



Department of  
Education and Training

## *Media Statement*

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1/5/09

### **Western Suburbs students return from the Western Front**

Two western suburbs students have returned from a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Western Front in France and Belgium, as part of the 2009 Premier's ANZAC Student Tour.

Year 11 students Christopher Wong, of Christ Church Grammar School, and Dominique Maberly, of Perth Modern School, were part of a group of 12 students from across the State who won a place on the history tour, which culminated with ANZAC commemorations at Ieper and Zonnebeke in Belgium.

The tour group's ANZAC commemorations began a day early on April 24 when students formed an honour guard and laid a wreath at the nightly Last Post service at Menin Gate in Ieper, joined by Western Australian Agent General Kerry Sanderson.

The highlights continued on ANZAC Day with a dawn service at Polygon Wood, followed by the opening of a new exhibition at the Zonnebeke Museum, a special morning Last Post service at Menin Gate and speeches at the Ieper Town Hall.

Throughout the tour, the students also visited key landmarks, memorials and battlefields on the First World War Western Front, including Pozieres, Villers-Bretonneux, Fromelles, Pheasant Wood, Thiepval and Le Hamel.

Dominique said the Menin Gate service on ANZAC Day was the highlight for her.

"The procession from Ieper Town Hall to the Menin Gate and back again was incredible, there were so many people," Dominique said.

"I thought I would understand everything better by being there but now it's so much harder to comprehend seeing the huge number of crosses. And I feel that there's so much more in which to be involved in the world, rather than sitting back and watching it on the news."

Chris agreed the ANZAC Day commemorations at Menin Gate left him awestruck.

"There were so many people there at each of the five ceremonies and you wouldn't get that in Perth," he said.

"The respect for Australians there is quite significant and I was amazed by that. And the amount of names on the walls at Menin Gate and number of graves at Tyne Cot were amazing. At Tyne Cot there were 12,000 graves, of which only 400 soldiers identities are known."

Applications for the 2010 ANZAC Student Tour are open now and close on 14 August 2009. Secondary school students from Years 8 to 11 throughout WA are encouraged to apply.

For more information visit the Department of Education and Training Premier's ANZAC Student Tour website at [www.det.wa.edu.au/ANZAC](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/ANZAC).

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**Media contact:** Carmen Carter, 0434 608 148 or 9264 5723.