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Australian Defence Force
since 1940



Dec 2022

ON PATROL

From the CCOMM's desk...

The Spirit of Christmas to an Everyman

We are all looking forward to our Christmas break this year, but unfortunately the lingering tensions around the world remain. The activities of China alone, over Taiwan, have reminded us all how fragile peace is.

I had the experience many years ago of being on an operation with the ADF that was considered "low key" but still in a declared war zone. One day it was waving at smiling locals, the next local killings and reported sightings of hostile militia. I can only imagine how much more tension there would be on a high tempo operation like a potential one with China.

Our REPs are willing to serve overseas to support our ADF despite these tensions.

I reflect on this Christmas season, which is in part about sacrificial service that Jesus, who Christmas is all about, said, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." Luke 22:24-27.

This of course reflects the willingness of our ADF members to serve the nation.

In Everyman's, as a Christian faith based ministry, that serves all people of all backgrounds, our REPs seek to emulate that ethic voiced by Jesus. I remember being told before I deployed many years back, that the state of the roads meant I was more likely to be a casualty in my Brew Truck than anyone else.

Though I knew it was said in jest, it did make me think. Would I be willing to lay down my life, even if it is just in terms of misadventure in a vehicle? That is what it may mean to serve the ADF as a Christian welfare worker. I had to say the answer was "yes." In fact, I was in a war zone at the time, and did break down once. The convoy I was supposed to be with went on without me. I prayed hard because I knew there were hostile militia everywhere in the hills around. By God's grace, the car started again. I was reminded that I could be in a dangerous situation in the course of my service to the ADF. However, Jesus laid down His life so that the whole world may have opportunity to find Him and Heaven when we die. Why then shouldn't I do something similar for those around me in serving them? I learnt a lesson that day that went beyond the initial euphoria of serving on operations in a war zone.

I know that not all our REPs today are able to deploy. Nevertheless, at the close of 2022, I can say we have a committed team who would be willing to take this risk, for the sake of our men and women in uniform. Even if that meant deploying to a most dangerous place. I know the ADF would really appreciate our presence alongside them. What more can an Everyman and Everywoman do but to emulate the example of the one we worship as Lord and God. At the same time, we become the best friends of many non-Christian people we meet. We serve "every man and every woman" just the same. In your Christmas prayers and/or giving, please remember Everyman's this season.



Ken Matthews
Chief Commissioner

CCOMM Ken Matthews

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Introducing REP David Hodgens



David grew up in a Christian home and vibrant Christian church in Melbourne. He initially trained as a teacher and after a stint in agriculture and teaching in the far west of Victoria, David was employed as a full-time teacher in Gippsland Victoria, (marrying Diana during this time) and then in the Mallee. Throughout this time the family was heavily involved in church with loads of opportunities for service and ministry provided in local church life.

After another season of work in agricultural management, the family headed back to Melbourne to undertake theological training at the Bible College of Victoria. The call of God was strong and after completing college the family served as missionaries in Papua New Guinea, with both David and Diana involved in training national men and women for ministry. After returning to Australia, David served as the Senior Pastor of the Warrnambool & District Baptist Church and is currently the Senior Pastor at the Wodonga and District Baptist Church in Victoria.

David was introduced to Everyman's while supporting the ministry of members of the congregation and while considering how he might encourage the church to better support the ministry felt God's prompting for him to become more personally involved himself!

Recipients of the National Emergency Medal for the 2019-2020 Bushfires



REP Chistina Kemper, ACOMM's Lou Hochimmer & George Thomas, REP's Leane Dabitz, Chris Wainwright & Neil McGinn, ACOMM Richard Gibson, REP Shane Lavell, SNR REP Kristian Kemper, Admin Support Helen Matthews, SNR REP Ben Ridley



Operation Flood Assist 2022 - Victoria



REP Shane Lavell



Keeping the Murray Valley highway open at Pianga

So many of our readers and supporters will have been affected by the floods that have extended across NSW and Victoria, and if not directly impacted by them, you will most certainly have been following the devastating and widespread effects of them on the news.

It was not long before a request for assistance was made to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and as they were preparing for deployment, Everyman's Welfare Service Rep Shane Lavell was asked to join them. The area of operations (AO) extended from Bendigo north to Echuca and Swan Hill, and east to Shepparton, where they responded to many requests for assistance initiated from the State Emergency Service's regional and state control centres.

The ADF focused on the filling and laying of sandbags to reinforce existing levies and to create new ones where required – solid tough work under trying conditions, throughout long extended days. ADF members were equal to the tasks and performed extremely well, as expected, over a period of four weeks. Further efforts focused on evacuating isolated people, using the ADF's famous Bushmaster vehicles, and undertaking check-ups on others, as well as undertaking reconnaissance tasks – an invaluable contribution and a capability unique only to the ADF.

REP Kiel Gardoll travelled from Adelaide to join Shane, covering the eastern AO whilst Shane serviced the western sector. Both Shane and Kiel were blessed with opportunities to share the background and Christian focus of our ministry with RAAF and Navy members on a regular basis – who rarely come into contact with our REPs and service. Army members welcomed us as familiar “family” members. There were many opportunities to encourage Christian members in their faith and to share the reason why we are involved in such a ministry with others.

A hot brew, goffas (cans of soft drink), snacks and Yvonne's (Shane's wife) homemade ANZAC biscuits brightened the day when we turned up with our brew trucks, putting smiles on many faces irrespective of uniform or service affiliation. It was such a privilege for us to serve such a dedicated and focused group of ADF members, serving and supporting our extended communities in a time of great personal need. Collectively they were all a remarkable credit to their individual service, uniform and the tradition of being an Australian – lending a hand, helping a mate out and not leaving them behind.

A big shout out to all members of the ADF who participated in Joint Task Force (JTF629.2), led by the 4th Brigade, under the command of BRIG Matt Burr; the 22nd Field Engineer Regiment (22 FER) who headed up the Joint Task Unit (JTU) initially, supported by trainees from the Army Logistic Training Centre; and the reinforcements who arrived from 381 Squadron's Combat Support Force (RAAF), HMAS Sydney. Still more ADF members came from various units as far away as Perth, Tasmania and Townsville. 381 Squadron later assumed local command from 22 FER.

Our final thoughts reach out to those who are still struggling with the recovery effort, re-piecing their lives together and grappling with the decision to rebuild or move on to a new location - leaving familiar surrounds, friends and loved ones behind.

Remembering Geoff Foster



It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of REP Geoff FOSTER (rtd) in August of 2022. Geoff came into Everyman's in 2006 and immediately showed his caring concern by looking after one of our older Everyman's REPs at the time, who was undergoing serious health challenges. He travelled from Wagga Wagga to Melbourne to do this. Geoff also came into Everyman's at a crucial time, when it looked like the ministry might fold due to financial stress. However, Geoff was one of our workers at that time, who refused to let go, even though he was only new in the role. In time, things turned around and Everyman's is stronger than ever today due to the vision and prayerful determination REPs like Geoff had in those dark days. Geoff served faithfully in his role, always making sure he served the staff as well as the recruits, as was his stated calling in the ministry. We pass on our sympathies and prayers to his widow Margaret, and to all of Geoff's family. Today Geoff is restored and healed with his Lord. All Everyman's REPs look forward to meeting again in eternal life, never to be parted again.

Operation Flood Assist 2022 - Victoria cont'd



Fresh bags and new start at Tytynder



Lifting the levy at Tytynder

Please pray that the Lord would inspire, resource and encourage local church ministries within the affected areas to reach out to those within their local communities in a meaningful and practical way – encouraging others, lending a hand and extending Christian love and fellowship to still more in their time of need, concern and disorientation.

REP Shane Lavell

CO-LABOURERS

At Everyman's we realise we can make a small impact on the ADF, but in conjunction with fellow ministries, the results are magnified. We gratefully acknowledge these like-minded ministries with whom we work to serve the ADF:

Chaplains

Navigators

Focus on the Family

Association for Conferences Teaching and Service (ACTS)

FOCUS

SASRA

Solid Rock

Military Christian Fellowship (MCF)

Red Shield Defence Service

The Bible Society

Naval Military and Airforce Bible Society

EveryVets Church



Wacol with new historical sign



The beautiful chapel at Wacol being put to good use once again

Sunday, the 11th of September, saw the first ever EveryVets church service at the Wacol Military Museum, which includes the Everyman's historical hut. In combination with the Nasho's Association, there was over 70 people in attendance. The service was followed by a lunch and fellowship, put on by the EveryVets team. The day was a great success, and many showed their desire for it to be held again, perhaps quarterly, throughout the year. A sign was also put up on the Everyman's hut which replicates the original sign designed by former REP Ed Bentley, who manned the centre back in the early days of Everyman's.



REP Brad Clarke & ACOMM Richard Gibson cooking up a storm



SNR REP Ben Ridley and EveryVets Petri Koskelainen

EWS LOCATIONS

- RAAF Base, AMBERLEY, QLD
- Kokoda Barracks, CANUNGRA, QLD
- Gallipoli Barracks, ENOGGERA, QLD
- Victoria Barracks, PETRIE TERRACE, QLD
- HMAS Kuttatbul, HOMEBUSH, NSW
- RMC DUNTROON, ACT
- Woodside Barracks, INVERBRACKIE, SA
- 17 Brigade, RANDWICK, NSW
- Blamey Barracks, KAPOOKA, NSW
- Gaza Ridge Barracks, BANDIANA, VIC
- Latchford Barracks, BONEGILLA, VIC
- Navy Accommodation, STRATHFIELD, NSW
- Simpsons Barracks, MACLEOD, VIC
- Robertson Barracks HOLTZE, NT

Farewell NRM Jeff Green



Our NRM Jeff Greene announced his retirement from Everyman's last month. Jeff will be missed and we are thankful to him for the hard work and many hours he committed to raising the profile of Everyman's nationwide. Jeff is now working as a Chaplain with the NT Police Fire and Emergency Services. The area he covers, 'Southern Command' is approx. 290 sq km. It comprises 27 Police stations, 6 Fire Stations and Emergency Services centres. Some of the stations are large, like Tennant Creek and Alice Springs, however the outposts on Aboriginal communities may be manned by only 2-3 Sworn police officers. Part of Jeff's role is to spend time and liaise with, support and provide a caring pastoral role to NT Police, Fire and Emergency staff and their families and to assist in critical incidents that occur. He is based in Alice Springs and travels to remote Police/Fire/Essential Service Stations, either via vehicle or the NT Police Air Wing transport.

We wish you all the best Jeff, and God's richest blessings in your new role.

More ways to give.....It's now possible to set up regular (or one-off) Direct Giving from your own bank account straight into ours! The details you need are:

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Title: Everymans Welfare Service
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