

20 February 2015 - Norwegian Red Cross 150 Years

Norway Post is celebrating the Norwegian Red Cross jubilee with four stamps. The country's largest humanitarian organisation truly deserves to be recognised.

The Norwegian Red Cross currently has 120,000 members. Six thousand employees and 42,000 volunteers make a huge contribution to helping people in need.



The Norwegian Red Cross was founded in 1865, but it did not grow into a folk movement until the 1920s. It was considered an organisation for the upper class for more than fifty years, but this changed in 1921 when the Norwegian Red Cross rolled out a recruiting campaign with the tagline, «If you are a



friend of peace, sign up for the Norwegian Red Cross». This touched a chord throughout the entire country, and by the end of 1921 the Norwegian Red Cross had more than 100,000 members.



Author Eldrid Mageli has described the work of the Norwegian Red Cross as follows: «When people get lost, Red Cross rushes out to find them. When mountain villages are cut off due to landslides or snowstorms, Red Cross ships food and equipment. At events where large crowds of people gather, the Red Cross is always there to offer first aid.(...) Immigrants, the lonely, the sick, the incarcerated, the drug addicts, minors seeking asylum and all others who find themselves in a difficult situation are focus groups for the Red Cross organisation.»



The international humanitarian efforts of the Norwegian Red Cross increased rapidly after the extensive movement to help the people of Biafra and Nigeria during the famine in 1968. The organisation of the massive aid project was the largest international project in the history of the Norwegian Red Cross. Every year the Norwegian Red Cross spends almost NOK 1 billion on aid in Norway and other countries and these resources are distributed in accordance with the seven Red Cross principles that were adopted in Vienna in 1965:

humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.