



NEWSLETTER FROM KOKODA HISTORICAL APRIL 2020

10 APR 2020

Four days from now our advance party was scheduled to depart for Port Moresby. Kokoda Historical with two trekking groups and two non-trekking groups were about to undertake unique pilgrimages to Kokoda and the Northern Beachheads. However, COVID-19 put an end to our plans. This unique situation has created a time for reflection, time to regroup as a business and to plan for when the pandemic ends.



The Kokoda Trek Operators Association (KTOA) have been holding regular meetings every Monday. Together we continue to monitor, discuss and devise ways of keeping on top of the latest developments in PNG. Including the communities, staff and suppliers that rely on tourism from our companies. The KTOA also are working closely with the Kokoda Track Authority (KTA). The Kokoda Track remains closed and PNG have extended their State of Emergency (SOE). However, in the downtime there are still areas of work which need to be undertaken.

To read the latest KTA Bulletin [click here](#)

Many KTOA members are already taking steps to offer financial relief to staff members in PNG. The pandemic has created a unique situation for us with our head guide Ben Jons stuck in Australia and unable to get home. As you may be aware from our previous blog,

Ben has a baby due in May. As you can imagine he is anxious to get home. We are currently working with the PNG High Commission and their Brisbane Consulate to work out a solution. We are hopeful next week that Ben and many other PNG Nationals stranded in Australia will be allowed to return home.



Lark Force Memorial 2020

We have already made a one-off lump sum of Kina to Ben and his brother Kila to help them get through the COVID-19 crisis. Next week we will be making payments to our Green Masin staff which will offer some help in these uncertain times. We will also be working with our partners in Sanananda to assist them through this crisis.

Many of the businesses in PNG that we deal with are holding the payments we have made to them for the April season in credit. We have offered the same for our clients, most of whom have postponed their trek or tour to Anzac Day 2021. This has helped our business to survive, assist our staff in PNG and ensure that we can continue to offer historic tours & tours into the future. I take this opportunity to thank all of those who have postponed. You have made a difference to a great number of people.

Likewise we have had to postpone our signature tour ANZAC to Amiens along with our Gallipoli and Western Front tours until next year. One of our unique bespoke accommodations that we stay at is Talbot House. Everyman's Club was founded in Poperinge in 1915 and fast become a place of refuge as thousands of soldiers passed through on their way to and from the Front. Kokoda Historical supports Talbot House in their efforts to stay afloat. We have made a donation to their cause and invite you to do the same by visiting <https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-talbot-house/donate>

We have also made donations to similar organisations in the UK and Europe.



Fred & Kila 2019

We would also like to take the opportunity to wish many happy returns to one of the original Mice of Moresby-Mr Fred Denny. Fred is 97 years young yesterday and a great stalwart of the 55/53 Battalion Association. Happy Birthday Fred!

As our historians are unable to take you on unique battlefield tours, we have turned our attention to ramping up the services we can offer at home. We have relaunched our research services which will allow people to get a detailed history report on their relatives (or person of interest) military service. This is a complimentary service for anyone booked

on any of our tours. If you are not booked on our tours, then a modest fee of \$50 is charged. This fee may be used as a credit should you wish to come on any of our tours in the future. To learn more, [click here](#)



I wish all our past, present & future clients along with our friends around the world, the very best for Easter. Please use this time to reflect, reach out to your family and friends. We may be physically isolated from one another, but it only takes a moment to pick up the phone, turn on the computer and make a call.

David Howell 10 April 2020

Save Talbot House



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

125780

Mail Call