



The Hon Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 4 February 2012

NEW NATIONAL SERVICEMEN'S MEMORIAL AND A NEW JAPANESE GARDEN ENTITY FOR COWRA

A new National Servicemen's war memorial was dedicated by the Minister responsible for Veterans' Affairs Victor Dominello MP and Member for Burrinjuck, Katrina Hodgkinson MP in Squire Park, Cowra today.

The memorial project, undertaken by the Returned and Services League Cowra Sub Branch, was supported by the NSW Government with a \$3,500 Community War Memorials Grant.

Minister Dominello said the memorial commemorates all National Servicemen of the Cowra District who provided Australia with defence protection from 1951 to 1972, and is fittingly placed in Squire Park, a central town space that includes memorial plaques to the four Australian soldiers who lost their lives in the 1944 Cowra breakout.

"National Servicemen formed part of our nation's defence forces in the 1950s and 1960s, a period that saw Australia involved in conflicts in Malaya and Borneo, and in the war in Vietnam," Minister Dominello said.

The Cowra National Servicemen's Memorial is testimony to the bravery, mateship and courage of those who served. It is a fitting tribute which will ensure future generations do not forget the hardships faced by previous generations in defence of the freedoms we enjoy today."

Ms Hodgkinson welcomed the partnership between the NSW Government and the local community in the honouring of our precious legacy of military service.

"I am very pleased to welcome Mr Dominello to tour Cowra today. Monuments such as the Cowra National Servicemen's Memorial testify to the enormous strength and resilience of our defence personnel and their families who hail from every town and suburb throughout our nation," Ms Hodgkinson said.

Mr Dominello and Ms Hodgkinson also visited the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre, a national landmark in which the NSW Government has been closely involved since its inception.

Minister Dominello along with Mr Don Kibbler AM, founder and builder of the Garden, and Mayor of Cowra, Councillor Bill West, announced the recent establishment of a new organisation, the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre Inc., aimed at modernising the governance of the Garden and securing its future for many generations to come.



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The Cowra Japanese Garden has long been recognised as the pre-eminent garden of its type. The pristine Garden which is linked to the only Japanese War Cemetery outside Japan via Sakura Avenue, lined with more than 1,000 cherry trees, demonstrates the unique partnership between this town and the people of Japan.

“Cowra’s association with Japan, although beginning in difficult circumstances, now prospers and provides a focus for tourism,” said Mr Dominello.

The Ministers were also led on a tour of the Cowra Council’s Peace Precinct by Councillor West. The creation of Cowra Peace Precinct aims to further strengthen the protection of Cowra’s military heritage sites as well as to educate visitors and residents to their significance.

“The town and community of Cowra are grateful for the continued commitment of the NSW Government to the preservation of the district’s remarkable history of military sacrifice and the promotion of Cowra’s internationally recognised work for harmonious relations between nations,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

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