

A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 8537379
Name: Melinda Lee BALDISSERA
Nickname: Milzy



Medals and Decorations

Australian Active Service Medal (ICAT Clasp)
Afghanistan Medal
Australian Defence Medal
NATO Medal (ISAF Clasp)

Rank: Corporal
Service: Army
Enlisted: 21 Jan 2008
Discharged: xx xxx xxxx

Melinda was born on 4 Aug 1989 at Tumby Bay to Anthony Baldissera and Judith Helen Baldissera (nee Zwar). There are 4 children in the family, 2 boys and 2 girls, of which she is the second youngest. Her father is a farmer at Ungarra, on the farm named “*Garra*”, which is the local aboriginal word for “clay flats”.

Melinda went to school at Ungarra for her junior schooling (Years R to 7) then to St Josephs School at Port Lincoln for Years 8 – 10, before completing her schooling at Loreto College, Adelaide (Years 11 and 12). On completion of schooling she joined the Army, originally as part of the “Gap Year” scheme, before enlisting for a 6 year period. She was actually very lucky to be able to do this as just before joining the Army she had an unfortunate accident when a high voltage power line fell across a ride-on mower she was operating at home on the farm. She received a severe electric shock and is lucky to be alive!

Her 12 week basic training was undertaken at 1 Recruit Training Battalion (1RTB), Kapooka (near Wagga Wagga, NSW), at the completion of which she received the “most outstanding recruit” award of the intake. She was then allocated to Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps (RAAOC) and sent to Bandiana (near Albury/Wodonga) for her Corps training where she again excelled, this time being awarded the “student of merit” for the 12 week course. In mid 2008 she was posted to 9th Force Support Battalion at Amberley (Qld) for 6 months; at the completion of this posting she was reposted to 7th Combat Service Support Battalion at Enoggera (Qld) where she remained for 12 months.

In Mar 2010 she deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, remaining until the end of 2010; in this posting she was responsible for ammunition resupply to ground troops and rotary wing aircraft (helicopters) as well as some Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). At

the completion of this tour of duty in Dec 2010 she was promoted to Lance Corporal and returned to Australia, to take up a position at Enoggera (Qld), where she remained for 12 months. At the end of this posting she was promoted to Corporal and posted to a newly raised unit, a Close Health Company (CHC), also based at Enoggera. The CHC was part of a Close Health Battalion of 3 companies. In this position she again excelled and achieved the RAAOC junior Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) award of the year for 2012.

Near the completion of this posting Melinda decided to apply for leave without pay and do some world travelling before returning to her parent's farm to decide on her future. In her own words "I have enjoyed my time in the Army. I am really pleased in the direction the Military has taken me and do not regret any part of it." Whatever she decides for the future she wishes to retain close ties with the Army and at the least will transfer to the local Army Reserve unit.

Melinda is currently working on the family farm. I was very lucky to be able to talk with her during the "reaping" period. If it was not for the colder and damper weather, earlier in the week, this would not have happened. Melinda has also decided to check out the South Australian Ambulance Service and has already been to a training session at the Tumby Bay Station – here's hoping for another recruit to this vital organisation.

The Sub Branch and I wish this very capable young woman all the best for the future and hope that she does retain her ties with the Military, and of course become a member of the RSL!



Kandahar Base,
Afghanistan