

THE SALVATION ARMY STOCKSBRIDGE




Festival of Thanksgiving



to be held at
St. Matthias Church
Saturday 20th November 2004
at 2.30 p.m.



1904 - 2004



*T*his brochure is to celebrate the centenary of the formation of the Salvation Army in Stocksbridge. Praise the Lord for a century of good works and Christian teaching in this area.

The first headquarters is said to have been a wooden hut, previously used as a fish shop, so there must have been quite a lot of cleaning to do! although the excitement at having their own headquarters would spur hardy and faithful people to great effort!

From 1912 onwards, any large event was held in halls throughout Stocksbridge; the Congregationalist Chapel, the British School, the Railway Dining Rooms and the British Hall. After one particular Harvest Festival, it was noted that the hall in Pearson Street was not large enough and in January 1913, the hall was given up and the lower Public Hall was rented at five shillings per week, including lighting and warmth! The lower Public Hall was in Edward Street, the property now known as the Legionnaires Club. The lower hall was a meeting hall which also held dances, the upper hall being a cinema at which the celebrated organist Reginald Dixon played at one time.

In July 1920 the corps was visited by Sheffield No. 2 band for the weekend and on the Saturday and Sunday a total of eleven outdoor and two indoor meetings were held - this was an age when people not only worked hard - they also shared a great Christian belief.

The decade of the twenties seemed an extremely busy time for the Army in Stocksbridge. In 1923 the Home League was formed, twelve months later the Songsters were inaugurated. While in 1926 a visiting brigadier drew congregations of two hundred people to each service!

The ambition of almost thirty years was reached in 1935. Hallelujah! The great opening of the new Salvation Army hall in Victoria Street. It is noted that a great crowd had gathered to see the Duchess of Wharnccliffe presented with a key and after making a speech she declared the hall open!

In 1970 the survival of the hall really was in God's hands when a runaway refuse lorry collided with it - the outer railings and wall were demolished, but the hall stood firm!

1999 saw the hall refurbished and modernised - double glazing and a new central heating system made the hall warmer and a loop hearing aid system was fitted.

In 2002 a number of young people who were just hanging around in the street came into a Sunday evening meeting. From this a youth drop-in was formed after the meetings on a Sunday night, which soon became a welcome venue for a cup of tea and a biscuit on a cold night!

Our weekly programme now includes Good Food (luncheon club), Good Friends (our Home League, but not just for ladies now!), Senior Challenge, Tinees and Tots, Timbrels and Scarecrows (our children's club). The love and faith that have kept the corps alive for 100 years is still very much in evidence so we pray that in another 100 years someone may write about what we were doing in 2004 - starting with this Centenary Celebration!