**Sunday 25 March 2018**

 **That’s a wrap: Oxfam Trailwalker Melbourne**

A successful Oxfam Trailwalker Melbourne event wrapped up at 6.30am this morning, raising more than $2.3 million and counting for Oxfam’s work tackling global poverty.

About 2,000 participants took part over the weekend, taking in some of Victoria’s most beautiful bush lands in the Dandenong and Yarra Valley Ranges.

Oxfam Trailwalker is a fundraising endurance challenge, with teams of four walking 100km in less than 48 hours, or 50km in less than 24 hours.

The 50km event was launched in Melbourne for the first time this year, meaning each of the Trailwalker event locations – Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney and Perth – now all offer both a 100km trail option and a half-trail option.

The 100km trail started on Friday morning at Jells Park, Wheelers Hill, and the 50km trail kicked off on Saturday morning at Silvan Reservoir. Both events then followed the same trail, before finishing at Wesburn Park near Warburton.

The first team to complete the 100km event was ‘Melbourne Midday Milers’, which crossed the finish line in an impressive 12 hours and 13 minutes.

One team, ‘Network Kokoda Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels’, was flown from Papua New Guinea to complete the 100km event. The team members are the grandsons of the beloved Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels - PNG war carriers who took supplies to the frontline and helped wounded Aussie soldiers on the Kokoda Trail during WWII. The four men live along the Kokoda Trail and work as porters during the trekking season.

“They’ve been doing all their training on the Kokoda trail,” said Steven Vaughan, who has been chaperoning the men on their visit, along with organisations Network Kokoda and Adventure Kokoda.

“They were excited to come to Australia and I know they’re very proud to be representing their villages.”

The team crossed the finish line at about 3am on Saturday.

The oldest participant in this year’s event - at 80 years young - Maxim Wood from Mornington Peninsula, completed the 100km for the 11th time this year, accompanied by his son Miguel.

Oxfam spokesperson Anna Wemyss said the fundraising efforts of Melbourne teams this year had surpassed all expectations.

“Our highest fundraisers this year were the Woods Bagot team, which have raised more than $21,000,” Ms Wemyss said. “This will go such a long way in supporting the lifesaving work Oxfam does around the world to tackle poverty and iinequality.”

Oxfam Trailwalker has raised $100 million nation-wide since first launching in 1999.

**For interviews, photos, video footage or more information, please contact** **Megan Giles on 0433 028 567 or** megang@oxfam.org.au