

**MEDIA RELEASE** - Embargoed: Tuesday, 16 March 2010

## **GAS INDUSTRY'S ETERNAL FLAME**

Australia's gas industry future will meet its past in Canberra this week when stalwarts of the old Australian Gas Association visit the Australian War Memorial and the Eternal Flame on 16 March 2010 at 10.30am.

The former AGA sponsored the eternal flame as a Bicentennial gift to the nation, and the gas industry delegation were in attendance at the lighting of the flame on Anzac Day 1988.

The nation's gas industry has undergone major changes over the past two decades, with privatisation of major assets and, now, an increased focus on natural gas as a means to help reduce the nation's carbon emissions.

Garry O'Meally (who was President of the former AGA in 1988) said he was pleased to have this opportunity to join the delegation and come to Canberra, and to also underscore the bright future for gas in Australia and the world.

"Australia has plentiful reserves of natural gas, more than 250 years' of gas, particularly with the development of coal seam gas in Queensland which will not only supply international markets, but local demand as well," Mr O'Meally said.

"Gas will be the mainstay of the energy economy as we move away from a high-carbon emission economy, to a cleaner world.

"Gas has less than half the emissions of coal when used for electricity generation and the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources means gas will be required as a back-up fuel for power generation."

Mr O'Meally also said the industry's early leaders were pleased to see the determination of the AGA to provide educational experiences for young people in the gas industry continuing.

"The Australian Gas Industry Trust is carrying on this good work, providing international study tours and local instruction seminars for young people in the gas industry," he said. "Training and education of people in the industry is vital to the future of the industry in Australia. After learning the hard way, we want to ensure that the skills and knowledge required for this industry are passed to the next generation.

"The Australian gas industry is in good hands and has a bright future – and the eternal flame will continue to burn at the War Memorial."

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Participants: Garry O'Meally (former President of the Australian Gas Association in 1988. ex 2IC AGL (NSW)); Len Bleasel (former President AGA. ex CEO AGL (NSW)); Phil Harvey former President AGA. ex CEO Alinta Gas (WA)); Ollie Clark (former President AGA. ex CEO SAGASCO (SA)); Dave McDonald (former Board member AGA. Involved with finding Northwest Shelf (Qld)); Harold Seeley (former President AGA. Manufacturer of gas appliances (Vic)); Jim McDonald (former CEO, The Pipeline Trust (Vic)); Gerry Gerrard (Senior Geologist (Qld)); John Ward (Auckland Gas (NZ)); Paul Greenhalgh (former CEO AGA (ACT))

