

NEW ZEALAND MEMORIAL

Le Quesnoy | France

FEBRUARY 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND MEMORIAL MUSEUM TRUST - LE QUESNOY



Le Quesnoy in winter. Photo credit: H el ene Lebon, Le Quesnoy.

The wintry February picture above of the walls surrounding Le Quesnoy in France is beautiful in its starkness. Here in New Zealand we have enjoyed a long, hot summer which until recently was devoid of any community transmission of Covid-19. It serves to remind us that the testing nature of this virus is certainly challenging at every level, globally.

In our December meeting we bade farewell to Greg Moyle, a founding trustee who has served nine years on the board and more before the board's establishment. We thank him for his vision and passion and commitment. Constant refreshing of those involved in governance is always important in long running projects.

I hope you enjoy reading the interview with Phil Keoghan in this edition of the newsletter. Although he has lived overseas for some 30 years, he remains a proud Kiwi who returns to New Zealand often. He has visited Le Quesnoy on a couple of occasions, and like many of his countrymen has connections to WWI through family members.

We continue to fundraise to see our visitor experience on the Western Front a reality, and thanks to the outstanding generosity of key funders, we are now well on the way there.



*Sir Don McKinnon - Chair
New Zealand Memorial Museum Trust*

PHIL KEOGHAN



*Kiwi Phil Keoghan is a USA based, multi award winning presenter and producer.
Photo credit: CBS - Cliff Lipson.*

With *The Amazing Race* in hiatus due to COVID-19, 2020 saw Phil Keoghan produce *Tough as Nails*, a new competition reality show celebrating essential workers. We caught up with Phil in LA having

just enjoyed a Kiwi summer to talk work, his home country and a deep connection with France and WWI.

How was it being back in NZ?

After the craziness of dealing with Covid in LA, coming home felt like stepping into another world. Being released into a mask free world took some getting used to though.

Someone recognized me as I left the quarantine hotel and I hesitated when they reached out to shake my hand. It made for an awkward moment, but I explained I hadn't shaken someone's hand for months.

The wonders of technology meant my wife Louise (fellow producer) and I never missed a beat keeping up with the post production work for *Tough as Nails*. Our entire team are working remotely in LA as is our new production norm.

Tough as Nails is inspired by your family?

It pays tribute to people like my grandfather and others in my working-class New Zealand family of farmers, gold miners, builders, fencers and coalminers. Hard working men and women who keep countries working.

I was lucky enough to spend my school holidays in Westport with my grandfather Jack Keoghan who was an A-grade mechanic, World War II aero mechanic, gunsmith and inventor. He was the master; I was the apprentice and his lessons have stuck with me ever since. To me, he was kind of a Leonardo da Vinci, thirsty for knowledge with expert hands capable of the most intricate work. I love using his tools at home for odd jobs.

PHIL KEOGHAN

You love NZ, the US, and you're a Francophile too?

I've always felt a pull towards France. I love the spirit of the people, the wine, culture, and history. Growing up I wanted to ride in the *Tour de France*. I did however get to experience it (of sorts) as an adult.

I had heard about Kiwi cyclist Harry Watson who was part of the first English speaking team to ride in the tour along with three Australians in 1928.

In 2013 a friend and I retraced his race on vintage bicycles, riding every mile, sticking to the same schedule, an average of 150 (242km) miles a day, circumnavigating France in

just 26 (exhausting) days. We documented our ride in a documentary film we made called *Le Ride*.

One of the most fascinating aspects of researching *Le Ride* was learning about the undying love French people have for Kiwis. They've not forgotten the tremendous sacrifice that was made by so many New Zealanders fighting a war so far away from home.

In 1928, only ten years after the end of WWI, French spectators were often seen holding up New Zealand and Australian flags to show their support for the Australasian team as they passed through their village.

You stopped with your family and crew at Le Quesnoy?

The original 1928 course passed quite close to Le Quesnoy, but we all wanted to visit regardless of how far it was, to pay tribute to all the amazing Kiwis who liberated this quaint town and continue to be honoured by the French public today.

Like so many New Zealanders, I have relatives who went to Europe to fight in both wars. My Great Uncle Victor Marshall is buried in Arras. He was hit by a shell in the battle of the Somme. Another Great Uncle, Reginald Hird, scaled the ramparts of Le Quesnoy and survived the war.



Phil Keoghan (right) and friend Ben Cornell riding 1928 vintage Tour de France bikes for the 2013 filming of *Le Ride*.
Photo credit: Doug Jensen.

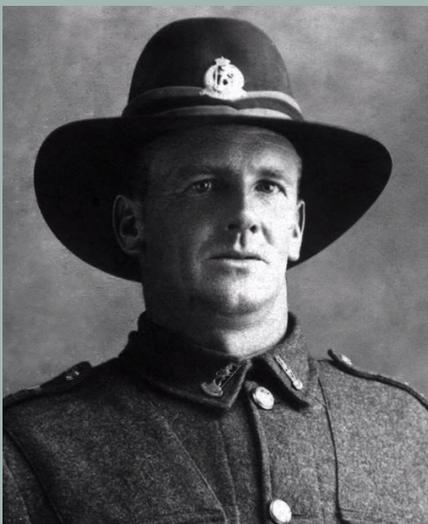
PHIL KEOGHAN



Phil Keoghan, family and filming crew at the New Zealand Memorial, Le Quesnoy in 2013. Photo credit: Scott Shelley.

It was hugely emotional for us as we stood looking at the New Zealand Memorial on the steep rampart.

We imagined Reginald Hird and his fellow soldiers scaling these sheer walls on a single ladder after a long battle. As we discussed it a wave of emotion flooded through all of us.



*Sergeant Reginald Hird.
Photo credit: Hird family.*

There was a realization of just how important it was to have a physical place to reflect on the sacrifices that were made, so we never forget what happened in two world wars in Europe. Not only here at Le Quesnoy, but elsewhere too, for all New Zealanders.

How do you feel about the NZ visitor experience being in Le Quesnoy?

In my opinion it is one of the most important destinations for Kiwis to visit when they travel to Europe. After more than 100 years, New Zealand is still very much part of the town's zeitgeist.

Seeing New Zealand street signs and knowing that every

year the town's people give thanks for our soldiers liberating their town, and commemorate ANZAC Day as well, is incredibly moving.

Knowing the tremendous impact that New Zealanders had during WWI, in particular at Le Quesnoy, I am excited that we will finally join the other Commonwealth countries in establishing a visitor experience for New Zealanders on the Western Front.

A 'must see' destination for Kiwis heading to Europe, it will be not only be a special place to understand our history, but an opportunity to celebrate freedom, friendship and the future with the people of France.

FUNDRAISING & PROJECT UPDATE

2021 marks the beginning of a brand new phase for the project. With the building and grounds now debt free and conceptual thinking done, we move forward to the exciting phase of planning what will go on the site. We are incredibly grateful to our founding donors who have got us to this point. Thank you. The huge generosity of cornerstone donors late in 2020 has seen the next phase start boldly. 2021 should see us making solid progress to our goal.



THE NEW ZEALAND MEMORIAL MUSEUM TRUST - LE QUESNOY

TO MAKE A DONATION:

Go to our website www.nzwmm.org.nz/donate
click **DONATE** and follow the instructions

OR

Write a cheque made payable to
**THE NEW ZEALAND MEMORIAL MUSEUM
TRUST - LE QUESNOY**

and send to
**PO Box 90345
Auckland 1143**

OR

Donate via **DIRECT BANK TRANSFER** using the following details:

Account name: New Zealand Memorial Museum Trust – Le Quesnoy

Account number: 03-1509-0097188-000

Reference: Your first and last name

PROJECT TEAM

PATRON

Rt. Hon. Helen Clark ONZ SSI PC

VICE PATRON

Mark Averill

TRUSTEES

Rt. Hon. Sir Donald McKinnon ONZ GCVO
(Chairman)

Jude Dobson

Major Mark Hall (ret'd) ED

Britson (Buddy) Mikaere

Rt. Hon. Sir Lockwood Smith KNZM PhD

STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP

Celia Caughey

Andrew Collow

Peter McKinnon

FOUNDER AND GENERAL SECRETARY

Herb H. Farrant FNZIOB

FRIENDS EMERITUS OF LE QUESNOY

Rt. Hon. Sir Anand Satyanand GNZM QSO KStJ

Rt. Hon. Lt. Gen. Sir Jerry Mateparae GNZM QSO KS

Dame Jenny Gibbs DNZM

Colin Averill

FUNDRAISER

Jenni Giblin - Giblin Group

ADMINISTRATOR

Rosaria Campbell

FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS



MinterEllison
RuddWatts



NEW ZEALAND MEMORIAL MUSEUM

LE QUESNOY FRANCE

— A PLACE TO REMEMBER —

New Zealand Memorial Museum Trust
- Le Quesnoy
PO Box 90345
Auckland 1143
New Zealand

Telephone: +64 9 393 5319

Website: www.nzwmm.org.nz

Email: info@nzwmm.org.nz

Charities Commission Number: CC5469