



Department of
Education and Training

Media Statement

1/5/09

Mount Lawley student returns from the Western Front

Mount Lawley Senior High School student Marissa Barbaro has 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.

Marissa, a Year 12 student, was part of a group of 12 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.

At Villers-Bretonneux, Marissa placed a poppy at the Wall of Remembrance, under the name of former East Perth Football Club player Private Stanley Herbert Smith. Pte Smith, who was in the 28th Battalion, played eight games for East Perth between 1913 and 1915. He died on November 16, 1916.

"Visiting Paris was really great but when we started looking at the historical aspects of the tour it was really eye opening to see the battlefields and put it all into perspective," Marissa said.

"To see the open ground and trenches at Le Hamel and the Newfoundland memorial was particularly helpful, because it gave us a better understanding of the ANZAC spirit and the conditions our diggers lived in."

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.

(ENDS)

Note: a photograph of Marissa placing a poppy under Pte Smith's name is attached.

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