

LEGACY — NINETIETH ANNIVERSARY

Statement by Minister for Veterans

MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot — Minister for Veterans) [12.03 pm]: This week marks the ninetieth anniversary of the establishment of Legacy in Australia. Legacy holds a special place in the hearts of the Western Australian public. As well as the thousands of private donations, both small and large, Legacy receives a grant each year through the Western Australian government's Anzac Day Trust. Originally established to guard the interests of ex-soldiers, Legacy's activities quickly shifted to caring for the widows and children of deceased ex-servicemen.

Established in 1923, Legacy was the brainchild of the distinguished divisional commander Major General Sir John Gellibrand, KCB, DSO and Bar. He was one of Australia's most successful military leaders who served with distinction as commanding officer in the Somme from Hamel to the Hindenburg line, and later served in the House of Representatives as the federal member for the seat of Denison. The official war historian C.E.W. Bean later observed that "the best monument to General Gellibrand" was not the performance of his division at the second battle of Bullecourt, but his untiring efforts in establishing Legacy.

Ninety years after its formation in the aftermath of the war to end all wars, Legacy continues to provide crucial financial and social support for widows, children and dependants throughout Australia. Sadly, the recent Afghan war has created new wards of Legacy. Legacy has provided incalculable help and assistance to the families of men and women who have died or have been incapacitated during or after service to the nation. Legacy currently cares for 100 000 widows and 1 900 children and disabled dependants throughout Australia. With over 5 900 Legacy volunteers around the country who act as mentors to the widows and their families, they ensure Legacy's promise to care for the families of deceased service personnel is kept.