

## ONE OF THE LARGEST SCHOOL VISITS



200 students in four buses from MacKillop College at Port Macquarie formed one of the largest school visits when they made their annual excursion in September.



## VIRTUAL REALITY WILL BRING THE TRACK TO LIFE

An innovative project is about to be launched by the KTMW board to bring Kokoda veterans' memories to life using virtual reality. Based on a successful project in Scotland, this technology will allow visitors to the walkway, and in particular school students, to hear and explore the veterans' WWII memories while viewing particular locations and experiences on the Kokoda Track itself.

The Scottish project has been hailed as a ground-breaking exercise, bringing together academic expertise from several disciplines, including videogames, history, education and technology. Similar expertise will be employed at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway,



A WWII VETERAN TAKING PART IN THE SCOTTISH VIRTUAL REALITY PROJECT

preserving individual stories and allowing veterans to share them with students in a relevant environment.

For a younger generation well versed in the intricacies of video games, this will be an appealing virtual reality experience with great educational potential.



# KOKODATRACK

OCTOBER 2019

MEMORIAL WALKWAY NEWS

## VP DAY 2019

The VP Day commemorative service at the Memorial Walkway on 15 August was attended by about 300 people, who were urged to reach out to veterans, support them, and let them know they are not alone.

The guest speaker was Adrian Talbot, a veteran of service in Afghanistan who had spent several years recovering from physical and mental injuries, and who is now working with the St Vincent's Hospital group as a Consultant to prevent violence. Mr Talbot has also been the administrator of the Homes for Heroes program which was established to find housing for veterans whose family relationships have broken down, often through drug or alcohol abuse.

Among those laying wreaths during the service was Professor Bob Lusby, chairman of the National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare, which had been opened only a week earlier at Concord Hospital.



ADRIAN TALBOT DELIVERS THE VP DAY ADDRESS



CR ANGELO TSIREKAS, CANADA BAY MAYOR (LEFT), JENNIFER COLLINS, KTMW CHAIR, AND HADYN WHITE, VETERANS' AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, WITH WREATHS AT THE CENTREPIECE



THE CATAFALQUE PARTY FROM 4/3 ROYAL NSW REGIMENT



PROFESSOR BOB LUSBY AND DR GENEVIEVE WALLACE, ACTING GENERAL MANAGER CONCORD HOSPITAL

### Extract from the VP DAY 2019 speech

*I spend my working life and some of my home life supporting veterans struggling with the difficulties they face in the transition back into civilian life. These struggles include drug and alcohol addiction, mental health injuries, homelessness, financial difficulties, relationship breakdown. On occasion these veterans don't make it. Since January 2001 more than 500 veterans have committed suicide.*

*Veterans are over-represented in the homeless population. Comprising 6 per cent of homeless Australians, they are more likely to be older and have a higher level of education; they are more likely to be sleeping rough alone, and almost half have some kind of brain injury. When I was going through my toughest and darkest days I would often get the feeling of being all alone in this world. It*

*feels good to know you are not alone. We are surrounded by people who care. That is why we are all here today, to pay homage and respect for those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. I hope that we all leave here today and give some consideration to how we can support veterans in our community. Reach out to them. There is more we can be doing and these things won't be solved by sitting in a board room.*

## 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:

CARD NUMBER:

CARDHOLDER'S SIGNATURE:

Visa  Mastercard

CARD NUMBER EXPIRY (MM/YY)

CVC (CARD VERIFICATION CODE)



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

## VISITORS FROM KEMPSEY

One of the larger school groups to visit the Walkway this year came from St Paul's College at West Kempsey. The 90 students were keen to learn about the Kokoda campaign, having already visited Cockatoo Island and the Fort Scratchley defence museum at Newcastle.

## HOLSWORTHY PUPILS CONTRIBUTE



REG CHARD WITH HOLSWORTHY PUPILS

When Tracey Carr, Defence School Mentor at Holsworthy High School, asked pupils who would like to spend a day helping to maintain the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway, she received more responses than she could fit into the school's 25-seater bus.

"We have a strong connection with Reg Chard, as one of the last remaining WWII veterans of the Kokoda Campaign, and I am very proud of our students who love to help Reg with the maintenance of the Memorial Track," says Mrs Carr.

Twice a year the Holsworthy HS students visit, and their tasks on 2 August included cleaning the stations and moving the rocks in the creek to clean out debris and make a channel for the water to flow freely.



CLEANING OUT DEBRIS

The volunteers included some of the 66 children enrolled at Holsworthy from Defence families posted to the area.



MS BROWN PULLING OUT REEDS

"Our careers teacher Ms Brown stood in the creek for two hours pulling out the reeds so that the water could flow properly," said Mrs Carr.

The KTMW is extremely grateful to the Holsworthy HS pupils and staff for their valuable contribution.



MAKING A CHANNEL TO HELP WATER FLOW

## KOKODA THEN AND NOW

Reg Chard, one of the Walkway's most dedicated volunteer guides and maintenance workers, will have the honour of delivering an address during the Kokoda Day commemorative service on Sunday 3 November.

Reg was a few months short of turning 19 when he enlisted in August 1942, later serving in New Guinea with the 55/53 Australian Infantry Battalion. Now one of the last surviving veterans of the Kokoda Track campaign, Reg will have celebrated his 96th birthday only three days before Kokoda Day.

He will be joined as a guest speaker by one of the pupils from Rosebank College at Five Dock who walked the Kokoda Track recently as recipients of the Rusty Priest Scholarship.



The service will commence at 10.30 am on Sunday 3 November, 77 years after our troops raised the Australian flag over Kokoda village to symbolise the beginning of the end of the war in the Pacific.

FOR YOUR DIARY  
in 2019:

Kokoda Day Service  
Sunday 3 November  
10.30 am

## KPMG CLEAN UP



The major accounting firm KPMG declared 25 September a national clean-up day and the Memorial Walkway was one of many beneficiaries. Ben Clutterham, from the Rhodes KPMG branch, organised about 50 of his co-workers to spend a couple of hours picking up litter from the walkway and the surrounding area. It was also a great opportunity for the volunteers to discover a terrific community asset just across the road from their office.

## ENJOYING AN OUTING



A group of about 40 seniors from the Eastwood district visited recently, exploring the walkway and making good use of the undercover barbecue facilities. The Macquarie branch of National Seniors organises regular activities and monthly meetings, and found the walkway an ideal destination. Pictured manning the bbq are, from left, Brian O'Neill, John Harris and Phil McLeod.



REG CHARD WITH KEMPSEY PUPILS

This was the fourth year that St Paul's College had brought Year 9 students to Brays Bay, where they were addressed and then led along the Walkway by guides Karen Camage, Graham Ware and Reg Chard.



PAYING RESPECTS