

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL YEAR - 1978

I found all the comments and notes in the "Presidential Black Book" extremely valuable and an excellent guide to a Melbourne Legacy President's responsibilities - particularly prior to assuming office and during those first few months - and I would urge all Nominated Presidents to read and re-read the contents of this book and also the recommended background reading.

As the fourteenth President to make specific comments, my conscience is not completely satisfied by merely saying that I endorse many of the points previously made - which I do. I am therefore making one or two brief observations.

Firstly - Legatee funerals.

Regrettably, during the 1978 Year, an above average number of Legatees died. I found the biggest problem in this connection was the time involved in discussing funeral service arrangements with the widow, minister, funeral director, R.S.L. etc., and then preparing the oration - both within a very short time frame and usually without any warning. I believe that the President should conduct the Legacy Service except in special circumstances, e.g. with WW1 Legatees, where Legatee Kemsley does a marvellous job. However, something reasonably specific needs to be organised to take some of the weight from the President, e.g. a list prepared of Past Presidents, past Vice-Presidents or ex-Branch Chairmen, who at short notice are in a position to liaise with the widow, minister and others in regard to the service and also to prepare the oration for the President.

And now - a pet Carter "hobby-horse" - the all important matter of communication and training.

For some little while we have talked about the changing face of Legacy. But we have some distance to go in reaching complete agreement on how we tackle the "new ball game", in telling Branch Legatees exactly what is expected of them, and in training Legatees - both old and new - in the somewhat different skills and approach needed. In line with this changing "ball game" - which will be concentrated more than ever in Branch areas - and also because of the fast increasing number of retired Legatees, we need to restrict our committees to practical sizes, more in keeping with getting the job done. Wherever possible, we also need to introduce a "horses for courses" approach in the use and disposition of Legatee manpower. Finally, we need to smarten up our footwork in regard to the assimilation of new Legatees into Melbourne Legacy's ranks. In common with other Clubs around Australia, we have lost too many potentially good Legatees in recent years in the younger age group.

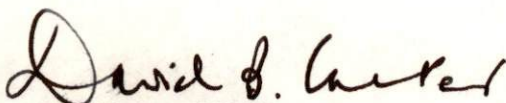
Next - perhaps not a major issue, but something that jarred on me whenever it occurred, and unfortunately that was on several occasions during 1978.

At the "public" Branch Annual Dinners I attended, the Introduction of Guests left a lot to be desired in that, the local Mayor or his representative was not always introduced first, Legatees weresometimes introduced before outside guests, guests were often not properly identified and key Legatees guests e.g. Vice Presidents and other Board Members and visiting Branch Chairmen were not appropriately identified. Chairman, C.A.C. was informed and Branch Chairmen told, but the position probably needs to be watched.

While on the subject of Annual Dinners - Group Liaison Officers could take some weight off the President by giving him, a week or two before the Group Annual Dinner, some reasonably brief notes on pertinent things happening or about to happen in the Group area, - about which the President should know. As I found it difficult to get what I was seeking, I did most of my own research, but this was not very successful as the Legacy House files are disappointingly thin.

Finally - the problem of the ever increasing cost of being an effective Legatee who participates - often with his wife - in comradeship activities, and Branch and Group/Club Annual Dinners.

These occasions are very important for both the Melbourne Legacy Family and for Legacy in Victoria, but understandably - largely because of today's costs - continued Legatee support for these functions has fallen. Some adjustment in the type of comradeship activities and the format of Branch Annual Dinners seems necessary, together with increased efforts to establish a Country/City private home hosting scheme for Annual Dinner visiting by Melbourne Legatees into the country and vice versa.



Handwritten signature of David B. Carter in cursive script.

DAVID B. CARTER

PRESIDENT, 1978.