



KOKODATRACK

APRIL 2019

MEMORIAL WALKWAY NEWS

BLACK HAWK SURVIVOR TO ADDRESS ANZAC DAY SERVICE

When a NATO Black Hawk helicopter crashed near Kandahar in Afghanistan in the early hours of 21 June 2010, three Australian commandos and one American soldier were killed. Signalman Gary Wilson was one of the survivors but his injuries were critical.

"I suffered multiple fractures," he recalls.

"My left foot was crushed completely, and my left knee, pelvis, ribs, forearm, nose and jaw were all broken. I had third degree burns and severe brain injuries that will affect me for the rest of my life."

Gary was discharged from the Army last July after almost 20 years. He started his career with the Third Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, and deployed to Timor Leste in 2000 and 2002. He later became an Electronic Warfare Operator and then was posted to 2nd Commando Regiment. The Black Hawk crash occurred just 10 days before his tour of duty was due to end.



GARY WILSON

"When I finally came completely out of a coma in September 2010, it's probably fortunate I had no memory of the previous few months. I'd been on my last mission after almost six months on the front line in Afghanistan."

Gary's journey of recovery is a story of resilience, determination, love and support, and has inspired him to embark on a post-Army career as a personal trainer and mentor for other veterans. Gary is married to Renee and they have two children.

Gary is a Service Ambassador for Soldier On and has represented Australia twice at the US Marine Corps trials and twice at the Invictus Games in Canada and USA.

The Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway is proud to announce that Gary Wilson will be the guest speaker at the annual ANZAC Day service.

Join us and hear Gary's story:
Wednesday 24 April 2019,
commencing at 10.30 am

DVA CONTINUES WALKWAY FUNDING

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has pledged to maintain financial support for the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway for another three years, reversing an earlier decision that funding would not be provided beyond 2019.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Darren Chester MP, has advised that interim funding would be provided by

his department to support the KTMW activities.

"Having visited the KTMW, I acknowledge it is an impressive and fitting memorial to those Australians who served their country in the South West Pacific during the Second World War," he wrote.

"I also recognise that the (Concord) hospital requires

additional time to put in place ongoing funding arrangements for maintenance of the KTMW."

In welcoming the Minister's announcement, the KTMW chairperson, Jennifer Collins, said the Board is very committed to ensure that greater community and corporate support be enlisted if the Walkway and its commemorative services are to be maintained beyond 2022.

REJUVENATING ROSE GARDEN

A small team of volunteers, led by horticulturist Edwina Rowe, spent a day in early March working hard to rejuvenate the Memorial Rose Garden, at the Concord Hospital end of the walkway. WWII veteran and Memorial Walkway guide Reg Chard was among the gardeners.



good soaking. The dry conditions have contributed to about 30 rose bushes dying and they will have to be replaced.

Each new rose bush will cost about \$35 and cash donations to cover this expense will be very welcome.

The Rose Garden features more than 400 plaques commemorating individuals who served and who gave their lives in the campaign. Other plaques are dedicated to groups of individuals, military units and veterans' groups. An alphabetical list of those named on the plaques is available on the website: http://rosegarden.kokodawalkway.com.au/cgi-bin/rosegarden_list.cgi



"We've dug 60 bags of cow manure in here today," said Edwina, "and we're short, probably needing another 30." The garden beds were turned over, manure, compost and soil wetting material was dug in, and a layer of sugar cane mulch was added after the roses were given a

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR DONORS

Bondi Junction Waverley RSL sub-Branch
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2/1 Pioneer Battalion Association
Forestville RSL sub-Branch
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Marrickville RSL sub-Branch
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STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOCUSSED ON THE FUTURE

After 23 years of commemorating and educating the wider community about Australia's achievements in the New Guinea campaign during WWII, the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway should be recognised officially as a National Memorial, says KTMW Board chairperson Jennifer Collins.

"At our March board meeting we looked back at how the Walkway was created and how it has become firmly established as a significant memorial, not only in New South Wales, but nationally," said Ms Collins.

"We also looked ahead at how the Walkway can grow, in visitor numbers, in educational resources, in commemorations and also in providing information

through the range of social media sites. To achieve our goals, and to ensure that the Walkway is maintained for future generations, we believe it is essential that governments at both Commonwealth and State levels recognise it as a National Memorial and provide appropriate support."

The board also accepted a mission for the next three years to commemorate and educate the community, with an emphasis on school children, about WWII and about the South West Pacific campaign in particular.

The Walkway was established with the strong support of the RSL, and is grateful for the financial assistance provided by numerous RSL sub-Branches.

FOR YOUR DIARY in 2019:

ANZAC Service

Wednesday 24 April, 10.30 am

VP Day Service

Thursday 15 August, 2.00 pm

Kokoda Day Flag Raising

Sunday 3 November, 10.30 am

Ms Collins said the link with the RSL would always remain, but we need to also focus on the next generation of veterans. The Board is keen to foster relationships with them and to ensure their enthusiastic involvement in commemorative events.

Strengthening this relationship will be critical as the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway moves to support the National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare at Concord Hospital. It will be Australia's first comprehensive care centre and will build on the hospital's long and proud history of providing specialist services to veterans and their families.



POLICE COMMISSIONER TO WALK KOKODA TRACK

NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller was a special visitor to the Memorial Walkway on 21 March, as he prepared to walk the Kokoda Track with a group of 40 legatees and members of Police Legacy. Mr Fuller told the group he was looking forward in particular to attending a

Dawn Service in New Guinea on ANZAC Day.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather, chairman of Police Legacy, said this would be the 14th year the organisation had sent legatees to the Kokoda Track, believing it is a wonderful way to prepare young legatees

for the future, while reminding older members of the challenges they had faced and overcome.

KTMW chairperson Jennifer Collins welcomed the group to the Memorial Walkway before Commissioner Fuller and Superintendent Merryweather laid wreaths at the centrepiece.



5 SENSES GARDEN ENHANCES WALKWAY

On 15 February the 5 Senses Garden was opened, providing a wonderful interactive community facility adjoining the Ralph Honner Education Centre at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway.

The garden is designed to bring the community together: the young, the elderly, and people from all walks of life, cultures and all abilities.

Roman Deguchi, the project co-ordinator, has created a space which will be a wonderful play and discovery area for children, but which will also allow older people to learn, feel less isolated and relax.

"It's an extension of the health service," he says, "an inter-generational garden where we can provide programs to encourage well-being."

The 5 Senses Garden will provide programs and workshops, tailored activities for residential care facilities, schools, hospital programs and other non-for profit organisations, a space for gardening band cooking classes, and opportunities for health professionals to use the garden with their clients for recovery and rehabilitation purposes.

The Garden has a generous space for growing vegetables and fruit, with raised garden beds, including wheelchair accessible raised beds. The sensory garden engages all the senses; sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound; a nature play garden, a playground with water and sand play and communal outdoor kitchen and workshop area.

The 5 Senses Garden enhances the KTMW - a terrific project from Canada Bay Council and Inner West Neighbour Aid, supported by Concord Hospital.

DONATION TO KOKODA TRACK MEMORIAL WALKWAY

TITLE	FIRST NAME	INITIAL	LAST NAME	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
COMPANY		POSITION IF APPLICABLE		
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ADDRESS		STATE	POSTCODE	COUNTRY
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PHONE	EMAIL			
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DONATION AMOUNT				
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All donations are tax deductible.				
PAYMENT DETAILS				
Please attach a cheque made out to "Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway" or complete the credit card details below. The form and cheque should be mailed to: Alice Kang, Co-ordinator Veterans Services, Concord Hospital, Hospital Road, CONCORD NSW 2139				
NAME ON CARD:				
<input type="text"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard
CARD NUMBER:			CARD NUMBER EXPIRY (MM/YY)	
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CARDHOLDER'S SIGNATURE:				
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Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway is grateful for your donation and undertakes NOT to disclose your contact details to any other organisation.

