



"Sitrep, Over!"

FEBRUARY 2020

Official Journal of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc

SUPPORT EXERCISE AT RAAF BASE EDINBURGH

Will it go ahead?
Was it cancelled?
See Pages 9 to 18.

POSTPONED

WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT PLANNING

If I always appear prepared, it is because before entering on an undertaking, I have meditated for long and foreseen what may occur.

Napoleon, 1831


A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan executed next week.

George S. Patton, Jr

Promulgation of an order represents not over ten percent of your responsibility. The remaining ninety percent consists in assuring through personal supervision on the ground, by yourself and your staff, proper and vigorous execution.

George S. Patton, Jr

Inside this issue:

Quinns Post	2
US Civil War Facts	4
Blackburn VC	5
Pte Ted 	7
Editorial	8
Kangaroo Island Bushfire Support	9 17
To our Soldiers.....	18

Malta & The ANZACs

Malta during the First World War was the site of extensive medical facilities that were set up to deal with the casualties of the campaigns on the Gallipoli Peninsula, Salonika and the Middle East. During the war, almost 135000 Commonwealth service personnel, sick and wounded, received treatment in Malta.

The 232 Australians who died from wounds or sickness, are buried in 5 cemeteries in Malta. Situated in the centre in the Mediterranean, Malta has always been seen as a crucial strategic location throughout history and was a British territory from 1814 and was used as a shipping way station and fleet headquarters. The burials on Malta are unique because the graves had to be cut from the rock underlying the island's shallow layer of topsoil. As a result, many of the graves are collective and joint burials, meaning that commemoration was mediated by efficiency.

The first burial occurred on the 7th May 1915, in Pieta Military Cemetery. Fitter William John Sergeant No 2262, 3rd Australian Field Artillery, died of wounds received in action at Gallipoli. Of the burials, 121 died of wounds, which equates to 60% of the total. The remainder of disease or sickness, with ailments ranging from enteric, scarlet fever, dysentery, pneumonia, peritonitis and typhoid.

Sent in by member Joe Vella

The 2nd Light Horse Regiment at Quinns Post

On 19 May the Turks launched a major attack on the whole of the Anzac position. A total of 42,000 Turks took part in the attack but were successfully repulsed, suffering over 10,000 casualties. During the armistice of 24 May, the 2nd Light Horse supplied a burial party of 50 men ...

Early one morning in March 1997, my wife, Rosemary, and I left Istanbul for a 10 day tour of Turkey with our English speaking Turkish guide, Artun Ertem, and driver, Sukruh. The highlight for that day was a memorable visit to the Military Reserve of Gallipoli. Having had the privilege of serving in a Light Horse Regiment which is the custodian of the Guidon of 2nd Light Horse Regiment (AIF), I planned to honour the Regiment's battle honour "Defence of Anzac"..



*This is a story of that visit, dedicated to the Lighthorsemen of 2nd Light Horse who paid the supreme sacrifice to achieve the Regimental battle honour. **Major G.F.Tregenza ED RFD (Rtd)***

Upon arrival at Gaba Tepe it was plain to see why this would have been an ideal beach-head for the ill fated campaign on the Gallipoli Peninsula. From the beach, the ground is open and undulating which allows easy mobility across the narrow Gallipoli Peninsula to the Dardenells. Art explained that Mustafa Kemal, the Commander of the Turkish defenders, knew from a study of the astrology of the moon and tides that a landing at Gaba Tepe on the night of 25th April 1915 would fail. Instead, he planned his defences for a landing at a beach which, now known as Anzac Cove, has become indelibly printed on the Australian psyche.

Quinn's Post was the farthest Anzac post along the eastern branch of Monash Valley taken and held by a handful of New Zealanders and Australians through the wild night of the landing. Opposing forces were each clinging to the edge of their own slope, forty yards apart, with a slight crest between them. The fact that Quinn's lay lower than the ridges on either side made it impossible for the garrison to raise their heads to the level of the parapets either to observe or fire. On the other hand, the Turks above them, both to the left and right, were able to hold theirs up so that at this point they had established superiority of fire. The strain of such a precarious method of defence was increased by the bombs now regularly thrown at the post by the Turks. Men passing up Monash Valley seeing and hearing the bombs bursting up at Quinn's used to glance at the place "as a man looks at a haunted house".

At noon on 13 May, 2nd Light Horse was charged with the defence of Quinn's Post which became for a month the centre of almost all the fighting at Anzac. These Queenslanders, including many who were little more than boys, suffered heavily because of their inexperience in such a precarious position. The holding of Quinn's was becoming a nightmare and it became vital to destroy old communication trenches from which the Turks were bomb-throwing. During the night of 14-15 May, an assault by 60 men of C Squadron resulted in 25 killed and 27 wounded. The Turks had effectively countered such an attack by placing machine guns which looked at point-blank range straight up the No-Man's land, no wider than a road, between Quinn's and the Turkish trenches facing it.

Quinns Post.....continued

On 19 May the Turks launched a major attack on the whole of the Anzac position. At that time, B Squadron was part of the defence of Quinn's Post. A total of 42,000 Turks took part in the attack but were successfully repulsed, suffering over 10,000 casualties. During the armistice of 24 May, 2nd Light Horse supplied a burial party of 50 men. According to a statement of a Turk subsequently captured, Mustafa Kemal worked as a Sergeant with one of the Turkish burial parties. He was impressed with the extraordinary opportunity which the position at Quinn's afforded, after having stood in front of that post and looked over the Australian trenches straight down the slope in rear.

The staff of Quinn's Post had always expected that, by a mine or other means, the Turks would some day force their way into Quinn's Post. Lieutenant T. McSharry of 2nd Light Horse, the post-adjutant, had determined his own action. When on 27 May the Turks broke into a section of Quinn's Post, McSharry went straight to the bomb-store and rallied the men tumbling out of occupied trenches by a cry, "Come on Australia!" To McSharry, very cool in the thick of

the fight, it seemed obvious that the one efficacious plan for dealing with the Turks then in Quinn's was by filtering men into the trenches on either side of them to attack them from both flanks through the trenches. By such tactics, the Turks were bottled up and finally surrendered. Quinn's Post had again been successfully defended.

An offensive planned for 7th August had as its main objective the strategic position on Baby 700. It was recognized that an unaided attack across the Nek against Baby 700 was almost impossible. The plan involved a simultaneous attack from the heights of Chunuk Bair, when captured by the New Zealanders who had that unenviable task. Also, there was to be a simultaneous



Quinns Post Cemetery today

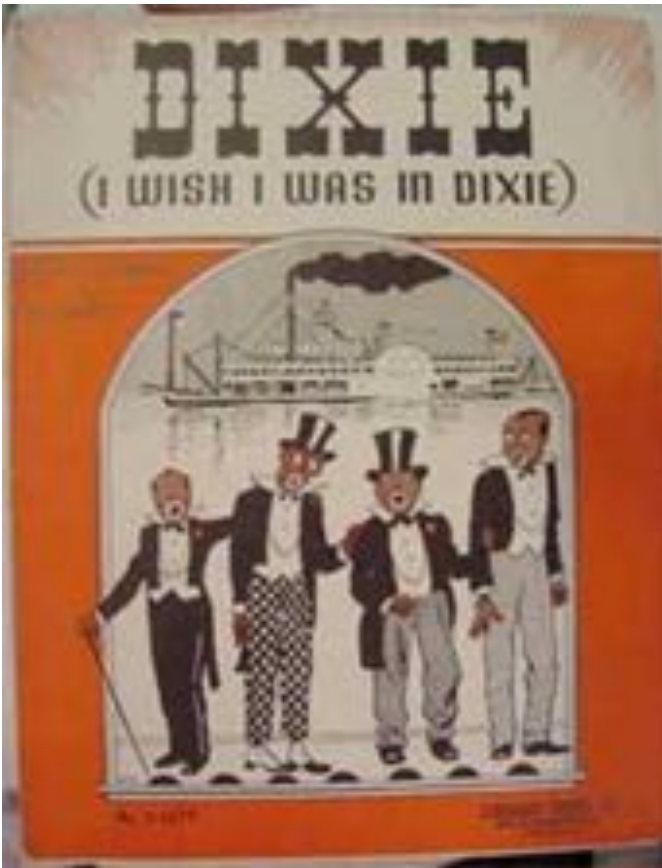
feint attack from Quinn's Post. The attack from Quinn's by the first wave of the 2nd Light Horse was doomed to fail because the preconditions for that attack could not be met. Critically, the Turkish machine-guns covering No-Man's Land between Quinn's and the Turkish trenches facing it were not destroyed or neutralized. The Regiment lost 16 killed and 37 wounded of the 56 who charged in the first wave. there was no valid reason for flinging away the later lines after the first had utterly failed.

On 18 December at midnight the last of the 2nd Light Horse left the trenches and wended their way to the beach and embarked as part of a successful evacuation completed on 20 December. Left behind was a medallion discovered on Anzac Day 1996 which bears the inscription "Presented to B Tippet with best wishes from his employers W. C. Thomas & Sons".. it is to be hoped that B. Tippet himself left in good health. It may be more likely that he lies in Quinn's Post Cemetery where can be found the following message from Kemal Ataturk, now known as the father of the Turks, erected at Gallipoli in 1934:

"Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives. You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore, rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehments to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours. You the mothers who sent their sons from far away countries, wipe your tears. Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well."

Facts About the US Civil War

4. "Dixie" was only a northern song



The precise details of when composer Dan Emmett wrote "Dixie" seemed to change every time he told the story (and some even dispute that Emmett was the author in the first place). But he first performed it in New York City in 1859, with the title "I Wish I Was in Dixie's Land."

Emmett was a member of a blackface troupe known as the Bryant's Minstrels, but he was indignant when he found out that his song had become an unofficial anthem of the Confederacy. He went on to write a musicians' marching manual for the Northern army.

Before and during the war, the song was a huge hit in New York and across the country, and quickly became one of Abraham Lincoln's favorite tunes. The day after the Surrender at Appomattox, Lincoln told a crowd of Northern revelers, "I have always thought 'Dixie' was one of the best tunes I have ever heard. Our adversaries over the way attempted to appropriate it, but I insisted yesterday that we fairly captured it." He then asked a nearby band to play it in celebration.

5. Paul Revere was at Gettysburg

Paul Joseph Revere, that is—the famous Paul Revere's grandson. Unfortunately for fans of the first Revere and his partly mythical Ride, PJR was in the infantry, not the cavalry, with the 20th Massachusetts. He and his brother Edward were captured at the Battle of Ball's Bluff in October 1861. After being released in a prisoner exchange, the Reveres rejoined the fight.

Paul was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in September, 1862, shortly before he was wounded in the brutal Battle of Antietam

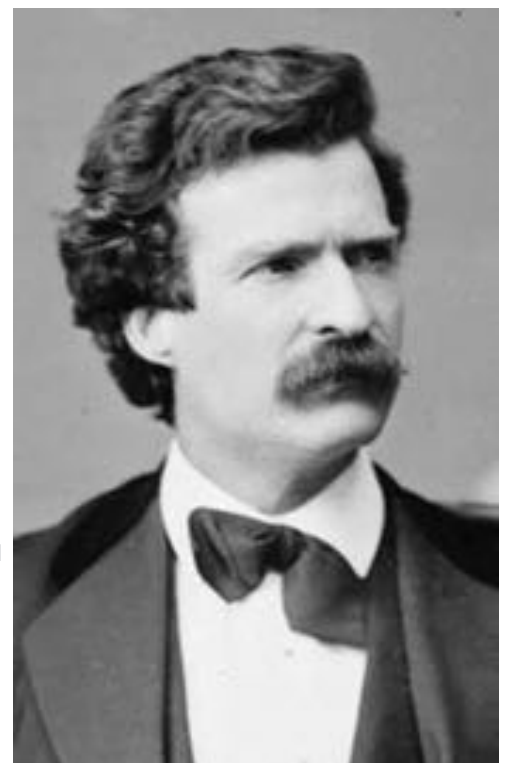
(a.k.a. the Battle of Sharpsburg). Edward, however, wasn't so lucky—he was one of more than 2,000 Union soldiers who didn't make it out of Sharpsburg, Maryland, alive.

By the following year, Paul was promoted again to Colonel, leading the 20th Massachusetts at Chancellorsville and, in his final days, at Gettysburg. On July 3, 1863, he was mortally wounded by a shell fragment that pierced his lung, and he died the next day. He was posthumously promoted again to Brigadier General, and is buried in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

6. Mark Twain fired one shot and then left

At least, that's what he claimed in "The Private History of a Campaign that Failed," a semi-fictional short story published in 1885, after *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, but before *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. In it, he recounts a whopping two weeks spent in 1861 with a Confederate militia in Marion County, Missouri. But he introduces the tale by saying that even the people who enlisted at the start of the war, and then left permanently, "ought at least be allowed to state why they didn't do anything and also to explain the process by which they didn't do anything. Surely this kind of light must have some sort of value."

Twain writes that there were fifteen men in the rebel militia, the "Marion Rangers," and he was the second lieutenant, even though they had no first lieutenant. After Twain's character shoots and kills a Northern horseback rider, he is overwhelmed by the sensation of being a murderer, "that I had killed a man, a man who had never done me any harm. That was the coldest sensation that ever went through my marrow." However, his grief is slightly eased by the realization that six men had fired their guns, and only one had been able to hit the moving target.



A S Blackburn VC Our Most Famous Soldier

Arthur Seaforth Blackburn was born on 25 November 1892 at Woodville, South Australia. He was educated at Pulteney Grammar School, the Collegiate School of St Peter and the University of Adelaide

Gallipoli

In 1914, Private Blackburn, a 21-year-old lawyer from Adelaide, was among the first to enlist in the "Fighting 10th" Battalion, and as a battalion scout he was among the first to land at ANZAC Cove on 25 April 1915. Australia's official World War I historian Charles Bean noted that Blackburn, with Lance Corporal Robin, probably made it further inland than any other Australian soldiers "whose movements are known". Blackburn was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant at Gallipoli in August 1915, and served there for almost the entire campaign.

Western Front

On 23 July 1916, at Pozieres France, the 23 year-old 2nd Lieutenant led an attack for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross. Blackburn was directed with 50 men to drive the enemy from a strong point. By great determination he captured 250 yards of trench, after personally leading four separate parties of bombers against it, many of whom became casualties. Then after crawling forward with a sergeant to reconnoitre, he returned, attacked again, and seized another 120 yards of trench to establish communication with the battalion on his left

Blackburn returned to Australia on 22 March 1917, marrying Rose Ada Kelly, and being discharged on medical grounds soon after.

He returned to legal practice and took an active part in the pro-conscription campaigns. During 1918–21 he was Nationalist member for Sturt in the House of Assembly; he did not seek re-election in 1921. Blackburn was a founding member of the Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League in South Australia, where he served as president of the State branch from 1917–21. He joined the militia in 1924. In 1933–47 he was city coroner, in which office he encountered and ignored criticism for refusing to offer public explanation for any decision not to hold an inquest

Second World War

The Medals of Arthur Blackburn VC



Victoria Cross (VC) Awarded for Gallantry at the Battle of Pozieres



Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) Awarded for Service to the Community



Commander of the British Empire (CBE) Awarded for Services in Java while in Command of "Black Force"



1914–15 Star Awarded for service overseas (or en-route) during 1914 or 1915



British War Medal 1914–18 Awarded for Operational Service between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918



Victory Medal 1914–19 Awarded to commemorate the Allied Victory in the First World War



1939–45 Star Operational Service between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945



Pacific Star for Operational Service on Java with "Black Force"



A S Blackburn VC continued



Defence Medal (UK) For Non-Operational Service in a prescribed area during WW2



War Medal 1939—45 Awarded for Service between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945



Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45 Awarded for Service between 3 September 1939 and 2 September 1945



King George V Silver Jubilee Medal Awarded to a selected number of Australian/Imperial Citizens to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the reign of George V.



King George VI Coronation Medal Awarded to a selected number of Australian/Imperial Citizens to commemorate the Coronation of King George VI on 12 May 1937



Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal Awarded to a selected number of Australian/Imperial Citizens to commemorate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on 2 June 1953



Efficiency Decoration Awarded for Long-Service (over 12 Years) with the Territorial Army

After the outbreak of World War II, Blackburn was appointed to command the 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion of the Second Australian Imperial Force, and led it during the Syria–Lebanon Campaign against the Vichy French in 1941, during which he personally accepted the surrender of Damascus. In early 1942, his battalion was withdrawn from the Middle East and played a role in the defence of Java in the Dutch East Indies from the Japanese. Captured, Blackburn spent the rest of the war as a prisoner-of-war. After he was liberated in 1945, he returned to Australia and was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for his services on Java in 1942.

Following the war, Blackburn was appointed as a conciliation commissioner of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration until 1955 and in that year was made a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) for his services to the community. He died in 1960 and was buried with full military honours in the Australian Imperial Force section of the West Terrace Cemetery, Adelaide. His Victoria Cross and other medals are displayed in the Hall of Valour at the Australian War Memorial.

STRANGE MILITARY FACTS

1. Roman soldiers were given one pound of meat daily. For an army 120 sheep were killed a day just for the meat ration. Or 60 hogs. Huge flocks of livestock were herded and grazed alongside an army. Roman soldiers were a mule more than anything else. They carried very heavy gear, on bad roads.
2. Top Gun was produced in collaboration with the Pentagon to rebrand the US military's image post-Vietnam war, and attract new Navy recruits. Top Gun was the first full-blown collaboration between Hollywood and the US military.
3. The U.S. military uses a 'context-based' learning technique from the Mormon Church for teaching new languages to recruits in as little as 5 weeks, even the Army's Intelligence Brigade enlists former missionaries to fill its ranks.
4. Sweden has "Gay Sailor" defence system in the Baltic Sea. Underwater dancing gay sailor neon sign sends a Morse code saying "Come here if you're gay", targeted to Russian submarines detected regularly in the area.
5. The US Military still uses 8 inch floppy disks on outdated IBM computers to run the nuclear missile systems. It's because they are incredibly hard to hack. The computers are essentially air-gapped and the old IBM computers are reliable. They could run for another 40 years with spare parts.
6. The US military was already using UAV drone technology in WWII. The primary manufacturer at that time, Radioplane Company, had a drone assembler named Norma Jeane Dougherty, who eventually changed her name to Marilyn Monroe
7. In 1905, a royal decree was issued to Donald Trump's grandfather ordering him to leave Bavaria and never come back after he failed to do military service.

PRIVATE TED'S HUMOUR

Meet SX 0001, Private Sidney Hubert Ichabod Ted. 10th Battalion AIF. Ted joined the AIF at the age of 6 but lied about his age, as teddy bears were supposed to be 8. He was one of the first ashore at Gallipoli and later saw service and action in France and Belgium.

Private Ted represents the Spirit of ANZAC, and he's joined our editorial staff to make you laugh. Welcome Ted!

Our new Joke Teller welcomes any contributions to this newsletter. Simply send them through to the Secretary for inclusion.

Thanks.



WORLDWIDE TELEPHONE SURVEY

Last month, a world-wide telephone survey was conducted by the UN.

The only question asked was: "Would you please give your honest opinion about possible solutions to the food shortage in the rest of the world?"

The survey was a complete failure because :

- In Eastern Europe they didn't know what "honest" meant.
- In Western Europe they didn't know what "shortage" meant.
- In Africa they didn't know what "food" meant.
- In China they didn't know what "opinion" meant.
- In the Middle East they didn't know what "solution" meant.
- In South America they didn't know what "please" meant.
- In the USA they didn't know what "the rest of the world" meant.

And in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Great Britain everyone hung up as soon as they heard the Indian accent.



**Did you know on
the Canary
Islands there is
not one canary?
And on the
Virgin Isles?
Same thing - not
one canary there
either!**

Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc



The Secretary David Laing
Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc
Riverglen Marina RSD 3152A
White Sands SA 5253

Email: davidlaing49@bigpond.com

Phone: 0407 791 822

www.rsara.asn.au

Hard copies of this newsletter are kindly printed by the office of the Federal Member for Barker, the Honourable Tony Pasin MP, in Murray Bridge.

Some members don't have internet access or email, therefore the only way we can keep them informed is by snail mail hard copies. This is made much easier thanks to Tony and his hard working staff.

Thank you Tony Pasin MP and Staff.



The Royal South Australia Regiment Association operates a great Facebook site which contains lots of important and historical information. For those of you not on Facebook, I urge you to have a look. You can alter your settings to protect your privacy, and you can even start up your own page under an assumed name. It's safe if you want it to be safe.

Ask someone who knows Facebook and they'll give you a hand to set up your own Facebook Page.

Editorial

Because I sent out the January newsletter before Christmas, this issue is "technically" the first issue of the year! Happy New Year! We start this Editorial with the question so many people are asking.....should we ban fireworks on New Years Eve?

For years we have stood, mouths agape, eyes cast aloft to watch millions of \$'s go up in smoke over Sidanay Harbour, Times Square and Piccadilly Circus, while terrified dogs and cats run off never to be seen again, and 10 minutes after it's all over we head off to bed!

With our country ringed by bushfires, and sadly, people losing their lives defending their homes, and the homes of others, isn't it time to get our priorities in order?

The drought has parched our vast plains but left enough to burn fiercely at the drop of a match! Imagine the damage if we hadn't been in the worst drought in decades?

And to think that some of these fires were deliberately lit! I can't imagine what is going through the heads of these buffoons when they see the result of their idiocy and delight from someone else's tragedy?

Shouldn't we be spending more money on drought relief and bushfire prevention than setting fire to rockets and making pretty colours in the sky for 5 minutes, in the very middle of a declared Catastrophic Bushfire Day?

So many people say "we do it for the kids," but if you speak to kids these days, kids like my grand children, they will tell you they would rather our money be spent feeding hungry farm animals and displaced koalas.

Do you remember the days when everyone had access to fireworks? Do you remember the Army days when we'd set off "wiz bangs" and parachute flares with no thoughts of bushfires? Do you remember Guy Fawkes Night (or Bonfire Night here in Oz) when all the left-over lounge suites, brick pallets and dunny doors would go onto the biggest bonfire in your suburb, the flames of which could be seen from the Moon? Well. I think those days are gone! We need to now focus on looking at rebuilding our torched countryside, and re-equipping our gallant firefighters with new equipment, and maybe some compensation for the long hours they spend fighting fires on our behalf? That's my thoughts!

Cheers

David Laing - Editor

SA's BUSHFIRES - Our Army Responds

Just when we were ready for the largest Association Support Exercise of the year, along came the Cudlee Creek fires, followed closely by the Kangaroo Island fires.

For the first time in history legislation was enacted to allow more than 3,000 Reservists to be called up to support the emergency services. About 100 members of the 10/27 Bn Battle Group made their way to KI and joined with firefighters to reclaim the land.



Our men and women assisted in many roles, including those of drivers, medical specialists, cooks, GDs and many other roles.



10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



As part of their assistance with recovery efforts, the Australian Army has been actively helping with treatment of many injured animals on Kangaroo Island. With the guidance of veterinarian, Captain Garnett Hall, 10th/27th Battalion soldiers Private Alexie Tarasov and Private Tyler Moseley-Greatwich provided a helping hand at the Kangaroo Island Wildlife Park.



Here are some snaps of the team conducting various tasks assisting the public during Operation Bushfire Assist in Kangaroo Island as part of Joint Task Force 1111.

Just some of the tasks for 10/27 personnel have included the members included: Building, Plumbing, Excavating, Plant Operating, General Labouring and being amazing baristas; but here is the big one.... Baggage Handlers for Qantas Airlines and REX!!!!

10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



10/27 Bn on Kangaroo Island



We had a bloody fire mate
 It burnt the bloody trees
 It burnt so bloody much mate
 Almost bought us to our knees

 It burnt our bloody houses mate
 It burnt our bloody scrub
 It burnt our bloody towns down
 Mate, it burnt the bloody pub

 And through the bloody fire mate
 The blokes that save the day
 Was not the Greens or Brumby
 But the Army saved the day

 The SES, the CFS
 the Army volunteers
 Their great bloody efforts mate
 Could reduce a bloke to tears

 So thanks for all your efforts mate
 And thanks for all your care
 But most of all thank bloody Christ
 That all of you were there.

Adapted from a poem by Colin Baxter

To Our Soldiers

To all the members of the 10th/27th Battalion Battle Group who supported the Emergency Services on Kangaroo Island and the Adelaide Hills during the devastating bushfires, let it be known that Australia is proud of you.

For the first time in history legislation was enacted that allowed our Reservists to be called up on CFTS (Continuous Full Time Service) and assist fighting the fires and repairing the damage done by the fires. As this publication goes to print, our soldiers are still on the fire front line, doing whatever they can to make life a bit easier for the Emergency Services and for the people of Kangaroo Island and the Adelaide Hills.

The Battlegroup deployed in record time, and in very short periods were already on the ground while we were still reading about it in the newspapers.

From Rod Beames, President of the RSAR Association Inc, there is this *"This morning I had the pleasure of watching the troops from the 10/27 Battle Group depart from Keswick on their way to Kangaroo Island. I spoke to a couple before they boarded the buses and they were keen, and understood their task. It brought a lump to one's throat as they drove past and waved farewell.*

I then met the new RSM of the Battalion, WO1 John Craig. He has just taken up his position and has hit the ground running. This is all "new Territory" for Reservists but there is a sense of confidence that it will lead to a successful outcome. The RSM attends at least 2 briefings each day in reference to the fires and 10/27 Bn's support role.

The fight is far from over, but we will support our soldiers as they are supporting the people of South Australia."

Due to about 90% of our Battlegroup being deployed to support the Emergency Services, it was decided to postpone the Battalion Skills exercise, due to be conducted at RAAF Base Edinburgh on 1/2 February, to a later date, still to be confirmed. The priorities of the safety of our communities come first.

For those of you who volunteered to assist on that weekend, we will advise of if and when you will be needed as soon as we know the situation.

We thank you for taking the time to put up your hand and we understand some of you may not be available at a later time. We'll cross that bridge when we come to it.

Those of you with Facebook and other social media platforms would have already seen most of the pictures featured here. I owe a debt of gratitude to the photographers, who are too numerous to name, however I do wish to thank Trent Burnard for keeping our RSARA Facebook page well informed, Jesse Humphrys for posting pics on our website and SGT Mark Blondell (& friends) for reporting directly from the fire front. You people are all amazing, and while those of us too old or too important to go, sit at home and watch, you continue to uphold the traditions of the Australian Defence Force. ***Pro Patria*** (which actually means "For Country.")