



The Hon Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW STATUE A LASTING REMINDER OF KOKODA

Minister responsible for Veterans' Affairs Victor Dominello MP today attended a special service at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway in Concord to unveil a new statue commemorating Australian and New Guinea efforts in the Kokoda Campaign.

The new bronze statue is a depiction of the famous image of a wounded Australian digger being assisted by one of the New Guinea civilian local bearers, affectionately known as the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, who gave care and assistance to Australian servicemen and women.

"Today, we honour the heroism, courage and self-sacrifice of the Australian and New Guinea men and women who fought in the Kokoda Campaign, including the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, without whom victory would not have been possible," Minister Dominello said.

"As we approach the 70th anniversary of the War in the Pacific, this new statue will ensure the story of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels is retold, along with the achievements of all our servicemen and women, for future generations," Minister Dominello said.

Between July and November 1942, Australian and Japanese soldiers battled in efforts to prevent the Japanese from reaching Port Moresby and to push them back over the Stanley Range.

By 2 November 1942, the Australians had retaken Kokoda and an Australian flag was raised the following day as a mark that Australian forces had won out.

"Although almost seventy years have passed, the name Kokoda continues to echo in the annals of Australia's military narrative and is a pinnacle of the Anzac line of courage and fortitude that runs through our nation's history," Minister Dominello said.

"We must also remember the experience of the Papuans whose own land had been invaded, and for whom resistance was without thought to their own safety.

"I congratulate the Board of the Walkway in adding this fine sculpture to the precinct, a symbol of the interdependence and friendship between the Australian soldiers and the legendary Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.

"As we reflect on the sacrifices of war, our gratitude goes to all who have served, those who continue to serve, and their families," Minister Dominello said.

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