

REMEMBRANCE

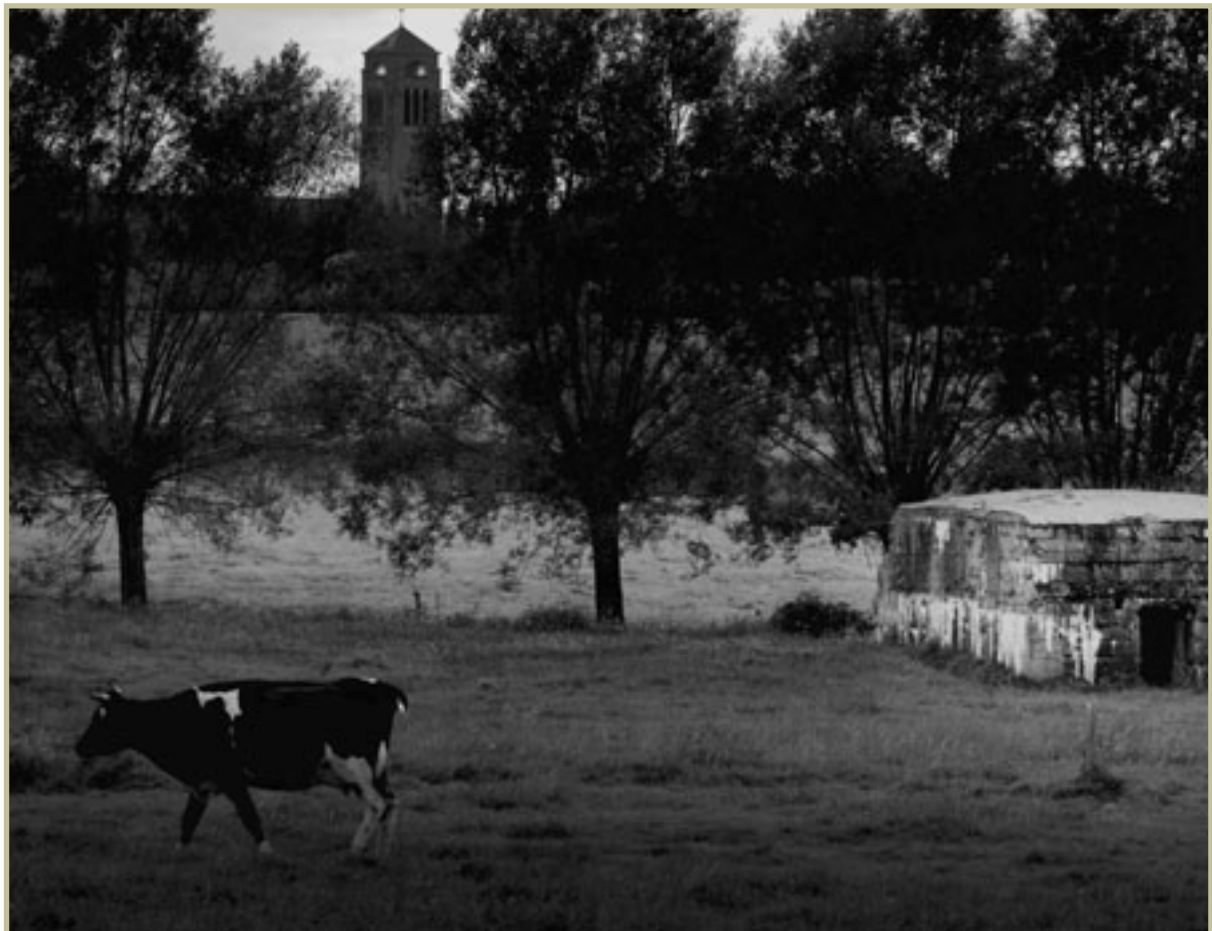
Battle of Messines-Wytschaete
Battle of Passchendaele
1917 - 2007



Program v.03
7 June - 11 November 2007



Wilfried Deraeve



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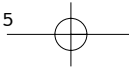
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Preface

Zonnebeke, Heuvelland and Messines are three communities situated on the West Flemish ridge. To the northwest is the more flat area of Langemark-Poelkapelle and to the west the old fortified town of Ypres. The villages around Ypres were small agricultural communities until they were abruptly set on the world map in 1917.

From 1915 to 1917 the front line acquired the shape of an inverted S, with in the north the Ypres Salient and in the south Messines Ridge. In 1917 the British Commander in Chief Douglas Haig intended to break out of the Salient towards Passchendaele and subsequently to Torhout and Oostende. But first the front line south of Ypres had to be straightened. This was done on 7 June 1917 in a spectacular way when 19 giant deep mines were detonated under the German positions. One week later all the objectives were reached, which made the operation one of the most successful campaigns of the entire war. On 16 July 1917 the bombardment of the German defence lines in the salient was started. Here no mines were used and on 31 July the attack began in the pouring rain. The Germans had developed a murderous defence system with bunkers and machine guns. The day-by-day progress was a matter of a few hundred metres. When the best British troops in September were used up, the Anzacs were brought in, and eventually by the end of October, the Canadians. What should have taken a mere three weeks, finally took more than three months to capture the ruins of the village of Passchendaele on 10 November 1917. Half a million of British and Germans were killed, wounded or missing. Passchendaele 1917 had entered history as the biggest slaughter of the First World War.

The Battle of Messines-Wytschaete and that of Passchendaele are inseparably linked because the first was the prologue to the latter. Both battles were fought by the same troops (British, Anzacs, Irish....) under the same commanders (Haig, Plumer and Rupprecht von Bayern). But also today Zonnebeke, Heuvelland and Messines have much in common: the fairly well preserved battlefields and the incessant efforts made to make the legacy of the war further accessible. Among other things we mention the setting up of the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917, re-opening an old railway line and the new visitor centre near Tyne Cot Cemetery in Zonnebeke, the restoration of Bayernwald and Letteberg in Heuvelland, and the Irish Peace Tower and new youth hostel in Messines. Sharing the passion of the common past and a dynamic approach, the local authorities of Zonnebeke (Passchendaele), Heuvelland (Wytschaete) and Messines have embar-



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ked on a unique co-operation for the remembrance year 2007. The project is supported by a partnership with the Belgian Ministry of Defence. For certain parts in the program there is also a co-operation with the community of Langemark-Poelkapelle and the town of Ypres as 2007 is also the 80th anniversary of the inauguration of the Menin Gate.

In this presentation brochure you will find a survey of all planned events and exhibitions. For further realization several authorities, museums and corporations will be approached, both nationally and internationally. The present text (version 03) will be updated in November and finally printed in the beginning of 2007 as a full colour brochure mentioning names of all partners and sponsors. The overall programme will be coordinated by the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917. Anticipating the kind support of anybody being presented with this brochure, we're looking forward to 2007.

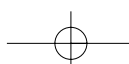
Yours sincerely,

The Aldermen of Culture and Tourism,

Franky BRYON (Zonnebeke)
Geert VANDEWYNCKEL (Heuvelland)
Frans LIGNEL (Ieper)

The Burgomasters,

Dirk CARDOEN (Zonnebeke)
Bernard HEENS (Heuvelland)
Luc DEHAENE (Ieper)
Sandy EVRARD (Mesen)



Flanders 1917

1917: AN OFFENSIVE IN FLANDERS

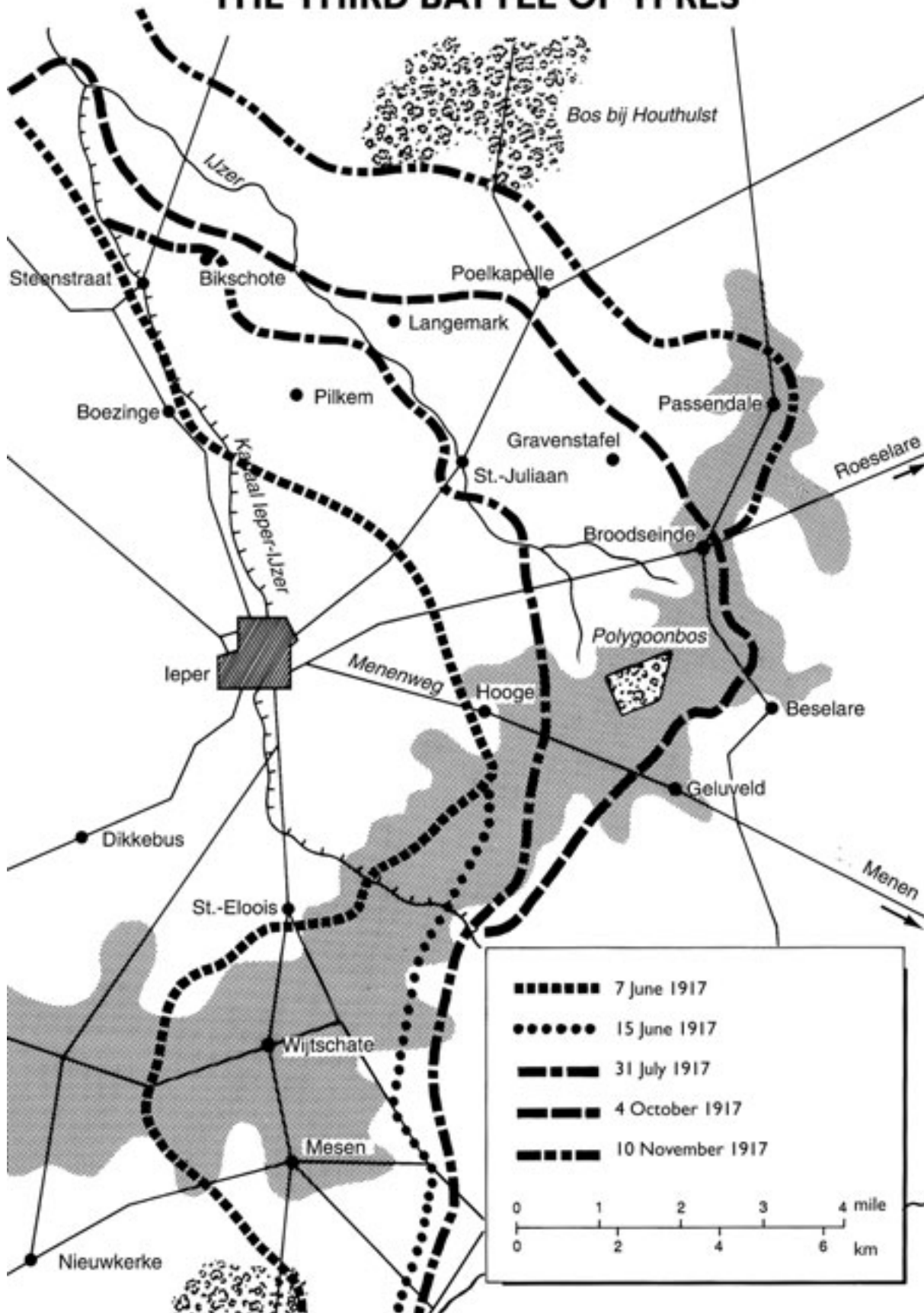
In the summer of 1917 the British are resolved to break the deadlock in Flanders. They intend to push forward to the German U-boat bases on the Belgian coast. At the same time they hope with this attack to relieve the pressure on the French troops in the south. The French face widespread mutiny and urgently need time and rest to set things right.

After the disastrous failures of Verdun and the Somme in 1916, the Germans resolutely opt for a defensive approach. The British however keep believing in a final breakthrough. In Flanders the Germans bring their Fourth and Sixth armies under the command of Crown Prince Rupprecht von Bayern. As chief of staff of the fourth army he gets the best German defence expert, Colonel von Lossberg, who prepares the big 'Abwehrschlacht'. They opt for a defence in depth with bunkers and machine guns, and a flexible relief system between front line troops, reserves and special 'Eingreifdivisionen', waiting to recover the lost territory in case the enemy breaks through. On the Messines-Wytschaete ridge three lines in depth are developed and in the Ypres Salient six. At Messines-Wytschaete the Germans concentrate their defence on the first line, while

towards Zonnebeke-Passchendaele they do so on the third (Wilhelm) and the fourth (Flandern I) line.

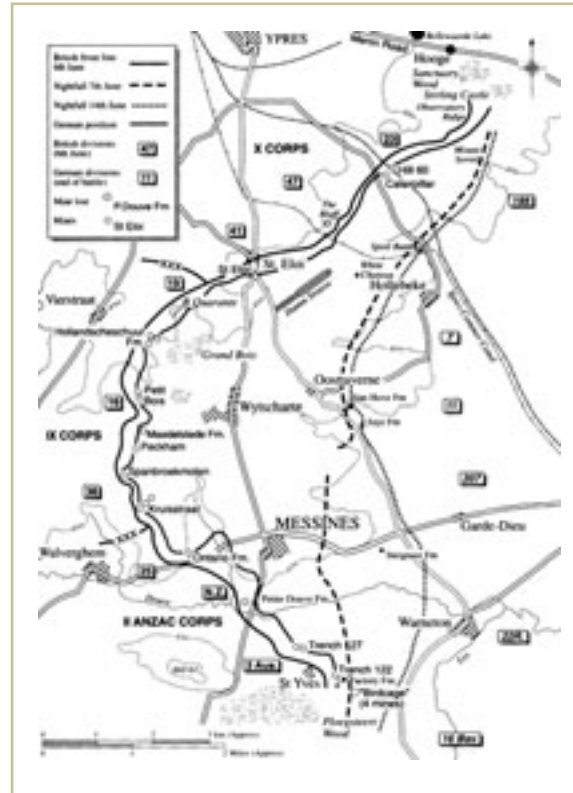
The offensives in the Wytschaete and Ypres Salient result in totally different successes for the British. Messines 1917 becomes one of the most important gains of territory of the whole war. Passchendaele 1917 is undoubtedly the biggest catastrophe.

THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES



MESSINES-WYTSCHAETE 1917

To break through the Ypres Salient, first the front line in the south, the Wytschaete Salient (better known as Messines ridge) has to be straightened. Between 1915 and 1917 the British had tried dozens of times to force their way through the high positioned German defences. From 1916 on they start one of their most important pieces of work: undermining the salient in 24 places with powerful deep mines. But the Germans are informed about it and try to keep them off from ever deeper tunnels. A bizarre cat-and-mouse game develops, a game of mining and countermining, a particular type of warfare deep below the salient. Near La Petite Douve the British lose one mine charge to the Germans, and also in other places the charges' locations are almost detected. Nevertheless, by the summer of 1917, everything is set for 'Zero Hour'.



At dawn of 7 June 1917 nineteen mines are detonated simultaneously. It is the most powerful man-made explosion until then, triggering off a powerful earthquake. The desperation among the Germans is complete. The first lines are abandoned with high casualties, and a few hours later they even have to give up their second line. The New Zealanders take Messines and both Irish divisions capture the ruins of Wytschaete. It's not before the third line, near Oosttaverne, that the Germans can hold their ground. The underground work of the Tunnellers, and the brilliantly conceived strategic plan by Plumer's second army bring about an unmatched success. A week later the whole Wytschaete Salient has collapsed and Commander in Chief Haig can focus on the 'Flanders Offensive', better known as Third Ypres or the Battle of Passchendaele.



Australian War Memorial

PASSCHENDAELE 1917



For Third Ypres, Commander in Chief Douglas Haig deploys General Gough's fifth army. South of it Plumer's second army is deployed. Haig and Gough have a major offensive in mind along a broad front. First the British artillery is to destroy the German defence lines, followed by a massive attack of the infantry. They are supposed to push forward as far as the Wilhelm Stellung, and if possible even to Flanders I.

On 12 July 1917 the Germans pound the first British lines with mustard gas, better known as Yperite. A bad start for the British artillery barrage scheduled to begin four days later. In two weeks' time the British fire over 4 million shells on the German lines, which is two and a half times more than earlier the year before at the Somme.



On the eve of the battle, near Polygon Wood, one of the biggest dogfights of the war takes place. No fewer than 94 planes are involved.

At the end of July the rain starts pouring down. The area, churned by shells, quickly turns into a swamp. After several delays, the nine divisions of the British fifth army finally set off. But the tank brigades soon get bogged down in the mud; the attempt gets stuck on the Wilhelm Stellung and has to be abandoned. In the space of three days the British have gained three kilometres of territory, slightly more than half the amount they had hoped for.

On 10 August the British launch an attack on the heights surrounding Gheluvelt. To the Germans these are of utmost strategic

importance: from there indeed they can hit the whole British right flank. However the attack fails: only the hamlet of Westhoek is taken.

Mid August the action switches to Langemarck. After a few warm days a dry crust has formed on the mud. As a result tanks can be deployed again. But still they get bogged down. The break through seems further away than ever.

At the end of August, the British Commander in Chief Haig understands that with



General Gough he has made the wrong choice, and he passes the initiative to General Plumer again. The latter decides to fight the German Eingreifdivisionen applying their own tactics. He develops a step-by-step approach: limited but well aimed attacks instead of a massive offensive over a broad front. Plumer can now also dispose of two new corps: the first and second Anzac, Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. The combination of the new troops and the adapted tactics turn out to be very effective. On 20 September fighting along the Menin Road is successful, and on 26 September the 5th Australian division takes Polygon Wood. The British succeed in breaking through the Wilhelm Stellung almost everywhere. The German bunkers have to be taken one by one. This is achieved most often by volunteers: they work their way round the bunker



and overpower the defenders with hand grenades, clubs and knives. Such attacks require a lot of prowess. Nowhere else were more Victoria Crosses – the highest military distinction – awarded than in this area.

On 4 October the British reach the Flanders I Stellung. The Germans are determined to defend the line at all costs. For this reason they abandon usual tactics, and deploy all their troops in the front line. The outcome is a bloody disaster: 4 October turns out to be Germany's blackest day. The New Zealanders take 's Graventafel and the 3rd Australian division breaks through the Flanders I position near what was to become Tyne Cot Cemetery.

October 1917 is one of the wettest months of the century. Plumer and Gough demand



Wilfried Deraeve

the offensive to be called off, but Haig badly needs a victory. He also wants to prevent the Germans from attacking the exhausted French troops further to the south. What was initially the objective of the first phase, now becomes the ultimate target of the whole campaign: to capture the ruins of the village on top of the ridge – Passchendaele.

In a few days' time, the unremitting heavy rains turn the landscape into a quagmire in which humans, animals and machines sink. On 9 October it takes the British troops eleven hours from Ypres to reach their jumping off lines along narrow duckboard tracks. Getting the artillery forward is impossible and so the German positions cannot be shelled as usual. The Battle of Poelcapelle has a bloody end.

On 12 October the allies try to take Passchendaele but the Germans repel the attack with machine gun fire from their bun-

kers. Next day Haig gives the order to stop the attack. He has the depleted Anzacs largely relieved by Canadians.

On 26 October the Canadians set out for their 'Road to Passiondale' in the pouring rain. Five days later General Plumer gets even more troops at his disposal. Meanwhile the name of the village has acquired mythical proportions: 'Passiondale', 'the valley of suffering'. On 6 November the Canadians manage to occupy the village, or what is left of it. They can make no further progress and on 10 November the offensive peters out on top of the ridge.

The result of Haig's 'Flanders Offensive' is distressing: after 100 days the allies have advanced hardly eight kilometres. The human toll is enormous. 245,000 British killed, injured or missing, a quarter of the troops deployed. On the German side losses are just a bit lower.



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After all, a British victory was simply not feasible. The British attacked with 57 divisions, the Germans defended with 88 divisions, a one to one and a half ratio. Nevertheless the Battle of Passchendaele determines the end of the war. Because the Germans are kept busy in the north by the British, they cannot take on the defenceless French in the south. During the Battle of Passchendaele they lose a considerable amount of equipment which the German industry cannot make up. Haig never got to Zeebrugge, but by means of his war of attrition he has deprived the Germans of the reserves which they will lack in 1918 to win the war. The 'Materialschlacht' of 1917 will finally finish them off one year later.



MENIN GATE 1927



On 24 July 1927, almost ten years after the beginning of the Third Battle of Ypres, the Menin Gate memorial was inaugurated under massive public interest. Indeed, more British soldiers were killed during this battle, than in any of the other battles near Ypres. At the time the Menin Gate fulfilled and continues to fulfil a very real need of the British front visitor: to find the names of relatives with no known grave. Field Marshal Plumer formulated this most poignantly on the day of the inauguration: "He is not missing, he is here".



The Menin Gate is twinned with the Memorial Wall at Tyne Cot Cemetery. All British soldiers who fell in the Ypres Salient before 15 August 1917 and whose bodies were never found are listed at the Menin Gate, those missing after 15 August 1917 are listed at Tyne Cot Cemetery. The Australians and Canadians are all remembered on the Menin Gate while the New Zealanders have separate monuments in specific cemeteries. Over the years the Menin Gate has become the war monument that has captured the public's imagination more than any other. The fact that internationally the Menin Gate has become the icon for war commemoration is also due to the Last Post ceremony. This daily ceremony – unique in the world – is the local population's tribute to those who fell during the Great War.



Over the years many dignitaries have attended the Last Post ceremony under the Menin Gate, including the British and Belgian royal families in 1966 and in 1998. In 1985, Pope John-Paul II made a significant visit to Ypres. His visit marked the beginning of renewed interest in the First World War and gave Ypres its calling as city of peace.

Exhibitions

For the remembrance year 2007, no fewer than seven exhibitions are being set up, six of which take place in Zonnebeke. The exhibition in Messines-Wytschaete opens on 8 June and will first stay in Messines for three months and afterwards for three months in Wytschaete. The exhibitions in Zonnebeke start on 13 July and are linked to each other along a marked circuit, and via the Westhoek cycle network even with Wytschaete-Messines. All exhibitions are on until 19 November 2007.

Exhibition I (Messines-Wytschaete) ZERO HOUR: The Battle of the Mines

End of 1914 the front line south of Ypres got fixed on the Messines-Wytschaete ridge. Time after time the British tried to break through the German high positions. In 1916 specialized Tunnelling Companies started their magnum opus to undermine the most important German forward positions with 24 powerful deep mines. But the Germans became aware of this and quickly a cat-and-mouse game with mines and countermines developed. Eventually, on 7 June 1917, nineteen charges were detonated simultaneously, triggering off the largest artificial earthquake till then. The Germans were bewildered and only one week later, the salient round

Messines-Wytschaete was rolled up. It's one of the greatest achievements of the whole war. The exhibition tells the story of the British Tunnellers and the German Mineurs by means of rare photo and film material, it gives a survey of the fighting between 7 and 14 June, and illustrates the impact of the blast on the landscape. The exhibition runs for three months in Messines, where it can be visited together with the local museum, and afterwards for three months in Wytschaete village.



Exhibition 2 (Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917)

THE ROAD TO PASSCHENDAELE: Excavations on an old railway

October 4 is the crucial day of the battle of Passchendaele. The jumping off line for the attack was the Zonnebeke-Langemark road. By the end of the day the 3rd Australian Division had taken position on the now Tyne Cot Cemetery, where a memorial plaque beneath the Cross of Sacrifice remembers them. The terrain for the attack is split up by the old railway line Ypres-Roulers, disused since 1952. In co-operation with the province of West Flanders a foot- and cycle path was traced out along the former railway track. This will constitute a physical link between the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 and Tyne Cot Cemetery. For the construction of it, extensive preliminary excavations were carried out in the summer of 2005. Among other things, several German bunkers were excavated, and also the exceptionally well preserved remains of a Lancashire Fusilier. For the first time in Flanders, historical research and archaeological work were so well combined on a World War One site. The results of it will be processed into a book and an exhibition with the same name: 'The Road to Passchendaele'. The exhibition

will tell the historical and archaeological story of the railway by means of photos, drawings, reconstruction work and an extensive selection of finds. This exhibition will also be set up in a museum abroad and will after 2007 continue as a travelling exhibition.



Exhibition 3 (Visitor centre Tyne Cot Cemetery)

TYNE COT CEMETERY : An Eternal Vigil

Tyne Cot Cemetery is the largest Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in the world. It contains 12,000 graves and on the crescent shaped rear wall are the names of 35,000 soldiers who are missing in action after 16th August 1917 and who have no known grave. For this reason Tyne Cot cemetery is a special place of remembrance in the 1917 Battle of Passchendaele. The cemetery is situated in the actual fields where fierce fighting took place and where so many of the missing now lie undisturbed and sleeping. Each year the cemetery attracts 180,000 visitors. However, by the end of 2006, brand new reception facilities will be finished, with car park, toilets and a visitor's centre providing background information on the cemetery and the thousands of

soldiers buried or commemorated here. The centre is designed in such a way as to focus on an interaction with the historical battlefield and in particular the capture of the ridge by the 3rd Australian Division on 4 October 1917, with a link to the temporary exhibition in the Memorial Museum. Although the new facilities will be available in 2006, the formal inauguration will take place on 12 July 2007. The costs of the whole scheme amount to 1.500.000 euros. It is an initiative of the Community of Zonnebeke, the Province of West Flanders, Tourism Flanders, the European Community and a private partnership, with the cooperation of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917.



Exhibition 4 (old cheese dairy)

A DESCENT INTO HELL: The New Zealanders in Passchendaele.

In 2003-2004 in the New Zealand Army Museum in Waiouru, there was a major exhibition on Passchendaele 1917. Two important dates are indelibly stamped in the New Zealand collective memory: 4 and 12 October 1917. On 4 October the New Zealanders successfully took the heights of Gravenstaefel, but got stuck near the Ravebeek, in front of Bellevue. On 9 October the British tried out a frontal attack, followed again by the New Zealanders on 12 October. 12 October 1917 turned out to be the bloodiest day in the history of the young New Zealand. In hardly more than four hours 2,700 casualties were inflicted on the division. As an eternal memory, there's a large monument on top of Gravenstaefel hill. The exhibition tells the story of 4 and 12 October and of the men who fought here in utmost degrading circumstances. We intend to bring this award winning exhibition to Passchendaele and to set it up in the old cheese dairy buildings, situated on the historic site between Gravenstaefel and Bellevue. Today Passchendaele is not only renowned for its war past, but also for its Passchendaele cheeses.

In this renovated old cheese dairy you can follow the whole production process from milk to cheese. There is a spacious cafeteria, parking place and play garden.



Exhibition 5 (Varlet Farm)

NAVAL DIVISION & IRON HARVEST: The story of a farm on the battlefield

Varlet Farm is near the hamlet of Walle-molen. On 26 October 1917 the Royal Naval Division tried to force their way through on the left flank of the Canadians, but the attack was stranded in the mud near the Padde-beek. Also on 30 October and 5 November there was another major offensive, but again in vain. In 10 days' time around Varlet Farm almost 2,000 marines were knocked out of action. The current inhabitants of Varlet Farm are passionately interested in World War One and for years have collected anything that was found on their fields. The story of the Naval Division in Passchendaele will be told by the Historical Branch of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth.

Here no cleaned relics in a static museum compartment, but bits of helmets, rifles and bayonets as they are ploughed to the surface each year. A lot of attention is paid to the finding of ammunition, set in an historical perspective. It's the story of thousands of labourers who earned their living here between 1919 and 1930 digging deep to find copper and iron, it's also the story of dismantling ammunition illegally by unauthorized people (which has cost the lives of hundreds of men) and the work of DOVO (Belgian Bomb Disposal Squad). Collecting war relics is also discussed relating to battlefield archaeology as a new discipline... the 'iron harvest' or the 'legacy of Passchendaele'.



Exhibition 6 (Passchendaele Village)

LEGACY OF VALOUR: The Canadians in Passchendaele

Last in the row, the Canadians began their 'Road to Passchendaele' on 26 October 1917. In front of them lay the valley of the Ravebeek with the hillocks of Crest Farm and Bellevue. When on 30 October Crest Farm finally was taken, it took another eleven days before also the church of Passchendaele fell, just one kilometre further up. This was the end of the Battle of Passchendaele, officially on 10 November 1917. After the war the Canadians erected a national monument near the ruins of Crest Farm, which was linked to the church by a new road, Canada Lane. Otherwise, on the face of it, not much

refers to this world famous village with its haunting past. In a special exhibition, named after the book by Daniel Dancocks, one will learn all about it. Striking photographs, testimonies, artefacts and reconstruction works give an exceptional, idea of the Canadian presence at Passchendaele and the utter destruction of this front line village. Moreover a lot of attention will be paid to understanding the historical battlefield and the link to the present landscape. Further there will also be stories of some Flemish people who were killed alongside the Canadians in Passchendaele.



Exhibition 7 (Passchendaele Church) KNOWN UNTO GOD: The Dead of Passchendaele

More than 200,000 British, German and French soldiers have no known grave in the area. About half of this number are simply remembered with the words "Known unto God," 'Unbekannt' or 'Inconnu'. Today, ninety years later, human remains are still being found. In most cases the nationality can be determined, occasionally the name of the regiment, and in some rare cases even the identity of the soldier. 'Finding the Fallen' tells the story of the latest human finds, and how they are treated with such great care. The exhibition is set up by the National Army Museum in Chelsea, where it was on display till spring 2006. A second exhibition is related to it, covering burial places in Westhoek. In some thirty pictures, the British photograp-

her Brian Harris offers a telling image of the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. After all, it is 90 years ago that this organization was established by Fabian Ware, who initially inspired it. Under the authority of the Commission, historian Julie Summers is working on an official history, helped as she is by these pictures. In Normandy and at the Somme, similar theme exhibitions will be running. Both exhibitions on 'The Dead of Passchendaele' are set up in one of the most symbolic places on the western front: Passchendaele Church. Outside there is an arts exhibition 'Reflection' with contemporary reflections on the subject 'life and death' in Passchendaele.



Events

All events are combined into five theme weekends which in time correspond to the different phases of the offensive. The activities each time take place on a site as close as possible to the historical location of the battle concerned.

Weekend I (Messines-Wytschaete) 7-10 JUNE: Battle of the Mines

As a prologue to the Battle of Passchendaele, the front line south of Ypres had to be straightened. This happened when on 7 June 1917 nineteen powerful deep mines were detonated, which together triggered off the largest manmade explosion so far. One week later all objectives were reached.

Thursday 7 June: CEREMONY

Official remembrance ceremony for the mine battle of 7 June 1917 in Messines. Traditionally the focus here is on the Irish and the impressive Irish Peace Tower. For the 2007 ceremony representatives of all countries involved will be invited.



Thursday 7 June: REDMOND WALK

Remembrance walk from Wytschaete to Loere commemorating Major William Redmond MP. Early morning start at 4.10 am.

Sunday 10 June: CEREMONY

At 10 a.m. ecumenical service in Wytschaete Church, followed by a parade to the local War Memorial and Wytschaete Military Cemetery.



Friday 8 June: PEACE CONFERENCE



International conference with different parties from Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic for a better co-operation and understanding in Northern Ireland. The meeting takes place in the International School of Peace Studies near the Irish Peace Tower.

Friday 8 June: OPENING

At 7 p.m. the official opening of the special exhibition 'Zero Hour' in the Peace School, followed by an Irish festival in the streets of Messines commencing 8.30 p.m.



Saturday - Sunday 9-10 June: THEATRE WALKS: BATTLE OF THE MINES

Theatre walks focusing on the 7 June 1917 Battle of the mines, starting and finishing at Wytschaete village. Historical evocation in ten tableau's with among others a visit to the German counter mine shaft Dietrich. Departure: every half hour between 1.30 and 6.30 p.m.

Saturday 9 June 2007: NEW ZEALAND WALK

Guided walk in the wake of the Kiwis. We follow the attack of the New Zealand Division along fields and meadows. Departure: 9 a.m. from Messines square.



Saturday 9 June: CONCERT

Unique theme concert in the church of Wytschaete with music, texts, photo and film material covering the mine battle of 7 June.



Weekend 2 (Zonnebeke, Chateau grounds) 12-15 JULY: Museum weekend

On 12 July 1917 the Germans for the first time attacked using mustard gas, better known as Yperite. Four days later the allies launched an artillery bombardment towards Passchendaele with unprecedented ferocity. 12 July is therefore chosen as the opening of the commemorations in Zonnebeke with an international ceremony at Tyne Cot Cemetery. Together, the traditional museum weekend is scheduled, which exceptionally is moved away from the end of April.

Thursday 12 July: INTERNATIONAL DOUBLE CEREMONY



On 12 July 2007 the official commemoration service for the Battle of Passchendaele at Tyne Cot Cemetery will be organised. Just as in 1967 and 1987 the heads of state and governments of all countries involved will be invited. The ceremony starts at 3.30 pm with the international opening of the new visitor centre near Tyne Cot Cemetery, followed at 5.30 pm by an ecumenical service, led by the Chaplain General to the Forces and a Belgian Bishop. Afterwards the delegation is going to the Menin Gate in Ypres for a special ceremony to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the inauguration of the Menin Gate at 5.30 p.m. Several regiments have already announ-

ced their presence. For the reception of the important guests the strictest safety procedures will be implemented. After the ceremonies there will be a VIP reception in the chateau grounds, which for the occasion will be closed to all other visitors. The ceremonies at Tyne Cot Cemetery and the Menin Gate are to become the absolute climax of the 2007 remembrance year.

Friday 13 July: OPENING EXHIBITIONS

On Friday 13 July all exhibitions will be officially opened. The guests will be taken by coaches from one site to the other, and afterwards an extensive reception will take place.



Saturday-Sunday 14-15 July: BATTLEFIELD TOURS

During the whole weekend shuttle buses will link the different exhibitions and some other accessible sites. Guides will be on the spot and with a single ticket you will be able to tour the whole day.



Saturday 14 July: BAL POPULAIRE

On Saturday evening the chateau grounds will be the setting of a popular dance party in the marquee. A band will perform authentic music from the years of the war. Re-enactors will add colour to the event and everybody is invited to dance to music from those days.



Saturday-Sunday 14-15 July: LIVING HISTORY

Following tradition during the museum weekend, festivities will get underway in Zonnebeke with living history. For 2007 we hope to welcome 200 re-enactors in what is to become the biggest evocation of First World War ever. In 2006 participants came from 7 different countries.



Weekend 3 (Zonnebeke, Chateau grounds) 26 AUGUST: Passchendaele I: Scots

From 31 July to the end of August 1917 British troops tried to break through the front line. Scottish units played an important role in this endeavour, more particularly the 9th, 15th and 51st divisions. A theme weekend focusing on the Highlanders and Lowlanders in Zonnebeke...

Saturday 25 August: FOUR DAYS OF THE YSER

Closing day of the Yser walking days, organised by the Belgian army. Thousands of hikers on the former Westhoek battlefields.



Saturday-Sunday 25-26 August: GASTRONOMY

On Saturday and Sunday afternoon running, Scottish specialities such as haggis and blends of whisky can be tasted in a special marquee in the chateau grounds. Adapted music will lead us all the way to Scotland.



Saturday 25 August: INAUGURATION SCOTTISH MONUMENT

On the Frezenberg, a Celtic Cross will be inaugurated on Saturday afternoon to commemorate all the Scots who were killed here in the First World War. It will be paid for by fund raising in Scotland. Any support is welcome.



Saturday 25 August: TATTOO

Imposing evening show with civilian and military pipe bands in the chateau court.



Sunday 26 August: HIGHLAND GAMES

A taste of ancient folklore from Scotland... genuine Scottish bruisers show how it should be done. Local teams will play for the honour.

Sunday 26 August: FREZENBERG DAWN WALK

For the first time in Flanders, you can witness a genuine 'dawn service', with a Scottish piper. In a four kilometers' walk we follow the story of the Scottish, Irish, English and South African attacks on Zonnebeke. Another first performance is the play 'The Prayer'. This well-known work by the Scottish stretcher bearer William St. Clair will be staged for the first time on the very battlefield it was written for. This unique 'battlefield walk' finishes with a Scottish breakfast, prepared by an army cook from Scotland.



Weekend 4 (Passchendaele, Old Cheese Dairy) 5-7 OCTOBER: Passchendaele II: Anzacs

To give the exhausted offensive new momentum, the two Anzac corps were deployed here in mid September. One month later this attack by the Australians and New Zealanders petered out on the murderous German defence system with bunkers and machine guns.

Thursday 4 October: SERVICE

At 10.30 a.m. service for the fallen New Zealanders at Gravenstafel and at 11 a.m. for the Australians at Tyne Cot Cemetery.



Friday 5 October: GASTRONOMY

The old cheese dairy premises are a popular venue for gourmets. To open the theme weekend, a famous Belgian chef will be faced with delicacies and Chefs from Australia and New Zealand.



Saturday-Sunday 6-7 October: LIVING HISTORY

Arrival on Saturday of participants to a several days' Anzac walk, organised by re-enactors from Australia and New Zealand. Throughout Saturday and Sunday there will be Anzac re-enactment with drill, battle re-enacting, advanced dressing posts...



Saturday 6 October: THEMEWALK AUSTRALIANS

Guided theme walk along the newly opened disused railway line Ypres-Roulers in the wake of the Australian 3rd Division. Departure: 3 p.m. at the Memorial Museum.



Saturday 6 October: DUAL PERFORMANCE

A unique dual performance with native music from Australia and New Zealand by Aborigines and Maori. Never shown in Flanders before!



Sunday 7 October: THEMEWALK NEWZEALANDERS

Theme walk focusing on the commitment of the New Zealanders on 4 and 12 October. Departure at 3 p.m. at the exhibition on the Old Cheese Dairy premises. In the morning at Messines at 9 a.m., the New Zealand walk of 9 June is repeated. There is the opportunity to combine both as a special day arrangement in the wake of the Kiwis.



Sunday 7 October: RUGBY MATCH

On 4 October 1917 at 's Graventafel the New Zealander David Gallagher, skipper of the national rugby squad 'The All Blacks', was killed. At 3 p.m. at Passchendaele, a unique remembrance match will be played: rugby for the first time in Westhoek!!



Weekend 5 (Passchendaele Village)

9-11 NOVEMBER Passchendaele III: Canadians

End October 1917 the exhausted Anzacs were relieved by Canadians. On 30 October 1917 they stood at Crest Farm, but it took them another 10 days before they managed to take the ruins of Passchendaele church, less than one kilometre further on.

Saturday-Sunday 10-11 November: BOOK FAIR

Two days' international book fair with thousands of new and antiquarian books about Flanders and the Great War. From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the former village school of Passchendaele in Canadalaan.



Saturday 10 November: SEMINAR

Seminar on the Flemish emigration to Canada in the 19th and 20th century and the special bonds between both countries.



Saturday 10 November: CLOSING CEREMONY

International closing ceremony of the remembrance year 2007 with a march from Crest Farm to the village of Passchendaele, with ambassadors of all countries involved. Start at 6 pm.





Saturday 10 November: CONCERT



Remembrance concert in Passchendaele church about the Canadians in Passchendaele with the subject 'War and Emigration'. Before the first World War, thousands of Flemings emigrated to Canada to start a new life. Quite a few of them came back when serving in the Canadian army, to die in Passchendaele. A few harrowing life stories constitute the guideline for this special remembrance concert with live music of the Swigshift. Start at 8 p.m.



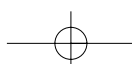
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Sunday 11 November: ARMISTICE DAY

Traditional November 11 ceremony in Passchendaele with service and ceremonies at different monuments.

Sunday 11 November: THEMEWALK

A singular exploration of the village of Passchendaele from the viewpoint of the Canadians taking the village in October-November 1917.



Others

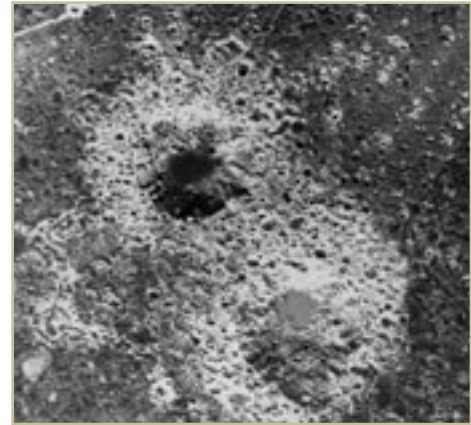
FRIENDSHIP CONCERT CCMP

As a yearly tradition, the 'Competentiecentrum Steun Materieel en Producten' (CCMP - the Belgian army logistics department at Ypres) organizes a friendship concert. It goes without saying that the army community cannot ignore the Battle of Passchendaele 90 years ago. For that reason, in the Ypres cloth hall, on 9 and 16 February, the theme concert 'From Tipperary to Passchendaele' will be performed. This poignant story of the Irish in the Great War finishes on 16 August 1917 at Frezenberg. With this concert the CCMP goes first in an impressive year of remembrance.



MINE PATH

For years in Heuvelland there has been the footpath 'Craters and Mines'. The municipality of Heuvelland has now taken the initiative to update it, incorporating a few new sites. The footpath starts at Wytschaete's village welcoming point linking the most important mine craters with Bayernwald war site, a few cemeteries, and the German countermine shaft Dietrich across Petit Bois. To achieve this, a special passage through Wytschaete Wood (Grand Bois) will be made accessible.



FILM

The municipality of Heuvelland is working on a documentary film about the mine battle of Wytschaete-Messines. The story of the digging of the tunnels and the mine battle will be visualised by new genuine footage, reconstructions and 3-D simulations. For the first time the story of the German moles will also be told. Preview of the film during the weekend of 7 June.



VISITOR CENTRE TYNE COT CEMETERY

Tyne Cot Cemetery is the largest burial ground of the Commonwealth in Europe. Every year 180,000 visitors come here from all over the world. In 2007 we open a brand new visitor centre with parking place, toilets and background information on the cemetery. The project is a co-operation between the municipality of Zonnebeke, the province of West Flanders, Tourism Flanders, the European Community and a private partner, supported by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917.



THE OLD RAILWAY

The disused railway line Ypres-Roulers links Zonnebeke with Tyne Cot Cemetery over a distance of less than 2 kilometres. The terrain concerned is the very area of the Australian advance on 4 October 1917. By the end of 2006, the disused track will be adapted as foot and cycle path. Along the track several war relics will be visible and there will be information plaques with historical explanation. Furthermore, an educational package will be linked to the path. In this way, school parties can learn about the Battle of Passchendaele in the museum and afterwards they can re-walk one day of the battle (4 October), to be faced eventually with the human cost at Tyne Cot Cemetery.



SCOTTISH MONUMENT

On 25 August 2007 at Frezenberg (Zonnebeke), a monument will be unveiled for all the Scots who died here in Flanders during the first World War. In August-September 1917, Frezenberg was the scene of one of the biggest tragedies in the Scottish history. The monument will have the shape of a Celtic cross, cut from Scottish granite. It will be erected on a pedestal of German block-house stones. To cover the costs, a sponsoring campaign is running in Scotland. Several regiments and official bodies have made a contribution already. Also the Flemish Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Tourism is giving financial help. To the broad public special 'pipers' are sold, made by the famous 'Shrapnel Charlie', and also the profits of selling the official 'pin 2007' will entirely go to the Scottish monument. For more information: www.scottishmonument.be



THE PASSCHENDAELE ARCHIVES

The 'Passchendaele Archives' are started to try and give a face to the thousands of names on headstones and memorials to the missing. Archives will be compiled of all the casualties of the Battle of Passchendaele on the condition that photographic material can be found. Thanks to an allowance from the Flemish Secretary of Culture, a historian could be employed to systematically check thousands of publications, to do research home and abroad in archives and to support a network of volunteers who try to get into touch with the families of casualties. This project is to result eventually into a database and publication with extracts from personal files. It will also contribute to the setting up of the new visitor centre near Tyne Cot Cemetery.



EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE



Early 2006, the Memorial Museum launched a full educational package for school groups, consisting of a handbook for class usage, a workbook to be used at the museum, and modules for fieldwork. It is aimed at helping teachers to prepare à la carte lessons and a visit to the museum. As far as teaching aids are concerned, there is an educational case for hire, and also in the museum artefacts can be touched and tried out. For those who still want more, there is the 'Platoon Experience' : 'The Road to Passchendaele'.

REFLECTION

'Reflection' will be the artistic part of the initiatives focusing on the Battle of Passchendaele. About ten photographers (Stephan Vanfleteren, Bart Michiels and others) and artists use the subject of Passchendaele 1917 and Tyne Cot Cemetery as a metaphor to express their artistic approach. Chaos, horror, war, death and violence but also the purified, peace, silence and whatever can sublimine passion. 'Reflection' is on from 13 July to 15 November on several locations in the centre of Passchendaele. More information: cultuur@zonnebeke.be



'PLATOON EXPERIENCE' : 'THE ROAD TO PASSCHENDAELE'



In 2007 a special day offer for schools will be worked out in close cooperation with the Department 'Moral Assistance and Remembrance' of the Belgian Veterans Institute. First the pupils will visit the Memorial Museum, where they hear and see the historical side of the Battle of Passchendaele. Thereafter, they actually put themselves in the shoes of an Australian soldier, complete with uniform and luggage. After brief instructions they follow the route of the attack on 4 October 1917. Soon they physically experience the impact of the rising ground. Along the disused railway Ypres-Roulers, there are also remains of old blockhouses and emplacements. The walk ends at Tyne Cot Cemetery, where they take off their gear to go and search for the grave of 'their' soldier. On their way genuine army food will be served. This scheme is the only one at the western front!!!

THE SWIGSHIFT



No band in Flanders is linked so much to the musical remembrance of the Great War as 'The Swigshift'. Since the Redmond remembrance in 1997, the war has haunted them. Some members of the group took part in the Passendale Peace Concerts, but their main success came in 2005 with the overwhelming concert 'From Tipperary to Passchendaele' in cooperation with the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917. These 'Celts' from Wervik bring a mix of historical folk and own compositions. On 9 and 16 February in the Ypres Cloth Hall, on 9 June at Wytschaete, on 25 August at Zonnebeke and on 10 November at Passchendaele.

MESSINES WALK

After the mine explosions of 7 June, Messines was taken by New Zealand forces. Up to now this is one of the most important events in the rich history of this small town. In 1975 Messines fraternized with Featherston, where a lot of New Zealanders came from. On 9 June, 15 July, 19 August, 16 September and 6 October, there are special guided theme walks in the wake of the Kiwis. Starting time is always at 9 a.m. at the Messines square.

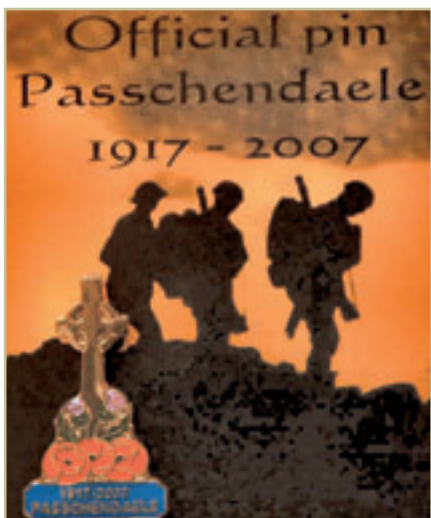


ALEX DECOTEAU RUN



On 30 October 1917, the Canadian Indian Alex Wuttunee Decoteau died during the assault on Passchendaele. Before the war he served in the city police corps of Edmonton. He was an excellent runner, winning eighth place in the 5,000 metres at the Stockholm Olympic Games in 1912. In recognition of the commitment of the native indigenous people in the Battle of Passchendaele, Flanders Athletic Club Ypres, in cooperation with the Memorial Museum, will be organising a 'memorial run' on 4 November 2007 through the battle zone of the Canadian Army Corps. Obviously Decoteau's historic 5,000 metres run is on the programme. But one can also for the 10,000 metres. Both recreational joggers and more competitive runners are welcome.

OFFICIAL PIN 1917-2007



Since 12 July 2006, an official pin for the commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele can be obtained. It costs 3 GBP or 4.50 euros. The entire profits go to the erection of the Scottish monument, which is depicted on the pin.

STAMP

For the memorial year 2007, an occasional stamp with day mark will be issued on 12 July in the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917.



CONFERENCE

From 15 to 17 November, the In Flanders Fields Museum and the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917 are organising a 3 days' conference on the Battle of Passchendaele. International experts go into the issue of the (military) point of the campaign or the lack of it. The conference is held in Ypres, with on Saturday, a visit to Zonnebeke and Passchendaele.



KIWIS IN FLANDERS

From mid September to mid November, the New Zealand poet Glenn Colquhoun and photographer Véronique Cornille (with Flemish roots) will visit the area. In their own unique way they will try to express the strong bond between the Flemish people and the New Zealand soldiers, in word and image. Also a well-known Flemish poet will be invited to contribute. The Dutch poems will be translated into English, and the English ones into Dutch. It will result into a special book: 'Kiwis in Flanders: 90 years on, New Zealanders return to Belgium to find the stories'. Officially it will be published on 11 November 2008. On the 12th October 2007, a cultural exchange programme will be set up between a Belgian school and the New Zealand Nelson College. This event will be launched symbolically with the planting of an indigenous tree, supervised by Horomona Horo. This popular Maori musician belongs to the Nga Puhi tribe, many of whom died in Flanders serving in the Maori Pioneer Battalion.



Nelson Mail New Zealand

PUBLICATIONS

As an introduction to 2007, three new books on the Battle of Passchendaele will be published. The first one will be a visitor's guide to the museum and battlefields, edited by Openbaar Kunstbezit Vlaanderen. In the second book, 'The Road to Passchendaele', the battlefields between Zonnebeke and Tyne Cot will be investigated based on the results of archaeological research on the disused railway and a study about Tyne Cot Cemetery. The third publication will offer a historical account of the Battle of Passchendaele by means of stories about those who were killed. Data for this book will be provided by the project 'The Passchendaele Archives'.



Colophon

The remembrance 1917-2007 is an initiative of:

Municipality of Zonnebeke
Municipality of Heuvelland
Town of Messines
Town of Ypres
Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917

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Passchendaele 1917



War and Peace
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Province of West Flanders



Westtoer



West Flemish Hills
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The Flemish Minister of
Administration, Foreign Affairs,
Media and Tourism



Tourism Flanders



The Flemish Minister of
Youth, Sports,
Culture and Brussels



Ministry of Defence



Veteran Institute
Department Moral Assistance
and Remembrance



DOVO
(Belgian Army bomb disposal squad)



Commonwealth War Graves
Commission



National Army Museum (UK)



Naval Historical Branch (UK)



Australian Government



New Zealand Government



Canadian Government

