

Kokoda trekkers raise funds for MND research at Qld Brain Institute

A TEAM trekking the famous Kokoda Track to raise money for the Ross Maclean Fellowship has returned safely to Australian shores.

Eight days of climbing and descending the notoriously difficult PNG highland path, often walking ten hours a day or more, was a huge test of endurance and something every Australian should do, Index Group Executive Director Jeff Maclean said.

“It was probably the hardest thing I’ve ever done, both physically and mentally,” Jeff said.

Together with his son Hamish, brother Craig and brother-in-law Marcus Grealy, the team tackled some of the wildest jungle in Papua New Guinea to raise funds for the Ross Maclean Fellowship – a scientific research fund established in 2004 by Jeff’s late father to study Motor Neurone Disease at the Queensland Brain Institute.

Muddy conditions prove testing

Intense pre-trek training paid dividends for the team, as they all returned without incident or injury. While conditions on the Kokoda Track can vary from steamy tropical downpours to quite cool nights, Jeff’s team took it all in their stride – albeit a very muddy one.

“During the first few days it rained non-stop for 36 hours,” Jeff said.

“You’re in mud, stepping between rocks and tree roots practically the whole time.”

Jeff said the team was thrilled to be able to meet one of the original ‘fuzzy wuzzy angels’, the local villages who played such a vital role in rescuing injured Australian soldiers from the frontline during WW2.

Part of the trek also included hearing detailed accounts from diaries of Australians who fought along the Kokoda Track, and learning more about the diggers’ wartime experiences.

While the trekkers covered the cost of their trip, they continue to seek public support to help fund the Ross Maclean Fellowship at QBI.

For information about how to support the Ross Maclean Fellowship call (07) 3346 7543 or email qbi@uq.edu.au



www.qbi.uq.edu.au



TOP: Jeff and Hamish Maclean with Kokoda Track porters Morrice and Nelson.

CENTRE: Hamish, Marc Craig and Jeff Maclean meet one of the original ‘Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels’.

ABOVE: Hamish thanks Kokoda Track porter Morrice for his help on the trek.