



CATCHING THIEVES AND RABBITS



Burwood police hope to identify two men who were captured on our security cameras, stealing plants from the Bruce Kingsbury VC memorial garden in front of the Ralph Honner Education centre.

The theft occurred around 6.00 pm on Monday 2 January, just two months after the garden was unveiled. About 20 plants, some of them ground covers, were stolen in broad daylight. Police have asked anyone who may have seen the theft, or anyone who has any knowledge of what happened, to contact them.

The Board has described the theft as very disappointing, condemning the culprits as showing a complete lack of respect for the memorial and those Australians who are commemorated here.

A few weeks later two domesticated rabbits were abandoned near the Education Centre. Canada Bay Council rangers assisted in capturing the pair and homes were found for them. Pictured are Alice Kang and a council ranger, with one of the rabbits.

MORE INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE

Recent upgrades to our website (www.kokodawalkway.com.au) have allowed us to expand our sections for news and events, and add much more information about the memorial stations along the Walkway.

We are also adding QR codes to each station, so visitors can use their mobile phones to access the story behind each of the battles or locations, linking visitors instantly with the descriptions on the website.

In the past two months we have also added the names of each Australian life lost in the battles for Buna, the Sanananda Track and Sanananda village. Each is listed alphabetically, with enlistment number, date of death, rank and the unit to which he was attached. Links to these lists can be found on the website, under the Buna and Sanananda sections.



www.kokodawalkway.com.au

We plan to expand this to cover all of the battles, including each engagement along the Kokoda Track, providing family members from anywhere in Australia, or indeed anywhere in the world, to find information on each and every Australian soldier whose death was recorded in the New Guinea campaign.

In November last year we unveiled the Kokoda Track digital honour roll, listing 621 Australians killed in the campaign on the Track itself. This list can be viewed, projected onto the front of the Ralph Honner Education Centre during office opening hours.

SCAN HERE TO VISIT OUR SITE



"INSPIRING AND COURAGEOUS"

LT COL GARTH CALLENDER TO SPEAK AT ANZAC SERVICE

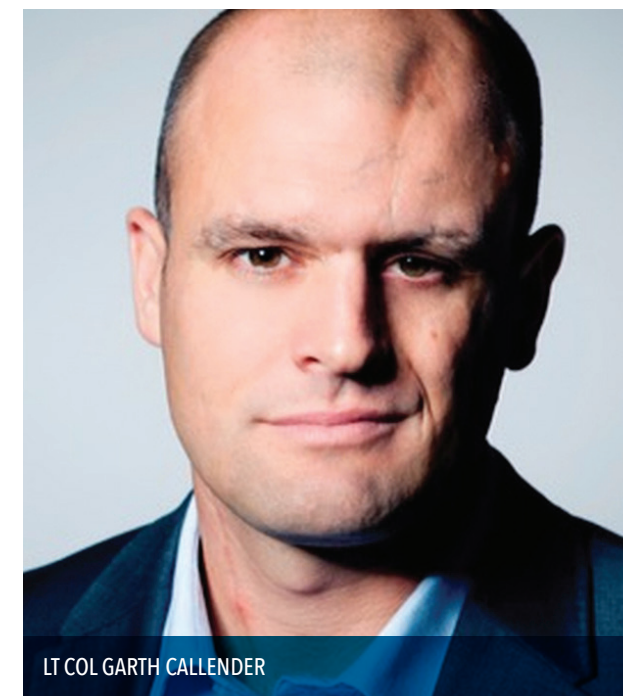
Lieutenant Colonel Garth Callender is a former Australian Army officer who has lived through some truly unique experiences while commanding soldiers during multiple operational deployments to war zones.

He is also the chair of the Bravery Trust and, as an active member of the Army Reserve, is the current commander of the University of NSW Regiment. Having written a book on his experiences and embarked on a career as a motivational and leadership speaker, Garth has agreed to deliver the keynote address at our Anzac Service, to commence at 10.30 am on Saturday 22 April.

Garth joined the Army in 1996 as a Rifleman in the 6th Battalion RAR, before graduating from Duntroon in 2001 with the Royal Australian Armoured Corps. His operational experience includes two deployments as part of the Australian Security Detachment – Baghdad, the first as a Cavalry Troop Leader in 2004.

Garth became Australia's first serious casualty in the war when his patrol was targeted in a roadside bomb attack. After recovering from his injuries, he returned to Iraq in 2006 as second-in-command of the Army's security detachment in Baghdad. His combat team suffered the death one of their own, Private Jake Kovco.

It was at this time that then Defence Minister Dr Brendan Nelson met Garth in Baghdad, describing him recently as "an inspiring and courageous man." From June 2009 to February 2010, Garth commanded the Weapons Intelligence Team in Uruzgan province, Afghanistan. His team was the first to develop technical intelligence products to focus coalition planning and operations, helping to define Australian policy.



LT COL GARTH CALLENDER

In 2016 Garth was chosen by the NSW Government to spearhead a veterans' employment program. He also chairs the Bravery Trust which was established 11 years ago to provide urgent financial assistance to current and former Defence personnel and their families.

We look forward to hearing Garth Callender at our Anzac Service: 10.30 am, Saturday 22 April. All welcome.



80 YEARS SINCE BATTLE AT SANANANDA



The KTMW broke new ground on Sunday 22 January by holding a wreath laying ceremony for a specific engagement to mark the 80th anniversary of the battle at Sanananda. It was on that day in 1943 that Australian and United States forces subdued the remaining Japanese troops on the northern coast of New Guinea.

Throughout December 1942 and January 1943 the Allied troops battled dreadful conditions to capture Buna, Gona, the swamps which made the approach to Sanananda almost impassable,



and then Sanananda itself. More than 650 Australians lost their lives in this period, tackling well camouflaged Japanese machine gun nests, eliminating snipers hidden in tree tops, and always fighting disease and illness.



More than 30 people attended the ceremony despite heavy rain, laying wreaths at the Memorial Centrepiece. Unit associations and families were well represented.

Two veterans took part: 100 year-old Colin Moir had fought at Sanananda as a corporal with the 36th Battalion, and 99 year-old Reg Chard OAM had been in the 55th/53rd Battalion in the battle to secure the Sanananda Track.

The strong response to the invitation to lay wreaths on this occasion has prompted the Board to consider holding more commemorative ceremonies to acknowledge the individual sacrifices made in other engagements during the Kokoda campaign. The views of unit associations will be welcomed.

WELCOMING VOLUNTEERS

On Friday 10 February we welcomed our team of volunteers for a working lunch and a day of discussing ways of improving the experience for visitors to the Walkway. The volunteers make a significant contribution to our activities, always on hand to guide school groups in particular through the Education Centre and along the pathway with its memorial stations.



New volunteers are needed to join our guides. If this is a role that appeals to you please contact us on 02 9166 0890 during the KTMW office hours, 10.00 am - 2.00 pm, Monday to Friday.



ERNIE WALKER FUNERAL CORTEGE



ERNIE WALKER

ERNIE CHESTER WALKER (OAM)

22 April 1916 – 22 November 2022

NX20046 - Rat of Tobruk, Kokoda veteran

We were saddened to hear of Ernie Walker's death at the age of 106, just months after he had attended the Anzac Service at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway. Ernie was the last remaining Rat of Tobruk in NSW and also saw service in the New Guinea campaign.

He enlisted in June 1940, aged 24, and was discharged in May 1944 with the rank of Sapper, his last post being with the 2/8 Field Company. A guard of honour lined the entrance to Holy Trinity

Anglican Church at Bundanoon when more than 100 people attended Ernie's funeral on 1 December. He had spent the past few decades living with his wife Bev in the nearby village of Penrose, following his love of horses despite a riding accident in which he lost an eye.

Ernie was described during the funeral as "a man's man, a hard worker, a gentleman and a good bloke," remembered for his love of his family and his service to the nation.

CONGRATULATIONS JENNIFER COLLINS AM

We were thrilled to hear on Australia Day that Jennifer Collins, chair of the KTMW Board, had been made a Member (AM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia.

Jennifer's service to veterans and their families, and to nursing, has been outstanding over many years, and she has served the Walkway well as a board member and now as chair.

Jennifer was Deputy Commissioner of DVA from 2004-17, acting Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission in 2009, former

National and State President of the Nurses' and Midwives' Association and held senior executive positions in the NSW Health Service during the 1990s.

As well as leading the KTMW Board Jennifer has also served the War Widows Guild of Australia as chair of the NSW Branch 2020-22 and now as a board director. Congratulations Jennifer on an honour well deserved and recognising your outstanding contributions to the community.

