

MELBOURNE LEGACY

COMMENTS ON PRESIDENTIAL YEAR 1971

The notes on the duties and responsibilities of Presidents have been recently updated by Past President Legatee R. H. Isherwood.

In themselves they form a comprehensive guide and are most useful. You will find them, together with the comments of other Past Presidents, a ready source of information on virtually any subject likely to be encountered and well worth keeping close at hand for reference.

These notes, together with the unfailing personal support of Past Presidents and all members of the Club which you will experience does not leave very much for me to add, but the following observations are perhaps pertinent.

The Legacy Story:

Variations to the theme appear to be highly desirable to maintain the interest of the "Friends of Legacy" at Branch and Group etc. Dinners. I found the historical aspects could be played down and more interest seemed to be evoked by short practical examples of Legacy in action and emphasis on the need for the continued involvement and support of the community.

Legacy Widows:

It appears to me that Melbourne Legacy in the Metropolitan area must now more actively pursue the program of caring for the Legacy widow without children, if we are to discharge our responsibilities under the Charter to our ultimate satisfaction.

Whilst our resources have been fully committed in the past in discharging <sup>our</sup> and responsibilities to widows with children, the need for Melbourne Legacy's involvement with other community organisations in providing for the care of those widows without children now seems paramount.

There appears to be ample scope and opportunity for such involvement and thereby allow us to provide the answers in which history could well judge us on how well Legacy completed its job.

World War I Legatees:

To many of our World War I Legatees, Legacy is a big part of their lives.

Having in mind their age, and in many cases their incapacities, but more particularly their part in the history and development of Legacy as we

know it, it seems to me we should, without overplaying our hand involve them as much as practicable.

Their obvious joy in being kept "a part of it" is good for them and is good for Legacy.

Decentralisation of Activities:

With the continued expansion of the Metropolitan Area the decentralisation of activities into the Branch areas appears inevitable, if effective family contact and other aspects of Legacy are to be maintained. It is important however, that Branches keep contact with the central organisation particularly in the Comradeship area if the "total" Legacy picture is to be retained by members.

I believe this is an aspect which will want continual attention by future Presidents.

Likewise an active liaison producing a worthwhile "two way" feed of information between Central and Country Groups and Clubs continues to be important if the decentralisation process is to be effective.

Legatee Strength:

With the average of Legatees at about 55, and our job being far from finished both in respect of Junior Legatees and Widows, the next four to five years seems critical in regard to the recruitment of World War II ex servicemen.

Whilst it can be expected that the increasing numbers of younger ex servicemen from Veitnam will be recruited, it seems doubtful whether sufficient will be available for Legacy to discharge all its responsibilities. It follows that the level of recruitment of World War II ex servicemen should therefore continue at least at its present level in the immediate future.

In regard to new Legatees, I believe we must look to the matter of upgrading the information courses and training facilities we provide.

In the matter of the President's Membership Committee, I personally have doubts as to its effectiveness and this view was also held by the Chairman of the Committee in my year.

Without suggesting it should be dropped, I do believe we should re-examine its role and whether or not it is in fact necessary.

*M. J. L. L. L. L.*