. A 1974 Warden's Report to the Management Committee referred to MSSC's call for a Probation Hostels seminar, to be held in Palmerston North, to aid newly developed hostels throughout the country in clarifying their 'purpose and operation'. Although the Minister of Justice approved the idea and suggested a date for it, the Probation Head Office considered it too early to be useful and deferred it.<sup>189</sup> It was never held. Liaison between national and local Probation staff was not always consistent, particularly in occupancy level targets, making it difficult for hostel staff to make long term plans. Changes in staff at the local level exacerbated this, as priorities differed between Probation staff, and in their interactions with the hostel warden. Merv Browne referred to the 'frequent failure' of officers to insist on

adherence to the terms of probation on one hand, and to inflexibility in supporting probationers' recreational and sporting needs on the other.<sup>190</sup> This inconsistency was also noted by his successor, Charles Haar, who reported after a meeting with Probation staff that 'even the Probation Officers do not agree upon who should be placed in the hostel' and that the boys being directed to live in the hostel were now those who would earlier have been sent to prison or borstal, while first offenders were 'only being fined by the courts.'<sup>191</sup> Inadequate funding and inconsistency in boundaries between the partners were common complaints, resulting in the MSSC and hostel staff feeling stretched to provide daily support and unable to provide effective counselling. Requests for a part time or fulltime social worker to work with residents and their families were rejected on the grounds that 'that was the role of the Probation Officer', although contemporary Justice Department annual reports repeatedly referred to overwork in the Probation Service.<sup>192</sup> Given that probation officers were stretched to cope with their client workloads, it can be inferred that the therapeutic help offered by hostel and Centre staff was not readily accepted or valued and that probation officers guarded their professional boundaries against non-statutory agencies' staff. This reflected a lack of alignment between the methodology and philosophical foundations of each group. The Director of the Centre for most of its involvement with the hostel, Roy Bowden, considered that there was an inherent conflict between how each organisation viewed the probationer: the Probation Service, in his opinion, tended to focus on the offender and offence, while the MSSC, with its counselling focus, saw him in his wider context of family, peers and social conditions. There was a values conflict between a 'rule system' inherent in the statutory justice process and an 'unwillingness to reject' as a foundation of the Centre's Christian philosophical base.<sup>193</sup>

When the Management Committee reassessed its association with the hostel in 1978, it surveyed past and present staff to ascertain their understanding of the roles of each partner and how they were fulfilled. Asked about advantages and disadvantages of MSSC involvement in a partnership with a government department, respondents tended to see involvement as beneficial to the probationers, but problematic for the Centre. One respondent considered that MSSC involvement was 'totally advantageous' for the residents, as 'the youths quickly recognised that MSSC was there to help them, and that the staff were in no way part of the punitive Police/Probation system....The [staff's] obvious neutrality enabled more effective counselling.'<sup>194</sup> Other responses asserted the importance of

the 'good Samaritan' concept, positing the potential for positive long-term benefits of hostel residency for some boys and their families<sup>195</sup>, while others mentioned the Centre's concern for the wellbeing of both staff and residents. When asked to suggest areas of weakness, four main areas were consistently mentioned: lack of clear written boundaries and responsibilities between the partners; lack of autonomy for the Centre; inadequate staffing; and little ongoing community engagement. Ambivalence was clear: the same respondent who discussed how the hostel had declined from being 'a place for first offenders with some real hope of reform [to] a holding pen for long time Borstal or jail inmates pending their future crimes which will send them off to jail, thus [temporarily] reducing the caseload of the [Probation Officer]' also endorsed the benefits of valuable group meetings with residents and Probation staff, aimed at behavioural management.<sup>196</sup> Here, he asserted, 'was where the skills and searching questions of the Probation Officers were used effectively....These sessions were a real benefit to hostel life even though it was an effort [for] all concerned.'<sup>197</sup>

The effort for the wardens and their families, who lived onsite and were subject to considerable stress in their dealings with the residents, resulted in burnout after two years at most. In a report accompanying their resignations from the wardens' jobs, Charles and Nathalie Haar noted 'a spate of under cover strong arm tactics being administered to two weak but presumably innocent probationers [who both] left the hostel as an act of self-preservation. Three other probationers and one boarder were subsequently told to leave.... I feel that the stress built up...has caused a deterioration in my health and a rift in family relationships.'<sup>198</sup> Other wardens also mentioned the wellbeing of their own children and families as a significant factor in their decisions to resign.<sup>199</sup> In addition, probationers were presenting with increasingly complex needs: these included violence, and drug and alcohol addictions, involving treatment at Manawaroa<sup>200</sup> and hospitalisation. It became harder for the MSSC to attract fulltime and relief staff for the hostel in general, and particularly hard to find staff with the Christian focus desirable from both MSSC and Probation Service viewpoints. Later couples did not have prolonged involvements with this work.

The Centre decided to withdraw from the joint hostel project following a review process whose participants concluded, unanimously, 'that the Centre's hopes for its involvement have been unrealistic', citing five main areas of differing expectations or difficulties: firstly, frustration that more could have been achieved had the

Centre's staff been allowed more autonomy; secondly, the difficulty of employing and retaining suitable staff; thirdly, the demands of working with boys who were often not first time offenders 'as had been agreed'; fourthly, tensions in the relationship between the Centre and the Justice Department related to finance and a 'perceived reluctance', and consequent low usage of the hostel, by Probation Officers; and lastly,

Acknowledgement that this was a 'difficult and unfamiliar area of service for average church people', and the belief that had greater involvement between the Director and the boys been allowed, this could have been ameliorated: 'he would have been a reassuring link between a boy and a befriending family.'<sup>201</sup>

This was the MSSC's first direct partnership with a government department, and it brought to the fore the importance of clear designations of responsibility, and the sometimes uneasy intersection of a faith-based philosophy with the values of public servants working for a secular statutory agency. Loyal Gibson, from the MSSC's review subcommittee, considered that the Centre had done all that it could given the restrictions upon it and that, having pioneered the hostel development in Palmerston North, it was time to pass it on and use MSSC resources and staff in other projects. It is difficult to quantify the benefit to probationers of the Centre's involvement in the West Street hostel, as involvement in the penal system afforded various opportunities for redemption, and it was not always immediately apparent who had been helped, and by whom. Successive wardens noted, however, in their survey responses that some ex-residents made a point of writing or visiting to thank them for their positive contribution to their rehabilitation years after they had left the hostel. Some young men were helped, but not as many as the MSSC would have liked: in response to Justice Department questions about what caused them to withdraw from the project, the Centre reported that 'there was a difficulty over 'philosophy' – we could not do any work for or with the boys. We could 'help' them, but not sure how.'<sup>202</sup>

Questioning the efficacy of probation hostels was not limited to the MSSC. The Department of Justice opened hostels over a decade from the late 1960s, but by 1975 was already noting that young people did not readily choose this type of accommodation, citing their reluctance to accept the 'necessary restrictions'. The report suggested that 'some less restrictive type of communal accommodation would be more in keeping with the preferred way of life', but that 'there are serious problems of cost and supervision'.<sup>203</sup> Even with the subsidisation of hostels by church welfare organisations cost was a constant factor in their viability, although it was still cheaper to keep a probationer in a hostel in 1982 than in a minimum-

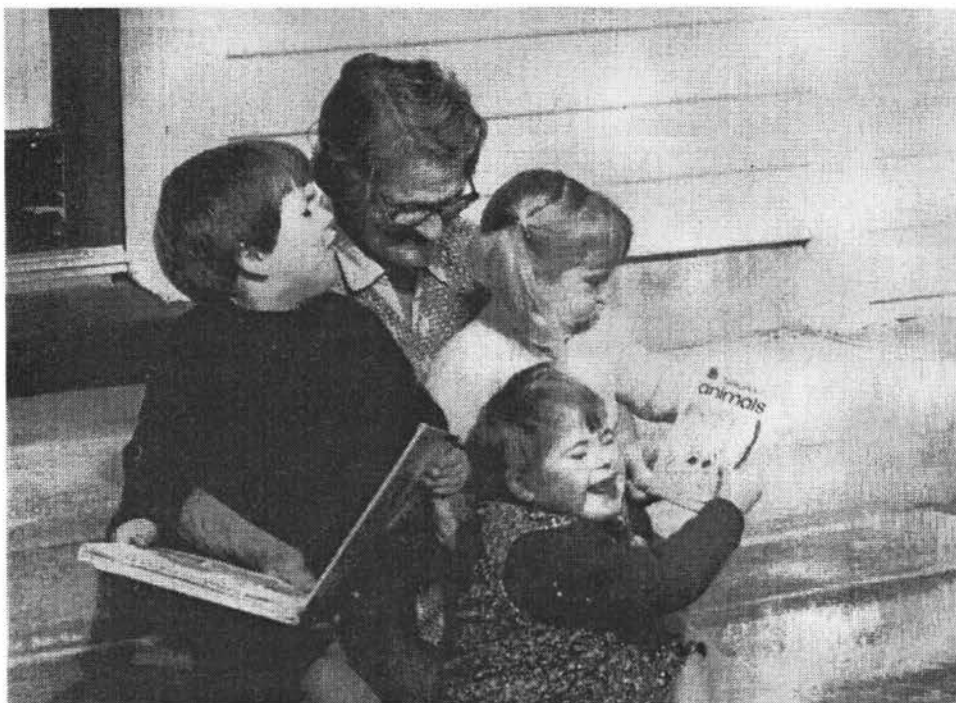


security prison.<sup>204</sup> Combined with low occupancy rates and changes in the duration and management of probation sentences, there was a certain inevitability to the Department's decision to gradually pull back from this aspect of the Probation Service programme. Following a Penal Policy Review in 1982, the 1983 annual report states 'it has not been prudent to extend these activities', withdrawing from them as staff resigned or retired. By then, the only probation hostel mentioned was that in Palmerston North, being run by the Department.<sup>205</sup> Increasingly, Community Service replaced probationary sentences and periodic detention, and resources were channelled into different forms of community involvement with offenders.

In terms of policy development and implementation, the Probation hostel experiment operated for a relatively brief period that coincided with broad social change in many areas. The climate for liberalisation of penal policy, with 'enlightened' leadership from both politicians and senior public servants, that existed in the late 1960s and early 1970s was relevant to its introduction – just as that of the later 1970s, with economic recession, higher crime rates and less political tolerance at central government level contributed to its demise. It also indicates how dependent such joint schemes are upon cooperation at each departmental level, with voluntary organisation representatives and staff, as individuals and collectively. This case study illustrates the very real operational constraints on collaborative ventures at the local level, and the tension between policy made at the national level and implemented in regional branches. It highlights the importance of individuals within both the state and voluntary sectors, as definers and supporters of policy implementation and providers of services, and notes that movements in personnel often reflected movements in the shifting ground of collaboration between the Probation Service and the MSSC.



**CASE STUDY 2: 'FAITHFUL AND COMPASSIONATE' - BERTHA ZURCHER AND THE HOME SUPPORT SERVICE, 1974-1988**



*Bertha Zurcher, with some of her young charges.  
Source: MSSC.*

**'Big Box of Books'**

You may wonder what the above title has to do with Miss Bertha Zurcher. Last year I was desperately in need of some relief and help in my home and it was arranged that Bertha would come into my home for a week.

She is an amazing little woman – with a great big heart – and an equally big box of children's' books!

It is not easy to leave one's children and home in the care of a stranger, but when that person invites the trust and confidence of both children and adults as Bertha does, it becomes so much easier.

Bertha has helped me, and cared for my children three times over the last year and I do so look forward to the end of June when once again I will hear a little voice call out "Hullo Bertha, have you got your big box of books?"

Thanks again Bertha,  
C.P. 206

This writer of this testimonial portrayed the essence of Bertha Zurcher's domestic and family support role: her in-home work combined competent domestic help and childcare and highly developed interpersonal skills in a way that provided families with emotional and physical support through crises. The Home Support Service, established in 1974 and active through most of the 1980s, encapsulated many of the features of the MSSC's work covered in this study. It was an example of the way in which the MSSC pioneered new programmes in the community, recognising an unmet need, developing an innovative service to meet it and then withdrawing from the area once other providers became more involved. In the process, the Centre publicised its service as a model of care, and developed national networks of interest in the home help field that led to considerable expansion of services. The Home Support scheme was unique, in large part because of the personal qualities of its originator and driving force, Bertha Zurcher. Her work was significant because it exemplified traditional aspects of women's voluntary caring roles in a domestic sphere, and was complemented by her knowledge of contemporary social work practice and her strong personal faith. This case study will examine the particular – the centrality of Bertha Zurcher to the scheme – and the general: the development of home-based care in this period in the local context and the way in which the MSSC's Home Support Scheme worked; its influence on other home care models; and the growth of home-based care as a recognised supplement to institutional care.

At the end of a long career as a nurse, midwife and medical social worker, Bertha Zurcher considered how she could use her professional skills in her retirement. In her time as a medical social worker she had often seen the enforced separation of children from their homes when parents were hospitalised, and witnessed their distress at leaving home to stay with strangers. With the idea of using this area of need as a basis for voluntary work, Bertha approached MSSC mentor Merv Hancock to discuss how it might be manifested in practice. The proposal offered to the MSSC was that Bertha Zurcher would undertake a year's voluntary work for the Methodist Church through the Order of St. Stephen, working with families in their homes.

Although the Home Support Scheme was a new venture for the MSSC, and operated in an innovative way to meet families' needs, there were earlier precedents for both statutory and non-statutory domestically based home care. The Department of Labour's Home Aid Service, instituted in 1945, was intended to

support housewives, and therefore the family unit, by providing home help. In practice the scheme did not attract enough workers to remain a significant source of assistance, due to the lack of training and low status of such work.<sup>207</sup> Where home support schemes existed they were often fragmented and uneven, with resources split between government departmental budgets (primarily Health and Social Welfare), and voluntary providers.<sup>208</sup> A 1982 survey of recipients of home help in Palmerston North referred to Hospital Home Aids and the DSW as statutory providers, but does not distinguish between home visits and live-in aid.<sup>209</sup> Voluntary organisations' schemes run by the Women's Division of Federated Farmers (WDFF), the Plunket Society and the Mothers' Helpers Associations were both active in and around the Palmerston North area at the time that the MSSC's scheme was established. All offered primarily practical help, with the WDFF scheme aimed at supporting rural women. Where the Home Support Scheme differed was in the particular professional skills and Christian motivation that Bertha Zurcher brought to her work, and the additional support available for families from the MSSC in the form of counselling, material assistance and education. Guidelines established by Bertha laid the philosophical and spiritual foundations for her work, and articulated her strong sense of the importance of entering family homes without judging their circumstances. She established six principles on which to base her interactions with families:

- Unconditional giving
- Maintenance of family patterns
- The sacredness of each child's personality, and the importance of listening
- Bertha's role as a facilitator
- Acceptance of anger
- Flexibility<sup>210</sup>

While these principles undoubtedly came in part from Bertha's strong Methodist faith, they were also influenced by ideas prevalent in western social services in the 1960s propounding non-judgement in casework, particularly those of Felix Biestek.<sup>211</sup> Her social work background, knowledge of current practice and ongoing professional support and development was a significant feature of this scheme that took it beyond the purely domestic, and the combination of Bertha's personal and professional skills widened the scope of her work with families beyond other contemporary models of home help services. Merv Hancock, who acted as a professional mentor and supervisor, recognised both facets of her Home Support work thus:

I think she had a view that it wasn't just housework – housework was vital because it was a central material reality and she supported and approved it, but she also wanted to offer to particularly the children the security that she would be there representing the father or mother who was absent...She was confident about extending the work that she did because she had a framework that was appropriate– she not only had a framework that had a philosophical base but she had a view of practice of social work... It was all implicit – she made no fuss about any of this.<sup>212</sup>

The Home Support Scheme worked specifically with families of young children by living with them in their homes (or onsite in a borrowed caravan if no bed was available) to support the family, and particularly the children, through the stressful circumstances they were encountering. The Methodist Church, along with other state and voluntary agencies, was then reappraising its involvement with institutional care and increasingly looking for alternatives that either placed children in small foster homes or, preferably, maintained them in their family homes where possible. This was certainly true of the MSSC, which was established in a period of deinstitutionalisation and which chose to develop community-based rather than institutional programmes. The MSSC had an established policy of working in areas that would support the family unit, however it was constituted, and that would enable families to develop skills to cope and grow. Accordingly, the Management Committee readily accepted Bertha's offer of a years' service, as her proposal and personal circumstances met their criteria for new initiatives – she had a strong faith, a practical temperament, considerable social work experience and sufficient personal means that the centre would not have to find funds for the work. At the end of the first year, the Management Committee elected to retain the scheme and to fund Bertha's work, seeking subsidies from the Department of Social Welfare (DSW). DSW declined direct subsidisation, preferring to fund users rather than providers of the service, but made funds available through its Home Aid programme for some families. This was consistent with central government's position that it had no desire to provide these services, but was willing to partly fund them although, as with other voluntary organisations' programmes, subsidies did not cover provision costs. Families were encouraged to pay at least part of the costs for the service.



*The use of a borrowed caravan allowed Bertha Zurcher to work 'on-site' with families who did not have room for her within their house. Her unique service was based on maintaining the integrity of the family unit wherever possible.*

*Source: MSSC.*

Early cases involved Bertha working with families where the mother was in hospital, or where her intervention prevented the need for hospitalisation, and in some cases allowing parents in crisis to have a break together without children. Working alongside families to alleviate stress, she reported:

...It was a joy to see how another pair of hands could help parents to regain confidence, mobilize their resources and fulfil their role with greater joy and satisfaction. At present I am living with 5 children while mother who is separated is in hospital, undergoing surgery. I never cease to marvel at the way little children support each other during the absence of both parents.<sup>213</sup>

Reflecting on her aim to approach each placement as non-judgementally as possible, Bertha considered that she did not always achieve this,

...but on the whole I tried to accept the family as it was and work with the family. Instead of going in and saying you ought to be this and you ought to do that I worked with them and helped them to carry on with whatever disability they had....I found that so much of my own experience – some of which was not positive – had been useful. It helped me to understand the difficulties of families. Whereas some of my spinster friends were critical of modern mothers, having lived in families I realised how hard it was to be a mother or a mother substitute...<sup>214</sup>



As she supported families under stress, Bertha was in turn supported by fellow parishioners, who helped with material support for Home Support families and with personal support for Bertha. There were also close links with the Centre's paid staff who sometimes provided additional individual counselling to family members with whom she was working, or who worked with other statutory and voluntary welfare agencies to provide services like budgetary assistance or benefit advocacy to the families. In turn, other organisations began to utilize her service as it became more recognised, and as deinstitutionalisation of residential facilities increased. Home Support worker reports referred to a 'switched-on' social worker attached to IHC increasingly utilising Home Support bookings to provide respite care for parents, as families were encouraged to 'turn to other community-based options for their mildly or moderately handicapped members.' Organisations like IHC reported 'continual pressure to keep up with the demands of families already shouldering a greater burden of care', and at this time, relief of that burden fell largely upon voluntary agencies.<sup>215</sup> . References to 'block bookings' of her time for Birthright<sup>216</sup> also reflected single parents' needs for support and relief for their families, who were often reliant upon government benefits for their income. These connections with special interest groups reflected the range of welfare organisations addressing their members' specific and differentiated needs in the increasingly diverse health and welfare sectors, and the gaps in provision for such home care services. Excerpts from annual reports illustrated Home Support clients' variety of needs, providing potential and actual supporters of the Centre with parameters of service and human stories behind the statistics:

- the mother of a baby and pre-schooler whose husband is under treatment for alcoholism [who] has been requested by [ the] doctor to spend a week with him prior to his discharge.
- the mother, dying of cancer, [who] remained at home a month longer in the company of her devoted husband and their beautiful baby
- the couple with three lively pre-schoolers, whose marriage was under stress, deepened their relationship during a holiday without the children
- the mother returning home with their fourth child under four years [who] appreciated an extra pair of hands for a fortnight
- the father of four young children who's wife died and for whom a month's assistance gave some time for adjustment and the making of longer term plans.<sup>217</sup>

There were also families where a parent was mentally ill or where complex interpersonal issues arose, which sometimes stretched Bertha's resources. Merv Hancock related the surfacing of such issues within families to societal change outside the familial unit:

It's true to say that everybody was taken by surprise by the kinds of issues that emerged...and to understand that you've got to look at things that are wider than the family, that are having an effect on the family, which expresses itself in complexity in the



family but was arising out of things that were occurring in the wider community. It's trite to say it but changes in the role of the male and female in the wider society profoundly affected the roles of the male and female in the family, in particular the women.<sup>218</sup>

In such cases, Bertha reiterated the importance of professional support, both in recognising her own limits and in referring such cases on through the centre's staff to other health or welfare agencies.

Bertha's spiritual foundation for her Home Support work came from her view that faith should be given expression through social action – in an annual report of the centre she asserted that 'to tell people they matter is one thing; to actually show them in the name of the Church that they do is quite another.'<sup>219</sup> Although the Home Support Scheme was active in a period of increasing secularisation of New Zealand society, she did not feel that she received any negative responses from involved families as a representative of a church-based agency.<sup>220</sup> This may have been due to both the centre's social service reputation in the city, Bertha's quiet strong faith and her non-judgemental attitude, shown by a colleague's description of her: 'She would describe what she did, but she wouldn't say now I'm doing this because I'm a Methodist or because I've been in social work and I know what to do. She did this because what she believed she was doing was important ...She was very respectful of the views of the family she was supporting – she didn't try to tell them that they ought to do it differently.' The Home Support Service, she contended, was 'just one of the ways in which the Church continues to give expression to our faith and concern toward families, enabling them to mobilize their own resources and develop their strengths.'<sup>221</sup>

In keeping with the centre's explicitly stated role in developing and publicising social service initiatives, Bertha gave talks on her work to many other welfare and community groups throughout the region and country, and interviews with national media programmes. Interest in the Home Support scheme also came from Australia and Pacific countries. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, as deinstitutionalisation gathered momentum in many areas of welfare provision, alternatives to residential care were sought and developed by many non-statutory organisations to allow in-home care where possible. In 1980 Bertha was invited to Christchurch by the Society for Research on Women to add her experiences to research on resources available for hospitalised mothers. A grant from the International Year of the Child Telethon Trust the same year allowed the Centre to help publicise Bertha's work through speaking engagements and an audio-visual programme, and to employ another Home Support worker. Kath Boyle's

appointment showed 'that others can do what so many felt was only possible for Bertha Zurcher.'<sup>222</sup> After ten months in the job, Kath Boyle had undergone training courses, developed links with helping agencies in the city, such as local church-run children's homes and the Christian Homes Trust (a forerunner to Arohanui Hospice), and reported that she was 'saddened to see how the standard of living for many New Zealanders is now below the poverty line! I feel very strongly about this, that it should occur in a land such as this.' She further noted the desperation of families struggling with insufficient income, stating that 'the families I have been dealing with are almost all either on invalid or widows pensions, or the dole, or low income and strict budgeting from Budget Advisory Service. They are finding it more and more difficult to make ends meet...I am quite sure some of the children are showing the effects of inadequate nutrition, and lack of adequate health care.'<sup>223</sup> Kath Boyle remained with the Centre as a Home support worker for less than two years, as ill health forced her resignation. Her reports to the Management Committee displayed a lively personality and prose style, reflecting her engagement with the families and issues she encountered:

I have continued marriage guidance counselling with one of the last year's Home Support client families who had multitudinous problems i.e. husband out of work, sick baby, eviction order for non-payment of rent, debt collectors ready to repossess the car, automatic washer, dryer etc. Husband expelled from church; wife in a state of nervous collapse. (Well!!!)

For the past few weeks 'everything is coming up roses' – husband found a job; baby's health improved; eviction deferred; debt collectors being paid through Home Budgeting Service; husband found new church.

Rosy??? Not quite!!!

Husband answered boss back – given notice. Wife chastised by new church for not attending more than three meetings per week (with her three children under four years of age) and feeling very guilty about it. Eviction order was 'reinstated' because rent again in arrears (not client's fault); mother has suspected stomach ulcer.

Bright note? Their personal relationship has really blossomed and the mother is learning to deal with her guilt feelings re. church attendance.<sup>224</sup>

This excerpt from Management Committee minutes illustrated the multiplicity of some families' problems and the potential for Home Support workers' interactions with a wide range of community groups on behalf of clients. Interactions with other aspects of MSSC services were also evident, whether informally through parishioners' donations of toys and babysitting or through material aid. Kath Boyle referred to taking clients to Highbury House for 'buckshee' clothing, noting that 'the friendly assistance and gentle demeanour of the ladies has helped dispel any feeling of 'charity' and is much appreciated by my clients and myself.'<sup>225</sup>

Kath Boyle's employment allowed Bertha the opportunity to extend her knowledge of the home help sector through further training. In recognition of

the work she had already done, and in anticipation of further insights to be gained, the Management Committee of the MSSC sought funding for Bertha to attend the International Congress on Home Help Services in Stockholm in 1981. Funding was not as easily forthcoming as had been hoped, but as a voluntary agency the MSSC was well regarded in its community and donors subsidized the cost to the centre. Bertha attended the conference as New Zealand's sole representative. She believed that a reluctance to back her by some donor sources was because her home help work was hands-on, rather than in a supervisory or managerial role.<sup>226</sup> This perceived lack of status for domestically based caring work was reinforced at the conference, where she found that most of the delegates were also supervisors of carers. In discussion, she challenged the dominant perception of carers as being primarily wage-driven, and asserted the role of compassion as a motivation for home help workers. It would be easy to dismiss Bertha's objections in light of her own well-honed ideal of service, but other contemporary New Zealand research showed a majority of home help workers who received wages for their labour considered that kindness and concern for clients were essential parts of their work, and certainly the low pay rates did not appear a sufficient incentive on their own to encourage participation in this field as a career.<sup>227</sup>

On her return home, after further visits to other programmes operating in England and Hong Kong, more publicity for the scheme followed, and the Centre was instrumental in organising the inaugural Conference on Home Help Services in New Zealand. The Director of MSSC, Philip McConkey, addressed the conference on the need to raise the status and awareness of home help services in the wider community. His speech noted the increase in interest in various home help initiatives over the previous ten years, as shown in reports and surveys on needs and existing services. Reiterating the MSSC's emphasis on supporting families he also advocated a need to refocus on the home, and to 'look creatively at ways of supporting the household unit so that its members can find their own renewed strength and resources.' Threats to the home unit were listed as 'the need/demand for specialist health care, unemployment, homelessness, broad issues of changing population patterns and general economic instability.' Other speakers detailed the fragmented nature of home help provision, both in terms of the diverse needs of clients and a lack of cohesion between existing providers. Programmes focussed on different groups of clientele, with many representing aged and health-related domestic care, and

without a unifying descriptive name. The beginnings of new central government initiatives were noted, with a pilot training scheme in Auckland, but no plans to develop it further, and no other formal training programmes available for carers to develop their knowledge of the field. As well as the practical elements of home help planning, speakers referred to the undervaluing of home help and of domestic work in general:

It is a truism to all those who over the years have supported various projects and programmes...that it has been achieved on a shoe-string. The work has always been relatively poorly paid. The status of those offering such fundamentally significant work has been low. Such low status is directly related to that accorded the unpaid work that household members themselves undertake... <sup>228</sup>

Successive speakers made a direct link between unpaid household work and low paid home help work and the lack of status afforded to either, and called for better training and career options for carers. Funding was also a constant struggle for home help providers, many of whom were voluntary welfare providers. When the MSSC was asked to take over the fledgling Horowhenua Home Support Service based in Levin, it became clear that the service was valued, supported and needed by district nurses, medical social workers, other voluntary agencies and convalescent or invalid people, but funded in an ad hoc and miserly fashion. It was an example of the 'funded to survive, not to succeed' model of voluntary agencies in partnership with government agencies, and barely that at times. It appeared that recognition of the long-term benefits of such a service was considerably slower in coming at the central government level than at local level, as nursing and medical staff added their voices to those of the MSSC in seeking regular and reliable funding. Although this service had similarities to Bertha Zurcher's model, it employed more workers, and worked in close conjunction with primarily health-related, rather than family, needs.

The central figure in this case study, Bertha Zurcher, was both an exception to, and a model of, the characteristics of home help workers at this time. The in-home service model she was instrumental in developing provided a stable base for families to work through crises, and supported them materially and emotionally, with the additional support of the MSSC. Her range of skills was fundamental to the success of the scheme, and as with other projects founded by a strong individual the scheme did not continue much past her second retirement in 1988. This was not due entirely to her leaving as placements had tailed off somewhat in the preceding years as other providers moved into the market. The work that the MSSC and Bertha had done in promoting their own scheme as an example of

perceived need and provision, and in publicizing the area of home help services in general, aided in this work gaining in professional recognition nationally. In the 1980s many new agencies providing home based caring were established, working in conjunction with both Health and Social Welfare ministries, and catering to an aging population. WDFF and other established organisations expanded their work in this area, becoming increasingly professionally oriented in order to comply with contractual obligations, often in partnership with government health providers. In the area of family-centred home help services, agencies like Barnardo's expanded existing services to fill a niche in the market. By the late 1980s the MSSC had moved on to other programmes, in keeping with its focus on pioneering, publicizing and propelling them into the wider community. The Home Support Scheme operated at the time that the concept of a unified home-based care network was developing, and Bertha Zurcher and the MSSC contributed to this development.

## THE 1980s

### **From Muldoon to monetarism: New Zealand in the 1980s**

The turbulence of the 1980s in New Zealand is well documented, and there is a sizeable body of literature relating particularly to the economic reforms of the fourth Labour Government (1984-1990), and their social consequences. While historians write of the 'watershed' nature of this government, it is also pertinent to consider the political and economic environment to which it was a reaction. Robert Muldoon's strongly interventionist National government grappled with worsening economic conditions, and the demands and costs of the still expanding welfare state. Welfare provision predicated on the nuclear family with a male breadwinner struggled to cope with marked changes in family structures and worsening employment levels. Generous national superannuation and accident compensation schemes, introduced in the 1970s, swelled the welfare budget to potentially unsustainable levels, although much of the 'blame' for governmental welfare spending levels was directed at recipients of the Domestic Purposes and Unemployment benefits. Although unemployment had risen since the end of the 1960s and full employment was a distant memory, an ideological attachment to the concept remained until the early 1980s, when it became evident that it bore little relationship to reality. 'Toleration' of unemployment became acceptable.<sup>229</sup> The economic viability of further welfare state expansion was seriously questioned in a way that it had not been for decades.

New Zealand was, then, an environment ripe for reform. The fourth Labour government, led by David Lange, was compelled by a balance of payments crisis to restructure economically. Combined with an ideological shift away from the state as provider, the government's policies radically altered the social environment. Roger Douglas, as Minister of Finance, was the impetus behind the monetarist reform programme. Michael King refers to Douglas's cabinet colleagues as 'strong on social policy but economically illiterate', suggesting that they consented to some policies because they had insufficient understanding of either theory or application. 'By the time they had concluded that the social cost of the policies was too high...it was too late: the policies were entrenched.'<sup>230</sup> The 1988 Royal Commission on Social Policy, charged in 1986 with consulting widely to ascertain New Zealanders' views of, and hopes for, the country's future direction, touched a



well-spring of public response. The Commission's terms of reference included the aim of securing 'a more fair, humanitarian, consistent, efficient and economical social policy which will meet the changed and changing needs of New Zealand and achieve a more just society.'<sup>231</sup> Respondents, many of whom were reeling from the rapidity and extent of government reforms, reiterated their support for the 1972 commission's ethos of participation, security and community development. Recommendations included further expansion of state welfare provision - at considerable cost - and argued against radical economic reform. This was clearly inconsistent with Douglas's policy agenda, and in the aftermath of the 1987 stock market crash he attempted to push through his flat-tax proposal. The Commission responded by releasing its findings earlier than anticipated, leaving it little time to complete a broad perspective. The final report was not widely used by policy-makers or government. It was indicative of the ideological clash within the Labour caucus between Douglas and the economic reform brigade, and those representing 'old' Labour who endorsed the existing welfare state model. Increasingly the public came to tar all government members with the same reformist brush.

Far-reaching societal change was wrought within two terms of government, although Roger Douglas's reform agenda was never fully implemented in the welfare area.<sup>232</sup> 'The strongly interventionist State that reigned at the start of the decade was replaced by one that looked to the market to provide for the nation's welfare. By the end of the decade, the market had become the major reference point.'<sup>233</sup> The implications for welfare providers and recipients were manifold. Involvement in paid labour was generally necessary to enjoy the material benefits of a market driven society, yet unemployment continued to rise throughout the decade. In 1980, 26,321 New Zealanders were registered as unemployed; by 1989 the number had increased to 134,292.<sup>234</sup> Widespread public service retrenchments and redundancies from struggling businesses often affected whole communities previously dependent upon a major employer. While opportunities for individual economic enrichment increased for some, the experience for many was that families 'marginal to paid labour were also marginal to other aspects of social and economic life.'<sup>235</sup> Cuts to welfare expenditure further increased the divide between those who benefited from, and those who were disadvantaged by, market-driven policies.

Welfare provision was also under scrutiny, based on the ideological position that the state was not necessarily the best vehicle for supplying and funding New

Zealanders' welfare needs. Margaret McClure refers to the 1984-1998 period as 'the reluctant state'<sup>236</sup> and the Lange government openly questioned not only the extent of earlier welfare funding, but its efficacy. Quantity, according to the Planning Council, did not necessarily equate to quality.<sup>237</sup> Welfare, as with other areas of the state apparatus, became increasingly contestable, contractual and devolved from central government to communities. The 1989 Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act exemplified the movement away from the state having jurisdiction over arrangements for family members to a more community-based system that involved families in decision-making about options for care and support of their members.

Many voluntary welfare agencies faced with the beginnings of a contract culture of welfare provision in the later 1980s experienced a profound organisational shift: Margaret Tennant summarised it thus: 'The consequent move to contracting was consistent with prevailing economic theories that exalted market-based models, competition, choice in the delivery of services and a reduction in the role of the state.'<sup>238</sup> Government-commissioned papers proposed that, apart from highly desirable cost savings, a reorientation of welfare services at a community level would allow for more flexible targeting of services to meet changing needs. A 1989 DSW publication, *Contracting for Social Services: Principles and Guidelines*, summarised the perceived benefits for voluntary agencies and their clients arising from formal contracting for services. It asserted that contracting would aid new community groups by making funding more available, and more secure, than under the previous pattern of fund 'capture' by a few large traditional service providers. In addition, it would result in services that were more clearly defined and relevant to consumers' needs. Contracting, then, was 'a means to achieve a variety of ends from quality improvements to consumer responsiveness, from reducing the price of services through efficiencies to rationing and targeting scarce resources.'<sup>239</sup> For the voluntary agencies, the beginnings of a welfare contract culture entailed 'establishing a more formal...and businesslike arrangement in the matter of state/voluntary agency cooperation', and reorienting their operations around the dominant market culture. The government still endorsed the role of the voluntary sector in welfare provision, partly from the ideological position of a 'less state, more community' focus, but the weighting given each - the mix in the 'mixed economy of welfare' - once again shifted to reflect changes in funding, direction and focus of services.

Ingrained in the new right ideological rhetoric that came to prominence in this decade was a strongly moral, idealised element to voluntary activity, made explicit in Margaret Thatcher's Conservative British government and in other western democracies. In a 1981 speech to the Women's Royal Voluntary Service in 1981, she asserted that 'the voluntary movement is at the heart of all our social welfare provision' and 'we politicians and administrators must not forget that the state has a limited role.' She continued, 'The willingness of men and women to give service is one of freedom's greatest safeguards. It ensures that caring remains free from political control.'<sup>240</sup> The state was clearly not seen as a natural home for caring service, and while such activity was seen as desirable and moral when carried out by voluntary agencies, state funding to support it did not necessarily reflect its ideologically ascendant position.

For church groups, especially those involved in the provision of social services, the 1980s presented many challenges. The 'heyday' of liberal churches in the early 1970s was well over, and Muldoon's antipathy towards them continued into the 1980s. Peter Lineham writes of 'governments shut[ting] their doors to churches' in this decade, even though two of the Labour government cabinet had direct church connections, adding that they 'no longer seemed to matter' to those in government.<sup>241</sup> The declines in mainstream church membership noted in the 1960s and 1970s continued<sup>242</sup>, and although church people were prominent in national political campaigns that involved emotive moral issues (homosexual law reform, the 1981 Springbok tour, nuclear arms) churches' positions as moral arbiters of public policy were further undermined by Treasury's dominant influence on government policy. Monetary concerns and 'new right' ideologies were in the ascendancy. As the economic situation worsened, and inequalities of income and opportunities to participate in society became more pronounced, the mainstream churches increasingly expressed their unease, showing 'hints of embarking on a new crusade' in response to the rollout of the Labour government's welfare reforms.<sup>243</sup> In 1987, the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) reflected on a shift in the relationship between church welfare agencies and the government, saying

Much of the work of the Council in the past has been in the area of consulting with government in relation to subsidies and capital grants. In the future it is hoped to move to advocacy on behalf of agencies and consumers.<sup>244</sup>

This heralding of the changing relationship between state and voluntary providers was noted by the MSSA in its report to Conference that same year. It reflected changes in availability and access to funding, but also a growing awareness that the

ideological foundations of each partner were increasingly dissimilar. The churches somewhat belatedly recognised that they would have to argue not just for allocation of funds, but justify the grounds on which they were claimed. Social justice advocacy became a more visible complementary feature of many church social service agencies in this decade, foreshadowing strong public criticism of government policies in the 1990s. The Anglican Church's first Social Responsibility Officer, Reverend Richard Randerson, argued that it was no longer enough for church agencies to be involved in social services that alleviated immediate distress without also working towards social justice, via raising awareness and community development. Only when people were informed and 'empowered' to change unjust structures would they have the ability to effect significant change in their lives.<sup>245</sup> Philip McConkey, the MSSC's Director for most of the 1980s, was also involved with national church groups like the MSSA, of which he wrote in 1983, 'From being little more than a fraternal [group] this organisation has become in the past two years an active participant in the forces of social change.'<sup>246</sup> Richard Randerson wrote of the churches' moral imperative to speak out, and of politicians' disinclination to listen:

Should the Church say anything at all about social and economic policy? Within the Church this is a very old debate, although in recent years there has been a greater acceptance by many church members that the Church not only has a contribution to make but indeed must make it as a central part of its mission.

Amongst political decision-makers, however, the Church's contribution is not always welcomed. One view often expressed is that the Church should look after spiritual matters and let the Government deal with political matters. Or, as one politician put it: "let the Church run the soup-kitchens and we will run the Government".<sup>247</sup>

Throughout the decade the churches could, and did, provide first-hand knowledge and experience of the social and economic effects of welfare cuts and unemployment on their clients. Their 'soup-kitchens', in the forms of City Missions, church-based welfare agencies and local church social service initiatives, continued to succour people for whom state benefits were inadequate. Research into the extent of poverty was commissioned by church- and inter-church agencies, as well as their secular peers, aided in some centres by the development of university social work and social science programmes that provided students for local research projects. The growth of foodbanks, almost unknown in this form at the beginning of the decade, was seen by the churches that largely ran them as indicative of the inadequacies of policies designed to curtail welfare dependency. Relationships between social service agencies like the MSSC and local branches of the DSW were sometimes strained, as DSW staff referred clients to foodbanks after

denying them special financial assistance while continuing to assert the adequacy of benefit levels.<sup>248</sup>

## **The Palmerston North Context**

Palmerston North's residents, like those of other areas of the country, coped to varying degrees with extensive restructuring and consequent high levels of unemployment in the 1980s. The city's mixed economy, comprising a range of industries and services, was relatively buffered in comparison to other centres that relied upon a major source of economic income. In addition, the growth of Massey University in the 1970s and 1980s provided the city with a significant source of employment and income. Unemployment rose in Palmerston North throughout the decade, but more slowly than the national average: between 1986 and 1991 unemployment rose nationally by fifty percent, although in Palmerston North the increase was twenty percent.<sup>249</sup>

Both state and voluntary social service agencies dealt with the social consequences of unemployment and poverty. MSSC reports throughout the decade noted the high correlation between poverty and unemployment in those seeking help, and reinforced the publicly expressed perceptions of other voluntary welfare agencies: 'Unemployment so often sets in motion a poverty spiral which sucks people down very rapidly, like water emptying out of a bath. It's the heart of the poverty problem.'<sup>250</sup> The closure of the Longburn Freezing Works in 1987 resulted in hundreds of workers losing their jobs, many of whom had few skills to meet a changing job market. Maori, over-represented in unskilled and semi-skilled categories of employment, were badly affected: "While there were opportunities for new kinds of employment for well-educated Maori skilled in operating in the European business or academic world, there was increasing alienation and poverty for those who had not learned those skills.'<sup>251</sup> In keeping with a national movement towards bicultural awareness and partnerships the PNCC developed its relationship with Rangitane<sup>252</sup> in order to address Maori social needs in the city in the 1980s. The MSSC was one agency that worked closely with the PNCC and the Highbury Whanau Support Group in setting up the Youth Work Project in a part of the city where unemployment and benefit dependency were high, and where the MSSC already had community links. Minutes of Management Committee meetings refer to the unprecedented nature of the MSSC's involvement with the Highbury



Youth Work Project. The MSSC financially funded the project through a Telethon grant, and provided the money 'untagged' i.e. without their practical input or direction into the workings of the project, at a time when Maori were asserting rights to independent self-development initiatives.<sup>253</sup> As a project, it illustrated a range of intersections between two local voluntary community groups, one working with a specific section of the community and the other as a general welfare agency, in cooperation with local government, and funded through local government and a national trust.

Community development initiatives established or fostered by the PNCC in the 1970s largely continued throughout the 1980s. An exception to this was the winding-up of the Community Chest in 1979. This was partly attributed to the capture of publicly donated funds by national, rather than local, voluntary organisations, but also related to increasing criticism throughout the 1970s of the way funds were dispersed to established and new community groups. The Community Services Council (CSC) had their Council funding increased in 1981 to \$7000, which included \$2500 for distribution to community groups. The following year, the PNCC approved a radical new funding structure for grants to local voluntary welfare agencies: funds would be channelled through the CSC on a *per capita* basis, initially at the rate of twenty five cents per head of population. Funding for the CSC more than doubled as a result. The CSC was responsible for assessing applications and allocating funds, subject to Council's final approval. The Mayor, Brian Elwood, wrote at the time, 'The allocation of a per capita grant by a city council to a community services council is, I understand, unique in New Zealand. It is part of a longer term objective of mine...to have a welfare grant available through New Zealand on the same basis as the Community and Recreation grant.'<sup>254</sup> The Mayor and his Council continued to show their commitment to the scheme, and the community organisation sector, increasing the *per capita* rate of funds allocated: this was continued under successive mayoralities.

Contemporary reports mention the strength of the voluntary sector in the city at this time. Lesley Read's impression of it in 1980 was that 'as an outsider moving into the city, returning from the relative strength and variety of social work in London in the late 70s, I was...impressed by the number and availability of helping, lobbying and support groups within the locality.'<sup>255</sup> The range of agencies and community groups working in Palmerston North also brought resourcing



issues to the fore. MSSC staff and committee members were aware of these issues and addressed them in a Review and Planning Report to their 1982 AGM. The Director, Philip McConkey, wrote

...there must be right through the community, in both State and voluntary sectors, a much more thorough knowledge of and consequent deployment of the money and people available. Some 'competition' for these can be a helpful thing, but too much is destructive, in my opinion. Therefore, one of the things I want to promote...is an in-depth study of the present extent and the future potential of 'volunteerism' – who is doing what for which cause and why; and who would like to or could do what, and how do we stimulate and channel these resources.<sup>256</sup>

He propounded the potential benefits of working more closely with other voluntary agencies, particularly with other church groups, in order to maximise both resource use and effectiveness, although the possibility of denominational loyalties was raised. In general, there is evidence of considerable ecumenical cooperation between local church agencies, in terms of sharing of knowledge and resources.<sup>257</sup>

## **The MSSC**

The social and economic conditions that surround us we cannot ignore. Poverty, housing problems, unemployment, mental stress and breakdown are things which, while I am in this place, we will continue to address, not just by providing for the sufferers, but by acting with them and on their behalf in the political and social areas of our community. I am confirmed in and committed to the belief that we cannot do one without the other.<sup>258</sup>

The introduction to the Centre's 1980 Annual Report begins with the writer's sense of 'foreboding' of what the decade might deliver – 'heightening anxiety' due to 'the spectres of galloping inflation, of unemployment, of community violence [and] international tension'. This gloomy, if somewhat prescient, picture was tempered by an alternative vision of what may be possible in such an environment with faith and hope, 'not careless of the problems ahead, but believing in the resources of our God and mindful of the faithfulness of our supporters'. All of these elements – increasing poverty and need, faith as a motivating force and practical action and support - were evident in the MSSC's work throughout the 1980s.

Considerable challenges in the form of political and social change required voluntary social service agencies like the MSSC to adapt their programmes and structures to cope with increased demands from both government and clients. The

MSSC's paid staff numbers increased significantly in the second half of the decade in response to the demands of new or expanded programmes.<sup>259</sup> These included a foodbank coordinator in 1984, a part-time receptionist in 1985 and an education coordinator in 1987. In the Goodwill Operations area long-term volunteers filled new paid positions of workshop coordinator in 1987 and the first retail salesperson (later shop coordinator) the following year, reflecting the rapid expansion of this area. Voluntary activity and commitment continued to be central to service delivery, although in general volunteers became a scarcer commodity. Philip McConkey continued in his role as Director until 1988, and was replaced by social worker Margaret Perowne, the last of the Centre's Directors to have direct, although not always strong, links with the Methodist Parish.

A concomitant rise in workplace stress was repeatedly articulated by the Centre's staff, caught between providing and funding services, and advocating for clients' needs as well as their own. After six months in the job, Family Social Worker Margaret Perowne reported her impression of 'people, paper, pressures', and reminded the Management Committee of the 'intensive nature of our work' and the necessity of replenishing physical and mental resources.<sup>260</sup> A sub-committee investigating staff workloads in 1984 commented on the general welfare foundation of the Centre, stating that 'it is a non-specialist agency and as such is open to all who call upon it for help. As a church-based agency there is an expectation that calls for help will not be refused', an expectation that came at least as much from those offering the service as those receiving it. The report also mentions staff awareness of the Centre's 'tradition and high standing' in the city, and expectations by the Parish and District that they would continue to uphold this.<sup>261</sup> Pressure came not only from the quantity of casework, but also from the wide range of areas of responsibility within and outside of the Centre's work, in the community development and social education fields.

## **Funding**

The 1982 Review and Planning Report to the MSSC AGM began its Finance section with a summary of its careful attention to, and past methods of, maintaining sufficient monies to provide 'a buffer against any sudden curtailment of services or reduction of staff.' However, inflation had, in recent years 'become a hard and uncomfortable reality and each year we wonder how much longer we can

keep going.’ Existing sources of funding – Highbury House proceeds, charitable trust funds and other donations – were no longer sufficient to meet expenses. New initiatives included special fundraising events and the establishment of a dedicated Finance sub-committee. The section concluded that ‘for the Centre finance will always be a matter of faith and action.’

Faith and action was an apt summation of economic activity in this decade: as spending expanded to meet greatly increased need, both belief in the worth of the work and energy to chase funds were needed. In 1984 the Centre approved its first \$100,000 budget.<sup>262</sup> New sources of income became apparent during the decade, while others became less certain as constant funders. The Centre received a one-off grant from the Telethon Trust in the 1979-80 financial year, which was used to publicize and provide additional staff for the Home Support scheme,<sup>263</sup> and in 1980 took the ‘unusual’ step of employing a TEP<sup>264</sup> scheme worker to investigate alternative and previously untapped sources of income.<sup>265</sup> Competition for public funding became more contested as voluntary agencies were compelled to adopt more market oriented marketing and fundraising plans, reflecting the predominance of business ‘market models’.

Available funds were not always considered appropriate for use in a church-based agency, and the use of ‘Golden Kiwi’ lottery funds in particular presented the Management Committee with an ethical dilemma. In November of 1981 the Director and paid social workers of the Centre presented a document to the Management Committee that argued for the Centre to accept such funding. In making their case, the group detailed the urgent financial needs of an increased clientele, the predation of inflation, and the anxiety that staff felt about finance on top of existing workplace stress. ‘We are in touch directly with the hurting needy people and the resources which can alleviate their discomfort.’ The document stated their position on gambling: they did not condone it, but accepted that many people gambled; and not applying would do nothing to lessen the incidence of gambling. The Methodist Church’s long-held position on gambling was also taken into account:

We know that the Methodist Church speaks out strongly against gambling: we agree wholeheartedly, BUT do not believe that it is necessarily correct, just or virtuous to abstain from making use of profits obtained from other people’s gambling if they can help people in need. <sup>266</sup>

This position was illustrative of the staff’s perception of pressing financial need for their clients, and for the Centre, to function effectively. Ken Fay, then Chairman of

the Management Committee, recalled his personal opposition to such a position, which he considered reflected that of many other Methodists involved with the Centre in the 1980s. Alongside his personal beliefs about gambling, he also noted that many of the Centre's clients already presented with problems associated with gambling, and financially benefiting from this represented an ethical dilemma. He noted that in the period after his chairmanship, lottery funding was applied for and received.<sup>267</sup> Nationally, the Public Questions Committee of the Methodist Church devoted considerably less time to gambling as a hot issue in this period than in earlier decades, accepting that in practice many of its members probably tolerated it to some degree, whether or not they chose to participate in it.<sup>268</sup>

Despite continual funding concerns, throughout the 1980s the Centre continued to offer its services 'free and with no religious barrier'.<sup>269</sup> This position, based on the principle of accessibility of self-help services, made the Centre reliant upon the financial support it could muster in the community. Parish grants, the relaunching of the 'Friends of the Centre' scheme, and the inclusion of bequest forms in copies of annual reports were aimed primarily at church members, who also considerably aided the Centre's finances through voluntary work in the Highbury House and rag-selling operations. While this work continued to be a major financial contributor to the Centre, it also had other benefits for those involved:

Those who have worked for the shop in any way would freely admit that they have been enriched through such involvement. They experience a sense of usefulness, they benefit from forming relationships with people from differing backgrounds, they gain an insight into some of the needs of families and they develop friendships with fellow workers.<sup>270</sup>

The considerable voluntary commitment in this area paid social as well as financial dividends for the Centre, and this funding source grew throughout the 1980s, in both physical outlets and grants to the Centre. The 1985 Annual Report details the reorganisation of the clothes and rags operation into a four-pronged Goodwill Stores Group, comprising sections relating to Stores and Supply, Production, Retail Sales and Administration. This structure mirrored the terminology and structure of private businesses, following a pattern of seeking increased efficiency to maximise profits for the Centre in a tight welfare market.

Bequests also provided the Centre with funds to develop new programmes or as a financial buttress against high inflation. Such funds often came with stipulations about what with which areas of MSSC service delivery they could be

associated. An example of this in the 1980s was the Catherine Jamieson bequest, where the donor's family requested that funds be used for capital developments and that the donor's name was publicly acknowledged in any new buildings.<sup>271</sup> Bequest donations allowed the Centre to maintain a reserve fund in readiness for potential new developments, in a period of tight financial constraints.

Discernible tightening of trust funds was also evident, as community groups competed for funding, and criteria for some grants precluded funding ongoing programmes or administrative costs in favour of new areas of work or capital spending. Voluntary administrators were compelled to cope with increasing amounts of necessary paperwork, while being vigilant with any funding received. When the Centre replaced its existing, well-used, van in 1982, it received funding from local and national organisations, including the Todd Foundation, F. & B. Isaacs Trust, the Wellington Methodist Charitable Fund and the CSC (this last group representing a range of community groups who were users of the new van.)<sup>272</sup> The charitable trusts that had regularly supported the MSSC in previous decades continued to do so, and were supplemented by other local trusts associated with well-known city families (the Hopwood and Milverton Trusts). Given the increased competition for trust funds, their sustained support indicated the Centre's recognized standing as a provider of social services within the local community.

For most of the decade, funding from central government – mainly the Departments of Labour and Social Welfare – related mostly to grants made to the Home Support Service. Government funding was relatively minimal in this period, although towards the end of the decade, the concept, and implications, of contracting of welfare services were being debated by the MSSC and other agencies. The Centre's ability to maintain a large degree of financial independence, particularly related to the development of the Goodwill operation and its strong volunteer labour force, and aided by careful internal financial planning, allowed it to pursue new programmes without relying solely on government grants. Philip McConkey recalled the relative stability of funding for the Centre in comparison with local Catholic social services in the 1980s, where initiatives would be launched and new staff members employed only to lose funding - and staff - in the next grant round.<sup>273</sup> In a period of financial tightening of welfare resources, the MSSC's experience and planning were significant factors in their ability to provide services.



## **Programmes and Initiatives**

In the 1980s the centre responded to changing patterns of need by providing some new services and reducing its involvement in others. Many of these programmes were based on the Centre's support for families, however they were constituted. The Home Support Service, which was an innovative and unique programme of family-focussed in-home aid when established in 1974, had served its purpose in publicising and developing this area of home-based care, and new providers had moved into this area by the time that Bertha Zurcher retired in 1988. Conversely, the Horowhenua Home Support Service, passed on to the Centre as a fledgling service in 1984 developed alongside, and with strong connections to, the local hospital board and district nurses. Its funding was initially uncertain and reliant upon annual grants, but with the backing of health services in Horowhenua it became financially viable and sustainable. The Centre had a short-lived experiment with providing accommodation for young people at the Catherine Jamieson Hostel, in response to concern about 'problem' youths and a citywide shortage of rental accommodation throughout the 1980s. Other programmes such as the counselling and education areas continued to grow, and a significant new response to community need – a foodbank – was established in 1983, at a time when foodbanks were relatively scarce.<sup>274</sup> Hostels, home-based care and foodbanks were contemporary equivalents of earlier welfare provision, whether administered by church and other voluntary organisations, or by Hospital and Charitable Relief boards. The reintroduction of foodbanks in the 1980s followed on from the soup kitchens and ration orders of the 1860s, 'outdoor relief' as a function of the 1885 Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Act and City Missions' distribution of food and clothing in the 1930s and beyond. As in earlier times, it reflected economic need, varying levels of political engagement or commitment and 'gap-filling' by churches and other voluntary agencies. As in the 1930s, it also signalled churches' political criticism of government policies that they considered had exacerbated clients' inability to provide for themselves.

### **The Palmerston North Foodbank:**

For several years before the establishment of the Palmerston North Foodbank, the MSSC had maintained an emergency fund of cash, as well as food vouchers and food supplies, to meet the immediate needs of clients. This informal assistance was distributed at the discretion of the Family Social Worker, Margaret



Perowne. From her work with housing issues and families' needs, she gained a clear understanding of the extent of hardship they faced, asserting in the Centre's 1981 Annual Report, 'Let no-one convince you that, in Palmerston North, everyone is adequately housed, fed and cared for – there is material poverty as well as emotional and spiritual poverty.' Management Committee reports from the same period describe the range of demands that the Centre's staff tried to fill: 'We are made most uncomfortably aware of the great needs existing and try to "keep our fingers on the pulse".' Requests for money, food, transport, work and accommodation stretched the capacity of the Centre's resources, and although most were at least partly filled, regret was evident in acknowledging 'it is really difficult to have to say, "No, we're sorry BUT...we can't help."' <sup>275</sup>

By mid-1983 Margaret Perowne reported to the Management Committee that there had been a significant increase in requests for food from MSSC clients. Stocks of food were 'well-used', and cash donations were kept to a minimum, but referrals from other agencies – the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), hospital social workers, Public Health nurses and PNCC Community Services – exacerbated the demand for existing resources. She posed the question 'Is it worth establishing a foodbank [like that operating] in Levin?' <sup>276</sup> A new report suggested by the MSSC and written by Massey University social work students on the extent of poverty in the city, entitled 'Surviving on the Breadline' <sup>277</sup> added further weight to the call. This report found that many respondents lacked adequate food and other resources to provide for their families, and tried hard to work within limited budgets: 'Even if I go without, I don't mind because I have learnt to go without. As long as I feed my kids! I don't have breakfast and I don't have lunch, as long as I have tea.' <sup>278</sup> Contemporary reports from Auckland and Christchurch showed similar patterns, suggesting to the local study's authors that 'the group of respondents who took part in this study are not an isolated few but are representative of many people in our society who share this standard of living.' The report ends by asking questions intended to trigger social action in this area, linking a 'societal problem' with a local response: 'What are the social consequences for Palmerston North of allowing this situation to continue, and possibly worsen?' <sup>279</sup> The Centre resolved to 'consult with other agencies in the city with a view to establishing an emergency food service'. <sup>280</sup> Chris Burgin, a recent Massey University social work graduate <sup>281</sup>, was given the task of launching the new service from a room made available at the MSSC.

By the beginning of October, the Palmerston North Foodbank was in operation, with local media publicity resulting in generous donations of food.<sup>282</sup> In its first two months, the foodbank received sixty one requests for food, and had nine churches involved in collecting it.<sup>283</sup> At the end of January the Director noted in his monthly report that 'we are getting good support from the radio stations but it seems clear that I will have to give more thought to publicising the issue of poverty as revealed by foodbank clients.'<sup>284</sup> Demand continued to grow but so did public donations, and MSSC reports noted 'extensive publicity' and community support.<sup>285</sup> In the first six months, \$6500 of food was dispersed, and a half-time foodbank caseworker, Cecily Gordon, was appointed in July 1984.<sup>286</sup> Her job encompassed two areas: the immediate environment of the foodbank, interviewing clients and administering the distribution of both food and money; and wider links with the community, in terms of follow up visits to families as needed, liaison with other agencies and the media and assisting with poverty research. Writing of the 'humbling lesson [into] the enormous struggle that some people in our city have to survive' and the resulting 'bleakness', she emphasised the importance of long term research to raise public awareness of the extent and scope of poverty in Palmerston North.

Research into foodbanks and the economic and social conditions which precipitated their development within the welfare sector, has since been used by church and other community groups to advocate for political change.<sup>287</sup> In line with developing social justice imperatives the MSSC Management Committee considered that their role in running the foodbank was twofold: the immediate relief afforded clients who received food parcels, and the Centre's voice as publicists for the foodbank and advocates for its clients in this period. By early 1985, the Director was feeling

exercised [by] the extent of DSW assistance to our clients. We approached the Department for financial support for the programme and they turned us down on the grounds that there were already sufficient benefits etc. available through the Department and, in effect, that there was no need for the foodbank. We know that while there are many ways in which the Department can help, there are many human factors which prevent that help reaching the people who need it. With that in mind, we will continue to talk directly to the Department pointing out the deficiencies and anomalies we see.<sup>288</sup>

Liaison with DSW staff was subsequently reported as improved, 'and we trust our clients will benefit.'<sup>289</sup>

Two further MSSC initiatives undertaken in 1985 were the establishment of a Poverty Watch group, comprising interested welfare professionals, to monitor

and publicise poverty levels in the city; and fourth year BSW student Mary Wootton's research project while on placement with the MSSC, that comprised part of a submission to the 1985 Budget Task Force. In both cases the Centre's growing concern, based on their practical experience of worsening social and economic conditions in the city, was expressed through engaging with wider concepts of need, provision and policy. Lobbying at a local level remained an important aspect of the Centre's work, and increased at a central government level as unpalatable ideologically driven policies strongly affected the MSSC's clients.

### **Catherine Jamieson House – 'an experiment in liberating young people'<sup>290</sup>:**

Accommodation continued to be a significant social issue in Palmerston North, and the MSSC was active in advocating for PNCC and community involvement in developing housing stocks and rental accommodation.<sup>291</sup> The Director's growing sense of the need to focus more on positive programmes for youth, combined with the city's accommodation shortage, led him to promote an MSSC-run youth hostel as a practical use of resources. The pre-existing Catherine Jamieson Hostel for students closed down in 1980, and the MSSC negotiated with its governing Board to take over the lease. Philip McConkey, presenting a proposal to the Management Committee, affirmed it as representing

a strong and significant challenge to the church to use one of its facilities to meet a very real need in this city. It cannot be achieved with buildings and money alone however – it needs the collective commitment of the parish and its people. Meeting the needs of teenagers, particularly those with problems is far from easy, but I believe the church has the resources to meet the challenge – if it has the will.<sup>292</sup>

As with earlier new initiatives like the Probation Hostel, there was a degree of 'selling' the idea to the parish community, which may have been related to the 'troubled youth' nature of both projects. Philip McConkey noted a high level of goodwill apparent from parish supporters, although some doubt as to whether they felt qualified to work in this new area.<sup>293</sup> As part of a study tour of Auckland church social service organisations, Philip McConkey had visited the youth hostel managed by Father Felix Donnelly under the aegis of the Catholic Church. Although Father Donnelly encountered some denominational resistance to his work in this area, his personal charisma and dedication to the project sustained it until his posting overseas resulted in its eventual closure. It was this model of community living and support that Philip McConkey sought to introduce into Palmerston North.

The involvement of the wider community was evident in funding for, and placements to, the hostel. Two 'substantial' grants from the International Year of the Child Telethon Trust were supplemented by donations of recreational equipment from service clubs and the PNCC. Accommodation was offered to up to eight residents, with a young resident staff of one TEP scheme supervisor and volunteer assistants recruited from other local churches. Relief staff and a support team from the parish provided much needed 'downtime' from daily stresses. In the first four months sixteen young people were accommodated, some as individuals and others as referrals from the DSW, Police Youth Aid and secondary schools in the area. As anticipated, the accommodation needs of the residents were only one facet of often complex personal needs, and problems in adequately supervising and motivating them quickly became apparent. By November, the Director was reporting that Jamieson House tended to 'dominate our working lives'. Occupancy rates and attendant problems centred around 'dealing with deprived adolescents, who lack stability, direction or motivation; self-centred but with little self-esteem; careless and hostile, but frightened and lost.'<sup>294</sup> The report detailed particular problems encountered in the previous two months – attempted suicides, break-ins, wilful damage and theft – which, along with staff burnout and financial pressures, led to the hostel's temporary closure. Despite obvious trials for the young staff and for hostel administrators, Philip McConkey reiterated his belief that problems could be overcome: 'We are learning all the time and we are getting good support. I never said it would be easy.'

Although there was a clear need for such a service in Palmerston North, it proved to be a bigger task than could be successfully sustained by the MSSC. By March 1981 the original three young supervisors had all departed, leaving only a part-time supervisor. The Director marked their contribution, calling them 'remarkable young people', and adding that 'they have...shown what committed Christian service is about, and we owe a tremendous debt to them.'<sup>295</sup> While the Christian commitment of the hostel supervisors was beyond question, their youth and inexperience in dealing with complex behavioural and social work needs was significant in the project's failure. The Hostel was forced to close the following month, as no replacement supervisors could be found. Philip McConkey spoke recently of his personal regret over the failure of this initiative for two reasons: youth work was an area of evident and under-covered need in the city; and the MSSC had been seen as not able to sustain it.<sup>296</sup> Reporting to the Management Committee after the decision to finally close the hostel, Philip McConkey wrote

‘This has been a very difficult and sobering decision for me personally. We are convinced of the need and the community appears to require the service, but I am very concerned that yet again young people are being abandoned.’<sup>297</sup>

In subsequent evaluations of the project, a number of issues related to such welfare provision arose including the burden of staffing and financial costs to a small agency like the MSSC when running a long-term project, and whether it was the best avenue to meet the needs of this group. An advisory committee comprised of Centre staff and representatives of other community organisations held meetings to determine future directions for youth work in the city, whether or not it involved the MSSC in direct provision. Their involvement in this project illustrates an institutional willingness to engage with needed but difficult work in the local community, at a time when new initiatives and perspectives on youth work were developing. The MSSC’s support for the Highbury Whanau Support Group was indicative of their continued commitment to youth work, albeit in a less direct form. The Centre had applied for a Telethon grant in 1983, to fund a youth worker to work with young people ‘on the streets’. In 1985 this funding became available and after reappraising the need the MSSC, in partnership with the PNCC, employed a youth worker for two years to work with the Highbury Whanau Support Group.<sup>298</sup> This initiative was timely, as the 1986 release of *Puao-te-Ata-tu*, the report of the Advisory Committee on a Maori Perspective in DSW, signalled the Department of Social Welfare’s intention to work in partnership with iwi in welfare provision. In the Centre’s 1986 report, youth worker Lawrence Mepham referred to the multiplicity of issues faced by many young people in the area, relating many of them to the economic climate: ‘Glue-sniffing and crime [are] due to the fact that there is no suitable employment, problems at home, lack of money...for recreation, and so many more.’ Philip McConkey, commenting on the value of such a project, tied it to growing awareness in the Methodist Church of the importance of ‘the bicultural journey’. ‘It is consistent with our commitment to biculturalism,’ he wrote, ‘that we hand over resources to Maori groups to use as they see fit.’ This was consistent with the Centre’s philosophy of putting their beliefs into action in a local context.

Counselling continued to be a valued and well-used facet of the Centre’s work, and demand for services resulted in more paid and volunteer counsellors later in the decade. Its use in conjunction with other MSSC services reflected the complex needs of clients, and the Centre’s philosophical orientation towards



working with them to improve all aspects of their lives. Reporting on an increased demand for counselling services in 1981, Philip McConkey described the two main areas of counselling need: those with 'marriage difficulties' and 'individuals with personal anxieties and confusion, often very depressed'.<sup>299</sup> In the Annual Report for 1982, he noted that demand had been 'at times...very heavy', so that 'it is clear that I...cannot continue at this level if I am to perform satisfactorily in other areas. One possibility is to train and use more volunteers.'<sup>300</sup> By the end of the decade more staff were working in this area on a part-time basis, some as paid employees and some in a voluntary capacity. All received training from and through the Centre.

## **Education**

We see our community education role as in the preventive area and we believe it to be an important balance to the more remedial work we do.<sup>301</sup>

The MSSC's emphasis on education as a fundamental part of its community work continued in the 1980s. This included a commitment to further professional development for the Centre's staff: in 1982 the Annual Report noted that 'the Management Committee has always recognised the importance of this for their staff, but because of increased demands of cost has now established it as a separate item in its budget.'<sup>302</sup> Staff attended courses locally and in other parts of New Zealand, and Philip McConkey and Bertha Zurcher both represented the Centre at international conferences.<sup>303</sup> Philip McConkey's attendance of the Australian Council of Churches' 'Families in Australia' conference reflected the Centre's family focus. He returned 'confirmed in the view that both church and state agencies need to be more aware of the changes that are occurring for families, and to keep this primary social group of society to the forefront of their educational and caring programmes. Certainly this is the intention for the future work of the Methodist Social Service Centre.'<sup>304</sup> Future directions indicated in his report included 'putting a lot of our education effort into ...parent support and training, marital breakdown, marriage enrichment, providing more effectively for aged parents etc. while also catering for the needs of other groups such as single men, or the recently widowed.' The report concluded by reiterating the Director's personal theological perspective underlying such work, and why it was important: that each human being is created unique, equal and interdependent; that people gain meaning in their lives through God; and that this could be manifested in the giving of one's resources and skills, linking belief and action.



Although faith remained central to the ethos of the Centre, it did not preclude further development of current social work or therapeutic knowledge. Seminars attended illustrated MSSC staff's awareness of contemporary areas of interest in counselling and therapy, involving Gestalt therapy, experiential human relations and psychodrama to complement existing methods. Areas of growth in both counselling and community education reflected the particular interests of the paid staff, and in the second half of the 1980s new courses relating to sexual abuse and rape counselling were developed.<sup>305</sup>

Public addresses to a wide range of community groups illustrated the Centre's links with many educational, health, service and welfare groups.<sup>306</sup> Speaking engagements were costly to the Centre's staff in terms of time, but valuable for the considerable goodwill and public awareness they engendered, and for the promulgation of their social policy objectives to the wider community.

The Centre was also involved in other courses for community groups and the wider community, mainly based around strengthening family groups (Marriage Enrichment, Separation and Remarriage, Coping with Depression), and providing volunteers and voluntary agencies with tools for further development (Creative Listening, Running Training Courses, Conflict Management). Some of these were run in conjunction with, or on behalf of, other agencies, including training courses for Barnardo's, Parentline and Parent-to-Parent.<sup>307</sup> By 1985 the Management Committee was reconsidering the basis on which Centre staff operated in this area: 'While all this work for other groups is very important it is our plan to put more time, energy and money into running more courses under our own name in future. We believe it is imperative we do more of this preventive work.'<sup>308</sup>

## **Community Development**

A growing sense of urgency to address social justice issues was part of the Centre's imperative to do more preventive work in the community. In 1981 the Director ended his monthly report to the Management Committee by saying 'There is plenty to do but we must be constantly alert to the injustices as well as the problems.'<sup>309</sup> MSSC staff and supporters were connected to a number of communities of interest, involving Methodist and inter-church associations and

voluntary welfare umbrella groups at regional and national levels, as well as with smaller local groups. The 1985 Annual Report for the Centre illustrates this with lists of involvement with community organisations by the Director, Social Worker and Chairman. These include national and regional social work organisations and social work training courses, supervision of local voluntary agencies like Parentline and Barnardo's; national and regional levels of Methodist and inter-church bodies; and local advocacy groups that interacted with local government, such as the CSC and Manawatu Resource Centre. The local community organisation networks fostered by the MSSC in previous decades were important in the wider community response to increased need as unemployment grew and increased needs became apparent. Sustained involvement by MSSC staff in existing organisations, and their input into new bodies, provided the Centre with a clear picture of poverty in the city and also of current national debates and issues.

Margaret Perowne's involvement with groups advocating for better and more accessible accommodation in the city centred around two pressure groups: the Palmerston Action Committee Concerning Accommodation (PACCA) and the Palmerston North Housing Trust. PACCA came initially from a meeting called by the MSSC to discuss the city's serious housing shortage. It was convened by Margaret Perowne, and had a brief 'to gather information, to convey it to organisations requiring it and to initiate action to alleviate the shortage of accommodation.'<sup>310</sup> It functioned intermittently for the next two years, but by 1982, reports to the Management Committee expressed growing frustration with attempts to alleviate what was seen as an increasingly acute shortage. Margaret Perowne detailed the situation: there were six hundred and forty five fewer rental units in the city than five years ago; Housing Corporation rental stock was declining due to fewer houses acquired and tenants buying their houses; and 'PNCC...own empty houses which they will not rent to [the] currently homeless'.<sup>311</sup> Although later minutes credit the PNCC with 'adopting a rather more responsible attitude towards the shortage of rental housing' they also noted that 'constant pressure must be kept up'.<sup>312</sup> This took the form of lobbying local MPs and meetings with the City Planner and other PNCC officials.

This kind of work increasingly led Margaret Perowne and other MSSC staff into reappraising the balance between providing assistance to clients and working towards structural societal change: 'As social injustices deepen and personal needs continue to be evident, the demands on us increase – but as we attend to more

people's needs the time available to change the social system decreases. This is the dilemma facing us.'<sup>313</sup> Margaret Perowne chose to become further involved in two kinds of action: '...advocacy for individuals versus bureaucracy, and for the community versus individuals...[and] establishing a Housing Trust.' She was asked to be acting Convenor, and the MSSC to be the Trust's 'parent body' as it was 'considered to be respected and impartial [and] to have a good image in the city (i.e. Not identified with Reds, radicals or rebels!')'<sup>314</sup> While MSSC staff were not afraid to speak out on social justice issues, they did so from a basis of consistent community service and welfare provision. The Centre's considerable efforts in local community development and social education no doubt aided their levels of endorsement and support in the city and region.

An area of community development that encompassed both positive and negative interactions with people and groups throughout Palmerston North was the use of the Centre's minivan. A Centre-run and volunteer-staffed free minibus service ferrying members of the public to Awapuni Hospital, a geriatric hospital on the western side of the city, was well-used on visiting days, and the van was also available to community groups at other times. Annual Reports from the early 1980s noted increased usage each year, with twenty groups who had almost doubled their usage, and assertions that the van was vital to the day-to-day work of the Centre.<sup>315</sup> As well as its regular use for transporting clothes and rags for the Goodwill operation and the 'Awapuni run', uses included transporting wheelchair-bound people and its loan to a Maori youth group for outings and sporting activities. Lending the van to other organisations had its drawbacks: not all users were considerate of the van's conditions of use – it was once spotted 'doing wheelies on the beach at Foxton' – and inappropriate use included the van, with the Centre's signage, appearing in a city parade 'bearing signs and promoting causes that were not compatible with our aims'.<sup>316</sup> Stricter conditions of use were imposed, although as funding for the van was contingent upon its use by a wide range of community groups, access was not limited. Eventually the volume of clothing and rags became such that the van was used solely for the Centre's use.

The use of the van by smaller community groups was one method that the Centre employed to foster such groups and encourage a strong network of cooperation within the city's voluntary community service and welfare sector. The Centre also offered a typing and duplicating service, so that small and less well-resourced groups could maintain and develop contacts with their members and the

public. It was seen as 'fundamental to [helping agencies'] effectiveness that they have strong links with other helping individuals and organisations within the community. The network of interdependence built up enables them to maximise their helping capabilities.'<sup>317</sup> This was clearly applicable to the MSSC itself, as the list of close contacts that followed this statement encompassed many levels of welfare provision: church-based agencies (Catholic Social Services and the All Saints Children's Home Trust); government departments (DSW and the Department of Health); hospital board agencies (Palmerston North Hospital and Manawaroa Centre for Psychological Medicine); local body facilitators (PNCC Community Services) and local voluntary agencies (Birthright, Plunket and Community Volunteers). The MSSC's general welfare foundation brought it into contact with a wide range of other providers and user groups, but it was the Centre's conscious policy of fostering these links that deepened its relationships with both groups and members of the public.

## **Summary**

The political, social, and welfare environments in which the MSSC operated changed markedly in the 1980s. Unemployment figures continued to rise throughout the decade, and as a consequence so did other social problems. Many families struggled to cope with their physical and emotional needs, and the Centre's new initiatives reflected local concerns. The establishment of the Palmerston North foodbank in 1983 predated the introduction of Labour government's radical reforms, but demand for food and other basic items increased as their effects became evident. Social dislocation also occupied the energies of the Centre, and it expanded counselling services. The short-lived Catherine Jamieson House venture indicated Centre staff's awareness of the need for dedicated youth services, although the complexities of residents' needs were beyond the capacities of the young and relatively inexperienced staff. The Centre had more success with the Home Support Service, and used it as publicity for developing a national home help network and new models of service, in keeping with the 'pioneering' guidelines for services.

Community development was a feature of the decade, and Philip McConkey and his staff built upon existing welfare networks and intersecting communities of interest. These included participation in, and encouragement for, meetings of local

and national church-based organisations. Faith continued to be a major motivation factor for most paid and volunteer staff in this period, and Philip McConkey's leadership linked social service and social justice with the imperatives of the Methodist social creed. Local government support for the community sector was also evident, and it funded the Community Services Council as a focal point for small groups.

Funding, although a constant concern, was aided by the steady contribution of the Goodwill Operations and support from philanthropic trusts. This prevented the centre from having to withdraw programmes or services due to shortfalls, at a time when demand increased markedly. Philosophical assertions of independence, and the ability back it up by providing a large proportion of the Centre's labour needs and finances from within the parish, gave the MSSC a strong basis for coping with further demands on its resources in the contestable and contractual environment of the 1990s.



## The 1990s

### The social laboratory continued – New Zealand in the 1990s:

By the 1990 general election the Labour government was looking tired and divided following two tumultuous terms of wide-reaching economic reform. Voters, whether alienated by unpalatable policies or returning to their natural position as National voters, opted overwhelmingly for a Jim Bolger-led National government. Members of the electorate hoping for some relief from a platform of radical reform were quickly disabused of such a possibility. The National government, which led the country for most of the 1990s, not only endorsed the monetarist 'less state, more market' ideological model that Labour had introduced, but expanded it into new areas of New Zealanders' lives, particularly welfare, health and education. Ruth Richardson, as Minister of Finance, felt vindicated in her push for further economic reforms by the immediate need to bail out the Bank of New Zealand, and by Treasury predictions of a \$5 billion deficit within three years. The 1990s were marked by more change, with increasing levels of economic inequality between those who benefited from, and those who were disadvantaged by, the government's economic and welfare policies. As the decade developed indignation, uncertainty and protest were clearly and vociferously articulated by many community organisations and individuals in response to ideologically driven neo-liberal policies.

Following on from the rapidity and breadth of change in the 1980s, some sections of the population felt that the New Zealand way of life itself was in danger of being reformed out of existence. Writing in the year after the 1991 budget cuts the Anglican Church's Social Responsibility Officer, Reverend Richard Randerson, attempted to articulate this, asserting that while many could not determine the source of their unease, he considered it to be philosophical:

...As a nation we have always acted on the belief that while individual enterprise has an essential role in any thriving economy, yet individual effort must always be set within the context of a community which is bound together by a commonality which transcends family, nationality, gender and race. At the end of the day, quite simply, we are our "sisters' and our brothers' keepers"; we are family; and it is the insidious erosion of this fundamental conviction which is troubling so many.<sup>318</sup>

Benefits and beneficiaries dominated much of the government's domestic policy: economic and social benefits would accrue to self-reliant and resourceful

New Zealanders who participated in the paid workforce and supported themselves and their families with minimal recourse to governmental welfare during their working lifetimes. Government leaders promulgated a 'new morality' of active citizenship, based on self-reliance and a strong work ethic, and were critical of the welfare state as undermining these virtues and encouraging a culture of dependence. Dependence was only laudable when linked informally to support given to, or received from, families or voluntary organisations.<sup>319</sup> Beneficiaries, other than those receiving government superannuation, were to be encouraged through reductions in welfare eligibility and benefit levels to enter or return to the paid workforce. This new morality refuted the 1972 Royal Commission on Social Policy's generous philosophical and economic foundation based on the right 'to fully participate in society': 'In a time of austerity, National was reluctant to grant a sense of belonging when the result was expensive and appeared unsustainable.' Belonging came instead through paid work, and those 'outside the mainstream' of paid work needed to be reminded of their obligations to contribute.<sup>320</sup>

Although the 1972 Royal Commission was represented as a romanticised version of welfare, the government and its neo-liberal supporters also repeatedly referred to an idealised earlier New Zealand whose members had, before the proliferation of state welfare services, willingly cared for their families and for other members of their communities. Business Round Table publications referred to the need for a return to a 'community without politics' whose members understood and willingly complied with their obligation to provide for each other. The churches, he argued, had fallen from their earlier positions as conduits for public giving by accepting, and soliciting state funds:

The churches were once central to encouraging private philanthropy, but in our times they too are more likely to demand action by the state. They are also likely to define the good citizen as the one who demands state measures with the greatest vehemence, a doctrine which is the very opposite of the spirit of philanthropy consistent with liberty. It is doubly pernicious because, on one hand, it denies personal responsibility, and, on the other, it dresses up political demands as altruism when they are no such thing. <sup>321</sup>

Green further contended that voluntary organisations should ideally refuse to accept government funding, and determine 'to treat beneficiaries not purely as victims of circumstance, but with the respect due to men and women of character who are capable of self-improvement and of making a positive contribution in the future.'<sup>322</sup> Although attractive to some, such simplistic polemic took into account neither the ethos of church agencies that aimed to help clients to achieve self-reliance (as outlined in the MSSC's establishing guidelines), nor the complexities of

practice and underlying belief detailed in existing studies of New Zealand's welfare history.<sup>323</sup>

The language used in the statement of goals for the DSW illustrated the transition from the 1972 Royal Commission position to the reduced coverage offered by the Department. Whereas the 1991 goal was to ensure that 'All people in New Zealand are able to participate within the communities to which they belong', by the following year this had been amended to ensuring that 'policies for social welfare contribute to a fair and just society and promote self-sufficiency and responsibility of individuals and their families/whanau.'<sup>324</sup> A 'modest safety net' intended to 'maintain individuals in the daily essentials of food, clothing, power and housing at a decent level'<sup>325</sup> was the government's new model, made manifest in cuts to welfare benefits in 1991 and 1993. The Minister of Social Welfare, Jenny Shipley, admitted that 'the market' and instinct provided the basis for establishing the reduced levels of support, saying, 'Quite frankly, the research I rely on is the marketplace. If the marketplace cannot pay, there is no such thing as an arbitrary, isolated, adequacy level... We had to make judgements on the whole package as to where we would pitch the levels.'<sup>326</sup> Much of the subsequent research and protests from community groups engaged in voluntary welfare provision centred around the inadequacy – and exaggerated modesty – of the state's safety net, and its impact on those most affected. 'The structural adjustment rhetoric talked constantly of the need for stability – but always in terms of the economy, never of people's lives.'<sup>327</sup> Anecdotal evidence of beneficiaries' struggles to cover their living costs was supplemented by empirical evidence of foodbank use and accessibility to targeted funding by DSW agencies.

The 1991 budget cuts, Ruth Richardson's 1993 'mother of all budgets' and subsequent introduction of market rentals for state houses, were predicated on the need for greater self-reliance and the dominance of market models. In 1992 DSW was restructured into three separate 'business units' - the New Zealand Income Support Service (NZISS); New Zealand Child and Young Person Service (NZCYPS); and New Zealand Community Funding Agency (NZCFA), with the Social Policy Agency and Corporate Office serving all three. The following year, in an attempt to make clear a common ethos, they were united under a new logo and slogan – 'from welfare to well-being'. The government saw voluntary and community agencies as integral to their intention of devolving state welfare provision to community agencies, although the balance of power, in terms of levels of financial and

ideological independence for the voluntary agencies, was at least threatened and sometimes substantially altered. Instead of grants or submissions for services, competitive contracting became the most common method of funding, so ubiquitous that it was known as a 'contracting culture'. For a few national organisations, this represented a major challenge to their traditional capture of government funding to the voluntary sector, as the government trumpeted the importance of contestability and consumer choice.<sup>328</sup> Once again, the balance of power and provision had shifted, between the government and the voluntary sector, and within the voluntary sector.

Concerns that contracting arrangements would alter the type and nature of services offered in local communities were sometimes borne out, as the government's legal and commercial requirements forced some agencies into survival mode, orienting themselves towards services that would attract funding rather than to perceived need. Compliance was time-consuming, complicated and often exceeded the parameters of the particular programme being funded. The Palmerston North Women's Refuge, already disadvantaged by the withdrawal of labour from government work schemes, commented that

funding from government became increasingly tied to bureaucratic measures such as the reporting of statistical information, workers' time sheets, and policy manuals. Fulfilling the criteria set out by the Community Funding Agency became a specialised and time-consuming task.<sup>329</sup>

Management of voluntary agencies became more specialised and some organisations, including the MSSC, restructured their staffing to incorporate administrative managers. Although funding had always been a significant factor for voluntary agencies their staff and management were now compelled to focus increasingly on 'counting, accounting and accountability'.<sup>330</sup> Accountability for these agencies was a double-edged sword, as it represented not only their contractual obligations to programme funders but to their communities of interest as well. Volunteers were required to fill an expanding range of governance and management roles, requiring new skills of existing volunteers, or recruiting people with desired areas of expertise. A diverse range of organisations, traditionally focussed on providing for clients' needs, was encouraged to operate in a business model similar to government departments. For some, this came dangerously close to becoming like government, at a time when they were strongly opposed to its direction:

Four organisations that represent more than 1200 social services groups have lost their funding support from the Community Funding Agency. Associate Minister of Social Services Nick Smith justifies the decision by saying the New Zealand Federation for Voluntary Welfare Organisations, New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, New Zealand Council of Social Services and New Zealand Federation of Vocational and Support Services all do the same thing. Smith says the groups should merge to form one fully representative organisation. If they did this, and were prepared to deliver a programme like the government's Strengthening Family Services, Smith says the CFA would reconsider funding.

The groups believe they are being punished for criticising government social policy. Gail Munro, Director [of] the Palmerston North Methodist Social Services says the government has knee-capped the voluntary sector. Munro: "Remove our funding, and we become fragmented, disparate groups at the local level. This is a political move. The government does not want to hear the messages about poverty, about children not going to school, about increased foodbank use. And the money saved is peanuts."<sup>331</sup>

This article articulated the tensions between opposing ideologies, and voluntary community agencies' perceptions of coercive tactics exercised by government agencies to 'encourage' compliance. Similar concerns were evident in other western societies, with correlations between levels of unease articulated by voluntary welfare agencies in New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. A range of papers discussed the threat to the collective ethos of voluntary organisations, referring to their new contracting role as being 'agents of the state', the 'shadow state', 'little fingers of the state' and of 'dissecting the golden goose' of voluntary provision.<sup>332</sup> Boundaries between voluntary and statutory provision, which had varied over time in elasticity and penetrability, were sometimes perceived as having stretched to diaphanous sheerness. Political advocacy, which many groups saw as central to their community work, was specifically excluded from governmental contracts. While some organisations benefited from restructuring, others became increasingly convinced that by their involvement in supplementing reduced government welfare programmes, they were, in essence, 'propping up the state'.<sup>333</sup>

Foodbanks provided a clear illustration of the dilemma faced by agencies critical of government policies and aligned to social justice principles. They proliferated in the 1990s due to inadequate benefit levels, and supported those who needed immediate help, but in supplementing beneficiaries' incomes enabled the government to further reduce funding and to deny the crisis conditions that voluntary agencies increasingly reported. By 1994 three hundred and sixty five foodbanks throughout New Zealand were distributing forty thousand parcels monthly, at an estimated annual cost of twenty five million dollars.<sup>334</sup> The Auckland City Mission alone provided seven thousand food parcels in that year,



compared with six hundred in 1990. Statistics kept by national agencies like the Salvation Army showed the correlation between benefit reductions and increased demand at foodbanks: they recorded a four hundred and thirty two percent increase in foodbank use in 1992 over the previous year, and by the end of 1993 had documented more than a ten-fold increase in three years.<sup>335</sup> The extent of fundamental need in their local communities, and frustration at what was seen as the government 'passing the buck' to the voluntary sector, politicised foodbank staff throughout the country. Annual foodbank conferences allowed workers to share their experiences and coordinate political advocacy campaigns. These included taking the Government to the Human Rights Commission in 1994 to challenge their welfare policies.

Not everyone was sympathetic to people running or using foodbanks. Government rhetoric spoke of a 'culture of dependency', exacerbated by the availability of handouts from foodbanks. A *New Zealand Herald* editorial in 1994 asserted that the proliferation of foodbanks was a natural corollary of offering free food, rather than evidence of insufficient incomes. It referred to the churches 'stumbling into social welfare' without understanding the bigger picture:

The 1991 economies were not simply "cuts"; special grants or advances were introduced for particular needs or demonstrable emergencies. Foodbanks have merely distorted the budgeting of indigent households and unbalanced the public outlays.<sup>336</sup>

The market, could, and would, provide the levelling mechanism for welfare if charities withdrew from providing foodbanks: 'nobody is likely to starve...and food costs could return to their rightful place in the priorities of the poor and of the department that helps them.' The editorial concluded with the statement that 'the Government owes its dependents a healthy, growing economy in which they might find opportunity and independence. Charity does not really help.' Once again churches were seen as swimming out of their political and economic depths.

Although the writer of this piece did not credit the churches with any detailed understanding of either welfare provision or wider economic issues, and repeated the old assertion that they should refrain from meddling, church welfare agencies' constant exposure to clients' needs and interactions with government departments provided them with considerable expertise in these areas. They also had in-depth knowledge of the supply-and-demand principle, as they tried to maintain financial viability in the face of substantially increased demand for services. If, as the writer suggested, they disputed the value of the economic



recovery, it was because the benefits of such a recovery were not then apparent to their clients.

Public - and overtly political - demonstrations of the churches' 'social justice initiative' came throughout the 1990s in joint statements such as the 1993 Church Leaders' Statement on Social Justice, and physical action such as the 1998 Hikoi of Hope. A Statement of Intent, issued to congregations in January 1993, was in effect a Christian call-to-arms. It articulated five principles:

The test of any policy is whether it enhances or threatens the life and dignity of the human person.

Human beings are called to community.

All are called to work for the common good.

Work is more than a way to make a living.

The poor and the vulnerable must be a major concern in social policy.<sup>337</sup>

These principles were sufficiently broad that they were hard for critics to refute. Although issued in an election year, the ten church leaders denied any party political motivation, invoking instead the imperative to '[fulfil] your duties as Christian citizens...taking account of the moral teachings drawn from the Gospels. Political activities are no more exempt from moral accountability than any other form of human behaviour.'<sup>338</sup> In July a full Social Justice Statement was read out at church services for the contributing denominations<sup>339</sup>, followed by a six-week study/discussion programme. While ostensibly aimed at the participating churches' congregations, government politicians perceived it as an attack on their welfare policies, and practising Christians from a range of denominations within Cabinet found such criticism particularly galling. Negative reactions also came from other church members, both within and outside of the denominations involved. Criticism was based on the perennial claim that churches had no right to meddle in politics, whether as moral arbiters or critics of the market model, while other individuals claimed that these churches had no mandate to attempt to speak for all Christians.

Although the Social Justice Statement's impact was less than its authors might have hoped for, and National government politicians became more overtly critical of clergy after the 1993 election, many churches continued to assert their right to advocate for political change based on Christian social justice principles.

Other more politically and theologically conservative Christian groups formed political parties to attempt to directly shape New Zealand society, although their electoral support was not high enough to achieve parliamentary representation until 2002.<sup>340</sup> Prime Minister Jenny Shipley's 1997 Code of Social and Family Responsibility, an extension to the concept of 'the family' and 'community' as primary sources of support, was dropped after wide criticism from a range of community and church groups. Varying degrees of cooperation and criticism coexisted between government and churches throughout the 1990s, alongside contracting for social service programmes. For churches like the Methodists, with a strong culture of participation in both social services and social justice advocacy, this was a period of considerable activity – and turmoil.

Five years after the Social Justice Statement, the churches once again chose to make public their concern over poverty, housing, education and employment by participating in a Hikoī of Hope. It was organised by the Anglican Synod at the suggestion of its Maori section, and modelled on the 1975 Maori land hikoī. Vivian Hutchinson, a community worker and veteran of the 1975 hikoī, wrote of the breadth of support for the Hikoī beyond the churches:

Sir Paul Reeves has described his hopes for this Hikoī that it may in some way be seen as "timely". That is my wish also. I think it is timely for New Zealanders to start re-examining the choices we are making as a nation. If an institution such as the Anglican Church – middle New Zealand at prayer – can help catalyse just such a re-examination...then it would be "timely" indeed.<sup>341</sup>

Perceptions of the worth of the endeavour varied from media coverage referring to the 'hikoī of the hopeless', to those who took heart from the massed action of New Zealanders to address or arrest what they considered 'a growing crisis'. It also included those who were unsure whether it was possible to redress social inequalities, given the extent of political reform since 1984 – 'If we are going to become a nation where it is every man or woman for her and himself let us at least draw attention to the choice we are making. The hikoī did that.'<sup>342</sup>

The hikoī represented the momentum for change after nine years of the National government, but also from the Labour government that had preceded it. Fifteen years of radical policy development, and growing inequalities between those who endured and those who benefited from them had blunted public enthusiasm for such doctrinaire government. A new Labour-led government and the MMP environment provided a basis for 'consensus' politics, although the

churches have had mixed success in making their voices heard. The rise of morally conservative fundamentalist churches, some with political agendas, has altered public perceptions of 'the religious voice', while 'the denominational agencies increasingly struggle to make good submissions to parliament, and to persuade their members to support them.'<sup>343</sup> In an increasingly pluralistic society mainstream churches face the challenge of publicly expressing their theology and service in ways that are relevant to the society of which they are part.

## The Palmerston North context

...The New Zealand economy is contracting further, placing business under increased pressure just to survive. Government spending has been reduced, as the basic fiscal policy remains a balanced budget by 1993. Palmerston North is suffering from the cutting back of the government sector with over 300 jobs lost in this sector over the last year. Social welfare cuts are just coming into effect now and will take out \$7.6m a year from local spending power. The impact of further Government cuts in spending in this year's budget on Palmerston North City is unknown at this stage, but is unlikely to be positive.<sup>344</sup>

This summary of economic conditions by the PNCC's economic analyst in March 1991 was included in a report for Council on the social effects of the Government's economic package, prepared by the Community Services Directorate of the PNCC. As well as attempting to quantify the economic implications of such policies for the city and the Council, the report included information from community agencies and submissions to the Select Committee of Social Welfare in January 1991 from local people at risk from proposed benefit cuts. Carol, a DPB beneficiary with three children, received at the time of her submission \$361 per week, and had detailed her weekly expenditure of \$360.50, excluding any money left for 'clothes, shoes, medical or school expenses.' Her income after the proposed reduction to her benefit would be \$333. In support of her submission she wrote:

The benefit I currently receive does not cover my outgoings now. I am behind with my rates and insurance. I am overdue with all my accounts and every week it is a case of "robbing Peter to pay Paul". I am trying hard to find part-time work. But for every job advertised, there seems to be hundreds of women like me after it. You say we should be out working! There are so many of us and so few jobs. What do you suggest to the 99/100 women that miss out on that one precious vacancy? Starve? Have your power turned off? Freeze? I was married 14 years and worked for 7 years before we had our family. The last 5 years I have had to cope with a partner who drinks heavily, business failure, unemployment and marriage break-up. I am amazed at the ignorance of people who now label me "one of the solo mothers". Your government policy leaves me feeling desperate and scared for my children. Why did your government single out children to hurt?<sup>345</sup>

Carol's situation was indicative of that faced by many people in Palmerston North and its surrounding areas. Her submission and others like it helped to bring home

to councillors the human and social costs of central government policies in the local context. In order to understand the impact of central government budget cuts on city residents, in 1991 the Council established a Low Income Sub-Committee to report on relevant issues. It was followed in 1993 by subsidies for low-income individuals and families to use recreational, cultural and learning facilities. The establishment of a Youth One Stop Shop in 1995, whereby young people had access to support, advice and referral services, was then unique in New Zealand.

Local government restructuring in the late 1980s and the National government's ideological commitment to 'less state, more community' presented local authorities with financial and philosophical dilemmas in their interactions with local community groups. Palmerston North City Councillors in the 1990s could be forgiven for feeling that they were in a no-win situation, caught between central government devolution of community responsibilities to local authorities, and local groups demanding their support as they dealt with the economic and social consequences of central government restructuring and reforms. For their part, voluntary community organisations found themselves similarly squeezed between highly contestable funding sources at local and central government levels, and providing a range of services to those individuals and families most affected by benefit cuts and economic uncertainty. Added to these external parameters were the permutations of personal political beliefs and philosophies between members of the Palmerston North community, whether as welfare clients, providers or advocates, local politicians or public donors. The debates over funding and relative responsibilities that were evident in Palmerston North at this time were indicative of those throughout communities in New Zealand.

A PNCC Community Development Committee meeting in December 1990 illustrated these tensions, with an hour-long debate about whose responsibility it was to feed local people needing emergency help. At issue was a proposed increase to the Mayor's Relief Fund, 'set up before the welfare state was established', from three thousand dollars to five thousand dollars annually, funded from rates. The Fund also made an annual contribution to the Palmerston North Foodbank of seven hundred dollars, then its only regular source of funding. While most councillors supported the increase, Councillors Baty and Ireland said that demands on the Mayor's Relief Fund showed the inadequacy of the DSW: Cr. Baty stated that it was not the ratepayers' responsibility to provide social welfare, while Cr. Ireland believed that people should not have to rely on voluntary agencies for help

that should come from the government. Mayor Paul Rieger sympathised with their views, 'but I think what we are doing is tokenism in helping people through the day. I have never been able to turn my back on their need.' The increased funding was passed, although the committee intended to discuss the issue with local DSW staff before approaching the Minister, Jenny Shipley.<sup>346</sup>

Tensions between, and within, the PNCC and different community factions throughout the 1990s showed the influence of market ideology throughout the city. In 1995 the manager of a major city-based national distribution centre questioned the Council's commitment to those who made the 'real wealth' for the city. There was, he suggested, too much emphasis on social and political strategies, at the expense of business. He urged the Council to adopt more business practices: 'You can only progress as fast as opinion leaders, which in any city community are the business leaders.'<sup>347</sup> The MSSC quickly responded. Director Lex Bartlett stated that 'the PNCC has a responsibility to look after the whole community, not just the economic "movers and shakers"', adding that diversity was the real wealth of the community.<sup>348</sup> The following year new Director Gail Munro, speaking to a PNCC draft annual plan submission, expressed her concern that the PNCC seemed to be moving away from supporting social service and community organisations, at a time when they were supporting more city residents than ever before. Describing them as 'under threat' financially, she added that, unlike the market model, community development organisations did not close down when the funds ran out. She also advocated for maintenance of Council branch services, as many clients lacked transport options, saying: 'It's common for us to have people come from Awapuni, walking, to collect a parcel of food worth \$25 and then they walk home again, probably with two or three children accompanying them. That is the reality we're dealing with and I would like you [councillors] to know about that.'<sup>349</sup>

Many councillors had strong links with community organisations, and supported their calls for assistance: when, in a PNCC Community Development and Health Committee meeting, Councillor Harrison referred to people using foodbanks as convenient income supplements, Councillors Tanguay, Brown and Wall all refuted this with current information about foodbank usage and issues. Councillor Wall commented on the requirement for foodbank users to get budgeting advice, although financial management was not the issue: '...they are actually budgeting OK; they just don't have enough money.'<sup>350</sup> The newspaper article in which this exchange was noted began with a brief summary of an MSSC



second-hand clothing fashion parade, held as a fundraiser for the foodbank, but most of the article related to the wider issues of foodbank use in the city.

The PNCC financially supported the MSSC through its annual grant to the foodbank, and through funds disseminated by the CSC. When the MSSC and five other local community agencies – the Palmerston North Women’s Health Collective, Manawatu WEA, Swan Women’s Health care, the CSC and the Nurses’ Organisation – co-sponsored a pre-election advertisement in the Sunday Star Times asking voters to consider health issues before voting in the local body elections, there was some consternation within Council that this political stance was inappropriate for agencies partly funded from PNCC funds. Councillor Baty moved a motion that the City Manager write to the organisations, reminding them of the Council’s ‘non-political stance’, saying, ‘It’s the principle. Before we know it, the money will be used against us at our own meetings. It’s happened before.’ Other councillors articulated their beliefs that ‘it [was] wrong that an organisation which cried out for money each year from the council had enough to sponsor the ad.’ and that ‘some organisations fed off the Council for years, only to turn around and bite us.’ Councillor Heather Allan countered their arguments, saying that ‘we have to treat people like adults’, adding that as PNCC money was tagged and defined for specific purposes ‘we don’t have the right to question their moral stance.’ The motion was lost 11-4.<sup>351</sup> This exchange was interesting for the differing perspectives displayed by city councillors, and the perception by some councillors that financial support of community agencies demanded a degree of ‘loyalty’ to the funder. It illustrated the other side of voluntary agencies’ concerns that contracting to central government departments would compromise their integrity and ability to speak as welfare advocates in the community.

Levels of support for the MSSC from the public also fluctuated throughout the decade. Although the MSSC’s reputation for community development work and sustained welfare provision was already well-established by the beginning of the 1990s, there was evidence in Palmerston North, as elsewhere in the country, of ‘donor fatigue’ or a perception of less sympathy for beneficiaries by supporters of the government’s neo-liberal policies. Gerard Dolan, summarising the material and social effects of the 1991 budget cuts in the following year’s annual report, connected them thus:

...The resulting recession had and continues to have an enormous impact on New Zealanders. The obvious effect on beneficiaries ...is really the tip of the iceberg. The polarisation of attitudes of people better off has meant that the Government has been able

to impose changes on a society that has gone through almost a decade of change. Any outcry in response to the suffering of people on less money, and facing increasing costs, is met by a shrug of the shoulders and the trite comment: "There is no money". This phrase is repeated mantra-like and with increasing forcefulness in order to overcome the increasing cries of pain from numerous sectors of the community.<sup>352</sup>

This was perhaps mostly clearly shown in the amount of food donated to the city's foodbanks, which experienced some years of generous giving and other years when it was necessary to buy in food throughout the year to meet the public demand. In this climate of sustained demand for its services, the relationships that the MSSC had established and maintained with local government and other city agencies became important for its own viability and ability to provide.

## **The MSSC**

The MSSC was subject to more changes in internal structure and personnel in this decade than in any other. Four Directors led the Centre through the 1990s, each with their own particular skills and interests, yet each committed to maintaining the Centre's ethos of working in both social service and social justice, as in previous decades. Margaret Perowne, who left the Centre in 1991, wrote of the combination of internal and external changes to come, and the challenges they represented to the MSSC's work: 'While staffing and service have remained stable, funding has become increasingly uncertain...Many changes lie ahead: the Centre will have to re-locate within two years; the current Parish/Centre discussions on social service may lead to changes in policy; Government policies in areas of health, welfare and justice will result in different criteria for funding; current social issues will become more, not less, urgent.' Under the leadership of her successor, psychologist Gerard Dolan, governance and management policy was reviewed, in order to make best use of available personnel. This resulted in a smaller Steering Committee<sup>353</sup> and the replacement of the Centre's Constitution with a new Charter between the Centre and the Parish, aimed at strengthening the links between the two bodies. In 1992 a parishioner who had been closely involved with the Centre asked for a place within the morning service every three months for MSSC staff to report on their activity, to maintain interest and understanding in the centre's work within the bounds of the church.<sup>354</sup> The decision was made in 1993 to appoint a Manager to review personnel, management and financial systems. This was indicative of the tension inherent in previous Directors' jobs between management and service delivery, but also reflected the more business-like climate for voluntary

welfare agencies in the 1990s, faced with increased compliance and accountability requirements from funders. For the MSSC, Lex Bartlett's appointment as Manager 'resulted in clearer Centre operating policy, an accounting system which is able to show accurately the Centre's position, and employment contracts and job descriptions for all paid staff'.<sup>355</sup> The costs of financing two management positions was a consideration for an agency that had always worked with a small staff and when, in 1994, Lex Bartlett took over as Director the positions were again combined. The Director's position became primarily managerial, rather than the previous hands-on model of service provision that had seen earlier Directors with often large counselling caseloads, as well as responsibility for overseeing the operations of the Centre. Gail Munro's appointment as Director in 1995 provided the Centre with stable and capable leadership into the twenty-first century, and brought a renewal of energy into the community development and advocacy areas of the Centre's work.



*The construction of a purpose-built Social Services building in the 1990s was the MSSC's only major building project since its establishment in 1963. It brought together workshop and storage space for the Goodwill Stores, counselling rooms and administration. Note the clothing bin, with its '100% Charity 100% Local' signage prominently displayed.*  
Source: PN Archives.

Changes in location as well as personnel were a feature of the decade. A major financial undertaking for the Centre was the construction of a new purpose-built Centre facility, bringing together all the elements of its work in one place for

the first time. The new Centre was built on land owned by the Church facing on to Main Street, close to but not initially connected to each other. Much of the capital for the building came from the Catherine Jamieson Trust Fund, supplemented by other grants and bequests. The new building was indicative of the increasingly professional presentation of the MSSC to the city, as well as the need for purpose-built premises in which to operate many facets of the Centre's operation effectively.

## **Community Development**

Strong links with local communities of interest were particularly important for non-statutory welfare agencies in the 1990s, when there were more clients presenting with more complex needs, and greater competition for funds to provide services. Relationships established in earlier decades with other welfare and church agencies continued, although they were no longer listed in annual reports. Stronger relationships with local iwi groups reflected the Methodist Church's national commitment to 'the bicultural journey' and the Centre's commitment to working sensitively and effectively with people with differing needs. A statement entitled 'Tangata Whenua Commitment to Support the Needs of the Community' in the 1994 Annual Report, invoked Article Three of the Treaty of Waitangi in its assertion that community service organisations must understand and include cultural values and practices in their practice:

Ngati Hineaute and Ngati Rangitepaia, two of the hapu of Rangitane iwi are tangata whenua of Palmerston North. In the name of these Rangitane ancestors you have our spiritual blessing, acknowledgement and endorsement to care for those who are suffering financial and psychological hardship. Your organisation, Methodist Social Services continues to meet the needs of our multicultural society acknowledging the different values and needs of those you serve. We are concerned that you endeavour to deliver those services with limited funding while the needs of our community increase.<sup>356</sup>

Internal courses for Centre staff and parishioners on Treaty principles and issues challenged them to be aware of, and incorporate, bicultural principles into their roles as social service providers. The appointment of a Kai Awhina for the foodbank in 1990 was an example of this, with '18 months of thinking, consultation and negotiation'<sup>357</sup> between the initial request for funding and the appointment of Debby Green to the role.

A new area of community cooperation and development related to the growth of the foodbank sector in the city throughout the 1990s. At the beginning of the decade there were two main sources of food parcel relief: the Palmerston

North Foodbank and Salvation Army Foodbanks, supported by churches of many denominations. Although other churches had traditionally provided small amounts of food parcels as part of their pastoral care, it was not until the 1990s that they developed as a significant area of local welfare development. After the MSSC carried out a 'comprehensive review' of the foodbank in 1996 in consultation with the Parish and wider community, it altered its criteria for assistance to again include people without children, reversing a policy change instituted in the late 1980s. The criteria had been changed to provide food parcels primarily to families with children as it was felt at that time that their need was greatest, but in the 1990s it was considered that it was no longer appropriate to distinguish between groups, given the widespread hardship of users. The Palmerston North Foodbank, in conjunction with the MSSC, also considered its place within the network of foodbank services in the city, and inaugurated a six-monthly meeting for these providers. The statistical information collated from these meetings revealed the extent of foodbank assistance and the numbers of people being helped. This in turn provided empirical evidence of patterns of use and interactions of foodbank clients with government departments, essential for advocating effectively on clients' behalves. The MSSC's involvement with the Poverty Indicator Project throughout the second half of the 1990s (later extended into the next decade) provided statistical information about foodbank usage throughout the country. The information gathered was the most comprehensive data yet gathered about foodbank clients, and proved a useful advocacy tool with government.

Advocacy became the primary focus of community development in the 1990s, reflected in public statements of the MSSC's opposition to the Government's policies and direction, and in the establishment of the Palmerston North Advocacy Service, later the Central region Advocacy Service, in the original Highbury House shop owned by the Centre. Its location in the Highbury Shopping Centre, close to the new premises of Highbury House second-hand clothing shop, was coincidental (in that the vacated premises of the earlier Highbury House shop were available) but significant: the MSSC had maintained a physical presence and a philosophical commitment to working in this low-income area of the city since the 1960s. The Advocacy Service functioned as a social justice agency, working as an intermediary between beneficiaries and government welfare agencies. It aimed to ensure that clients were informed of their entitlements under the cumbersome and sometimes discretionary departmental regulations, and that they received them. In addition to



the city's foodbanks receiving referrals of clients from government departments, it was clear to foodbank workers that many clients who had been declined special emergency food grants by ISS or the Department of Work and Income (DWI) were not aware of the parameters for such assistance, and the review process available if they were declined. The Service was staffed and resourced for its first year by the MSSC with trained volunteer advocates, but as it became more demanding of time and resources, the decision was made to form an independent trust to administer the service. Gail Munro and Debby Green maintained their association through membership on the trust board.

Advocacy, seen by the Centre as a necessary complement to the immediate relief offered to foodbank clients, was not always viewed favourably by government funders. In 1993 the Centre applied to the local committee of the government funding body the Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS), for a continuation of the funding they had previously received to pay the wages of the Foodbank's Kai Awhina. Their application was declined, on the grounds that funding criteria had become more stringent, more groups were seeking help and the foodbank had alternative sources of funding through the MSSC. The Director, Gerard Dolan strongly refuted this, saying that the MSSC administered the foodbank for the city, but did not fund it. He added that 'he had difficulty with the idea of Methodist Social Services funding the foodbank [as it] would amount to the organisation taking on what it perceives to be a Government responsibility.' He considered that if the Centre paid the worker's wages, there was a danger that the foodbank could be seen as the MSSC foodbank rather than the city's resource. This was 'unpalatable' because 'in the 1920s when the churches ran government charity, people were judged to be either the deserving poor or the undeserving poor. A moral judgement was made by those giving out resources and MSS doesn't want to find itself having to make moral judgements.'<sup>358</sup> This position was consistent with the Centre's values, reiterated each year in annual reports, of 'non-judgemental service', although they clearly felt a moral imperative to speak out against the ideological direction of the Government. The background to the COGS funding guidelines showed the Centre's preparedness to become involved in political advocacy in relation to the foodbank. Gerard Dolan approached the local daily newspaper, the *Evening Standard*, with a copy of a recent Internal Affairs memo to COGS community coordinators that stipulated that no Government funding would be made available to groups involved in political activity. Although the Minister defined the ruling as referring to organisations 'totally involved' in political

activity, whether for or against the government, ‘Mr Dolan said the ruling was absurd, as every welfare advocacy group trying to change social conditions for their clients was political, and was involved in “political activity”.’ He was clear that this was an issue for central rather than local administrators, and by extension the faceless policymakers rather than the known local administrators: ‘I’m not criticising our local COGS committee. They had less money to work with this year. I am criticising the policy. This political activity ruling runs a fine line between freedom of speech and whether you are allowed to say the policy and direction of the Govt is wrong.’ The MSSC could be clearly be construed as a politically active organisation, based on its connection with recent child poverty campaigns by NZCCSS, and the Joint Church Leaders’ Statement of Intent - ‘We’re political, all right’ – and there was no certainty that the Minister of Social Welfare might not attach the same conditions to Community Funding Agency (CFA) funding.<sup>359</sup> His concern that the Centre’s commitment to both social service programmes like its work with the foodbank, in partnership with social justice or social action initiatives that were critical of government policies, left it vulnerable to funding cuts was shared by other advocacy groups. Lobbying of the local committee by the MSSC, the Mayor and by the CSC led to a partial grant of \$1400 being made, although the amount requested had been \$10000. The CSC also made a grant to the foodbank of \$800, which had been donated to it by the Methodist Parish at the time of opening their new Worship Centre. A spokesperson stated that ‘This donation has been set aside for a special emergency need, and it was felt that the loss of COGS funding for the salaried worker had highlighted for the city the vital work done by Foodbank, and the need for the community to stand by and support its work.’<sup>360</sup> The Centre’s strong links with both local government and other community agencies resulted in mutual support networks.

### **Programmes and Initiatives**

The direction taken by the Centre in the 1990s was partly in response to continuing to do what experience had told it was needed by clients – a fluid range of counselling services and education courses for personal development and growth – but predominantly in response to national political movements and policies that had profound effects on local welfare provision. A platform of welfare devolution from the state to local communities, combined with neo-liberal market-driven policies, meant that for agencies like the MSSC this was a decade of fire fighting, foodbanks and funding, as they attempted to meet increased needs. For

the Centre's staff there was a tension between providing for clients' immediate needs for food and clothing, and addressing the wider structural causes of poverty. It was also the decade in which the relative merits of social service and social justice were hotly debated in the voluntary welfare sector, and when political action, empirical evidence and advocacy compelled the government to notice, if not heed, community responses to their ideological position.

By the end of the decade the MSSC was re-evaluating its programmes in the light of the Methodist Mission Aotearoa report 'Breaking the Cycle'. It challenged those involved in social service to examine their practices and programmes for relevance and commitment to social justice, to move from 'Ka mate – the way of death, to Ka ora – the way of life':

We recognise that church based social services may become ka mate when they:

- become a band-aid for structural injustice in our society
- create dependency
- become self-perpetuating services and institutions

So we ask of all our church social services, whether at parish level or within the regional Missions

- what do they do **for** people?
- What do they do **to** people?
- How do people **participate** in them?<sup>361</sup>

For the Methodist Mission as a whole, it was timely to reconsider its orientation, as some older City Missions had developed in a time of institutional care and capital building programmes, while others like the MSSC were the products of later social policy trends. For all of the Church's social service providers, the 1980s and 1990s in particular had been a turbulent time of balancing disparate needs and desires with funding from state and private sources. Wide social change, in attitudes to families, women and the bicultural journey provoked some controversy and disagreement within the Church and with other Christian denominations. The dominant social justice imperative generally associated with the leadership of the New Zealand Methodist Church did not always sit comfortably with its more conservative members, although most of the Palmerston North parish seemed to support the close relationship with the Centre.

## **The foodbank**

A local newspaper report on foodbank use in Palmerston North in the months after the 1991 benefit showed the climate in which the city's two main foodbanks operated. It reported that the Palmerston North Foodbank,

administered by the MSSC was 'just keeping pace' with increased demand for food parcels, clothing and blankets (these last two in partnership with the Red Cross). At this time the Centre supplied only to families – 'they're the ones really feeling the need now.' The Centre's spokesperson added, 'we do our best to see the food goes to the most deserving people as we have a responsibility to the donors too.' This was reiterated by Captain Colin Burgess of the Salvation Army Foodbank, a 'subsidiary backup to Methodist Social Services' that helped single people and those who missed the hours of availability at the MSSC. He spoke of the close ties between the two foodbanks, to 'quietly monitor' anyone trying to abuse the system, adding that 'if he hears of anyone going to the pub and then to foodbank they won't get any sympathy.'<sup>362</sup> Gail Munro recounted an experience where a client arrived after hours at the Centre asking for a food parcel, which he was granted. She later saw him entering a nearby pub, while his children sat in the car outside. She recalled her initial annoyance, but then considered that at least the children would eat that night, which mattered more.<sup>363</sup> The story could easily have come from charitable relief files in the 1890s or the 1930s, and Margaret Tennant's *Paupers and Providers* showed similar examples of ambivalence in the giving of aid to families where the male breadwinner was deemed less than 'deserving.'<sup>364</sup>

As government politicians stepped back from the welfare state, voluntary welfare providers were compelled to move into the gaps created in order to feed their clients. Foodbank staff providing food parcels in the 1990s could relate to 1930s Hospital Boards providing relief, in their feelings that far from being an 'adjunct to the pensions system...it was once more a crucial welfare resource which touched the lives of tens of thousands of New Zealanders.'<sup>365</sup> Of interest to this study are tensions between the philosophies of government and voluntary organisations; the networks of cooperation between local voluntary agencies at a time when they were feeling besieged; the Centre's focus on its responsibilities to families as recipients of assistance; and to donors, to ensure that their contributions were being well-used, by 'deserving' people. The mention of 'deserving' recipients particularly resonated with attitudes towards welfare provision from as early as New Zealand's colonial period. The introduction of limiting criteria of foodbank use in 1992 also echoed that of earlier periods: compulsory budgeting advice, limits on the number of parcels available and the option of refusing parcels to people who were deemed dishonest or addicted were all introduced. There was also concern about dependency on food parcels, and 'double-dipping': the foodbank Kai Awhina Debby Green noted that 'over recent

months staff have noticed there are a number of clients receiving help from several welfare agencies in town.’<sup>366</sup> Numbers of foodbank clients dropped in this period, although not to pre-1991 budget cut levels. This was perhaps attributable to new limits on use, but also to the proliferation of other small foodbanks, run mostly by churches, in the city. The human nature aspect of judgement was also significant: foodbank workers were called upon to make judgements about their clients’ needs and circumstances daily, yet still be cognisant of the Centre’s ethos of non-judgemental service. Within foodbank networks, denominational differences could sometimes be observed, and other churches chose to support the foodbanks that most closely mirrored their own theological perspectives.

The MSSC and other voluntary agencies stepped up their social service work when benefits were reduced in the first half of the decade, and community input and ‘buy-in’ to foodbank donations also rose. Food drives, begun in 1991 to stock the two main foodbanks for the coming year, allowed Palmerston North residents to show their support for the foodbanks by collecting food bags from around city streets through church groups and service clubs, or by filling bags to be collected. The Centre’s 1994 Annual Report noted that although cash donations to the foodbank had dropped, donations of food were consistent, and that five thousand six hundred adults and children had been helped in the past year. The centre’s foodbank staff attended the inaugural national meeting of foodbank workers in Wellington that year, and found that the Palmerston North foodbank was the only one to run training courses for volunteer helpers.

By 1996, newspaper reports showed that the public impetus for supporting foodbanks was slowing, and the MSSC was having to supplement donations with bought food. ‘Ms [Gail] Munro said “people, including contributing churches, [weren’t] giving as much as they used to. But the foodbank was still servicing 30-50 families a week...In the year 1992-93 we got \$25000 in donations...The next year we got something like about \$17000 and this year we got \$6000. You can see it’s all a big decline.”’<sup>367</sup> Increasingly Gail Munro, as Director, voiced the Centre’s concern that church sponsorship of foodbanks was essentially ‘propping up the Government’s shrinking benefits policy’ and that the MSSC would like to eventually move out of such provision: ‘I’m not saying we will stop foodbank tomorrow. It’s an essential human response, to feed the hungry. But doing so creates a dilemma.’ It was, she contended, the government’s responsibility to provide adequate incomes for food, shelter, clothing, medicine and a buffer for



emergencies, and they were not meeting this responsibility. 'They are able to shrink and shrink the benefits because we are here', putting the onus of responsibility back on to voluntary agencies, helped less by 'affluent' residents.<sup>368</sup> Her publicly voiced frustration was similar to that felt by other foodbank workers throughout the country, and summarised by Margaret McClure: '...voluntary providers were becoming increasingly politicised by their daily confrontation with people who claimed that they had too little to live on. Church workers expressed growing indignation at the state's assumption that it could "pass the buck" to organisations which were not contracted to help in this way.'<sup>369</sup> Gail Munro's indignation at the coercion she felt to 'prop up the state' in this way reflected that of other voluntary welfare workers and researchers throughout New Zealand and in other western democracies.

An *Evening Standard* editorial discussed the challenge posed by agencies like the MSSC to put the responsibility back onto the Government and its agencies to cope. In the face of less public generosity, the PNCC was forced to step in:

...The reality is that the Council now has to cope with a number of functions which central government no longer takes responsibility for, and it is unlikely to walk away from those of its citizens most in need of emergency help... If so-called affluent people are being less generous in their support, it may well be because they wonder if they should have to help out. Part of such reasoning may be put down to an unthinking beneficiary-bashing mentality, but a good deal of it has to do with people believing the Government should be responsible for providing adequate benefit levels in the first place, and that they should not have to make up the shortfall.<sup>370</sup>

Under Gail Munro's Directorship, the orientation of the foodbank turned towards ensuring that beneficiary clients had received their full entitlements before using foodbanks as a 'backstop'. Education for clients, and advocacy on their behalves were essential manifestations of the social justice imperative, and the Centre opened an Advocacy Service to complement its social service work.

The overtly political nature of some of the Palmerston North Foodbank's actions had the ability to publicise issues, but also to polarise public opinion. In December 1994, a national foodbank campaign was centred on Prime Minister Jim Bolger's questioning of why people kept returning to foodbanks. Christmas cards in the shape of baked beans tins were printed to send to him, with the reason for each food parcel given on the back. An Auckland Foodbank Action Group spokeswoman was quoted as saying that they suspected that Mr Bolger already knew why people used foodbanks 'but this will give him all the reasons and he won't have to ask any more.' MSSC Director Lex Bartlett endorsed the campaign as an effective way of foodbanks providing the Prime Minister with feedback. The

Salvation Army did not approve, and called the campaign ‘an abuse of the Christian desire to celebrate the birth of Christ’ and said that the money would be better used ‘buying food or contributing toward budgeting and life skills programmes’.<sup>371</sup> A newspaper correspondent from Paraparaumu also disagreed, questioning who would pay for postage: ‘So the foodbanks intend to misuse their donations on stamps? Conversely, is it their intention to use the “free” parliamentary postal service, for which NZ Post is reimbursed by the taxpayer? These questions are important because it costs \$45000 to post 100,000 cards. This is a lot of money to ask someone else to pay for an ill-considered publicity stunt.’<sup>372</sup> Whether or not the correspondent was a contributor to the funds of voluntary welfare services, he or she clearly felt that it was appropriate to comment upon how such organisations used their funds – and political advocacy did not meet the criteria.

Some consternation over combining foodbank provision with political advocacy was also evident when MSSC staff, supported by the steering group, decided upon a symbolic closure of the foodbank in 1996. In conjunction with a ‘National Action on Poverty Week’, the MSSC and Palmerston North Foodbank helped organise a Citizen’s Rally and a week’s closure of the foodbank to publicise ISS special grant entitlements and social justice issues in the lead-up to the General Election. It was, commented Gail Munro, something of a ‘Clayton’s closure’, as liaison with ISS and other foodbanks and community organisations meant that no-one who needed a food parcel would go without one. MSSC and foodbank staff prepared food parcels in advance and distributed them to Samaritans (who deputised for the week) and the Salvation Army foodbank.<sup>373</sup> Feedback was mostly ‘positive and supportive’, although several individuals and St Peter’s Anglican Church indicated that as a result of this campaign they intended to transfer their support to the Salvation Army foodbank. Gail Munro noted a conservative/liberal theological divide in interpretation of biblical injunctions between the vicar at St Peters and the MSSC: whereas he considered that ‘the poor will always be with us’ was an imperative to succour [or feed] them in their distress, MSSC staff saw the same text as an imperative to work for social change on their behalves. A summary of the week concluded that ‘we don’t wish to compete for donations of food, money, or clients with [the] Salvation Army, so remain satisfied that those donations will still go towards hungry people resident in this city irrespective of the organisation providing the day to day service.’<sup>374</sup>

# **National Action On Poverty Week**

**Monday 30 September to Sunday 6  
October**

As part of the week, the organisers invite you to:

## **CITIZEN'S RALLY AGAINST POVERTY**

***Lions Den, The Square, Thursday October 3  
starting 12 noon***

speakers : distinguished local citizens will speak, but NO political candidates  
(Watch media for names of speakers nearer the date)

warm-up music and sound system courtesy of local blues  
singer Bullfrog Rata, who will be singing from 11.30

**org. by Palmerston North Foodbank  
and Palmerston North Community Services Council**

Two public election meetings: Sunday 29 Sept 2 pm, Wesley Broadway, and  
Wednesday 2 October 12 noon, Sci.Cte and Museum - both with a focus on  
poverty concerns

*MSSC staff were active in social justice campaigns that aimed to garner local support for national issues, ostensibly without part-political focus. They often worked with other local community agencies, as with this rally. Source: PN Archives.*

It was a significant feature of the relationship with government agencies that, in general, MSSC staff attempted to refrain from attacks on local staff, preferring to focus their criticism at central government policy makers. When Lex Bartlett criticised ISS for the policy that stated that clients needed to have a 'personal health need' for more than six months before they were eligible for a counselling allowance, he specifically excluded the local staff from his criticism.<sup>375</sup> Gail Munro spoke of the same central government focus as a target for criticism – although she was involved in actions that affected local agencies, she tried to keep the level of debate at a policy level, recognising that staff had no direct input into policy and that their cooperation helped their mutual clients in the local community. This was not always easy, as short quotes from media interviews given to publicise national debates were sometimes misconstrued by local agency staff as attacks on them.<sup>376</sup> The Centre's demonstrated commitment to working for change in the local community usually allowed them some licence to speak and act publicly without incurring significant loss of support.

## **Education**

The appointment of an Education Coordinator in the late 1980s reflected the priority given to maintaining a range of relevant educational programmes to community groups and individuals. A survey completed in 1990 showed that 'overall our courses were meeting needs', although the courses offered reflected changing needs and concerns in the Centre's staff and in the wider community. In 1992 the Centre offered, in conjunction with Manawatu Polytechnic and Queen Elizabeth College Adult Education, a certificated course for volunteer training. Although the Centre had been involved in training volunteers for other community groups throughout its history, this formalisation of courses was consistent with community groups needing volunteers with skills to operate in an increasingly business-like voluntary sector. Another main area of educational involvement was facilitating ongoing training for both paid and voluntary workers in the 'helping professions', and providing tutors for 'in-house' training programmes. In 1990 the Centre ran a new type of training course for counsellors, based on a fulltime intensive intermediate counselling skills programme. Rewpresentatives from twelve other agencies joined two participants from the MSSC: 'the courses were very successful and we believe that in training people from other agencies we are doing a great service to the community.'<sup>377</sup> Further courses were run in Masterton. The centre also maintained its commitment to training its own staff, in order to develop their own skills and train them for tutoring roles. They also benefited from a trip to Te Rangimarie marae in Rangiotu, 'in terms of furthering an understanding of Tikanga Maori and...of broadening our bicultural journey with the Centre.'<sup>378</sup>

Personal development programmes aimed at strengthening family relationships and communication continued, with parenting skills becoming a strong component of the programme in the mid-1990s. The sexual abuse and eating disorders programmes developed in the late 1980s reflected the interest and knowledge of available tutors and of wider societal interest, and by the mid-1990s had changed in emphasis towards children at risk. The Education Coordinator wrote in 1997's annual report that 'the focus for courses remains on family issues, individual self-development and professional extension or interest for those working in the community. There is a need to establish a recognised market niche

for the Methodist Social Service Centre to avoid direct competition with other agencies.<sup>379</sup> Centre staff identified areas that were not well-covered locally, and developed programmes to suit. 'In the Same Boat', a grief programme for children dealing with loss, was developed in partnership with a grief counsellor and local funeral directors. This course and another based on suicide prevention did not attract large numbers of participants but filled a previously unmet community need. The 'Bag of Tricks' parenting programme was offered to different groups – pre-school families, primary schools, the Deaf Association – in locations across the city, and proved popular.

The Education programme had run twenty nine programmes with three hundred participants in the year to mid-1998, and Margaret McNie, the Education Coordinator, had identified two ongoing issues:

The first is about the appropriateness of what we are offering in relation to the people who are attending our courses. People attending these courses often have problems way beyond the scope of an education course and seem unable to access help within the community. At times they appear to be referred by professionals who now lack resources within their own agencies to deal with clients who are not in immediate crisis. The second is the ongoing issue of funding to ensure that we can offer courses at a cost which is affordable to the general community.<sup>380</sup>

The following year's report commented that the content of the parenting programme was adapted to suit the 'extensive needs of many of the parents' attending, sometimes in conjunction with school social workers. 'Extra sessions on particular issues e.g. anger and stress' and referrals to other agencies were encouraged.<sup>381</sup> Strong links between the Centre's education and counselling programmes aimed to develop complementary methods of promoting self-help and growth in participants. An 'anger issues' programme for children, based around '*A Volcano in my Tummy*<sup>382</sup>' was developed in response to the Centre's work with families and enquiries from teachers and parents. Courses on step-parenting for professionals and families were run in partnership with Parentline, with ongoing self-supporting groups developing.

Finding funding for courses was a constant issue for the Centre, as it tried to maintain accessibility at a low cost to participants, while employing internal and outside tutors and course facilitators. From the mid-1990s funding sources for education programmes were detailed in annual reports: they showed strong support from a variety of national and regional trusts, many of whom had supported the centre throughout its history. Government grants from the Community Funding Agency, Ministry of Education and Internal Affairs varied



depending on the particular programme being funded, but generally did not exceed funding received from other sources.

## **Funding**

For voluntary welfare agencies, funding has always been a constant issue, and it is likely to remain so. For most of New Zealand's welfare history, the voluntary sector has been a complement to state welfare provision, operating services by a combination of privately garnered funding and subsidies from government welfare budgets. In the 1990s, the National Government clearly expressed its unwillingness to continue to be the major partner in this area, and attempted to devolve much of what had previously been state provision to 'the community'. For voluntary agencies, this entailed sometimes profound shifts in their services, funding and organisation. Their involvement in contracting arrangements with government agencies generated increased administrative requirements at the same time as they were dealing with markedly increased demand for immediate relief from those most affected by benefit cuts. This had implications for staffing, both paid and voluntary, and for funding. Funding became central to provision of services and organisation of agencies in addition to its traditional importance as the oil that greased the wheels of agencies like the MSSC. Previously reliable sources of funding, like philanthropic trusts and to a lesser extent lottery funds, became more sought after by more groups, and developing and maintaining alternative sources of income became vital. For the MSSC, the funds generated by the Goodwill Operation meant the difference between financial viability, and therefore security and stability, to offer services throughout the decade.

The Goodwill operation consisted, at the beginning of the decade, of two shops – Highbury House and Cuba Cottage, which later moved to Affordables – with the workshop and storage in temporary premises in Ngata Street, until the new Centre was built in 1992. Vogel House was added initially as a '50c shop' before becoming the third full retail outlet. Through these buildings came thousands of items of clothing and household goods, processed by a handful of paid staff and a large volunteer labour force of over one hundred people at any one time. Many of the parish volunteers had long associations with this work,<sup>383</sup> although the Centre's 1994 annual report records that 'we find that new

volunteers come to us from the Community rather than the Church. We are pleased to have gained a number of new volunteers this year.' Other sources of help came from customers who returned to volunteer, and from Taskforce Green and other community employment initiatives throughout the decade.

Although the shops and workshop provided a substantial, and indispensable, element of the MSSC's funding, those who worked in this area were also aware of their community focus, providing good quality clothing at affordable prices to their customers. 'As a church-based organisation we need to take care not to measure our worth...solely by a financial standard. Mere increase in size, turnover or profit will not necessarily offer better quality of service.'<sup>384</sup> Regular shop workers learned what was needed or wanted by different groups, and oriented their stock, and their shop hours, around providing it. To those members of the parish and wider community who work for the Centre in this way, 'the Goodwill Stores operation is...much more than an organisation just raising funds to support social service. It is part of the service.'<sup>385</sup>

At the time that Lex Bartlett became Manager of the Centre in 1993, he requested statistical data from the Workshops to ascertain the levels of activity: in the first month of recording there were ninety hours of voluntary work and another forty of paid work, resulting in 1700 garments ready for sale; eighty boxes of household goods received and forty bags of rags processed. Clothing bins located strategically around the city, and emptied by regular 'van teams' of volunteers, were introduced in the early 1990s. In response to competition from private businesses paying charities a percentage of their income for the use of their names on other clothing bins, Lex Bartlett suggested that the MSSC bins clearly advertise themselves as '100% CHARITY, 100% LOCAL', giving donors the opportunity to target their charitable donations to supporting the Centre's work in the community. A letter to the editor of a local newspaper expressed some consternation that by using other bins, the writer had realised that she was not supporting local organisations. Lex Bartlett responded by suggesting initially that charities who allowed their names to be used in this way were being duped, but later retracted this after the business involved named a range of charities throughout the country, including Methodist Missions, who were happy to be involved as part of their fundraising efforts.<sup>386</sup> He did, however, take the opportunity to reiterate that the Centre's bright yellow bins were a volunteer initiative and all funds used locally. This commercial 'capture' of the clothing bin

enterprise continued to rankle with the Centre's volunteers, as this comment in an annual report demonstrated: 'the competition from "out of towners" claiming their funds go to Child Cancer etc makes our job harder. We would have one bin when they would have 2, 3, or 4.' This case demonstrated the blurring of boundaries between the voluntary welfare sector and commercial interests, in a time when entrepreneurial ventures were lauded and voluntary welfare agencies needed funds. Values, as well as funds, were at stake where the market met the op-shop.

In his thirty year history of the Goodwill Operation, Loyal Gibson estimated that approximately one million dollars had been transferred to the Social Service account, although 'despite this fine result, the money raised from trading [in the second half of the 1990s] has met less than half of the operating costs of the Social Service Centre. This makes the work increasingly vulnerable to Government policies and economic pressures, if our own effort diminishes.'<sup>387</sup> Annual contributions from this area enabled the Centre to have an unusual degree of financial stability for a voluntary agency of its size, with an average of thirty five percent of the Centre's income generated through rags and shop sales in the 1990s. In comparison, funds received from government agencies for the same period were approximately half of those generated by the Goodwill operation for the Centre. Philanthropic trusts and lottery funding were also significant sources of funding and, combined, accounted for slightly less than government funding.<sup>388</sup>

For those involved in the centre's planning and service delivery processes, it did not seem that the MSSC was in a comparatively healthy position, as the Centre worked around tighter budgets, yearly deficits (usually but not always countered by the Goodwill contribution to the Centre's funds) and the stress of not knowing when or how the government may undertake further welfare reforms or cuts to services. In a local newspaper article in 1991 - 'Director fears closure' - the Director, Gerard Dolan, spoke of the Centre being faced with closure after a twenty thousand dollar funding application to the Manawatu-Wanganui Area Health Board (MWAHB) was turned down.<sup>389</sup> Cuts in the health budget affected local agencies like the MSSC who worked with the Board's agencies in counselling. Much of the Director's frustration related to the withdrawal of funding while the Community Health team and Child and Family Services (both under the jurisdiction of the Board) continued to refer people to the MSSC, due to their own long waiting lists. The MSSC was, he added, the only community agency dealing with eating disorders and, by implication, performing useful work that should be

funded. The MWAHB did not revise its decision, but a funding reprieve came in the form of a lottery grant of twenty thousand dollars. This case illustrated the precarious position of small non-statutory agencies in relation to central government budgets, and the implications of such cuts for local service provision, whether in the state system or in community-based agencies working alongside it. It was also indicative of the MSSC's willingness to use the local media to publicly advocate for their own interests and for wider political comment.

When funding applications were not granted alternative sources of income had to be found, as cutting services was the Centre's least favoured option. This involved financial juggling for the Centre's administrators and treasurers: cash reserves, and occasionally trust funds, were used to avoid deficits; and in 1991 counselling services that had been kept deliberately free of charge could no longer be sustained without fees. Counselling costs were revised again in 1994, but even then, 'we conservatively estimate we subsidise our service when compared to private counselling fees by at least \$55,000 per annum. The policy of the Centre is to provide an affordable counselling service.'<sup>390</sup>

Philanthropic trusts continued to support the Centre throughout the 1990s and into the next century: some trusts, like the McKenzie and Dudding Trusts, have remained financial supporters of the Centre through to the present day. The Centre itself was compelled to form itself into a charitable trust in the mid- 1990s, in order to comply with changed government funding criteria. New guidelines made it necessary for the Centre to apply for funding under its own name, rather than as a part of the Methodist Church. As the MSSC had previously been funded through Lottery Welfare for counselling and education programmes Lex Bartlett considered that,

without this grant we would have to either increase our fees, reduce our level of service and overheads, or cease a service altogether unless alternative funding is found. We would effectively find ourselves in a similar annual funding problem [to] Anglican, Catholic [and] Rangitane...social service [organisations], particularly as we do not receive funding assistance from the Parish.<sup>391</sup>

This comment indicated the relative financial security of the MSSC in comparison with other local welfare agencies, who lacked both the MSSC's longevity and independent financial support on the level that the Goodwill store provided. Concern that separation of the Centre, and other branches of the parish, from the parish<sup>392</sup> could 'fragment the Methodist Church and its services throughout N.Z.' did not prevent the establishment of the charitable trust, as the level of funding

received made compliance a necessity. The range of purposes for which lottery funding was available was also tightened, and in 1995 the Lottery Board had warned of the necessity for the MSSC to be 'weaned off them for salary grants'.<sup>393</sup>

Considerable effort went into maintaining funding at levels sufficient to ensure continuity of service in the 1990s, and it is clear that the Centre would have struggled to do so without the sustained efforts of the Goodwill operation. Funding became more contestable at every avenue, whether as a result of tendering for government contracts or competing with other agencies and groups for philanthropic or public donations. The MSSC's relative financial stability buffered it from the exigencies of developing services based on yearly funding, which could then be denied further funding and, therefore, viability. Philip McConkey and Gail Munro, operating in successive decades, both noted that they were aware of other welfare agencies in the city whose reliance upon funding applications led to a 'boom and bust' model of staffing and services.<sup>394</sup> The MSSC was also aided in this area by having effective and long-term volunteers who acted as Treasurers and in governance roles.

## **Summary**

Voluntary welfare agencies like the MSSC were confronted with change in every direction of their operations throughout this decade. Most of the changes were provoked by the ideologically driven, and socially divisive, policy platform of the National Party-led governments who held political power until the 1999 general election.

Voluntary welfare organisations were asked or compelled to carry more of the tasks and costs of welfare provision in this decade, in keeping with the government's 'social responsibility' community focus. Yet there was little firm empirical data on which to base understandings of the voluntary sector, its structures and concerns. It was not until the end of the decade, and the election of a Labour government, that a Working Party was convened to investigate the relationships between community and iwi organisations and government. The working party consulted with community groups and individuals throughout the country. Its format echoed earlier Royal Commissions into Social Policy in its attempts to provide a forum for people to discuss the nature of their intersections



with the government as volunteers, and how these could be improved. The final report, released in the International Year of Volunteers in 2001, demonstrated 'deep levels of frustration, mistrust, cynicism, anger and burnout' reflecting 'communities' experiences of dealing with governments over the past two decades'.<sup>395</sup> Heeding the call for more research into voluntary organisations, the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (NZFVWO) released the 'Counting for Something' study in 2004, aimed to demonstrate the extent of voluntary work, and its financial and social value to New Zealand society.

The MSSC's commitment to maintaining its ideological and financial independence as far as possible in a climate of welfare contracting undoubtedly buffered it from the 'fragility' of tenuous survival associated with the annual funding 'boom-or-bust' cycle experienced by other small agencies.<sup>396</sup> The Goodwill operations contributed a considerable proportion of the Centre's income, generated by a local community-based service that benefited both its users and the Centre. Community support for the Centre also continued to come from public donations and business sponsorship, as well as through local government grants. MSSC staff were visible and vocal in the Palmerston North community, working to meet increased demands in areas of immediate need, as with their association with the Palmerston North Foodbank, and also in social justice campaigns that highlighted their commitment to challenging what they perceived as structural inequalities. Directors of the Centre in this decade did not come from a Methodist, or even Christian, perspective, but shared the Centre's commitment to social justice campaigns and community development. Gail Munro had a particularly strong presence in this area. As in earlier decades, nurturing networks in the local community, and involvement in community development, paid social and organisational dividends for the Centre. Although social justice was more overt in this period, in response to the political environment, the threads of social service, social justice and faith were all still evident in the services, values and campaigns of the MSSC.

## CONCLUSION

There are five features of this study that interweave with each other to provide a picture of how the MSSC has fitted into its local environment, and into wider welfare contexts: the nature of change and constancy in welfare provision; the motivating factors of social service, social justice and faith; time and place; the current interest in the voluntary sector as a significant and under-researched part of welfare history; and finally – and fundamentally – people.

Within contemporary welfare history there are many descriptive catchphrases that attempt to exemplify the character of interactions between the different but overlapping sectors of state, community, voluntary organisations and informal care. Jane Lewis's 'mixed economy of welfare' concept illustrates the constantly evolving and changing emphases given at different points of time and place to each 'actor' in welfare provision. Similarly Roderick Finlayson's 'moving frontier', originally coined to describe fluidities in British twentieth century welfare provision, has become widely used. Both of these descriptors use visual imagery to evoke what cannot easily be discerned without close scrutiny of welfare history over long periods of time. To these I add another image, borrowed from science, that encapsulates the nature, and constantly negotiated position, of the MSSC as a provincial, voluntary, church-based agency – the semi-permeable membrane as a metaphor for elements of mutability and immutability, of change and constancy.

A semi-permeable membrane is 'a membrane which will allow certain molecules or ions to pass through it by diffusion (sometimes 'facilitated diffusion'). The rate of passage depends on the pressure, concentration and temperature of the molecules (or solutes) on either side, as well as the permeability of the membrane to each solute. Depending on the membrane and the solute, permeability may depend on solute size, solubility properties, or chemistry.'<sup>397</sup> Just as other concepts indicate movement and change, the concept of the semi-permeable membrane itself and of the elements passing through it indicates the changing influences on the organisation within. By accommodating the passage of some influences crossing into the Centre's ethos and operations from outside, and by disseminating others from within the Centre to outside organisations on the same basis, the centre has been in a position of reacting to, reflecting and influencing change within the local community. Semi-permeability relates also to the boundaries

between sectors, most usually in this period the boundaries between state and voluntary welfare provision, although philosophical and values boundaries between these two providers have also been significant. In general, movement in both directions suggests fluidity across the membrane although the presence of the membrane itself suggests discrete parameters of each organism.

The MSSC has, as a local welfare organisation, positioned itself to respond to its clients' changing needs, and to influence community development and social change. The four decades of its operations have provided a political and social context for this positioning in which the Centre has been at times compelled to supplement inadequate state provision and at times a willing partner in cooperative ventures. Some programmes have developed in response to wide societal change, others to specific need in the local community. Worsening economic conditions throughout this period and the introduction and expansion of neo-liberal ideologies and policies shifted some of the 'welfare burden' from the state back to voluntary welfare agencies, with varying degrees of mutually agreed goals. The MSSC has responded by developing social services like the Palmerston North Foodbank to meet the immediate material needs of some clients, while maintaining services aimed at encouraging personal development. The three strands of the study's title – social service, social justice and faith – have remained as significant elements of the Centre's ethos and public expressions of service. Social justice, an established element in Methodist theology, became more pronounced from the late 1980s, and advocacy campaigns in the 1990s echoed those of the 1930s in their criticisms of government policy and calls for structural change. Inherent in the Centre's voluntary motivation, whether in social service roles or social justice campaigns and advocacy, is the centrality of faith as an imperative to act. Over time, paid staff are less likely to be Methodists, or even professed Christians, but connections with the parish have remained strong. The Centre's policy of offering services without evangelical content, embedded at the time of its establishment, has allowed the Centre to reach, or welcome, local people who they may not have otherwise. In a secular society, albeit one that some researchers argue retains values and beliefs consistent with those of Christianity, the MSSC has maintained its Methodist origins in its name and nature – it stands as a 'presence'. While not as directly as in the past, churches still have influence over societal values and government policies at the level of lobby groups, advocates and agents for social change.

If the fluidity of the wider welfare context can be seen as one significant facet of this study, and the three strands of social service, social justice and faith as another, then a third important facet must be the combination of time and place to the nature and operations of the MSSC. The Centre's establishment in the early 1960s represented a departure from other Methodist social service initiatives – it deviated from the pattern of City Missions in the main centres by its firm belief in working in a non-institutional community-focused way (at a time when church-based institutions were still a major component of faith-based welfare provision), and by its embracing of contemporary social work principles as a basis for programmes and services. It was a child of the sixties, guided by founders who had knowledge of both pastoral care and social work practice, interwoven with a liberal theology and deep roots in the local community. In the 1970s and 1980s, when new community groups proliferated in order to meet newly articulated needs The MSSC worked cooperatively with other church, welfare and community groups and fostered new groups and links between communities of interest and support. The effect of this networking and community development was a process of mutual benefit for the Palmerston North community and for the MSSC, which garnered wide public support when seeking funds or help with community projects.

Voluntary agencies and activity in New Zealand have become much more interesting to government departments and researchers in the past decade, at a time when more has been asked of them. The nature of New Zealand's 'social laboratory' model of welfare state development had previously focused attention on the motivations and actions of the state as provider, with the voluntary sector as something of a bit player at the edges of welfare activity. This perspective, as with many others, has become open to contestation, with evidence of more nuanced interactions between the state and voluntary sectors, and even within each sector. Movements across the membranes between state, private and voluntary providers have enriched understandings of why and how aspects of welfare services have been supplied and used by clients and communities. This study is another small addition to the call for more information in this area.

Finally, this study is about the people associated with the MSSC over forty years of service. Most of those mentioned have done so in a 'helping' context, although they have acknowledged the personal benefits gained through their involvement. Their work alongside those who have sought assistance through the Centre in many different ways is honoured. Some of them have played significant

roles in many areas of the Centre's work, some have committed to one area of work for decades, others for shorter periods. Their motivations have varied, but many - perhaps most - of them have seen their work as a public expression of their faith. From the vision developed by George Baber, Merv Hancock and Reverend George Goodman, the Centre has grown in size and recognition as a valued member of the Palmerston North community. It has been cognisant of the need to be active in the community – to listen and to adapt its practices and programmes in response to changing needs, and to foster community development through other groups. From personal conviction and an organisational theological position that humanity is created interdependent - that 'inasmuch as you do unto the least of these, my brethren, you do unto me' - it has modelled this interconnectedness through the interwoven strands of social service, social justice and faith at a local community level.



## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> See Bronwyn Labrum, 'Negotiating an Increasing Range of Functions: Families and the Welfare State', in Bronwyn Dalley and Margaret Tennant (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Caroline Daley, 'Gender in the community: a study of the women and men of the Taradale region, 1886-1930', PhD. Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Maria Brenton, *The Voluntary Sector in British Social Services*, Harlow: Longman, 1985, pp.57-58.

<sup>4</sup> David Robinson. 'Values in the Voluntary Sector' in G. R. Hawke and David Robinson, *Performance without Profit: the Voluntary Welfare Sector in New Zealand*, Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1993, p.106.

<sup>5</sup> *Communities and Government – Potential for Partnership*, Whakatapu Whakaaro, Wellington: Ministry of Social Policy, 2001, p.34.

<sup>6</sup> Jeremy Kendall and Martin Knapp, 'A loose and baggy monster: boundaries, definitions and typologies', in Justin Davis Smith, Colin Rochester and Rodney Hedley (eds.), *An Introduction to the Voluntary Sector*, London: Routledge, 1995. Jos Sheard's chapter in the same book, 'From lady bountiful to active citizen' similarly refers to British societal models, but asks questions that relate to wider notions of change in perceptions of, and involvement in, volunteer work.

<sup>7</sup> The Wolfenden Committee Report, *The Future of Voluntary Organisations* (1978), cited in *Communities and Government – Potential for Partnership*, Whakatapu Whakaaro, Wellington: Ministry of Social Policy, 2001, p.34.

<sup>8</sup> The Johns Hopkins Project excluded organisations with a purely religious focus from its work, although religious organisations that perform voluntary community work in one of the qualifying categories were included.

<sup>9</sup> *Voluntary Action*, Vol. 3, #1, Winter 2000

<sup>10</sup> Jeni Warburton and Melanie Oppenheimer, *Volunteers and Volunteering*, Sydney: The Federation Press, 2000 p.17.

<sup>11</sup> Julie Nyland, 'Little fingers of the state: aggressive instrumentalism in the Australian welfare state', in *Power, Politics and Performance: Community Management in the 90s, Conference Papers, (Vol.1)*, Sydney: CACOM, 1993; David Robinson, 'Innovator or Government Agent. The Changing role of the voluntary sector in New Zealand Social Services', 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Ann Trotter, *Mary Potter's Little Company of Mary: the New Zealand experience, 1914-2002*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books; Little Company of Mary, 2003; Jessie Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, Auckland: AUP; Bridget Williams Books, 1996; Michael Belgrave, *The Mater: a history of Auckland's Mercy Hospital 1900-2000*, Palmerston North: Dunmore, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Ken Catran and Penny Hansen, *Pioneering a Vision. A History of the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind 1890-1990*, Auckland: Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind, 1992; Linda Bryder, *A Voice for Mothers. The Plunket Society and Infant Welfare, 1907-2000*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003; Mary Collie-Holmes, *Where the Heart Is. A History of Barnardo's in New Zealand 1866-1991*, Wellington: Barnardo's New Zealand, 1991; Julia Millen, *Breaking Barriers. IHC's First 50 Years*, Wellington: IHC New Zealand (Inc.), 1999.

<sup>14</sup> Sheryl Hann, *Palmerston North Women's Refuge Herstory*, Palmerston North: Palmerston North Women's Refuge Inc., 2001.

<sup>15</sup> Many of the chapters in this volume are relevant to this topic, as they offer a wider perspective on the policy side of welfare provision i.e. Bronwyn Labrum's chapter on families and the welfare state and Michael Belgrave's on evolving social policy in New Zealand history.

- <sup>16</sup> Peter Lineham, 'The Voice of Inspiration? Religious Contributions to Social Policy', in Dalley, Bronwyn and Tennant, Margaret (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004
- <sup>17</sup> The *Report of the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party* details five pages of possible and desirable areas of research, pp.154-159. Downloaded from [www.msd.govt.nz/work-areas/communities-hapu-iwi/community-and-government/working-party-report.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/work-areas/communities-hapu-iwi/community-and-government/working-party-report.html) on 31/5/05.
- <sup>18</sup> Robyn Munford and Mary Nash (eds.), *Social Work in Action*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1994.
- <sup>19</sup> Christine Cheyne, Mike O'Brien and Michael Belgrave, *Social Policy in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Critical Introduction (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- <sup>20</sup> Rex Ahdar and John Stenhouse (eds.), *God and Government: the New Zealand Experience*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000
- <sup>21</sup> John Stenhouse, 'God's Own Silence. Secular Nationalism, Christianity and the Writing of New Zealand History', *NZJH*, 38,1 (2004), p.53.
- <sup>22</sup> Peter Lineham, 'Social Policy and the Churches in the 1990s and Beyond', in *The Future of Christianity. Historical, Sociological, Political and Theological Perspectives from New Zealand*, John Stenhouse and Brett Knowles (eds.) assisted by Antony Wood, Adelaide: ATF Press, 2004, p.178.
- <sup>23</sup> John Adsett Evans, 'Church State Relations in New Zealand 1940-1990, with particular reference to the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches', PhD thesis, Otago University, 1992.
- <sup>24</sup> White, J. M., 'The Love of God Constraineth Us: "Hannah and her Sisters"'. A critical appraisal of the Anglican Order of the Good Shepherd, 1895-1938, M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1989; Ball, Graeme, 'The Amazing Jasper' Calder, The Auckland City Mission and welfare provision', M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1997.
- <sup>25</sup> Edwina Watson, 'Impact of Welfare State Restructuring on Voluntary Welfare Organisations in West Auckland', M.A. thesis, Auckland University, 1994.
- <sup>26</sup> Jonathon Boston, 'Christianity in the Public Square: The Churches and Social Justice', in Jonathon Boston and Alan Cameron, (eds.), *Voices for Justice. Church, Law and State in New Zealand*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1994.
- <sup>27</sup> Peter Lineham, *New Zealanders and the Methodist Evangel: an interpretation of the policies and performance of the Methodist Church of New Zealand*, Auckland: Wesley Historical Society of New Zealand, 1983.
- <sup>28</sup> Elaine Bolitho, *Meet the Methodists. Postwar Personalities and Perspectives*, Auckland: The Christian Research Association of New Zealand, 1994.
- <sup>29</sup> John R. Grigg, *The Last Ripple: A Century of Methodism in the Manawatu*, Levin: Kerslake, Billens and Humphrey for the author, 1972.
- <sup>30</sup> Florence M. Baber, *Towards Wholeness: a history of the Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre 1963-1983*, Palmerston North: Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre, 1983; Loyal Gibson, *A Stitch in Time 1969-1999. Thirty Years of Recycling Clothing*, Palmerston North: Methodist Social Service Centre, 1999.
- <sup>31</sup> Ian Shirley, Rajen Prasad and Peter Isaacs, *The Provision of Personal Social Services in the Manawatu. A Report to the Palmerston North District Office of the Department of Social Welfare*, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University, Palmerston North, 1993.
- <sup>32</sup> Neil Brosnahan, Jenny Chilcott, Dean Henderson, Tim Holdaway, Diane Miller and Mike O'Brien, 'Surviving on the Breadline. A Study of Low Income Families in Palmerston North', BSW research report, Massey University, 1983.

---

<sup>33</sup> See Tennant and Dalley, 'A Practitioner's Perspective on Change' in *Past Judgement* (2004), and Munford and Nash, 'A Conversation with Mervyn Hancock' in *Social Work in Action* (1994).

<sup>34</sup> Ian Matheson Palmerston North City Archives, A25/191, Series 4: Box 1.

<sup>35</sup> James Belich, *Paradise Reforged. A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000*, Auckland: Allen Lane, Penguin, 2001, p.313.

<sup>36</sup> Declining export markets affected employment, and a short recession followed. The economy recovered somewhat until further external pressures in the 1970s forced another downturn in the national economy.

<sup>37</sup> Merv Hancock interviewed by Margaret Tennant, 'A Practitioner's Perspective on Change', in Bronwyn Dalley and Margaret Tennant, (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004, p.233.

<sup>38</sup> Bronwyn Labrum's chapter, 'Negotiating an Increasing Range of Functions: Families and the Welfare State', in Dalley and Tennant (eds.), provides a textured analysis of fluctuations and developments in the relationships between state welfare agencies and families in this period.

<sup>39</sup> Margaret McClure, *A Civilised Community. A History of Social Security in New Zealand, 1898-1998*, Auckland: AUP in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1998, p.162.

<sup>40</sup> McClure, 1998, pp.162-163.

<sup>41</sup> Margaret McClure, 'A Badge of Poverty or a Symbol of Citizenship? Needs, Rights and social Security, 1935-2000', in Dalley and Tennant (eds.), p.149.

<sup>42</sup> John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God*, London: SCM Press, 1963; Harvey Cox, *The Secular City: Secularisation and Urbanisation in Theological Perspective*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965.

<sup>43</sup> A useful summary of the Geering controversy and trial is found in Peter Donovan, (ed.), *Religions of New Zealanders*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1996, pp.92-95.

<sup>44</sup> E. W. Hames, *Coming of Age. The United Church 1913-1972*, Auckland: Wesley Historical Society of New Zealand, Vol. 28 Nos. 1 and 2, 1974, p.130.

<sup>45</sup> This was John Wesley's catch cry, indicating the importance for Methodism of concern for the spiritual and temporal welfare of those in this world, as well as the next.

<sup>46</sup> Within the Methodist Church there were also conservative elements. Elaine Bolitho's PhD. thesis, 'In this world: Baptist and Methodist Churches in New Zealand 1948-1988', Ph.D. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1992, details the growth of the charismatic evangelical movement within Methodism, which in keeping with other Pentecostal-derived groups tended to be more conservative than the Church's connexional leadership. The influx of Pacific Island Methodists from the 1960s also provided a more morally conservative viewpoint.

<sup>47</sup> Hames, p. 138.

<sup>48</sup> New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971.

<sup>49</sup> Selwyn Dawson, *Your kingdom come on earth. Methodist social concerns in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Christchurch Methodist Mission, 1998, p.153. Dawson notes that another avenue of involvement for resigned Methodist ministers was Labour Party political activity.

<sup>50</sup> Dawson, 1998, pp.153-192, details the predominant social concerns of Methodist Conferences in the decade, noting that temperance and gambling, while still of concern to some, were afforded less prominence than previously. International issues e.g. Vietnam, refugees, overseas aid, and human rights in general, were much discussed, while contemporary issues like changing perceptions of marriage and family structure, welfare policy and political advocacy were raised.

---

<sup>51</sup> Hames, p.132.

<sup>52</sup> Graham Bowpitt, 'Evangelical Christianity, Secular Humanism and the Genesis of British Social Work', in *British Journal of Social Work*, 28, 1998, pp.675-693, p.679.

<sup>53</sup> Donald Phillipps, *Mission in a Secular City. Methodist Mission Northern, 1851-2001*, Auckland: Printed by Image Centre for the Methodist Mission Northern, 2001, p.10.

<sup>54</sup> Phillipps, p.23.

<sup>55</sup> Wesley Parker, *In the Midst of the City: the rise and growth of the Auckland Methodist Central Mission*, Auckland: Auckland Methodist Central Mission, 1971, pp. 26-30.

<sup>56</sup> Originally called the Christchurch Mission, and founded by a Congregational minister, it was incorporated into the Methodist Church in 1950. Downloaded from [www.nmsi.org.nz/history](http://www.nmsi.org.nz/history) on 1 September 2005.

<sup>57</sup> Dawson, 1998, p.53.

<sup>58</sup> Leah Taylor, *Leslie Bourneman Neale. A Man of Faith and Vision*, Dunedin: Dunedin Methodist Mission, 2000, p.41 and Donald Phillipps, *Mission in a Secular City. Methodist Mission Northern, 1851-2001*, Auckland: Printed by Image Centre for the Methodist Mission Northern, 2001, both provide good studies of strong individual leadership.

<sup>59</sup> For details of Methodist, and other Protestant, Deaconess orders, see Margaret Tennant, 'Sisterly Ministrations: The Social Work of Protestant Deaconesses in New Zealand 1880-1940', in *NZJH*, (April 1988), pp.3-32; Wesley Chambers, *Not Self – but others: the story of the New Zealand Methodist Deaconess Order together with an index of all those who have served in it*, Auckland (?): Wesley Historical Society (New Zealand), 1987.

<sup>60</sup> Peter Lineham, *New Zealanders and the Methodist Evangel, : an interpretation of the policies and performance of the Methodist Church of New Zealand*, Auckland: Wesley Historical Society of New Zealand, 1983 p.21.

<sup>61</sup> Leah Taylor's biography of Leslie Bourneman Neale of the Dunedin Mission, and Donald Phillipps' general history of the Auckland Mission, including the importance of Everill Orr as Missioner, both provide good character studies of significant – and financially astute - leaders who led their organisations through decades of change in the welfare environment. Phillipps also discusses the particular brand of iconoclastic charisma that Colin Scrimgeour brought to Methodist Mission, and the social creed principles that he helped publicise. In other denominations, strong leadership was also significant, for example Jasper Calder at the Auckland City Mission and Thomas Fielden Taylor at the Wellington City Mission.

<sup>62</sup> Phillipps, p.55

<sup>63</sup> Residential facilities included homes for elderly men and women, children's homes and health camps, and support programmes for these groups.

<sup>64</sup> Cited in Elaine E. Bolitho, 'In this world: Baptist and Methodist Churches in New Zealand 1948-1988, Ph.D. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1992, p.

<sup>65</sup> Elaine Bolitho, *Meet the Methodists. Postwar Personalities and Perspectives*, Auckland: The Christian Research Association of New Zealand, 1994, p.1.

<sup>66</sup> The establishment of the New Zealand Methodist Social Service Association, at the 1952 Conference, further focussed the Church's work in this area.

<sup>67</sup> George Baber had a background of pastoral work in his local church, voluntary experience with Marriage Guidance, and had employed youth farm workers through the Child Welfare Department.

<sup>68</sup> Baber, p1.

<sup>69</sup> Baber, p.7.



- 
- <sup>70</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 11 September 1964.
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>72</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1965.
- <sup>73</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1966.
- <sup>74</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 31 May 1968.
- <sup>75</sup> In addition to supporting families through imprisonment and rehabilitation of a family member, Management Committee minutes note material assistance given e.g. groceries. MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 22 November 1967.
- <sup>76</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 22 November 1967.
- <sup>77</sup> Further help came from the Takaro Church of Christ/Methodist Bowling Club who organised social events at Lake Alice. Baber, p.14.
- <sup>78</sup> Baber, p.7.
- <sup>79</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 11 December 1964. The speaker, Mr Hay Rogers, was a co-opted member of the Management Committee for 1965 and 1966. MSSC Annual Reports, 1965, 1966. (The report for 1964 was not available.)
- <sup>80</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 19 July 1968. The speaker was Miss Joyce Morton, M.A. DipSoc Sci.
- <sup>81</sup> Baber, pp.8-9. The keynote addresses were given by Mrs Ephra Garrett [later a founding lecturer in the Massey University BSW degree course] on 'The Needs of Children in Foster Homes', and Mr Tom Ball, of the Wellington Child Welfare Division, on 'Why we place children in Foster Homes'.
- <sup>82</sup> Florence Baber recounts the initial outreach into the city fringe neighbourhood surrounding Trinity Church in Cuba Street, pp.2-5.
- <sup>83</sup> Baber, p.7.
- <sup>84</sup> Hames, p.125.
- <sup>85</sup> Bronwyn Dalley, *Family Matters: Child Welfare in Twentieth-Century New Zealand*, Auckland: AUP in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1998, Chapter 6: pp.216-258.
- <sup>86</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 21 November 1967. The Methodist Women's Fellowship were aided in this task by women from the Associated Church of Christ and the Congregational Church
- <sup>87</sup> Many children spent time on farms, with families representing Methodist, Presbyterian, Anglican, Churches of Christ, Open Brethren denominations, 'as far afield as Feilding, Marton, Taihape, Pahiatua, Pohangina etc.' MSSC Annual Report, 1967. Placements for school holidays during the year were also made.
- <sup>88</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1967.
- <sup>89</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1968.
- <sup>90</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1969.
- <sup>91</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 17 October 1969.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>93</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 31 May 1968.
- <sup>94</sup> Baber, p.11-12.
- <sup>95</sup> Baber, p.14.
- <sup>96</sup> McClure, 1998, p.162.
- <sup>97</sup> McClure, pp.162-163
- <sup>98</sup> Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, Auckland: Penguin, 2003, p.465.
- <sup>99</sup> King, 2003, p.459.
- <sup>100</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>101</sup> Michael Belgrave, 'Needs and the State: Evolving Social Policy in New Zealand History', in Dalley and Tennant (eds.), 2004, p.34.



<sup>102</sup> *New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, 1971, 1976, 1981*. From the 1966 to 1996 data, Methodist adherence halved from 7% of the population to 3.5%. Other mainstream Protestant churches generally also showed marked declines, while the 'no religion' category almost doubled from 4.5 percent in 1976 to 8.7 percent in 1981.

<sup>103</sup> *Zealandia*, 12 October 1975.

<sup>104</sup> In a television interview not long before his death, David Lange referred to the Methodist Church in the 1970s as 'the Labour Party at prayer'. 'Campbell Live', TV3, 8 August 2005.

<sup>105</sup> The involvement of more liberal churchgoers and clergy in the 'Clergy for Rowling' campaign was seen by some commentators, inside and outside of Parliament, as acting outside of the churches' traditional relationship with the state, by explicitly endorsing a political candidate.

<sup>106</sup> Peter Lineham, 'Government Support of the Churches in the Modern Era', in Rex Ahdar and John Stenhouse (eds.), *God and Government. The New Zealand Experience*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000, p.43.

<sup>107</sup> Reverend Arthur Preston, 'The Church in Welfare and Counselling Ministries', address to the Conference of Central Missions, Auckland, April 1972. NZMSSA papers, Methodist Church Archives, Christchurch.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* The Menzies quote comes from a speech launching an appeal for the Citizens' Welfare Service in Melbourne.

<sup>109</sup> 'Research into Non-Statutory Welfare Organisations in Palmerston North' Interim Report, Palmerston North Community Services Council, 1982, p.9. The responses showed that of the 109 organisations surveyed, 28.4% were less than 4 years old; 36.7% were 4-10 years old; and 34.9% were over 10 years old.

<sup>110</sup> Palmerston North City Corporation Town Planning Department Report No. 53, *Social Services in Transition*, March 1973, p.1.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6

<sup>112</sup> The report summarises a 'recent [undated] address' at a seminar on 'Social Welfare Service and the Local Authority'.

<sup>113</sup> Merv Hancock later became a City Councillor, serving in this capacity from 1983-1992.

<sup>114</sup> Jim Park was at this time a retired Presbyterian minister, and returned to a church position after a year in the City Planner's job. Palmerston North Community Services Council, *Sharing Our Stories: Palmerston North Community Services Council, 1971-1996*, Palmerston North: PNCSC, 1996, p.3

<sup>115</sup> K. R. Daniels, in his 1974 thesis on 'Non-Professional Involvement in the Helping Services in Palmerston North', noted a 100% return rate to his survey. He described this as 'most encouraging' and representative of 'a commitment on the part of the helpers of Palmerston North' to explore this relatively undeveloped area. P.121.

<sup>116</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 28 June 1972.

<sup>117</sup> *Social Services in Transition*, March 1973, p.1.

<sup>118</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1974.

<sup>119</sup> Baber, p.20. At this point the Management Committee was accountable to the Manawatu Hawkes Bay District Synod, a situation that endured until wide-scale revision of the Centre's constitution in 1987.

<sup>120</sup> Ken Fay, the Chairman of the Management Committee from 1976-1986, and Philip McConkey, the Director appointed in 1978, were both Methodists and active in the Parish as well as the Centre.

<sup>121</sup> Of 85 responses to this question, three deemed such involvement irrelevant; 47 helpful; and 35 essential.

<sup>122</sup> Baber, p.42

<sup>123</sup> Roy Bowden correspondence with author.

- 
- <sup>124</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 12 July 1977.
- <sup>125</sup> Of the responses to the question 'Should the Centre be involved in institutional care?' 24 of 59 answered 'yes', which still reflected a familiarity with traditional service avenues for volunteers, rather than the community-based approach of the MSSC.
- <sup>126</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1976
- <sup>127</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1977
- <sup>128</sup> Roy Bowden correspondence with author, September 2005.
- <sup>129</sup> Roy Bowden correspondence with author, September 2005.
- <sup>130</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1975. The report also notes that 'more work [could be done] with families, long term support if more staff [were] available.'
- <sup>131</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1970.
- <sup>132</sup> Management Committee meeting minutes, 21 September 1976.
- <sup>133</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1979.
- <sup>134</sup> A Social Service account was used for making direct grants to clients in immediate need in this period. Although expenses exceeded income, reports note that some need remained unfilled. The establishment of a foodbank in the early 1980s was an initiative aimed at alleviating this need, providing material rather than monetary assistance.
- <sup>135</sup> 'Parish Finance Report', MSSC Annual Report, 1976.
- <sup>136</sup> Management Committee meeting minutes, 3 March 1972.
- <sup>137</sup> Management Committee meeting minutes, 13 November 1970
- <sup>138</sup> Eastern & Central Savings Bank donation of \$100 and 'sundry donations' of \$190, MSSC Annual Report, 1976; \$50 from Winstone Plastics, Management Committee meeting minutes 12 July 1977.
- <sup>139</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1975.
- <sup>140</sup> The case studies for these two initiatives cover their financial relationship with central government in more detail.
- <sup>141</sup> Minutes relating to the operations of the West Street Probation hostel and the Home Support Scheme report delays of this kind.
- <sup>142</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1974.
- <sup>143</sup> Graeme Ball, 'The Amazing Jasper Calder, the Auckland City Mission and Welfare Provision 1920-1946', M.A. thesis, 1997, p.80.
- <sup>144</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1970.
- <sup>145</sup> Loyal Gibson, *A Stitch in Time 1969-1999. Thirty Years of Recycling Clothing*, Palmerston North: Methodist Social Service Centre, 1999, p.79
- <sup>146</sup> Gibson, p.15.
- <sup>147</sup> Highbury House was the first shop opened by the MSSC, and its location in the shopping centre of a state housing, lower income area was part of the Centre's outreach policy.
- <sup>148</sup> 'One hundred' volunteers in the Goodwill operations pool is a number that occurs in various MSSC publications: the 1977 Annual Report refers to the '100-up' team, Baber refers to 100 helpers in 1983, p.59; and Gibson refers to 'several hundred...nearer the thousand mark' over thirty years, p.37.
- <sup>149</sup> NZMSSA Annual Reports for the years 1963; 1970; 1971; 1974 and 1977 all discuss the need for the religious element and formal qualifications for church-based social services.
- <sup>150</sup> *The New Zealand Social Worker*, April 1970.
- <sup>151</sup> Parish Council notes of a Consultation between Trinity Methodist Leaders and the Takaro Church of Christ (4 October 1973) report the feeling of the meeting that the Church of Christ, which was affiliated with the Methodist Parish and supported its social service work, should be represented on the Management Board. 'However it was pointed out that the Board was made up of experts in the field of

Social Service, [and] not based on the principle of representation of interest within the Parish.'

<sup>152</sup> Sheryl Hann, in her 'herstory' of the Palmerston North Women's Refuge, also notes the 'significant role' that staff and students from Massey University (and Manawatu Polytechnic, now UCOL) have played in that organisation.

Interestingly, she notes that it has been a two-way process, with volunteers then furthering their interest through related areas of academic study. Hann, pp.118-119.

<sup>153</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1971.

<sup>154</sup> The first warden of the Probation hostel, Merv Browne, and social worker Jennie Pilalis, both completed Massey University extension courses in counselling; other areas of social work practice covered by staff training were childcare, drug and alcohol abuse and marriage guidance, with some attracting Justice Department sponsorship – Management Committee meeting minutes 28/10/75; MSSC Annual Report 1973.

<sup>155</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1971 notes seminars throughout the year at Methodist churches in Palmerston North, Feilding, Ashhurst, Foxton, Rongotea, Wanganui and Hastings. Parish Council minutes for 18 April 1971 also note that 'a course for lay befrienders entitled "The Family Friend" has run for four sessions during April, and 32 people attended.'

<sup>156</sup> A 1971 'Seminar for the Clergy on Grief' was summarised as of 'keen interest, ecumenical nature valuable.' MSSC Annual Report 1971; Management Committee meeting minutes, 16 April 1971.

<sup>157</sup> Annual reports in this decade detail many seminars each year based on aspects of social service in a community setting, reflecting the growth of this area of welfare provision, and keen public interest in it.

<sup>158</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1973.

<sup>159</sup> The first Chairman of the CSC was Merv Browne, who was employed by the MSSC as a community worker while waiting for the Probation Hostel, of which he was the first warden, to be established.

<sup>160</sup> Jennifer Whyte, a social worker with the Centre who was involved in Youthline's establishment, reported that after two months of operation the service had 'already had many serious calls', and she was then involved in training the second intake of volunteers. MSSC management Committee meeting minutes, 16 April 1971. Both paid and volunteers associated with the MSSC and its parish also worked with the Samaritans and with Marriage Guidance locally.

<sup>161</sup> Sheryl Hann, *Palmerston North Women's Refuge Herstory, 1979-2001*, Palmerston North: PNWR Inc., 2001, p.59. Women involved in the establishment of the Palmerston North Women's Refuge commented on the 'positive climate of change' then evident in Palmerston North. Initial support for the project came from Community Volunteers.

<sup>162</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 28 June 1972. The 1960s section discusses this aspect of the Centre's work in more detail, under the heading of Programmes and Initiatives.

<sup>163</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 29 October 1974.

<sup>164</sup> MSSC considerations were the continued autonomy of the Centre to act locally, rather than from a Wellington perspective; differences in pay scales between the two denominations; and some suggestion from the Presbyterians that the Centre may need to change its name to reflect a less Methodist, and more broadly Christian, base. Finance was a significant issue for the Presbyterians, specifically whether their parishes could financially support a social worker.

<sup>165</sup> Agencies included those that represented the health sector: Hospital Boards and their medical social workers, mental health specialists and associated services, public health nurses, general practitioners, and Plunket nurses; established

national organisations such as the Crippled Children's' Society, the Society for the Intellectually Handicapped and the National Society for Alcohol and Drug Abuse; local voluntary agencies like the Manawatu Home Budgeting Service, and local branches of national agencies such as Samaritans and Youthline; state agencies – the Department of Social Welfare and the Probation Service of the Justice Department; and groups representing the rapid growth in single parent families.

<sup>166</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1974.

<sup>167</sup> 'The West Street Hostel, Palmerston North', pamphlet to commemorate the opening of the hostel, March 1973.

<sup>168</sup> Management Committee meeting minutes, 29 November 1968.

<sup>169</sup> Department of Justice, Annual Report, 1969, *AJHR*, H20, p.14.

<sup>170</sup> Department of Justice, *Crime and the Community. A Survey of Penal Policy in New Zealand*, Wellington: Government Printer, 1964, p.49.

<sup>171</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> The New Zealand Prisoners' Aid Society was established in 1877, and philosophically and financially supported by the Justice Department to complement its own work in the period of this case study.

<sup>173</sup> Margaret Tennant, *Through the Prison Gate. 125 Years of Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation*, NZPARS, 2002, p.17.

<sup>174</sup> Department of Justice, Annual Report, 1974, *AJHR*, E.5, pp.18-19.

<sup>175</sup> The numerical peak was 889 in 1971 (15.6% of prisoners), although the percentage peak occurred in the previous year (15.7 in 1970), *AJHR*, 1974, E5, p.30.

<sup>176</sup> The earlier figure is based on a '25 and under' grouping, while the latter is 'under 25', due to a change in documenting these statistics. Source: *AJHR*, 1969, H20, p.24; *AJHR*, 1974, E5, p.30.

<sup>177</sup> *Crime and the Community*, 1964, pp.11-12.

<sup>178</sup> Department of Justice Annual Report, 1973, *AJHR*, E.5, p.8. The Whangarei hostel was a Justice Department/PSSA initiative. Another hostel was opened in Hamilton in 1974, in association with the Baptists.

<sup>179</sup> 'The West Street Hostel, Palmerston North' commemorative pamphlet, March 1973.

<sup>180</sup> Merv and Marj Browne letter, in response to Probation Hostel Survey, MSSC Management Committee papers, 1978.

<sup>181</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> Tennant, *Through the Prison Gate. 125 Years of Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation*, NZPARS, 2002, p.5.

<sup>183</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1974, p.5.

<sup>184</sup> Merv Browne recommended, on resignation, that the warden's position be offered jointly to a married couple, reflecting the combined work involved. Charles and Nathalie Haar were employed on this basis.

<sup>185</sup> Charles and Nathalie Haar letter in response to survey, MSSC Management Committee papers, 1978.

<sup>186</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> Initially \$8000 p.a., but this had risen to \$10000 p.a. at the time of withdrawal.

<sup>188</sup> New Zealand Electricity Department, which had training programmes in the city; other government trainees were also sometimes accommodated.

<sup>189</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 20 February 1974.

<sup>190</sup> Browne survey response, 1978. He noted the frustration felt by residents and hostel staff in being unable to develop constructive areas of interest: 'Ixxx was a keen and capable swimmer but he was not permitted to attend Lido pool unless in the company of the warden. Who was then responsible for the other residents during the warden's absence?'



---

<sup>191</sup> Warden's Report to the Management Committee, on the West Street Hostel, 11 June 1975.

<sup>192</sup> Roy Bowden – response to West St. Hostel survey, MSSC Management Committee papers, 1978; 1975's Probation Service report states 'The constant dilemma for the field officer is that the time he must spend in preparing pre-sentence reports leaves little time for the supervision of offenders.' This is indicative of annual reports for the entire period of this case study. Annual Report of Justice Department, *AJHR*, 1975, E5, p.10.

<sup>193</sup> Bowden survey response, 1978.

<sup>194</sup> Browne survey response, 1978.

<sup>195</sup> Maintaining contact with some ex-probationers, who were in prison or drug/alcohol programmes, was seen as a worthwhile form of outreach that may influence their later behaviour when they were released back into the community.

<sup>196</sup> In 1975, Charles Haar reported that these meetings were intended twice weekly with two Probation Officers, but that their frequency tailed off in the two years of his employment as warden.

<sup>197</sup> Haar survey response, 1978.

<sup>198</sup> West St Hostel – Report to the Management Committee, 23 February 1977.

<sup>199</sup> Browne and Haar survey responses, 1978.

<sup>200</sup> Manawaroa is the psychological medicine treatment centre attached to the Palmerston North Hospital. The MSSC maintained strong links with it in this period through counselling and patient support.

<sup>201</sup> Baber, pp.37-38.

<sup>202</sup> Parish Council meeting minutes, 18 October 1978.

<sup>203</sup> Department of Justice Annual Report, *AJHR*, 1975, E5, p.11.

<sup>204</sup> The yearly cost of keeping each resident was given as \$9000 in a probation hostel, \$12000 in a minimum security prison. Department of Justice Annual Report, *AJHR*, 1982, E5, p.20.

<sup>205</sup> Department of Justice Annual Report, *AJHR*, 1983, E5, P.20. From this point, probation hostels are no longer mentioned in annual reports.

<sup>206</sup> Letter from client family in Home Support album, A25/191, Series 3 box, Ian Matheson Palmerston North City Archives.

<sup>207</sup> Lynda Bryder, *A Voice for Mothers. The Plunket Society and Infant Welfare 1907-2000*, 2003, p.143.

<sup>208</sup> The paper written by Alan Nixon and Raoul Ketko for the 1<sup>st</sup> National Conference on Home Help Services in 1982 showed that at that time the ratio of provision of home help services between Health, Social Welfare and voluntary agencies was respectively 63:20:17. Alan Nixon and Raoul Ketko, Department of Social Welfare, 'An Overview of Home Help in New Zealand', paper given at 1<sup>st</sup> National Conference on Home Help Services, Palmerston North, 17-19 November 1982.

<sup>209</sup> Alley, Dorothy and Margaret Perowne, 'Survey of Some Recipients of Home Help in New Zealand', commissioned by the Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre, 1982. The report surveyed six home help providers in Palmerston North, of which one was a commercial enterprise and 'had recently been established.' A seventh organisation, the Maori Community Trust, was reported to be 'flourishing', although time constraints did not allow its inclusion.

<sup>210</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 15 May 1974.

<sup>211</sup> Merv Hancock interview; Felix Biestek, *The Casework Relationship*, Chicago: Loyola University, 1957

<sup>212</sup> Merv Hancock interview.

<sup>213</sup> Home Support Worker's report, MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 30 March 1976.

<sup>214</sup> Bertha Zurcher interview.



- 
- <sup>215</sup> Millen, Julia, *Breaking Barriers. IHC's First 50 Years*, Wellington: IHC New Zealand (Inc.), 1999, p.83; Management Committee meeting minutes, 17 July 1980.
- <sup>216</sup> Birthright is a voluntary agency that supports single parents in the community.
- <sup>217</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1976.
- <sup>218</sup> Merv Hancock interview.
- <sup>219</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1976.
- <sup>220</sup> Bertha Zurcher interview.
- <sup>221</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1976.
- <sup>222</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1981.
- <sup>223</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1981; also MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 16 July 1981.
- <sup>224</sup> Home Support Worker's report to MSSC Management Committee meeting, 20 May 1981.
- <sup>225</sup> Home Support worker's report to MSSC Management Committee meeting, 16 July 1981.
- <sup>226</sup> Bertha Zurcher interview.
- <sup>227</sup> See Christopher Higgins, *Home Help Services in and around Christchurch*, 1984 and Alan Nixon and Raoul Ketko, 'An Overview of Home Help in New Zealand' paper, 1982.
- <sup>228</sup> Merv Hancock, 'The restoration of old enduring ideas in new forms' opening address to the Inaugural Conference on Home Help Services in New Zealand, November 1982.
- <sup>229</sup> Belgrave, in Dalley and Tennant (eds.), 2004, p.36.
- <sup>230</sup> King, 2003, pp.491-492.
- <sup>231</sup> Royal Commission on Social Policy, *The April Report*, Wellington, 1988, vol.1, p.v.
- <sup>232</sup> Belgrave, 2004, pp.36-37, notes that divisions within constituency and caucus 'held back some neo-liberal proposals for welfare reform', preventing the completion of Roger Douglas's reform agenda.
- <sup>233</sup> Kay Saville-Smith et al, *Bringing Home the Bacon: the changing relationship between family, state and market in New Zealand in the 1980s*, Christchurch: New Zealand Institute for Social Research and Development, 1994, p.107.
- <sup>234</sup> Statistics New Zealand, 1994c, quoted in Saville-Smith et al, p.103.
- <sup>235</sup> Saville-Smith et al, p.103.
- <sup>236</sup> Margaret McClure, 'The Reluctant State, 1984-1998', in *A Civilised Community. A History of Social Security in New Zealand 1898-1998*, 1998, pp.210-256.
- <sup>237</sup> NZ Planning Council, *The Welfare State*, cited in McClure, 1998, p.211.
- <sup>238</sup> Margaret Tennant, 'Mixed Economy or Moving Frontier? Welfare, the Voluntary Sector and Government', in Dalley and Tennant (eds.), *Past Judgement*, 2004, p.53.
- <sup>239</sup> Kay Saville-Smith and Marianne Bray, *Voluntary Welfare: A Preliminary Analysis of Government Funding to the Non-Profit Sector*, NZ Institute for Social Research and Development, 1994, pp.13-14.
- <sup>240</sup> Maria Brenton, *The Voluntary Sector in British Social Services*, Harlow: Longman, 1985, p.143-144.
- <sup>241</sup> Peter Lineham, 'The Voice of Inspiration? Religious Contributions to Social Policy', in Dalley and Tennant (eds.), *Past Judgement*, 2004, pp.69-70.
- <sup>242</sup> Where increases occurred, or decreases slowed, for these churches they were often linked to immigrant populations, particularly those from Pacific Islands.
- <sup>243</sup> Lineham, Dalley and Tennant (eds.), 2004, pp.69-70.
- <sup>244</sup> Quoted in New Zealand Methodist Social Services Association, Report to Conference, 1987.

---

<sup>245</sup> Richard Randerson, *Hearts and Minds, Hearts and Minds: A Place for People in a Market Economy*, Wellington: Social Responsibility Commission of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, 1992, pp.83-87.

<sup>246</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 23 August 1983.

<sup>247</sup> Randerson, p.7.

<sup>248</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 23 January 1985. See sub-section on the foodbank's establishment in this decade, under 'Programmes and Initiatives'.

<sup>249</sup> Ian Matheson, *Council and Community: 125 years of local government in Palmerston North 1877-2002*, Palmerston North: Palmerston North City Library (for the Palmerston North City Council), 2003, p.62.

<sup>250</sup> Waldegrave, p.84.

<sup>251</sup> Matheson, p.60.

<sup>252</sup> Rangitane is an iwi strongly connected with the Manawatu region.

<sup>253</sup> Women's Refuge nationally cultivated a 'parallel development' culture to meet the needs of Pakeha and Maori women in the mid-1980s, moving towards a social change model. This was contentious, and resulted in some supporters leaving the movement. Hann, pp.84-86.

<sup>254</sup> John Thornley, 'Role of Local Government: the History of the Palmerston North Support Model', in Palmerston North Community Services Council, *Sharing Our Stories. Palmerston North Community Services Council, 1971-1996*, Palmerston North: self-published, 1996, p.51.

<sup>255</sup> Lesley Read, 'Funding Issues – an Overview', *Sharing Our Stories. Palmerston North Community Services Council, 1971-1996*, p.49. Philip McConkey also notes the proliferation of groups - 'more and more agencies being established' in his Review and Planning Report to MSSC AGM, 1982.

<sup>256</sup> Review and Planning Report to MSSC AGM, 29 September 1982.

<sup>257</sup> Instances of this include Philip McConkey's role in instigating and running regular lunch meetings for church-based social service agencies in the city, and the collection of food for the MSSC-run foodbank by many other churches' congregations. The MSSC was involved, as leaders or participants, in many seminars that aimed to develop the voluntary welfare sector in the city and surrounding areas, and shared their experiences with other church groups interested in establishing or developing a social service organisation along similar lines.

<sup>258</sup> Philip McConkey, Addendum to Review and Planning Report, for MSSC AGM, 29 September 1982.

<sup>259</sup> Other additions to the paid staff were part-time counsellors who took over some of the heavy workload in this area from the Director and Social Worker, and ran new courses in the social education area. Some of the volunteer counsellors trained by the Centre moved into paid positions as they became vacant.

<sup>260</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 17 July 1980; MSSC Management Committee AGM, 17 September 1980.

<sup>261</sup> Report of the Sub-Committee investigating Staff Workload, to MSSC Management Committee meeting, 25 January 1984.

<sup>262</sup> Parish Council meeting minutes, 24 October 1984.

<sup>263</sup> The Telethon was based on the 1979 International Year of the Child, and the Centre applied for funding based on the child-based focus of their Home Support work.

<sup>264</sup> TEP was a governmental temporary employment programme, later renamed PEP.

<sup>265</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1980.

<sup>266</sup> Paper 'Concerning the Urgent Need for Finance and Using Golden Kiwi Profits', submitted to the MSSC Management Committee meeting, November 1981.

---

<sup>267</sup> Ken Fay interview tape.

<sup>268</sup> A summary of the Methodist Church's internal discussions about gambling in 1978 asked, as part of a wider survey, 'does the traditional view about gambling really express how we as Church members feel about it?' Although opposition to gambling was reiterated, it was in the context of a Christian concern for the welfare of others, and urged governmental controls over expansion of gambling facilities. John Dawson, *Your kingdom come on earth. Methodist social concerns in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Christchurch Methodist Mission, 1998, pp.248-250.

<sup>269</sup> Recipients of Home Support aid were encouraged to meet some of the costs involved, through part payment or applications for DSW subsidies, but counselling services were provided without cost to clients.

<sup>270</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1982.

<sup>271</sup> After the Catherine Jamieson House was sold to the National Alcohol and Drug Dependency Service (NADDS) in 1984, there was ongoing consultation between the donor trust and the MSSC over potential uses for the funds. In 1986, the Catherine Jamieson Hostel Trust was finalised and the assets gifted to the MSSC. Funds were to be invested with the Methodist Trust Association, and any interest received over 5% p.a. reinvested by the Centre as a hedge against inflation. Parish Council meeting minutes for 24 October 1984; 15 July 1986.

<sup>272</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1982.

<sup>273</sup> Philip McConkey interview tape.

<sup>274</sup> In Palmerston North, a second foodbank was opened by the Salvation Army in 1988, followed by other smaller operations, mostly run by churches, in the 1990s. Richard Randerson, in his book, *Hearts and Minds*, considered that foodbanks were, prior to 1985, almost unknown, pp.17-18.

<sup>275</sup> MSSC Management committee minutes, 16 July 1981.

<sup>276</sup> MSSC Management Committee minutes, 25 May 1983. The first 'foodbank' in New Zealand was opened in Auckland in 1980, although earlier examples of food aid programmes were evident since the colonial period – see Margaret McClure, 1998, p.245-246.

<sup>277</sup> Neil Brosnahan et al., 'Surviving on the Breadline. A Study of Low Income Families in Palmerston North', Massey University, 1983.

<sup>278</sup> Brosnahan et al, p.25.

<sup>279</sup> *ibid.*, pp.54-55.

<sup>280</sup> Graham Pritchard, 'Twenty One years of the Palmerston North Foodbank, 1983-2004', p.1.

<sup>281</sup> Chris Burgin was employed at the Centre for six months to cover the overseas leave of Margaret Perowne at this time.

<sup>282</sup> MSSC Management Committee minutes, 28 September 1983.

<sup>283</sup> MSSC Management Committee minutes, 30 November 1983.

<sup>284</sup> MSSC Management Committee minutes, 25 January 1984.

<sup>285</sup> Supermarkets played their part by donating goods and by providing collection boxes by checkouts. MSSC Management Committee minutes, 26 September 1984.

<sup>286</sup> In the first year of operation, the foodbank dispensed \$22000 in goods and cash to 1400 people. Management Committee meeting minutes, 26 September 1984.

<sup>287</sup> A range of evocatively named studies, many dating from the early 1990s and commissioned by church agencies, were overtly critical of government ideologies and policies: see *Food for Thought: Research on Foodbanks*, Methodist Mission Aotearoa, 1991; *Housing the Hungry*, Salvation Army/NZCCSS, 1995; *Missing Out: the road from Social Welfare to Foodbanks*, Inner City Ministry, 1993; *Passing the Buck: New Zealand Income Support procedures for assessing applications for emergency assistance: the problem of DSW referrals to foodbanks*, Downtown Ministry, 1994.

<sup>288</sup> MSSC Management Committee minutes, 23 January 1985.

- 
- <sup>289</sup> MSSC Management Committee minutes, 27 March 1985.
- <sup>290</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1981.
- <sup>291</sup> This aspect of the Centre's work is covered under the 'Community Development' heading of this section.
- <sup>292</sup> Undated Report on Catherine Jamieson Hostel, MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 19 March 1980.
- <sup>293</sup> Philip McConkey interview, 4 October 2005.
- <sup>294</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 19 November 1980.
- <sup>295</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 18 March 1981.
- <sup>296</sup> Philip McConkey interview tape. In response to questioning about the depth of understanding and coverage of working with the city's young people in this period, Philip McConkey referred to a popular perception of youth as 'a problem' to be dealt with, and the MSSC initiative as concentrating on supporting them through adolescence towards healthy adulthood. As the hostel was a new perspective on tackling this area of youth work (and given the Centre's background of pioneering services) he thought that other agencies were interested, but adopted a 'wait and see' attitude.
- <sup>297</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 16 July 1981.
- <sup>298</sup> This group comprised local families/whanau, community workers and 'other concerned people'. MSSC Annual Report, 1986.
- <sup>299</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 17 March 1982.
- <sup>300</sup> MSSC Annual Report 1982. At this time, Director Philip McConkey and Family Social Worker Margaret Perowne were the only counsellors at the Centre.
- <sup>301</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1981.
- <sup>302</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1982.
- <sup>303</sup> Bertha Zurcher's attendance at an international 'home help' conference in 1982 is covered in the 1970s section.
- <sup>304</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1982. His concept of 'family' was liberal, and included single and older people in combinations of households.
- <sup>305</sup> MSSC staff were involved in the establishment (1979) and development of a Women's Refuge in the city in the 1980s, as well as with Rape Crisis and other support groups for abuse survivors.
- <sup>306</sup> Groups mentioned in Annual Reports include Guides, kindergarten teachers, senior citizens, Longburn Freezing Works shedhands and solo parent groups.
- <sup>307</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1985.
- <sup>308</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1985.
- <sup>309</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 20 May 1981.
- <sup>310</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1980.
- <sup>311</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 17 March 1982.
- <sup>312</sup> MSSC Management Committee meeting minutes, 15 July 1982.
- <sup>313</sup> MSSC Management Committee AGM minutes, 29 September 1982.
- <sup>314</sup> Ibid. The Palmerston North Housing Trust continued to operate as an advocacy and lobbying group throughout the 1980s.
- <sup>315</sup> MSSC Annual Reports, 1981 and 1982.
- <sup>316</sup> Gibson, p.47.
- <sup>317</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1982.
- <sup>318</sup> Randerson, p.46.
- <sup>319</sup> McClure, 1998, p.233.
- <sup>320</sup> McClure, 1998, p.234.
- <sup>321</sup> David Green, *From Welfare State to Civil Society*, Wellington: Business Roundtable, 1996, pp.104-105.
- <sup>322</sup> Green, p.120.
- <sup>323</sup> See David Thomson, *A World without Welfare, New Zealand's Colonial Experiment*, Auckland: AUP/Bridget Williams Books, 1998; Margaret Tennant,



---

*Paupers and Providers. Charitable Aid in New Zealand*, Wellington: Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1989.

<sup>324</sup> Jane Kelsey, *The New Zealand Experiment: a world model for structural adjustment?*, Auckland: Auckland University Press in association with Bridget Williams Books, 1997, pp. 272-273.

<sup>325</sup> M Prebble, 'Critical New Elements in Government Thinking, in G. Hawke (ed.), *A Modest Safety Net? The Future of the Welfare State*, Institute of Policy Studies, Wellington, 1991, pp.1, 3-4.

<sup>326</sup> *Listener*, 25 March 1991, p.16.

<sup>327</sup> Kelsey, p.295.

<sup>328</sup> The Plunket Society and IHC, who had enjoyed substantial and long-standing pre-allocated government funding for services, were confronted with losing their pre-eminent positions and having to tender for contestable contracts.

<sup>329</sup> Hann, p.125.

<sup>330</sup> Garth Nowland-Foreman, 'Governments, Community Organisations and Civil Society – A Beginners Guide to Dissection of a Golden Goose', paper given at the Fourth Working for the Common Wealth Conference, Derry, Northern Ireland, 23-27 September 1996. Downloaded from [www.jobslatter.org.nz/jbl05110.htm](http://www.jobslatter.org.nz/jbl05110.htm) on 11 October 2005.

<sup>331</sup> Article dated 10 November 1998, downloaded from [www.jobslatter.org.nz/jbl09001.htm](http://www.jobslatter.org.nz/jbl09001.htm) on 11 January 2005.

<sup>332</sup> See Garth Nowland- Foreman (1996), Julie Nyland, 'Little fingers of the state: Aggressive instrumentalism in the Australian welfare state', in *Power, Politics and Performance: Community Management in the 90s – Conference papers (Vol.1)*, CACOM, Sydney; Jennifer Wolch, *The Shadow State: Government and the Voluntary Sector in Transition*, New York: The Foundation Center, 1990.

<sup>333</sup> *Tribune*, 11 April 1993, 'Mayor backs appeal over foodbank funds'; *Evening Standard*, 19 February 1997, 'Foodbank 'propping up Government'.

<sup>334</sup> McClure, 1998, pp.245-246.

<sup>335</sup> Kelsey, p. 292.

<sup>336</sup> *NZH*, 16 September 1994, 1:8.

<sup>337</sup> Lineham, 2004, p.70, citing Ruth Smithies and Helen Wilson (eds.) *Making Choices: Social Justice for our Times: an initiative of the Church Leaders in 1993*. This was the study/discussion booklet for church congregations that followed the July 1993 Statement.

<sup>338</sup> Church Leaders' Statement of Intent, 31 January 1993, downloaded from [www.casi.org.nz/statements/decsjsoi.html](http://www.casi.org.nz/statements/decsjsoi.html) on 18 October 2005.

<sup>339</sup> Denominations represented a cross-section of established Christian churches: Anglican; Apostolic; Associated Churches of Christ; Baptist; Methodist; Presbyterian; Salvation Army; Society of Friends.

<sup>340</sup> Christian Heritage and the Christian Democrats both founded political parties in the 1990s, but it was not until 2002 that the Christian Democrats, who had become Future New Zealand, merged with the United Party to form United Future and gained parliamentary seats.

<sup>341</sup> 'Walking for Change – some thoughts from the Hikoi of Hope', downloaded from [www.jobslatter.org.nz/vivian/hikoi98.htm](http://www.jobslatter.org.nz/vivian/hikoi98.htm) on 19 October 2005.

<sup>342</sup> Letter to the editor from unspecified source, cited in [www.nzine.co.nz/hot/hikoi/html](http://www.nzine.co.nz/hot/hikoi/html), downloaded 19 October 2005.

<sup>343</sup> Lineham, 2004, p.73.

<sup>344</sup> Bi-monthly Economic Report to Finance and Economic Committee, PNCC, March 1991, cited in Jo Ihimaera, Social Effects of Government Economic Package, December 1990, on Workers/Low Income and Beneficiaries in Palmerston North City, Social Services Unit, Community Services Directorate, Palmerston North City Council, March 1991, p.10.



- 
- 345 Ihimaera, 1991, Appendix 1.
- 346 *Evening Standard*, 6 December 1990.
- 347 'Council's commitment challenged', *Evening Standard*, 8 July 1995.
- 348 'An all-embracing role', *Evening Standard*, 11 July 1995.
- 349 *Evening Standard*, 1 May 1996.
- 350 'Pre-loved fashion on parade', *Evening Standard*, 5 December 1996.
- 351 'Political stance angers', *Evening Standard*, 30 October 1996.
- 352 MSSC Annual Report, 1992.
- 353 The steering committee comprised six members (four parish representatives and two managers) instead of the previous fifteen-member management committee/council model.
- 354 Parish Council meeting minutes, 25 November 1992.
- 355 MSSC Annual Report, 1994.
- 356 MSSC Annual Report, 1994.
- 357 MSSC Annual Report, 1990.
- 358 'Mayor backs appeal over foodbank funds', *Tribune*, 11 April 1993.
- 359 *Evening Standard*, 30 March 1993.
- 360 *Guardian*, 5 May 1993.
- 361 MSSC Annual Report, 1999-2000.
- 362 *Tribune*, 'Foodbank just 'keeping pace' with increased need', 22 September 1991.
- 363 Gail Munro interview tape, October 2005.
- 364 Margaret Tennant, *Paupers and Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand*, Wellington: 1989, pp.185-186.
- 365 Margaret Tennant, quoted in McClure, 1998, p.57.
- 366 *Tribune*, 'Numbers drop', 30 August 1992.
- 367 *Evening Standard*, 'Lack of donations hurting foodbank', 26 August 1996; also 19 February 1997.
- 368 *Evening Standard*, 'Foodbank propping up Government', 19 February 1997.
- 369 McClure, 1998, p. 247.
- 370 *Evening Standard*, editorial 'Foodbanks right to toughen up', 20 February 1997.
- 371 *Evening Standard*, 'PM to get 'beans' over foodbank use', 2 December 1994.
- 372 *Evening Standard* (?), undated letter to the editor from M. E. A. Dillon, Paraparaumu, in scrapbook of press clippings, A25/191, Series 2:1, Palmerston North City Archives .
- 373 Gail Munro interview.
- 374 Undated document entitled 'Act on Poverty Week: Monday 30 September-Friday 4 October', Parish Leaders Council papers, 1996.
- 375 *Evening Standard*, 'Counselling must wait', 20 May 1995.
- 376 Gail Munro interview tape.
- 377 MSSC Annual Report, 1990.
- 378 MSSC Annual Report, 1999-2000.
- 379 MSSC Annual Report, 1996-1997.
- 380 MSSC Annual Report, 1997-1998.
- 381 MSSC Annual Report, 1998-1999.
- 382 Wayne Pudney and Eliane Whitehouse, *A Volcano in my Tummy*, 1994.
- 383 At the time Loyal Gibson wrote his history of the Goodwill Operation in 1999, there were at least four people still regularly volunteering thirty years later.
- 384 Gibson, p.55.
- 385 Gibson, p.44.
- 386 *Tribune*, 'Think before you bin clothes', 13 February 1994 and letter to the editor and accompanying explanation, 20 February 1994. Supreme Textiles stated that it had 'given' more than \$400,000 to charities, including \$136,000 to various

---

branches of the Methodist Mission from bins bearing their names in the last year. It did not give details of its own profits from this commercial venture.

<sup>387</sup> Gibson, p.51 and p.55.

<sup>388</sup> Income in these areas includes funding received for the foodbank. Differences in the way figures are accounted for in successive yearly accounts make it difficult to give precise figures: lottery funding was not always differentiated and the Annual Report for 1993 is not available. Compiling available figures and then averaging them over the decade gives a sense of relative proportions of funding.

<sup>389</sup> *Tribune*, 27 October 1991.

<sup>390</sup> MSSC Annual Report, 1994.

<sup>391</sup> Undated (1995?) memo from Lex Bartlett, Centre Manager, to Parish Leaders Council: 'Changing Government Funding Criteria'.

<sup>392</sup> The Agape Fellowship, a parish-based community support group, and Halafungani, representing the parish's Tongan membership, were also faced with funding cuts if they did not comply with governmental accountability guidelines for funding.

<sup>393</sup> Parish Council meeting minutes, 25 November 1995.

<sup>394</sup> Philip McConkey and Gail Munro interviews.

<sup>395</sup> Report of the Communities and Government Working Party, *Communities and Government – Potential for Partnership, Whakatapu Whakaaro*, 2001, p.3.

<sup>396</sup> *Communities and Government*, 2001, p.13.

<sup>397</sup> Definition downloaded from

[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/semipermeable\\_membrane](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/semipermeable_membrane) on 21 November 2005.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

### **PRIMARY SOURCES:**

#### **Audio taped interviews:**

Ken Fay, tape received in response to correspondence and questionnaire

Merv Hancock, 9 February 2005

Philip McConkey, 4 October 2005

Gail Munro, 28 October 2005

Graham Pritchard, 12 April 2005

Bertha Zurcher, 4 February 2005

#### **Correspondence:**

Roy Bowden, received September 2005

#### **Alexander Turnbull Library:**

Alley, Dorothy and Margaret Perowne, 'Survey of Some Recipients of Home Help in New Zealand', commissioned by the Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre, 1982

#### **Ian Matheson Palmerston North City Archives:**

MSSC/Methodist Parish Research File – A25/191:

Series 1, Envelope 2: Photographs used in *A Stitch in Time*

Series 2, Volume 1: Scrapbook of articles from newspapers, March 1988-1997

Series 4: 30<sup>th</sup> Celebration of Goodwill Stores Group, 14-20<sup>th</sup> June 1999:  
one box; ten folders

#### **Methodist Archives, Christchurch:**

McConkey, Philip, 'Reflections: Ten Years at the Methodist Social Service Centre (P.N.)', 1988, unpublished

Methodist Social Service Centre [Palmerston North] Annual Reports, 1963- 2005

New Zealand Methodist Social Service Association Annual Reports, 1960-1984

New Zealand Methodist Social Service Association Seminar and Conference Papers, 1960-1984

Palmerston North Methodist Parish Leaders Council Reports, 1972-1998

### **Graham Pritchard Papers:**

Gibson, Loyal, 'A Proposal to create a new Palmerston North Circuit', 1971

MSSC, 'Constitution', 1988

Pritchard, Graham, 'Twenty One Years of the Palmerston North Foodbank, 1983-2004', unpublished, 2005

Pritchard, Graham, 'The Methodist Social Service Centre – A time-line, 1963-2005', Unpublished, 2005

Zurcher, Bertha, 'Report on the Sixth International Congress of Home Help Services, Stockholm, May 10-15, 1981'

## **SECONDARY SOURCES:**

### **Unpublished theses and research essays:**

Arrowsmith, David, 'Christian Attitudes towards Public Questions in New Zealand in 1975', M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1978

Ball, Graeme, 'The Amazing Jasper' Calder, The Auckland City Mission and welfare provision', M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1997

Bolitho, Elaine E., 'In this world: Baptist and Methodist Churches in New Zealand 1948-1988, Ph.D. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1992

Brosnahan, Neil, Jenny Chilcott, Dean Henderson, Tim Holdaway, Diane Miller and Mike O'Brien, 'Surviving on the Breadline. A Study of Low Income Families in Palmerston North', BSW research report, Massey University, 1983

Clements, Kevin, 'The Churches and Social Policy: A Study in the Relationship of Ideology to Action', Ph.D. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1970

Cull, Mary, 'The Effects of Funding Requirements on the Management of Voluntary Organisations', unpublished Dip.Bus.Ad. research report, Massey University, 1992

Daniels, Kenneth R., 'Nonprofessional Involvement in Helping Services in

- Palmerston North', M.A. thesis, Massey University, 1974
- Evans, John A., 'Church-State Relations in New Zealand 1940-1990, with particular reference to the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches', Ph.D. thesis, Otago University, 1992
- Johns, Cindy, 'The Voluntary Welfare Agencies in Palmerston North, and the issues facing them and their clients', BSW research essay, Massey University, 1998
- Roper, David, 'The New Zealand Heads of Churches 1993 Social Justice Initiative', M.A. research essay, Auckland University, 1995
- Watson Edwina, 'Impact of Welfare State Restructuring on Voluntary Welfare Organisations in West Auckland', M.A. thesis, Auckland University, 1994.
- White, J. M., 'The Love of God Constraineth Us: "Hannah and her Sisters". A critical appraisal of the Anglican Order of the Good Shepherd, 1895-1938, M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1989
- Wootton, Mary, "How to get some of the cake": A Report for Concurrent Placement, March – August 1985, Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre', BSW research report, Massey University, 1985
- Woodd, Daniel, 'The Order amid chaos? Aspects of St. John in New Zealand since 1987', B.A. (Hons.) Research Exercise, Massey University, 2000

### **Central government publications and reports:**

- Church, Alison, *Community Development. A History of the Involvement of the Department of Internal Affairs in Community Development*, Department of Internal Affairs, 1990
- Community Policy Team, *Communities and Government – Potential for Partnership, Whakatapu Whakaaro*, Wellington: Ministry of Social Policy, 2001
- Department of Justice, *Crime and the Community. A Survey of Penal Policy in New Zealand*, 1964
- Department of Justice, *Review of Borstal Policy in New Zealand*, 1969
- Department of Justice, *Penal Policy in New Zealand*, 1968
- Department of Justice Annual Reports, Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives, 1969 (H20) -1983 (E5)
- Nixon, Alan and Raoul Ketko, Department of Social Welfare, 'An Overview of



Home Help in New Zealand', paper given at 1<sup>st</sup> National Conference on Home Help Services, Palmerston North, 17-19 November 1982

Northey, Robyn, *Ministerial Task Force on Social Welfare Services – Supplementary Paper No. 4: Case Studies of Organisations Providing Social Welfare Services*, September 1986

Report of the Ministerial Reference Group for International Year of Volunteers 2001, Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 2001

Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry, *Social Security in New Zealand*, Wellington: 1972

Royal Commission on Social Policy, *Public, Private and Voluntary Provision of Social Services in New Zealand*, Discussion Booklet No. 2, 1987

Royal Commission on Social Policy, *The Role of the State: Five Perspectives* [Commissioned discussion papers], 1988

Wyn, Helen, *Government Funding of Voluntary Welfare Agencies: A review of Funding by the Department of Social Welfare*, Social Programme Evaluation Unit, Department of Social Welfare, 1984

#### **Local government publications and reports:**

Hindmarsh, Jennifer K., *Social Services in Transition*, Palmerston North: Palmerston North Town Planning Department, March 1973

Ihimaera, Jo, *Social Effects of Government Economic Package, December 1990, on Workers/Low Income and Beneficiaries in Palmerston North City*, Social Services Unit, Community Services Directorate, Palmerston North City Council, March 1991.

Kennedy Good, J., *The Network Report No. 4: Problems of Social Service Provision in Small Towns*, Hamilton: Greater Waikato Public Relations Officers' Network, 1980

#### **Voluntary and Non-Governmental Organisations – Publications and Reports:**

Bayne, Stan, *Sharing the Harvest. The History of the Upper Hutt Foodbank Inc. from 1991 to 2003*, Upper Hutt Foodbank, 2003.

Inner City Ministry, 'Incomes, Housing and Tax in New Zealand over the 1970s and Early 1980s', Wellington: Inner City Ministry, 1983

- McGurk, Tony and Lindsay Clark, *Missing Out. The road from Social Welfare to foodbanks*, Wellington: Inner City Ministry, 1993
- Methodist Mission Aotearoa, *Food for Thought: Research on Foodbanks*, Methodist Mission Aotearoa, 1991
- New Zealand Council of Social Service, *Sharing Social Responsibility. Report of the New Zealand Council of Social Service on desirable roles and directions in social service development*, Wellington: NZCOSS, 1978
- New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations, *Counting for Something. Value Added by Voluntary Agencies: the VAVA Project*, Wellington: NZFVWO, 2004
- New Zealand Association of Social Workers, *Social Justice, a Social Work Concern for the '80s*, [Conference papers, biennial conference 22-26 August 1982]
- New Zealand Planning Council, *The Welfare State? Social Policy in the 1980s*, Wellington, 1979
- New Zealand Social Work Training Council, *People in the Social Services: A New Zealand Survey*, Wellington: 1981
- Palmerston North Community Services Council, *Sharing Our Stories. Palmerston North Community Services Council, 1971-1996*, Palmerston North: self-published, 1996
- Ponter, Elizabeth, *Interface: a review of Catholic Social Services, New Zealand*, Palmerston North: National Directorate, Catholic Social Services, 1986

### **Published Articles, Books and Pamphlets:**

- Ahdar, Rex and John Stenhouse (eds.), *God and Government: the New Zealand Experience*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000
- Baber, Florence M., *Towards Wholeness: a history of the Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre 1963-1983*, Palmerston North: Manawatu Methodist Social Service Centre, 1983
- Bassett, M., *The State in New Zealand 1840-1984*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1998
- Belich, James, *Paradise Reforged. A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000*, Auckland: Allen Lane, Penguin, 2001
- Belgrave, Michael, *The Mater: A History of Auckland's Mercy Hospital 1900-2000*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 2000

- Belgrave Michael, 'Needs and the State: Evolving Social Policy in New Zealand History', in Dalley, Bronwyn and Tennant, Margaret (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004
- Biestek, Felix, *The Casework Relationship*, Chicago: Loyala University Press, 1973
- Bolitho, Elaine, *Meet the Methodists. Postwar Personalities and Perspectives*, Auckland: The Christian Research Association of New Zealand, 1994
- Boston, Jonathon, 'Christianity in the Public Square: The Churches and Social Justice', in Boston, Jonathon and Cameron, Alan (eds.), *Voices for Justice. Church, Law and State in New Zealand*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1994
- Boston, Jonathon and Cameron, Alan (eds.), *Voices for Justice. Church, Law and State in New Zealand*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1994
- Bowpitt, Graham, 'Evangelical Christianity, Secular Humanism and the Genesis Of British Social Work' in *British Journal of Social Work*, 28, 1998, pp.675-693.
- Brenton, Maria, *The Voluntary Sector in British Social Services*, Harlow: Longman, 1985
- Brown, Colin, 'Christianity: Mainline Denominations to the 1960s', in Donovan, Peter (ed.), *Religions of New Zealanders, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1996
- Bryder, Linda, *A Voice for Mothers. The Plunket Society and Infant Welfare, 1907-2000*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003
- Catran, Ken and Hansen, Penny, *Pioneering a Vision. A History of the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind 1890-1990*, Auckland: Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind, 1992
- Chambers, Wesley, *Not Self – but others: the story of the New Zealand Methodist Deaconess Order together with an index of all those who have served in it*, Auckland (?): Wesley Historical Society (New Zealand), 1987.
- Cheyne, Christine, O'Brien, Mike and Belgrave, Michael, *Social Policy in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Critical Introduction (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000
- Collie-Holmes, Mary, *Where the Heart Is. A History of Barnardo's in New Zealand 1866-1991*, Wellington: Barnardo's New Zealand, 1991
- Cox, Harvey, *The Secular City: Secularisation and Urbanisation in Theological Perspective*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965

- Cox, Harvey, *The Seduction of the Spirit; the use and misuse of people's religion*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973
- Dalley, Bronwyn, *Family Matters: child welfare in twentieth-century New Zealand*, Auckland: Auckland University Press in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1998
- Dalley, Bronwyn and Tennant, Margaret (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004
- Davidson, Allan, *Christianity in Aotearoa. A History of Church and Society in New Zealand*, Wellington: New Zealand Education for Ministry Board, 1991
- Davidson, Allan, 'Chaplain to the Nation or Prophet at the Gate?', in Stenhouse, John (ed.) with Wood, G. A., *Christianity, Modernity and Culture. New Perspectives on New Zealand History*, Adelaide: ATF Press, 2005
- Davis Smith, Justin, Rochester, Colin and Hedley, Rodney (eds.), *An Introduction to the Voluntary Sector*, London: Routledge, 1995
- Dawson, John, *Your kingdom come on earth. Methodist social concerns in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Christchurch Methodist Mission, 1998
- Dawson, Selwyn, *A Better Way? Where are our Economic and Social Policies Leading Us? Reflections on the conference 'Policy for our Times'*, Wellington, 1991, Methodist Church and Auckland Methodist Mission, 1991
- Donovan, Peter (ed.), *Religions of New Zealanders*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1996
- Donovan, Peter, 'Civic Responsibilities of the Churches to People of Other Faiths', in Ahdar, Rex and John Stenhouse (eds.), *God and Government: the New Zealand Experience*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000
- Easton, Brian (ed.), *The Making of Rogernomics*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1989
- Ellis, Gwen, 'Social Work in Voluntary Agencies', in Munford, Robyn and Nash, Mary (eds.), *Social Work in Action*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1994
- Emilsen, Susan and Emilsen, William W. (eds.), *Mapping the Landscape. Essays in Australian and New Zealand Christianity*, New York: Peter Lang, 2000
- Everingham, Christine, *Social Justice and the Politics of Community*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- Fenwick, Anna, Davidson, Darren and Briar, Celia, *Is Advocacy Helping? The effectiveness of advocacy assistance to clients of Income Support*

*Services: a research report*, Palmerston North: Social Policy Research Centre, School of Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University in association with Methodist Social Services, Palmerston North, January 2000

Finlayson, Roderick, 'A moving frontier: voluntarism and the state in British welfare 1911-1949', in *Twentieth Century British History*, 1:183-206

Forrester, Duncan, *Christian Justice and Public Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997

Fry, Ruth, *Out of the Silence. Methodist Women of Aotearoa, 1822-1985*, Christchurch: Methodist Publishing, 1987

Gibson, Loyal, *A Stitch in Time 1969-1999. Thirty Years of Recycling Clothing*, Palmerston North: Methodist Social Service Centre, 1999

Gordon, Linda, *Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence, Boston 1880-1960*, New York: Viking, 1988.

Gosnell, Janette A., *Servant of the City. The Wellington City Mission 1904-1984*, Wellington: Grantham House in association with the Wellington City Mission, 1985

Green, David, *From Welfare State to Civil Society*, Wellington: Business Roundtable, 1996

Grigg, John R., *The Last Ripple. A History of Methodism in the Manawatu*, self-published, Palmerston North, 1972

Hames, E. W., *Coming of Age. The United Church 1913-1972*, Auckland: Wesley Historical Society of New Zealand, Vol. 28 Nos. 1 and 2, 1974

Hann, Sheryl, *Palmerston North Women's Refuge Herstory*, Palmerston North: Palmerston North Women's Refuge Inc., 2001

Hawke, G., (ed.), *A Modest Safety Net? The Future of the Welfare State*, Institute of Policy Studies, Wellington, 1991

Hawke, G. R. and Robinson, David, *Performance without Profit: the Voluntary Welfare Sector in New Zealand*, Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1993

Higgins, Christopher, *Home Help Services in and around Christchurch*, Planning and Research Series No. 15, Canterbury Hospital Board Primary Care Unit, October 1984

James, Colin, *The Quiet Revolution. Turbulence and Transition in Contemporary New Zealand*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin/ Port Nicholson, 1986

James, Colin, *New Territory. The transformation of New Zealand 1984-92*,



Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992

Kendall, Jeremy and Knapp, Martin, 'A loose and baggy monster: boundaries, definitions and typologies', in Davis Smith, Justin, Rochester, Colin and Hedley, Rodney (eds.), *An Introduction to the Voluntary Sector*, London: Routledge, 1995

Kelsey, Jane, *The New Zealand Experiment: a world model for structural adjustment?*, Auckland: Auckland University Press in association with Bridget Williams Books, 1997

King, Michael, *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, Auckland: Penguin, 2003

Labrum, Bronwyn, 'Persistent Needs and Expanding Desires: Pakeha Families and State Welfare in the Years of Prosperity', in Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum, (eds.), *Fragments. New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000

Labrum, Bronwyn, 'Negotiating an Increasing Range of Functions: Families and the Welfare State', in Bronwyn Dalley and Margaret Tennant (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004

Lineham, Peter, *New Zealanders and the Methodist Evangel: an interpretation of the policies and performance of the Methodist Church of New Zealand*, Auckland: Wesley Historical Society of New Zealand, 1983

Lineham, Peter, 'Government Support of the Churches in the Modern Era', in Ahdar, Rex and John Stenhouse (eds.), *God and Government: the New Zealand Experience*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000

Lineham, Peter, 'Social Policy and the Churches in the 1990s and Beyond', in John Stenhouse and Brett Knowles (eds.) assisted by Antony Wood, *The Future of Christianity. Historical, Sociological, Political and Theological Perspectives from New Zealand*, Adelaide: ATF Press, 2004

Lineham, Peter, 'The Voice of Inspiration? Religious Contributions to Social Policy', in Dalley, Bronwyn and Tennant, Margaret (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004

Lukka, Priya and Locke, Michael, 'Faith, Voluntary Action and Social Policy: a review of research', in *Voluntary Action*, Vol. 3 No. 1, Winter 2000. Downloaded from [www.ivr.org.uk/faith.htm](http://www.ivr.org.uk/faith.htm) 20/5/05

McLeay Elizabeth, (ed.), *New Zealand Politics and Social Patterns. Selected Works by Robert Chapman*, Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1999

McClure, Margaret, *A Civilised Community. A history of social security in New Zealand 1898-1998*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1998

- McClure, Margaret, 'A Badge of Poverty or a Symbol of Citizenship? Needs, Rights and Social Security, 1935-2000', in Dalley, Bronwyn and Tennant, Margaret (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004
- McGurk, Tony and Clark, Lindsay, *Missing Out: The road from Social Welfare to foodbanks. A report prepared for the Inner City Ministry*, Wellington, Wellington: Inner City Ministry, June 1993
- Malcolm, Marge-Jean, *Organising for Influence. Government/Voluntary Sector Relations in Transition*, (unpublished), November 1991
- Martin, John, *State Papers: The State and Its Welfare and Labour Interventions; Economy, State and Class in New Zealand; The Modern Welfare State and Expenditure in New Zealand*, Palmerston North: Massey University Department of Sociology, 1981
- Martin, John E., *Holding the Balance. A History of New Zealand's Department of Labour, 1891-1995*, Christchurch: Canterbury University Press in association with Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs and the Department of Labour, 1996
- Matheson, Ian, *Council and Community: 125 years of local government in Palmerston North 1877-2002*, Palmerston North: Palmerston North City Library (for the Palmerston North City Council), 2003
- Methodist Social Services Association (New Zealand), *The Erosion of the Welfare State: six studies*, Auckland: Methodist Community and Social Services, Auckland for MSSA, 1984
- Millen, Julia, *Breaking Barriers. IHC's First 50 Years*, Wellington: IHC New Zealand (Inc.), 1999
- Morgan, G. M., *A Century of Social Work. The History of the Social Service Council of the diocese of Christchurch*, Christchurch: Social Service Council of the Diocese of Christchurch, 1966
- Munford, Robyn and Nash, Mary (eds.), *Social Work in Action*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1994
- Munford, Robyn and Walsh-Tapiata, Wheturangi, *Strategies for Change. Community Development in Aotearoa/New Zealand*, Palmerston North: Massey University, School of Social Policy and Social Work, 1999
- Munro, Jessie, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert*, Auckland: Auckland University Press in association with Bridget Williams Books, 1996
- O'Brien, Mike, *New Wine in Old Bottles: Social Security in New Zealand 1984-1990*, Sydney: Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, 1993

- Oram, C. A., *Social Policy and Administration in New Zealand*, Wellington: New Zealand University Press, 1969
- Nowland-Foreman, Garth, *Neither Mendicants Nor Deal-Makers*, Wellington: New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, 1995
- Nowland-Foreman, Garth, 'Governments, Community Organisations and Civil Society – A Beginners Guide to Dissection of a Golden Goose', paper given at the Fourth Working for the Common Wealth Conference, Derry, Northern Ireland, 23-27 September 1996. Downloaded from [www.jobslatter.org.nz/jblo5110.htm](http://www.jobslatter.org.nz/jblo5110.htm) on 11 October 2005.
- Parker, Wesley, *In the Midst of the City: the rise and growth of the Auckland Methodist Central Mission*, Auckland: Auckland Methodist Central Mission, 1971
- Pelly, Raymond (ed.), *Towards a Just Economy. Employment, Economics, and Social Justice in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1990s*, Wellington: The Combined Chaplaincies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1991
- Phillipps, Donald, *Mission in a Secular City. Methodist Mission Northern, 1851-2001*, Auckland: Printed by Image Centre for the Methodist Mission Northern, 2001
- Prebble M., 'Critical New Elements in Government Thinking', in G. Hawke (ed.), *A Modest Safety Net? The Future of the Welfare State*, Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, 1991
- Prochaska, F., *The Voluntary Impulse: Philanthropy in Modern Britain*, London: Faber and Faber, 1988
- Randerson, Richard, *Hearts and Minds: A Place for People in a Market Economy*, Wellington: Social Responsibility Commission of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, 1992
- Robinson, D. (ed.), *Social Capital and Policy Development*, Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1997
- Robinson, David, 'Innovator or Government Agent? The changing role of the voluntary sector in New Zealand social services', paper presented at the Third International Conference of Research in Voluntary and Nonprofit Organisations, Indianapolis, U.S.A., March 11-13, 1992
- Robinson, John A. T., *Honest to God*, London: SCM Press, 1963
- Rochford, M. W. and Robb, M. J., *People in the Social Services: A New Zealand Survey*, Wellington: New Zealand Social Work Training Council, 1981
- Roper Brian and Rudd, Chris (eds.), *State and Economy in New Zealand*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1993

- Salamon, Lester M., *Partners in Public Service. Government-Nonprofit Relations in the Modern Welfare State*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995
- Salamon, Lester M. and Anheier, Helmut K., *The Emerging Nonprofit Sector: An Overview*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, in association with the Johns Hopkins Nonprofit Sector Project, 1996
- Salamon, Lester M. and Anheier, Helmut K., *Defining the Nonprofit Sector: A Cross-National Analysis*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, in association with the Johns Hopkins Nonprofit Sector Project, 1997
- Saville-Smith Kay et al, *Bringing Home the Bacon: the changing relationship Between family, state and market in New Zealand in the 1980s*, Christchurch: New Zealand Institute for Social Research and Development, 1994
- Saville-Smith, Kay and Bray, Marianne, *Voluntary Welfare: A Preliminary Analysis of Government Funding to the Non-Profit Welfare Sector*, Christchurch: New Zealand Institute for Social Research & Development, 1994
- Sheard, Jos, 'From lady bountiful to active citizen: volunteering and the voluntary sector', in Davis Smith, Justin, Rochester, Colin and Hedley, Rodney (eds.), *An Introduction to the Voluntary Sector*, London: Routledge, 1995
- Shirley, Ian, Prasad, Rajen and Isaacs, Peter, *The Provision of Personal Social Services in the Manawatu. A Report to the Palmerston North District Office of the Department of Social Welfare*, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University, Palmerston North, 1993
- Sider, Ronald J. and Unruh, Heidi Rolland, 'Typology of Religious Characteristics of Social Service and Educational Organizations and Programs', in *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Volume 33, Number 1, March 2004, pp.109-134
- Social Policy Committee of the Board for Social Responsibility of the Church of England, *Not Just for the Poor. Christian Perspectives on the Welfare State*, London: Church House Publishing, for the General Synod Board for Social Responsibility, 1986
- Social Responsibility Commission of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, *Social Justice Resource Kit: Starting places and projects, for parishes and groups seeking social change*, Wellington: Social Responsibility Commission, 1994
- Stenhouse, John, 'God's Own Silence: Secular Nationalism, Christianity and the Writing of New Zealand History', *New Zealand Journal of History*, April 2004; 38(1), pp.52-71
- Stenhouse, John and Jane Thompson (eds.), *Building God's Own Country*.

- Historical Essays on Religions in New Zealand*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004
- Stenhouse, John (ed.) with G. A. Wood, *Christianity, Modernity and Culture. New Perspectives on New Zealand History*, Adelaide: ATF Press, 2005
- Taylor Leah, *Leslie Bourneman Neale. A Man of Faith and Vision*, Dunedin: Dunedin Methodist Mission, 2000
- Tennant, Margaret, *Paupers and Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand*, Wellington: Allen and Unwin, in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1989
- Tennant, Margaret, 'Governments and Voluntary Sector Welfare: Historians' Perspectives', *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, Issue 17, December 2001, pp.147-160
- Tennant, Margaret, 'Sisterly Ministrations: The Social Work of Protestant Deaconesses in New Zealand 1880-1940', in *NZJH*, (April 1988), pp.3-32
- Tennant, Margaret, *Through the Prison Gate. 125 Years of Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation*, Wellington: New Zealand Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society, 2002
- Tennant, Margaret, 'Mixed Economy or Moving Frontier? Welfare, the Voluntary Sector and Government', in Dalley, Bronwyn and Tennant, Margaret (eds.), *Past Judgement. Social Policy in New Zealand History*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2004
- Thompson, Richard, 'Caution Good Works Ahead' in du Plessis, Rosemary and Fougere, Geoff (eds.), *Politics, Policy and Practice. Essays in honour of Bill Willmott*, Christchurch: Department of Sociology, University of Canterbury, 1998
- Thomson, David, *Selfish Generations? The Ageing of New Zealand's Welfare State*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1991
- Thomson, David, *A World without Welfare. New Zealand's Colonial Experiment*, Auckland: Auckland University Press in association with Bridget Williams Books, 1998
- Trotter, Ann, *Mary Potter's Little Company of Mary. The New Zealand Experience 1914-2002*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books in association With the Little Company of Mary, 2003
- Veitch, James, 'Christianity: Protestants Since the 1960s', in Donovan, Peter (ed.), *Religions of New Zealanders, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, Palmerston North: Dunmore, 1996
- Waldegrave, Charles and Coventry, Rosalyn, *Poor New Zealand: An Open Letter*



- on Poverty*, Wellington: Platform Publishing, 1987
- Warburton, Jeni and Oppenheimer, Melanie, *Volunteers and Volunteering*, Sydney: The Federation Press, 2000
- Wood, G. A., 'Church and State in the Furthest Reach of Western Christianity' in Stenhouse, John (ed.) with Wood, G. A., *Christianity, Modernity and Culture. New Perspectives on New Zealand History*, Adelaide: ATF Press, 2005
- Wright, Donald I., *Mantle of Christ: a history of the Sydney Central Methodist Mission*, St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1984