



# Anzac Day

Commemorative  
Services

*25 April 2026*



**FRONT COVER ARTWORK**

Frank Crozier, *Through the saps to Pozieres*, c.1917-18,  
oil on canvas, 64 x 67cm (ART00209).

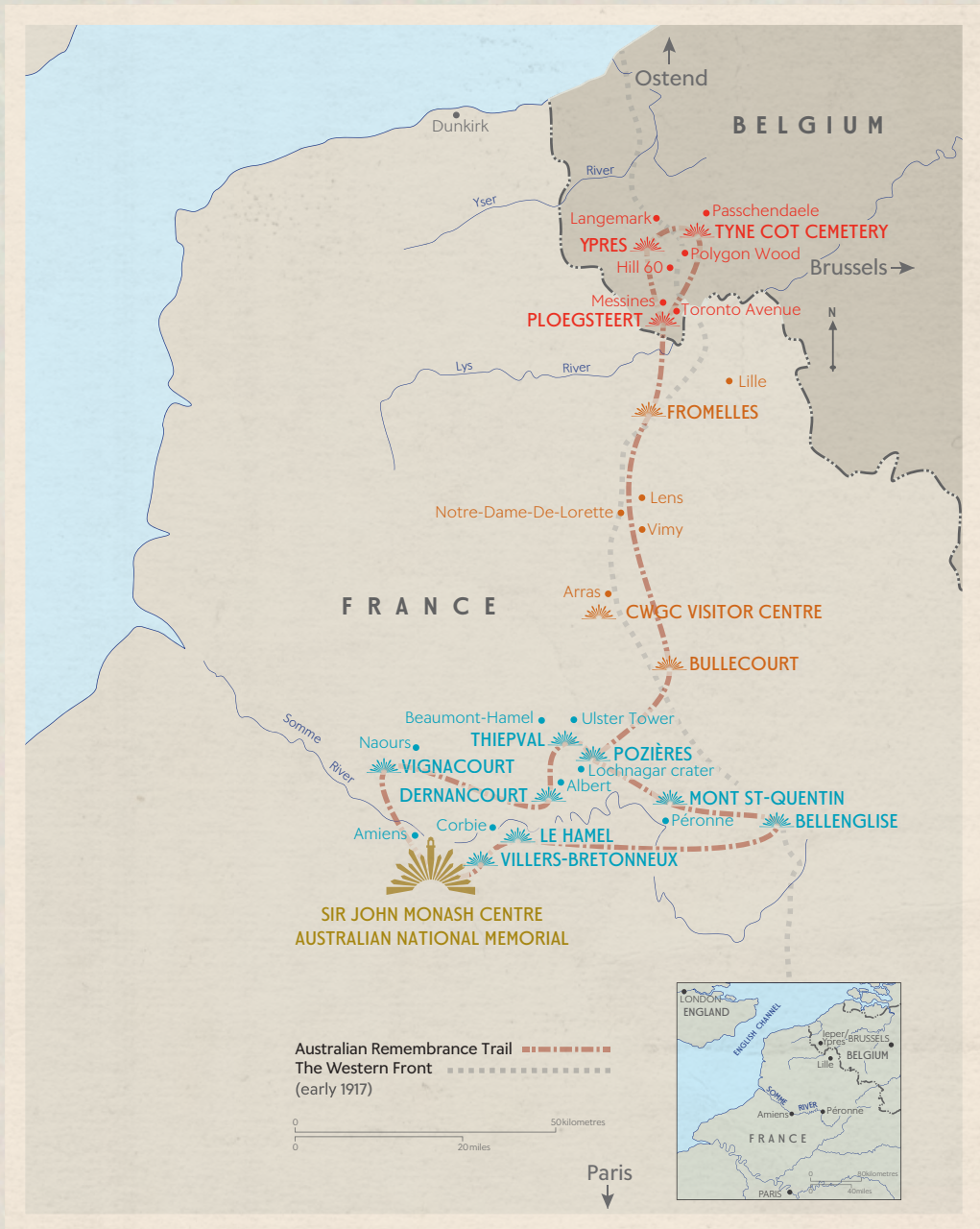


**Page 22 artwork**  
James Fraser Scott, *4th Division  
Artillery and Infantry moving into  
battle*, 1919, oil on canvas,  
142.8 x 194.5 cm  
(AWM ART03406).



**Page 31 artwork**  
John Goodchild, *Adelaide Cemetery,  
Villers-Bretonneux*, 1919, pen and ink on paper,  
12.7 x 21.3 cm (AWM ART02524).

# Australian Remembrance Trail along the Western Front



THEIR NAME  
LIVETH FOR  
*evermore*



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**Left:** Australian soldiers of the 12th Battalion resting in a village street, making their way to the First Battle of the Somme with the 1st, 2nd and 4th Divisions (AWM EZ0163).

# Australians on the Western Front

By the time the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) began arriving in France in March 1916, fighting on the Western Front had been raging for more than 18 months. Over a million lives had already been lost, but neither side had been able to break the stalemate which had prevailed since the war's opening weeks. Prior to 1916, only a small number of AIF troops had served on the Western Front, as 2 motor transport companies had been sent there attached to a British division in 1915.

The first AIF divisions made up of Gallipoli veterans and new reinforcements crossed the Mediterranean from Egypt and entrained for the British sector. They went into the line in the relatively quiet 'nursery' sector outside Armentières, but even here it soon became clear that the war on the Western Front was vastly more destructive than anything they had experienced in the Dardanelles. The Australians were shocked by the violence and skill of German raids and the power of modern heavy artillery.

Over the following months, while the Australians accustomed themselves to life on the Western Front, the British and French armies were preparing to launch a major offensive on the Somme. This attempt to end the deadlock began on 1 July 1916 and lasted until November at the cost of more than a million lives. More British soldiers were killed on the offensive's opening day – over 20,000 – than on any other in British history. Australia suffered a similar disaster in the AIF's first major attack, at Fromelles, where more than 5,500 men became casualties in less than 24 hours. Then came the bitter fighting at Pozières and Mouquet Farm, where Australia's losses in a 6 week period, approached the total for the 8 month long Gallipoli campaign.

**Right:** Men of the 53rd Battalion waiting to don their equipment for the attack at Fromelles. Only 3 of the men shown here came out of the action alive, and those 3 were wounded (AWM A03042).



On the Western Front, the AIF experienced industrialised warfare on a vast scale. From above, airmen described the front as a brown smudge running through a green landscape. For 4 years, this swathe of land just a few dozen kilometres wide and more than 700 kilometres long was the focus of the world's attention. Soldiers serving in that wasteland of shell holes, barbed wire and trenches were at the end of a supply chain that stretched across the world from the Americas to distant British dominions like Australia and New Zealand. Men and materiel crossed oceans to reach the Western Front. Industries in countries hundreds or thousands of kilometres from France were geared to meeting the needs of the warring armies, from feeding and clothing millions of men to supplying ammunition, weapons, medical equipment, machinery, sandbags, wire and the myriad other things that sustained the campaigns in France and Belgium.

The AIF established a base in the United Kingdom where reinforcements completed their training, supplies were organised and dispatched, and casualties received care. Medical personnel and nurses in the United Kingdom and on the Western Front treated and cared for many thousands of casualties. Men who recovered from their wounds and illnesses were often returned to the front, while others died while being cared for or were repatriated home on hospital ships.

To prevail in this theatre and thus win the war, those who fought on the Western Front also depended on the combined efforts of millions of individuals who neither joined the armed forces nor set foot in France or Belgium. They depended too on the Allied navies, particularly Britain's Royal Navy, to protect merchant vessels and troop transports and keep shipping lanes open. The Royal Australian Navy contributed to the Royal Navy's blockade of Germany, and Australian ships could be found on seas and oceans around the world during the war.

**Right:** Four Australian soldiers walking along the duckboard track at Tokio, near Zonnebeke, in the Ypres sector, over a portion of the country captured by the Australians in the fighting of the Third Battle of Ypres, in September and October 1917 (AWM E01236).



A month before the Somme fighting began, the Royal Navy suffered heavy losses in the Battle of Jutland off the Danish coast, the casualties included 8 Australians serving on British ships. However, it was an important strategic victory, denying the German fleet passage into the Atlantic and making possible a blockade that stemmed the flow of food and resources into Germany.

In the face of crippling losses on the Somme, the Germans withdrew to a stronger defensive position known as the Hindenburg Line. Allied troops followed their retreat, reaching the outer defences in March 1917. The first major British battles of 1917 were fought on this line around Arras, with the AIF launching two costly assaults on the heavily fortified town of Bullecourt.

By mid-1917 the French army, beset by mutiny and having suffered enormous casualties, was no longer capable of offensive action. From then on, the British carried much of the Allied effort on the Western Front, and the focus of fighting moved north to the country outside Ypres in Flanders. After taking part in the stunning success at Messines in June, the Australians were committed to the major British offensive known as 3rd Ypres or Passchendaele. It is from this campaign that our most enduring images of the Western Front come. Photographs of a waterlogged landscape, ruined by shell holes, passable only on wooden duckboards and dominated by reinforced concrete strongpoints – the pillboxes that were the scene of vicious fighting and which dot the landscape to the present day – have come to symbolise 4 years of fighting in France and Belgium.



More Australians – some 40,000 – were killed in action on all fronts in 1917, more than in any year before or since, and two-thirds of all those who lost their lives during the war. On the Western Front the number of Australians listed as killed, missing or wounded that year exceeded 76,000. The impact of these losses upon families in Australia was profound. People grieved at the loss of friends or relatives.

Australians were consumed with the fighting in France and Belgium, but the Western Front had been the focus of people's attention years before the first members of the AIF arrived in that theatre. From the war's earliest days Australians, many of whom could ill afford it, were asked time and again to contribute to patriotic funds and war related causes, most of which were directed towards France and Belgium.

The fighting in 1917 ended with Passchendaele ridge in British hands. But the campaign's objective, to occupy the North Sea ports at Zeebrugge and Ostend, from which enemy submarines were setting out to sink Allied shipping, was never achieved. Far from the Western Front, in Eastern Europe, Russia succumbed to revolution at home while at the front her army was crippled by mass desertions. Russia's collapse freed dozens of German divisions for service on the Western Front. On the Allied side, the United States had entered the war in April 1917.

By early 1918 her seemingly unlimited supplies of men and equipment were beginning to reach France. Germany was compelled to seek victory before the American presence became decisive.

A series of German offensives between March and July 1918 gained great swathes of territory and in the Somme area threatened to split the British and French fronts, occupy the vital British transport hub at Amiens and, in the worst Allied nightmares, drive on to the Channel coast. The German advance in this sector reached its farthest point at Villers-Bretonneux in April.

**Right:** Members of the medical corps and wounded soldiers gathered outside the receiving room for the wounded at a Regimental Aid Post (AWM E05253).

Their patrols could see Amiens in the distance, but the Germans were spent. A ferocious Australian counter-attack swept them from the town and the opposing armies settled into a period of static warfare. This time, though, there were no lines of well-organised trenches. The German advances here and elsewhere along the front had carried them beyond their prepared defences, leaving them vulnerable to raids, at which the Australians were particularly adept, and to major attacks.





Germany's fate hinged on the outcome of the fighting on the Western Front, but German soldiers also needed the support of their country's civil population. The Allied naval blockade made this impossible. In the weeks since the first German offensive began in late March 1918, both sides had suffered heavy losses in men and materiel. For the Germans neither could be made good, while the Allies could count on large numbers of American troops arriving. By the time they came to launch their own offensive in August, industry in Allied countries had more than replaced the equipment lost in the earlier fighting.

On 8 August 1918 the Allies launched a mighty attack in the Amiens area, seizing the initiative and beginning what has become known as the 'hundred days' - the final three months of fighting that brought about the collapse of the German army on the Western Front.

Australian infantry fought their last battle of the war at Montbrehain in France on 5 October. So heavy had been the AIF's losses that battalions were going into battle with the strength of companies. Some battalions had been disbanded to reinforce others. The soldiers that were left were mostly experienced, skilled veterans, and each platoon carried an array of weapons that made up for the lack of men. Nevertheless, some doubted the capacity of the AIF to continue to field its five Western Front divisions should the war continue into 1919.

Today, Australia's contribution to the Allied victory and the sacrifice that so many made to bring it about, is remembered in the memorials on the former battlefields of France and Belgium. From March 1916 until November 1918, Australians fought the main enemy in the main theatre of a major war, and made a substantial contribution to defeating that enemy, a circumstance unique in our country's wartime history.

**Left:** View of the church at Montbrehain (AWM E03605).

*More than a century after  
the fighting there ended,  
the Western Front remains  
a presence in Australia and  
around the world.*



For the wartime generation, the Western Front dominated understanding and experience of the war. It existed in people's imagination and was brought home with the returned soldiers who spoke of the war, in the silences of those who did not, in those who bore obvious scars of their service, and in those whose wounds could not be seen.

No one who served on the Western Front is alive today, but reminders are with us still, in public commemorations, in the memorials and monuments that can be found across Australia, in the names of streets and public amenities, and in family lore. More than a century after the fighting there ended, the Western Front remains a presence in Australia and around the world.

**Left:** From the cemetery wall, 2 Australian soldiers salute the memorial to their departed comrades (AWM H17494).

**Below:** Embroidered silk postcard made in France during the First World War (AWM RC00671).



*'We are at present resting  
for about 10 days & not  
at all looking forward  
to our next trip in, but in  
we must go.'*

GEORGE LESLIE MAKIN,  
20 NOVEMBER 1916, FRANCE



# Western Front Timeline

## **AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 1914**

Germany invaded France and Belgium. French, Belgian and British forces retreated, and finally stopped the Germans at the First Battle of the Marne between 6 and 12 September.

## **SEPTEMBER–NOVEMBER 1914**

The 'Race to the Sea' involved both sides attempting to outflank the other by moving north. This resulted in a nearly 700 kilometres long line of defensive works from the Swiss border to the North Sea. This became known as the Western Front.

## **OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 1914**

The First Battle of Ypres made clear the industrial character of modern trench warfare, with heavy casualties on both sides.

## **DECEMBER 1914–MARCH 1915**

Winter paused major operations.

## **FEBRUARY 1915**

*HMAS Australia* became the first Royal Australian Navy warship to join the naval blockade of Germany in the North Sea.

## **MARCH 1915**

The Battle of Neuve Chapelle, a joint British-French offensive, demonstrated the many operational challenges to overcome if the deadlock of trench warfare was to be broken.

## **APRIL–MAY 1915**

In the Second Battle of Ypres, the Germans used poisonous gas, the first large-scale use of chemical weapons in the war.

## **MAY–JUNE 1915**

The Second Battle of Artois saw the French recapturing lost territory but with significant casualties.

## **JULY 1915**

The first AIF units arrived in France, the 300th and 301st Mechanical Transport Companies attached to the British 17th Division.

## **SEPTEMBER–NOVEMBER 1915**

In the Third Battle of Artois, the French and British attempted to advance but faltered amid autumn rains, exhaustion, and arguments over the responsibility for the failure.

## **FEBRUARY–DECEMBER 1916**

The Battle of Verdun, the war's longest battle, involved the Germans unleashing a new strategy of using artillery to maximise the other side's casualties. Total casualties on both sides neared 750,000.

## **MARCH–JUNE 1916**

The 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th Australian Divisions and the New Zealand Division arrived from Egypt, and formed I and II Anzac Corps.

## **MARCH–JULY 1916**

The AIF opened its administrative headquarters in London and training depots on Salisbury Plain in southern England.

## **JULY–NOVEMBER 1916**

The Battle of the Somme, a major French-British offensive, resulted in some territorial gains but at a terrible cost and failed to meet key strategic objectives. The Australian 5th Division made an ill-fated diversionary attack at Fromelles and the other divisions fought on the Somme at Pozières and Mouquet Farm.

## **DECEMBER 1916**

The 3rd Australian Division arrived on the Western Front.

### **FEBRUARY–MARCH 1917**

The German army made a strategic withdrawal to a newly constructed defensive line dubbed the 'Hindenburg Line.'

### **APRIL–MAY 1917**

The Allies' Nivelle Offensive at Arras and the Aisne had mixed results, with the French demoralised by heavy casualties on the Aisne. Australians fought at Bullecourt supporting the Arras battle.

### **JUNE 1917**

Hoping to relieve pressure on the French, the British attacked at Messines, Belgium. British, Canadian and Australian sappers dug tunnels to detonate mines under the German lines. Australians participated in the capture of Messines Ridge.

### **JULY–NOVEMBER 1917**

The Third Battle of Ypres in Belgium involved the Allies attempt to break through with improved artillery fire. The offensive stalled due to horrendous weather and tough resistance, with the capture of Passchendaele, a consolation. Australians fought at Menin Road, Polygon Wood, Broodseinde, Poelcappelle, and Passchendaele.

### **SEPTEMBER 1917**

No. 68 (Australian) Squadron, Royal Flying Corps — originally and later again known as the 2nd Squadron, Australian Flying Corps (AFC) — became the first AFC squadron deployed to France.

### **NOVEMBER 1917**

The Australian divisions were formed into the Australian Corps.

### **MARCH–APRIL 1918**

Russia's withdrawal from the war enabled Germany to redeploy forces from the Eastern Front. With the United States of America having entered the war in April 1917, the Germans needed to act before the Americans could complete their build-up of forces in France. The Germans launched their Spring Offensive, making large territorial gains, but without defeating the Allies. Fortunate to miss its main thrust, the Australians were rushed to areas needing to be held, fighting at Dernancourt, Morlancourt, Hazebrouk, and finally Villers-Bretonneux, which was recaptured on 25 April.

### **MAY 1918**

General John Monash became the first Australian commander of the Australian Corps.

### **JUNE–JULY 1918**

Both sides reorganised ahead of renewed operations. Monash planned and executed a small battle at Hamel in July, which demonstrated the operational and tactical advancements made by the Allies, with coordination of infantry, artillery, armour, and air support.

### **AUGUST–OCTOBER 1918**

In a series of offensives that began with the Battle of Amiens, the Allies pushed the Germans back, retaking territory and breaking through the Hindenburg Line. Australian battles include Mont St Quentin, Peronne, and finally, on 5 October, Montbrehain.

### **NOVEMBER 1918**

The Armistice was signed, bringing 4 years of fighting to a close.





# Pre-Service Program

# Pre-Service Program

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

### ADELAIDE CEMETERY, FRANCE

A short film on the work of the Imperial War Graves Commission and the creation of the Western Front cemeteries, including Adelaide Cemetery in France. This film also tells the story of Australian soldier Jack O'Brien of the 48th Battalion, who died of wounds on 9 August 1918, aged 18, and is buried at Adelaide Cemetery.

### BIOGRAPHY ON PEARL ELIZABETH CORKHILL

A biographical short film telling the story of Pearl Corkhill of the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS), who was awarded a Military Medal for courage while serving in France during the First World War. This film also examines the experiences of the nurses of the AANS near the front lines of the Western Front, and the work of Harefield Hospital in England.

### BIOGRAPHY ON WALTER 'TOBY' WATT

A biographical short film telling the story of Walter 'Toby' Watt, an Australian aviator who served with the French Foreign Legion, then the AFC in Egypt, England and France during the First World War. This film also examines the experiences of men of the AFC training in the UK and flying over the Western Front.

### READING BY GENERAL SIR JOHN MONASH FOUNDATION SCHOLAR

Mr Nick Bradman  
2026 Jane Hansen and Paul Little  
John Monash Scholar

### LIVE MUSICAL PERFORMANCES BY THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY BAND

Conducted by  
Major Doug Hall  
Music Director  
Australian Army Band

**Previous page:** Informal group portrait of members of the 5th and 6th Brigades resting on the road to the front line trenches at Pozières (AWM EZ0074).

## ARRIVAL OF THE PORTE-DRAPEAUX

The Porte-Drapeaux, or 'Flag Bearers', are members of veterans' organisations who regularly participate in military and commemorative ceremonies within France. The flags they carry are emblazoned with the names of various units, conflicts and branches/chapters of their respective organisations.

## SPIRIT OF PLACE

### VETERAN READING

Ms Corrie Lee  
Royal Australian Navy Veteran

Mr Nicholas Broadbridge  
Australian Army Veteran

### ROLL OF HONOUR

Portraits of some of the Australians who died on the Western Front are presented on the Australian National Memorial tower, as their names are read by members of the Australian Defence Force.

## SILENCE

*'Dear Mrs Maber,*

*It is with much regret that I have to relate this unpleasant piece of news of your dear brother's death in the last big move we made but there is one consolation he gave his life for his country in the execution of his duty. He was one of my best pals him and I was stretcher bearing at the time he got hit and I carried him out... I done all I could for him.'*

Letter of an anonymous soldier (NLA MS244).

# Dawn Service





# Order of Service

Dawn Service commences at 5:30 am at the Australian National Memorial.

The music for the service is provided by members of the Australian Army Band.

Conducted by  
Major Doug Hall  
Music Director  
Australian Army Band

## PLAYING OF THE DIDGERIDOO

Warrant Officer Class Two  
Lachlan Youll  
Australian Army

## INTRODUCTION

### MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Lieutenant Colonel Geoff Godkin  
Australian Army

## MOUNTING OF THE CATAFALQUE PARTY

Members of Australia's  
Federation Guard

## CALL TO REMEMBRANCE

A senior representative of the  
Australian Defence Force

## COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS

A representative of the Australian  
Government

## HYMN

Abide with Me  
Australian Army Band

*Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;  
the darkness deepens;  
Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail  
and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless,  
O abide with me.*

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
earth's joys grow dim,  
its glories pass away.  
Change and decay in all around I see.  
O thou who changest not,  
abide with me.*

*I need thy presence every passing hour.  
What but thy grace can foil the  
tempter's power?  
Who like thyself my guide and  
strength can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine,  
O abide with me.*

## COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS

A representative of the Government  
of the French Republic

## PRAYER OF COMMEMORATION

Principal Chaplain Kerry Larwill CSC  
Australian Army

## OFFICIAL WREATH LAYING

## ODE OF REMEMBRANCE

Member of the Australian  
Defence Force

They shall grow not old,  
as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning,  
We will remember them.

### Response:

*We will remember them.  
Lest we forget.*

## ACTE DU SOUVENIR

Lieutenant Colonel Jean-Marc Sapet  
Military Delegate for the  
Department of the Somme

## LAST POST

## ONE MINUTE OF SILENCE

## REVEILLE

## NATIONAL ANTHEMS

### LA MARSEILLAISE

*Allons, enfants de la Patrie,  
Le jour de gloire est arrivé !  
Contre nous de la tyrannie  
L'étendard sanglant est levé,  
L'étendard sanglant est levé !  
Entendez-vous dans les campagnes  
Mugir ces féroces soldats ?  
Ils viennent jusque dans vos bras  
Égorger vos fils, vos compagnes !  
Aux armes, citoyens,  
Formez vos bataillons,  
Marchons, marchons !  
Qu'un sang impur  
Abreuve nos sillons !*

**Below:** Pioneers of the 1st Division preparing a duckboard track over the muddy waste near Zonnebeke, the day after the Australian attack on Broodseinde Ridge (AWM E00837).





## **ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR**

*Australians all let us rejoice,  
For we are one and free;  
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;  
Our home is girt by sea;  
Our land abounds in nature's gifts  
Of beauty rich and rare;  
In history's page, let every stage  
Advance Australia Fair.  
In joyful strains then let us sing,  
Advance Australia Fair.*

## **FINAL BLESSING**

Principal Chaplain Kerry Larwill CSC  
Australian Army

## **CATAFALQUE PARTY DISMOUNTS**

Members of Australia's  
Federation Guard

## **PUBLIC WREATH LAYING**

Members of the public are invited to  
lay floral tributes

## **OFFICIAL PARTY DEPARTS**

Please note that the  
Villers-Bretonneux Town Service  
will be held at the French  
Monument, Town Centre,  
Villers-Bretonneux at 8:30 am  
today. All members of the public  
are invited to attend.

# Villers-Bretonneux Town Service





# Order of Service

Villers-Bretonneux Town Service commences at 8:30 am at the French Monument.

This is a French Military Ceremony organised by the Departmental Military Delegation of the Somme.

## **WELCOME OF THE AUTHORITIES**

## **SPEECHES AND READINGS**

## **WREATH LAYING**

## **HOMMAGE AUX MORTS**

## **NATIONAL ANTHEMS**

## **DEPARTURE OF THE AUTHORITIES**

## **CONCLUSION**

Later this afternoon there will be a wreath laying ceremony in Bullecourt, followed by an Australian Service at the 'Digger' Memorial on the outskirts of Bullecourt.

These services will commence at 3:00 pm and 4:00 pm respectively.

**Previous page:** Four unidentified soldiers inspect the ruins of Villers-Bretonneux (AWM E02193).

*It is indescribable here at present. You cannot imagine the conditions. I've tried to find words to express myself about it & have only succeeded in praising it up.*

*The mud is waist high in some places & everywhere knee deep. It rains every day & I haven't been dry for a fortnight.*

GEORGE LESLIE MAKIN, 9 NOVEMBER 1916, FRANCE



# Customs, Traditions and Protocols

## PLAYING OF THE DIDGERIDOO

The didgeridoo is played here today to acknowledge and pay respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have contributed to the defence of Australia in times of peace and war.

## CATAFALQUE PARTY

Historically, a catafalque was a support for a coffin, but it has come to represent a remembrance stone or a tomb. A Catafalque Party was originally appointed to guard a coffin from theft or desecration. Now it performs a ceremonial role, honouring the dead.

## FLAGS

Flags are important symbols of all nations, and of those who have fought and died for those nations, and as such should be treated with respect at all times. They should not be subjected to indignity or displayed in a position or size inferior to any other flag. They should always be flown aloft and free and should not be allowed to fall or lie upon the ground.

Please note that 'flag draping' (i.e. wearing the flag as a cape or cloak), allowing the flag to touch the ground, or defacing the flag by writing on it, may be considered disrespectful acts and are discouraged at this service.

In accordance with Australian flag protocol, the Australian national flag is flown on the left facing the memorial, and the French flag on the right.

When a flag is raised or lowered, or when it is carried past in a parade or review, all present should face the flag, remove headwear and refrain from talking. Service personnel in uniform are to salute.

## LAST POST

The *Last Post* is a bugle call which signals the end of the day. It became incorporated into funeral and memorial services as a final farewell and symbolises that the duty of the dead is over and they can rest in peace.

Visitors should stand, remove headwear and refrain from talking during the playing of the *Last Post*. Service personnel in uniform are to salute.

## **NATIONAL ANTHEMS**

Visitors should stand facing the flags, remove headwear and refrain from talking during the playing of all national anthems. Service personnel in uniform are to salute.

## **ODE OF REMEMBRANCE**

Many ceremonies of remembrance include a recitation of the Ode. It is the fourth stanza of '*For the Fallen*', a poem written by Laurence Binyon (1869–1943) in 1914. It can also include the third stanza. The Ode has been recited in ceremonies since 1919.

Visitors should stand, remove headwear and refrain from talking during the reciting of the Ode.

## **ONE MINUTE OF SILENCE**

The practice of observing one minute of silence originated soon after the First World War and provides an opportunity for quiet reflection on the sacrifice of those who served and lost their lives.

Visitors should stand, remove headwear and refrain from talking during the period of silence.

## **PORTE-DRAPEAUX**

The Porte-Drapeaux, or 'Flag Bearers', are members of veterans' organisations who regularly participate in military and commemorative ceremonies within France. The flags they carry are emblazoned with the names of various units, conflicts and branches/chapters of their respective organisations.

## **REVEILLE**

During dawn services, the *Last Post* is followed by the *Reveille*. Historically, the *Reveille* woke the soldiers at dawn, and the name of the ceremony is mentioned in sixteenth century books of war. Until a hundred years ago, the *Reveille* was performed on drum and fife; today a solo bugle or trumpet is used.

# Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Cemeteries on the Western Front are managed and maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

The CWGC was founded by Royal Charter on 21 May 1917 and is responsible for the commemoration of some 1,700,000 members of the Commonwealth forces who gave their lives in the two world wars.

The graves and memorials of these men and women, who came from all parts of the Commonwealth and who were of many faiths and of none, are found around the globe at 23,000 locations in more than 150 countries and territories.

Today the CWGC, on behalf of the six member governments of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom, looks after more than 1.1 million graves worldwide, including all those Commonwealth graves on the Western Front.

During the First World War the dead of both sides were buried under battlefield conditions, their final resting places marked by wooden crosses or stakes.

In that conflict, one of the major battlegrounds was the Western Front in France and Belgium, where great battles were fought with names that became household words in Australia – Fromelles, the Somme, Bullecourt, Messines, Passchendaele and Villers-Bretonneux.

Of the more than 295,000 Australians who served in this theatre of war in the AIF, more than 46,000 lost their lives and some 132,000 were wounded.

It was not until the 1920s that the CWGC began the task of constructing permanent cemeteries and memorials here. Our cemeteries and memorials around the globe are physical reminders of a painful past, but they are also places that have the power to bring enormous comfort to the families and comrades of those buried and commemorated there.

We would encourage you to visit the graves and to spend a quiet moment reading the names, before departing, the better for the experience – inspired by those who lie here and determined that they will never be forgotten. Information on locating war graves is available at: [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org).

## THE CWGC VISITOR CENTRE

An extraordinary organisation, an extraordinary experience.

Open since June 2019, the CWGC Experience is a unique visitor attraction that shines a light on the work of the remarkable organisation at the heart of remembrance of the war dead. The CWGC Experience gives visitors an up-close and intimate look behind the scenes at the teams who still work painstakingly to care for the fallen.

From the story of how we still recover and rebury the dead today, to the skilled artisan craftsmen at work maintaining the world's most impressive and recognisable monuments and memorials, a trip to the battlefields of the Western Front is not complete without a visit to the CWGC Experience.

The CWGC Experience is open from Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
5-7 Rue Angele Richard  
62217 Beaurains, France

Organise your visit here: [www.cwgc.org/visit-us](http://www.cwgc.org/visit-us)

### **The Department of Veterans' Affairs would like to thank all those involved in the Anzac Day services including:**

- The Prefecture of the Somme and all French Services
- The Somme Departmental Council
- The Mayor and community of Villers-Bretonneux
- The Mayor and community of Fouilloy
- The Mayor and community of Corbie
- The Military Delegation of the Somme
- The Gendarmerie of the Hauts-de-France region
- French medical and emergency services
- The Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Tourist Office Val de Somme
- The Porte-Drapeaux of the region
- All those who have participated in the service

*'I can see by your letters dear  
Mother that you are worrying your  
poor heart out. It hurts me more than  
anything, to think of your suffering.'*

GEORGE LESLIE MAKIN, 9 NOVEMBER 1916, FRANCE

LOVE · SERVICE · SACRIFICE



At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning  
We will remember them.

Embroidered silk postcards made in France during the First World War  
(AWM SC00186, RC06519, RC06403).



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

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