

Geoff Brock MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Kyam Maher MLC
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Wednesday 21 September 2022

New funding to ensure First Nations veterans remembered

First Nations veterans who have been laying in unmarked graves, or graves that have fallen into disrepair, will be appropriately recognised and commemorated thanks to new funding announced for Aboriginal Veterans South Australia (AVSA) today.

The AVSA Grave Dedication Project began in 2016, with the return to country of the remains of World War One Ngarrindjeri veteran, Miller Mack, from a grave at West Terrace Cemetery to Raukkan Aboriginal Cemetery in the Coorong, south-east of Adelaide.

The South Australian Government, through Veterans SA, has today announced funding of \$72,000 to AVSA to support the continuation of the project, which to date has completed grave updates and dedications for seven veterans across the state.

Local grave dedication ceremonies include input from the veteran's family alongside members of the local Aboriginal community, fellow veterans, ex-service organisations and the wider local community.

AVSA also works with local schools to share the stories of local heroes with students, creating a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture, tradition, and service among younger generations.

Quotes attributable to Geoff Brock

First Nations people have made significant contributions to our service history, having enlisted and served in every war and peacekeeping mission Australia has been in since the Boer War.

There are many First Nations veterans across the country who have remained in unmarked graves, and I am pleased that the State Government can support the

important work of the Grave Dedication Project to ensure that their final resting place is culturally appropriate and suitably marked in recognition of their service.

Quotes attributable to Kyam Maher MLC

Having been at the reinterment of World War One Ngarrindjeri veteran, Private Miller Mack, back on Raukkan Country, I know firsthand how important this is for Aboriginal communities.

I'm delighted and moved by all efforts to recognise the often-unsung courage and comradeship of Aboriginal veterans.

This is part of the Australian story, and I commend AVSA and others for their ongoing work with and support for veterans' families and local communities.

Quotes attributable to Frank Lampard, Co-Chair, Aboriginal Veterans SA

Through the Grave Dedication Project, we are successfully raising awareness within local communities about the service and sacrifice of First Nations people.

We are currently researching dozens of veterans and thank the South Australian Government for their support that will ensure these local heroes will be given the respectful resting place they deserve.