



**Independence**

Winter 2016

*is*  
**precious**  
**MISSION AUSTRALIA**



# Thank you

**Welcome to the first issue of Independence, your new look newsletter that replaces Transformations. We designed it to celebrate a very special community of people – you. We hope you enjoy reading it.**

Inside, you'll find stories of lives changed thanks to your incredible generosity. Discover how your gifts brought Christmas joy to vulnerable families across the country through the Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal.

If you think homelessness can't happen to you, read Matthew's heartbreaking story. Matthew went from running a successful landscape business to sleeping rough in Sydney's Hyde Park. **We're so thankful to you for giving him a second chance.**

Find out how a desperate Queensland mother was able to rescue her precious son from ice addiction thanks to you. And if – like me - you can't resist a bargain, turn to our story on op shopping and see why it's good for your wallet, your wardrobe and sustainability.

We recently launched our **Independence is Precious** campaign, which shines a light on the harsh reality of homelessness. We are so grateful to you for supporting it.

I'd love to hear what you think of your Independence newsletter so please, get in touch!

**Thank you for restoring hope to people in need this winter. With gratitude,**



**Catherine Yeomans**  
CEO, Mission Australia



**Connect with Catherine:**



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missionaustralia.com.au/news-blog



Over the past 6 months, your generosity has touched so many lives. Whether it's caring for a woman who has suffered domestic violence or giving a child a safe place to live, you make everything possible. Independence is precious. Thank you for creating hope and opportunity for men, women and children in need.

**57,600** 

gifts received for families in need  
via the Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal



**2,200**

disadvantaged  
people attended our  
40th Christmas Lunch  
in the Park in Perth



**28**

people with disability  
housed at our new independent  
living facility in Victoria

**164**

young people graduated  
from Triple Care Farm  
in New South Wales



Launched Home &  
Away: **Child and Youth  
Homelessness Report**



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**Your impact**





# Christmas joy because of you

**If you've been wondering where the 57,600 presents you donated through the Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal ended up then read on! Thanks to your incredible generosity and goodwill, lots of children woke up with big smiles on their faces on Christmas morning.**





Across the country, our staff were delighted to be Santa's little helpers and bring festive joy to Australians facing a bleak Christmas. For the families and children that received your gifts, just knowing that so many of you cared gave them hope. **Here are some of the stories.**

### Delivering happiness around the country

Mission Australia gave me gifts for each of my children and a roll of wrapping paper. They said I could tell them that they were from me. I can't believe someone would do this for me. This has changed the lives of my family and my children's memories of Christmas forever. I was able to be a mum and give to my children at this most blessed time of year. Thank you! *Emily, South Australia*

We have a young person who has just started her HSC year. She is the carer for her mum who has significant mental health and physical issues and cannot leave the house. She also cares for her baby brother and two little sisters. When asked how she normally celebrates Christmas, her response was that they don't because they can't afford a tree or anything to put under it. She was able to select some gifts for her mum, her sisters, her baby brother and her grandfather. She was quite overwhelmed. *Phil, Sydney*

The gifts themselves were great, but what we treasured most was the feeling it gave us. We had forgotten that good things can happen. You restored our faith. *Family of four, Queensland*

One of my clients is a grandmother. She broke down when we gave her gifts for her grandson. She'd been trying to work out which bill not to pay in order to be able to buy him something. She'd even thought about stealing something from the local shopping centre - she'd never stolen anything in her life. It was heartbreaking to think that this sweet and caring lady had almost been driven to such desperate measures. *Dave, Perth*

One of our clients is a 15-year old who often has to care for his mum who has depression and his brother who has learning difficulties. His mum was retrenched from her job two weeks before Christmas. The whole family was in tears when asked to choose gifts from the Wishing Tree. *Claire, Victoria*

**We look forward to your support with Kmart again this Christmas.**

**"We needed help and you delivered. Thank you for supporting the Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal."**

*Catherine Yeomans,  
CEO Mission Australia*

**Happy Christmas facts** thanks to your kindness:

**57,600**  
**GIFTS DONATED**

to Mission Australia  
for families in need



**33** Kmart stores  
provided gifts to  
Mission Australia

**300** gifts delivered  
via barge to  
Morningson Island, Queensland



# Homelessness can happen to anyone

**Smart and articulate, Matthew is not a drug addict, alcoholic, long-term unemployed or any of the numerous tags that society bolts on to the homeless**

I had everything. I'd worked for a courier company for 14 years, then ran a successful landscape gardening business on the north shore. I was financially secure, living in Pymble with my partner, Kylie.

In the past Kylie had issues with gambling. I'd spent \$110 a day for her to go to rehab in Melbourne. She was doing really well and I was proud of her. But one day, I tried to use my credit cards and couldn't access any funds. She'd spent \$260,000 on poker machines. I don't know why. Maybe she felt lonely. Maybe she was bored.

I lost everything - my car, my house, my furniture, even my cat. I lost my mates and my social life. And of course I lost Kylie. She took everything besides my sanity.

**I went from having everything to sleeping on cardboard in Hyde Park. I had to cover the sprinklers with plastic bags so I could get some rest.**

I felt numb and lost. I had no shoes for three months and ended up with a bone spur. I didn't have any clothes with me because it was too hard to carry them.

Food wasn't a problem. People were so generous. I met some really nice people who would stop and see how I was going and not overlook me.

**The worst parts are the loneliness and lack of friendship.**

When you're in that situation you live one moment at a time...just surviving.

There are a lot of people like me on the street. You'd be surprised, people who were successful and lost everything.

I tried to get help, but it was really hard. I caught a train out to a hostel in Parramatta, but the dormitory I was put in was full of people who'd just got out of jail. They suggested I contact Mission Australia who referred me to Housing NSW.

I've been living in my own place for six weeks now. I'm so grateful I just want to put back into the community. Thank you so much for your hospitality and the kindness you've shown me.

## Standing together

Matthew was referred to me by our counsellor. When I sat down to listen to his story, he was still on the streets. **For me, it was about keeping hope alive**

**for Matthew.** He knew from others on the streets how long it could take to get housing. I said to him, "I'll stay with you until things get better." It was really important to him that I would listen to him and be there for him for as long as he needed me.

*Dave, Mission Australia caseworker*

## A home with heart

An estimated 1 in 5 people experiencing homelessness are over the age of 55. In Orange, there are people sleeping in drainage ditches or rubbish compactors just to keep warm during the cold, harsh winters, so there's a real need for our newest 60-bed, aged-care facility, Benjamin Short Grove. Modelled on our award-winning Annie Green Court and Charles Chambers Court, construction began in April and is expected to take around 12 months.

**Have you donated  
to our winter appeal?**

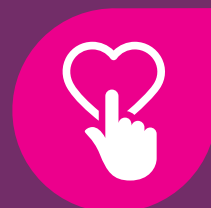
Help provide safe housing for  
people like Matthew. Donate today:



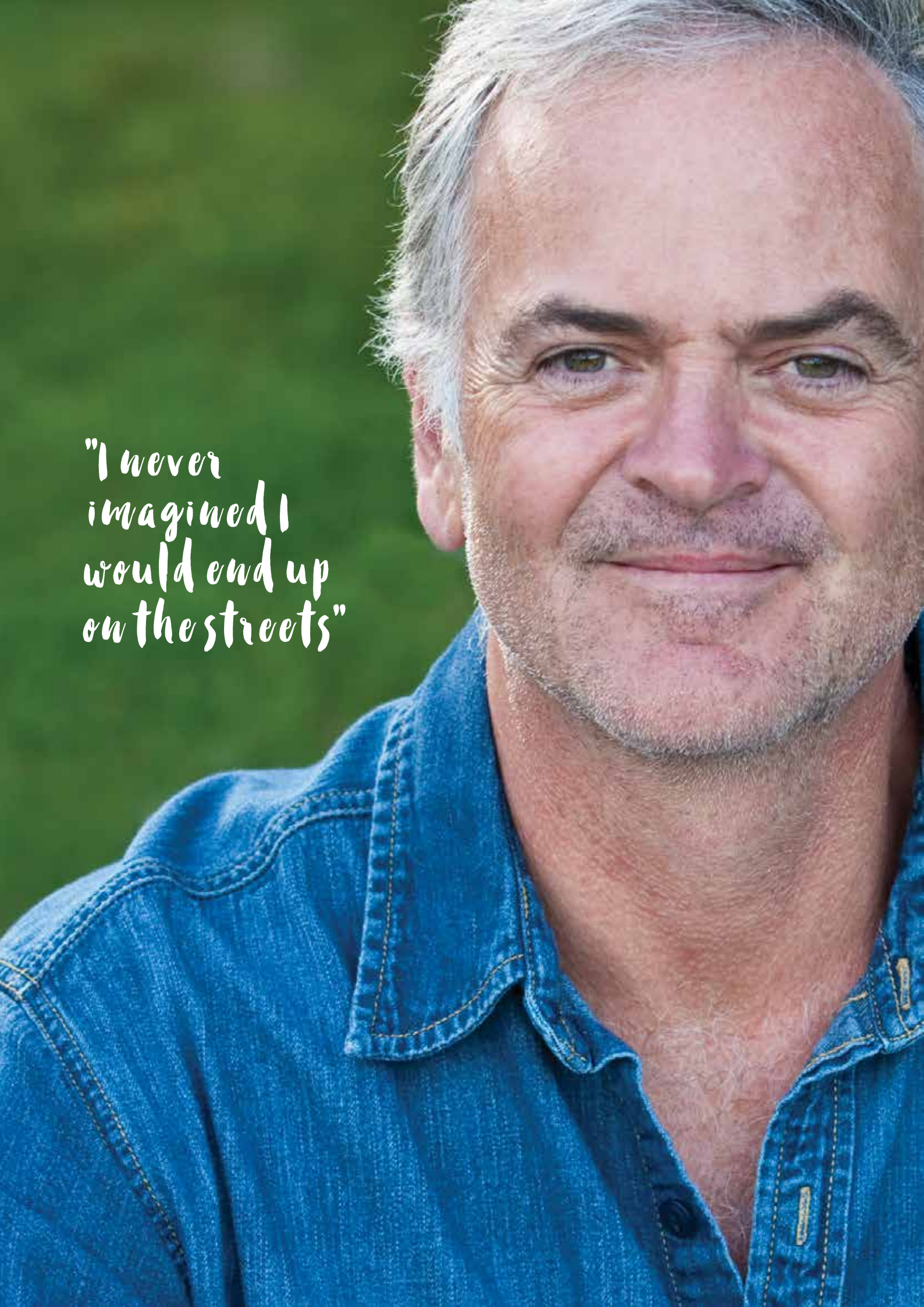
**1800 88 88 68**



**[missionaustralia.com.au/winterappeal](https://missionaustralia.com.au/winterappeal)**







*"I never  
imagined I  
would end up  
on the streets"*





## Hard facts about ICE:

In 2014 there were **5 times as many people receiving hospital treatment for meth/ice issues** than in 2010<sup>1</sup>

2009-10

1,600



2013-14

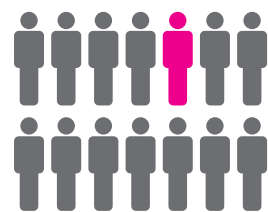
8,000

Over  
**200,000**  
Australians  
used ice in 2013<sup>2</sup>

This is **more than double** the number of those who used in 2007

In 2013, about

**1 in 14**



Australians had used meth/ice in their lifetime<sup>3</sup>



# The destructive force ravaging our youth

**Australia is facing an ice epidemic and a lack of youth-focused treatment services is leaving many families feeling helpless**

## **Ice ruins lives. It consumes the addict.**

And it consumes everyone around them. Because of its potency, many users experience a range of significant physical and psychological health problems, including psychosis, paranoia, aggression and impaired memory. Ice is increasingly infiltrating regional communities across Australia. **With limited detoxification, counselling, rehabilitation and follow-up services for young addicts, ice is putting an entire generation at risk.**

## **Ice hell – a mother and son's journey**

Jane, a newsagent from Northern Queensland, only found out about her son Will's ice addiction when he was expelled from his private school aged 15. She contacted rehab centres across the state, but Will was either too young, too old or their waiting lists were too long.

Will's life unravelled. He left home and overdosed at 17. When the family GP was unable to get Will into rehab, Jane had no choice but to help him detox at home. After receiving threats from Will's drug world associates, Jane had no choice but to take matters into her own hands. She put her ice-addicted son into her car and drove along the east coast of Australia until Will was accepted into Triple Care Farm's 12-week residential drug and alcohol program.

Will is now clean and his life is back on track. Jane knows that, unlike many young Australians, Will is one of the lucky ones.

**"There have been many parents who have lost their children. They have literally died waiting to go into rehabilitation. That shouldn't happen in this country."**

## **From the heart of Mission Australia**

Karen Mulvey | Chaplain NSW



My role as a chaplain is to support and care for our staff as they care for people in crisis. It might involve a cuppa and a chat or a deep theological discussion. Over the years I've discovered that the one thing most people want is to be heard, something we're encouraged to do in the Bible. **"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak." (James 1:19)**

I've supported a staff member whose family has been touched by ice addiction. Often people blame themselves when someone they love becomes addicted to ice, but it can affect anyone. It's just so cheap and so incredibly addictive. And that's why services like Mission Australia's Triple Care Farm are so important. Without these services the future for young people affected by ice is bleak.

For me, the most rewarding part of my role is getting to know our staff and being allowed to share some of their journey with them. It is a great privilege when people trust you enough that they will share their heart with you. I never take it for granted.

## **Become a volunteer chaplain**

Previous training or experience required. To express interest:



**1800 88 88 68**



**chaplaincy@missionaustralia.com.au**





# Thanks to you we're top of the OPs

**Not so long ago, op shops were just a grim hodgepodge of bric-a-brac, nylon and knitting patterns. But all that has changed. Op shops have finally lost their “ewww” factor!**

With 11 shops and more than 100 donation bins across New South Wales, Mission Australia Op Shops have come a long way in recent years. They've had makeovers. They've embraced the dark art of visual merchandising. They've even got their own social media account. Yes, you still need stamina to trawl through the racks, but op shopping is affordable, ethical and fun.

**3 It offers variety** Op shops are full of the deliciously bizarre and the tastelessly mundane. Whether you're after clothes or homewares, there are always hidden gems to be found.

**4 It saves you money** If you're a creative soul on a budget, op shopping is for you.

Finding a Gucci handbag at a bargain price is a bit like winning the Lotto.

**5 It's environmentally friendly** By recycling your things, you are reducing landfill and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. None of your valuable donations go to waste. Any unwearable clothing is cut down and sold as cleaning rags.

### 5 great reasons to go OP SHOPPING

**1 It supports charity** Every dollar you spend goes directly to people in need and provides local jobs and volunteering opportunities.

**2 It's a hipster haven** Love the thrill of the chase? Op shops are the perfect hunting ground for elusive fashion treasure. You'll be surprised at the vintage beauties and designer brands lurking here.

### Save the date

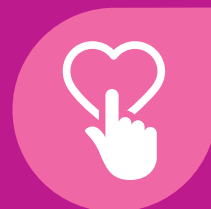
Rock your pre-loved outfit at the Mission Australia Op Shop Ball on Friday 12 August at Fairy Meadow.



**02 4286 6100**



**opshopball@missionaustralia.com.au**



Find your local Mission Australia OP SHOP:  [missionaustralia.com.au/opshops](http://missionaustralia.com.au/opshops)





**16-year old Breannan has a passion for fashion.** She volunteers part-time in one of our stores as part of our school based traineeship program. This will give her a Certificate III in Retail for her HSC.

"I've learned so much and I've met so many great people from the community. But the best thing of all, is I've found so many great bargains. I've now got a whole new wardrobe to wear."

I ♥ OP SHOPS



## DID YOU KNOW?



**1 shopping bag of clothing equates to approximately \$8,** which can put a meal on a family's table

.....



**6 months' worth of clothing donated into 1 donation bin equates to approximately \$5000,** which can create a traineeship for a young, unemployed jobseeker

.....



**1 full donation bin equates to approximately \$160,** which can provide necessities for a family who are homeless





**"I don't want  
to sleep in the  
car anymore."**

**Independence is precious**

Help us find them a safe home. Donate today.

 [missionaustralia.com.au/winterappeal](https://missionaustralia.com.au/winterappeal)

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