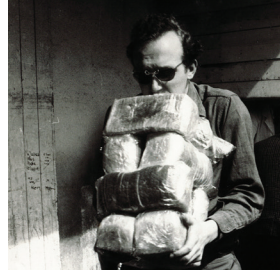


## THE EARLY DAYS



“SIMON IS ALL ABOUT GREAT PEOPLE...”

“When days were dark, chaos was everywhere, the pressure was intense, the work was never done and the urge to quit was mighty, it was the people who kept me going, great people at all levels in Simon - all people of generosity and commitment.

“Many of these people are gone without a trace; some are dead. Other greats who must not be forgotten are the people who silently and generously provide the money to keep us on the road.

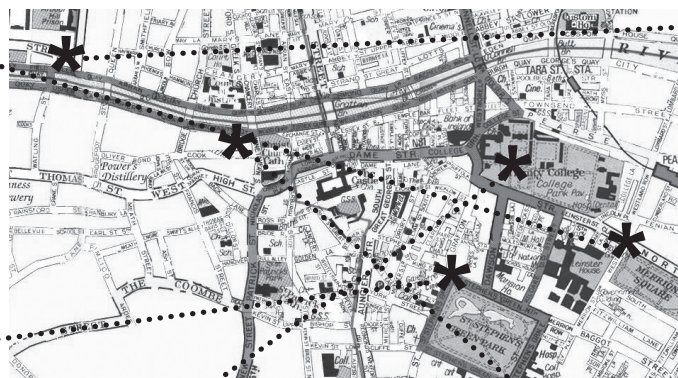
“All of us probably have (or should have!) got our inspiration from the modest, patient people who lived in old cars, doorways and skips and who had the canny gift of seeing the bright side of things. Simon is about the sharing of that spirit; the sharing of human goodness.”

The late Frank O’Leary, Soup Runner, Committee Member and Chairperson, writing in 1989.

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## SIMON MOVES ACROSS DUBLIN

**FEBRUARY 1969**  
Merrion Square  
The first Soup Run, made up of Trinity and UCD students, sets out on the streets of Dublin. This followed a talk at Earlsfort Terrace by the founder of the Simon Community in England, Anton Wallich-Clifford.



**JANUARY 1971**  
Sarsfield Quay  
Volunteers acquire No. 9 & No. 10 Sarsfield Quay for the Soup Run, a Wet House and a Dry House.



**MAY 1969**  
St Stephen’s Green Park  
Volunteers hold a 24 Hour Fast and Sleep Out to raise funds for supplies and a residential house.

**JUNE 1969**  
Arts Block, Trinity College  
The volunteers are given permission to use the Arts Society Rooms during the summer.



**OCTOBER 1969**  
Winetavern Street  
Frank O’Leary, a Franciscan Priest, organises the next base at a disused house, soon becoming a shelter and base for the Soup Run.

WORDS FROM OUR CLIENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

“There were at times different ways of describing the Simon philosophy. It was said to be based on three fundamental concepts of Identification, Non-Judgemental Acceptance and Therapeutic Community. The concept of unconditional help was also sometimes used.”

Jim, Early Simon Volunteer

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“The homeless people who have become part of Dublin Simon over the years have contributed to all those who have worked with the Community; they have taught us the basic facts about homelessness - what causes it, what the reality is like, and where the possible solutions might lie. Many of them have show extraordinary courage and good humour in the face of circumstances which would have defeated other people. This story is, above all their story; without them there would have been no Dublin Simon Community.”\*

Ursula, Early Simon Volunteer

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“Simon offers us a sense of involvement that we cannot find in other organisations. Here we have time to talk and communicate with other people.”\*

Marie, Early Simon Worker

“They said, ‘We’re Simon’. They told me they had a house in Winetavern Street. I’d get a mattress on the floor, a cup of tea and whatever else was going. So I took the chance. They put me into a car and brought me down.”

Tommy, Winetavern Street Resident\*



“It was really good living in that house - something I couldn’t explain. You had a roof over your head, you had a home, although you were only sleeping on a mattress on the floor. It was great luxury.”

John Joe, Winetavern Street Resident\*

\*Quotes from ‘It’s Simon - The Story of the Dublin Simon Community’ by Ursula Coleman.

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SIMON IN THE NEWS

IN THE UNIVERSITIES

## Nourishment for Vagrants

By Our T.C.D. Correspondent. Irish Times  
14th March  
1969

THREE NIGHTS a week a group of Trinity and U.C.D. students take bread and soup to areas frequented by Dublin’s down and outs. Though there is an estimated 200 people sleeping out in the city this winter, the organisers of this soup run have only located 43 and not all of these will avail themselves of the free soup for fear of the motives of the “dogooders.” Undaunted the volunteers make their regular stops and by doing so hope to win the “dossers” around to accepting warmth, nourishment and, perhaps, eventually their friendship.

## AN IRISHWOMAN’S DIARY

### Night Watch

Irish Times  
6th October  
1969

While the worthy burghers of Dublin sleep snug in their beds, some 40 young people of whom about half are students spend the small hours with the down and outs and derelicts of the city’s skid row. Since February the young people, who belong to the Simon Community, have brought hot soup and consolation to the men who sleep rough, in an abandoned car or truck, perhaps, or in any shivering shelter they can find.

## THE DARK SIDE OF DUBLIN

Irish Times  
16th May  
1969

We cater for people who are not able to avail of the services offered. We must go out to them because they cannot come to us and accept them as they are, on their own conditions.”

The aim is to have a three tier community. The first plan is a rough all night cafe. This, it is hoped, will attract outcasts of the night and develop into a shelter where 12 down and outs and three Simon workers will live together, all decisions being taken by the community.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Dublin Simon Community would like to establish contact with anyone who has volunteered with us over the past 50 years to share your stories and experiences. Anyone who is interested can contact the Fundraising Team at [simon50@dubsimon.ie](mailto:simon50@dubsimon.ie). Thank you.

