

Media Release

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Stringybark Creek works commence to honour fallen officers

Work has commenced to enhance infrastructure and signage at the historic Stringybark Creek Reserve, near Mansfield, to better reflect the historical importance of the site.

Sergeant Michael Kennedy, and Constables Thomas Lonigan and Michael Scanlan, were killed at the reserve while searching for members of the Kelly Gang on October 26, 1878.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has been working with Victoria Police and other stakeholders to commemorate the lives of the fallen officers.

“This is an extremely important site from both a historical perspective and for the families of the policemen who were killed there,” DELWP Senior Community Partnerships Officer, Catherine Spencer, said.

“The project includes the construction of a new walking trail in the locality of where Sergeant Kennedy was killed and a fourth member of the police party, Constable McIntyre, escaped.”

“We are also upgrading interpretive signs, and erecting three individual memorials to the fallen police.”

This year marks the 140th anniversary of the deaths of the policemen who were shot while searching for Ned and Dan Kelly in the Toombullup State Forest after warrants were issued for their arrest in 1878.

The deaths of the three policemen marked an escalation in the search for the Kelly brothers and their associates Joe Byrne and Steve Hart. The four were declared outlaws and became known as the Kelly Gang.

Following an extensive 20-month manhunt across Victoria and New South Wales, Ned Kelly was captured during the final confrontation between the gang and police at Glenrowan on June 28, 1880.

Ned was later tried and hanged for the murder of Constable Lonigan, while his brother Dan, and associates Joe Byrne and Steve Hart perished in the siege.

The works, which have been approved by Heritage Victoria, and are being undertaken by Forest Fire Management Victoria staff, are expected to be completed this spring.