

LEGACY DOES MORE THAN SELL BADGES

THE ROLE OF LEGACY IN AUSTRALIA'S SOCIAL HISTORY

I N D E X

1. Australia - forming an identity.
2. Social change "between the wars".
3. Making hard times easier.
4. The role of women.
5. Changing face of Australia.
6. Educating Australia's youth.
7. Present and future.



1914 – 1918 " THE WAR TO END ALL WARS "

A Young Nation Joins the Fight

Australians entered the 1914–1918 war, "the war to end all wars" as optimistic youth sailing to unknown destinations filled with patriotism for the Empire.

In 1915 under British command Australians and New Zealanders (ANZACS) were employed to help break through the Turkish lines, to seize the Dardenelles and clear a way to the Mediterranean. The battle which began on April 25, 1915 was unsuccessful from the start. More than 7,600 courageous Australians lost their lives and 19,000 were maimed and wounded. The casualties suffered by Australia grieved the young nation and fuelled the legend of the Anzac.

Much of Australia's war was fought in the trenches in France, and in Palestine. From 1914 to 1918 an integral part of the grinding, dying, warfare machine were the Australian troops – the "Diggers".



In 1915 the Anzacs were employed to help break through the Turkish lines, to seize the Dardenelles and clear a way to the Mediterranean.

Of the 330,000 Australians sent to fight in World War I, 59,342 died and 151,171 were wounded.

Those returning. . .

Those who returned, came back to a country recovering from a severe drought in the midst of industrial turmoil.

A Department of Repatriation was established in 1917 to deal with the problems of these returned men. The Department organised benefits for those who were brought home permanently disabled. They arranged training for those wishing to re-enter the civilian workforce, but employment was scarce

and at the start of the "prosperous" twenties, 14,000 returned men were out of work.

Battling widows

The war left many widows battling to survive on their own, many of them with young families. In 1925 half of the light industry workforce was female, but with a differential wage structure operating, women only received half of the male wage. There were no child-minding facilities, no public health scheme, and child endowment was not introduced until 1927.

the DEPRESSION



*In 1939 Australia became involved
in a Second World War.*

In the United States, the supposed boom period of the twenties was a time of extravagance and over-expansion of industry. Australia responded with unrestrained use of foreign investment funds.

When the US stockmarket crashed in 1929 the world's trading nations suffered almost immediately. Australia felt the effects as wool and wheat markets dropped, and the overseas interest bill soared.

In Australia the Depression crippled primary and secondary industry and put half a million workers on the streets. At the peak of the Depression unemployment stood at 24%.

The State Governments financed the dole and some public works, but this support was little and grudging. Many men resorted to the goldfields and rabbit trapping to try to make a living.

In 1939, when Australia had put behind it the worst effects of the Depression, the world was thrown into chaos by Hitler's aggression.

settling INTO CIVILIAN LIFE



No soldier could avoid meeting almost every day some sad-faced young widow, not long bereft of a husband, or some young family in which the father was only dimly remembered.



Australian servicemen voyaged for six weeks and fifteen thousand kilometres to the First World War. There was no opportunity for home leave, and therefore no gradual appreciation of how the loss of their comrades was affecting life back in Australia.

On returning to peaceful, civilian life the men were unable to forget their experiences of the previous four years. Their war experience united them in a common category with thousands of living comrades and those who had died beside them in battle or as the result of battle. "No soldier could avoid meeting almost every day some sad-faced young widow, not long bereft of a husband, or some young family in which the father was only dimly remembered."

■ THE ORIGINS OF LEGACY

Men who were known for their leadership and influence in wartime were looked to for leadership in civilian times. Major-General Sir John Gellibrand from Tasmania was such a man. He formed a Remembrance Club in Hobart for returned servicemen to gather to revive comradeship and to establish business contacts. Apart from providing a friendly meeting opportunity, the Club's primary aim was to assist in finding employment for returned servicemen.

The Remembrance Club inspired the origins of Legacy. The first Legacy Club in Australia was formed in Melbourne in 1923 founded by the late Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Savige, KBE, CB, DSO, MC, ED, who believed that "life itself is worthless without some form of service to the community".

By 1925 most returned servicemen had been assimilated into peaceful society and their problems diminished. The Legacy Club needed a new objective to hold the idealism of its members. The Club took up the challenge of caring for the widows and children of deceased comrades, for as Legatee Frank Doolan said to an assembly: "Have you fellows thought that the dying wish of any of our cobblers would be that we should look after his missus and kids?"

the GROWTH OF LEGACY

Why Legacy?

The word *legacy* describes something handed down or received, a gift bequeathed by will. For the Legacy Club its meaning is in reverse. It is the Club's *legacy* to serve, and to give without receiving anything in return.

After careful investigation of the benefits provided by the Repatriation Department and the help given by other bodies like the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia (now the RSL), it was concluded that the usefulness of Legacy lay in the care, guidance and encouragement of families of those comrades who were no longer there. Members of Legacy were to act as guardians and sponsors giving the advice their dead comrades would have given.

To qualify to join Legacy an applicant had to have served in war overseas in Australian or British Forces, and ideally belonged to a profession or trade, or had employment connections which the club could call on. Legatees made up a pool of professional and commercial skills with considerable influence.

Legacy spread throughout the continent as a response to local demand. The various offshoots of Legacy were tailored to suit local conditions but had the same basic intention to care for the widows and children of deceased comrades.

Today, there are 48 Legacy Clubs in Australia. Melbourne Legacy is just one of these Clubs. The services of Melbourne Legacy are provided through 13 Metropolitan Branches and 13 Victorian Country Groups.

how LEGACY STARTED HELPING

At the time of its emergence in the 1920's Legacy's main concerns were obtaining employment for children of deceased servicemen (called Junior Legatees), providing child welfare services and arranging social events.

The real work of Legacy began as the first signs of the depression were evident in the financial structures of the world. It was this period of poverty and unemployment that put Legacy firmly on its feet. "Legacy stood like a rock on which many harassed mothers and their small families came to rely almost as the basic fact in their small lives."

During this period Legacy together with the RSL also provided assistance in finding work for ex-servicemen.

In 1928 Legacy made the first representations asking for increases in widows' pensions by the Federal Government.

Self improvement was the aim of physical culture classes held for Legacy's junior boys and girls. Melbourne Legacy held the first of what became annual demonstrations of physical culture and eurythmics in March 1928 in Melbourne Town Hall.

making **HARD TIMES EASIER**

During the early years when Australia, like the rest of the world, was experiencing hard economic times Legacy helped to secure jobs for unemployed Juniors and widows.

Legacy's efforts ran in conjunction with the Repatriation Department which had endless lists of unemployed. Legacy circulated employment cards listing those in need of work, they also ran press and radio advertisements. Many youngsters were found employment in this way. They proved to be in most cases exceptional workers and the reputation of Legacy grew. The name of Legacy became an opening to Departments and business houses.

During times of greater affluence Legacy examined the positions held by Juniors and widows to see if they held good future prospects. A Tutorial Sub-Committee was set up which saw that many Junior Legatees were raised from the ranks of unskilled labour into positions which held a likelihood of continuity throughout their working lives.

■ AS LEGACY GREW ...

As Legacy grew so too did its capacity to respond to areas of need. Committees of Legatees were established providing a great variety of services.

The Pensions and Distress Committee was formed during the Depression in the early 1930s to solve family problems through advice and practical co-operation. Assistance took many forms; children were given clothing for school or employment; there was food relief; optical, dental and medical treatment (there was

no Medicare); board and lodging; pocket money and fares. Legacy provided a sewing machine, a loan to meet a furniture payment, a welcome pound (\$2) to pay the gas bill . . .

The Use of Visitor Contactors was also an important development in these hard economic times. Legatees were appointed as advisers to the families of Junior Legatees. They were required to not only establish personal friendly relations with the Juniors, but also to report on domestic or economic troubles being experienced by the families under their guidance.

The personal nature of this service is what characterises Legacy. Part of a Legatee's work involves the pleasant task of "having a cup of tea with mum in the kitchen."

PENSION APPEALS

Perhaps Legacy's greatest usefulness lay in its appeals to the Repatriation Commission (now known as D.V.A) if a deceased serviceman's widow had not been given entitlement to pensions and assistance.

Legacy assembled and presented to the tribunals material relevant to the hearing of pensions applications and appeals. In the majority of cases Legacy helped to secure Repatriation Department benefits for widows.

And then another world war . . .



Each year hundreds of Legatees, helped by Defence Force Personnel and friends of Legacy, sell badges to raise money for Legacy.

In 1939 when World War II broke out the machinery was in place for Legacy to serve the widows and orphans of this new conflict. The bereaved of war had never been served before in any country in history in such a way.

Legacy does not only assist the dependants of men killed in action, but also of those who died on returning to civilian life.

Many of those who had been orphaned as a result of World War I fought in the services in World War II. Legacy provided a contact newsletter for Juniors and ex-Juniors, prompting such sentiments; "It made me feel good inside to think that the Legacy Club should remember me after all these years; still it goes to show how lasting Legacy is ..."

In August 1942 when World War II had reached Australian territory it had been realised that the responsibility for the widows and orphans of war lay with the community as a whole. In the beginning Legacy work had been financed by Legatee subscriptions, Club Luncheon profits, and bequests. Now the organisation appealed to the public to enable it to maintain its services.

In August 1942 Legacy held its first Badge Day Appeal. In 1948 this was moved to the first Friday in September commemorating the declaration of World War II and the signing of the peace treaty in the Pacific. Badge Day has been held on this day ever since, and continues to receive great public support.

1992 marked the 50th Annual Legacy Badge Day.



WOMEN IN WAR

The Second World War saw a significant change in the role of women. As ever nurses and their assistants were in the thick of things - in hospitals next to the front line and behind the lines but the absence of men at home brought women into new areas of employment. Around 200,000 women entered the workforce with 52,000 joining the services.

Women's services - in the Army, Navy and Air Force - went beyond the menial tasks. Women became communication specialists; aircraft ferry pilots; specialist code breakers; aircraft plotters; airtraffic controllers; parachute assemblers; supply organisers; mechanics; armourers and fitters; air spotters and clerical workers. The munitions factories, aircraft and naval vessel assembly lines were almost 100% womanpower. Trams, trains and buses saw women taking over the jobs usually reserved for men.

On the home-front, women worked farms taking over the crops from seeding to harvesting. The Australian Women's Land Army was formed in July 1942 and alone had 2,500 permanent employees and 630 auxiliary members.

Women's increased involvement in the workforce raised their understanding of society outside the home. After the war had ended many women through necessity or desire chose to stay in the workforce. Legacy assisted widows and Junior Legatees to gain employment. A differential wage structure applied with women receiving well below male wage. Legacy supplemented the widow's income when necessary.

The wife and mother role still dominated and women were required to organise their work timetable around childminding and household tasks. Legatees assisted with advice and aimed to give Legacy mothers greater independence from their children by arranging sporting and activity groups, tutorial assistance, holiday camps and outings.

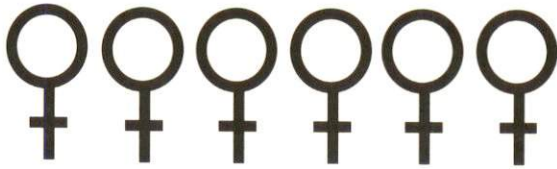
Nowadays women have equal employment opportunities with men. Legacy continues to assist Junior Legatees in their studies. Many are gaining professional degrees or are undertaking post-graduate work.

■ WOMEN LIVE LONGER

The teenage bride who was made a young widow by World War I, whose pension Legacy fought for and whose first home it helped her obtain is now elderly and is having difficulty caring for herself at home.

It is accepted that women have a greater life expectancy than men. In Australia on average women live seven to ten years longer than men. This longevity has been aided by advancements in technology and medicine. Legacy registers the effect as more and more elderly widows of World War II servicemen are enrolled.

Legacy provides an important avenue of social contact for many of these women through self-supporting Widows' Clubs. They meet for activities and day trips. In many cases they visit those who are house or hospital bound, or gain satisfaction from voluntary work in Legacy's cause.



Women doing Legacy work . . .

Throughout its existence most of Legacy's work has been carried out by Legatees drawn from the ranks of servicemen who fought overseas in the Australian or British Forces. The majority of these men served in the World Wars, and their numbers are decreasing due to age and ill health.

The present rules for eligibility to become a Legatee now permit the enrolment of women. The recently formed Legacy Foundation (1987) has made provisions for women and non-returned men to join and to perform the function of Legatees.

In some areas Legacy employs Field Officers to assist with Legatee tasks. All Field Officers employed by Legacy are women. The employment of Field Officers and Welfare Officers experienced in Social Work has also occurred in response to widows' requests for more advice and assistance.

Women in the services . . .

Today many women are in the Services, and with changes to Department of Veterans' Affairs benefits and the Veterans' Entitlement Act, dependants of these servicewomen will be eligible to apply for benefits in the event of their deaths. As these changes have occurred, Legacy has extended its services to the widowers of ex-servicewomen.

Changing **FACE OF AUSTRALIA**

■ **THE SUBURBS**

The years immediately following the end of the Second World War saw the birth of Australia's outer suburbs. Returned soldiers with their horizons expanded by overseas service, were prepared to move 30 kilometres from the city centres to buy their own plots of land.

In 1948 a joint State and Commonwealth housing scheme provided 28,000 houses for ex-servicemen and low-income earners adding to the rapid growth of the suburbs.

■ **NEW AUSTRALIANS**

The end of World War II saw a boom in immigration which literally changed the face of Australia. From 1951 onward Australia was to receive about 100,000 immigrants annually. In 1947 Australia's population stood at 7.5 million and in 1993 at 17 million.

Migrant widows of Australian and Allied servicemen have equal rights to Legacy services. For example a family of migrants from Malta was enrolled with Legacy. The father was a British serviceman who died, after migration, as the result of his war service. The mother was unable to speak English and was living with four children in a sub-standard home. Legacy had them transferred to a housing settlement, with the promise of a Housing Commission home in the future. Legacy is non-discriminatory when providing assistance in cases of need where eligible.

■ **EDUCATING AUSTRALIA**

The period from 1949 to 1960 saw major developments in higher education with an increase in universities and other tertiary education institutions. Juniors and widows with the assistance of Legacy benefited from the improved opportunities for further education.

The commitment continues . . .

During the fifties and sixties communist armies threatened the freedom of a number of countries. Between 1950 and 1953 Australian troops joined the United Nations military contingent assisting the South Koreans against a North Korean Communist assault. The conflict in Korea produced 1,600 Australian casualties. Legacy was once again able to assist the families of the deceased.

In 1955 Australia provided troops in Malaya to help counter the Communist insurgency there.

In 1965 Australia deployed troops to Vietnam to fight in a war which was to span an entire decade from 1962 to 1973. Many of those who served in Vietnam were drafted as conscription was reintroduced in 1964. Furious debates raged as to the morality and wisdom of this war and compulsory service.

Nevertheless, those who served acted in accordance with Australia's laws, and in Australia's interests as perceived by the government of the day.

Australian service personnel have also been committed to Peace-keeping Forces in United Nations Operational Areas. Recent involvement has been in the Sinai, Iran, Iraq, Namibia and Cambodia.

The recent conflict in the Gulf also saw the deployment of Australian service personnel.

In the nineties Legacy is still coping with the repercussions of war and peacekeeping operations.

Australia's

YOUTH



One of Legacy's main objectives has always been to prepare its youth for successful adult lives, to educate them, to train them as good citizens, and help them enter the adult community as well-balanced, useful, patriotic citizens.



One of Legacy's main objectives has always been to prepare its youth for successful adult lives, to educate them, to train them as good citizens, and help them enter the adult community as well-balanced, useful, patriotic citizens. Its concern has always been for both their intellectual and physical health.

In the twenties Legacy established Gymnasiums to provide Juniors with the opportunity to develop in physique, deportment and discipline. The debating society, guest lectures, the lending library, and tutorial groups assisted in their intellectual development. Camps, outings, concerts etc. provided a social outlet.

Finding employment for Junior Legatees was and still is a major concern; however the emphasis shifted from merely securing jobs to placing Juniors in positions that would start them off on definite life careers. Occupational Suitability Tests and vocational guidance assisted Junior Legatees searching for employment appropriate to their talents and interests.

Legacy holds the underlying principle that no child should lack the opportunity for educational advancement for lack of funds. Legacy has obtained financial scholarships for the education of Junior Legatees, and also provides assistance with fees, text books and pocket money. Over the years Legacy has provided assistance for a variety of fields of study ranging from law and medicine, to signwriting and modelling.

In the early days Legacy hostels were provided for trade apprentices, and for students attending universities and technical colleges.

... Legacy still has 2500 Juniors enrolled.

Since its inception, Legacy has guided more than one million young people to take their places in society, some very prominently.

There are ex-Junior Legatees who are national and international media personalities. Others are successful business and professional people.

Legacy does not favour the clever and willing student over the rebellious child. Since its inception Legacy has endeavoured to assist Juniors who find themselves in trouble. Legatees made regular visits to Juniors in juvenile institutions and where possible helped to settle them in normal life. When Junior Legatees attracted the attention of the police, Legatees intervened to help steer the Juniors' reform.

Throughout Australia Legacy still has 2500 Juniors enrolled. Of these around 672 live in Victoria. In Melbourne Legacy alone there are 547 "juniors"; of these 300 are handicapped dependants – who, regardless of age, are the responsibility of Legacy.

As in the early days of Legacy when there were vast numbers of fatherless children, Legacy is concerned with the cultural, physical and recreational needs of young Junior Legatees.

In recent years Junior Legatees have taken part in Outward Bound Courses, Pony Camps and holiday camps. Others have sailed with the Young Endeavour Youth Scheme, enjoying the unique learning experience of a ten day voyage.

Junior Legatees play important roles in the Legacy Week Wreath Laying Ceremony and Church Service, and in Rosemary for Remembrance on Anzac Day. Each year a Junior is chosen to present a sprig of rosemary to the Governor, and another bears the flag of Legacy.

Legacy NOW & FOREVER



Legacy keeps alive
the memory of those
who lost their lives
in the service of
their country.



In 1945-46 many of the first Legatees, ex-servicemen from World War I, were approaching an age which limited their future service. The end of World War II brought an influx of returned servicemen, and the ranks of Legatees swelled. These World War II Legatees still comprise the bulk of Legacy's membership, they too have reached an age where many are unable to continue Legacy's services.

Legacy had always been made up of "steady sincere thinking men whose memories reached back to the pals who did not return ..." To ensure that when these "traditional" Legatees were no longer available there would be the means to manage the assets - nursing homes, hostels, housing, welfare funds and joint interests in housing - the Legacy Foundation was established.

The Foundation will bring to Legacy the support of younger people who have an interest in the work and ideals of Legacy and are prepared to give personal service. The Foundation will perpetuate the spirit and concept of Legacy.

Just as the age of Legatees is increasing, so too is the age of Legacy widows with the majority of them having lost husbands who served in World Wars I and II. Legacy assists these widows to remain in their own homes and environment as long as possible. Legacy is looking to arrange for such services as meals-on-wheels and home nursing to assist these widows to cope. They are also actively involved in seeking accommodation in retirement villages, hostels or nursing homes, preferably close to the widows' families and friends.

Assistance is being given to the very old and infirm by providing nursing home accommodation. This takes up a considerable amount of Legacy's welfare funds.

Legacy keeps alive the memory of those who lost their lives in the service of their country. War is a terrible scourge of mankind but so long as peace-loving nations can be threatened by aggressors their freedom depends on their will and capacity to resist.

Should there be another war . . .

The recent Gulf War is a reminder of how peace in the world can be so easily undermined. A naval lieutenant who took part in Australia's Operation Damask had these words to say:

"When we sailed from Sydney on the Thirteenth of August (1990) we had no real idea what we were sailing into. It was a period of a great deal of uncertainty and a great deal of tension.

"For the entire period we were over there all of the ships were prepared for war. Both materially and mentally. At that time, everybody thinks of home... You think of home, and you wonder whether or not you have adequately provided for your family, in case something should happen to you. This is where Legacy is a comfort."

Thankfully Australia has not been involved in any other conflicts on the scale of those that gave rise to Legacy, namely World Wars I and II. However, Legacy is committed to a "lifelong responsibility of service", and with the introduction of the Foundation Legacy's future goes beyond a human lifetime, Legacy will always be ready should the need arise.