



LEST WE FORGET

STAND TO

"THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE"

NUMBER 143 March–April 2009

VETERANS' NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL



ACT NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL

Setting future agenda of the RSL

In a wide-ranging statement on the future of the Returned & Services League, the National President, Major-General Bill Crews (Rtd), said the statement was appropriate now "if we wish to focus our energies where we do need to change and improve".

He said the statement had been prompted by the presentation, by a prominent member of the Queensland State Branch, of a paper entitled *Call to Action RSL-2015*.

The paper advocates a critical review of the RSL, including its relevance to the Defence family, organisational structure, governance and operations.

The National President welcomed the comment and urged RSL members to take an interest in the League's long-term future.

He went on, "The RSL retains a critical responsibility for supporting both the service and ex-service community but we are more than an ESO. Our charter requires us to engage with our communities, particularly young Australians, and make our country a better place in which to live. That is, after all, what we all fought for.

"It needs to be better recognised in the veteran community that the League carries most of the workload in working with our communities to heighten awareness of our military history and the special debt owed to those who have served. Such public awareness, to which the League makes a major contribution, undoubtedly enhances our collective ability to retain political influence and responsiveness. Public support has always been essential to underpin political commitment.

"The League remains the only ESO able to extensively undertake this critical role. We are willing to continue to do so, and have no concern that other ESOs can gain some of the benefits of this work."

The national executive acknowledged that the League indeed faced many challenges to retain its pre-eminence and its effectiveness in serving its members, the wider veteran community and the wider Australian community.

He continues:

"Our shortcomings can only be rectified if they are appropriately acknowledged and discussed.

"Conversely, our strengths should also be understood and appreciated.

The State Branches of the League have, over recent years, examined their governance arrangements, and the League nationally has made



An artist's impression of the proposed new national headquarters of the RSL — part of the League's agenda for the years to come. The front of the building (left to right) faces Constitution Avenue. The site is broadly the same as that of the present (more modest) headquarters building.

ACT Branch headquarters returns to Manuka



Left: The Canberra Services Club, Manuka, the new home of the RSL ACT Branch, its newly formed trustee company RSL Community Care Ltd and the first trust established under it, RSL and Community Village Trust.

The trustee company RSL Community Care Ltd and the first trust established under it, RSL and Community Village Trust, have been established, both in the Canberra Services Club, Manuka, new "home" of the RSL ACT Branch (which owns the company).

Nonetheless, the trustee company operates separately from the trustee company. Sounds complex? It isn't really but that's the way the law requires things to be done.

The company's vision is to provide a secure environment and services for the welfare of war and peacekeeping veterans, their dependant spouses and/or dependant children, war widows and service personnel, their dependant spouses and/or children in times of necessity.

The Trust's aim is to provide secure accommodation for those people, the aged and/or disabled or provide services to aged and disabled veterans, ad-

hering to the principles of compassion and support for special needs groups as defined in the Acts.

Bequests and donations represent one of our organisation's most important sources of financial support.

Donations may be made direct to RSL and Community Care Ltd at Canberra Services Club, Manuka Circle, Manuka ACT 2603 or the Australian Defence Credit Union, BSB 802397 Account 714183.