

Memorial archway to symbolise war links



Sixteen in-bound volunteers from Brisbane are greeted by a Koiari dancer at the Jacksons International Airport on Saturday. Nationalpic by EKAR KEAPU.

By PHIL-PEERS YOMBON

PORT MORESBY: The Koiari Development Authority has embarked on the construction of a world-class memorial archway at the Owers Corner near Sogeri, Central province, to commemorate the historical Kokoda Trail Campaign of the Second World War.

The construction is being facilitated by the Kokoda Memorial Foundation, a non-profit organisation based in Sydney, Australia. The archway would be constructed from steel with bronze plaques and concrete footings and base plates.

Koiari Development Authority chairman Garry Imiri said the modern design features six steel uprights to symbolise the six States of Australia with linking beams to symbolise the carriers and people of PNG and the topography of the Owen Stanley Ranges which are the backdrop of the arch.

In addition to the archway, a monument and display case would also be erected, which would provide focus and photo background for all walkers and day trippers. The Kokoda Trail monument and surrounds at Sogeri will also be upgraded.

Work at both will include land clearing for carparks, helipads, picnic shelters and water supply all in preparation for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay which will start its route in PNG at Owers Corner in May next year.

A team of 16 volunteers from the KMF, led by director Eric Winn, arrived here from Brisbane on a RAAF Hercules aircraft on Saturday, together with 12 tonnes of materials to assist in the construction of the monument and general community works at Vesulogo village.

A further five tonnes of materials will be arriving late this week.