

## UNVEILING OF THE SIR STANLEY SAVIGE MEMORIAL

MORWELL – 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2006

### ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT LEGACY CLUB OF MELBOURNE

The man we pay tribute to today, General Sir Stanley George Savige, founder of Legacy.

25<sup>th</sup> September 1923 is regarded as the day of inauguration of the first Legacy Club, almost 83 years ago. That Club was in Melbourne. It took a short time to determine exactly what role Legacy would eventually play within the community.

The story however, began much earlier on the battle fields of the Western Front and one could say that similar requests were made on most battlefields throughout history. A dying Digger says to his mate, "If I don't make it will you look after the missus and kids?"

Sir Stanley Savige served on the Western Front as a Captain with the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion and later under the command of General Sir John Gellibrand. After the war their friendship continued as it did with many members of the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion in which he served.

It was this friendship that led to Sir Stanley Savige forming a Club in Melbourne to care for returned Veterans, help them find work and care for the children who had lost their father during the war.

This Club to be known as Legacy was formed with no money or resources to help educate the kids or to help the unemployed veterans. Stan Savige was still not happy with the way this club was heading, he called a meeting of the Board of Management. After much discussion, a big quietly spoken man stood, he didn't say much but when he spoke people listened. His name was Frank Doolan and he said.

**"Have you fellows thought that the dying wish of any of our cobbers would be that we should look after their missus and kids?"**

Frank was then asked to address the membership of the Club. When he had completed his address; all present realised that Legacy had found its soul.

Legacy continued to grow with boys and girls clubs established focusing on sport, debating and outdoor activities. The first boy's camp was held at Balnarring in 1926. There was concern among some that there was no money, Stan believed that if the cause was right, money would follow. He was right; money was received from all sections of the community. Mums played such an important part in Legacy and Stan Savige never stopped talking about them.

It is significant that tomorrow is Legacy Badge Day, part of Legacy Week. We know the cause is still right and the money continues to come in from a very generous community. So please buy a Legacy Badge.

Legacy grew throughout Australia, caring for hundreds of thousands of widows and children. Demands on Legacy continued to grow after WW 2. Once again the kids were the priority as they were our future. The Mums were never neglected. The stories are many of how Legacy helped these young families.

As the years rolled on, by 1957 Legacy was caring for 25,200 widows and 18,900 children and had incurred expenditure of 454,000 pounds.

Today Legacy cares for more than 126,000 widows and 1,900 children and disabled dependants nationally and in Victoria 24,000 widows and 400 children.

Legacy continues to meet the needs of our newer Veterans families with over 60% of our current Australian Defence Force having operational service.

I wonder if Sir Stanley Savige, a man who gave his life to Legacy would have ever imagined that what he and his small band of brothers started after WW1 would have become such a valued organisation and touched so many lives some 83 years later.

He was and will always remain the "Grand Old Man of Legacy – Our Founder."

It gives be great pleasure to unveil this Memorial to General Sir Stanley Savige – Founder of Legacy.