

MISSION **POLYGON WOOD**

The project 'Mission Polygon Wood' combines the personal stories of fallen soldiers with activity tasks in the Polygon Wood. With this activity, our museum strongly engages in the basic principles of remembrance education: knowledge and broad insight, empathy and commitment, reflection and action.



Polygon Wood belongs, together with Tyne Cot Cemetery, to the utmost important sites of the Ypres Salient commemorating World War I. The wood covers about approximately 70 hectares and is located some three minutes' drive from our museum. Apart from the Commonwealth-cemeteries, Polygon Wood Cemetery and the Buttes New British Cemetery, bunker ruins amongst others are reminiscent too of the war history.

CONTENTS OF THIS INFORMATION PACK:

- Learning outcomes - p. 1
- Practical information - p. 2
- In Polygon Wood - p. 3
- Personal stories - p. 4
- In the neighbourhood - p. 9

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This project is focussing on the broad-based second and third grades of secondary schools, which means it can be booked for classes attending general education as well as for classes attending technical and professional training (concerning this latter: strictly appropriate for its third grade).

Mission Polygon Wood and its including educational packet aim to basically concentrate on the following school subjects, depending on the selected language:

- History – Trench warfare (subject matter).
- Emphasis on geography during the activity tasks.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

- ➔ A maximum of 40 students per session (larger groups will be split up into groups of minimum 20 students, max. two sessions at the same time). With a group of up to 30 students, the interaction is optimal.
- ➔ The **group leader** registers at the museum before or after the session.
- ➔ The supervisors must be taken with the bus at the **car park of Polygon Wood**, Lange Dreve, 8980 Zonnebeke (near the CWGC cemeteries).
- ➔ From there, the bus continues to the starting point: **Black Watch Corner** (intersection Lotegatstraat – Oude Kortrijkstraat) and/or the intersection Lange Dreve – Lotegatstraat (only when the group is split up).
- ➔ Mission Polygon Wood takes **two and a half hours**. Please note that an eventual visit to the museum is not included in this!
- ➔ Target groups: **Secondary Schools** with students aged above 14.
- ➔ Rates: passchendaele.be/en/Education
- ➔ Our own supervisors will be present throughout the entire journey. However, we expect the presence of **at least 1 teacher** during the whole course.
- ➔ Bookings can be made via reservaties@zonnebeke.be. Museum visit: via our web shop groepsreservatieszonnebeke.recreatex.be (in case you are a new customer, you can 'log in as a new user'; if you already are a customer but don't have an account yet, you can request your account data via booking@passchendaele.be).

Furthermore, our museum team is always at your disposal to work out an excursion meeting the needs of the pupils. We are happy to share our experience in organizing battlefield tours. A large, competent pool of guides for all ages is also part of our team.

Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917
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IN POLYGON WOOD:

After a brief introduction to the historical background of Polygon Wood, the students will be split up in *subsections*, groups of about 3 to 5 with a **British, Australian or New Zealand identity**. At the site, the group is supposed to reach the other side of Polygon Wood via four locations. However, they do not dispose of a ready-made itinerary. Each *subsection* will be using an **authentic-looking operation order**, a kind of military command containing activity tasks.

At each stop, each subsection carries out a task leading to a code. The codes are passed on to a subsection of Maori identities, able to determine the correct walking direction. Using a compass, the Maoris lead the group **independently from stop to stop**, right through the wood. However, our supervisors will be keeping an eye on things on the way.

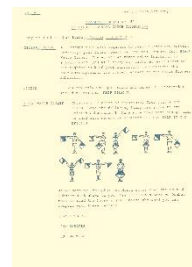
In order to carry out the assignments, each *subsection* is given a **bag with items**: a *field service pocket book* with explanations, the authentic-looking *operation order* with assignments, copies of original historical documents, a compass, binoculars and semaphore flags or Morse boards. Each student also uses the **identity card of a fallen soldier** during the assignments. It's only on arriving at Buttes New British Cemetery that they learn that 'their' soldier is either buried or commemorated there.



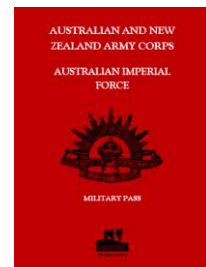
Haversack with activity items.



Field Service Pocket Book with information.





Authentic-looking Operational Order.

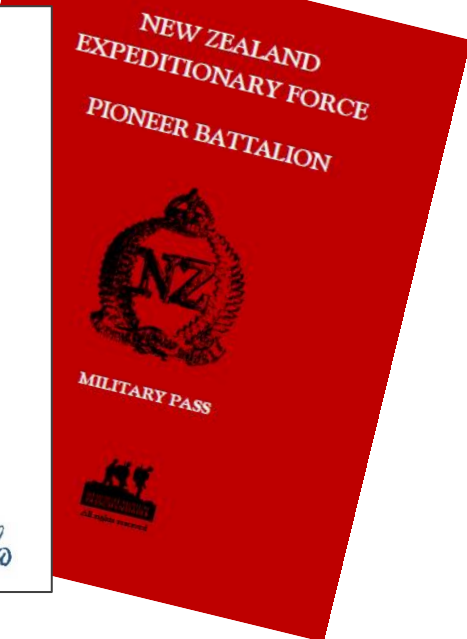


ID cards of fallen soldiers.




PERSONAL STORIES:

Throughout Mission Polygon Wood, every participant uses an ID card with a **photograph**. Each card shows a fallen soldier buried at Buttes New British Cemetery or commemorated on its New-Zealand memorial. The students only get to know this at the end of the track.

	Name: Takoko	Military Service:	
	First name: Hori	Rank: Lance Corporal	
Born:	20 August 1896, Tikitiki, East Coast, North Island, New Zealand	Service number: 16/740	
Parents:	Wi and Marara Takoko	Unit: New Zealand (Maori) Pioneer Battalion	
Eyes: Brown Hair: Black		Passport number: I. B. 8.	
Occupation: Labourer		Signature: <i>Hori Takoko</i>	
Religion: Church of England			



The nationality of the military is the bedrock for the *subsections*, the small groups into which the students have been split up. Such as:

-  Ten Brits;
-  Eighteen New-Zealanders, including five Maoris;
-  Twelve Australians.

The characters express the **religious, political and ethnic diversity** during World War I. Apart from Maoris, a person of Jewish origin, a colonial from Sri-Lanka, men from German-speaking Czech and Swiss origin and a person suffering from chronic shellshock all are incorporated. Through this diversification of stories and nationalities, we aim to emphasise the many-voiced stories in order to highlight the international idea of peace.

The next page shows a survey of all 40 soldiers used in Mission Polygon Wood. It's obvious that all of these can't be exploited as far as small groups are concerned. → ***Are you using the workbook? In this case, indicate, before your visit, which characters you have chosen. Or ask our educational department for a customised selection. Bear in mind that the names in green will always be featuring in every session!***



John BALERO

† 16/11/1917

Has Filipino and Chamorro ancestors.



David BIRD

† 26/09/1917

Police officer; he fell near Polygon Wood.



Edward BOUSKILL

† 04/10/1917

Member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.



Hugh BRIDGE

† 25/11/1917

Father of a one and a half years old baby-girl.



George CALDER

† 30/09/1917

Found in 2006 during nearby roadworks.



William CHERRY

† 07/10/1917

Got wounded at Gallipoli in Turkey.



Gother CLARKE

† 12/10/1917

Doctor; was a Major, a senior officer.



John DAVIES

† 09/10/1917

His brother fell in the Middle-East.



Joseph FISCHER

† 05/12/1917

Had German-speaking Swiss roots.




Edward FORD

† 04/10/1917


Needed parental approval to join the forces.






Samuel GRACE 
† 19/02/1918
Belonged to the Maori.




Horace GRIMSTON 
† 21/10/1914
Was born in colonial Sri-Lanka.




John HASSED 
† 26/09/1917
Was unearthed along the Polygon Wood track.




Hori TAKOKO 
† 24/12/1917
Belonged to the Maori.




John HUNTER 
† 26/09/1917
Found in 2006 during nearby roadworks.




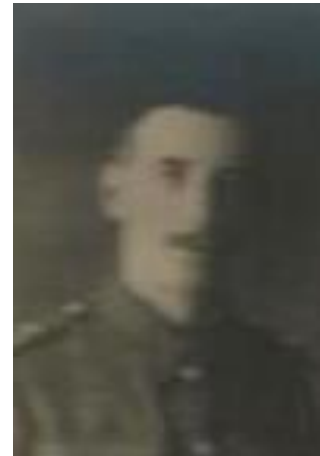
John Boyd HUNTER 
† 03/12/1917
Served in Greece and at Turkish Gallipoli.




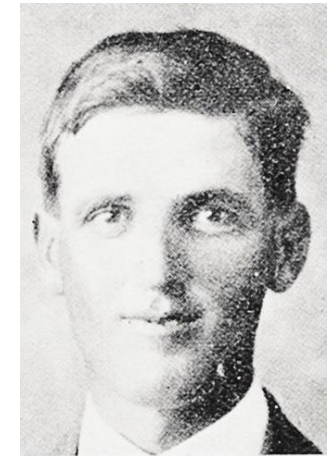
William HYAMS 
† 04/10/1917
Jewish; was exhumed just in front of our museum.



Sidney JACKSON 
† 17/11/1917
Joined the Forces since the outbreak of war.



John JEFFERSON 
† 22/10/1917
Father of two sons of 7 and 5 years old.



Frank LISTER 
† 27/01/1918
Got wounded in Gallipoli and in Messines.




Francis LIVERTON 
† 23/11/1917
Fell at the age of 17.




James LOVE 
† 23/11/1917
Of Irish origin.




Thomas MCLEAN 
† 17/12/1917
Belonged to the Maori.




Leslie MCMURDO 
† 26/09/1917
Spent his youth in South-Africa.




James NEAGLE 
† 18/10/1917
Suffered from chronic shellshock when he fell.




Allan PALMER 
† 16/02/1918
Had a brother who fell in 1918.




Frederick PITT 
† 16/08/1917
Was a 16 years old factory worker before WWI.




William POOLE 
† 09/10/1917
An only child who fell at the age of 18 years old.




Albert REID 
† 29/11/1917
Was a teacher before joining the Forces.




Alan SCOTT 
† 01/10/1917
Served in Turkish Gallipoli.




George STOREY 
 † 30/09/1917
 Found in 2006 during nearby roadworks.




Frank TATE 
 † 24/11/1917
 Had a brother who fell in 1915.




Joseph TATTON 
 † 09/10/1917
 Was a teacher before joining the Forces.




Rupert TAUCHER 
 † 24/11/1917
 Had German-speaking Czech ancestors.




Morton THOMSON 
 † 03/12/1917
 Already fell after a month and a half on the front.




Moetu TOHERIRI 
 † 13/03/1918
 Belonged to the Maori; brother of Rupena.



Rupena TOHERIRI 
 † 14/12/1917
 Belonged to the Maori; brother of Moetu.




Dudley TURNBULL 
 † 1/10/1917
 Was in the army since the outbreak of war.



Joseph WHITE 
 † 4/10/1917
 Born out of a Catholic, British farming family.



Albert WHITING 
 † 20/12/1917
 Fell while brewing a cuppa.

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD:

Mission Polygon Wood can easily be combined with a visit to the museum and the surrounding sites. The following locations are within walking distance or at less than a 10 minutes' drive from our car park:

The **Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917** (rates and bookings: see passchendaele.be) is located on the **Château grounds of Zonnebeke**, which can be visited free of charge. The park contains the Passchendaele Memorial Gardens, eight poppy-shaped gardens dedicated to countries who fought here (Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, France, Great Britain, Germany and Belgium).

The **church tower of Zonnebeke** is close to the museum and has free entrance. Group reservations (from 15 people) are possible at 9:30 am, 11:30 am, 13:30 pm or 15:30 pm via reservaties@zonnebeke.be. In the tower, the exhibition 'Scarred Landscape' shows, on the different floors, the evolution of the landscape in the Ypres area. At the top, at a height of 40 metres, you can enjoy a wide panoramic view of Ypres, Passchendaele and the former battlefields of WWI.

CWGC Tyne Cot Cemetery is located at about a 5 minutes' drive from our museum car park. The site is also accessible on foot via The Road to Passchendaele, a low traffic trail of about 3 km along which there's also a **crypt with Belgian fallen soldiers**. With its 11,956 graves, this is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world, a silent witness to the Battle of Passchendaele. A visitor's centre (Vijfwegestraat, near the car park) provides more information on the cemetery itself and offers a panoramic view on the 1917 battlefields.

