

# Lavington teenager tackles Kokoda trail thanks to Albury Legacy

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A LAVINGTON teenager will trek a famous wartime track to honour legacies both past and present.

Jayde Goldsworthy, 16, flies out on Sunday bound for Papua New Guinea and 96 kilometres of steep terrain and tropical rainforests along the Kokoda trail.

She will be part of Operation Legacy Australia Kokoda Challenge 2017, where Australian Defence Force members mentor Legacy youth in leadership development.

The trip coincides with Legacy Week and commemorates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kokoda campaign during World War II.

Two family military connections inspire Jayde – her great-great uncle fought and died at Kokoda and her late father Stephen was in the navy.



**LOOKING AHEAD:** Jayde Goldsworthy, 16, of Lavington, prepares to face the physical challenge of the Kokoda trail as part of a Legacy initiative. Picture: SIMON BAYLISS

His death three years ago brought Jayde, her mother Karene Bye, and two sisters Chelsea, 18, and Hollie, 11, in contact with Albury Legacy, the group that supports the dependants of deceased Defence personnel.

“We’re just lucky we’ve got Legacy as part of our family,” Ms Bye said. “Giving you opportunities that you would never have had in life.”

As well as Jayde’s adventure, last year Legacy sent older sister Chelsea to France to visit the battlefield of Pozieres.

The sisters also attend Legacy camps, where Jayde has met some of the other junior legatees who will join her on the Kokoda trail.

A recent training camp in Queensland helped the 26 members of the group work on their fitness and survival skills.

“We had to build a raft, ride our raft over to our bag of food and get our food for the night,” Jayde said. “It was fun; it was good to push us out of our comfort zone.”

Jayde has also done lots of hiking in preparation, which she enjoys.

“Some days,” she added with a smile.

Albury Legacy immediate past president Colin Darts, who has himself walked the Kokoda trail, said it’s hard for the junior legatees to picture the mud, uneven ground, tree roots and rocks of the challenge before them.

The trip, like many Legacy projects, aimed to make an impression on the young participants.

“Inspire them and teach them about the military side of history,” Mr Darts said.

Jayde said she felt excited but nervous as departure day approached.

For Ms Bye, the feeling is pride, both in her daughters and those who have served.