

# YOUNG AMBASSADORS



## BATTLE OF SOMME & WESTERN FRONT SEPTEMBER 2016



*Students will have the opportunity to stand in the footsteps of history and see for themselves things that a textbook cannot come close to! This tour is a life changing experience in the making.*

## OUR ITINERARY

Meals indicated as: (B) = Breakfast (L) = Lunch (D) = Dinner  
*\*\*Please note drinks not included for all meals\*\**

### Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016

**\*\*Flights Depart Auckland International Airport for Paris Charles De Gaulle International Airport\*\***

### Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Arrive in Paris Charles De Gaulle International Airport

Meet your coach at the airport and be transferred north to your arranged school and family hosting in Arras.

***Overnight with host families in Arras***

### Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Today students will spend the day at your host school participating in school activities and classes.

**Today is also a day to include any additional events you may have organised - Glenda**

***Overnight with host families in Arras***

### Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Board your coach and travel to **Le Quesnoy**.

Arrive in Le Quesnoy.

*The capture of Le Quesnoy by the New Zealand Division on 4 November 1918 has special significance in New Zealand's military history. This is not merely because it was the last major action by the New Zealanders in the Great War but also because of the manner of its capture. The New Zealand Division captured 2000 Germans and sixty field guns. The attack cost the lives of about ninety New Zealand soldiers — virtually the last of the 12,483 who fell on the Western Front between 1916 and 1918.*

Leading off from the town square (*Place de Général Leclerc*) through the Porte du Château is the "Avenue des Néo-Zélandais", which leads to the "Jardin du Souvenir" (Garden of Remembrance). Signposts will direct you to the "New Zealand Battlefield Memorial", one of the four New Zealand Memorials on the Western Front. Just to the north of the town is "Le Quesnoy Communal Cemetery Extension". Most of the fifty New Zealanders buried here lost their lives on 4 November 1918, one week before the Armistice.



**Afternoon – perhaps organise a similar event as the 2014 tour. Mayor meeting/ town visit and lunch. Organised by Glenda**

***Overnight with host families in Arras***

## Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016

This morning travelling over to **Beaumont-Hamel** where you can tour the Park of Newfoundland (free access). A track leads to an orientation table at the top of the Caribou mound from where a wide overall view of the whole battlefield reveals the trench lay-out.

Then on to **Thiepval**, the biggest Memorial in the World. This centre counts a number of amenities (an information desk, shop, projection room, vending machines and toilets).

*Own arrangement for lunch*

After lunch, you stop in **Ovillers La Boisselle** where you can see the impressive “Lochnagar mine crater” which is 100 meters in diameter and 30 meters deep.

Then you head on to **Becordel-Becourt** to see the *Dartmoor Cemetery* and the grave of John J. Sweeney who was sentenced to death for desertion.



Return to your host families

***Overnight with host families in Arras***

## Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Today you will spend the day commemorating the **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of New Zealand Involvement in the Somme.**

*The New Zealanders fought their first major campaign on the Western Front in the Somme, alongside British divisions. The New Zealand Division was particularly involved in the fighting which began on 15 September near Longueval, taking their objective of the village of Flers with the support of tanks. After three weeks of violent fighting, the division was relieved on 4 October. The New Zealand Division lost 7,500 men on the Somme.*

Travel through to **Longueval.**

**Attend 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event organised by Glenda**

Visit the *Caterpillar Valley Cemetery*. This cemetery now contains 5,569 Commonwealth burials and commemorations of the First World War. 3,796 of the burials are unidentified. On 6 November 2004, the remains of an unidentified New Zealand soldier were entrusted to New Zealand at a ceremony held at the Longueval Memorial, France. The remains had been exhumed by staff of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission from Caterpillar Valley Cemetery, Longueval, France, Plot 14, Row A, Grave 27 and were later laid to rest within the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, at the National War Memorial in Wellington.



***Overnight with host families in Arras***

## Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Full day with your host school and families participating in school activities and classes

***Overnight with host families in Arras***

## Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Arras host families bring the students to the **Wellington Quarry**, for a visit of this underground site filled with memories and emotion. 20m below ground discover how the soldiers lived in the quarries during the week before the 1917 spring offensive. Then, like them, come out of this shelter and via a film, discover the shock that was the 9<sup>th</sup> April Battle of Arras



*Own arrangement for lunch*

Then stroll around the town especially the magnificent “Grand’Place” and “Place des Héros” before returning to your families.

***Overnight with host families in Arras***

## Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Arras host families bring the students to the meeting point. Board your coach for an excursion to **Vimy**.

Visit the **Canadian National Vimy Memorial**, a memorial to all Canadians who served their country in battle during the Great War of 1914-1918. It bears the inscribed names of 11,168 missing Canadians, killed in action in France but whose remains have not been found or identified. The site of the memorial park also comprises an area where a section of original Allied and German trenches has been preserved using concrete sandbags and duckboards. This area is open for visiting at all hours. Much of the ground in the memorial park was cleared of surface battlefield debris but was deliberately left in its damaged state. You can also visit the **Vimy Interpretive Centre** inaugurated on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1997 and administered by Veterans Affairs Canada.

*Own arrangement for lunch*

Travel to the **French National War Cemetery at Notre-Dame de Lorette**, the largest of the French WWI cemeteries and a poignant reminder of the huge losses sustained by every sector of society during the Great War. The cemetery is the final resting place for some 40,000 French troops, including 22,000 unknown soldiers.

Then visit the **Living Museum of the Great War** (*Musée Vivant 14-18*) which displays photographs, uniforms and helmets as well as fascinating reconstructions of underground shelters. In addition, one room has 16 dioramas showing different aspects of life at war, from the hospitals to the Front. Finally there’s a recreated battlefield of the German and French trenches.

***Overnight with host families in Arras***

This morning host families bring the students to the meeting point. Board your coach and transfer to the Belgium Flanders

Arrive in **Kemmel** where you will visit the **Bayerwald trenches**. The trenches are actually within a fenced off area about 50 meters square. Information panels and a scale model explain the events of war and life at the front. What you definitely must do is walk to the restored trenches. A unique experience!



Board your coach and transfer to **Ypres** (15 min drive).

*Own arrangement for lunch in Ypres*

Visit the **Museum “In Flanders Fields”** which presents the story of the First World War in the West Flanders front region. It is located in the renovated “Cloth Halls” of Ypres, an important symbol of wartime hardship and later recovery. The completely new permanent exhibition (*opening 11 June 2012*) tells the story of the invasion of Belgium and the first months of the mobilisation, the four years trench war in the Westhoek, the end of the war and the remembrance ever since.

After your visit, stroll around Ypres and explore the city on your own including the ramparts and “**ramparts cemetery**” where several ANZAC soldiers are buried.

Make your way to the “**Menin Gate**” by for the daily World War I Memorial ceremony. At 8pm you attend the Menin Gate Ceremony (*the group needs to be at the gate by 7.15pm to get a good position*). Here you can witness this moving ceremony where since 1920 (exc WWII) the traffic is stopped each night and the “last post” is played. The Menin Gate has inscribed upon it 58,000 names of soldiers with unknown grave.

*Dinner at a local restaurant*

**Overnight in Messines**

Enjoy breakfast then leave your hostel for a tour of the “Ypres Salient”.

First you stroll around **Messines**. This village was taken by troops from the New Zealand Division. The New Zealand troops had to advance up a steep hill to reach Messines, from their front lines in the vicinity of the farm buildings in the valley below. Walking up the road that curves up the hill, you realise what a steep climb this would have been for the attackers. Near the top of the hill is the **New Zealand Memorial Park**.

Board your coach and transfer to **Zonnebeke**.

Visit the **Memorial Museum of Passchendaele**. There the memory of the battle is kept alive through images and movies, a large collection of historical artifacts and several life-like-dioramas. Eye-catcher is an underground dugout tunnel with communication and dressing post, headquarters, workplaces and dormitories.



*Own arrangement for lunch*

In the afternoon, visit **Tyne Cot Cemetery**, the largest British war cemetery in the world (*11,908 graves are registered*), the **Monument to the New Zealand Forces** and the **new British Passchendaele Cemetery**, which dates from the 1920s and that contains 126 New Zealand burials.



Transfer back to **Messines** for dinner and overnight

### ***Overnight in Messines***

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016**

**(B)**

This morning check out of hostel by 9:00am and travel to **St Omer**.

Stop en route in **Poperinge**. There you visit the "**execution spot and the death cells**" located Guido Gezellestraat 1 (*free entrance*) and the "**Poperinge New Military Cemetery**".

Transfer to St Omer where you arrive at lunch time.

*Own arrangement for lunch*

This afternoon, visit "**la Coupole**", located 5 km from Saint-Omer, a gigantic underground bunker designed by the Nazis, in 1943-1944, to store, prepare and launch the V2 rockets. La Coupole is among the most impressive remnants of the Second World War in Europe. Due to its overwhelming mass, the nature of its underground facilities and the suffering of the slave labourers who built it, this is a place symbolic of Nazi oppression. Rehabilitated as a History and Remembrance Centre, it reveals the challenges of total war and the stages in the conquest of space, which paradoxically resulted from the V2 technology. The Centre also expands on the theme of the German occupation from 1940 to 1945 in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, one of the hardest hit regions during the "dark years".

Travel back to **Arras** and meet with your host families in the late afternoon.

### ***Overnight with host families in Arras***

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016**

Full day with your host school and families participating in school activities and classes.

### ***Overnight with host families in Arras***

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2016**

**(D)**

This morning you will farewell your host families and travel by coach through to **Morlancourt**.

Arrive in Morlancourt and visit the "**exhibition of the WW1 in the Poppy Country**".

*Own arrangement for lunch*

Transfer to and **Meaux** for a visit of the "**Musée de la Grande Guerre du Pays de Meaux**". Housing a collection unparalleled anywhere in Europe, this museum offers a new vision of the first worldwide conflict, through innovative scenography

illustrating the great changes and upheavals in society that resulted from it. A remarkable heritage to be handed on to future generations. A museum of history and society to help learn of past hardships, better understand present-day society and build tomorrow's world.

Finally you transfer to your hostel accommodation in central Paris.

This evening enjoy a 2 hour panoramic tour of Paris by night.

Dinner at hostel.

### ***Overnight in Paris***

#### **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (B)**

Meet with your driver at the hostel. Load your luggage and transfer by private coach to Paris CDG Airport.

Check-in for your onward flight

**Depart Charles De Gaulle Airport**

#### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

On flight

#### **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

Arrive Home

#### **\*\*Arrangements End\*\***

As our trips are unique and tailored to your needs, this proposal is subject to availability at the time of confirmation. When the clients deposit is received by Defining Moments we will then immediately start to reserve the itinerary.

If any part of the itinerary is not available, we will do our best to secure an appropriate alternative. If the group or any individuals decide not to participate in this pre-arranged itinerary and substitute it for an alternative it will be at their own costs.

**\*\*Add ons/side trips are available and can be requested through Defining Moments\***

**Defining Moments**

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