

In Action – Celebration

The Salvation Army Centre of Hope in London

10th Anniversary – Recognizing the History, Celebrating the Present

The roots of The Salvation Army run deep in London, Ontario. For over a century, we've been providing shelter from the storms of life and nature for those who come to our doors. The first Salvation Army shelter, the "London Men's Social Services Centre" began operations in 1897.

November 2014: 117 years, thousands of lives and literally millions of meals later, a lively group of people gathered in the chapel of The Salvation Army Centre of Hope on the corner of Wellington and Horton Streets. It was the 10th anniversary of the Centre, the 21st century version of that original men's social services mission.

The party marked the anniversary, but it also provided a wonderful occasion to reflect on the deep history of The Salvation Army's ministry to the dispossessed in London. Divisional leadership and Irene Matheson, the local Member of Parliament, spoke to the significance of the occasion. Special music was provided by Major Glenda Davis, Nathan Kerr and Adam Woodman. Photos were shared while plenty of cake and ice cream were consumed. The chapel was close to full with current and former residents, staff and community partners.

But the Centre of Hope doesn't necessarily need an anniversary to celebrate. The Centre's Wellness Committee and staff members assist our team and clients to find the joy in every day. This often happens with special event days including The Salvation Army Donut Day, ice cream sundae parties, goodie bags on Hallowe'en and fun activities and gifts at Christmas. We know that you need to celebrate regardless of reason because life is reason enough. Tomorrow is a new day, and tomorrow someone will find a new home, a new friend and a new commitment to life within these walls. After all, this is the Centre of Hope.

Sheryl Rooth is an opinion columnist in The Londoner, a wife, mother and Office Coordinator at The Centre of Hope.

