



THE MISSION

Everyman's Ministry to the 8th/9th Battalion
the Royal Australian Regiment

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Dear supporters and prayer partners, it has been a busy year and I look forward to letting you know how things have developed in 2019. Many exciting things have occurred and we are building some great momentum in the projects the we are involved in. In this day and age, we are in need of much prayer as many doors are opening up for ministry in a number of areas.

EVERYMAN'S VETERANS LEAGUE IS ON!

As I have written in previous 'The Missions' updates I have been working on a new project for Veterans which is called 'EveryVet's'. This has been something that the Lord has put on my heart for a few years and initially it began when I started attending a secular Veteran organisation and saw that there was a need to reach out to former soldiers, sailors and airmen, some that I knew personally. I initially thought that I could be a part of these veterans groups and shine a light in a dark place but I soon realised that whilst there were good intentions in the organisations they lacked the same vision that I had and I knew that true and lasting healing for these veterans can only come through the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, if I was to be able to have the freedom to share this hope then a new work would need to be started. This was when the seed was first planted, and I began to pray about this and share with others in Everyman's. After some prayer and consideration, the burden I had was to create a group that was based on the Bible and focused on Jesus. Our first EveryVet's event was a fishing and camping trip in which

a few of us went 5 hours north of Brisbane to Lake Monduran which is near a town called 'Gin Gin'. We were on the hunt for barramundi as there was a fishing competition on up there to catch a golden, white and silver barramundi all of which had prizes associated with the respective colours. For the most part we caught nothing! Although, I did hook up one fish and as I was reeling it in it jumped out of the water and spat the lure. To our disappointment it was the white barra! A true 'one that got away' story. But this was not the real purpose for the trip, and we all enjoyed the fellowship and getting away from the big city. Since then we have begun having regular meetings and at the time of me writing this we are preparing to have our third EveryVet's Family Day. In a true answer to prayer the Lord provided a venue for us to have the meetings in. I began to pray to the Lord for a venue for our meetings and made requests to the Lord for certain things, amongst them were: 1. Close proximity to Gallipoli Barracks in Enoggera so that those soldiers who work at the barracks would be able to attend easily 2. A café area. 3 A BBQ area and 4. Would be available on Thursday nights. The Lord answered all of my

EveryVet's



requests and more! About a month after I began to pray for these things, I had a random phone call from a man named Michael who wanted to meet me. We meet up for a coffee and it turns out that Michael who served nearly 15 years in the Army himself has a son who is currently serving in 8/9 RAR. I shared the vision for EveryVet's with Michael and he was excited about the project. Michael who runs a Bible study class at his church for people suffering with depression and PTSD had gone through many years of depression and PTSD himself and now has a ministry helping others. Michael informed me that his church had a suitable café area. It turns out that Michael's church, Good Shepherd Baptist, is located 15 mins drive from the barracks, has an amazing café area with plenty of room, multimedia setup for presentations, a playground for children, BBQ and full kitchen. Michael asked the pastor of the church and he was more than happy to let us use the facilities! What an awesome God we serve who answers prayer in ways that are beyond what we ask! We had our first meeting at the church and we had about 15 of us there with a mix of Christian and non-Christian veterans and current serving people and their families. There was a really good response from everyone and even the non-Christian wives were asking when the next event was on! We decided that we would have a family day at least once a month and likely a veterans only meeting once a month, however, this is all subject to the Lord's leading. The plan for the future will be to establish a tight knit Christian fellowship and share the good news with those who do not know Christ yet. I use the example of 'Louis Zamperini' whose life story has been made into two films called 'Unbroken' and a documentary called 'Captured by Grace'. Louis was taken POW by the Japanese during WW2 and suffered much torture at the hands of his guards. After he returned from the war he suffered greatly from PTSD and became an alcoholic and was becoming violent towards his wife. After she went to a Billy Graham crusade, she met the Lord and she invited Louis along. He went and heard the gospel and felt the Lord convicting him, Louis also went forward, gave his life to the Lord and was born again. At that time all nightmares, alcohol cravings and PTSD stopped and he had peace in his heart. After this he went to Japan and preached the gospel to those same guards who tortured him and after sharing the forgiveness found in Christ hundreds of them came and gave their lives to Jesus too! This same message will set those captives free who are suffering today and we are already seeing lives touched in such a short time we have been going. Please pray earnestly for this project!

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand." Zechariah 4:10 NLT



ANZAC DAY 2019

This Anzac Day was another great day. I wasn't scheduled to do a 'Brew Run' at any dawn service so I took the opportunity to go to the dawn service at 8/9 RAR. It was the first time that I had been to the battalion for an Anzac Day service since joining with Everyman's and the battalion put on a great service. I was particularly touched by the reading of a particular letter from a digger prior to boarding a landing craft to storm the beach at 'Anzac Cove'. The letter was to the diggers wife and expressed his love for her and their young child. I was particularly touched by the conclusion to the letter which read words to the effect of 'tell my mother that I am not afraid to die, as I know in whom I have believed in...'. I was glad to hear that spoken at the battalion with all the families and friends present, whom, for the most part, are not believers in Jesus. Although, many may not have understood the reference to the digger's faith, I'm sure there would have been some who got the message. It made me think of how many were just like that digger who served their country and one day we will meet in heaven, I think there will be more than we imagine and I wonder how many would have come to faith during that time knowing that death was so close to them at any moment. After the dawn service Richard Gibson and I got changed into our uniforms and headed into Brisbane CBD to set up our 'Brew Trucks' for the troops so they would be hydrated as they waited for their turn in the parade. This year I got in a prime position to serve both 8th/9th and 6th Infantry Battalions to which they were much appreciative of. This year we were also able to join in the march and Richard and I drove slowly behind the Boys and Girls Brigades and scouts. The photo above features a 'selfie' with some of the Boys Brigade as they were forming up for the march. These boys were from the 'Pine Rivers' Company whom I visited last year as a part of the Anzac Day commemorations. This year also was the 3rd year I did a service at Bethany Christian Care's three aged care facilities. I also spoke at the Boys Brigade Beenleigh Company for their Friday night parade where I was able to share my testimony.



BATTALION LIFE

Since leaving the Battalion as a soldier in 2014 I have not had the opportunity to get 'back on the tools' in terms of firing any weapons or 'dropping any bombs' a term we use for firing mortars. To be honest I wasn't too phased either but within the space of two weeks I was offered the opportunity to have a shoot on the F-88 Steyer Rifle and to drop a few mortar rounds (photos below) when I visited the 8/9 RAR boys doing their combat shooting, Mortars and Assault Pioneers courses. It was just like riding a bike really and the muscle memory kicks in. I must say though even though these things may be fun, I have much more of a thrill when I get to share the gospel and have a great conversation with the boys about Jesus! I think the Lord really changed my heart. Some other highlights from the year so far have been 'Australasian Military Bank' sponsoring our RAAF Base Amberley recreational centre with a table tennis table (they have said they will continue to give more in future), 8 RAR's reunion for the Battle of Long Hai which was fought in Vietnam and the release of the preview of the movie 'Danger Close: The Battle of Long Tan' which I was an extra for. The release date is later this year on the anniversary of the battle itself. You can see the preview on YouTube.



ON THE HOME FRONT

We recently had our churches Easter conference where we had brothers Brian Long and Edgar Reich from the USA and Canada respectively. We were blessed by the preaching and fellowship with all the brothers and sisters who came from Melbourne and Adelaide and I think every one of the hundred or so people who came left touched by the Lord and motivated to seek the Lord and serve Him in these dark days. We also now have a new house mate Manami who is from Japan (the picture below was from her birthday dinner) and joins our old faithful friend and brother Panayot (Pancho is his nickname) who is from Bulgaria. We also had the blessed opportunity to visit an Everyman's living legend: Stacey Kruck and his wife Hazel (picture below). We were blessed to stay with them a night, visit their local church for a men's breakfast and they showed us around their lovely town.



Claudia's Corner

Dear brothers and sisters, our God is so good! We may say this with confidence, for *He daily loads us with benefits*. Last year, I apparently had a nerve that was dislocated that caused back pain and my leg to become numb sometimes. Ben thought that maybe I should start thinking about doing another job and even suggested admin job or activities in the aged care and we prayed for the Lord to guide us. However, in my heart I didn't want to leave my job as I learned to love by the grace of God. The pain went away by stretching and exercise and I totally forgot about what he suggested. Until one day, my boss called me to her office and told me I was not in trouble. She said she was going to call the manager and that they wanted to offer me the position of Lifestyle Supervisor which takes care of the activities. At the moment I froze and I thought "O Lord, you know I don't make these decisions without consulting You", and her very next sentence was "I am not sure if you have thought about this before" and suddenly I remembered 'yes we had and Ben even prayed for it'. I knew the Lord was there and there was nothing to fear, so I accepted the position. I was still very nervous as I was taking a big job at The Plains without any study or experience and many prayers were offered in my first month.

He gave me this verse at the very beginning and when my heart was sinking, and I thought "I cannot do this anymore" His lovingkindness lifted me up. Again, the Lord is proving Himself faithful, full of mercy and lovingkindness and He has not left my foot slip. Praise be to His name!

If I should say, "My foot has slipped," Your lovingkindness, O LORD, will hold me up. (Psalm 94:18)

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So far, this year has been busy and the rest of the year looks to be no different. There are 2 major exercises happening nearly back to back to I see a few big trips up to Shoalwater Bay as the whole Brigade deploys as well as many international militaries that are going to be visiting Australia during that period. May the Lord grant us wisdom to navigate the rest of this year with all of its challenges.

Proverbs 9:11 For through wisdom your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life.

Much love,

Ben and Claudia



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