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KOKODA HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022

Well the day has finally come! After nearly two years since COVID closed the borders between Australia and PNG, we are finally able to resume travel. As of 16 February 2022, PNG have reinstated tourist visas. The steps we will need to do in order to visit PNG are simple: you will need to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, have a negative PCR test within 72 hours of travelling and a negative RAT on arrival.

The cover photo this month is of Bomana War Cemetery on Anzac Day, the last time we were able to commemorate this important occasion in PNG was back in 2019. In 2022, it is even more important as we commemorate the 80th Anniversary of Kokoda.

Recently the Kokoda Trek Operators Association (KTOA) of which Kokoda Historical is a founding member held their first meeting for 2022. The news released through the KTOA is exciting as our President has met with both PNG and Australia DFAT representatives, all of whom are working hard to get tourism in PNG back on track. KTOA representatives will fly to Port Moresby and walk Kokoda in the next fortnight, we will be talking to the locals on the ground, ensuring we have COVID safe protocols in place and helping local stakeholders prepare for the return of tourists.

on Anzac Day treks and tours and will be holding a Zoom information session as we prepare to return to PNG.

Kokoda here we come!

David Howell February 2022



THE BLOODY BEACHHEADS ONE DAY CONFERENCE THE BATTLES OF GONA, BUNA AND SANANANDA

The Battle of the Beachheads was the bloodiest of all the Papuan campaigns. The resolve and tenacity of the Japanese defenders was, to Allied perceptions, unprecedented to the point of being “fanatical”, and had not previously been encountered. It was to mark the conduct of further battles throughout the remainder of the war. Securing victory at the Battle for the Beachheads cost Australia 1,261 dead and 2,210 wounded, and the Americans 734 dead and 2,037 wounded.

What was the Japanese plan? Who controlled the sea and the sky? How did the Allies mass forces onto the northern coast of Papua? Was the order to destroy the Japanese positions necessary? How well did the Australian and American forces cooperate in fighting the battle? Were Allied forces pushed beyond their capability? How much did tanks help to break the stalemate? What are the legacies of this little-known chapter of military history?

Please join a group of well-qualified speakers as we examine these and other questions in a one-day conference – The Bloody Beachheads: The Battles of Gona, Buna and Sanananda – on **Saturday 12 November 2022**.

To read the full conference program and for further details click [here](#)



This Month in History-Bombing of Darwin

On 19 February 1942, the Japanese mounted two air raids on Darwin and mainland Australia came under foreign attack for the first time since white settlement.

Admiral Chūichi Nagumo (1887 – 1944), the mastermind of the Pearl Harbor attack on 7 December 1941, planned the Darwin raids, which involved 54 land-based bombers and 188 aircraft launched from four aircraft carriers operating in the Timor Sea. The Japanese, who were preparing to invade Timor, correctly surmised that a disruptive air attack on the Darwin base would hinder any Allied counteroffensive.

The first attack began just before 10.00 am and lasted 40 minutes. Heavy bombers struck harbour installations and the town, while dive bombers, escorted by Zero fighters, attacked shipping in the harbour, the military and civil aerodromes and the hospital at Berrimah. The second raid began an hour later and involved high altitude bombing of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) base at Parap. This raid lasted about 20 minutes.

To read the full article click [here](#)



BOOKINGS NOW OPEN FOR ANZAC DAY 2022 AND BEYOND

You can choose to trek with us from Kokoda to Owers' Corner or if trekking is not for you, you can come on our non-trekking tour. Both trips will be attending the Official Anzac Day Dawn Service at Bomana War Cemetery.

So this Anzac Day, 2022 we are offering a choice of 2 special in-depth history options.

1. \$3,950 12 Day Fully Australian Led Tour, Anzac Dawn Service Bomana (15-26 April 2022) trekking Kokoda to Owers' Corner. Find out more by clicking [here](#)

2. \$3,850 9 Day Fully Australian Led Non-Trekking Tour, Anzac Day Service Bomana (18-26 April 2022) visiting Port Moresby, Owers' Corner, Kokoda, Buna, Gona and Sanananda . Find out more by clicking [here](#)

All of our 2022 and 2023 treks and yours are now available for booking. This includes all of our non-trekking and trekking options. Remember if you have made a booking with us previously you can use any credit you have on file with Kokoda Historical not just for Anzac Day but you can pick any of our 2022 or 2023 tours. Why not give us a call and start planning your journey to PNG. You can call us anytime on 0405 007 700

We look forward to welcoming you back soon.