

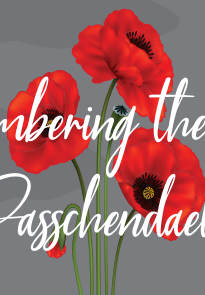
Passchendaele in Schools





*That future generations are aware of the
courage and sacrifice of New Zealanders at
Passchendaele and the Western Front during
the First World War, which greatly influenced
our sense of national identity and the
development of our nation.*

*Remembering the 2,421
who died in the Passchendaele Offensive 1917*





THE PASSCHENDAELE SOCIETY

The objectives of the Passchendaele Society are based on the Ypres Agreement of 4th October 2007 where the Flemish Government and the New Zealand Government agreed to cooperate in the field of shared history of the World Wars of the twentieth century.

Our prime objective is to enhance community awareness and recognition of the events at Passchendaele and the Western Front related to the Great War of 1914-1918. Within this overall context our specific objectives are to increase broad community recognition, educate younger generations, honour the war dead, preserve heritage material and encourage tourism to commemorative sites in Flanders and New Zealand.

EDUCATING YOUNGER GENERATIONS

To commemorate the centenary of the Battle of Passchendaele in 2017 we worked with the Ministry of Education and the Fields of Remembrance Trust to organise a competition whereby 16, 17 and 18 year old students in all New Zealand schools were asked to produce a curriculum resource on the Battle of Passchendaele for younger students, delivered through the innovative use of digital technologies. The Ministry described the digital resources created by participating students as of an exceptional quality and available for subsequent generations to ensure that the sacrifices made by New Zealanders are not forgotten. The ten winners of the competition participated in a ten day tour of the centennial commemorative activities in Flanders which was highlighted by the opening ceremony of the New Zealand Passchendaele Memorial Garden, Nga Pua Maraha at Zonnebeke Chateau.

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The Ministry subsequently encouraged us to communicate the learnings from Passchendaele through schools, teachers and students and suggested this can best be done by linking those learnings with broader curriculum learning areas and the effective pedagogies in social sciences outlined in the New Zealand Curriculum. The role played by teachers in this process is obviously paramount but in order to provide a starting point the Passchendaele Society has prepared our suggestions on some of the areas where lessons can be learned from Passchendaele.

INVITATION TO SCHOOLS, TEACHERS and STUDENTS

The Passchendaele Society invites schools, teachers and students to utilise the Learning and Resources section in our website at www.passchendaelesociety.org to assist them in their research. This section contains:

Passchendaele Centennial Competition 2017 Winning Entry
dylanjameswoodhouse@gmail.com

The Passchendaele Offensive
info@amazingnz.com

Passchendaele in the Context of the First World War
ismackenzie@xtra.co.nz

The Auckland Battalion
cjpowell1@gmail.com

Lessons from Passchendaele
greghallfinance@gmail.com

Any emailed questions on this material will be responded to by the Passchendaele Society members who compiled this information. Our Learning and Resources section also provides links to useful sources such as the Auckland War Memorial Museum, Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917, In Flanders Museum and The Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Questions from an educational perspective about utilising “Passchendaele in Schools” can be addressed to defydjoan@xtra.co.nz Passchendaele Society Member and Head of History at St Paul’s Collegiate, Hamilton.

“Winners of the Passchendaele Centennial Competition in Flanders Fields”.



THE PASSCHENDAELE SOCIETY SUGGESTIONS

There is general agreement among historians that one word has become the metaphor for the horrors of war and that word is Passchendaele.

The world was shocked in 1916 when one million casualties resulted from the Battle of the Somme and despite the evidence that the attacking army lost more men than the defending forces, British Commander Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig's planned response in 1917 was to attempt to drive the Germans out of Belgian ports of Ostend and Zeebrugge. His documented strategy recognised the inevitability of more casualties but controversially emphasised that Britain and its colonies had access to a bigger pool of manpower than the Germans.

The British Prime Minister David Lloyd George was opposed to the Passchendaele Offensive and what he was later to describe as “the most futile and bloody fight ever waged in the history of war” resulted in half a million casualties. The differing views of the British Prime Minister and his Commander-in-Chief offers an excellent starting position to examine war and its consequences.

LINKING PASSCHENDAELE WITH SOCIAL SCIENCES

A learning series could also be developed on “THE PEOPLE WHO MADE NEW ZEALAND” including the first Polynesian arrivals, the early European settlers, the colonial wars, the Treaty of Waitangi, the land wars and linking this with the First World War as New Zealand made its presence known on the world stage. The significance of Passchendaele, which has been described as New Zealand's darkest day, is of major importance to the emergence of New Zealand as a nation state and had a significant influence on our thinking and our social, economic and political development.

The Ministry of Education's Passchendaele Centennial Competition in 2017 encouraged Defeyd Williams, Head of History at St Paul's Collegiate in Hamilton (and a member of the Passchendaele Society) to enter a team comprising Dylan Woodhouse, Tony Wu, Lucy Tustin and Connor Harrigen in the competition.

The Passchendaele Society subsequently obtained rights to their winning entry bloodandmud.org which now features in the Learning's and Resources segment of our website at www.passchendaelesociety.org/links

Schools, teachers and students are invited to utilise this resource by linking it with other areas in the social sciences curriculum to answer questions such as “Examine how a significant historical event affected New Zealand society” from a recent New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Level 2 History paper.

THE NEW ZEALAND SECONDARY SCHOOLS TOUR TO PASSCHENDAELE

The ten winners of the Passchendaele Centennial Competition, organised by the Ministry of Education, who participated in a ten-day tour of the centennial commemoration activities in Flanders in October 2017 were Dylan Whitehouse, Tony Wu, Lucy Trustin and Connor Harrigan from St Paul's Collegiate in Hamilton, an individual entrant Alexandra Lay from St Margaret's College in Christchurch and a team of Alyssa May Pinada, Kayla Kautai, Mairatea Mohi, Atawhai Ngatai and Keighly Jones from Rotorua Girls High School.

A farewell function was held at Auckland International Airport attended by the families of the winners and the next day the group took off for Paris, then made their way to Flanders by coach. The tour was professionally conducted by student travel company Student Horizons. The group were thrilled to play a participatory role at the opening of the New Zealand Passchendaele Memorial and Garden where in addition to presenting brief speeches they were involved in symbolic poppy, water and earth ceremonies where the dignitaries included Cabinet Minister Hon Dr Nick Smith MP; Speaker of the House, the RtHon David Carter MP; Willie Apiata VC and singer Dave Dobbin.

The group were also present at the official centennial commemoration ceremony which was held at Tyne Cot Cemetery where the dignitaries included Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, Princess Astrid of Belgium and the Chief of Defence Force New Zealand LTGEN Tim Keating CNZM.

Other memorable activities included visits to the grave of the captain of the original All Blacks SGT Dave Gallaher at Nine Elms Cemetery, the Passchendaele Memorial Museum 1917, the Menin Gate and the Sunset Ceremony in Polygon Wood.



THE STORY OF PASSCHENDAELE

New Zealand sent more men as a percentage of population to the First World War than any other nation - 100,000 from a population of just over one million, with only 240,000 eligible to serve. Of these, 18,277 died on active service.

The war on the Western Front was a war of attrition and the battle lines barely moved for most of the war. British Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig was under great pressure to change the stalemate and his strategy was to break through the Ypres front, where the Germans had taken up defensive positions along a small ridge overlooking Ypres in West Flanders. A key to his plan was for the New Zealand Division to advance up the Belle Vue Spur and take the village of Passchendaele.

The British artillery had pounded the German positions with 4.2 million shells in the two weeks before the Battle of Passchendaele. Every house, church, street and tree had been totally obliterated and the terrain between Ypres and Zonnebeke had been reduced to a pitiless quagmire, due to days of rain. The German pill boxes were left undamaged, and a tragedy of epic proportions was inevitable.

Despite all this, the order was given to attack Belle Vue Spur at 5.25am on 12th October 1917. As the New Zealanders advanced towards the ridge, some of them up to their hips in mud, they were exposed to raking machine-gun fire from both the front and the flanks. Those who tried get through or over the uncut barbed-wire entanglements were mown down mercilessly.

846 young New Zealanders died that day, and the total death toll rose to more than 1,000 when those who died of their wounds in the following days were taken into account. Tragically, it took two and a half days to recover the wounded from the battlefield. Many were never found, sucked into the morass of mud. It was New Zealand's darkest day, with more deaths on a single day in our history, before or since.

In total, 2,412 New Zealanders lost their lives in the Passchendaele Offensive. The Passchendaele Society exists to help our communities recognise that they exist and flourish today because of the sacrifices made by brave New Zealanders who fought for this freedom. Lest we should ever forget.



NEW ZEALAND PASSCHENDAELE MEMORIAL GARDEN

The highlight of the centennial commemorations was for many the opening of the Passchendaele Society's New Zealand Passchendaele Memorial Garden which was originally conceived by the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 as one of nine "Poppy Gardens" which could be built to represent the nations involved in the Passchendaele Offensive. Since the New Zealand Government had made a significant contribution to the refurbishments of the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 the New Zealand Embassy in Brussels suggested that establishing the Memorial Garden might be a project that the Passchendaele Society would wish to take on. We accepted the challenge and the total cost of the project at around one million dollars was funded by contributions from our members, the donation of the land by the Zonnebeke Council and the granting of around \$600,000 from the Lotteries World War One Fund. Created in the shape of a fifteen metre diameter poppy the garden sits in the magnificent grounds of the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 in the village of Zonnebeke, Flanders, Belgium.

Willie Apiata VC and Prince William, Duke of Cambridge at the Passchendaele Centennial Commemoration 12th October 2017, Belgium.



The New Zealand Passchendaele Memorial Garden at Zonnebeke Chateau in Flanders, Belgium.





THE FIELDS OF REMEMBRANCE TRUST

A partnership of the Passchendale Society, Auckland Returned & Services Association and the Royal New Zealand Returned & Services Association.

The Trust was created in 2013 to develop a nationwide project to establish individual fields of remembrance during the centennial period of the First World War. It sought to acknowledge the more than 100,000 New Zealanders who served overseas and to individually commemorate the 18,277 who died on active service.

Through a variety of networks, the Trust established the fields throughout New Zealand, corresponding with the cumulative numbers of the fallen in each year of the centennial period.

From the outset the Trust enjoyed a successful collaboration with the Ministry of Education which saw the provision of more than 80,000 white crosses in kitset form to 2550 Primary and Secondary Schools. This relationship proved to be invaluable in creating an understanding of the sacrifices made in the First World War as being one of the foundations of our nationhood.

This initiative resonated throughout the country resulting in its extension to 4600 early childhood centres and an awareness within communities of the White Cross as a symbol of sacrifice.

The project culminated with a National Field of Remembrance installed for Armistice Day 2018 in the Auckland Domain. This Field consisted of 18,277 personalised white crosses, including a special Brother's Field for the 638 families who lost two sons, 53 who lost three sons and 9 who lost four sons.

One of the Trust's enduring achievements is that it has established the creation of Field's of Remembrance and the white cross as the lexicon and architecture for such commemorations in the future.

"The field of 18,277 personalised crosses in the Auckland Domain".



NEW ZEALAND'S LARGEST COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMME

- * 7500 Fields of Remembrance established throughout New Zealand during the First World War Centenary, including numerous RSA and Community groups.
- * 4600 Early Childhood Centres gifted packs of miniature personalised white crosses.
- * 2455 Primary & Secondary Schools gifted packs of personalised white crosses.
- * 9 Military Bases & Camps gifted 100 personalised white crosses.
- * 4 Main Centre - Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin - installed major Fields of Remembrance 2014-18, increasing each year to represent Fallen 1914-18.
- * 1 National Field of Remembrance installed for Armistice Day 2018 in the Auckland Domain - 18,277 personalised white crosses, including nine families who lost four sons, 53 who lost three sons and 638 who lost two sons.



Acknowledgements

The Passchendaele Society
would like to thank the following
for their valuable support
and generosity of spirit

The Fields of Remembrance Trust

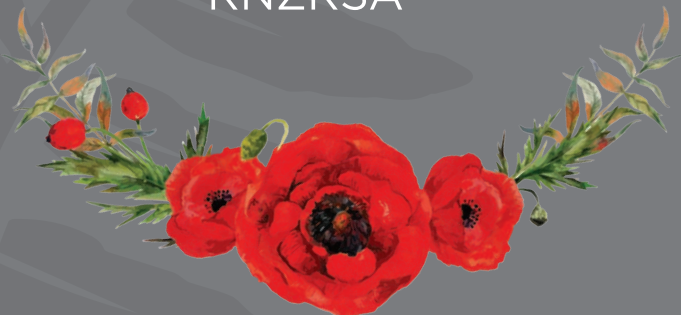
The Ministry of Education

Soar Printing Ltd

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Auckland RSA

RNZRSA





British Prime Minister David Lloyd George was
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described it as
**“the most futile and bloody fight ever waged in
the history of war.”**

The Passchendaele Society

www.passchendaelesociety.org