SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MOUNTED RIFLES ASSOCIATION INC

SAMRAG 207

Representing the Royal Australian Armoured Corps
Corporation Limited in South Australia

January 2026, Number 70

PRESIDENT'S PAGE— I have a confession to make.

There are times that I have dropped a piece of toast on the floor of my kitchen at home, and it has landed the butter side down, then I have picked it up and eaten it. When that happens, I invariably mutter to myself "Three second rule" to justify my actions. I am well aware of research by the University of Queensland and many other researchers that have debunked the "Three second rule" and confirm that bacteria can transfer to food instantly upon contact with contaminated surfaces, regardless of how quickly it's picked up….and still I do it.

Part of why I do it is because of my experience in living and working in an armoured vehicle on exercises in Cultana, Woomera or Puckapunyal where personal hygiene and food standards were not the same as in barracks or in your own home. In the field, we tried to maintain a basic level of hygiene with a daily "dub rub", if possible. Beyond that, living in an environment full of dirt (or mud), oil, grease, diesel and gunpowder with other armoured crewmen who, like you haven't had a shower for days or sometimes weeks, was not the cleanest of conditions. So, picking up a jaffle that had fallen on the ground or eating straight from a can with your fingers because you couldn't find FRED (F***ing Ridiculous Eating Device) was what we did……and we survived.

I look back on those days and feel that a lot of what we experienced and endured helped us to build up our resilience. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity, adapting and recovering from stress, trauma or challenges by using inner strengths, coping skills, and support systems to keep functioning. On reflection, our Directing Staff and trainers worked towards building up our resilience, even if I didn't feel it at the time. I have been able to draw on that resilience so much in my military career, civilian employment and even in my family life. Although I swore at them at the time (but not to their faces), I appreciate the work of my DS. The Army Training System really works.

Resilience, however, has its limits. The challenges of modern life can eat away at our ability to bounce back. There are so many competing influences that build the levels of stress. Common causes of stress include major life changes (job loss, divorce, bereavement), relationship issues, financial worries, demanding employment pressures, health problems and internal factors like negative self-talk, perfectionism, or unrealistic expectations, all stemming from feeling demands exceed our ability to cope. Everyday hassles, social pressures, environmental factors (noise, unsafe areas), and even positive events can also trigger stress. For those military personnel, the experiences of operational or active service can also be the cause of significant stress.

This issue is recognised a lot more than it has been in the past. In addition to talking to your GP, there are a lot of organisations these days like Lifeline and Beyond Blue. For former military personnel there is Open Arms, Soldier On and Mates4Mates, to name just three organisations. I have found that one great way to help is by keeping in touch with your Army mates. Sometimes, just being with someone is all that it takes. I also know that if you ask someone "How are you?" they often, and almost instinctively say "No worries, mate", even if they are not, because that is the way I am and that is the way I respond to people asking about me. Watching out for changes in a person's behaviour is therefore critical.

As we come to the end of the year, we never know what is around the corner. As I write this article I am listening to the carnage unfolding on Bondi Beach against innocent members of the public celebrating a Jewish festival. The world can be a dangerous place and our resilience continues to be tested. We are now preparing for Christmas which should be a time of peace, joy and sharing with families. Caring for family, friends and mates has never been more important. May there be a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year for you and your family.
Malcolm Haynes
Nec Aspera Terrent

2026 COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

PRESIDENT:
Malcolm Haynes RFD
Mobile: 0408 892 375

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
Reg Williams AM, RFD
Mobile: 0488 303 599

VICE PRESIDENT
James Kennelly RFD
Mobile: 0419 866 978

SECRETARY, NEWSLETTER, WEBSITE, PUBLIC OFFICER:
David Mercer OAM
Mobile: 0439 843 897

TREASURER:
Peter Byass RFD
Mobile: 0418 841 680

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Robert Townsend-Gun
Mobile: 0407 115 667

Steve Langdon
Mobile: 0452 507 986

Warwick Edwards
Mobile: 0402 780 171

Pete Tulloch
Mobile 0417 781 059

Simon Braid
Mobile: 0417 705 147

Greg Hill
Mobile: 0429 030 277

Thomas Begg
Mobile: 0424 144 812

3rd/9th LH (SAMR) Unit Representative.

Tpr Louis Dow
Mobile: 0414 093 289

Visit our website www.samrainc.org

A GAME-CHANGER FOR CAVALRY

ARMY'S newest cavalry vehicles were put to the test during Exercise Talisman Sabre, with the first troop of Boxer Block II CRVs deploying to Shoalwater Bay. Troopers from B Sqn 2/14 LHR (QMI) employed six vehicles in reconnaissance, offensive and defensive operations.

The Boxer Block I CRV was introduced in 2022 under Land 400 Phase 2 as an interim solution while the Block II systems were developed and built. The new platform retains a similar hull and armament but provides a turret with improved sights and sensors, making it easier for crews to land rounds on target with the first burst. It is further supported by integrated digital command-and-control systems to provide situational awareness to the crew.

According to a gunner, being able to shoot at longer ranges accurately with the improved sights was 'unreal'. "It's an extra 1000m on what the ASLAV has, and because of the sighting systems, you're still seeing it up close with zoom distances," the gunner said. "You can really hone in and see where your rounds are landing. It gives you a better sense that you're getting rounds on first burst." She said a bigger bang from the 30mm automatic cannon and the ability to fire kinetic energy timed fuse (KETF) rounds were a big improvement over the ASLAV. KETF is an airburst munition that uses a programmable fuse to detonate projectiles at a precise distance near the target. To help gunners find their mark, crew commanders use a 360-degree panoramic camera that allows them to scan the battlefield and assign targets independently of the turret. For crew commanders, it allows extra command and control in dynamic combat situations.

Source—Army Newspaper, 18th September, 2025 (condensed version)

Presentation of a new Standard— On 12th September 2025 HRH Prince Edward, the Duke of Edinburgh presented a new standard to the Royal Dragoon Guards at Battlesbury Barracks in Warminster UK. The RHG is an affiliated Regiment of 3rd / 9th Light Horse. The unit was represented at the presentation ceremony by the Officer Commanding, Major Hamish McKendrick and Sergeant Aaron Johnson. The emu plumes certainly stood out in the audience.

Presentation of the new standard to RHG.

Major Hamish McKendrick and Lieutenant Colonel Mick Henderson, former Commanding Officer of 1st Armoured Regiment

HRH Prince Edward arriving at the parade

Sergeant Aaron Johnson and Major Hamish McKendrick attending the parade.

Interesting read in the latest SAMRAG. Some feedback for you. Reading Lieutenant Colonel Trent Harron's article reminded me of when we visited the Golan Heights on a tour of Jordan and Israel in 2008. It was a great tour but I was disappointed we didn't go to Beersheba. There was trouble there at the time. As we drove along the Golan Heights there was a very large Israeli antenna farm on top of the Heights so of course I had to take a photo but to Janet's consternation. She thought the Israelis would object and take our camera off us - they didn't. We also looked down onto the UN Camp just inside the Syrian border and the border crossing. Michael Kuilboer

The Australian Army is set to sharpen its armoured edge with the rollout of 16 state-of-the-art tank simulators, built by local defence company Thomas Global Systems Australia.

Defence has invested around $60 million in the project, which has created more than 60 jobs |nationwide. The simulators will help train soldiers as they transition to the Army's new M1A2 Abrams main battle tanks.

Developed at Thomas Global's Newington facility in Sydney, the M1A2 Immersive Tactical Trainers |replicate the interior of a tank in extraordinary detail, offering a level of sophistication comparable to flight simulators.

Head Land Systems, Major General Jason Blain, said the new capability highlights the strength of Australian industry. "The simulators proudly showcase Australian capability and innovation. They can train an entire tank crew at once, cutting down the time needed for field training while delivering significant savings on fuel, ammunition and maintenance," he said.

The systems allow for both individual and collective training, with modes controlled either by an on-board instructor or through networked battlefield scenarios. They can be scaled from crew-level drills right through to full tank squadron operations. The fleet includes both permanent classroom set-ups and containerised versions, which can be transported by land, sea or air for use almost anywhere. They will be co-located with Army tank units and training schools across the country.

Training on the new simulators has already begun, with soldiers giving strong feedback on the realism and effectiveness of the platform.

"Thomas Global Systems Australia has given us the ability to replicate the experience of operating a 70-tonne main battle tank almost anywhere in the world," MAJGEN Blain said. ***Source: Defence Connect—September 2025.***

A race is brewing behind closed doors as the Australian Defence Force searches for its next service rifle before the tried-and-true Enhanced F-88 Austeyr rifle approaches its planned withdrawal mid next decade.

A soldier practices on the EF88 Austeyr rifle at the range on 6 August, during Exercise Borella Strike 22.

While contracts have not been formalised, Australian leadership has confirmed interest in moving close combatant personnel to an up-gunned 6.8mm weapon |system and ammunition during an Australian Army Land Environment Working Group meeting in June this year.

It's understood that support personnel would remain with the 5.56mm NATO ammunition they currently use, potentially utilising a new Armalite Rifle style standard configuration design.

The current EF88 rifle, chambered in 5.56mm NATO, is approaching a decade of service with the ADF since it was rolled out in mid-2016. The iconic bullpup-style rifle, with a 30-round magazine, is currently manufactured in Lithgow, NSW, by Thales Australia.

It's speculated that Thales Australia could potentially contend for a future 6.8mm contract with a system of their own, possibly based on their standard configuration platform, the Australian Combat Assault Rifle (ACAR). The ACAR has allegedly already seen testing by members of the Australian Federal Police and the ADF's 2nd Commando Regiment. Thales neither confirmed nor denied the speculation.

There is already considerable momentum for Australian troops to move to a 6.8mm calibre rifle with the United States military currently transitioning the US Army to their new 6.8mm M7 rifle, produced by SIG Sauer. Such a rifle would almost certainly be considered a contender for any future rifle contract with the ADF, due to interoperability and joint force compatibility as well as historical preference for US-adopted military systems.

Victorian defence company Aquaterro, which supplies SIG Sauer products in Australia, confirmed its interest in entering the race to find the next ADF service rifle.

"Aquaterro, as an existing supplier of SIG Sauer platforms, optics and ammunition to the Australian Defence Force, is keen to offer the M7 rifle in 6.8x51mm as the close combatant rifle," said Greg Knowles, Aquaterro director of defence and strategic programs.

LH Memorial Horse Trough—2020

"Manufacture of M7 rifles and the associated common cartridge case/hybrid cartridge case ammunition in Australia is absolutely feasible.

"The common cartridge case/hybrid cartridge case, regardless of calibre, is central to outperforming legacy brass cartridges. Hybrid ammunition, a brass cartridge with a steel case head, allows the safe function of ammunition at operating pressures over 30 per cent higher than legacy.

"These higher pressures deliver greater kinetic energy, with a flatter trajectories, from shorter barrels than what legacy ammunition and weapons can deliver, enabling the 6.8mm projectile to defeat body armour, protected mobility vehicles and the reduction of cover."

In addition, it's speculated that those changes may provide Australian soldiers an advantage with higher impact against near peer soldiers equipped with body armour and possibly effectiveness against lightly armoured vehicles.

There has been widespread uptake of conventional rifle designs, like the AR-15, with international military partners such as the United Kingdom, Ukraine and Sweden. Within Australia there are already several domestic manufacturers, such as NSW firearms manufacturer Oceania Precision and its 6.8mm OP25 rifle, moving to standard configuration AR style designs.

Oceania Precision managing director Jeffrey Bacon confirmed there is a tangible advantage to using 6.8mm rounds in a standard configuration rifle, such as the 6.8mm OP25 or in a 7.62mm OP25.

"This particular rifle runs our proprietary incline radial locking bolt, which allows us to chamber 6.8mm in an AR10 or an AR308 platform," he said.

"We are looking at around about a 40 percent increase in pressure from 7.62mm, which give you an increase in velocity and thus, more energy on target." *Source: Defence Connect—October 2025*

THE OWEN MACHINE CARBINE—PART 1

Pete Tulloch

SAMRA ARCHIVIST

INTRODUCTION

In early 1941 Australia faced an increasingly perilous strategic situation.

Japan, faced with an embargo on oil and other strategic materials to support its war in China, was beginning to look southwards to the colonies of Britain and the Netherlands to supply the deficit.

The majority of the AIF was deployed to the Middle East, and the country was attempting to rapidly convert from a rural economy to its own manufacturing base, and overcome years of parsimonious defence spending.

Although there was an established smalls arms factory at Lithgow in New South Wales which produced Lee Enfield rifles, Vickers MMGs and Bren LMGs these weapons took many man hours of skilled labour to produce.

In addition, some 10,000 Lee Enfield rifles had been sent to the UK in 1940 when Britain faced imminent invasion.

In early 1941, the threat of invasion was still very real, and would remain so until June 1941 when Hitler turned his attention to the Soviet Union.

The two potential sources of small arms, Britain and the United States, were fully committed to producing enough weapons for their own needs. There would be few, if any, available for Australia.

The Australian Army, (following the British Army), had belatedly adopted the Thompson M1928, but these expensive weapons had to be purchased from the United States.

What was needed, was a cheap and robust automatic weapon, which could be produced in factories with little or no experience in weapons manufacture, and could be wielded by one soldier.—Enter Evelyn, (Evo), Owen.

EVELYN OWEN (1915-1949)

LH Memorial Horse Trough—2020

Owen lived in Wollongong and was an inveterate tinkerer who produced a number of home- made rifles and bombs.

In 1939 he produced, with some help, a sub machine gun which he and his father demonstrated to the Australian Army.

At this time there was prejudice against sub machine guns by the established Army hierarchy. There was no doctrine for their employment and they were considered “American gangster weapons”

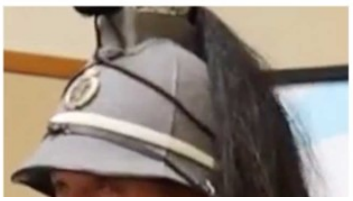
In addition, Owen’s weapon was quite crude in appearance, with a thumb trigger, and a non-interchangeable magazine chambered for .22 short, (hardly a man stopping round.)

Owen appears to have lost interest in the gun and enlisted in the AIF.

During his pre-deployment leave, he took his gun to the beach and fired off some rounds seaward.

On returning home he left the gun in a sugar bag, propped against the low wall which separated his home from the neighbour, one Vincent Wardell, General Manager of Lysaght’s Port Kembla works. Evo then adjourned to the local pub.

Part 2 to be continued in our next SAMRAG



Editor: This year cavalry in South Australia celebrated its 186th anniversary. It is always good to be reminded of our heritage and the significant role that cavalry played in pre-federation days.

The Adelaide Lancers (far left) were named and formed in 1886, for a mainly ceremonial role, from the South Australian Mounted Rifles (top right) who had 125 members leave Port Adelaide in 1900 to be part of the Boer War in South Africa. The 19th Century South Australia history of mounted rifles included colourful episodes such as the Reedbeds Cavalry 1860-70 formed (bottom right) with prominent members such as Samuel White and Captain James Ferguson. It was able to afford its own Adelaide-designed helmet. ***Images courtesy State Library of South Australia***

The Reedbeds Cavalry, 1860 to 1870, was a colourful interim mounted military unit between the 1840 South Australian Volunteer Cavalry through to the South Australian Mounted Rifles and the Adelaide Lancers at the end of the 19th Century.

The South Australian Volunteer Cavalry was formed by the four-year-old province as part of a South Australian Volunteer Militia Brigade with a company of infantry and two troops of cavalry, By April 1840, it had a total strength of 77 and, by June, with a severe economic depression and wave of lawlessness, all training ceased with the brigade disbanded although the officers continued to "dine" together.

With a new perceived Russian threat, South Australia's Legislative Council introduced the 1854 bill to raise a volunteer militia of 850 men, with 14 troops of artillery, four troops of Infantry and eight troops of mounted infantry. The low government pay of one shilling a day meant groups formed their own volunteer' forces including independent cavalry corps, most notably in East Torrens, Para and Goolwa.

The South Australian (or Adelaide) Mounted Rifles was formed around 1854. This corps received no pay, found their own arms and equipment and had one captain, one lieutenant, one cornet, one surgeon and 27 troopers. By 1856, the government's Military Force Act was repealed and its "regiment" disbanded.

Between 1860 and 1870, the Reedbeds Cavalry from the Adelaide western wetlands area of later suburbs Cowandilla, Lockleys, Underdale and West Beach arose. Samuel White, son of John White, who arrived in South Australia in 1836 and founded Fulham Farm, named after his London suburb former home, was in the Reedbeds Cavalry, along with Gabriel Bennet and W.H. Gray. The Reedbeds Cavalry stood out as wealthy and socially prominent as sponsor of theatrical performances. It also could afford to have its own Adelaide-designed helmets made.

The Reedbeds Cavalry captain from 1861 was James Ferguson, noted as for his rifle skills and a founder of the semi-military South Australian Rifle Association. In 1866, during another European war scare and the revival of South Australia's voluntary militia including cavalry, Ferguson accepted command of B Troop, and the squadron named The Duke of Edinburgh's Light Dragoons by the duke during a South Australia visit. About 18 months later, Ferguson was thrown from his horse and broke his arms and wrists. He could no long use a sword but could still handle a rifle and win cavalry brigade's best marksman prize.

South Australia's volunteer militias were again disbanded due to lack of finance and support until war started between Russia and Turkey in 1877. Responding to concerned citizens, the Adelaide mayor called a public meeting in May that year to discuss the colony's defences and it opened lists for volunteers. James Rowell, who rose through the South Australian Mounted Rifles ranks, was at the meeting.

The first parade of the mounted rifles was in August 1877 and the force was divided into two troops, each of 32 men and one officer. Weekly parades were on Saturday afternoons in the park lands. By 1887, the South Australian Mounted Rifles had more than 1,000 troops in major country centres as well as the two troops of Adelaide Lancers.

The Adelaide Lancers were named and formed from the South Australian Mounted Rifles in 1886. Governor, the earl of Kintore, was an honorary colonel of the lancers whose role was mainly ceremonial and, in 1897, sent a detachment to England for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee celebrations. James Rowell commanded that contingent.

In December 1899, 125 members of the mounted rifles regiment volunteered to fight in South Africa against the Boers. Among them were Harry Harboard (Breaker) Morant. On Australia Day 1900, the regiment sailed from Ocean Steamers Wharf at Port Adelaide in the troopship *Surrey.* ***Source: AdelaideAZ***

The following items are available for purchase. All profits support the Association:

- NAME BADGES—$25.00
- BLACK POLO SHIRT, BADGE ON THE FRONT, WITH SAMRA UNDERNEATH— $45.00 WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING SIZE IN STOCK 2XL x 2
- 3rd/9th LH (SAMR) BLAZER POCKET BADGE - $25.00
- RAAC LAPEL BADGE—$6.00
- SAMRA MEMBERSHIP LAPEL BADGE—$5.00
- ASSOCIATION TIE—$33.00
- UNIT TIE—$33.00

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MOUNTED RIFLES ASSOCIATION INC Contact Details

Secretary Newsletter Editor, Public Officer & Webmaster

63 Barramundi Drive Hallett Cove SA 5158 Mobile: 0439 843 897

Place your orders with Simon Braid, Mobile: 0417 705 147 please add $11.00 for postage and packing. The preferred method of payment is via your financial institution using EFT, details are;

Account Name—Association, South Australian Mounted Rifles
BSB—833 205, Account No—20760940, or send your payment to:
SAMRA Secretary, 63 Barramundi Drive, Hallett Cove, SA 5158

BELPERIO CONNELL LAWYERS
Advise, Empower, Resolve

Law Services include—Family Law, Wills & Estates Commercial Law & Dispute Resolution.

Address: 94 Sturt St, Adelaide 5000
T: (08) 8102 1322 E. Charlie@bclaw.au

Lawyers, Mediators & Collaborative Practitioners

At Belperio Connell we are passionate about helping our clients sensibly prevent , minimise, and resolve legal issues.

Donors 2023—2025

To the George Johnson MM

Prize

BALTHAZAR
ITALIAN PIZZERIA & CAFE

Café Balthazar is a family owned business since 2012 looking after our guests as if they were family. Our passion is food, coffee, and good times.
Breakfast, lunch & dinner
7 days a week.

Website: balthazarcafe.com.au/
For orders and reservations Tel: 8277 9909
Address: Pasadena Green
20 Fiveash Drive, Pasadena, SA

2026 SOCIAL CALENDAR

- **Thursday, 5 February—Old & Bold lunch at Café Balthazar.**
- **Saturday, 25 April—ANZAC Day, LH Memorial Service & RSL march.**
- **Thursday, 14 May—Old & Bold lunch at the Seacliff Hotel.**
- **June, TBA—Black Hat Night.**
- **Thursday, 23 July—Old & Bold lunch at the Victoria Hotel, O'Halloran Hill.**
- **Wednesday, 19 August—38th SAMRA AGM at the Naval, Military & Air Force Club.**
- **Thursday, 17 September—Old & Bold lunch at the Earl of Leicester Hotel.**
- **October, TBA—Black Hat Night.**
- **Saturday, 5 December—SAMRA EOY family function, TBA.**