
Voluntary welfare organisations

by Margaret Tennant

Red Anzac poppies, long sold on the street to raise funds for the RSA, have been joined by daffodils, bandannas and ribbons of various hues – all ways that New Zealand’s voluntary welfare organisations raise money to continue supporting those in need.

Voluntary welfare organisations – overview

In New Zealand, people in need receive help from a number of sources, including family assistance, informal community aid, and through the more formal mechanisms of the state and voluntary organisations.

Benevolent societies

Structured forms of support began in New Zealand in the 1840s, through mutual aid organisations such as lodges and friendly societies. From the 1850s, general-purpose benevolent societies were formed to give aid both within and beyond their own membership. Only a few of these societies survived beyond the mid-20th century.

Churches

The churches became increasingly active in providing social welfare in the last two decades of the 19th century, focusing especially on orphanage care for children and the moral reform of prostitutes and single mothers. Religious belief remained an important motivation for voluntary charity, both for individuals and for denominations.

During the 20th century the churches expanded their activities into youth and city mission work in the community. After the [Second World War](#) they also provided youth hostels and institutional care for the elderly. The churches favoured institutional care because in ‘homes’ they could separate the needy from the sinful, monitor behaviour and model the Christian life. Homes also attracted more donations than community-based care. Institutions remained a key aspect of church welfare until the 1960s and 1970s.

Secular organisations

Secular forms of charity expanded from the late 19th century. Many focused on categories of need, such as disability or family violence, or groups such as returned servicemen or underprivileged children. Voluntary organisations became increasingly specialised, and in the

21st century some were not just providers of services, but also advocates for those they represented.

Māori organisations

Some major Māori voluntary organisations emerged during and after the **Second World War**. In the later 20th century Māori health and welfare agencies, many of them iwi and hapū-based, proliferated. They challenged existing organisations and highlighted obligation within and across cultures as a dimension of volunteering. Iwi services were often linked with other Māori development programmes in employment, housing, tourism and agriculture. Marae increasingly became the base for contracted welfare services for Māori, and a more holistic approach to well-being that incorporated spiritual, physical and mental health was used.

Voluntary organisations and the state

Voluntary welfare has sometimes been criticised as patronising and inefficient, giving aid on a moralistic and inconsistent basis. It has also been presented as more selfless and worthy than services provided by the state, allowing individual citizens to become involved and receive training. Organisations can be more flexible and innovative than state agencies, often experimenting and setting up services in advance of the government. But their relationship with the state has sometimes been tense, especially where they became financially dependent upon government subsidies, grants and contracts. The introduction of rigorous government contracting requirements in the 1990s represented a low point in this relationship. After 2000 a period of review and renegotiation occurred between the state and the voluntary sector.

Daffodils, ribbons, poppies and bandannas

Street collections have always been vital to voluntary organisations for raising funds – and their profiles. Especially since the 1980s, public sympathy has been aroused by the use of potent symbols, from daffodils and pink ribbons to butterflies and bandannas. Perhaps the best-known fundraising symbol in New Zealand is the red poppy sold by volunteers just before Anzac Day to support services for war veterans.

19th-century charity

Māori support structures

Early European settlers encountered a Māori communal society with its own support mechanisms based on family and tribal relationships. While a few Europeans became integrated into Māori social networks, most stayed well outside them, although they sometimes depended on Māori trade and other assistance.

The first Pākehā charities

Pākehā settlers created their own informal support networks. Neighbours helped in times of crisis: the loss of a home through fire; injury while clearing bush; the death of a breadwinner. In larger communities these supports gradually became more structured, following models of voluntary organisation brought from Britain and Europe, where voluntary organisations had expanded considerably since the late 18th century.

The vast range of charities in Britain could not be replicated in New Zealand, which had too few people and very different social conditions. Colonial New Zealanders were suspicious of the class ideas behind much British charity. Strongly individualistic, they saw poverty as personal failure, an inability of the lazy and inadequate to take advantage of the opportunities in a new land. Women and children were more likely to be exempt from this judgement, so the few colonial benevolent societies focused on them.

Women organised some of the earliest charities, including the Auckland Ladies' Benevolent Society in 1857 and the Onehunga Ladies' Benevolent Society in 1863. Benevolent societies were formed by groups of men and women in Dunedin in 1862, Christchurch in 1865 and Wellington in 1867. Other societies followed, but always struggled to survive. Many soon depended on government grants, as private bequests and donations were limited.

Mutual-aid and friendly societies

While not usually regarded as charities, from 1841 mutual-aid organisations on the English model provided an important form of social and financial support for those who could afford to join them. They included the Manchester Unity Order of Oddfellows and the Ancient Order of Foresters.

Members, usually working men, paid a regular subscription to ensure support from the friendly society in time of sickness. The societies also played an important social role, providing settlers with a familiar institution to ease their transition into the colonial environment. They organised festivals, picnics and parades, providing entertainment not just for members but for the whole community. By the end of the 19th century there were 465 friendly societies and lodges in New Zealand, with a total membership of around 40,200.

Church welfare

Church charitable efforts were initially parish-based and relied on church members to detect instances of need. By the 1880s, as denominations became more established, their social outreach expanded. Influenced by evangelical Christianity, new ventures combined good works with religious conversion. The Salvation Army's work was the most varied. The Catholic Church relied largely on female religious orders for its welfare outreach. A locally established Catholic order, Mother Mary Joseph Aubert's Sisters of Compassion, was especially admired for charitable work across denominations.

Rescue homes, orphanages and shelters

Church-run 'homes for fallen women' first attempted to 'save' prostitutes by teaching them more morally and socially acceptable ways to make a living, and later turned their attention to helping single mothers and their babies. One of the first rescue homes was established in Christchurch in

Colonial charity

In March 1860 the Auckland Ladies' Benevolent Society reported that it had assisted 70 cases over the previous year. Of these, 16 were destitute widows, one of them an older woman with 10 children. Thirteen deserted wives and 14 abandoned, orphaned or neglected children were helped. The society noted that in many cases distress was caused by the drunkenness and misconduct of men who ought to have been the protectors of their families.

1864. The number of homes was boosted by the arrival of the Salvation Army in 1883. By 1890 there were at least 12 women's homes operating in New Zealand, mostly under church direction.

Various churches set up orphanages, soup kitchens and men's night shelters, and worked with discharged prisoners.

Welfare services expand, 1890s–1930s

Growing welfare needs

An expanding population and economic recession in the 1880s disproved the view that there was no real poverty in New Zealand. Growth of towns made the plight of the poor more visible. There were more old people in the population, some without families to assist them. Prisoners' aid societies, sailors' rests (which provided accommodation and recreation facilities for sailors in port), shipwreck relief associations, hospital guilds and societies for the protection of women and children were set up in the main centres.

Government subsidies

Many organisations were based on British examples, but were smaller and had less certain funding. Charities were dependent on annual subscriptions, special collections and small government grants. Some organisations attracted more generous government funding than others. The government recognised the Foundation for the Blind (formed in 1890) as the main provider of services to this group, and provided subsidies and payments for the children assisted at the Institute for the Blind. The Plunket Society, which supported mothers and babies, gained government subsidies even before it was incorporated in 1907. Such assistance helped both organisations to become nationally dominant.

Philanthropy and charitable trusts

New Zealand never developed a strong tradition of private philanthropy. Large donations and bequests from the wealthy to support charity were unusual. Those philanthropic trusts that did come into existence were valued all the more because of their rarity. Some early trusts operated in particular areas. A wealthy farmer, Dan Bryant, created the Waikato-based Bryant Trust in 1921. The T. G. Macarthy Trust, established in 1912 from the estate of a wealthy brewer, operated in the Wellington region.

First World War

During the [First World War](#) nearly 1,000 patriotic societies were formed. They were concerned with the welfare of refugee populations overseas, especially in Belgium, and with supporting New Zealand soldiers and their families. Later they assisted servicemen who returned home disabled.

Wartime fundraising efforts were ingenious and untiring. Women formed knitting and sewing circles, while children collected eggs and bottles for sale. Queen carnivals (in which young women competed to raise funds) became very popular, as they provided a distraction from wartime

sorrow while raising large amounts of money. Art union lotteries provided another means of fundraising, but they were denounced by some church people as encouraging gambling.

It was estimated that by the end of the war, New Zealanders had raised approximately £4.9 million (\$525 million in 2019 terms) for patriotic causes. In the process, many women gained experience in organising and in fundraising. They would carry this sense of social purpose into the post-war years.

Red Cross

A branch of the British Red Cross was formed in New Zealand in 1915, working with the St John Ambulance Association to supply war relief services. The Red Cross assisted during the influenza epidemic of 1918 and a polio epidemic in 1925. It also arranged community classes in home nursing. The Junior Red Cross was a major presence in schools for many decades, providing New Zealand schoolchildren with international pen-pals and projects on healthy living. An independent New Zealand Red Cross was formed in 1931. The [Hawke's Bay earthquake](#) that year had revealed the need for greater efficiency in disaster relief, and the Red Cross prepared itself to play this role.

Mother of millions

The Red Cross attracted many women volunteers during the First World War by appealing to their nurturing instincts. The organisation described itself as 'The GREATEST MOTHER in the WORLD', dedicated to 'warming, feeding, and healing thousands of suffering men'.¹

Footnotes

- Margaret Tennant, *The fabric of welfare: voluntary organisations, government and welfare in New Zealand, 1840–2005*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2007, p. 99. [Back](#)

Depression and the welfare state

Voluntary welfare in the depression

The [economic depression](#) of the late 1920s and early 1930s saw existing voluntary organisations such as the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the Red Cross supplementing government and hospital-board assistance to the unemployed and their families.

In Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, church city missions, especially those of the Anglicans and Methodists, gained a high profile. Their missionaries and deaconesses distributed food, clothing and fuel, ran children's health camps, dosshouses and jumble sales, and provided health services and legal aid. They tried to raise spirits through community 'singalongs' and other forms of entertainment. Increasingly, they and other voluntary agencies were overwhelmed by the scale of demand.

Depression and joy

At the height of the depression in 1932, some Wellington businessmen established the Smith Family Joyspreaders. Members of the organisation distributed Christmas parcels, sent children to health camps and provided them with school

One effect of the depression was to raise questions about the efficiency of voluntary charity. There were calls for the state to take greater responsibility for welfare arrangements. The depression also prompted informal welfare exchanges within families and among neighbours.

uniforms. They ran a boot repair shop for the unemployed and provided a library service for men working in relief camps. Because the help was given anonymously, many people received assistance without knowing their benefactor was the Smith Family.

Friendly societies rise and fall

In the 20th century, especially as economic uncertainty increased, the insurance role of the friendly societies became more important than their social role. In 1938 their total membership peaked at nearly 114,000 (in a population of 1.6 million). In that year the Social Security Act 1938 established the modern welfare state, undermining the societies' role as the principal means of protection against the financial impact of sickness.

The impact of the welfare state

After the implementation of the 1935 Labour government's policies of economic protectionism, full employment and social security, it seemed that charities would no longer be necessary. This was not the case, as not all needs could be met through economic means. Charities continued to provide advice and services, and were often better placed than state agencies to offer speedy, short-term and community-based relief.

Politicians recognised that voluntary agencies provided useful testing grounds for new or controversial services, and they generally saw state and voluntary social services as complementary.

Plenty to do

Winefride Dive became a social worker for the Society for the Protection of Women and Children in 1939. She found no shortage of work, despite the advent of the welfare state: 'I found myself dealing with domestic upheavals, unmarried mothers, old people, neighbours' quarrels ... Social Security had hardly been established then and the unfortunate wives who sought Court Orders for Maintenance had a pretty raw time.'¹

New charitable trusts

Some major charitable trusts were formed at the end of the 1930s. The McKenzie Trusts, fostered by successive generations of a family associated with a leading New Zealand chain store, were set up from 1938. The Sutherland Self Help Trusts, which grew from the wealth generated by a grocery business, started in 1941.

Footnotes

- Winefride M. Dive, 'The Society for the Protection of Home and Family.' *New Zealand Social Worker* 6, no. 1 (1970), p. 11. [Back](#)

Second World War and beyond

Second World War

During the **Second World War**, collection of war funds and patriotic activity was under greater government control. Those women who replaced men in the workforce had less time for voluntary effort. However, organisations such as the Salvation Army, the Order of St John and the Red Cross coordinated national campaigns in addition to those run by the National Patriotic Fund Board.

Māori welfare organisations

The Maori War Effort Organisation, formed at the request of the government in 1942 for recruitment purposes, became a focus for Māori voluntary effort. It also acquired an important welfare function, especially among young Māori migrating to urban areas for employment. Māori had previously followed **Pākehā** models of voluntary organisation in areas such as health and recreation. The War Effort Organisation was based on tribal committees, and allowed Māori more freedom of expression.

Although the organisation was disbanded at the end of the war, its success influenced the establishment of another pan-Māori voluntary organisation, the Maori Women's Welfare League, in 1951. The league tackled issues arising from post-war urbanisation of Māori, including substandard housing, discrimination, and health and education challenges.

New organisations

Post-war years saw the formation of new organisations responding to social or attitudinal changes. Marriage Guidance, formed in 1949, recognised the growing rate of marriage breakdown, exacerbated by wartime conditions. The Intellectually Handicapped Children's Parents' Society (later IHC), also formed in 1949, was a lobby group for a previously marginalised sector. It developed into one of New Zealand's largest social service agencies by the 1980s.

Government grants

These and many other organisations were receiving government recognition and financial grants by the 1960s. Some money came via the state-administered art union lottery, and some direct from government departments. Practical state assistance included training schemes for social workers, free air-time on national radio for voluntary organisations, and help with rents and office space.

From 1949 churches and other voluntary agencies received generous subsidies to build homes for the elderly, relieving the public hospital system of their care.

Closure of institutions

Some voluntary agencies disappeared or changed their purpose over time. Improvements in pension levels following the introduction of social security spelled the end for some benevolent societies, but others survived and continued to provide emergency aid. Changing moral attitudes – it was increasingly acceptable for unmarried mothers to keep their babies – led to the closure of women's rescue homes. The introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit for sole parents in 1973 dealt a death blow to the remaining maternity homes for single mothers. As institutional

care became increasingly unpopular, many church-run children's homes also closed during the 1960s and 1970s.

'Consumer-choice' organisations

As gaps in the welfare state became more apparent over the 1960s and 1970s, radically different voluntary welfare organisations emerged. Many of these were inspired by overseas movements and were critical of existing state and voluntary welfare services. Women, Māori and disabled people were among those asserting the right to control how their own needs were best met. As well as forming their own organisations based upon 'consumer choice', they challenged existing charities to change what they saw as rigid, inefficient and patronising ways of operating.

Women's refuge

The women's refuge movement, which developed from 1973 to provide support and accommodation for women leaving violent relationships, is an example of a new-style voluntary organisation. By 1983 there were 34 women's refuges throughout New Zealand. Originating in the women's liberation movement, most refuges adopted collective responsibility and non-hierarchical ways of operating. While providing a service to women, refuge volunteers also attempted to change attitudes towards domestic violence in the judiciary, the police force and society generally. Initially critical of the state, the refuges soon became heavily dependent on government funding.

Changes in voluntary work, 1980s and 1990s

Funding issues

In the mid-1980s government agencies distributed an estimated \$75 million annually (about \$200 million in 2019 terms), usually in grants and subsidies, to voluntary social agencies. Much went to nationally organised societies. Smaller, locally-based and rural groups felt excluded. They criticised the practice of funding organisations on the basis of historical precedent rather than demonstrated need for their services.

Devolution and contracting

From 1984 Labour and then National governments attempted to reduce state activity. Some social services previously provided by the government were devolved to the voluntary sector. Voluntary agencies still received state financial support, but increasingly on a competitive model. The government began to make contracts with them for the purchase of services. In the early 1990s contracting became the usual way for government to fund the voluntary sector. The contracts negotiated were often short-term and involved only partial funding. Measurable outputs were required, such as specific numbers of contact hours with clients, or of beds provided. A higher level of efficiency and professionalism was often needed to meet these goals, so trained and paid staff were required.

1990s change

The 1990s were one of the greatest periods of change in the history of New Zealand's voluntary social services. Many newer agencies successfully competed for government funding. Established organisations undertook much-needed reviews of their activities. A greater openness to cultural diversity emerged across the sector. However, volunteers sometimes felt excluded by the new developments.

In place of the term 'voluntary sector', a new terminology emerged. Organisations were referred to as 'non-profit organisations', to differentiate them both from government and from an increasing number of profit-making providers of social services.

Māori and iwi social services

Before it was dismantled in 1989, the Department of Māori Affairs had fostered community-based social services for Māori, including kōhanga reo (Māori language-learning nests) and the Matua Whangai programme to support young Māori. In the 1980s Māori and government agencies increasingly cited the [Treaty of Waitangi](#) as justification for services 'by Māori for Māori'.

The devolution of social services to Māori providers accelerated from the late 1980s. These groups, too, were successful in gaining government endorsement and funding. Many were iwi-based. Others, such as urban Māori authorities, catered for Māori who were outside or alienated from tribal structures. Activities ranged from early childhood education to health and disability services and community social services. [Iwi](#) services were often linked with other Māori development programmes in employment, housing, tourism and agriculture.

In the 1990s Māori and iwi hopes for choice and autonomy in the delivery of social services came into conflict with the government's contracting regimes. Not all Māori agencies had the capacity to meet the demands of negotiating contracts, sometimes with a wide range of government departments. They also felt that they were being asked to meet objectives determined by the government rather than by Māori.

Business philanthropy

In the late 20th century links between business and philanthropy continued through private trusts such as the Todd and Tindall foundations. Some businesses supported charities intermittently, seeing this as a form of corporate responsibility. Business sponsorship was not necessarily directed at welfare, however, as sport and culture could generate more positive publicity.

Community trusts

Community trusts resulted from reforms in electricity provision and deregulation of the banking industry in the 1980s. Governed by

Zero to hero

Academic Mason Durie estimated that the number of Māori social-service provider organisations increased from 'almost zero to more than a thousand' in the 20 years after 1984.¹

Reaping the harvest

The J. R. McKenzie Trust has adopted as its logo a sprig of kūmara (sweet potato) leaves and the proverb 'Iti noa

statute, they were distinctive to New Zealand and dispersed larger amounts of funding than private and company trusts.

Philanthropy New Zealand

Most of the charitable trusts and foundations in existence in the early 21st century emerged after 1980. Philanthropy New Zealand was formed in 1990 to promote 'generosity in action' by all New Zealanders at all levels. It encouraged networking among philanthropists and grant-makers. A trend was for donors to seed new ventures likely to survive on their own, in order to receive value from the funds invested.

ana, he pito mata' (with care, a small kūmara will produce a harvest). The trust aims to help others to help themselves, and has moved away from making many small grants to organisations. In the early 2000s it gave fewer, larger grants in partnership arrangements, with the intention of making long-term changes in communities.

Footnotes

- Mason Durie, *Ngā tai matatū: tides of Māori endurance*. Melbourne; Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 50. [Back](#)

The 21st century

Non-profit sector dissatisfaction

In the early 21st century there was a huge range of non-profit social service organisations, but their interests were often different. Some were complex and nationally organised, following business models of management and employing large numbers of staff. Others were small, often local in their operations, and solely reliant upon volunteers. Larger organisations with greater resources had a political voice and pressured the government for funds.

The government's use of contracts to fund the non-profit sector caused relations with the sector to deteriorate during the 1990s. Contracts encouraged competition among agencies that had formerly cooperated. Many organisations resented having to constantly renegotiate contracts, and felt that their values and aims were being undermined by the tight specifications. Volunteers were sometimes sidelined because of the need for trained, professional delivery of services.

Reviewing relationships

The Labour-led government elected in 1999 put in place a number of measures to review and improve the relationship with voluntary organisations. These included a new ministerial portfolio (the minister for the community and voluntary sector), a working party to investigate the relationship between the sector and the government, and the establishment of an Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector within the Ministry of Social Development. Te Wero (Action Group Māori) was set up in 2003 to examine engagement between government departments and Māori. Research into the non-profit sector was encouraged.

Partnership?

In the early 21st century there was much talk of ‘partnership’ between non-profit social services and government. However, government departments still had to be accountable for taxpayer funds when dealing with contracting agencies. Many agencies, on the other hand, felt that the relationship with the government was one-sided and shaped by government priorities rather than those identified by voluntary and community groups.

The Charities Act 2005

Because of the limited amount of private charity in 19th-century New Zealand, the colony did not develop an agency along the lines of the English Charities Commission established in 1853. There was consequently no body to register and oversee charities. Charities in New Zealand were exempt from income tax and gift duty. Concerns about the abuse of charitable status for tax purposes and charities’ accountability for funds received prompted the Charities Act 2005.

A Charities Commission was formed to register and monitor charities as a condition of their tax exemption. It also had a statutory role to support charities to improve their management and governance. In 2012 the commission was integrated into the Department of Internal Affairs. Charities Services Nga Rātonga Kaupapa Atawhai was established to register charities and provide advice on their governance.

New reporting standards developed in 2015 require financial statements in a specific format. New audit and review requirements necessitate increased competence in accounting. In 2016, 27,955 charities were registered. Six per cent of them provided social services and 2.6% services for people with disabilities. Others were involved in areas such as emergency relief, arts, culture and heritage, sport and recreation, and religious activities. Not all non-profit organisations qualified or chose to register as charities.

Defining a charity

From the 16th century, case law developed on the definition of a charity. One important criterion that was sometimes tested in the courts was benefit to the community. Under the Charities Act 2005, to be registered as a charity an organisation must have a charitable purpose. This can relate to ‘the relief of poverty, the advancement of education or religion, or any other matter beneficial to the community’.¹

Footnotes

- ‘Charitable purpose.’
<http://www.charities.govt.nz/Settingupacharity/Charitablepurpose/tabid/158/Default.aspx>
(last accessed 5 July 2010). Back

Volunteers

Numbers of not-for-profit organisations

A 2013 study by Statistics New Zealand found that there were 114,110 non-profit organisations in New Zealand, an increase of 17,000 since 2007. The largest group (44%) was in the areas of arts,

culture, sport and recreation.

In the health area there were 3,010 non-profit institutions (2.6%). A further 7,960 (7%) came under 'education and research', and 14,801 (13%) were categorised as 'social services'. There had been an increase in sporting organisations and a slight decline in religious organisations.

Paid staff and volunteers

According to the 2013 census, 1,229,054 people were involved in volunteering as an unpaid activity, including voluntary work for or through an organisation, group or marae. The average volunteer did 3 hours per week of formal unpaid work. More people were involved in voluntary work than in 2004, but the total number of hours spent in voluntary work had diminished. This was consistent with international trends in volunteering.

Working with volunteers

For some organisations, mixing paid staff and volunteers is challenging. The two groups may have different, even conflicting, perspectives. Paid staff may insist they are the professionals, and as a consequence volunteers may feel undervalued. Some organisations have found managing the two groups too difficult and have either avoided using volunteers or severed links with their volunteer supporters. 'Managing volunteers' is now seen as a distinct skill, involving careful screening, orientation, training and ongoing supervision.

A diminishing volunteer workforce?

The accountability requirements of government agencies such as the Health Funding Authority have put strain on some voluntary organisations. Professionals have to be paid to do this work, as volunteers cannot afford the training to become sufficiently qualified. In addition, some voluntary organisations have reported difficulty in recruiting new volunteers.

Research by Statistics New Zealand found that the number of waged and salary staff in not-for-profit organisations increased by 30% between 2004 and 2013. Paid staff were most frequently employed in social services, education and research organisations. However, 90% of not-for-profits employ no paid staff.

Who volunteers?

Women

Traditionally, women dominated voluntary organisations, as this work was seen as an ideal adjunct to homemaking and childcare. Until the 1960s voluntary organisations provided an outlet for the energies and talents of women (particularly middle-class married women with children) who were unable to – or didn't want to – enter the paid workforce full-time or at all. Volunteer work provided training and experience in skills such as running meetings, political lobbying, organising events and managing finance. For some women,

Where have the volunteers gone?

2001 was the International Year of the Volunteer, but organisations found helping hands hard to find. A Wellington Order of St John community manager, for example, claimed his region had only half the volunteers needed to cover sporting and cultural events. Suggested reasons for the volunteer shortage included seven-

learning these skills was a stepping stone into the paid workforce from the 1960s onwards.

‘Consumer choice’ organisations set up by groups such as women, Māori and disabled people from the 1970s attracted a more diverse range of volunteers. In 1978 the feminist magazine *Broadsheet* described women’s refuge workers as being from ‘every class and background, from students through to old-age pensioners; from solo mothers balancing the D.P.B. to retired professional women’. They were far from being housewives with nothing to do (a common stereotype of charity workers).

day shopping, a longer working week, new occupational safety and health requirements, and the alternative attractions of sport and entertainment. Another possible reason was the growing number of women in the paid workforce.

People of different ages

People aged 60 and over are visible in parts of the volunteer workforce, as retirement from paid work gives them more time to devote to community work.

Young volunteers are often students or people seeking paid work, for whom voluntary work is useful experience which they can add to their CVs. In 2016, 10% of Volunteer Wellington recruits were under 20 and 38% were in their twenties.

Immigrants

Recent immigrants also had a significant presence in voluntary organisations in the 21st century. For some it was a way of finding out about New Zealand culture, improving language skills and gaining New Zealand work experience.

The joy of volunteering

The benefits of volunteering include learning new skills, networking, having fun, having a positive effect on the lives of others and making a contribution to the community. In the words of one volunteer, ‘It’s interesting, varied, challenging and rewarding too. I’d recommend volunteering to anyone.’¹

Footnotes

- ‘Man on a mission.’ Volunteer Wellington, <http://www.volunteerwellington.org.nz/profiles/profiles/profile27.html> (last accessed 5 July 2010). Back

External links and sources

More suggestions and sources

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How to cite this page: Margaret Tennant, 'Voluntary welfare organisations', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/voluntary-welfare-organisations/print> (accessed 12 December 2023)

Story by Margaret Tennant, published 5 May 2011, reviewed & revised 18 Sep 2018

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