

The year 1946 opened full of promise of a return to more normal conditions. More and more of those who had been serving either in the forces or in <sup>other</sup> war-time capacities were returning to their civil occupations and were keen to again take their share of Legacy activities. We were also looking forward to increasing our numbers from those who had served in the 1939-45 war.

This period of transition from a war time set-up back to a more normal legacy organization was not without its difficulties. It must be realized that for six years our work had of necessity, been carried on by relatively few legatees and that during this period new and changing conditions had demanded an increase in our activities in many directions and general reorganization of existing fields of service to keep abreast of these demands. It was inevitable that during the war years the government of Legacy both as regards the Board of Management and the Junior Legacy Club should remain more or less in the hands of a small group of those who had the experience and the necessary time to devote to the work.

It is not surprising therefore that, whilst those who carried on the work of the Club during the war period were looking for relief, there was a certain reluctance to hand over the reins of office not only to those who were returning from service but particularly to the younger members, who had not yet had the opportunity of gaining the wide knowledge of Legacy which it was felt was required in controlling what had undoubtedly become a big business.

The question of eligibility for membership of the Club also loomed large at this time. During the war years a special Standing Committee had kept this matter under constant review and decisions had been made from time to time in the light of changing conditions. The fundamental rule on which Legacy was based - that of honourable service overseas - was not departed from, but what was clear cut in the 1914-1918 War, was much more difficult to define because of the many and varied fields of service in the war which commenced in 1939.

This matter had been discussed at a number of Annual Conferences of Legacy and it was felt that no definite general rule could be evolved until after the cessation of hostilities. At the 17th Annual Conference the Co-ordinating Council were requested to make a full investigation and recommendation for discussion at a subsequent Conference. In the meantime the subject was considered very fully by Melbourne. Amongst those of our older members who served in both wars were some who considered that membership should be open to any male person who served as a member of the Forces of the British Empire irrespective of whether or not overseas service was involved. The basis of this suggestion was that there were many men who had volunteered for overseas service who, from no fault of their own, were denied this privilege. The Armoured Division was cited as an outstanding example of this.

After very full and protracted discussion and submission to a General Meeting of members the views of Melbourne were that there existed a definite bond between the men who served together on active service and that this would not be so amongst those who were not privileged, for whatever the reason, to serve overseas. It was felt that the basic concept of Legacy had resulted in a magnificent comradeship which is unknown in any other organization. For these reasons we were not favourable to



any widening of the definition of eligibility.

The recommendation of Co-ordinating Council which was placed before the 18th Annual Conference held at Adelaide in September, 1946, was:

"That the following shall be eligible for membership of Senior Legacy -

"Any male person who served as a member of the Forces of the British Commonwealth of Nations during the War of 1914-18 or the war which commenced on 3rd September, 1939."

An amendment moved by Sydney Legacy and supported by Adelaide and Melbourne was eventually carried. This amendment read:

"Any male person who has served in War overseas in the Navy, Army or Air Force of the British Empire either in the War of 1914-18 or in the War of 1939-45 provided such service was as an enlisted or commissioned member of the above Forces".

The word "enlisted" was defined to mean "as a volunteer or otherwise."

At the same time as eligibility for membership of Senior Legacy was under consideration we were also concerned with the vital question of Junior Legacy and eligibility for Legacy benefits. The problems here were much more difficult and complex than the one affecting senior membership. We had to give serious thought to the line of demarcation between those who were eligible and those who were not. The simple rule that had served prior to the 1939 War - overseas service of the deceased serviceman - could no longer meet the position created by the very different circumstances of the second war.

<sup>Legacy</sup> The finding of a suitable definition of eligibility for Junior Legacy benefits was arrived at only after discussions at many meetings of the Junior Legacy Committee and the Board of Management. Again there was a number of those who served in both wars who considered that we should make our benefits available to the children of all deceased service personnel. It was clear that this attitude had the sympathy of all members but this was tempered by the consideration of the ability of Legacy to satisfactorily render service to the very large numbers which might become eligible in the years ahead. It was therefore decided that, whilst we would be prepared to widen eligibility in very large measure, we could not, at this time, go further than that -

"ELIGIBILITY FOR LEGACY BENEFITS SHALL BE AVAILABLE TO -

1. A dependant of deceased person who was a member of or officially attached to the Naval, Military or Air Forces, Nursing Service or Merchant Navy of any part of the British Empire, who was entitled thereby to any of the British War Medals issued in connection with the War of 1914-18, or who served in a defined operational area during the War of 1939-45, or
2. A dependant of a deceased person who was a member of or officially attached to the Naval, Military or Air Forces, Nursing Service or Merchant Navy of any part of the British Empire, who did not serve in a defined



operational area during the War of 1939-45 but who died from any causes whatsoever while on service during the period of the 1935-45 War, or whose subsequent death is accepted by the Repatriation Department as due to war service, or

3. A child of a deceased person whose service is considered by the Club Committee to be equivalent to that outlined in 1 and 2."

#### DEFINITIONS -

"Child" means a legitimate or illegitimate son or daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, adopted child whether or not legally adopted, or any other child wholly dependant on the deceased at the time of his death.

"Person" includes both male and female but, except as provided, the child of a deceased woman will not be eligible while its father is still alive.

"Deceased" shall be deemed to include a person who is insane, divorced or who has deserted or separated from his or her family. All such cases will be determined by the Committee of Junior Legacy.

#### OPERATIONAL AREA

(A definite statement will be prepared from the official documents which set out "Operational Areas" in terms of both areas and limiting dates, and will be inserted at this point under "Definitions". This will cover Army, Air Force, Navy and Merchant Navy).

Melbourne moved an amendment to this effect when the matter was discussed at the Adelaide Conference and this became the resolution which was accepted by Conference.

The change over from war to peace presented many other problems which called for solution. Amongst these was the satisfactory rehabilitation of Junior Legatees who were returning from service. It must be remembered that most of these lads had joined the forces before reaching the age of 21 years, however, the Education Committee was successful in placing practically all those who discussed their problems with it.

A small influential committee was also formed to assist in suitably placing Senior Legatees in ~~suitable~~ positions.

Serious consideration was also given to the younger widow with a young family. It was our desire to render greater service than had formerly been the case to this group. The institution of a Housekeeper service to ensure that a trained woman was available to look after the home if the widow was sick was investigated also the possibility of establishing a residence for the child of three to eight years of age. In regard to the latter the Club had received a very generous offer of a property with six acres of land at Glen Waverly as a gift.

The suitability of this site was under consideration when we received information from the Trustees of "Blamey House", a hostel which had been conducted for servicemen during the war, that it was intended to close down and that the balance of funds



available on winding-up would probably be donated to Legacy. The condition attaching to this proposed gift was that we should place before the trustees a proposition embracing some tangible asset such as a home or permanent camp that could bear the name nominated by the donor. The amount which it was anticipated would be available was between £10,000 and £15,000.

The project of providing a residence for young children which had become known as a "Toddlers' Home" was presented to the Trustees and approved by them.

With this gift available we proceeded with increased vigour to secure a suitable property. Further consideration of the Glen Waverly property resulted in a decision that the situation was not all that could be desired for a home of the nature contemplated. Various other properties were considered and the choice fell on a residence known as "Mossgiel" in Balcombe Road, Beaumaris, and in October this property was purchased at a cost of £11,000. It was considered that a further expenditure of £3,100 on alterations and additions would provide a residence for 22 young children and staff.

Our second residence "Stanhope" which the Victorian Red Cross Society had very generously undertaken to purchase from the Club and also to meet the cost of altering and furnishing was altered and equipped during the year and the first residents were welcomed in December.

The use of the other property owned by the Club "Dureau House" was also under constant consideration during the year and preliminary plans for its reconstruction for Legacy purposes were approved at an estimated cost of £30,000 to £35,000. Meantime we had transferred our Dental Clinic to Dureau House and had made available part of the Building to the Melbourne Technical College for use in connection with the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen.

Our work among the children continued to increase but difficulty was experienced in securing halls in which to hold our classes. Most of the Drill Halls of which we had been deprived of the use during the war period were still in use by the Army. Efforts were made to again secure the use of 43 Market Street which was being used as Air Force House but we were unsuccessful. We were however fortunate in obtaining the co-operation of the Hawthorn Boys' Club which made their premises in Auburn available to us and our Auburn class commenced there on 22nd March with an enrolment of 41 boys.

The Club's expenditure on Welfare cases was greatly assisted by the A.M.F. Special Benefits Fund. This fund was created to make available for the benefit of ex-servicemen and their dependants profits derived from the Army Canteens. Legacy was appointed trustees of portion of funds made available for the welfare of the dependants of deceased Army personnel of the 1939-45 War and the Mothers' Club in each state undertook the responsibility of the proper expenditure of the funds. The initial allocation to Victoria was £1,800 and a committee known as the A.M.F. Fund Committee was appointed to administer the fund on behalf of Legacy in Victoria.

The activities of J.L.C. were generously supported by gifts and donations particularly from Patriotic organizations which were ceasing their activities, so that, apart from donations and gifts for specific purposes, our expenditure on Junior Legacy activities of approximately £16,000 was fully provided by our many friends.



Other matters of particular interest during the year included:-

- (a) The inauguration of a superannuation scheme for Legacy staff.
- (b) Discussion of the advisability of the incorporation of Club as a Company.
- (c) Extension of Legacy - Inauguration of Horsham Legacy - 16/11/46.
- (d) Introduction of Supernumary Lists 'A'.'B'. and 'C' covering non-active personnel.

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