

## Gallipoli Barracks, Brisbane.

Back in [Vol 39](#) we had a story on one of the “Pleasant Sunday Mornings” which are held on a regular basis at Brisbane’s Gallipoli Barracks and it drew quite a bit of interest with a few blokes wanting to know a little more about the Base (probably not the correct term but we’ll refer to it as a Base from here on). On that Sunday morning we did not see a lot of the base, just a quick drive to the barbecue area, then back out again, so we too were interested in having a better and longer look around. We got in touch with Chris Kelly from Defence Media Operations in Canberra and he was



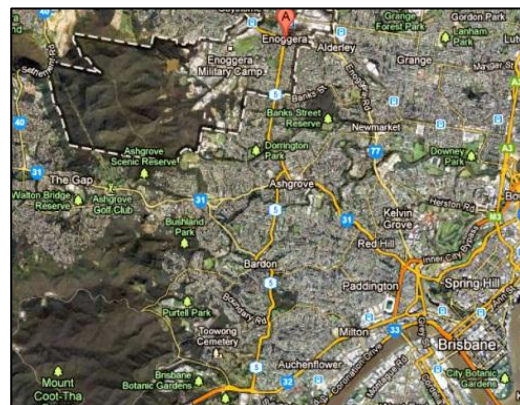
kind enough to arrange a day on the Base for us and he introduced us to Major John McPherson (left) from the Military Strategic Commitments Division at Gallipoli who was gracious enough to give up his day and show John “Sambo” Sambrooks and me over the Base and to answer the million stupid questions we fired at him.



kind enough to give up his day and show John “Sambo” Sambrooks and me over the Base and to answer the million stupid questions we fired at him.

A big thank you to both.

Gallipoli Army Barracks is a large and busy training centre, situated on approximately 1200 acres in the Brisbane suburb of Enoggera and is only about 6.5 kms north west of the city centre. If the Commonwealth ever decided to move the base to another site, the proceeds from the sale of the land would probably settle our nation debt. (Click the map for a bigger view.)



It is one of the largest and oldest army bases in Australia, with currently more than 4,000 servicemen on site and plans and huge construction works are well underway to increase this number significantly.

The Base was originally known as “Enoggera Army Camp” and by the late 1960s it had become “Enoggera Barracks,” then on Anzac Day, 1990 the site was renamed “Gallipoli Barracks,” a name by which it is known today.

It dates back to 1855 when the Qld State Government acquired a collection of 4 paddocks, Fraser’s, Bell, Rifle and Thompsons, for military purposes and these names were retained for a number of decades. With Federation, the Australian Government took on the portfolio of Defence and in 1908 the land was acquired by the Commonwealth.



With War looming, the period from 1910-1915 saw considerable development on the site, with a



number of substantial buildings being built, including the Heritage Listed Small Arms Magazine Store (right, in front of the new Gym) Many of the older buildings on site were destroyed by fires which spread through the Barracks in 1919 and 1920. These buildings were replaced by a number of hospitals and mobilisation stores and in 1968, in response to Defence's changing requirements, sports fields were developed.

Today, Gallipoli Barracks is considered a very important and significant Army facility and is the home of the 1 Division which includes the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade and the 16<sup>th</sup> Aviation Brigade, along with corresponding units (see [HERE](#) for a full list of units operating from the Base)



The base is currently undergoing a \$770 million expansion, a new building has been built to house the 7th Brigade's headquarters and when the works are finished in 2014, the number of regular personnel will rise to about 5,600.





A new and fantastic gym has been built and an indoor pool and training centre, to rival any in Australia, has also been built.



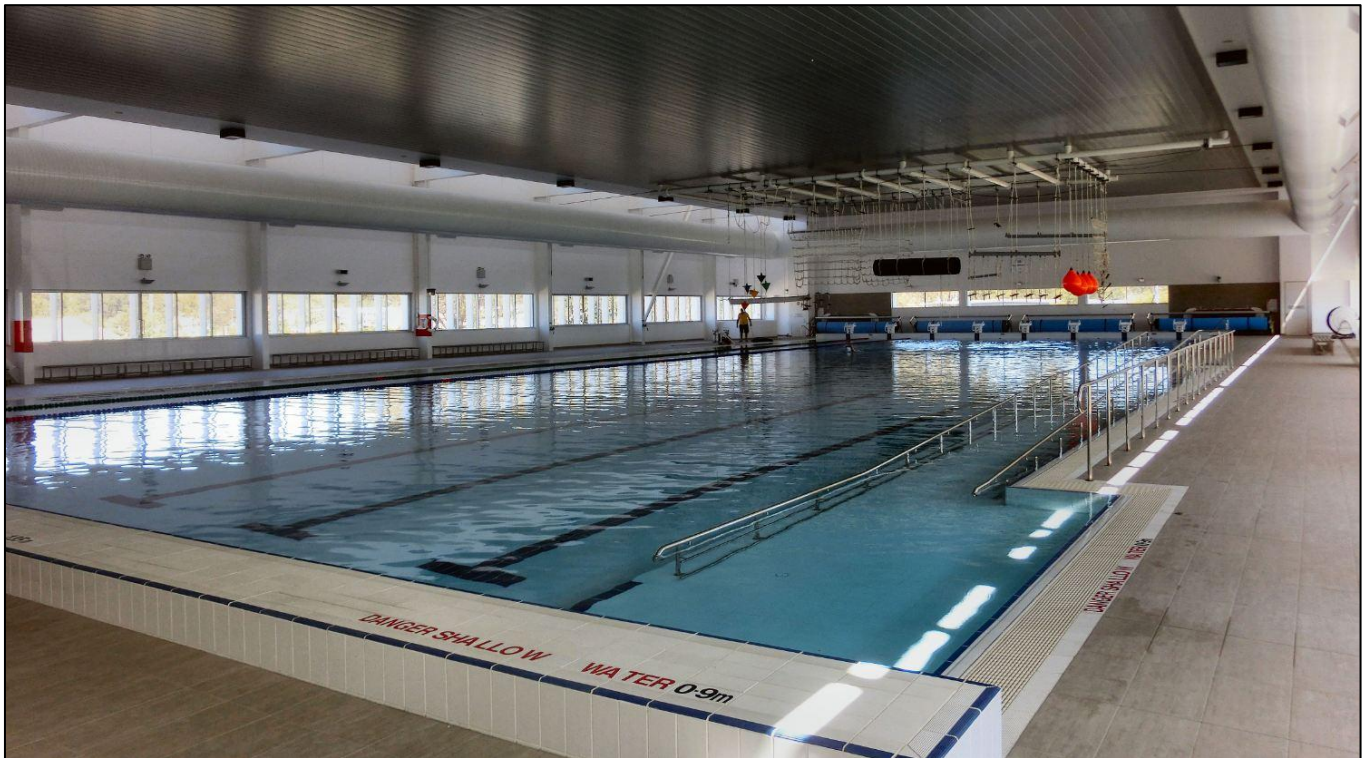
**The new Gym building on the Base.**

The proposed combined pool and gym precinct will, when finished, consist of three separate buildings arranged to form a triangular training courtyard. The buildings will include a main hall (squash courts, basketball, volleyball and badminton courts) – under construction, Training Hall (cardio vascular training, weight training, multipurpose room and administration) - finished and a Pool Hall (indoor 50m training pool and children’s pool) – also finished.



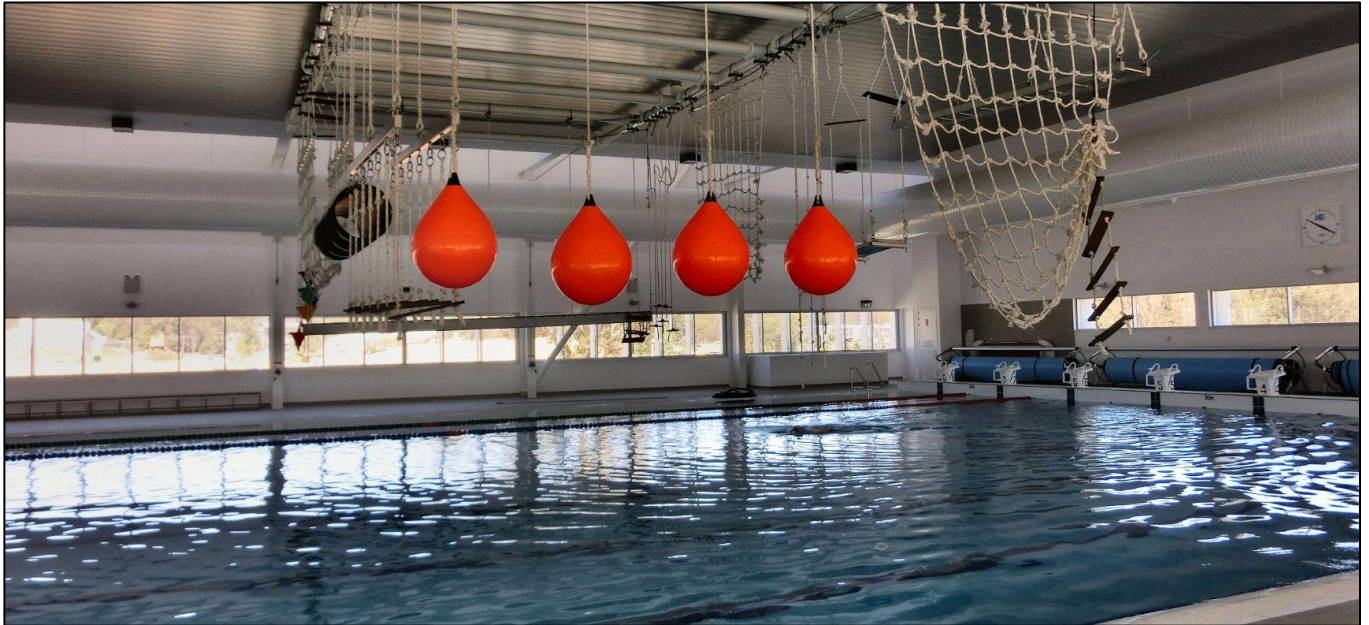


Inside the gym facility, showing the extent of equipment available for organised classes and also available for private individual after hours use.





The wonderful indoor pool facilities, an eight lane, 50 metre pool, as well as being intended for organised classes it is also available for private individual use. One can just imagine the numbers in the pool when Queensland turns up the heat later in the year.



And what do they say?? – “all work and not play.....”

Physical fitness plays a big part in today’s Australian Army. Each morning, the base comes to life with soldiers conducting their morning physical training before launching into daily drills or courses - whether they be simulations or live rehearsal.





Military life can be and is very demanding and it is essential for their own safety and the safety of people with whom they are associated, that a soldier be physically fit in order to perform his or her duties competently and efficiently as and when required.



They say an army marches on its stomach and they used to say Army blokes and blokettes would look forward to spending a day or two on a RAAF base, just to experience good food.

Well, not any more.



Someone has finally put the thinking cap on and designed a messing area that is efficient and attractive. All the Messes, the Officer's, Sergeant's and OR's are in the one triangular shaped building, with each mess built around a central kitchen.

We had a look through the OR's Mess, before the troops hit the place and the standard of food, presentation and surroundings were, we felt, unbeatable. No C Rations here!!!

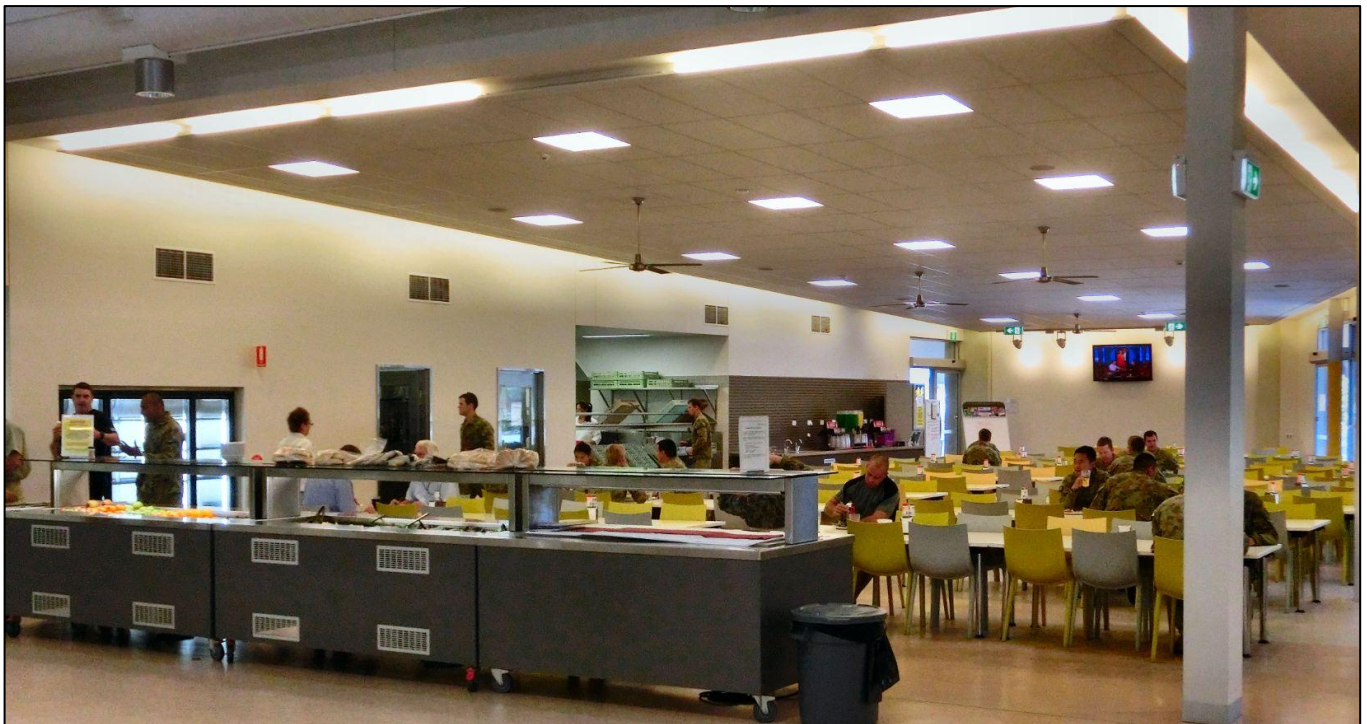




Instead on entry, the OR blokes and blokettes are provided with a menu of today's meal and are offered the choice of a self-serve Bistro, a salad bar to rival [Sizzler](#) or a sandwich bar where they can make their own and go sit by the pool.



Click the pic at right and see the menu for the day we were there.



Above, looking to the right after entry, the well-stocked salad bar and below the self-serve bistro.





And below, looking left after entry, the sandwich bar.







And what Messing area would be complete without a soft serve machine, red or green cordials and even chilled orange juice. Life can be hard at times!!

If you've been out of the ADF for a while, you would notice a considerable difference in the way the ADF provides food and accommodation. These days personnel must pay for each meal they consume in the various Messes and if they live on base, they are charged "board". But as Lord Voldemort said in one of the Harry Potter movies, "the Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away"? ADF pay their personnel a 'Service Allowance' of \$12,128 each year, on top of their salary, which compensates them for these charges.

Meal costs at Gallipoli Barracks are (about):

Breakfast	\$4.00
Lunch	\$6.00
Dinner	\$6.00

and you pay these charges in cash on the way into the Mess.

ASCO has long gone but the base still has a 'shop' which provides the same sort of facilities that ASCO used to provide, though these days at Gallipoli Barracks it's called Frontline. And since blokes and blokettes are allowed to drink in their 'lines', (we all used to do it, but now it's legal) the old Boozer has lost a lot of its appeal and a lot of people now take a drink 'home' to share with their mates.

We didn't eat in the OR's Mess as we were with Major John who couldn't – so it was around the corner and into the Officer's Mess – some days are just tough!!!



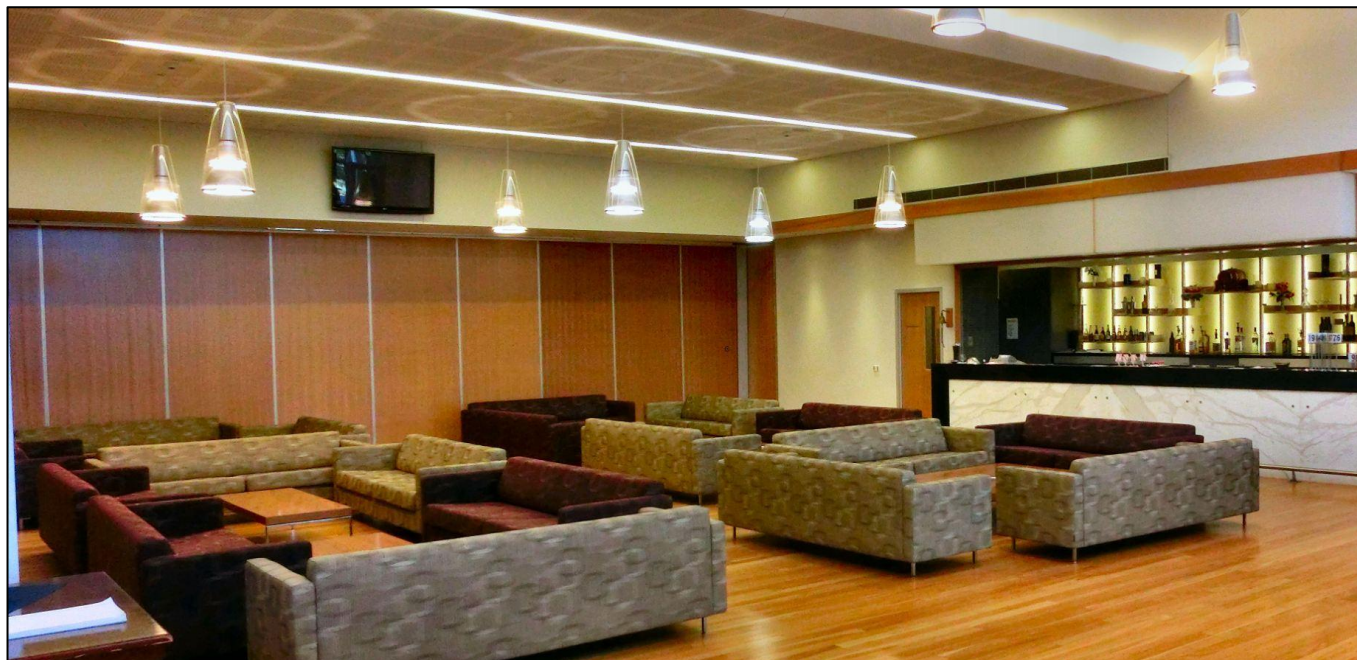


Inside of the Officer's Mess, quite a bit smaller than we thought it would be, probably a lot of 'baggers' at Gallipoli.



John "Sambo" Sambrooks and our 'chaperone' for the day, Major John McPherson. Once upon a time Sambo would have tucked into half a dozen schooners at lunch time, if given the opportunity, but this time he was into water – sad really!!





The 'anteroom' in the Officer's Mess, no Bistro here, all meals are À la carte, ordered at the bar and delivered to the table shortly afterwards.

### Living Quarters.

Another outstanding change that is immediately evident to those long out of the ADF is the standard of on-base living quarters. No longer is it 4 to a room and a walk down the open balcony to the communal ablution block, or a 100 yard walk across the grass to the old Lightburn washing machines, today's accommodation would rival any suburban apartment block.

Those that live in these buildings enjoy air-conditioned comfort, their own ensuite facilities, a small kitchenette and communal 'in-block' washing facilities. An under-cover car park is also provided.





People living in these quarters pay \$250 per fortnight board (all inclusive).

And if a bunch of blokes/blokettes want to get together and enjoy a drink and a yarn over a meal, Army has thoughtfully provided communal bar-b-q areas for their use.



### **Soldier Recovery Centre.**

One area that John was keen to show us was the Soldier Recovery Centre (SRC). Not so many years ago, in the Vietnam era and prior to, Military people who returned from a conflict had any physical ailments professionally seen to and were then either returned to their military unit or were medically discharged. Not a lot of attention was paid to the person's mental state, which is probably why there are a lot of unsettled Vietnam Vets in this country today.

Thankfully, that oversight has now changed!!

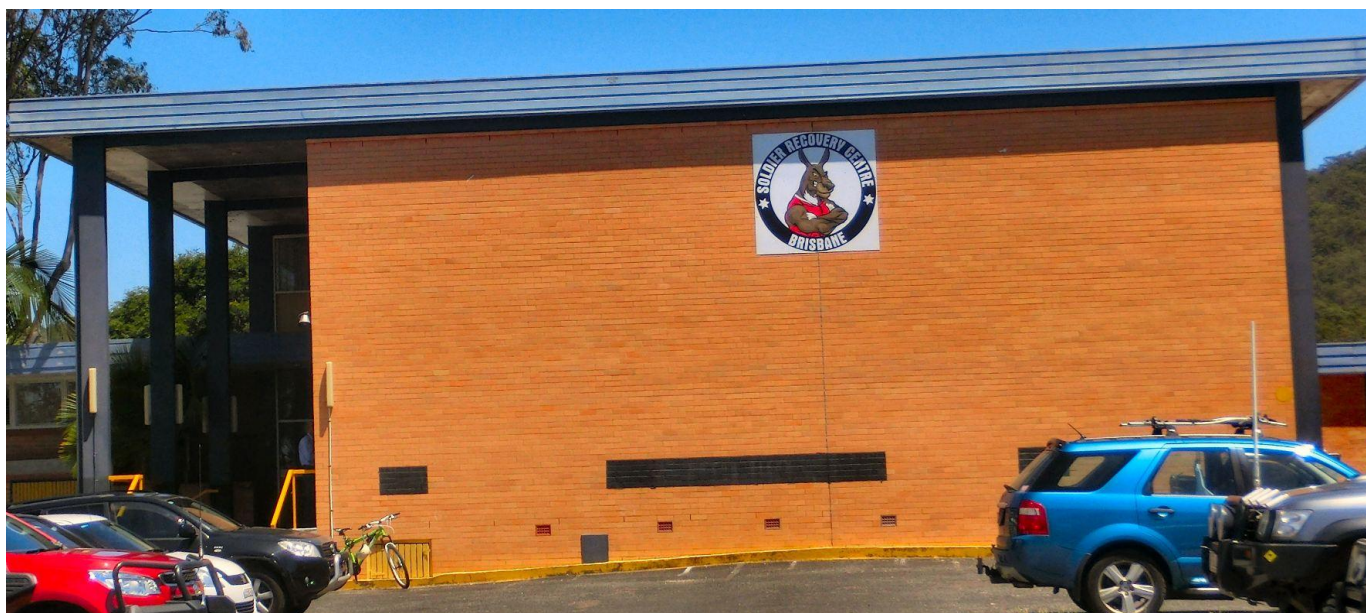
The Army has embarked on a Support to Wounded, Injured and Ill Program (SWIIP) with the establishment of SRC's in Townsville, Darwin and Brisbane. The Military has finally realized



that recovery goes beyond physical rehabilitation. The SRC's provide an environment of command, leadership and management to support and accelerate the recovery of soldiers with complex physical and mental injuries. This assists soldiers reach one of three goals, return to their original job, transition to another within Defence or develop the confidence and skills to find a career in the civilian world. While the majority of personnel health and welfare issues can be resolved through normal Command and management processes, Army recognises that additional resources and management are required to coordinate the support and services provided to personnel and their families with complex care requirements.

As a lot of the soldiers, both male and female, have families and live off base, the SRC has a 24 hour help line which can be reached should a soldier find it hard to cope any time after hours.

The SRC's work closely with welfare and support agencies including the Department of Veterans Affairs, Returned Services League and Young Diggers Australia who, if and when needed, can provide extra support services for the soldiers.



The SRC at Gallipoli Barracks has been established in the old area Gymnasium.

The SRC program has been designed to suit the differing needs of wounded, injured or ill soldiers. A group of men and women from different units, who at first find it difficult to get to know each other, soon interact and share their stories. Most times just having a chat to someone can be very helpful and make them realise there are people worse off than themselves or going through the same issues. Admitting you have a problem, then being able to talk about it is usually the first step towards recovery.

Once a month representatives from all Defence support agencies visit the SRC to provide information for the members of the garrison. [Young Diggers Australia](#) are a member of the Veterans' Indemnity and Training Association and have donated a Siberian Husky named 'Harry' as a Companion Dog to the Centre. 'Harry' has proven to be the ideal companion for



soldiers with a mental health condition, Sometimes they might not feel up to socialising with others so they can take 'Harry' for a walk instead.

We had a chat with Jarad Nicholson-Bliesner (right) who, back in August 2010, was serving with the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion's Mentoring Task Force in Afghanistan. He was with his mate, Jared MacKinney, a 28 year old Lance Corporal when his mate was shot and killed right beside him.



Understandably, Jarad Nicholson-Bliesner has found that very hard to accept and understand and his outlook and acceptance of everyday military life suffered. Luckily for him, his CO was a compassionate person and referred Jarad to the SRC in Brisbane.

Jarad, who is a Brisbane boy, joined the Army in 2006 and like all his compatriots, did his rookies at the Army Recruit Training Centre, Blamey Barracks, Kapooka, which is about 10 km SW of Wagga township.

After an 80 day rookie course, he was posted to the Lone Pine Army Barracks School of Infantry at Singleton (NSW) where he completed another 3 month course after which he was posted to 6 RAR and eventually sent to Afghanistan.

Has been at the SRC for 8 weeks and was very keen to sing its praises. We wish him all the best.

The centre in Brisbane is run by two dedicated blokes, Captain Trent Kirk is the CO of the unit and his CSM is Steven Davis.

L-R: Trent Kirk, Steven Davis.

Both blokes spoke warmly of the people under their care and both have the welfare of all concerned as their number one priority.

Click [HERE](#) to see the list of all Australian servicemen who have given their lives in Afghanistan.

What a terrible, terrible loss!!





A group of monks are working in the Scriptorium when they realize there might be an error in the text they're copying. After a long debate over what they should do, the Abbot decides to go find the oldest copy they have. He takes quite a while to come back so the other monks decide to go check up on him. They find him in the back corner of the archives, clutching a tattered book and weeping. One of the monks runs to him and asks what was the matter. The Abbot replies "It says celebrate! CELEBRATE!"