

Name/Title of Project St James firewood fund raising project for Fred Hollows Foundation

Background to Project

Some years ago a parishioner who has large quantities of fallen timber on their property, suggested a group might get together to cut some firewood for older folks in the parish. From this germ of an idea came the now flourishing St James Firewood for Fred Hollows Project. Over time the group has expanded to include other people from the larger community.

The Fred Hollows Foundation supports health care, particularly related to eyesight and cataract operations in the Third World. As many as 50,000 people in the Pacific remain blind for want of cataract operations. Sir Edmund Hillary was patron of the NZ Foundation and along with Fred Hollows shared a commitment to leave the world a better place. This seem to resonate with both the work group and those who purchase the firewood.

Who the Project is Aimed at

There are three beneficiaries, the 'lumberjacks' group, the firewood customers and those receiving treatment through the Fred Hollows Foundation

The Aim of the Project

To raise funds for a foundation which reflects our concerns for others and in a small way mirrors the work of Jesus who 'gave sight to the blind'.

It also provides an opportunity for members of the congregation and supporters from the wider community to get together on a weekly basis, working and sharing time together in an activity which has very obvious benefits to all concerned.

How the Project Works

Once a week the group of around 5-9 meets with chainsaws, tractors, a wood splitter, utes and trailers and plenty of muscle to cut and spilt gum and pine which is delivered to homes where people are only too willing to see payment going to this worthwhile cause. Others also participate by providing refreshments for the team.

The Outcomes of the Project

In 2008/09 around \$3000 was raised, \$5,000+ in the 2009/10 season In the 2011 over \$8000 was raised.

The other very positive outcome is the social outreach of the church through the contact with the customers and the time the 'lumberjacks' spend working together.

General Observations

It has become an enriching activity for all concerned. This project keeps the group warm in many ways: as the wood is chopped and split, as they sit together over a cuppa and chat, as they deliver to their 'valued customers' and even warmer when they get the cheque! Finally, thinking of the people who will benefit which is the warmest feeling of all!