Author and broadcaster, Patrick Lindsay, and renowned cinematographer, Paul Croll, have started pre-production on a feature-length documentary, Kokoda … the spirit lives, for completion in early 2017 to commemorate next year’s 75th anniversary of the Kokoda campaign.

Lindsay also announced plans to raise the film’s production costs by crowdfunding on Creative Partnerships Australia’s The Australian Cultural Fund online funding platform.

“We’re particularly excited about putting the project up for crowdfunding. We feel it’s the perfect way for Australians to share in the project and to honour our Diggers by keeping the story alive,” Lindsay said.

He said the film would take viewers on a fascinating journey of discovery and provide a modern telling of the Kokoda story. It would examine Kokoda’s significance in the Pacific War and explore the enduring spirit which sustained the Kokoda Diggers and which still inspires Australians today.

“What is that spirit? Why does it still burn so brightly, three quarters of a century later?” Lindsay asked. “In telling the story, we’ll try to answer those questions. In doing so, we’ll walk in the footsteps of the Diggers and we’ll bring the story to life through the eyes of those who fought it - Australians, Papuan New Guineans and Japanese – drawing from more than 100 participant interviews I’ve conducted over the past 25 years and new interviews we’re working on now.

“We’re determined that our Kokoda Diggers will have their story portrayed with the respect and accuracy they deserve. Sadly, most of them have now left us. We must pass on their magnificent story to future generations.”
Lindsay said the film would interweave existing and new interviews with historic footage, purpose-shot scene-setters, drone vision and CGI illustrations of the Track and the iconic battlesites to explain the battles and to show how the Diggers, against all odds, withstood the previously unstoppable Japanese invasion force to preserve Australia’s freedom.

“Our Director of Photography, Paul Croll - one of Australia’s most experienced cinematographers - will bring unparalleled experience of the Track to the production. Paul has walked the Track 30 times, more than any other cameraman, and has shot documentaries, TV specials and many stories on the subject,” Lindsay said.

“We will explore the continuing relevance of the story by showing how our Diggers drew on what we now call ‘the Kokoda spirit’ as they fought for our freedom in 1942 and we’ll illustrate the remarkable continuing power of that spirit today.”

Lindsay also announced the project’s partnership with the RSL & Services Clubs Association on a major outreach campaign through special viewings of the completed documentary at RSL services clubs.

“We see our partnership with the RSL Services Clubs as the ideal way to bring the story to Australians at the grassroots level,” Lindsay said. “Clubs will hold special viewings to which veterans and their descendants will be invited to see the documentary and then explore the story further by telling their own individual and family tales, thus passing the story to future generations.”

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Project website at:
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Crowdfunding now at:

Background material:
THE FILM MAKERS

Writer/Director Patrick Lindsay will draw on his 25-year study of the Kokoda campaign and its participants to vividly present the story to the digital generation.

Lindsay has written three books on Kokoda and has produced, written and directed two previous network television documentaries on the campaign: Kokoda … The Bloody Track in 1992; and Kokoda … The Last Parade in 1998.

Director of Photography, Paul Croll, one of Australia’s finest cinematographers, will call on his hard-won experience of more than 30 crossings of the Kokoda Track to capture the drama of the campaign and the treacherous terrain that served as its backdrop.

Croll was DOP on Kokoda … The Last Parade and has filmed many network television features on the Track, including Specials for A Current Affair and the Seven Network.
Lindsay spent more than 25 years in network TV as a reporter, producer, writer and presenter, on the Nine and Seven networks and Sky News. Since 2002 he has been one of Australia’s leading non-fiction authors, having written 20 best-selling books.

Lindsay first visited PNG in 1983 to shoot a series of reports for Nine’s Today program. He briefly visited Kokoda and heard, for the first time in detail, of the remarkable story of the battle that saved Australia. He was captivated by the story and the country.

He returned to PNG in 1985 and 1987, shooting many stories for Nine’s Wide World of Sports. In 1990 and 1991 he was there again to shoot the acclaimed documentary, Kokoda ... The Bloody Track for the Australian Army. In 1992 he walked the Track for the first time. In 1998 he returned to shoot his second doco, Kokoda ... The Last Parade, the story of the Diggers’ return to the battlefields to say their final farewell to the mates they left behind.

In 2001, Patrick wrote The Spirit of Kokoda, published in 2002 by Hardie Grant. In 2003 he wrote The Essence of Kokoda and that year he was one of the founding directors of the Kokoda Track Foundation, an Australian aid organization which aims to help to improve the lives of the people of PNG. He has been KTF’s chairman since 2006.

In 2009 Lindsay wrote Kokoda Spirit, published by Hardie Grant, a richly illustrated telling of the Kokoda story, then and now. In 2011 he created the format for the acclaimed TV series In Their Footsteps (which featured an episode on Kokoda) and was broadcast by the Nine Network. In 2013 he wrote and created the Kokoda App, for Apple and Android, to bring the story to the digital generation.

In June 2015, Lindsay was named a Member of the Order of Australia for ‘significant service to the media as a television presenter and journalist, to international relations, and to literature as an author’.