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TEAM SPIRIT: Gunner Daniel Brown and Gunner Adam Reid from 16 AD Regiment, at the Oakbank Racecourse, join Shelley Long, 4, and Bradley Jefferies, 7, who have been helped by the Little Heroes Foundation.
 Picture: TAIT SCHMAAL

TOM DOUGHERTY

THE spirit of the Anzacs and family fun will help attract more than just regular racing fans to this year's Oakbank Easter Racing Carnival.

With near-perfect weather predicted and a rare alignment this year of Easter with Anzac Day, Oakbank could host the largest gathering for an Anzac service in Australia on Monday.

The *Last Post* will be played to honour the Anzacs before the first race, in front of a crowd that could exceed 50,000.

Gunners Daniel Brown and Adam Reid, from the 16th Air Defence Regiment, Woodside, were helped by Shelley Long, 4, and Bradley Jefferies, 7, from the Little Heroes Foundation, an organisation that helps children with cancer and other serious illnesses.

Shelley celebrated her fourth birthday on April 2 at the Little Heroes Family Picnic Race Day and loved it.

"She had an absolute ball at her birthday," said Shelley's mother, Barbara Long.

"She's a little bit scared of the horses, but she really enjoyed seeing them race."

Shelley has Hirschsprung's Disease, a rare bowel condition, and will not be able to attend the Anzac Day races because of her susceptibility to infection.

However, Mrs Long said that thanks to Little Heroes she was hoping to take Shelley to tomorrow's races, when there will be fewer people.

"Any opportunity to get her out is great," she said.

Tickets for Oakbank can be pre-purchased online with part of the proceeds going towards the foundation.