



## ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

### NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2020

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### **SALUTE TO SA GUNNERS INVOLVED IN OPERATION BUSHFIRE ASSIST**

All members will be aware of the frightening and tragic bushfires impacting on our South Australian communities in recent weeks, particularly in the Adelaide Hills and on Kangaroo Island. You would also know that the resources of the Australian Defence Force were galvanised into action to support the men and women who continually placed their lives at risk on the fire fronts, which were both fierce and often quite unpredictable. My feedback is that all units of the ADF applied themselves rigorously to the many and varied tasks allotted to them, fulfilled their commitments willingly, and left behind them an exemplary reputation, all of which has enhanced the ADF's reputation across the community!

It should be noted that, following the call out of Army Reserve personnel, attendance was compulsory, except in a very few cases (eg. reserved occupations such as members of SA Police, who were already hard-pressed), and several members had to cancel long-planned holidays or other family events. It was not easy for many ARA members either, some of whom were on their holidays, or in the middle of relocating their families as a result of new postings.

Two units of particular interest to our members are 16 Regiment at Woodside, and 6/13 Light Battery at Keswick. Thanks to the efforts of **Capt Mike Parry** (16 Regt) and **Lt Natasha Wilson-Beddoe** (6/13 Lt Bty), I am able to provide the following brief summaries relating to the efforts of their members.

#### **16 Regiment, Woodside Barracks**

Since the 10 January 2020, 16 Regiment Royal Artillery has been involved with Operation Bush Fire Assist. The Regiment established the backbone of the 16 Regiment Emergency Support Force (16 REGT ESF) and was reinforced with soldiers from 10th/27th Royal South Australia Regiment, 1st Combat Engineer Regiment, 9th Combat Service Support Battalion, 7th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, 144 Signals Squadron, airmen and women from No. 1 Combat Communications Squadron and medical staff from across Army, Navy, Air Force, as well as initially from the New Zealand Defence Force.

The main effort has been to coordinate the Australian Defence Forces' support to the community affected by the Cudlee Creek fire on 20 December 2019. Woodside Barracks is approximately 400m from the fire-affected area and are ideally placed to support the community.

16 REGT ESF's key tasks in support of the fire-affected community include; route and debris clearance, wildlife recovery, stock feed and water transportation, as well as assisting the local council. This force was rapidly deployed and has adapted quickly to provide recovery support to those in need.

If you would like additional information on 16 REGT ESF activities you can find it on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/16Regiment/> or <https://www.facebook.com/9BdeAusArmy/>







## **6<sup>TH</sup>/13<sup>TH</sup> Light Battery, Keswick Barracks**

6<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> Light Battery, 9 Regiment was called out as a unit as part of the Governor General's compulsory call out of ADF Reserve personnel under s 28 of the *Defence Act 1903* on 9 January 2020. Within a day, the Battery had mobilized at Keswick Barracks and the majority of the Battery was force-assigned to an Emergency Support Force (ESF) commanded by 10<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Some Battery headquarters staff also fulfilled roles within the Joint Task Force headquarters throughout the operation.

The main body of the Battery headed over to Kangaroo Island on 13 January with the 10<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Battalion ESF, being fortunate enough to make the journey over to the island in CH-47 Chinooks. Immediately upon arriving on the island, the Battery got to work in conducting a number of tasks to assist in the bushfire recovery effort for several weeks, with most members also taking several days back in Adelaide to conduct a 21 Gun Salute in honour of Australia Day, before heading back out to the island.

The tasks we conducted were very varied, and included (just to name a few): assisting farmers with fencing, delivery of hay by CH-47, deceased livestock and wildlife removal, manning entrances to national parks, clearing roads and access routes by chain-sawing fallen trees, assisting local police (including cordoning off an area where a serial arsonist was believed to be lighting fires), creating vehicle check points to assist after a car accident, escorting SA Power Networks and SA Water personnel to bring vital services back to the island, and manning a bio-security vehicle wash point for local council. Most members of the Battery ceased their service on 5 February, with a number of personnel staying on for an extended period of voluntary service.

The overall experience of the Battery was extremely positive, mainly due to interactions with locals and emergency service workers who were always quick to show gratitude for the ADF's work on the island, even those locals who had lost virtually everything in the fires. Battery members were glad to have been a part of such a worthwhile and historic operation.









**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL MEMBERS OF BOTH UNITS FOR THE EXEMPLARY MANNER IN WHICH THEY APPLIED THEMSELVES UNDER TRYING CONDITIONS – WELL DONE!**

***Geoff Laurie***  
**President**

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.**

**2019-2020**

**Committee:**

President	Major Geoff Laurie RFD (Retd)	8332.4485 (H)	Mobile: 0418.852.661
Treasurer	Major Rex Jones RFD (Retd)	8388.4201 (H)	
Secretary	Sgt Jan Burgess	0411.446.656	
Members	LTCOL Stefan Landherr RFD (Retd)	0419.030.536	
	WO2 Don Millard	8263.5334 (H)	
	WO2 Tony Matz	0412.824.600	
	SSgt Ernie Reichstein	-	
	Sgt Eddie Tanzer	-	
	Sgt John Nield	0468.396.457	
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Assoc Reps at Army} Museum of SA }	Maj Geoff Laurie, LTCOL Stefan Landherr, Sgt Eddie Tanzer, Sgt John Nield, SSgt Ernie Reichstein		
16 Regt	LTCOL Mark Mankowski	CO 16 Regt	
6/13 Light Bty	Maj Mark Lee	BC 6/13 Lt Bty	
Proof & Experimental Establishment, Port Wakefield	Maj Tony Mumford	OC P&EE	

**Committee Meetings:**

The Committee endeavours to meet on the second Monday in February, May, August, and November.

**Agenda items, and Newsletter Articles to:** Geoff Laurie or Jan Burgess

**Memorabilia** (when available)

RAA Tie \$40 - (currently in stock)	Book, 'Roundshot to Rapier' – A History of RAA in SA)	\$5
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**Membership Fee:**

**Full Member:** Annual Subscription: \$30 Joining Fee \$20 (at Committee's discretion)

**Affiliate or Serving Member:** 50% of above annual subscription