

£22,000 BUILDING FOR THE RED CROSS

OPENING - AND AN ANNIVERSARY

AFTER MANY YEARS OF SAVING AND CAMPAIGNING, OF HOLDING MEETINGS IN CRAMPED QUARTERS STACKED HIGH WITH PACKING CASES FOR CLOTHING, THE NEW PLYMOUTH RED CROSS SUB-CENTRE HAS A NEW BUILDING IN DEVON ST WEST.

THE £22,000 PREMISES WILL BE OFFICIALLY OPENED TOMORROW BY THE NEW ZEALAND RED CROSS SOCIETY'S DOMINION CHAIRMAN, MR. E. GIBBARD, DANNEVERKE.

The completion and opening of the building is particularly with the centenary of the founding of the International Red Cross and with the centenary of the New Zealand Red Cross Society.

The two centenary celebrations for the appropriate times, and the New Plymouth sub-centre secretary, Miss J. Jarvis, was just a lucky coincidence.

The site of the new building was purchased in 1946 with what was to become the old Red Cross building on it. It cost £200. Today the site and the building are valued at £23,000.

The old building was considered a great step forward at the time because previously rented rooms had been used.

In the new building the committee will use half the ground floor, the rest being left to a florist and a health store occupying their rooms and the first floor being left to the Child Welfare Division who will move in on Tuesday.

With the letting of these rooms, the sub-centre opens to pay for its

46,800 MEMBERS

Last year it was calculated that there were 46,800 adult associate members of the Red Cross Society in New Zealand and 23,800 Junior Red Cross members.

The salaries staff employed by the society, however, are no more than 20 in number, and it estimated that 97 per cent of Red Cross work in the country is performed by unpaid volunteer members.

The present Dominion president of the New Zealand Red Cross is Brigadier K. Maccoy, CBE, DSO, ED, of Auckland, and the Dominion chairman is Mr. E. Gibbard, Danneverke.

Brigadier Maccoy is at present attending the international conference of the Red Cross at Geneva.

THEY MET IN THE SHADOW OF WAR...

It was 1915—five years after the death of Henri Dunant, founder of the International Red Cross. The world was in the throes of a war far beyond any he would have envisaged when a public meeting was called in New Plymouth to organise a local Red Cross branch.

The issue of the Taranaki Herald which contained a report of that meeting was crowded with war news. "Greece drops out of the war," "The British Red Cross Society is formed?"

Mr Burgess was elected president of the branch and Madamess Crooke and

several inches long of sick and wounded New Zealand servicemen.

The meeting, held in the New Plymouth Town Hall, was called by the then Mayor, Mr C. H. Burgess.

A resolution was passed that a New Plymouth, New Zealand, branch of the British Red Cross Society be formed.

In June Mr Burgess resigned as president and his position was filled by Dr. H. S. Leatham.

Much of the early Red Cross work in New Plymouth, completed a weekly shop day to raise funds to help in providing comforts for servicemen and later for leading relatives of soldiers.

This latter work had been done locally during the early years of the war but no assistance came from national headquarters until the local branch was established.

When the post-war influenza epidemic struck New Zealand, these men gave much valuable help throughout Taranaki. Some of them spent a great deal of time in visiting country districts, which were then very isolated, and in taking medical supplies or in

Women members also organised sewing bees and concerts to provide clothing and funds during the war.

Mrs R. Quilliam, New Plymouth, was one of the original Red Cross members. She says she can remember making grey flannel shirts



MR. A. E. GIBBARD, Dominion Chairman of the Red Cross Society. He died in 1942.



WITH ITS IMPRESSIVE FRONTAGE, the new Red Cross building in Devon St, New Plymouth, is a dramatic addition to the city.

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and other things for the soldiers."

Another original member, still living in New Plymouth, Miss C. Leatham, daughter of Dr. Leatham, can remember organising fund-raising concerts during those years.

"We gave concerts for other organisations, too," she recalls, "but most of them were for the Red Cross."

In 1918 an additional men's committee was appointed, comprising Messrs Bell, Cutfield, Robertson, Ashbury, Weston, Crooke, O'Hagan and Johnstone. Mr W. L. Newman was treasurer.

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some cases driving exhausted doctors to country patients.

In 1922 Dr Leatham resigned from his position as branch president and Mr Gibson was elected.

Mr Gibson, president until 1925, was one of the branch's most active and enthusiastic members.

He was later made a life member of the Red Cross in Taranaki and until his death in 1942 continued to take a keen interest in all Red Cross activities.

The first peacetime Red Cross nurse to take up duties in Taranaki arrived from Wellington in 1923. She was Sister Webster. Among the arrangements made by the local committee for her visit was a free pass on trams.

One of Sister Webster's Red Cross activities, as recorded in the minute book of that time, was to accompany patients on the ambulance train to Palmerston North where they attended the "Thickson Mission," a faith healing group.

When Sister Webster resigned in 1926 her place was taken by Sister Corhill who held the position until 1934 and was not replaced.

Expanding During this time the Red Cross in Taranaki was ex-

panding—in 1925 the New Plymouth committee was joined by representatives from Waitara, Eltham, Uremu and Inglewood.

And it was also progressive. In July, 1924, a resolution was passed "that this meeting considers it essential that a run-about-car is purchased so that the sister can carry out her duties more efficiently."

A new Ford car was purchased at a cost of £176, each Taranaki branch making a contribution towards the cost.

In its early days the New Plymouth branch also had some growing pains. It was frequently suggested that it should amalgamate with the local office of St John but the move was never taken.

There was also the minor irritation of a club which used the rooms the Red Cross rented in St Aubrey St and repeatedly left the floor in a "greasy condition."

From 1925, when Mr Gibson retired as president his position was taken by the Rev. T. R. Richards until the present time, the branch has had many different presidents. Some taking office for a brief time only and others, like Mr H. V. S. Griffiths and Mr M. S. Hughton, the present presi-

dent, remaining for some time.

They were Mr Richards (1925-27), Mrs A. Patrick (1927-28), Mr H. C. Morgan (1928-29), Dr. Stinchcombe (1929-30), Mr B. Hulme (1930-32), Archdeacon G. H. Gavin (1932-1933), Mr Griffiths (1933-47), Mr Crookford (1947 for six months), Mr H. St. Ledger (1947-1948-51), Mr C. F. A. Waters (1951-53), Mr M. A. McRae (1953-56) and Mr Hughton from 1956.

When World War II broke out Red Cross members were kept busy making clothing and raising funds for New Zealand servicemen overseas and providing comforts for the wounded when they returned home.

By that time many of the sister's services had been started. The annual classes in first aid and nursing were begun in the 1920s, as was the women's visiting division which became the voluntary aid detachment during World War II.

From its foundation the branch has made regular hospital visits, although until more recently it provided comforts and assistance only for wounded ex-servicemen.

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A witness of the battle was a young Geneva banker and philanthropist, Dr. Daniel Dagnan, who had travelled to Italy to see the battle and to see the wounded with Napoleon III of France.

He was shocked and deeply moved by what he saw. Dagnan quickly gathered together a few Italian women and organised a makeshift hospital in a nearby church where they tended to the wounded. He was so impressed by what he saw that he decided to do something about it.

Some time later, when Dagnan wrote of his experience at Solferino, he said one of the most appalling

Centenary symbol

THIS special symbol is being used by the Red Cross throughout the world to mark the centenary of the organisation's founding in Geneva in 1864.

The symbol, in red and grey, is a stylised antique oil-lamp representing the 100 years existence of the Red Cross and its efforts on behalf of humanity. The flame symbolises charity and the light of life which must be re-ignited and protected.

In his book "A Memory of Solferino," he stated: "What I want is a general mobilisation of all the charities in the world."

Among his contemporaries who showed interest in Dagnan's ideas were Victor Hugo, the French scholar, Saint Marc Girardin and Florence Nightingale.

It was his proposals were taken most enthusiastically by four men — General Dufferin, former Commander-in-Chief of the Swiss armed forces, Gustave Moynier, a Geneva lawyer, and two doctors, Louis Appia, with Dagnan.

In the 100 years that have passed since that memorable convention the International Red Cross has grown to include more than 80 national societies comprising more than 125 million individual members.

No principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality have been so successfully and so widely adopted by people all over the world, and its contribution towards peace and worldwide harmony has been immeasurable.

In 1864 the first Geneva Convention was held — 14 countries signed in recognition of the existence of the International Committee and the principles they had laid down. This was followed by a further convention at The Hague in 1864 when Red Cross principles were officially adapted to marine warfare.

The third convention in Geneva in 1929 laid down

as their fifth member, they set up a committee of five. Using the full extent of Dagnan's considerable persuasive powers, the committee organised an international conference in Geneva.

The conference met on October 26, 1864. The committee outlined their plans which catered for relief committees and the organisation in war-torn areas and military hospitals and of Army medical staff. They adopted an emblem of a white flag bearing a red cross, and the Committee of Five became the first committee of the International Red Cross.

When their efforts were not centred on war, national Red Cross societies organised their resources into other fields.

Today the New Zealand Red Cross, for instance, has a wide range of services which provide assistance to people in trouble, it provides a first-aid course for people who give many services for the sick and wounded in hospitals.

It also holds public courses in first aid, nursing and kindred subjects and caters for sick and wounded New Zealand servicemen stationed overseas.

The Voluntary Aid Detachment formed from people qualified in first aid, nursing and other subjects and public gatherings to give assistance to people who may need it. There is also the Junior Red Cross, comprised of pupils from primary and post-primary schools.

UNUSUAL

A rather unusual activity of the Red Cross in New Zealand is its tracing service, through which it is able to assist those concerned about the welfare of relatives in countries torn by war or a disaster.

In 1867 business magnates forced him into bankruptcy and he resigned from the International Committee. He left Geneva and, almost destitute, travelled around the Continent. He continued this existence for almost 23 years.

Then he was "rediscovered" when a Swiss doctor, then 70 years old, and wrote an article in the "Nouvelles" of the "maternal" old man. The article was published in Dagnan's magazine and he was able to live his life in comparative comfort. And in 1901 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

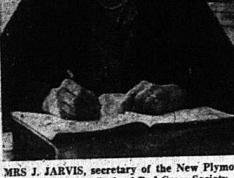
Red Cross officers



MR M. S. HUGHSON, president of the Red Cross in New Plymouth, who is now in his seventh year of office.



MRS J. JARVIS, secretary of the New Plymouth Red Cross Society, at work in her office in the new building; Mrs Jarvis has served on the New Plymouth committee since 1951.



MRS J. JARVIS, secretary of the New Plymouth Red Cross Society, at work in her office in the new building; Mrs Jarvis has served on the New Plymouth committee since 1951.

ASSISTANCE FOR MANY

Very few people in New Plymouth have not, at one time or another, come across or been assisted by one of the several active branches of the local Red Cross sub-centre as it operates today.

They may have been helped by gifts of clothing or in some other way after a personal misfortune; they may have been visited in hospital, or they may have been helped in tracing relatives in an overseas country torn by earthquakes or flood.

The Red Cross helps in many different fields. Under the leadership of their president, Mr M. S. HUGHSON, who has held the office since 1956, and the secretary, Mrs J. JARVIS, who has been a committee member since 1951 and secretary since 1956, members perform a variety of voluntary activities.

At public assemblies or sports meetings a Red Cross member of the VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) is often in attendance.

In hospitals Red Cross people are a familiar sight, both for their visiting of the sick and for their visits to the sick and for their visits to the sick and for their visits to the sick.



MISS CONSTANCE LEATHAM, one of the original members of the Red Cross in New Plymouth. She can recall organising concerts and raising money during World War I.

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N.Z. body set up in 1931

Organised Red Cross activity was not carried out in New Zealand until the beginning of World War I, when several branches of the British Red Cross Society came into being. New Plymouth was one of the early branches.

It was not until 1931 that a National Red Cross Society was set up in New Zealand as an incorporated body, officially recognised by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies.

Then the need for such a body had been proved by the outbreak of the Hawke's Bay earthquake and the extensive relief programme which had followed.

Headquarters were set up in Wellington and a Dominion Council was appointed to control the society's affairs, and to provide a liaison with all overseas Red Cross societies. The Government's Department of Internal Affairs and kindred organisations. These headquarters are now the hub of 37 Red Cross centres and 285 sub-centres throughout New Zealand.