



Media Statement

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Katanning student blazing a trail to the Western Front

Katanning school student Rachel Drake-Brockman took another step closer to the First World War's historic Western Front recently when she received her official ANZAC Student Tour blazer from Premier Alan Carpenter.

Rachel, a Year 11 student at Katanning Senior High School, is one of 12 students selected to travel with Mr Carpenter to France and Belgium this month as part of the Premier's ANZAC Student Tour 2008.

Mr Carpenter said the students will be walking in the footsteps of the ANZACs, paying tribute to those who served or were killed or injured on the battlefields of the Western Front.

"More than 48,000 young Australians, not much older than the students selected for this tour, lost their lives on the battlefields of France and Belgium," Mr Carpenter said.

"The students chosen to take part in the tour have demonstrated an interest in Australia's role at the Western Front and are all outstanding representatives of young Western Australia.

"Rachel holds a black-belt in karate and is a keen clay target shooter. She enjoys society and environment, science and English at school and has participated in a model United Nations assembly."

Rachel's family has a history of involvement in the defence forces and uncles serve in World War I.

"I am really looking forward to visiting Menin Gate because one of my family's friends had a relative serve there and seeing the place will give me a better understanding of what really happened," Rachel said.

"I am also excited about coming back to Katanning and encouraging other students to take more of an interest in ANZAC Day and to remember what the soldiers have done for us."

Mr Carpenter said the tour has special significance in 2008 as the students will join him at the Dawn Service on April 25 at the French village of Villiers-Bretonneux to mark the 90th anniversary of the town's liberation from German occupation.

“This tour is part of the State Government’s commitment to raising the profile of ANZAC Day in the lives of all Western Australians, remembering the sacrifices of our forebears,” he said.

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Photo attached. Rachel is available for interviews.