

# Army Museum Waiouru Celebrates the Return of the Medals

**New Zealand's medals of gallantry and honour were returned to their spiritual home this month.**

The medals, including nine Victoria Crosses, two George Crosses and an Albert Medal, stolen on 2<sup>nd</sup> December last year were formally handed over by Police to the Army Museum Waiouru in a formal ceremony on 21<sup>st</sup> October.

The Museum's Director Colonel Ray Seymour said he and the museum's staff were delighted to welcome the medals back to the institution where they are once more displayed for the New Zealand public to view.

"The impact the theft had on my staff, the custodians of the nation's treasures and taonga was just unimaginable. So too, was the impact that this theft had on the entire nation."

The Museum, together with the support of the Army, hosted the special ceremony which begun with a powhiri at NZ Army National Marae before heading to the Museum for the formal handover by Police and return of the medals to display.

Visitors at the ceremony included a number of dignitaries such as the Minister of Defence the Honourable Phil Goff, Commissioner of Police Howard Broad, Detective Senior Sergeant Chris Bensemenn, Lance Corporal Willie Apiata, New Zealand's most recent Victoria Cross recipient, together with a large number of family members of the recipients of New Zealand's medal winners.

Colonel Seymour said he wanted to extend a 'big thank you' to all the people who supported the museum in the aftermath of the theft, including messages of support from throughout New Zealand.

"I am convinced that it was a combination of your support, the support of media agencies, the unselfish support of Lord Ashcroft and Mr Tom Sturgess, and the professionalism and passion of our Police that culminated in a truly amazing result."

"Your treasures and taonga have been safely returned to their place of honour in this memorial museum - thank you New Zealand."

**ENDS**

For more information about the medals, their recipients and the Museum please see [www.armymuseum.co.nz/media.html](http://www.armymuseum.co.nz/media.html) and/or contact Nicola Bennett, Marketing Manager on 06 387 6911 or 021 495 178.