

# “Sitrep, Over!”



OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

PATRON: MAJGEN NEIL WILSON AM RFD

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On this day. January 11th 1973

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On January 11, 1973, the Australian government officially ended its involvement in the Vietnam War with a proclamation issued by Governor-General Sir Paul Hasluck. This marked the official cessation of hostilities by Australian forces in the conflict, which had been ongoing for eleven years. Over 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War, with 523 tragically losing their lives and almost 2,400 being wounded.

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War began with a small commitment of 30 military advisors in 1962, and increased over the following decade to a peak of 7,672 Australian personnel following the Menzies Government's April 1965 decision to upgrade its military commitment to South Vietnam's security. By the time the last Australian personnel were withdrawn in 1972, the Vietnam War had become Australia's longest war, eventually being surpassed by Australia's long-term commitment to the War in Afghanistan. It remains Australia's largest force contribution to a foreign conflict since the Second World War, and was also the most controversial military action in Australia since the conscription controversy during World War I. Although initially enjoying broad support due to concerns about the spread of communism in Southeast Asia, an increasingly influential anti-war movement developed, particularly in response to the government's imposition of conscription.



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# EDITORIAL

**Welcome** to 2026 and all the wonders it holds for us! We start this newsletter with an article about our most traditional item of dress, the KFF, or Khaki Fur Felt, the Slouch Hat. We all wore it at some stage of our military careers (I still have mine issued in 1972) but how many know of its origins? Learn more on Page 3.

Our allied Regiment “over the ditch” is the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion RNZIR, and their Commanding Officer LTCOL Gareth Seeds has had an interesting and full bodied Army career, both in NZ and the UK. He has kindly given his permission and you can read his profile on Page 4.

All those military historians out there would know of our Regiments involvement in the battles of the Western Front during WW1, including those at Passchendaele. It's on our Battle Honours. Keeping with our NZ theme, Paul Koorey, the Honorary Colonel of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion RNZIR has written an article about their involvement in the same battle. You can see that on Pages 5 & 6.

**Late** last year we appointed a new Welfare Officer to assist the members of the RSAR Association, and to provide welfare support to any members “doing it tough!” WO2 Phil Stuart has kindly put up his hand for the position, and you can read a little about him on Page 10.

**While** we are getting busier each year, with Support Exercises, Awards Presentations, the supply of shields, and provision of New Arrivals packs and Care Packages for our deployed soldiers etc., we still have an Association to run, and we can't do it without your support or your yearly subs. So, if you can't remember the last time you paid your annual fees, drop me a line and I'll let you know if you're financial. If you're NOT, I'll let you know how much you owe, and we can be friends again 😊

**Association** Vice President Des Hawkins also wears another hat in his busy life, that of the Curator of the RSAR Historical Collection, an important link to our military heritage. The collection holds vital links to our past, and we need help to ensure its future. Des tells us a little about it on Page 11, 12 and 13 and appeals for your support.

**The** story of Billy Sing, the Gallipoli Sniper has been featured in this newsletter before. Unless you haven't read it, it's again on Pages 14 & 15.

**Bravery & Betrayal.** Watch it and make up your own mind. Details on Page 16.

**Finally,** [Denis Mulroney](#), please contact the President via email.

That's it for this month. Stay well and stay safe.

*David Laing*

Pro Patria

# The Australian Slouch Hat KFF



The slouch hat is an object strongly associated with Australian identity. The word 'slouch' refers to the sloping brim. The brim is made from rabbit-fur felt or wool felt and is always worn with a puggaree. The Army refers to the slouch hat by its official designation - hat khaki fur felt (KFF).

The slouch hat became a famous symbol of the Australian fighting man during World War One and continued to be worn throughout World War Two. Its use since that time has made it a national symbol.

The origins of the slouch hat began with the Victorian Mounted Rifles in 1885. The Victorian hat was an ordinary bush felt hat turned up on the right side to ensure it would not be caught during the drill movement of 'shoulder arms' from 'order arms'.

By 1890, State military commandants had agreed that all Australian forces, except the artillery corps, should wear a looped-up hat of uniform pattern. The hat was turned up on the right side in Victoria and Tasmania, and on the left side in all other States to allow for different drill movements.

The Slouch Hat became standard issue headdress in 1903 and its brim position was mostly standardized.

General Bridges, the first commander of the 1st Australian Imperial Force, was found wearing his slouch hat reversed when he was fatally wounded at Gallipoli. As a mark of respect and remembrance for Bridges, when the slouch hat is worn at Royal Military College - Duntroon, it has become traditional to wear the chinstrap buckle on the right side of the face and the brim down. This tradition commenced at the Royal Military College in 1932.



Today, Army members wear the slouch hat with the brim down to provide additional protection from the sun when not performing ceremonial duties.



# Lt Col Gareth Seeds CO of 2nd/4th Battalion RNZIR



## LEADING THROUGH CHANGE

*Lieutenant Colonel Seeds commissioned into the Queen's Lancashire Regiment in April 1995 but began his military career when he enlisted as an electronic systems engineer with the Royal Corps of Signals in September 1989. Lieutenant Colonel Seeds transferred to the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment in June 2011.*

During his Regimental duty as a light and mechanised Line Infantry Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Seeds has commanded a Rifle Platoon, Assault Pioneer Platoon, Mortar Platoon and Headquarter Company. He has also served as the Battalion Intelligence Officer and Operations Officer; the latter included a period as the Chief Controller for the Merseyside Joint Operations Control Centre during the National Fire Service Strike of 2002/3.

His staff appointments include 2 years as an instructor at the British Army's Infantry Training Centre. A year as the 7th Armoured Brigade 'The Desert Rats' Brigade Operations Officer. He qualified from Intermediate Staff College as a Technical Weapons Staff Officer and spent 3 years at the UK's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, as a specialist military advisor to scientists and experts on an array of research and procurement programmes.

Operational deployments include 6 months in Bosnia (96) as a Rifle Platoon Commander; one year as a Rifle Platoon Commander and Company Operations Officer patrolling Omagh and the borders of County Tyrone and County Fermanagh (97-98); 6 months as the Battalion Intelligence Officer in South Armagh (01) and 5 months in Basrah City as the Battalion Operations Officer (03). He deployed to Afghanistan with Headquarters 6th (United Kingdom) Division for a year as a CJ5 staff planner in Regional Command (South) (09-10). His most recent operational deployment has seen him back in Iraq (17) as the Task Force Taji-V Chief of Staff and the New Zealand Senior National Officer.

*His first appointment in the New Zealand Defence Force was as the Requirements Manager for the Network Enabled Army Programme. This was followed by a posting to the First Battalion RNZIR in Linton as the Battalion Second-in-Command. Lieutenant Colonel Seeds was appointed acting Commanding Officer for 2015. 2016 was spent at Advanced Staff College in New Zealand where he gained a Masters with distinction in International Security. He spent 6 years at Army General Staff firstly as Director Strategic Concept, then Director Strategy and Force Planning and also as Assistant Chief of Army (Strategy). Highlights include landing Force Design and many iterations of the Army budget. Lieutenant Colonel Seeds was honoured to be posted as Commanding Officer 2nd/4th Battalion in June 2023, and extremely honoured to meet Thurza Batchelor shortly afterwards.*

*Her first words being – “but you’re a bloody pom!”*

(Thurza is the widow of Eric Batchelor, the only New Zealander to be awarded the DCM and Bar in WW2. He died in 2010 aged 89)



# The Canterbury & Otago Regiments at Passchendaele

## by Paul Koorey HONCOL of 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> RNZIR

Before the First World War, there were four military districts in New Zealand, each one centred on what were the four major population areas of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. In 1914, the Canterbury Military District covered all of the South Island north of the Waitaki River while, south of the Waitaki, the Otago Regiment was formed from units in Otago and Southland.

At the outbreak of the war, each district was required to provide an infantry battalion and, later, second, third and even fourth battalions were raised as the Expeditionary Force increased from two brigades to three, plus a Mounted Rifles brigade, the latter also involving troops from throughout the South Island.

The Canterbury Regiment companies all retained the names (and wore the badges) of their parent battalions. So, the battalion contained four rifle companies: the 1st Canterbury Company, the 2nd South Canterbury Company, the 12th Nelson Company and the 13th North Canterbury and Westland Company. Similarly, The Otago Regiment companies were the 4th Otago Company, the 8th Southland Company, the 10th North Otago Company and the 14th South Otago Company.

Both battalions used the 'double company' organisation, that is, an enlarged company structure which totalled about 225 men each, so the battalions were all about 1000 strong. After mobilisation in August 1914, the 1st Battalion The Canterbury Regiment embarked for overseas service in October of that same year, with the Otago Battalion leaving soon after. Both regiments fought first around the Suez Canal in Egypt, then on the Gallipoli Peninsula, before returning to Egypt.

In 1916, the Canterbury and Otago battalions were divided into two battalions each – the 1st and 2nd Canterbury Battalions and the 1st and 2nd Otago Battalions. In 1917, a further battalion was created in each regiment so that, during the battles leading up to Passchendaele, all three Canterbury and Otago battalions were involved.

Passchendaele was also known as the Third Battle of Ypres and occurred in a number of areas of the Western Front from July to November 1917 with the aim of gaining control of the ridges south and east of the city of Ypres. Leading up to the battles of October 1917, the New Zealand Division mostly spent the month of September in a training area well behind the front lines.

The first objective of the New Zealand Division was the Gravenstafel-Abraham Heights section of the Broodseinde Ridge, just to the southwest of Passchendaele. For this, attack on 4 October, the 1st and 4th New Zealand Brigades were involved, with the 3rd Otago Battalion in the front line, while the 3rd Canterbury Battalion was in close support and ready to move through and exploit any successes. It was a bloody and long fight, but nonetheless a success for the New Zealanders.

However, the subsequent attack on 12 October was a disaster. Patrols during the previous nights – including one by the 2nd Otago's Sergeant Dick Travis (who had been awarded a DCM in the previous year) – had established that there were huge wire obstacles covered by concrete pillboxes, each one containing German machine-gunners. Worse, the British artillery had not managed to break up the wire. Reports to higher headquarters suggesting that the attack should be postponed until better artillery preparation had occurred failed to change the plan.

This battle involved the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Canterbury Regiment and the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Otago Regiment. Zero Hour (H Hour) was at 0525 hours on 12 October, and the battle was fought in what

can only be described as a muddy quagmire. In addition to the constant rain and mud, the defences prepared by the Germans were extensive. From the start line, the troops had to move through the mud while dodging quite accurate enemy artillery fire. When they got closer to the enemy positions, they had to get through about 25-50 yards of barbed wire, which their own artillery was supposed to break up. This did not occur, partly due to the fact that fewer guns were able to be brought up for the bombardment because of the bad weather and ground conditions.

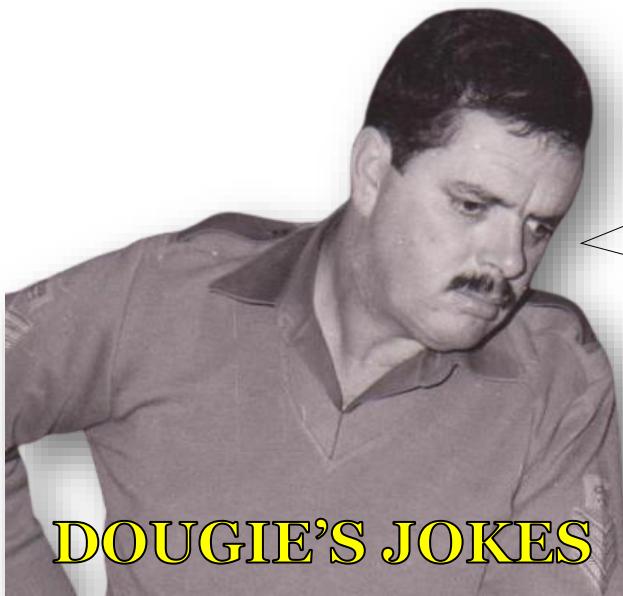
Any troops who made it to the wire were then cut down by German machine-guns sited to cover the obstacle. For obvious reasons, the attack failed to achieve most of the objectives, and the New Zealanders lost more troops killed and wounded on this day than in any other action on the Western Front. The numbers vary, however, it is estimated that over 1000 New Zealanders died on this one day. As an example, in the 1st and 2nd Canterbury Battalions, the casualties included 31 officers and 739 men, which amounted to most of the officers and over 60% of the men who began the attack.

There were local successes, and local acts of great courage, including in the 1st Otago Battalion, where in one of the companies, all the officers had been killed or wounded and only 28 men remained of the 140 which began the attack. Sergeant Edwin Jacobs took command of these men and moved to outflank the pillboxes, later being awarded a DCM.

The King's and Regimental Colours of 2/4 RNZIR actually comprise two sets of colours – those of the former 2nd (Canterbury, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast) and 4th (Otago and Southland) Battalions. On each of the regimental colours are inscribed the battle honours awarded for the exploits of our predecessor units, including Somme 1916-18, Messines 1917, Ypres 1917, Passchendaele and the overriding battle honour of France and Flanders 1916-18.

**Article by Paul Koorey. HONCOL of 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion RNZIR**





My therapist says I have a preoccupation with vengeance.

We'll see about that!



THE TASTE



No change yet.



I didn't say anything yet



It's my fault

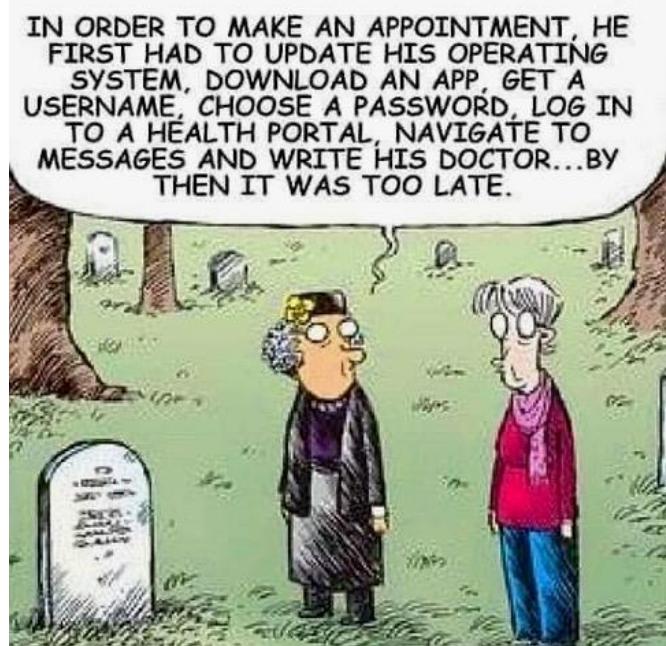


You are right

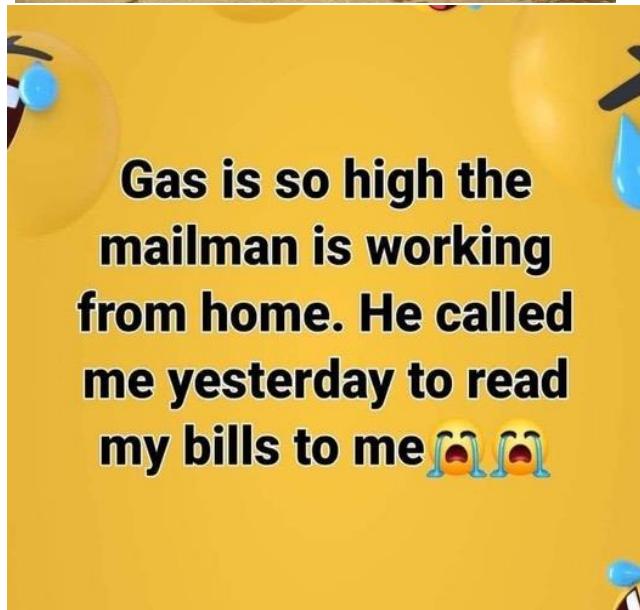


**NEVER LEAVE HOME  
WITHOUT A KISS, A HUG  
AND AN 'I LOVE YOU.'  
THEN REMOVE THE DOG  
HAIR FROM YOUR MOUTH  
AS YOU WALK TO THE  
CAR.**

fb / New & Interesting



**Why don't the  
99% of us who  
aren't  
offended by  
everything  
quit catering  
to the 1% who  
are**



**Ride On Lawnmower**  
**\$300**

I never thought I'd be the type of person who would get up early in the morning to exercise. I was right.

# Meet our new Welfare Officer



Last year we advertised for a new Welfare Officer to provide assistance and welfare to any members who required support. WO2 Phil Stuart put up his hand and was accepted by the Committee of Management. Phil tells us a little bit about himself, and can be contacted on the means listed below. We welcome him to our team and look forward to a long and fruitful relationship.

I work at Adelaide Universities Regiment (AUR) at Hampstead Barracks in a logistics role as a civilian. I am also a SERCAT 5 (Reservist) member as the Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (RQMS) 10<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Battalion RSAR after previously serving 12 years in the Regular Army.

I enlisted in May 2008 and spent most of my time in the SERCAT 7 world in Darwin, completing multiple operations overseas in a Tri-Service environment, which I found extremely rewarding. I only left the full-time Army due to personal family reasons at the time and feel blessed to still be working in Army in both my full-time capacity and in the Reserve space.

I am extremely fortunate to be serving with some outstanding soldier's at the Battalion, in particular for a brilliant current CO and RSM.



In my spare time (not that I have a lot), I am heavily involved in the Gawler & Districts Softball Association (GDSA), serving on the Executive Board as the Treasurer. I also coach several sides (both Junior and Senior) at the Kangas Softball Club that plays within GDSA.

In between my full-time job, Reserve commitments and sporting obligations, I am also a carer for my elderly Father-In-Law (David) who lives with me. He has multiple health issues and is wheelchair bound so keeps me on my toes! Despite his ailments, he is still fiercely independent and pretty good at looking after himself for the most part.

I feel with my time in Army, combined with caring for David, as well as nursing both my parents when they were terminally ill prior to them both passing unfortunately in July 2019, I have the right attributes for this position and are grateful to be given the opportunity.

I live in a little town called Manoora that is located in the Gilbert Valley (just east of the Clare Valley and the town before Burra). Despite living quite a long way from the metro area, I have no problem in going north, south, east or west if required, proven by the distances I travel daily with my commute to work.

If any member wishes to have a chat, my mobile number and email is listed below and I welcome your calls.

Kind regards,

*Phil Stuart*

RSAR Association Welfare Officer

**0421 543 869**

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[philip.stuart1@defence.gov.au](mailto:philip.stuart1@defence.gov.au)

# Des Hawkins – Curator RSAR Historical Collection

As the newsletter editor has observed, many readers may not realise the scale of responsibility behind the RSAR Historical Collection and the Robert Grey Collection. With over 10,000 pieces of regimental property under custodianship — ranging from banners, plaques, weapons and instruments to deeply personal memorabilia — the collections represent an extraordinary treasure of our shared history. For the “old and bold,” these holdings are familiar reminders of service and tradition. For younger members of the Association, they are often a revelation: tangible links to the battalion’s past, and proof of the work required and to keep regimental history alive.



The RSAR Historical Collection is currently preserved across multiple sites: the Keswick Museum, 10/27 Battalion Headquarters, A Company at Warradale, B Company at Edinburgh, and the Broken Hill Military Museum. Its stewardship continues today through the dedication of Martin Forsyth, Bob Cotton, Heather Phillips, Mimi Ewens, and Des Hawkins (Current Curator). Together, this team balances cataloguing, conservation, and advocacy, ensuring that regimental property remains protected and accessible.

The collection owes much to the vision and dedication of its previous curator, Major Jeff Ayles (Retd), whose passing in January 2022 marked the loss of a wealth of knowledge and experience. His meticulous care laid the foundation for ongoing preservation. Equally, the contribution of Jim

Thomson, a valued volunteer who passed away in April 2025, is remembered with gratitude. His efforts exemplified the spirit of service and community that underpins the RSAR Association’s work. The collection also acknowledges the foundational role of WO1 Paddy Keefe, a significant historian whose work at the Torrens Training Depot helped establish the RSAR Collection during a formative period. His dedication ensured that the battalion’s heritage was preserved for future custodians.

Every Wednesday, the custodians gather at the Museum to undertake conservation and cataloguing. Yet much of the work extends far beyond those walls. Volunteers regularly take tasks home: researching diggers and reconstructing service histories, writing up data records to ensure accuracy and accessibility, and adding photographs to update the computer database. A further challenge lies in verifying and locating items. Much of the provenance work depends on referring back to “ancient” handwritten Q Store records and, where available, very poor-quality Polaroid photographs. These fragile sources are often the only surviving documentation of an artifact’s existence or movement, requiring patience and careful interpretation.

As volunteers for the Army Museum at Keswick, the team must also comply with official Army policy. Being located on Commonwealth property, custodians are required to adhere to state police regulations regarding edged weapons and firearms. These compliance measures ensure that all items — from ceremonial swords to historic rifles — are managed responsibly, securely, and in line with both military and civil standards.

Alongside the RSAR Historical Collection, the Robert Grey Collection focuses on personal memorabilia and family connections. It reconstructs overlooked narratives — letters, photographs, and service records that bring forward the human dimension of military history. Through careful archival research and cross-referencing with institutions such as the Australian War Memorial, National Archives of Australia, & Trove.



The custodianship of these collections involves ongoing conservation, cataloguing, and advocacy. Current priorities include artifact recovery and provenance documentation, secure storage and relocation planning, and donor transparency with regular updates to stakeholders. A pressing issue remains unresolved: the sale of Keswick Barracks and the relocation of the Museum and associated Unit Collections. Decisions regarding where these holdings will be moved, and when, are still pending. Irrespective of the eventual outcome, the RSAR Historical Collection will continue to maintain a significant display of memorabilia. If the Battalion Headquarters moves as anticipated to Warradale, it is hoped that additional room can be found to expand and display more of both collections.

“In war, truth is the first casualty.” — Aeschylus.

And when truth is lost, so too is history. That is why our work to preserve regimental artifacts is vital: without it, future generations would inherit gaps instead of stories.

Among the many treasures in the RSAR Historical Collection is a Red Ensign with deep regimental significance. Time and circumstance have left their mark on this flag — its fabric worn, colours faded, and stitching fragile. Yet it remains a powerful symbol of service and identity. Recognising its importance, the custodians have sought the expertise of Artlab SA, South Australia’s specialist conservation service. The goal is to stabilise and preserve the Red Ensign so that it can be safely displayed and interpreted for future audiences. This project reflects a broader commitment: ensuring that regimental artifacts are not only stored but actively conserved to museum standards.



As curator, I also hold a position on the Regimental Council. At meetings held four times a year, I report on developments with the collections, progress made, and initiatives underway. The current council members have been very supportive of our work, recognising the importance of preserving regimental heritage and encouraging the steps we are taking to safeguard it. I also wish to acknowledge and thank the current Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Darrin Tyson, and the Regimental Sergeant Major, WO1 Mark Broadbent, who have generously allowed us access to artifacts for audit purposes. Their support ensures that our stewardship remains thorough and accountable.

Looking ahead, succession planning is vital. Just as the RSARA committee relies on new members to carry forward its work, the Historical Collection will need younger volunteers to step into custodianship roles. If something were to happen to myself, it is essential that the work can continue without having to start from scratch again. Building this continuity will ensure that the regiment's history remains protected and accessible for generations to come.



Together, the RSAR Historical Collection and the Robert Grey Collection embody the regiment's enduring commitment to honouring its past. They serve as archives, memorials, and educational resources — connecting families to their heritage and ensuring that the regiment's legacy remains alive. But stewardship is demanding. It requires time, expertise, and resources. The custodians welcome assistance from members who can contribute skills in research, cataloguing, or conservation. By joining this effort, you help ensure that the regiment's history is preserved with dignity and remains accessible to future generations.

Serving members are warmly encouraged to visit the Museum. Entry is free — simply show your ID on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Sundays. This is an opportunity to see firsthand the treasures of the regiment and to connect with the history that continues to shape its identity.

For the "old and bold," these collections are proof that regimental heritage is being actively cared for. For younger members, they are an invitation to discover the battalion's history and contribute to its preservation. Together, we can ensure that the RSAR's story continues to be told — not just in records and artifacts, but in the living tradition of remembrance and service.

Should anyone wish to know more about volunteering for the RSAR Historical Collection, please contact me on the numbers listed below.

*Des Hawkins*

Curator RSAR Historical Collection and Grey Collection

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0434 676 050



# BILLY SING

# The Gallipoli Sniper

Billy Sing, nicknamed 'The Murderer' was a World War 1 hero, once known around the world. But by the time he died in 1943, alone and almost penniless he had all but been forgotten. Billy was born in 1886 in Clermont, QLD to a Chinese father from Shanghai and an Englishwoman. This son of a Chinaman rose above the racist attitudes and laws of the time and was a likeable young bloke admired for his sporting prowess, particularly with the rifle. While still a boy, the story went, he could shoot the tail off a piglet at 25 paces with a .22 rifle.

From the age of 15, Billy worked as a station hand, ringer and horse drover further cultivating his childhood bush skills, including hunting. He honed his shooting skills at the Clermont Rifle Club, and later at the rifle club in Proserpine. A regular winner of shooting prizes, he was also a good cricketer.

Sing was in his prime when he journeyed to Brisbane to join the 5th Light Horse (LH) Regiment in 1914. The 5th LH was in Egypt when the ANZACs landed at Gallipoli. Leaving their horses behind, Billy's regiment deployed in May 1915 as Infantry to Turkey's Gallipoli Peninsula. Trooper 355, Billy Sing became 'probably the most dangerous sniper in any army throughout the war', wrote Ion Idriess. Idriess sailed to war on the same boat as Billy and became a popular author after the war. He was also an experienced bushman and at times was Billy's spotter.

'Abdul the Terrible', as the Allies called him, was the decorated Turkish sniper bought to Gallipoli to stop Sing! He methodically studied the Australian's handiwork – up to nine kills per day. Having finally located Sing's specially constructed 'possie', Abdul prepared to take down his prey – only to be shot between the eyes by Sing.

Abdul was one of Sing's 201 confirmed Gallipoli kills, though he probably took the lives of many more Turks – there was not always a spotter to verify kills, and it was sometimes difficult to determine if targets that had been hit and fallen into trenches had actually been killed. Though bringing grief to Turkey, Sing's exploit saved Allied lives and was perfect propaganda – he was mentioned in dispatches, awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and lauded in newspapers from Sydney to San Francisco.

But it didn't go all Sing's way. He was wounded in August 1915, when a Turkish sniper hit the telescope of his spotter, who was badly wounded before the bullet finally came to rest in Billy's shoulder. As the weather deteriorated, Billy succumbed to the cold, wet weather and the appalling conditions in the trenches and was



evacuated to Malta just weeks before the Allies withdrew from the Gallipoli peninsula.

Bouts of illness kept Billy in England for some time before he was deployed to the Western Front in January 1917 with the 31st Australian Infantry Battalion, where soon after he was wounded and sent back to England to recuperate. He wrote home, 'We had an awful time in France this winter; it was the coldest they've had for years.....It would break your heart to see the dead bodies lying around unburied.'

Following his discharge from hospital he was given leave. Sing headed to Edinburgh, where he had a whirlwind romance with a waitress Elizabeth Stewart. On 29 June they were married. A month later Billy was back in the trenches!

Private Sing was awarded the Belgian Croix de Guerre in early 1918, for his role in leading a patrol, killing several German snipers at Polygon Wood in September 1917. Over his period of service he contracted influenza, rheumatism, mumps, had been gassed, shot on two occasions, sustained shrapnel wounds to both legs and his back, spending quite some time in and out of hospitals, eventually causing his medical discharge.

The mustard gas caused lifelong lung disease for Billy and it signaled the end of his military career when in July 1918 he was shipped home. Despite having been wounded, gassed and ill several times he was declared fit and able to work when discharged in Brisbane.

For a time Billy was buoyed by an enthusiastic welcome in both Proserpine and later Clermont but that soon faded. He set out to be a sheep farmer like so many other soldiers on blocks donated to returned servicemen by the Federal Government, but his land was poor like many of the blocks in this flawed scheme. Almost a third of the soldiers turned farmers walked off the land – including Billy Sing.

There's no indication that Billy's wife was ever part of his new life. There is correspondence showing that he applied for Elizabeth to have free passage from Britain, it doesn't seem to have eventuated.

Though hampered by illness and his wounds, the failed sheep farmer still had to make a living. He turned to gold prospecting and did well enough to go on weekend sprees with his mining mates. He also got a reputation for heavy drinking and a bad attitude. When the gold ran out, Billy turned to laboring in Brisbane where he continued to work hard although complaining of pains in his heart, chest and back.

On May 19, 1943, Billy was found dead in his boarding house bedroom. Five shillings were also found but no sign of his war medals.

As his humble grave marker in the Lutwyche War Cemetery weathered away, Billy Sing was all but forgotten. 50 years after his death a newspaper article revived interest in 'this ace Australian sniper'. A plaque was erected on the site where he died and in 1995, a statue of Sing was unveiled with full military honours in his hometown of Clermont.

In 2004 Australian Army snipers named their Baghdad post the 'Billy Sing Bar & Grill'. In 2009, on the 66th anniversary of his death, wreaths were laid at Sing's grave during a ceremony attended by various dignitaries, including the Chinese Consul-General.

[Sourced from AWM](#).

# BRAVERY AND BETRAYAL

## The True Story of the SAS in Afghanistan



*In November 2025 my daughter Selina and I attended a viewing of a new documentary put out by Wandering Warriors, about the work, combat, trials and tribulations of the Australian Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) in Afghanistan. We thought we knew all about the situations faced by these brave souls, who were sent into harms way, and then abandoned by their own hierarchy. The documentary is confronting and disturbing, to the point I was compelled to write to both my State and Federal political representatives, urging them to bring about urgent changes for these men, who I believe have been "thrown under the bus" by those who were supposed to be their leaders. David Laing - Editor*

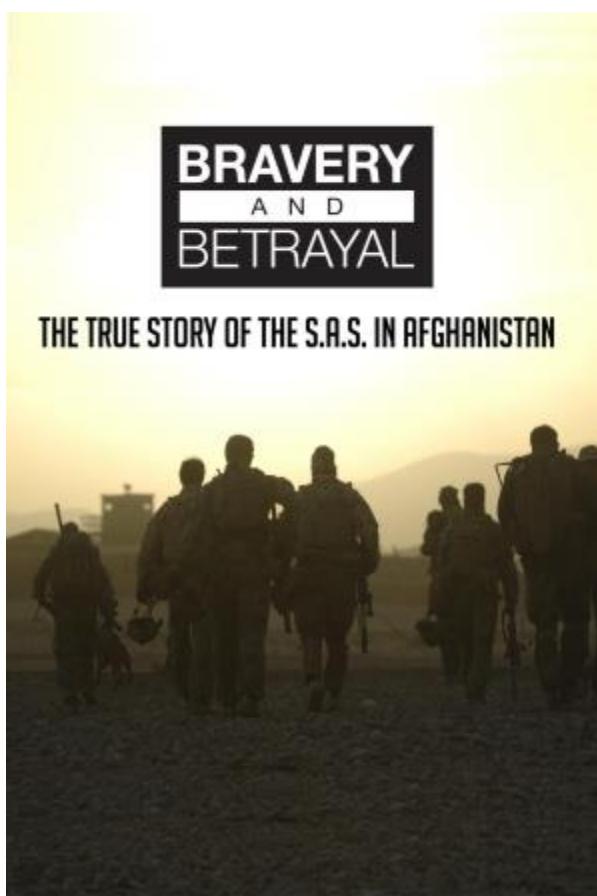
After 9/11 our Nation sent the Aussie S.A.S. into harm's way to protect us. 25 years later, their suffering continues. The S.A.S. now tell their story of what really happened in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Featuring exclusive, never before seen interviews with officers and soldiers of the SASR. As Prime Ministers Rudd, Howard and Abbott tell for the first time what they knew; and the brave pilots of the American Army reveal what they saw.

Most heartbreaking of all are the stories by the wives, mothers, widows, and children left behind.

***This is their story, in their words, of the S.A.S. in the War on Terror.***

MORE THAN JUST A DOCUMENTARY. It's now available on Streaming Services and DVD



# The Murraylands Community Men's Shed

In 2009 a group of older, retired gentlemen decided to build a place from scratch, where they could gather on a daily basis, make use of their many skills, and solve all the worlds problems. With a land donation from the Rural City Of Murray Bridge Council, many building material donations and a lot of hard work, the Shed was finally opened in 2010, and has since gone from strength to strength, adding a metalwork shop, a paint shop, a retail goods-for-sale shop, and a large garden where raised garden beds produce all types of vegetables. They currently have about 80 members, with 30 of those being active on a daily basis..

I became a member of the Men's Shed in 2015, and have worked on many projects, both personally and for community benefit.

In my time at the Murray Bridge RSL I worked closely with the Mens Shed on various projects, one of which restored a WW1 German Artillery Gun to near-working order condition, and saw it housed securely under cover at the RSL for many years to come.

On December 19<sup>th</sup> 2025 I attended the Men's Shed Christmas lunch, and had great pleasure in presenting the Men's Shed President Terry Brown with a framed Certificate of Appreciation from the Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc.

Since 2015 the Murraylands Men's Shed have manufactured high quality CNC and Laser engraved Regimental shields and awards for high achieving soldiers of the 10<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Battalion RSAR. They were also responsible for making the inaugural Rodney Beames Perpetual Shield in 2023.

The core values of the Men's Shed reflect those of the RSAR Association, and we are happy to be associated with them and to achieve similar goals. I congratulate them on their work. Well done all.





Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc.

# APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP 2026

**PLEASE PRINT AND ENSURE ALL BOXES ARE FILLED**

**EST  
2008**

Membership Category

Date of Application / /

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

*My Details - Please print clearly and fill out ALL sections*

Full Name:	Address:
Date of Birth:	Post Code:
Mobile No:	Email:
Regt No. or PMKeys No.	
Period of Service / / to / / Unit .....Battalion .....Company	Can you assist the Committee? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Spouse/Partners name.	<b>PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY</b>

*Method of Payment*

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cheque or Money Order - Payable to</b> The Treasurer Christian Bennett RSAR Association Inc. PO Box 1133 Kensington Gardens SA 5068	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Electronic Funds Transfer</b> Royal South Australia Regiment Association Inc. BSB 633 000 Account 1616 585 88 Please include your <u>Surname</u> as an identifier								
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>CASH (In person to a member of the Committee)</b> Committee Members Name  <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have paid my Fees to the Association Account listed below and posted/mailed my Application to The RSAR Association PO Box 5218 Murray Bridge South SA 5253 <table border="1"><tr><td>Account Name:</td><td>RSAR Association Inc.</td></tr><tr><td>Bank:</td><td>Bendigo Bank</td></tr><tr><td>BSB:</td><td>633 000</td></tr><tr><td>Acct #</td><td>1616 585 88</td></tr></table>	Account Name:	RSAR Association Inc.	Bank:	Bendigo Bank	BSB:	633 000	Acct #	1616 585 88
Account Name:	RSAR Association Inc.								
Bank:	Bendigo Bank								
BSB:	633 000								
Acct #	1616 585 88								

**NOTE: Please submit this Application **WITH** Proof of Service. You will be notified of the progress of your application.**

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.



Website: [www.rsara.asn.au](http://www.rsara.asn.au)

Please send this completed application, with proof of service to the RSAR Association at [davidlaing49@bigpond.com.com](mailto:davidlaing49@bigpond.com.com)

## Merchandise available ONLY to RSARA Members



- A. Regimental Tie \$25
- B. Stubby Holders \$6 each or 6 for \$30
- C. RSARA Nameplate \$30
- D. RSARA Lapel Badge \$15
- E. Laser-engraved timber shield w/- brass look plaque \$60
- F. Vinyl RSAR Sticker 70mm x 100mm  
**Only \$2 each or 6 for \$10 FREE Postage.**
- G. Hoodie w/- LOGO \$55

**Allow \$15 postage for each item**  
**Unless collected by member**

**POLO TOP \$50**

Order by contacting CPL Selina Laing via [lebanonsel@live.com.au](mailto:lebanonsel@live.com.au)



# FINANCIAL MEMBERS

Life Members	Members	A - G	Members	H-R	Members	S-Z
Acton	Chris	Abel	Colin	Hanson	Reece	Sailes
Beckett	David	Abraham	Michael	Harrington	Malcolm	Sanders
Benveniste	Sam	Albrecht	Stephen	Harrison	John	Sandhu
Blackmore	Bill	Allison	Robert	Harrison	Keith	Sando
Boscence	Bob	Andrews	Ronnie	Harrison	Nigel	Schuh
Brookes	Phil	Angove	Derek	Hartshorne	Anthony	Scott
Burnard	Trent	Angus	Sebastian	Hawkins	Des	Sexton
Burns	Wayne	Attenborough	Geoff	Heath	Jonathon	Shephard
Carnachan	Ian	Baker	Craig	Hewett	Ben	Shrive
Carpenter	Ian	Bampton	Michael	Hewitt	Emily	Skapin
Cotton	Bob	Barry-Orcales	Dianever	Higgins	Kevin	Slater
Dart	John	Beames	Paul	Hill	Max	Sniedze
Davey	Trevor	Bennett	Christian	Hudson	Rick	Sperling
Elliott	Graham	Blondell	Mark	Hume	Matthew	Stuart
Ewens	Mimi	Brown	Bruce	Humphrys	Jesse	Tasker
Gaborit	Lyndon	Burnard	Saxon	Jolly	David	Tattersall
Goodwin	Graham	Burton	Ray	Jones	Brett	Thomas
Harris	Lachlan	Buttars	Erik	Justin	Trent	Threlfall
Hawking	Don	Cardone	Rob	Kleinig	Jack	Tiller
Haynes	Malcolm	Carlisle	Lesley-Anne	Koop	Joshua	Tran
Higgins	Jonathan	Cartwright	Harrison	Kovacs	Philip	Treguis
Hogan	Mark	Chamberlain	David	Laing	Selina	Trezise
Hook	Alan	Cooke	Nat	Langtry	Paul	Tsoulakis
Hope	David	Cram	Kevin	Larkins	Steve	Christos
Horseman	Ian	Dale	Andy	Leach	Thomas	Tucker
Hudson	Mick	Demosani	Tony	Lee	Nathan	Paul
Jackson	Aaron	Dennis	Emily	Lewis	James	Garry
James	Grant	Dew	Trevor	Loveder	Peter	Blaz
Jeffrey	Scott	Djakovic	Livio	Matchett	William	James
Johnson	Paul	Domanski	Glenn	McCulloch	Don	Waldon
Johnson	Barry	Drew	Anton	McIver	Bill	Weepers
Klopf	Alex	Duncan	Coen	McKenzie	Kain	Nicole
Laing	David	Dunn	Bob	McMahon	Tucker	Reg
Lakin	Bruce	Dunn	Peter	Migali	Joshua	George
Marlin	Robin	Duras	Roman	Mitchell	Thomas	Trill
Meredith	Mike	Etteridge	Hugh	Mitchell	Jonathon	Paul
Miller	Nick	Eva	Keith	Morony	Associate	Members
Moore	Peter	Ewens	Mimi	Mulroney	Dennis	Abel
Moore	Terry	Faunt	Joshua	Murdock	Wheeler	Karen
Moore	Thomas	Flynn	Adrian	New	Angove	Charles
Paul	John	Fortune	Nigel	Normandale	Bampton	Angela
Pollard	Barry	Foy	Erin	Oakley	Zachary	Leslie
Richter	Sean	Gatley	Graham	O'Daly	Andrew	Dom
Salamon	Piotr	Genovese	John	Orrock	Ryan	Trish
Stewart	Robin	Ghanem	Paul	Osborne	Eva	Gail
Stewien	Peter	Gibson	Lindsay	Papps	Hawkins	Lynn
Vella	Joe	Gill	Graham	Parslow	Hook	Philippa
Waters	Ian	Gordon	Frank	Parsonage	Bernard	Margaret
Watters	Matthew	Griffiths	Amanda	Pascoe	Hudson	Yvonne
Westover	Rhys	Groffen	Renee	Payne	Michael	Margaret
Wilson	Graham	Guglielmi	Jermaine	Pearce	Pollard	Kay
Associate Life	Members			Pexton	Parsonage	Jill
Elliott	Julie			Phillips	Timothy	Winger
Field	Shirley			Phillips	Colin Rex	Kathleen
Johnson	Sally			Portakiewicz	Honorary	Members
Laing	June			Portakiewicz	Anthony	Neil
Parkin	Audrey			Portakiewicz	David	Darrin
Phillips	Heather			Portakiewicz	Richard	CAPT Jilbert
Sanderson	Lorraine			Powell	Gary	Charles
				Preece	WO1 Broadbent	Mark
				Rado	Steven	
				Ramm	Denis	
				Ranger	Ordinary Member	
				Rijken	Life Member	
				Roberts	Serving Member	
				Robertson	Ordinary Member	
					Colour	Denotes

Please welcome  
new member  
ROB CARDONE