



KOKODATRACK

DECEMBER 2018

MEMORIAL WALKWAY NEWS

JENNIFER COLLINS ELECTED AS CHAIR

Jennifer Collins, the former Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, has been elected to chair the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway Board, succeeding John Haines.



AT THE DECEMBER BOARD MEETING, L TO R: PETER WOODS, ROBERT RIDGE, JOHN WRIGHT, JOHN MURRAY, JENNIFER COLLINS, BILL PATERSON, JOHN HAINES, CAROLE-ANNE PRIEST, ALICE KANG, PHIL MACNAMARA (ABSENT ANGELO TSIREKAS)

At the annual general meeting in December Mr Haines announced that he was retiring after serving on the board for 18 years, and having succeeded the late Rusty Priest as chairman in 2012. Directors were unanimous in praising Mr Haines for his leadership and for the many years of voluntary service he had given to the memorial walkway.

"A lot of the visitors here thought I was one of the workers," Mr Haines recalled.

"I'd come down here quite often in shorts and a T-shirt just to pick up rubbish and they'd thank me for keeping the place clean."

Ms Collins brings to her role a lifetime connection with Concord Hospital and invaluable experience as a highly respected

senior administrator in the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

"The biggest challenge we face is keeping and growing our financial support and I will be working very hard to maintain that," she said.

"As always we are extremely grateful for the donations we receive from individuals, corporate supporters and RSL sub-Branches."

John Wright also resigned after many years' service on the board. Five

Dock RSL sub-Branch president Robert Ridge was elected to replace him.





NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF OUR PAST

The message on Kokoda Day

KTMW BOARD MEMBERS AND GUESTS ON KOKODA DAY

Hundreds of veterans, family members and supporters of the Memorial Walkway attended the Kokoda Day Flag Raising ceremony on Saturday 3 November, to hear an inspiring address from Brigadier Susan Coyle CSC DSM, Commander of the Army's 6th Combat Support Brigade.



Brigadier Coyle noted that her late mother had trained as a nurse at Concord Repatriation Hospital in the 1950s and had shared many memories she had of the veterans she cared for.

"This amazing Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway is a living memorial," she said, "ensuring that we never lose sight of our past, never forget, and enables a place that allows people to come here to honour all Australians who fought in WWII. In particular today, it is important that we pause and remember the sacrifices made by those who fought for the freedoms that we can take for granted today.

The sacrifices that they made during key battles in New Guinea along the Kokoda Track are etched forever in the fabric of our nation's history, and indelibly in the hearts of all Australians."

Brigadier Coyle recalled a time earlier in her career, as an Aide-de-Camp at Sydney's Victoria Barracks in 1999, when veterans from the Sanananda campaign had been assembled.

"Several of them were going back to now Papua New Guinea to re-trace their steps – proudly knowing that their efforts contributed to ensuring that the Japanese war machine never reached Port Moresby, and ultimately Australia. I knew then on that day, listening to those veterans that I wanted to remain serving in the Australian Army for as long as I could.



"I had never felt so much pride or honour to be wearing the same uniform, to wear this distinctive Australian slouch hat. Even today, if I needed any reminder of why I

am still serving 30 years later, I just need to look around here. To see the pride in you and your families' faces, to look into the eyes of those that have served, to see the pain of the loss of mates, and be reminded of why such memorials such as the Kokoda Memorial Walkway must remain, and why these dedications will always continue."



Younger Australians were well represented during the service, with tributes to the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels read by Abbey Krzanic from Rosebank College and Adam Muratore from St Patrick's College.

Cr Angelo Tsirekas, Mayor of the City of Canada Bay, and Kokoda Track veteran Reg Chard displayed a memorandum of understanding between the local council and Sohe electorate in the Northern Province of PNG, pledging an affiliation to promote goodwill and to develop education, health, sporting and cultural exchanges between the two regions.

1. (L to R) PNG Consul Leo Oaeko, Jean-Louis Worobec representing French war veterans, and Senior Master Sergeant Jacklyn Mackinley USAF
2. Mayor of Canada Bay, Cr Angelo Tsirekas, and WWII veteran Reg Chard display the document pledging an affiliation with Sohe electorate in PNG
3. Students from St Patrick's College, Strathfield, were among those taking part



MILITARY HISTORY COMES ALIVE FOR STUDENTS

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



During September we gave a special welcome to our largest school group yet, 200 students and teachers from MacKillop College, Port Macquarie. The Year 9 pupils were returning from a study trip to Canberra, which had included a day at the Australian War Memorial. Their visit to the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway gave them the opportunity to hear first-hand accounts from our veteran guides, including some who had fought on the Kokoda Track during WWII.

Gathering in sections along the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway, the students were given a sense of the conditions that prevailed in New Guinea in 1942 and at each of the audio visual stations, learned about the significant battles and individual actions. Beside the Parramatta River they inspected the memorial to the Commonwealth ship building yard, which produced many small cargo vessels during the war years.

This was the tenth year that MacKillop College has brought students to the Memorial Walkway, and teachers remark that there's nothing like this anywhere that compares in bringing our military history to life, in a manner which Year 9 students can understand so easily. Each year more than 4000 school pupils visit the walkway and many times that number use the resources of the KTMW website.

THANK YOU!

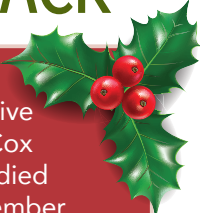
The KTMW Board is very grateful for donations received recently from the following:

Castle Hill RSL sub-Branch
Chester Hill Carramar RSL sub-Branch
Bondi Junction Waverley RSL sub-Branch
Bronte RSL sub-Branch
Rockdale RSL sub-Branch
Forestville RSL sub-Branch

Redfern RSL sub-Branch
2nd Pioneer Battalion
Enfield Croydon Park RSL sub-Branch
Chatswood RSL sub-Branch
St Marys RSL sub-Branch
Wyong RSL sub-Branch

CHRISTMAS DAY 1942 ON THE KOKODA TRACK

"We were lost in our own thoughts. It was a dreadful day. The Japanese were still fighting and we were losing men killed on that day. My friend and I heard a noise behind us and we turned round to see a Padre coming through the mud on his hands and knees, and he dropped into the slit trench beside us. He said "I'm Padre Cox of the 49th Battalion." He had a satchel with him and he pulled out a bottle of communion wine, and said "I don't think the Good Lord would mind too much if we all had a swig of this on this day." So we did. After he wished us well he went on his way. A few hours later word came through that Padre Cox had been badly wounded helping a wounded soldier, and an hour or two later he died. It gave us all a bit more faith in human nature to think that someone would do that for us and eventually lose his life doing that sort of thing." Keith Irwin, NX14248 Private, 2/2nd Battalion



The Rev. Clive Mortimer Cox VX108117 died on 28 December 1942, aged 39, and is buried in the Bomana War Cemetery, Port Moresby.





HUGE STORM HITS WALKWAY

The high winds and deluge that created havoc across Sydney in late November brought down a large tree at the walkway, causing extensive damage.

The footbridge leading to the memorial centrepiece fell victim to the stricken tree and will need significant repairs. The Canada Bay Council moved quickly to remove the trunk and branches but visitors to the walkway have had to be diverted around the damaged section.

DONATION TO KOKODA TRACK MEMORIAL WALKWAY

TITLE	FIRST NAME	INITIAL	LAST NAME		
COMPANY		POSITION IF APPLICABLE			
ADDRESS		STATE	POSTCODE	COUNTRY	
PHONE	EMAIL				
DONATION AMOUNT					
\$,	.			
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="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard
CARD NUMBER:				CARD NUMBER EXPIRY (MM/YY)	
CARDHOLDER'S SIGNATURE:					

Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway is grateful for your donation and undertakes NOT to disclose your contact details to any other organisation.