

# Shepherd's Voice

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## Every Supporter, a Catalyst for Change

We extend our profound gratitude to each person who stands with Good Shepherd. Your invaluable contributions are not just gifts; they are powerful tools that enable us to advocate for positive social change and support women, girls and families to live full and dignified lives.

Your unwavering support fuels our mission to deliver impactful programs, directly addressing the far-reaching effects of intergenerational disadvantage and emerging vulnerability in our communities. Your partnership empowers us to make a difference that resonates through generations.

In 2022-23, your support helped us change lives across Australia.

**120,000+**

women, girls and families supported by our programs and services

 **33,139**

hours of support given to women and children experiencing family and domestic violence through The Orange Door

 **582**

women and children supported by the Family Violence After-Hours Outreach Crisis Response Program (VIC)

 **1,598**

individuals supported through the Financial Independence Hub

 **40,111**

people supported through the Power Saving Bonus in partnership with Neighbourhood Houses (VIC)

 **38,260**

No Interest Loans (NILs) issued to support people with access safe and affordable credit

 **3,118**

No Interest Loans issued to support people to purchase a vehicle

 **3,067**

people experiencing financial hardship supported with financial counselling

**\$3,674,206**

client debt waived through financial counselling support

# Recognising 160 Years of Partnership: A Morning Tea for our Generous Donors

# 160 YEARS YOUNG

Last month, we had the pleasure of hosting a morning tea at the historic Abbotsford Convent, where we gathered with members of our donor community to commemorate 160 years of unwavering support for women, girls and families in Australia.

Stella Avramopoulos, our CEO, emphasised that the remarkable work we do wouldn't be possible without our incredible donors. We are grateful for your continuous contributions, as we deliver vital programs and services to the community. Your donations are seeds that grow into meaningful work.

Gendrie Klein-Breteler AM, Executive General Manager of Mission, recounted how the first Sisters arrived in Australia in 1863 to respond to the growing number of women in distressed circumstances.

**The Sisters' mission of providing relief to women, girls and families still resonates today, a testament to the enduring value of their work.**

Gendrie also shared a touching anecdote about the early fundraising events held by Melbourne's well-to-do families, which laid the foundation for the Abbotsford facility, a place of refuge for women, girls and families.

During the morning tea, we heard firsthand accounts from our frontline heroes. Audrey Kelly, a Family Services Coordinator based in the Bayside Peninsula area in Victoria, showcased the critical resources that are offered to women and children in our refuge accommodation.

Sister Noelene White shared her experiences of assisting those experiencing homelessness and vulnerability around Kings Cross in NSW during the 1970s. These stories demonstrate how the golden thread of our mission and values continues.

As we approach Christmas, our mission remains steadfast. Today, affordable housing for women aged 55 years and over is a priority for Good Shepherd. They are one of the fastest-growing groups experiencing housing vulnerability in Australia. Your generosity can make a profound difference.

**Learn more at [goodshep.org.au/christmas-appeal-2023](https://goodshep.org.au/christmas-appeal-2023).  
Every gift of \$2 or more is tax-deductible,  
and together, we can make a lasting impact.**



# Unlocking Hope: Help Us Build Women a Safe Place to Call Home

Women aged over 55 are one of the fastest growing groups becoming homeless. Current housing solutions are inadequate in number and design. Good Shepherd is continuing our 160-year tradition of developing innovative solutions to challenges in our communities.

With financial support from the Siddle Family Foundation, we have partnered with RMIT to co-design our audacious project. Our housing solution is being co-designed by older women with lived experience. The design that emerged from workshops with these passionate and creative women includes wrap-around health, support and wellbeing services that women need most.

**We stand at the frontline of the housing and homelessness crisis, witnessing the severity of the problem, and we are taking action. We're asking you to join us.**



Images of women with lived experience of homelessness participating in workshops to design safe, affordable, fit-for-purpose housing.



On a 5,550 square metre site in Marrickville NSW, we're creating a Good Shepherd village – more than 40 purpose-built homes, designed specifically for women aged over 55 who are facing housing vulnerability.

Stella Avramopoulos, our CEO, sums up the spirit of this project: "It's about more than just a roof over their heads. It's about building a strong, supportive community, addressing their health, financial wellbeing, and recovery needs. It's about giving these deserving women a fresh start."

The homes will also incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design to radically reduce the cost of living by minimising utility bills.

Good Shepherd is investing significantly in this project. We are looking to raise a total of \$40m to provide a community of safe places to call home.

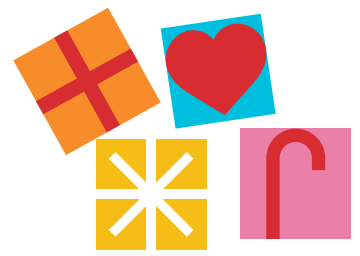
Your donation will go directly to supporting our Affordable Housing project, contributing to building these homes for women who are experiencing financial vulnerability and at risk of homelessness.

You can be part of a solution that is a testament to the power of collaboration between the community, government, philanthropy and corporate sectors to bring about meaningful change.

Together, we can reshape the landscape of housing availability and affordability, particularly for women experiencing vulnerability.

**Visit [goodshep.org.au/christmas-appeal-2023](https://goodshep.org.au/christmas-appeal-2023).  
Every gift of \$2 or more is tax-deductible.**

# Christmas in Australia 160 Years Ago: A Glimpse into Yuletide of the Past



Australia, with its unique history and geography, has celebrated Christmas in various ways over the years. But what was Christmas like in the Land Down Under 160 years ago when the first four Good Shepherd Sisters arrived in Australia? Let's step back in time and explore the traditions, customs and atmosphere of that bygone era.

## Simplicity and self-sufficiency

Christmas celebrations in 1863 were marked by a sense of simplicity and self-sufficiency. The country was still in the early stages of development, and many families lived in rural areas, relying on their own resources for sustenance. Traditional Christmas meals were prepared with locally sourced ingredients. Freshly caught seafood, game, and homegrown vegetables were common on the menu. Puddings and fruitcakes were cherished treats, often made with fruits from family orchards.

## Religious significance

Christianity played a significant role in the lives of many early Australian settlers, and attending church services on Christmas Day was a central part of the celebration. Christmas was not just a time for feasting and gift-giving; it was an occasion for reflection, prayer, and communal worship. Carols were sung, and nativity scenes were created to emphasise the religious aspects of the holiday.

## Family and community gatherings

Family was at the heart of Christmas celebrations, and it was a time for loved ones to come together. Communities were smaller and tightly knit, so Christmas often involved gathering with extended family and neighbours. Festivities were marked by storytelling, games, and shared meals. In the absence of modern distractions, social interaction was a key component of the holiday.

## Outdoor celebrations

With Australia's warm climate in December, outdoor activities were common. Picnics, games, and gatherings in parks or natural settings were popular ways to celebrate. Families often spent time in the open air, enjoying the sunshine and the beauty of the Australian landscape.



Christmas feast at Studley Park. State Library of Victoria: Melbourne Post, 23 December 1864

## Limited decorations

Decorations were simpler compared to modern Christmas traditions. While some families adorned their homes with greenery and wreaths, elaborate decorations were not as common. The natural beauty of the Australian landscape often served as a backdrop for the festivities.

## Hand-crafted gifts

Unlike today's commercialised Christmas season, in 1863 store-bought presents were rare. The focus was on the sentiment behind the gift rather than its monetary value.

People crafted items themselves, such as knitted scarves, crocheted blankets or hand-sewn quilts. These heartfelt homemade gifts carried a special significance, as they showcased the time, care, and consideration that went into creating them. Although times were hard for many, small treats like candies, fruits, and nuts were included in Christmas stockings.

**The Good Shepherd Team would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very happy Christmas and a wonderful new year.**

**Would you like to give to Good Shepherd this Christmas? Please visit [goodshep.org.au/christmas-appeal-2023](https://goodshep.org.au/christmas-appeal-2023)**