



MEET THE DONUT LASSIES



In 1917, The Salvation Army responded to a call for help from U.S. soldiers fighting in France during World War I. At the request of Gen. John J. Pershing, around **250 SALVATION ARMY OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS** traveled overseas to set up small huts near the front lines, providing soldiers with supplies, clothing, and, most importantly, sweet treats.

Faced with the challenge of baking under difficult conditions, two officers — Ensign Margaret Sheldon and Adjutant Helen Purviance — came up with the idea of frying donuts. These simple yet delicious snacks quickly lifted the spirits of the troops, becoming a **SYMBOL OF COMFORT AND CARE** in the midst of war.

The women who served the donuts became known as the **“DONUT LASSIES”** and are often credited with introducing the donut to the American public when soldiers returned home from the war. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, The Salvation Army continued to make and distribute donuts, offering a sense of hope during the Great Depression.

In 1938, The Salvation Army in Chicago established the first **NATIONAL DONUT DAY**, a tradition created to support those suffering during the Depression and to honor the legacy of the Donut Lassies.

Today the donut remains a lasting symbol of the comfort and joy The Salvation Army provided to soldiers during World War I. National Donut Day, celebrated every year on the first Friday of June, continues to commemorate the work of the Donut Lassies, with Salvation Army locations across the country delivering donuts to **VETERANS AND THOSE IN NEED** as part of their ongoing mission of service and compassion.

