OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC

Patron Major General Neil Wilson AM BFD Editor David Laing 0407791822

# A Christmas Message from Rod

While officially not the president, I again, take great pride in stepping up to write this report. I have had many coffees with many (what I consider to be suitable replacements) members but I have been unsuccessful in securing a new "president elect".

So, short of becoming another Donald Trump, moving up while I can, I will.

We move into Christmas mode once the 10/27 Battalion Band completes their Christmas Pageant obligations, so we are well and truly there, now. I spoke with the Bandmaster last week and he said their work load is "full on" with requests for the end of year events.

This year, however, there are no troops expected to be serving overseas or away from home over the Christmas period so the Association will not be (as is usually the deal) needed to pack and send Christmas Care Packages.

We have been invited to the Battalion's end of year awards presentations. 7 worthy serving members will be named and presented with their trophies. We will get a chance to say farewell to the current CO, LTCOL Sam Benveniste, after a busy and exciting 3 year posting.

The "Pro Patria" Journal should be published this month and copies made available for the "old and the bold." The "Pro Patria" has become a summary and hard record of the previous 3 years or so of the Battalion's activities.

I look forward to catching up with LTCOL Aaron Jackson, the new CO when he takes his role very soon.

I once again, look forward to catching up with many of you at our Christmas lunch at Keswick Barracks Roy Inwood VC Club. It <u>could</u> be our last Christmas lunch at this venue.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL.

### Rod Beames

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Editors Note: At an Association Committee meeting held at Keswick Barracks on November 24th, the Committee voted unanimously to reinstate Rod as President for the foreseeable future. Welcome back mate!



cemher

2023

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s a mark of respect for our President Rod Beames, and to honour his hard work for the Association and the Regiment, the RSARA Committee instigated an award to be presented in Rod's name for perpetuity. The criteria for the award, as laid out by senior Battalion staff is: *"Awarded to a member of the Regiment who has displayed outstanding commitment, service and strength of character, beyond that expected of their duties."* It's called <u>The Rodney Beames Perpetual Shield</u>, and the 2023 winner, *PTE G. Turner,* was presented with the award by Rod himself. That story and the pics of the Battalion Awards night are on Pages 3,4 & 5.

e publish 12 of these newsletters every year, and they take a fair bit of editing and tweaking to get things just right. But, are we doing the right thing and giving you what you want, or are we just wasting our time? That is the question I'd like to know, and you can provide me with an answer just by dropping me a simple email with the words "Keep doing the Sitrep, Over!" in the Subject Line. I look forward to seeing your response.

s this year draws to an end, I look back on the rest of 2023, and think have far we've come as an Ex-Services Association. We started off in 2008 with about 30 members, mainly from the ranks of the old 10 Battalion RSAR. Then as our name was bandied around, more members joined from the old 1 RSAR, 10 RSAR, 27 RSAR, 43 RSAR, and then 10/27 Bn RSAR. Now we have members from all those Battalions and their attached units. We also have 6 former and current Commanding Officers as members, which just shows the dedication of those who served and continue to serve. Our numbers stand at over 170, but there is always room for more. An Application Form is on Page 17, so if you know anyone who has served or is still serving within our Regiment, give them a copy. They can join the largest ex-Services group currently operating and enjoy our camaraderie.

> ow that we've re-established links with our NZ Infantry "neighbours" I'll publish some interesting stories about the 2nd/4th Battalion RNZIR, and its personnel. You can also find out more at <u>www.nzdf.mil.nz/media-centre/news/</u>

utgoing CO 10/27 Battalion RSAR LTCOL Sam Benveniste has provided a "farewell" story before he departs for his next posting. That story is on Page 6 & 7. The RSAR Association wish to thank LTCOL Benveniste for his unwavering support of us and our goals during his tenure. He was presented with a mounted segment of the Original Torrens Parade Ground, our "Spiritual Home," by Rod Beames & David Laing at the 2023 Awards night. His successor LTCOL Aaron Jackson has kindly provided an insight into his service life, and what he hopes to achieve over the next few years. That can be found on Pages 8 & 9.

hilst we're talking about moving on, our Padre Paul Ghanem has been posted out and leaves the Regiment at the end of the year. He's been a great supporter of myself and the Association, and we're sorry to see him go. His final article for this newsletter is on Page 16. Go well and stay safe Padre.

erry Christmas to all our members, their families and our readers. Stay safe and we'll catch up in the New Year. Cheers



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### **Contact Us**

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Visit us on the web at **www.rsara.asn.au** 

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Cheques etc can be mailed to

The Treasurer Christian Bennett RSAR Association PO Box 1133 Kensington Gardens SA 5068 christianbennett95@gmail.com



The 2023 Awards Presentation and Promotions was carried out at Warradale Barracks in front of soldiers, family and friends, and members of the RSAR Association Inc. The highlight for Association members was the presentation of the inaugural "Rodney Beames Perpetual Shield" by Rod himself to Pte G. Turner. Rod had no idea about the Shield, which was an idea of the RSARA Committee to commemorate Rod's service and commitment to our members and those of the Regiment. When asked to say a few words he was overcome with emotion and could only say "Thank you!"



Rod presents the "Rodney Beams Perpetual Shield" to PTE G. Turner in the presence of the CO LTCOL Benveniste



LTCOL Sam Benveniste was presented with an Honour Board as a parting gift as he ends his tenure as Commanding Officer.

The Rodney Beames Perpetual Shield for Excellence in Soldiering

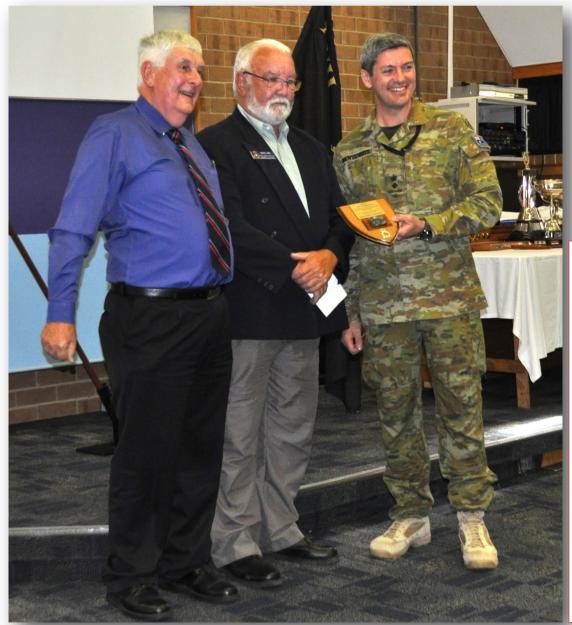
## 2023 Awards Presentation Night



David Laing, Des Hawkins and Rod Beames at the awards Presentations night,



Special guests were members of Rod Beames family who were invited without Rods knowledge to see the Presentations.





A special Award of Gratitude comprising a shield mounted with a piece of the original Parade Torrens Ground, the Spiritual Home of the Regiment, was presented to LTCOL Benveniste for his "unwavering support of the RSAR Association during his tenure as Commanding Officer of 10/27 RSAR.

LTCOL Benveniste received the award from Rod Beames and David Laing.

## 2023 Awards Presentation Night



ABOVE: RSAR Association Committee member WO2 Mark Blondell is presented with his Warrant by the CO.

RIGHT: Padre Paul Ghanem is presented with a parting gift prior to being posted to 3 Health Battalion.





LT Zorawar Sandhu is presented with the "Top Shot" Trophy, won during the Simpson Trophy Shoot, by Mr Craig Simpsonthe great, great grandson of the original Simpson Trophy donor ,the Hon. Alfred Mueller Simpson MLC.

Competing in the event this year were Australian Army soldiers from 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, 1st Armoured Regiment, 10th/27th Battalion, Royal South Australia Regiment, 3rd Field Squadron, 144th Signal Squadron, 9th Combat Service Support Battalion, Headquarters 9th Brigade, 6th/13th Battery, and 3rd Health Battalion, as well as Navy sailors from HMAS Encounter.

7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment's Support Company placed first in the team category and Lieutenant Zorawar Sandhu from 10th/27th Battalion, Royal South Australia Regiment took out the top shot.



It has been an absolute honour and privilege to have been able to serve as Commanding Officer of the 10th/27th Battalion the past three years, and I am exceptionally proud of the achievements of our people both individually and collectively throughout my tenure. Our people are the unit's centre of gravity, and I am constantly impressed by the dedication, service, professionalism and enthusiasm of our officers and soldiers.

In 2021 we had come out of a period of significant domestic operations including bushfires and COVID, and I was determined that we take a deliberate approach to regaining our focus on foundation warfighting, which remains our core role. The necessity for this has been sharply demonstrated by the commencement of the war in Ukraine and the outcomes of the Defence Strategic Review which highlights the increasing tensions in our own region. As I write this we are preparing a contingent of our Combat Engineers from 3 Field Squadron to deploy on OP KUDU in support of 7 RAR, to train Ukrainian soldiers in the United Kingdom, and I wish them all the best in undertaking this very important Operation.



The changing strategic landscape has also necessitated significant structural changes in the ADF and Army. In 2022 the 9th Brigade transferred to Forces Command and integrated 7 RAR and 1st Armoured Regiment into the Brigade. This also saw the transfer of command of 3rd/9th South Australian Mounted Rifles to 1st Armoured Regiment, and I thank the members of the Squadron for their significant service and support to the Battalion over the preceding decade.

The new hybrid full time / part time integrated Brigade has led to significant tempo, but also exceptional opportunities for our members, including live warfighting exercises with the flanking full time units (such as EX Rhino Run in Sept 23) and the deployment of a platoon to Indonesia on Exercise Super Garuda Shield in August 23. This year we have had great success with the trial of the Reserve Accelerated Training Scheme, employing reservists on flexible full time contracts to accelerate individual and collective training.

Whilst we focus on warfighting, we still continue to support domestic operations and border protection operations – deploying members to OP FLOOD ASSIST to both Northern NSW in March 22 and to the SA Riverland over Christmas 22, as well as a contingent to OP RESOLUTE in the Torres Strait.

We have also continued to develop new capabilities including the introduction of PMV to the infantry and engineer elements, as well as raising direct fire support weapons capability. Our facilities at Warradale continue to expand, with the construction and use of new urban training and armed combative centre, as well as moving B Coy's 5 PL from Smithfield to Edinburgh to be collocated with 7 RAR.



The near future will see further significant changes including the 9th Brigade moving back to a Reserve Brigade and the transfer of Keswick Barracks to the State Government. I am confident, however, that whatever further changes and challenges arise the unit will continue to be able to meet them with enthusiasm and make the most of all opportunities presented as we continue to



LTCOL Benveniste, Rod Beames holding the Shield, and the inaugural winner PTE G. Turner

provide ready and relevant capability.

I remain grateful for the exceptional support provided by the RSAR Association to both the members of the Battalion and myself personally during my tenure. Whether it be providing BBQ lunches at unit training activities, sending care packages to members deployed over Christmas or even providing new signage around the unit, the Association and it's members have always been happy to help with enthusiasm and a smile. I thank David Laing for his work as Secretary, which includes editing and distributing "*Sitrep, Over!*", which is always informative and entertaining, and allows Association members to stay up to date.

I would especially like to acknowledge the exceptional work and dedication of Rod Beames as RSARA President. Rod has worked tirelessly in support of the Association and the Regiment for over a decade, and frequently visits the RSM and I at the unit, undertaking all manner of tasks to support us. At our recent unit

awards night I was delighted to be able to present a new award named in Rod's honour – the 'Rodney Beames Perpetual Shield'. This shield will be presented annually to *"a member of the Regiment who has displayed outstanding commitment, service and strength of character beyond that expected of their duties."*. I thank David Laing for creating the Shield, and the clandestine operation to bring Rod's daughters Narelle and Kim and other family members to the unit to witness it's inaugural presentation. Rod was taken completely by surprise, and was greatly moved by the presentation - this Shield is a truly fitting way to acknowledge Rod's service.

In closing I wish to thank all of the members of the unit for their service, as well as their families who have supported them, and I hope all can enjoy a safe and restful holiday period. I wish the incoming CO, LTCOL Aaron Jackson all the best and I know the Battalion will continue to excel and succeed long into the future. As I leave the Regiment I look forward to being able to remaining connected via the Association, and receiving these newsletters to keep abreast of its many activities.

Pro Patria

LTCOL Sam Benveniste

Commanding Officer 10/27 RSAR



To the members of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association,

I am privileged to have been appointed Commanding Officer of 10th/27th Battalion in 2024-25. Accordingly, I am writing to introduce myself to you and to highlight some of the key challenges and opportunities that I expect the unit will encounter during my tenure. First, I want to thank the outgoing Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Sam Benveniste, who has left the unit in an excellent position and thereby given me both an example to follow and a worthy challenge to ensure that I leave the unit in a better position than the good one in which he is leaving it.

This will be my fourth posting to 10th/27th Battalion. My first, from 2002-05, was as a Private, first in in B Company and then in Signals Platoon Support Company. My second posting to the unit was from 2007-09, during which period I was a Second Lieutenant then Lieutenant, and I commanded Training Platoon, 4 Platoon, and then Training Platoon again. My third posting to the Battalion was as Officer Commanding B Company from 2018 to 2020.

Outside of 10th/27th Battalion, my other post-

ings have included Adelaide Universities Regiment, Headquarters 9th Brigade, Army Headquarters, the Australian War College, and 2nd/17th Battalion The Royal New South Wales Regiment. I am also privileged to have deployed on Operation Astute (peacekeeping in Timor Leste), Operation Resolute (Australian border security), Operation Okra (building partner capacity in Iraq), and Operation COVID-19 Assist (domestic emergency response). The picture above was taken during my deployment to Iraq - I have used this as I am yet to have an official portrait photo taken!

In my civilian career, I have been a public servant since 2010. My career highlights include having deployed on Operation Accordion (non-warlike service in the Middle East region) as a Defence Civilian, and having been Commander of the State Control Centre - Health in SA Health during the period between the opening of SA's state borders in November 2021 and the cessation of the COVID-19 state of emergency in May 2022. In this appointment, I had the honour of leading a team of over 300 personnel, which provided support to over 10,000 of the state's most vulnerable people during the Omicron strain outbreak that followed the opening of the state's borders. By so doing, we also played a major role in preventing the state's hospital system from being overwhelmed by COVID-positive patients. In my current civilian role, I am Senior Researcher Joint and Integrated Military Operations in Defence Science and Technology Group.

Having been in the Battalion on-and-off for the past few decades, I have seen it evolve and adapt to meet changing strategic circumstances. When I enlisted in January 2002, the Army Reserve was reaching the end of a long period without any operational deployments. Back then, the only opportunities for overseas service were Rifle Company Butterworth, or exercises in Hawaii or New Zealand. I was incredibly lucky to be selected to attend the latter two of these three activities in 2003 and 2004 respectively.

Skipping forward to 2007, when I returned to the Battalion upon completion of my officer training course, the focus had shifted entirely. Reservists were deploying on operations in formed bodies





for the first time since the Second World War, and the Battalion was focussing on training for stability operations in Solomon Islands. Several of my soldiers deployed there over the three years of my posting as a Platoon Commander.

During my third posting to the Battalion, which began in 2018, the focus had shifted again. I commanded a Combat Team as part of Battlegroup Jacka during the 'readying year' of Army's force generation cycle, then in the subsequent 'ready' year several members of my company (and indeed the rest of the Battalion) deployed to a range of locations including Afghanistan, Irag, and on border security operations. Those that did not deploy on these operations were called out a few months later and deployed on Operation Bushfire Assist in early 2020. This domestic emergency response operation set the tone for the next few years, and I ended my sub-unit



command time shortly after a score of my soldiers completed deployment on Operation COVID-19 Assist in November 2020.

Now, as I post into the Battalion for my fourth time, the unit is once again facing strategic circumstances that have changed since I last posted out. The 2023 *Defence Strategic Review* (which I recommend all RSARA members read if you have not done so already) makes it clear that great power competition is now the defining strategic feature the Indo-Pacific region. The Army, and indeed the entire Australian Defence Force, is both restructuring and reequipping to enable it to continue to protect Australian sovereignty and security within the contemporary strategic environment. Locally, it was announced earlier this year that Keswick Barracks will be handed over to the SA State Government. This will necessitate the move of Battalion elements located at Keswick to other bases in the mid-term.

The 'so what' of all this is that I anticipate my command tenure will be driven by the need to generate then maintain a three-way balance between proactive change management; the planning and delivery of robust training, with a particular emphasis on foundation warfighting skills; and sustaining a reasonable tempo that will enable ongoing success in the long-term. While this situation will pose challenges, these are far from insurmountable, and more importantly it will also present several opportunities for the Battalion and its members. I expect that the relationship between the Battalion and the RSAR Association, which has been mutually beneficial during every proceeding epoch, will continue to be so as we explore these opportunities together as a Regimental community.

Pro Patria.

Lieutenant Colonel Aaron P. Jackson

Commanding Officer Designate 27 November 2023

Editors Note: LTCOL Jackson has been a Life Member of the RSAR Association since 2019. We congratulate him on his posting as Commanding Officer of 10th/27th Battalion and look forward to working closely with he and his team over the next few years. Welcome.





After Monday and Tuesday... even the calendar says. Whoever put the "s" in fastfood, is a marketing genius.

Turns out that being a "senior" is mostly just googling how to do stuff

They had to get a translator in at the benefits office today. Somebody came in speaking English. 🙂

SHARE IF YOU LAUGHED!



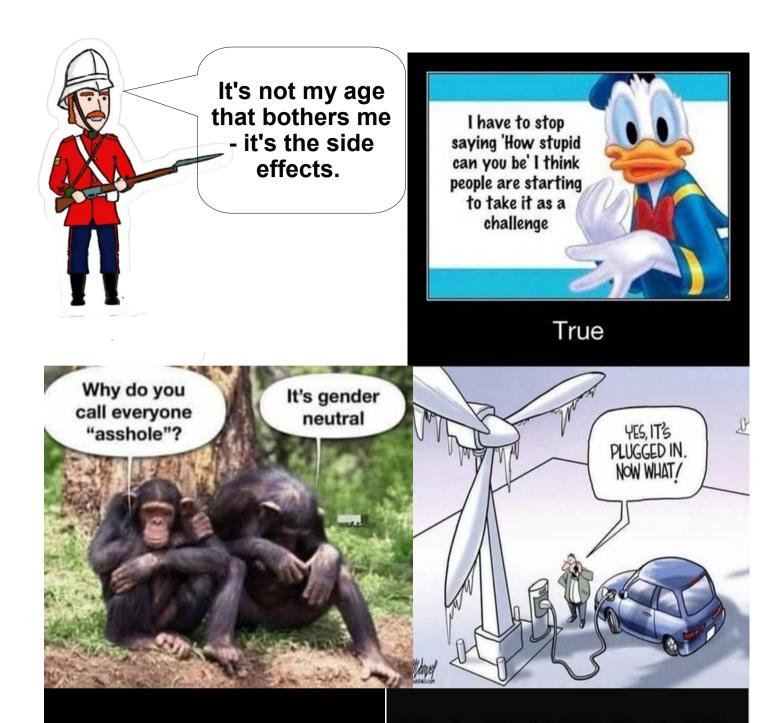
Common sense is a flower that doesn't grow in everyone's garden.

fb/sun gazing

Have you ever just looked at someone and knew the wheel was turnin' but .. the hamster was dead?



Get your relatives speaking to one another again by sending a heartfelt Christmas card with a picture of your family with an extra child nobody knows.



Confuse your doctor by putting on rubber gloves at the same time he does. I WENT LINE DANCING LAST NIGHT. WELL, IT WAS A ROADSIDE SOBRIETY TEST... SAME THING.



In reference to our letters in the November edition, we have been in further contact with our brethren of the 2nd/4th Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, and I wrote to the Commanding Officer of that unit, offering our hand of friendship. See below.

#### Greetings LTCOL Seeds

I have been communicating with HONCOL Paul Koorey about restoring links with our regiments, and he has suggested you may like to receive monthly copies of our Association newsletter "Sitrep, Over!". It contains up to date info on our battalions operations plus some interesting stories of a military nature.

If you would like me to add you to our distribution list, please advise and I'll do so accordingly.

Regards

David



David Laing Secretary – Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc Editor *"Sitrep, Over!"* Mobile 0407 791 822 Website: <u>www.rsara.asn.au</u>

David

Kia Ora and warm greetings from the beautiful South Island.

Paul is doing a fabulous job of primarily reconnecting the Battalion but also keeping me on the straight and narrow with lots of excellent advice and guidance as a newbie in the seat!

Grateful thanks for getting in touch, and yes please could you add me to the distribution list. Paul has already sent me the latest edition of 'Sitrep, Over!' and I have had a good read through.

Our drive to reconnect is deliberate; I had the good fortune, whilst at Army General Staff, of being present when the two Chiefs of Army signed Plan ANZAC. The world in which we serve is changing and reestablishing close ties with our Ally is more important than ever.

I look forward to the next edition.

Yours Aye

Gareth

LTCOL Gareth Seeds COMMANDING OFFICER 2/4RNZIR, 2ND/4TH BN ROYAL NZ INFANTRY REGT Ngāti Tūmatauenga | New Zealand Army

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Private (PTE) Leah Miles, 2/4 Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment is a person who enjoys a challenge and says recruit and Reserve Infantry Corps training gave her that every single day.

PTE Miles is no stranger to challenging herself, and if you are a women's rugby follower you might well recognize the name Leah Miles from Otago Spirits Women's Rugby Team.

PTE Miles is in her final year studying a Bachelor of Science majoring in Psychology and minoring in Sports and Exercise Sciences at Otago University, and also works part-time at the university gym where a few of the women identified PTE Miles as being a good contender for joining ResF. They had also joined and loved the training, the challenges and the friendships formed.

During lockdown in 2021, PTE

Miles and a fellow Spirits team member were locked down together in Dunedin and rose every morning at 0600h to train. PTE Miles confesses it was the mornings that were a struggle during her Army training.

"Even getting out of bed at 0530h every morning after a long day was a challenge. I'd never done anything remotely like what I did on recruit training. I ended up loving it and thriving on the challenges."

She reminds potential recruits to arrive with a mindset of being comfortable with being uncomfortable, enjoy every day and expect the unexpected. There are times when you are going to feel out of your depth but it's all worth it in the end, she says.

"On Corps training we were critiqued every day. This was my biggest mental challenge. In the beginning, I became flustered but with repetition it built my confidence," says PTE Miles.

She says people are now shocked by what she can accomplish in a day. Everything from organisation strategy, self-confidence, communication and tolerance towards others have all been unexpected life skills she has come away with from her short time in the Reserve Forces.

"Graduation Day was pretty special and meant a lot to many of us. I was super sad to leave all my friends. I am so grateful about what has come out of my training and for everyone who I met.

"My parents were super proud of me. They thought some of the stories sounded funny and couldn't believe I had lived this whole different life over the summer!"



Sourced from <a href="http://www.nzdf.mil.nz">www.nzdf.mil.nz</a> June 2022





This Padre can't march, tactical know how and all that sort of stuff ......

The 3FD TRGWO (Training Warrant Officer) said out aloud what everybody was thinking "this padre can't march." His feedback directly back to me was even more blistering. "Padre," he said, "you look like a chicken trying to fly!"

These days very few comments cause me stress, especially having crossed the Rubicon when I turned 55. The effect of his comment was to bring a smile to my face as I imagined how hilarious I must have looked and what the RSM must have been thinking. His comments led me to ponder the question, *if I can't march then what can I do*?

Positioned to serve, without reference to rank, is where the chaplain can be of greatest effect. It makes no difference whether it be at the Commanders Update Brief at 2100 or in the Roy Inwood VC Club at 2201. It's in places as diverse as a conference room, a members' family home or a boozer where a chaplain can help grow unit capability.



My hope is that in the past year I have aided in the char-

acter development of those who have sought my guidance. Ethical and moral decision making is practised by all, while religious affiliation only applies to some. It is my hope that the 'all' and not the 'some' have been my primary focus.

In January 2024 I will march into...."**Correction**" In January 2024 I will <u>strut</u> with wings flapping into the Third Health Battalion (3HB). CHAP Mark Sexton and CHAP Stephen Albretch (a new to service chaplain) will take over my role. Mark is well known to many in the Association, having begun his military service in Adelaide almost 40 years ago.

Here's hoping that my marching prowess will improve while I'm at 3HB. As Chaplain I will remain focused on Army's new mission to prepare land power to enable the Joint Force in peace and war, to which I will factor in some drill – something I should have done 3 years ago. I wonder if there's a TRGWO out there willing to assist?

**Festive Season Blessings** 

ZKJ QRX 3HB AR

The Padre

<u>Editors Note</u>: Padres usually come and go, and most leave their mark in one way or another. Padre Paul Ghanem was posted into our Regiment just 3 years ago, but in that time has made a tremendous effort to serve our members, both serving and former serving, and provide them with the best pastoral care and friendship that can be given. He has made many friends within our group and I'm certain that no matter where God's bid (and the Army's) takes him, he will continue his great work and support where it's most needed. Thank you Padre Ghanem, for being there when we needed you. Stay safe.



Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP 2024** 



1

Membership Category

Date of Application

<b>Full Membership</b> \$30 (Former member of the RSAR)	Current Serving Military Member   Must be serving with the RSAR or a sub unit.   FREE 1st year. \$10 thereafter while still serving		
Non Voting Associate Member	Life Membership (By invitation Only)		
\$15 (Spouses, non former members of RSAR)	FULL Member \$300		
	ASSOCIATE Member \$150		

#### My Details - Please print clearly

Full Name:	Postal Address:		
Date of Birth:	Email:		
Mobile No:	How did you hear about the Association?		
Regt No. or PMKeys No.			
Period of Service / / to / /	Current Serving Member of the RSAR or Sub Unit		
Spouse/Partners name.			

#### Method of Payment

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The Treasurer Christian Bennett	Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc						
RSAR Association Inc	BSB 633 000						
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CASH (In person to the Committee)	listed below and p	id my Fees by <u>Cheque</u> to the Association Account low and posted Application to The Secretary RSAR 5218 Murray Bridge South SA 5253					
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	BSB:	633 000					
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I understand that receipt of this application constitutes my acceptance of the Associations Rules as set down in the Constitution found at the website address below. I also authorise the processing of my preferred method of payment and acknowledge that I may be required to provide proof of past or current military service as required.							
Find us on: facebook.	Website: W	ww.rsara.asn.au					
Please send this completed application, with proof of service to the	RSAR Association Secretary	at davidlaing49@bigpond.com					

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Burnard	Trent	Bennett	Christian	Ranger	Denis
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James	Grant	Faunt	Joshua	Weepers	Nicole
Jeffrey	Scott	Fortune	Nigel	Wheeler	Chris
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Johnson	Barry	Gatley	Graham		
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Lakin	Bruce	Gibson	Lindsay	Wilson MAJGEN	Neil
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Miller	Nick	Groffen	Renee	Hon Memb for Life	
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Moore	Terry	Harrison	John		
Moore	Thomas	Harrison	Keith		
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