



# THE MISSION



## Everyman's Ministry at the 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment

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*Happy New Year from the Ridley's! I hope this letter finds you well and resting up after what seemed to be a year that flew by! I figured I would give you an update of the last quarter of 2015 and let you know how things have been going recently. The last part of 2015 was quiet as is normal when the ADF goes on stand down over the Christmas break. The Lord has continued to open doors and opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with members and ex-members of the ADF.*

### EVERYMAN'S WEEK

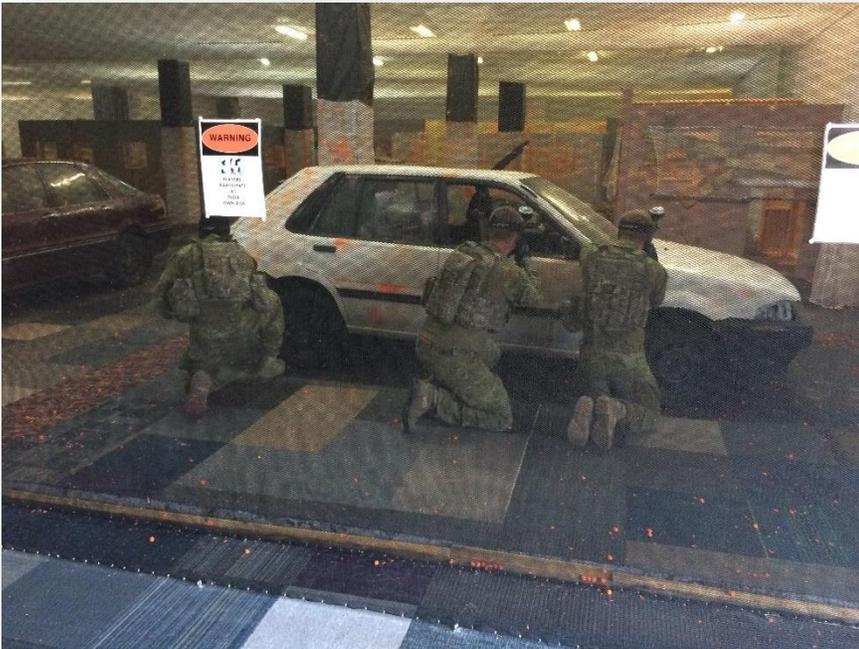
Once a year we have an Everyman's week in which we seek to raise funds and awareness of Everyman's. It is a tradition that we have a gate collection at the bases around Australia where Everyman's are located. This year being my first year with Everyman's I had the privilege of organising the gate collection at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera. With the help of the boys from 8/9 RAR we managed to cover all the gates leading into the barracks in the morning rush of traffic. All up we raised a total of \$1650 for Everyman's general fund. The day was a success although not without a few hiccups. We also did a gate collection at RAAF base Amberley a few weeks after Everyman's week and although it was left up to another Rep Sue and myself to do the collecting we managed to raise a further \$430, much needed to keep us going!



## NO GAME!

As I have mentioned in the last newsletter 8/9 RAR has been preparing to send Alpha company and Delta Company to Iraq and Afghanistan respectively, and a part of their pre-deployment training has been sharpening their skills in urban combat. They were sent to an urban paintball centre that is run by an ex-8/9 member who recently discharged and started his own paintball

business, the business is near Brisbane city and is called "Spec-Ops paintball". The boys (and a few girls) came down and we put into some challenging scenarios against one another where they could experience realistic training when the consequences of being shot at can be felt for days to come. The set-up is completely indoors and has multiple rooms and even some old cars inside to be used for taking cover behind. During the scenarios when someone is shot by a paintball they must exit the arena until the next round begins this adds to the realism of having consequences of being shot like in real life situations.



There are cameras placed around the arena and those who are not a part of the game or they have left due to being taken out of the game can watch on a T.V. screen. I enjoyed coming down and supporting the activity, it was good to have a chat with them as the day got closer for them to deploy. I also cooked some hotdogs for their lunch break which they seemed very appreciative of. During one of the days I was able to chat with the owner's wife who told me she was raised in a Christian home but she was not walking with the Lord. I was able to share my testimony about encountering God in Afghanistan and how that changed my life. I hope our conversation will remind her of what really matters in life and that the Lord is still seeking for her to come back to Him. I thank the Lord for each day He gives me to share His light into the darkness, what an honour it is to serve the Prince of life!



## **WHAT WAS MEANT FOR EVIL TURNED OUT FOR GOOD**

I was in a good conversation with a very interested digger about the prophecies in the Bible, when the conversation was interrupted by a certain Atheist who seemed to know everything about anything. At first I felt annoyed about being disrupted in my conversation because I ended having to deal with all of the objections this Atheist was bringing up. I suddenly remembered that God is in control of all things, I had a peace about it and I just trusted that God would work all things for good. As I continued to battle the objections brought, the subject of the "Old Covenant and New Covenant" came up, the digger I had initially been speaking with interrupted and asked what is the difference between the two Covenants. I said that I would love to explain but I would have to start from the beginning of the Bible so I asked my Atheist friend if he would be willing to not interrupt whilst I expounded, to which he agreed, I knew this was the moment the Lord had brought about, because by this stage the whole room of around 10-15 blokes had stopped and were listening to this informal debate and now I had not just the digger's attention but the entire rooms attention. Then I began "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..." I explained the full gospel message from Genesis to Revelation, of sin, righteousness and the coming judgement and Jesus Christ who came to save the world from their sins and give us a relationship with God. He is truly amazing in how He works. I was reminded of the verse in Genesis when Joseph finally revealed himself to his brothers who had sold him in to slavery in Egypt and yet he said to his brothers:

***"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."*** Genesis 50:20 NKJV

## **CARE PACKAGES FOR THE BOYS**

As I have mentioned in my last letter I organised and sent care packages to the deployed 8/9 members in Iraq and Afghanistan. I received some photos back from some of the boys over there and I got messages of thanks from all of them. They were surprised and glad to see the Tim-Tams, I was just glad



they made it there without completely melting. The photo on the right is from Iraq and my mate, Karl is holding up a packet of Tim-Tams although it is too small to see. Please pray for the safety of our troops and that the Holy Spirit will use the Christian DVD's etc. to convict them and plant a seed of the Gospel. Most guys of them are not

saved and are quite hostile to anything related to God or religion but Jesus Christ loves them and died for their sins regardless and wants to draw them into His Kingdom.

## RACING WITH SOME MATES

*I have been going along to the “Mates 4 Mates” meetings as I mentioned last newsletter and even Claudia has been coming along once a month when they have a combined meeting with familys too. I was initially invited by Ben and Paul and these guys mentioned about the Mates off-road racing team, they currently have three different cars that they compete with including the RAEMUS Rover which is a 1961 ex-Army Series 2 Land rover which, after a retirement of 22 years, has been restored and revitalised for off-road racing a group for ex-defence members who suffer from injury and illness whilst serving in the military. I saw this as*



*another door opening to get involved with an minister to those who are suffering and I took a Christian brother, Mason down one Saturday to watch the team compete. Although I am not mechanically minded it was great to chat with guys and watch the cars compete in the last race meet of the 2015 season.*

*I have shared my testimony with some of the guys already and I look forward to being able to bring Christ to them who for*

*many are seeking for things to help deal with their struggles and to find peace. “But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place” (2 Cor 2:14)*

## Military Christian Fellowship

The MCF meetings have been a really good way of meeting fellow Christians in Defence and being able to encourage each other’s walk with the Lord. Both groups that I have attended at Enoggera and Amberley are different but I enjoy both none the less. We only have about 45 mins max for our meetings but it is a refreshing time for all. We all look forward to the meetings because for the most part the Military is secular so it’s good to have some Christian fellowship at work during the week. We have looked at a range of different subjects during this year and I look forward to continuing in 2016 and getting deeper into some more ‘meaty’ topics. It looks like I will have to step up to lead more often as Luke who has been looking after the group for some years now will not be able to attend anymore due to his church placement as a part of his studies to become an Army chaplain.

### Josh

I would ask for prayer for a good friend of mine Josh who I had the privilege of sharing the Gospel a few months back. Although he listened it never went much further than that, however, recently we have had a few conversations about world events and he seems to be taking more of an interest and has even come and asked to borrow some of the Christian literature I have sitting on my desk, so let’s pray that the Lord will do a work in Josh’s heart!

## **Family News**

Claudia went for an interview at the "Bethany aged care" facility down the road and the interview went very well, she was told she was exactly what they were looking for. They asked her when she could start and she mentioned that we were going down to Adelaide for a month over Christmas so they have told her to contact them when we return. However they contacted Claudia recently asking her to sign the paperwork and to start as soon as we are back in Brisbane. Most likely as a cleaner to start with until she can complete a certificate III in aged care work.

Claudia's family lives in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her father, Gilberto is a biologist and her mother, Cristina, works in I.T. she has only one brother, Andre who lives at home with mum and Dad. Gilberto had some good news recently, with a scientific paper being published in a journal to which he was pleased with, he is also looking at doing a Ph.D. None of Claudia's family are saved, most of the extended family are involved in the religion that Claudia used to be in, called "Spiritism", and we would appreciate prayer for them.

I have three brothers: Tim, Daniel and Jason. Tim is married to Cindy. Daniel's wife Jessie recently gave birth prematurely to their third child: Heath Finn Ridley. Heath spent two months in hospital and was released just recently and is now at home and doing well. My younger brother Jason is getting married on the 16th of January to Kelsey in a town called Clare, here in SA. None of my brothers are walking with the Lord either and once again we would ask for prayer for them.

As is our usual tradition for the Christmas break we have headed down to Adelaide for a month. Adelaide is the town that I grew up in and I always cherish the time that we have when we get to go and visit the majority of my side of the family who live down there. I love the fact that Adelaide has everything in a nice and neat package, lots of beaches but you can also visit the scenic Adelaide hills and all in very close proximity. The photo here is of my Grandpa: John Ridley, my cousin Jasmine, Claudia and myself down at Grange beach. My cousin Jasmine recently became a Christian and is getting to know

Jesus as her Lord and what it means that He is our Saviour, so we have much to be thankful for! I have enjoyed our conversations together on the phone and it was great to be able to speak face to face with her. Another cousin of mine, David, recently became a Christian as well and we have enjoyed spending time with him too and encouraging him in his new found faith, both cousins are still babes in Christ but seeing what the Lord is doing in their lives is so uplifting! The weather down here is very hot and records have been broken for the hottest days in December. We have enjoyed many swims in the pool at my parents place and we also were able to get away for a couple of days down to Hindmarsh Island about an hour south of Adelaide, near the mouth of the Murray river. It has been wonderful to share our Lord's precious words with other members of the family and friends. Praise the Lord for His unchanging truth and for opening our eyes to His so great salvation! May others see how great He is!



We have been continuing doing evangelism around the place and we recently went to the festival called "Stereosonic" which is a major festival that runs all over the country. Interestingly Claudia and I attended this festival in 2011 when neither of us were walking with the Lord, now we were back for a different reason! Praise the Lord! We went and spoke with many people and handed out some tracts. Claudia and I also were able to witness to some people on the plane down to Adelaide when there was a mix up and we had to sit in seats away from each other. I ended up speaking with a young woman named "Heidi" who had a "I have my own religion" kind of world view. We spoke the whole way down to Adelaide and I was able to reason with her and tell her about who Jesus Christ is. The Lord led the conversation and I was able to share the whole gospel message and share my testimony of God's grace in my life. I left her with a tract and a few things to think about. Meanwhile Claudia was on the opposite side of the plane sharing her testimony with another lady who was with her husband. We thank the Lord for every opportunity to plant a seed in someone's life, who knows how that could change their eternal destiny, only God knows and He gives the increase!

We are always grateful for all of your prayers and support. The Lord continues to provide all of our needs and we know that His hand is upon us. Some of you may know that I will be deploying with Everyman's to Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, next year in April. Dubai is a staging area for Afghanistan and Iraq and although it is not dangerous I will be away for four months. It will be a great opportunity to minister to those members of 8/9 who are deployed to the Middle East and other members of the wider ADF. Please pray for Claudia and myself as we will be separated during this time (don't worry, Claudia is thrilled at this opportunity to serve the Lord!). Although we will miss one another we know that it is for the Kingdom. I hope that 2016 will be year filled His grace and mercy for all of us whilst we edge closer to our meeting with Him and being with Him forever.

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Cor 15:58)*



In His service,

**Ben and Claudia**



**EVERYMAN'S WELFARE SERVICE**  
Serving the Australian Defence Force