

# Celebrations tempered with sadness

About 2500 soldiers from the Brisbane-based 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade (7 Bde), including roughly 1700 officers and soldiers who had recently returned from operations, and soldiers from one of Australia's oldest units, marched in a combined welcome-home/birthday parade on 20 November last year.

The entire 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade participated in the parade through the streets of Brisbane, to conclude their contribution to operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and East Timor in 2010 – and to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> year of unbroken service to the nation for 2<sup>nd</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment (Queensland Mounted Infantry).

But it was the welcome-home aspect of the parade that drew the most attention and the large crowd – estimated at up to 15,000 men, women and children ready to clap, cheer, wave and otherwise show support to 'their' troops in a variety of loud and colourful ways.

The march stepped off from the South Bank

Cultural Forecourt and crossed Victoria Bridge, along Adelaide Street, past the VIP dais in the vicinity of Brisbane City Hall, up Creek Street and concluded on Ann Street.

Army Band-Brisbane led the parade, with thousands of spectators barely pausing their cheers from the time the band came into view until the last man had marched past. Except when the horses came!

Representing the mates lost on operations, six riderless horses with combat boots reversed in the stirrups – two leading 2CER and four leading 6RAR – drew a tear to many eyes as the parade passed by and the crowd

hushed in reverence.

The troops on the march very much appreciated the strong show of support in th size and warmth of the public turn-out on the day – and the support their friends and families had demonstrated over the past few years.

Dignitaries in attendance at the parade included Commander Forces Command Major General Dave Morrison, Deputy Prime Minister Wayne Swan, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence David Feeney, Senator for Queensland Russell Troad, Member for Brisbane Teresa Gambaro,

Sapper Allan Barbagallo, injured in a Mack Truck crash on the Bruce Highway heading to Exercise Hamel in 2010

## KILLED IN ACTION

**Sapper Jacob Moerland**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Combat Engineer Regiment  
– improvised explosive device  
– 7 June 2010.

**Sapper Darren Smith**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Combat Engineer Regiment  
– improvised explosive device  
– 7 June 2010.

**Private Nathan Bewes**  
6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment – improvised explosive device – 9 July 2010.

**Private Tomas Dale**  
6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment – improvised explosive device – 20 August 2010

**Private Grant Kirby**  
6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment – improvised explosive device – 20 August 2010

**Lance Corporal Jared MacKinney**  
6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment – engagement with insurgents – 24 August 2010





Queensland Attorney-General Cameron Dick and Brisbane Lord Mayor Campbell Newman.

Major General Morrison received the official salute as the troops marched past, accompanied the Lord Mayor and Deputy Commander 7 Bde Colonel Ian Cruickshank.

Commanding Officer 7 Bde Brigadier Paul McLachlan, who led the parade, said the support of the crowd was "mind-blowing and amazing".

"I am very familiar with just how supportive Brisbane is of 7 Brigade, but when you see this many people who have taken their time on a weekend to support soldiers, it is very humbling," Brigadier McLachlan said.

"I can't tell you how much the soldiers of the brigade appreciate it."

He said the soldiers had completed extensive post-deployment decompression but the parade and the support from Brisbane would help bring a sense of completeness for the soldiers who had deployed on operations.

"They are never going to forget the experiences they have had and they are never going to forget the mates they have lost.

"But this parade does draw a line under a difficult time and allows them to get ready to focus on the next one."

Brigadier McLachlan said that 7 Bde would soon be focused on preparing for another deployment to Afghanistan early next year.



## FANS' FEEDBACK

From the Australian Army Facebook Fan Page

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**Michael Sullivan:** I went and was so proud to be Australian. The gentleman next to me was the public affairs officer from HMAS Parramatta and I struck up a good conversation with him and his wife. It was great when the truck drivers from the light horse were honking their truck horns for the kids. Great atmosphere, a bit like the VJ parade. 21 November 2010 at 19:51

**Marion Perrott-Green:** It is so great that Australians are welcoming home our armed forces, it does wonders for their moral as they have been fighting for our freedom. I salute them all for what they do. I also am pleased that Australians are treating them as heroes as it was so different when my husband returned from Vietnam. His welcome home was so different. 21 November 2010 at 20:45

**Ron Taylor:** And so they should have a huge welcome home parade, these diggers have served their country very well, well done boys.

**Lee Heyes:** 6RAR & 8/9RAR both in Afghan at the same time... I have 1 in each and SO SO PROUD. It's so very good to have them home. I love u guys so much xx LEST WE FORGET. 21 November 2010 at 22:22

**Maggie Roach:** I was at the march with members of 6RAR Association, but supporting ALL the men and women who were marching. I was just so proud, but also so emotional, especially seeing the 6 riderless horses honouring the 6 who were lost. I really felt for their families. Yes Marion, I had a brother who did a tour of Vietnam back in 1969 and, as you say, the so-called "welcome" was very different. Thank God most Australians are not as ignorant now as they were back then. 22 November 2010 at 01:59

**Lesley Barnes:** We travelled from Canberra to see our son march. Words can't describe how proud we were. Well done to all and thank you. 22 November 2010 at 08:23

**Sharon Poynter:** It was an honour to cheer on & welcome our troops home, I have a nephew who was a part of the parade and am so very proud of him! Enoggera barracks put on a fantastic family afternoon, got to hear some of the stories of what they endured. So proud of our Aussie troops. Welcome home guys & girls... 22 November 2010 at 10:59

**Kylie Ahin:** What a fantastic turnout there was for the parade ... weather was kind to those marching and watching ... welcome home to you all ... we are all so proud of you ... rest in peace those who made the ultimate sacrifice - you will be remembered always. 22 November 2010 at 11:06

**Michelle Byatt:** It was fantastic to be there, flew up from Vic & very emotional! 22 November 2010 at 16:46

**Ruta Woolley:** Travelled from NSW to welcome our boys home & honour our fallen soldiers. A very emotional weekend for us all but wouldn't have missed it for the world. Met & thanked many of the people who supported us during our son's deployment. Very proud to be part of the Army Family. 22 November 2010 at 18:03

**Maggie Loveland:** My son was part of that parade. He didn't serve OS but is certainly part of that wonderful family of 7th Brigade. 30 November 2010 at 11:55

# WE'LL BE LIKE THE DYNAMIC DUO OF FIREARM MAINTENANCE AND UTILITY CAN-DO

YOU DROP ME IN YOUR CUSTOMER'S HAND AND **KAPOW!** WITH MY TACTICAL, "WOW THIS THING'S GOT A BOLT OVERRIDE TOOL AND CARBON SCRAPER!" THEN **SHAZAM!** YOU SHOW THEM THE PRACTICAL, "AND IT HAS ALL THE BEEFY LEATHERMAN UTILITY STUFF BUILT IN TOO." TOGETHER WE'LL SOLVE ALL THEIR PROBLEMS, EVEN ONES THEY HAVEN'T HAD YET. I'LL BE YOUR HEROIC SIDEKICK. BUT HEY, WHADDA YOU SAY WE LEAVE THE TIGHTS AT HOME?

### FEATURES INCLUDE:

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- BOLT OVERRIDE TOOL
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