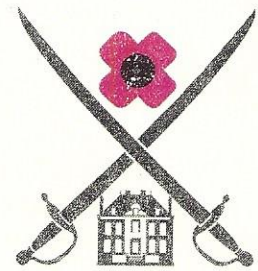


**New Zealand War Memorial Museum – Le Quesnoy**  
P O Box 90345  
Auckland 1142  
New Zealand



**NEW ZEALAND  
MEMORIAL MUSEUM**  
LE QUESNOY FRANCE  
— A PLACE TO REMEMBER —

20 February 2019

**David Sinton**  
**Thames & Districts RSA**  
PO Box 273  
Thames 3540  
New Zealand

**Dear David Sinton,**

I am contacting you and other Royal Returned Services Associations throughout New Zealand to let you know about a project that I hope will capture your imagination and enable me to gain your support. I am well aware that amongst your more than 102,000 members, spread over 182 RSA's around New Zealand, there are many who are aware of this French town and the important part it played in our military history. But allow me to elaborate:

It was on November 4, 1918 that the town of Le Quesnoy, in northern France, was liberated by New Zealand soldiers. The New Zealanders chose to use ladders and ropes, rather than grenades and mortar fire, to make their way into the town, to avoid civilian casualties. They took 2,000 Germans prisoner, and there was no loss of civilian life. However, 142 courageous New Zealanders died in liberating the town. Their sacrifice forged an enduring link between the people of Le Quesnoy and their liberators - the brave strangers from the other side of the world.

Many New Zealanders spend time in Europe visiting the graves of family members who fought in the wars, retracing the fateful steps of the dead and of those who eventually returned home, many wounded, all of them changed for life after witnessing the horror of war. Nearly 100 years since the end of WW1, there is no dedicated place in Europe that tells their story but that is about to change.

Along with a group of like-minded people, I am a member of a Charitable Trust behind the establishment of the first permanent New Zealand War Memorial Museum in Europe - and yes it will be in Le Quesnoy. The battle of 4 November 1918 will be highlighted alongside exhibitions and displays relating to all of New Zealand's valiant efforts during WW1 and WW2.

The Museum will be located in a beautiful building, which has been used previously as the Mayor's residence and more recently as the local Gendarmerie HQ. The building is on an impressive site that allows for development of an annex and accommodation for visitors to the town.

The New Zealand Memorial Museum Trust's work is well underway to raise funds to develop the property and ensure that the whole project is carried out in a way that befits its importance. We have raised just under \$3 million of our \$15 million target.

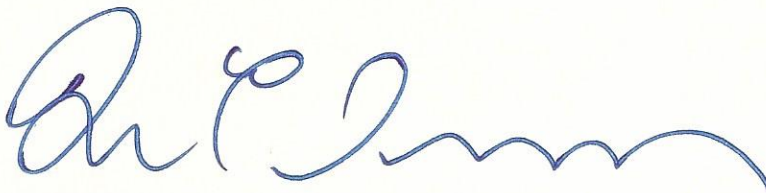
We have also developed an education programme that we are rolling out nationally in schools that predate 1920. Schools will be invited to take part in a project whereby Year 9 & 10 students identify and research fallen soldiers from World War I with connections to their school, and where possible, themselves. The schools will have a physical link to the NZ War Memorial Museum, their maps indicating the place of death of the researched fallen soldier and a biography will be displayed in the Museum in France.

It is time to honour the New Zealanders who served in the World Wars, many of them never to return home. I'm counting on generosity from fellow New Zealanders to help achieve this. I hope you are able to discuss this project amongst your members and its value to the nation. I, of course, would welcome the chance to meet with you to discuss this exciting and overdue project to see how you and your local RSA can help.

You can find out more now by going into our website [www.nzwmm.org.nz](http://www.nzwmm.org.nz) to get a broader picture.

I will follow up this letter within the next month or so by email to discuss how we can help you fully inform your membership as to the benefits of this project to all Kiwis. However, do not hesitate to get in touch via email or letter, I would be pleased to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Donald C McKinnon', with a long, wavy flourish extending to the right.

**Donald C McKinnon ONZ GCVO**  
**Chairman**  
NZMM Trust – Le Quesnoy