Passchendaele 100TH anniversary
Western Front Battlefield Tour
01 – 15 Oct 2017 (15 days)

During WWI, the Australian Imperial Force & the New Zealand Expeditionary Force joined to become the Anzacs. Roughly 517,000 young men, mostly volunteers enlisted in the Corps – a huge contribution from a combined population of fewer than 6 million inhabitants.

With courage and a sense of adventure they departed our shores to fight in strange and unknown lands.

This tour is a special opportunity to attend the 100th commemorations of the Battle of Passchendaele and follow Anzacs footsteps on the Western Front – from the battlegrounds of Flanders Fields in Belgium to The Somme in France – your opportunity to remember stories of great bravery and honour those who went before us and those who never returned.

With The Journey of Remembrance series, The Innovative Travel Company invites you to bring the past to life and explore in more depth the moving battlegrounds of the Western Front. Once a land of devastation and mud, today the area is green again and dotted with sites of remembrance honouring the fallen.
Innovative Travel is pleased to introduce tour host Dr Stephen Clarke, war historian and former RSA Chief Executive.

Stephen’s in-depth interest in WW I history began with specialist degrees from NZ and Australian universities and later five years as Chief Executive of NZ RSA. He has been closely involved with many major national commemorative projects, such as the return from the Somme of the Unknown New Zealand Warrior in 2004 and a major programme to raise the awareness in NZ for the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele in 2007. Since 2011, Stephen has worked with government, museums and organisations in New Zealand & the UK including the Royal British Legion in London; with the key focus on the 1st World War Centenary. Projects included involvement with the momentous poppies installation at the Tower of London, the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall and Remembrance Sunday in Whitehall. In 2015 he co-hosted a large NZ focused tour to Gallipoli for the 100th anniversary on Anzac Day 2015.

Like many New Zealanders Stephen has personal family connections to the Western Front in The Somme and at Passchendaele. His historical knowledge and personal connections on the Western Front will ensure this is an amazing journey. In association with World War Tour specialist Innovative Travel, you are warmly invited to join this very special commemorative tour.

**ITINERARY**

**Sun 01**: Brussels – arrival
Welcome to Belgium. This evening is a tour introduction and welcome reception for the group to meet with your tour hosts and fellow tour participants. (WR)

**Mon 02**: Brussels
Morning at leisure or join an optional walking tour around the city centre of Brussels. This afternoon join a city tour of the capital city of Belgium. Tonight dinner is at a local restaurant. (B,D)

**Tue 03**: Brussels – Ypres
This morning depart for Ypres. Stop off at the ‘Hellfire Corner’ and visit Hooge Crater Museum, which houses a private collection of remnants from the war in a 1920’s chapel. Arrive in Ypres. Visit the town’s Council Chambers featuring beautiful stained glass, walk to the Menin Gate Memorial and continue along the top of historic ramparts following the river towards Ramparts cemetery, the only WWI Commonwealth War Graves cemetery within Ypres. This afternoon is at leisure to explore further Ypres’ town centre and medieval Cloth Hall which 70m high bell tower overlooks the battlefields. Evening free for dinner before attending the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing. (B)
Wed 04 Ypres – commemorations
Today attend the 100th commemorations of the Battle of Broodseinde at New Zealand Gravenstafel Memorial.
Depending on the commemorative schedule of events, today’s visits shall also include grave of former All Black captain Dave Gallaher at Nine Elms Cemetery and Talbot House in Poperinge, a welcome resting place for soldiers travelling to and from the front line. This living museum is filled with original items, including the “Friendship Corner” where visiting soldiers left messages for their friends. (B)
Note: today’s arrangements are flexible and will be confirmed upon final commemorative schedule of events as decided by the Government of New Zealand.

Thu 05 Ypres – Messines – Armentieres – Lille
This morning visit the village of Messines – a WWI strategic point, captured by Kiwis in one of the most successful offensives of the war following the simultaneous detonation of 19 mines. See the New Zealand soldier statue, Samuel Frickleton, VC memorial and St.-Nicholas Church with its Peace Carillon formed of bells donated from all over the world, including New Zealand. Continue to Messines Ridge British Cemetery with its NZ Memorial and then to the NZ Memorial Obelisk, part of the NZ Memorial Park with views over the battlefields.
Continue to Armentieres – the Nursery sector. See the New Zealand memorial at Cite Bonjean cemetery, the largest New Zealand cemetery in France which also has 473 Australian graves and, unusually, more than 500 German graves.
En-route to Lille visit the grave Tony Wilding, New Zealand only Wimbledon winner, at Rue des Berceaux cemetery. Dinner tonight is at local restaurant in Lille. (B,D)

Fri 06 Le Quesnoy – Lille
Today visit Le Quesnoy. This town-fortress was liberated by the New Zealand Division in its last major action of the war. Under the leadership of 2nd Lieutenant Leslie Averill, MC, soldiers climbed the ramparts of the town, where a commemorative plaque is now located.
Numerous links to New Zealand can be found across town, from street names to the Garden of Remembrance and the Maori Giant in the City Hall. Visit the communal cemetery at Le Quesnoy which contains the graves of 50 New Zealanders who died liberating the town, just 7 days before the end of the war. Time free to explore Le Quesnoy before returning to Lille for overnight. (B,L)
### Sat 07  Lille – Arras – Amiens
This morning visit the impressive Ring of Remembrance at Notre-Dame de Lorette which commemorates 579,606 soldiers from over 40 countries who have fallen in the region without distinction of nationality, rank or religion.
Continue to Arras, where New Zealand Tunnellers created a large underground military system used to hide troops and supplies in the preparation of a surprise offensive in which soldiers would emerge to attack in front of enemy lines. Visit the Wellington Quarry Museum which allows visitors to explore sections of the original underground system. Later drive to Amiens for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

### Sun 08  The Somme – Amiens
Today visit the battlefields of The Somme Battle. At Pozieres visit Mouquet Farm site and two fortified observation posts which dominated the entire battlefield – on the Albert side “Gibraltar” and on the Bapaume side “The Windmill.”
See the monumental Thiepval memorial, the largest British War Memorial in the world, and Lochnagar Crater. Caused by a mine explosion, it is the largest crater ever made by man.
Continue to Albert where you will have some free time for lunch and to discover the legend of the Basilica Notre-Dame de Brebieres. Later, visit the Somme 1916 Museum and return to Amiens. (B)

### Mon 09  The Somme – Amiens
This morning ride on a historic steam train travelling between Froissy and Dompierre on a railway line constructed in 1916 for the Battle of the Somme. Continue to Longueval; the capture of this strategic town was New Zealand’s Division first major action on the Western Front. Visit Caterpillar Valley cemetery and its New Zealand memorial. On 6 November 2004, the remains of an unidentified New Zealand soldier were exhumed from Caterpillar Valley cemetery and entrusted to New Zealand to be laid to rest within the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, at the National War Memorial in Wellington.

Stop at Grevillers New Zealand memorial and continue to Bapaume following the route New Zealanders took as part of the Third British Army counter attack to still and push back the German 1918 Spring Offensive.
After free time for lunch in Bapaume, visit Newfoundland Memorial Park and walk along preserved network of trenches before returning to Amiens. (B)

### Tue 10  Amiens
Day at leisure in Amiens to explore the lively waterside district of Saint-Leu and the historical centre of Amiens, including the XIIIth Century Gothic Notre-Dame Cathedral. The Cathedral survived the Great War and is now a place of remembrance.
Inside, commemorative plaques pay tribute to soldiers who came from all over the world to fight in the Somme and six Allied flags hang in the Sacré-Coeur Chapel. (B)

Today drive to Etaples which was during WWI the scene of immense concentrations of Commonwealth reinforcement camps and hospitals. The military cemetery of Etaples is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in France. Continue to Montreuil-sur-Mer to visit the General Headquarters of the British Army on the Western Front, based in town from March 1916 onwards. After lunch in Montreuil-sur-Mer, continue to Lijsenthoek cemetery & visitors’ centre which offers an interpretation of the biggest evacuation hospital in the Ypres Salient. Overnight in Ypres. (B,L)

Thu 12  Ypres – commemorations

Today attend the official 100th commemorations of the Battle of Passchendaele. Depending on the commemorative schedule of events, today’s visits shall also include Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 & Poppy Garden where a special section is dedicated to New Zealanders in the Great War. Today you may also visit Buttes New British cemetery at polygon Wood, where impressive New Zealand and Australian memorials are located. (B)

Note: today’s arrangements are flexible and will be confirmed upon final commemorative schedule of events as decided by the Government of New Zealand.

Fri 13  Diksmuide – European Peace Domain – Ypres

This morning visit Tyne Cot cemetery, the largest Commonwealth war grave cemetery in the world, built on a German fortified position taken by Australia. Then drive to Diksmuide to visit the “Trench of Death” and the European Peace Domain formed by the Gate of Peace, the Crypt and the Yser Tower. Today’s last stop will be at the moving statue of the “Grieving Parents” at the Vladslo German War cemetery, which has twice as many burials as Tyne Cot. Overnight in Ypres. (B,L)

Sat 14  Ypres – Bruges

This morning drive to Bruges. Crossed by canals, the “Venice of the North” is one of the best preserved medieval towns of Europe. Upon arrival take a canal boat ride and a walking city-tour to explore the historical centre of Bruges, a Unesco World Heritage Site, where medieval architecture blends with the 19th century neo-Gothic style.

Tonight farewell dinner is at a local restaurant. (B,D)

Sun 15  Bruges – Brussels departure

Today transfer to Brussels Airport for your return flight. (B)
Itinerary maybe subject to change. All commemorative services are subject to final authority of the New Zealand Government. The order of schedule, timings and inclusions are subject to change at any time and will be confirmed when final information is available.

**TOUR COSTS:**
- 7,995 NZ$ pp/twin land only
- Single supplement: NZ$ 1,895 pp

**TOUR INCLUSIONS:**
- Private bus transportation for all transfers, sightseeing and touring as per itinerary
- 14 nights' accommodation in 4-star hotels based on (or similar):
  - 2 nights in Brussels at Crowne Plaza
  - 4 nights in Ypres at Novotel Ieper
  - 2 nights in Lille at Mercure Central
  - 4 nights in Amiens at Mercure Cathedrale
  - 1 night in Bruges at Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza
- Buffet Breakfast daily, Welcome Reception, 3 Lunches, 4 Dinners
- Experienced Tour Host throughout the tour
- English-speaking WWI specialist guide throughout the tour
- City tours in Brussels
- Walking tour and canal boat ride in Bruges
- Entrances and admissions as follows:
- Gratuities for Driver and Tour Manager
- Tipping
- Local taxes

**EXCLUSIONS:**
- Personal Expenses
- Full Insurance (compulsory)
- Departure and airport taxes
- Early check ins / Late check outs
- Meals not specified
- Mini bar
- Tour extensions
General information:
The tour is subject to the normal tour conditions and operational procedures as listed on the Ancient Kingdoms Holidays brochure. Please ask for your copy.

Remember that religious beliefs, traditional customs, infra-structure and daily manners will differ from country to country, these may seem quite strange at first. These idiosyncrasies are part of what makes travelling a special experience. Please be patient if you think things are happening at a different pace than you are used to and respect the differences in culture.

Acknowledgements:
The Innovative Travel Company greatly acknowledges the Alexander Turnbull Library for the use of its images throughout this itinerary. Permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand must be obtained before any re-use of any image.

Tour conditions:
Due to the interest in attending these important commemorations, early registration is essential to secure your place on this unique tour.

A non-refundable deposit of NZ$1,000 is required upon registration. The signed registration form must be sent to The Innovative Travel Company along with the deposit. Registration is not guaranteed until acknowledgement is provided by the company. After registration cancellation fees apply. Refer to tour registration form for full information. Interim payments may be required. A copy of your travel insurance policy and passport copy must be supplied to The Innovative Travel Company, prior to the final documentation being released.

Full payment due by 02 June 2017

Your itinerary has been prepared in 2015 and final hotel selection maybe subject to change prior to departure. The order of schedules, timings and inclusions are subject to change at any time due to local conditions. The price is subject to a minimum of 20 participants, if less than 20 travel, a surcharge will apply. The final tour price may also be subject to currency fluctuations.

Hotel check-in/out times are normally IN: 2pm / OUT: 12noon.
The only way to guarantee an early check-in or late check-out is to pre-book the night before (early check-in) or right after (late check-out). Otherwise early check-in and late check-out are subject to availability when you are there.

Hotel Rooms: As a policy Innovative Travel request non-smoking rooms for all guests. These rooms are requested and are subject to availability. Rooms on the tour are run-of-house and room sizes/styles may vary.

Travel Advisory Information can change at any time and we suggest clients refer to The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Travel Trade Advisory website at www.safetravel.govt.nz prior to departure for the latest up to date information and general advice regarding the countries you are visiting.