[**#HumansofTheShelters**](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/humansoftheshelters?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZXa_s0MPXuxPKDiZM0ZZfRn3fa3QWzqodQYxgEDyLt6BWhAbl5sHkYTrEBKqedOq_j-fTgTBQulA6IiuLF15RYlB7wOfeX1jlEHmZF9X3j5Gti1sxwpoM0wwKFwRuL5JEw&__tn__=*NK-R)

“Well, I was having some problems... mental health kind of and living with my boyfriend at the time and things started to go bad. I lost my mom, so I started getting some mental issues and crying a lot. Everything went downhill. My boyfriend started staying out and so it caused us to be in a really bad predicament with each other... because he started being aggressive with me and mad all the time because I was still in mourning over my mother. Crying, and I was having outbursts. I can’t believe that I’m here and I’ve changed my whole outlook on everything. I really didn’t feel like I had a home when I was there. I just needed help and I didn't want to reach out to anyone else. This was the only place I'd heard of so I was nervous coming. I think I called a couple times and then I just said ‘okay, I’m going to do it’ and I got up in the morning, called and I came. If it weren't for you guys, I don’t know where I’d be. Honest to God, I had no place to go and for sure thought ‘Oh my God...I’m going to die this winter’. It’s made me a better person. Everything is possible. If I am living, everything is possible. I’ve had a lot of hardships and a lot of loss. My life has totally changed. I was literally depending on everyone else my whole life and now I’m independent and do a lot of things on my own. That is a big change for me. All the things I’ve taken for granted in the past, I realize now. I was always a good person I would say. But now I feel stronger. I wouldn’t let those things happen...I wouldn’t let the people who did bad things to me continue to do it. Now, I know better and would tell them. My goals are mainly to keep doing things that I’m supposed to be doing and get into housing. Hopefully with my two sons and living a better life than what I’ve had in the past five years. Thanks to you guys, I’ve learned how to clean. Now I clean...clean very well! I'm glad. Even when your down, have a shower...you’ll feel a little bit better. I want to get my GED.” They describe The Shelters as “a place where you can re-build your life and learn from your mistakes”. Their favourite place in Fredericton is Grace House.

**Source**: The Fredericton Homeless Shelters Facebook Page

**Meet John** [**#HumansofTheShelters**](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/humansoftheshelters?__eep__=6&__tn__=*NK*F)

 “First time, loss of job and drug addiction...loss of job was because of drug addiction. I stopped struggling probably five years ago. I’ve slipped a couple times since then, but it’s not a struggle anymore. It switched from struggle to life. I just had to get my life not centered around drugs. I didn’t realize that’s all I had to do...was just live. I tried NA, AA, all of that shit and that just triggers... it just wasn’t for me. Some people it saved their life. It was not for me; I couldn’t do it. As soon as I figured out, I just needed to live life, there doesn’t need to be dilaudid in it. I’m older, I missed the whole meth... it wasn’t around when I was younger. I probably would have tried it if it was around when I was younger. I probably would have been right into it, but I luckily missed it. This shit scares me. It’s just not good, I’m scared to death. I don’t know what you guys are going to do to help these people. This is a great place...this place has helped me, seriously. It saved my life... just straight up saved my life.” Each day he looks forward to “breakfast. I love to eat. I’ve eaten across Canada and this is the best soup kitchen by far. It is very rare that you find a kitchen that will serve three meals a day to begin with...but then three full cooked meals is just unheard of. Most places will give you a bag at lunch time if you are lucky. It's not good, it’s awesome. As far as a soup kitchen goes, I would say they are top ten in Canada.” In five years, he sees himself “not here... hopefully in five years I’m going to be running my own business... my partner and I are going to try and do our own paint and drywall. In five years, I hope to have that running.” His favourite place in Fredericton is walking across the walking bridge and on the trails.

**Source:** The Fredericton Homeless Shelters Facebook Page

**Meet Michelle.** [**#HumansofTheShelters**](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/humansoftheshelters?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZXJ3kFGjtsg9CPbfKcxcHP0QEeRcJoe-Jr44v7F_juMz4Mw5la8g5QHxyLtT1sdPaynNqHlpQJGomoqhZ0-Z4boRWW_lstoVuSAjKtgSTHH3_NQrry-AkTC1o1zYTpZGvo&__tn__=*NK-R)

“Originally I’m from Fredericton. I was crying upset and I was talking to one of the girls here and I told them my situation luckily there was two beds for me and my daughter or we would have been on the street. I’ve been on the street before when my kid was smaller but in an abusive home and I had abusive relationships. I’m the type of person that I’m a go getter and I also worked with the homeless when I had a home quite a few years ago with my kids. I used to gather stuff up and go lay it on the street and give kids, like people, everything I could. So, I know what it feels like. I was bound and determined I’m not going on the streets. I seen people on the street and I cry all the time because there’s gotta be more homeless shelters. It’s not safe to be on the street. I think people should know. I went to school and I went to college. I went back to school in my fifties and got my grade twelve. I want to go back and take a French course because I’m a French descent. I wanted to go in the army when I was younger. I wish I had. I’m still young, and I think I can be a massagist, my mother always told me I was good with that. My ambition here is to...I’m bound and determined... to get a place and try to make my daughter feel better about herself. I know I can do it; I’ve done it before; I’ve been in bad situations before. My time here at The Shelters has been good, the staff are awesome. The residents are great, I have a few I’m more closer to because they’re more my age. I try not to say anything negative about anybody. If they help me, I will help back. We all work together. I have no addiction. I like my coffee, if you call that an addiction but I think a lot of people my age and younger like it too. I have high anxiety which I don’t take any meds for. My daughter is my support, my support person. She is there for me, and has been there for me.” Her favorite place in Fredericton is the “lookout because you go up and you look over the river and it’s so peaceful.”

**Source**: The Fredericton Homeless Shelters Facebook Page

**Meet Mark.** [**#HumansofTheShelters**](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/humansoftheshelters?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZUB7weENt4d3gmeTLZKaRICDy4jme98ZYhZxwyyHRtvGB5C0UhJzMNz17nxiwVNmxAS2c1KEVy1SVAvbnM_WThhIx86vtiYL8NGnmTCpcFsDX5OPfSWPFY-9XezNjXTSfI&__tn__=*NK-R)

“I am from McAdam, New Brunswick.” Mark came to The Shelters “the first time was because my ex-girlfriend's family threw me out of her house and this time here is because I thought with the wrong head... easiest way to put it. Coming to this homeless shelter isn’t a bad thing at all. You guys have a lot you can offer people. Your guy's words for one are enough to help people realize that this place isn’t a bad spot to be.” When asked what he looks forward to each day, Mark said “a Tim Horton's coffee, believe it or not”. Mark commented that “there has been a lot of really good experiences here, but I can also say there have been a lot of bad experiences here. The good ones are that I’ve got to meet a bunch of new people I get to help when I can or how I can. The bad things about it is having people wake me up all hours of the night. But that’s life. In five years, I hope to have had my GED finished, I hope to be done my hairdressing school and I’m hoping to have my driver's license. I most definitely can because I finally got my head in the right spot that it needs to be. Those are the three most important goals right now. When I am extremely stressed out, I walk. When I am aggravated, I talk. If I am depressed, I just keep to myself and I like to help people when I know I can’t help myself. If I can help somebody, it makes me feel like I’ve accomplished something so that really turns my day around. I try to do whatever I can to make everybody else a little bit happier in the run of a day, whether I am happy or not at that point is not the issue, it’s making sure that they don’t feel like they are alone. Even though you feel alone yourself, it is a weird feeling to be honest.” Mark’s favourite place in Fredericton is the basketball courts at Wilmot Park.

**Source**: The Fredericton Homeless Shelters Facebook Page

[**#HumansofTheShelters**](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/humansoftheshelters?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZWhb0VfPm2ssRi51-VFVcb9g2u_uP9lGZXNQk7ktt0mWuBiiaQj_IbOaGQUe7j4hZOhWWy0DoKsiP3nRy8S2GgCmurWHMzYYTgYeRuijJfIfFzTlYplp8JSk1PTJtCAqFo&__tn__=*NK-R)

 “Just a hassle with not having a permanent living situation, I guess. Tired of moving here and there and tired of living with other people. I know one thing; I didn’t realize how good the shelter is if people are looking to change their lives. It made a big difference for me. I didn’t want to go there at first. The staff are great, they did a lot for me. At first, I had a lot of negative...like I was unsure of it. Once I got there, I realized how well it was and how respectful the people are that stay there also. I got along with everyone there... I never had no problems. I don’t have some of the same worries I had a year ago with living situations and I’m at ease with where I’m at and where I’m living right now. Just being at peace. In five years? Hopefully by then I’ll have a job and something I can do with the way my back is. Maybe go back to school...I don’t know yet. Just getting my life back in order after a lot of different things in my life brought me to where I am. Have better relationships with people and being more social and outgoing like I used to be. My childhood was normal, but I was brought up in a lot of alcoholism and I think that affected me as I got older... not wanting to be home, violence and stuff like that I seen. At an early age, went on my own...I wasn’t disciplined for what I did at a younger age. I basically did what I wanted. It kind of caught up to me as I got older. Not so much addiction now, I’m on methadone but I did because of the operation I had for my back... I was on dilaudid. Big change in the last five years, a big difference. Thanks for the shelter and the soup kitchen. It helped me out a lot and it helps a lot of other people out. Programs like that help a lot of people around here. I’m grateful for it. Just try it if you need it. Just try it...give it a chance if ya need it.” Their favourite place in Fredericton is “St Mary’s Reserve”.

**Source**: The Fredericton Homeless Shelters Facebook Page

**Meet Emily.** [**#HumansofTheShelters**](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/humansoftheshelters?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZWPZ_bLOV4P2M4BQhobTQA9pyX48VBuwyil9cgsMZOupLhtnUFzKsUD0owDRQoP6kK_Q4A-qYj0l0tAL9UjgQTP7TShCfFyB7NQQLqFgCLs2JSTuM5z_NQTNi1jIpw68Ew&__tn__=*NK-R)

“Fredericton needs to be more aware about the homeless situation. Working downtown and seeing the people on the streets every day and seeing how people just walk by or hearing people say things about them. They need to stop being so closed minded. After being in this situation myself, it’s opened my eyes a lot more to how it can be anyone. It’s not just one type of people. It could be anybody. Everybody who comes to shelters has a life, has a story, has a purpose...they just need to find it and get back on their feet. They need a chance and Fredericton needs to start giving them a chance. No matter where you are from or how good of a life you have...things could still go to shit and you could still end up in a shelter. Just because you are in a shelter doesn’t mean that you are one of ‘those people’. My time at the Shetler has been pretty oddly normal. It’s just like living in a shared housing situation, which I’ve done before. The staff are great... I get along with all of them so far. Something I look forward to everyday is I guess just the fact that I’m living downtown and I’m able to go for a walk by the river every day. Hopefully I am going to be a tattoo artist and have my own little business set up by then. I want to have kids and settle down. Probably just two or three. My alcoholism started when I was 14 and it got really bad when I was 18. I became a binge drinker by the time I was 18. Then I got into cocaine when I was 20. I did that until I was almost 22. I’ve relapsed a couple times here and there. I’m still relapsing with booze but it’s going a lot better than it used to be. I’m on a waitlist for rehab and I've gone to detox a couple times and I've got an addiction counsellor. It’s a daily struggle but it’s weirdly enough after coming here, I've seen more hope than before because it’s just meeting so many people coming in and out – different people every week and hearing different people's backstories. I’ve met a few people who used to be into hard drugs and stuff and then they got sober and clean. They were still sober and clean when they came here despite having gone into a shitty part of life again- they're not relapsing... that just kind of reinforced the fact that just because I’m going through a shitty time and am going to have more shitty times happen in my life, doesn’t mean that I always have to go down this route.” Emily’s favourite place is by the river.

**Source**: The Fredericton Homeless Shelters Facebook Page