

SUDDEN DEATH OF MR. P. F. DOUGLAS

A foundation member of the R.S.L. in Canberra, Mr. Percy F. Douglas, of Griffith, died yesterday while listening to the Anzac Dawn service at his home.

Mr. Douglas, who was 68, had been in ill-health for some time.

By his death Canberra lost one of its best-known citizens. Mr. Douglas being connected with public life for many years as Chief Officer of the Canberra Fire Brigade and ambulance; as a member of many sporting and social organisations.

Mr. Douglas was born in Victoria in 1887 and for many years served with the Melbourne Fire Brigade. He came to Canberra in its infancy, and early in 1920 the telephone was connected to his residence, the number being "Canberra 1."

At Acton he established the Canberra Volunteer Fire Brigade, training the first members of the organisation, and on the establishment of a regular brigade he was appointed Chief Officer.

His pioneer work as ambulance officer will be remembered by older residents of the Territory, for he made many hazardous journeys over rough tracks to outlying parts, and on more than one occasion assisted at the birth of children on the way to the hospital. He founded the Canberra Branch of the St. John Ambulance Association and did valuable work as honorary instructor in first aid. For this work the association rewarded him with life membership.

Mr. Douglas served in World War 1 with the artillery, becoming an original member of the R.S.L. in Canberra and one of the first presidents of the Canberra Returned Soldier's Club, now the Canberra Club, of which he was life member.

Mr. Douglas was also made a life member of the A.C.T. Cricket Association and the Canberra Swimming Club, of which he had been president. He was also president at various intervals of the National Football League, the Kingston Tennis Club, the Canberra Rugby League, and the Ainslie Cricket

League, and the Ainslie Cricket and Tennis Clubs.

Closely associated with the welfare of the community, Mr. Douglas assisted in the foundation of Canberra Legacy, the Cricket Association, the Bowling Association, the Boys' Cricket Association and other bodies. He was the first delegate from Canberra to the National Football League Council, on which he obtained a seat for the A.C.T.

In earlier years, in addition to his ambulance instruction and examination work, Mr. Douglas was founder and honorary instructor of the Canberra men's and boys' gymnasiums, for he had been an outstanding boxer and gymnast in his young days.

In 1922 he married Una Southwell, who has also played a big part in Canberra's community life, being an active member of many women's associations. She was recently awarded a gold badge for her work on the Women's Auxiliary of the R.S.L.

In addition to his widow, Mr. Douglas leaves two daughters and one son, Mrs. Turner (Melbourne) and Joan and George, of Canberra.

North Canberra R.S.L. Club and the Canberra Club yesterday observed two minutes' silence in honour of Mr. Douglas.