



**GOVERNMENT OF NIUE
OFFICE OF THE PREMIER**

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Press Release

“Lest We Forget”



Alofi, Niue, 26th September 2016: The Niue Return Services Association tour to the Battle of the Somme Commemoration in France has concluded with the majority of the group arriving back on the island last Friday 23rd September 2016.

Sixteen (16) representatives from the Fourteen (14) villages including a Government of Niue Minister and Niue youth representative, spent Seven (7) days in Europe for the Commemoration of the Battle of the Somme in France as well as visits to many of the dedicated memorials to those perished or missing during the Great War.



Grave of (1) of the Niuean soldiers buried at Bailleul France-Cpl/Tionesini 16/1133

Many of the representatives in the group felt the magnitude of the war through the reflections of the historians and local tour guide within the Belgian and French towns that were caught in the crossfires of the World War 1 conflict as well as the refuge the men took comfort after the war in Hornchurch England.

The Government of Niue representative Honourable Minister Pokotoa Sipeli who headed the tour group said the experience of the war is of an indescribable scale that cannot be defined.

“It’s only in the reflections of historians that families can understand the enormity of the World War 1 conflicts 100 Years ago on the brave souls from Niue and the sacrifice by the tiny nation to send 150 soldiers to join the allies.”

“The Government of Niue will continue to support the War Commemorations on Niue and abroad in the remembrance of our brave heroes who joined the war for world peace”.



(Memorial Caterpillar Valley France) (Dawn Service Longueval France) (Hornchurch England)

For the descendants of the soldiers from Niue, the images of the war remnants in Europe brought some of the most horrific experiences to the fore and the knowledge that the brave souls from far away Niue experienced such saddened circumstance beyond their control and the emotional bond that kept many of them alive.



Bunker & small room where soldiers were treated at the Western Front. WW1 cannon.

The war will continue to be commemorated around the world, but the 150 soldiers that left Niue will be etched in the minds of all Niueans on the 25th April each Year as well as a special remembrance on the 13th of October for the farewell that shed so many tears 100 Years ago.

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The expansion of the Battle of the Somme tour will continue to be uploaded to the website once it becomes available.