

NATION

Facelift for Kokoda Trail relics

PORT MORESBY: Australian ex-servicemen (RSL) and the Koiari Development Authority (KDA) are working to carry out facelift of war relics and memorials along the Kokoda Trail on the Central Province side.

They will also be providing assistance in village improvement projects like water supply.

Sixteen Australian ex-servicemen are here on a month-long stint.

They will give the Kokoda Trail War Memorial Monument at Sogeri a facelift and construct a memorial archway at the start of the trail at Owen's Corner near here.

The work on the monument began last week and would be completed this week.

Team leader Eric Winn said it is only upgrading work on the monument, where iron pickets will be fenced around the piece of land where the monument stands, replacing the present pipe fencing.

They will also rebuild the plaque's platform mostly of ready mixed concrete, and gravel the monument area replacing the grass lawn, paint the fence and do other minor clean-ups.

"An archway will also be constructed at Owen's Corner where the trail begins on the Central Province side with regular water supply installed and connected to a nearby stream on the mountain side," Mr Winn said.

"At present trekkers find it hard to get water to drink after a long climb

up the last Owen's corner mountain from Uberi or Goldie river, he said.

The ex-servicemen are here on an agreement made by the Australian Government and KDA in December 1997.

While at Sogeri, they will be reconstructing the Vesulogo village water supply, which is also along the trail.

The projects are constructed under the Kokoda Trail Development Program (KTDP), where funding is made available by business houses in Australia through Kokoda Foundation.

"It is great that Rouna Quarries, a subsidiary of Hebou Construction, is providing free ready mixed cement and gravel while KDA is providing food and transport," he said.