



## NZ Remembers

The New Zealand Experience, Le Quesnoy

Newsletter of the New Zealand Memorial Museum Trust - Le Quesnoy

**FEB 2024**

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This month Te Arawhata has been host to hundreds. The All Blacks and New Zealand Rugby gifted a carved bench, which now sits in the grounds of the museum. This donation was facilitated by New Zealand Rugby through Dame Patsy Reddy, and the ceremony was performed by Ngāti Rānana – The London Māori Club.

I will let Josh Hansen the Museum Manager explain further about the bench ceremony and also please enjoy the photo gallery. I am sorry I was not there to be part of the events. What I can clearly see is the involvement of the local community. This is so vital for the life of the museum. A great job was done by all the museum staff to make the locals, and the NZ contingent, feel welcome.

This momentum should keep us going through to Anzac Day. There are events and commemorations planned from 25 – 28 April with a dinner on Saturday 27 April being a highlight. The details and how to book are included in this newsletter, along with a release of Te Arawhata merchandise.

The opening in October 2023 feels so far away now, as we get down to the day-to-day business of running of the museum. Apart from the bench ceremony the museum also hosted a visit from the Wilfred Owen Association, and had visits from our museum counterparts at Carrière Wellington in Arras and The Sir John Monash Centre on the Somme – as well as our regular visitors of course. I am delighted by each new step Te Arawhata takes into the community in France, while managing to remain very much a Kiwi concern.

I will be back with a report from the Trust Board next month. In the meantime, fundraising is ongoing as always – so spread the word!



*Sir Don McKinnon – Chair  
New Zealand Memorial Museum Trust – Le Quesnoy*



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## NEWS FROM THE NZ LIBERATION MUSEUM - TE ARAWHATA

On 10 February, we held an amazing ceremony at Te Arawhata. The carved bench, donated to the museum by New Zealand Rugby and the All Blacks, was unveiled by the Mayor of Le Quesnoy, Marie Sophie Lesne and New Zealand's Ambassador to France, Her Excellency Caroline Bilkey. Ngāti Rānana (the London Māori Club) opened the ceremony, and blessed the bench with waiata and karakia.

The unveiling was followed by speeches, given by Marie-Sophie Lesne; H.E. Caroline Bilkey; NZ Rugby Commercial Partnerships Manager Mike Moeahu; myself, and All Black Andrew Mehrtens, who spoke in French and charmed the local crowd getting plenty of laughs. This was not his first visit to Le Quesnoy, and he spoke from the heart about the significance of this place for New Zealanders. After the speeches, Ngāti Rānana sang and performed the Ka Mate haka for everyone. It was a powerful moment.

The Mormal Rugby Club served food and drink from their portable bar (made from tree logs), set up under large gazebos in the museum courtyard. We had big screens to televise the France v Scotland Six Nations match (France won the match in the last minute!) It was a great atmosphere and a delight to watch the Mormal junior rugby team members crowding around the bench, getting their photos taken with Ngāti Rānana and Mehrtens.

Over three hundred people came for the ceremony, and after official proceedings, there was long queue to get in to the museum. The gift of this taonga allowed us to host a community day that was both solemn and joyful, and all about manaakitanga.

So thank you - to Dame Pasty Reddy for making this happen, to New Zealand Rugby for donating the bench, to the New Zealand Māori Arts and Crafts Institute - Ngā Kete Tuku Iho for making this taonga, and thanks to all who came along. The bench is somewhere to sit, to remember, and to reflect on what this museum represents, including the notions of enduring international community and friendships.

We are otherwise busy receiving visitors and progressing our plans, partnerships, and programmes for 2024. It has been gratifying not only receiving positive comments from visitors about the museum experience, but also being approached by many possible partners in the region, eager to be a part of Te Arawhata's journey and community. Lastly, we are excited to be able to share our Anzac Day plans which I am sure will be a memorable and meaningful weekend, so I hope to see some of you here then.

Josh Hansen  
Manager - The NZ Liberation Museum - Te Arawhata

P.S. Grab yourself some of the new Te Arawhata merch. It's all the rage on the streets of Paris I assure you...





## THE BENCH CEREMONY ME EKE MAI – OUR BENCH IS YOUR BENCH



L-R front row: Geraldine Williamson, Ngāti Rānana;  
Her Excellency Caroline Bilkey; Mayor of Le Quesnoy  
Marie Sophie Lesne; Tamara Fleming, Ngāti Rānana;

L-R back row: Logan Carroll, Ngāti Rānana; Josh  
Hansen, Manager Te Arawhata; Aritaku Robens,  
Ngāti Rānana; Andrew Mehrstens, All Black; Sam  
Martin, Ngāti Rānana; Mike Moeahu, NZ Rugby.

And all the kids from Mormal Rugby Club!







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## THE BENCH CEREMONY LES DISCOURS - NGĀ KŌRERO - THE SPEECHES



Marie Sophie Lesne - Mayor of Le Quesnoy



H.E. Caroline Bilkey - NZ Ambassador to France



Mike Moeahu - Senior Manager NZ Rugby



Andrew Mehrrens - All Black #944



Josh Hansen - Manager  
The NZ Liberation Museum - Te Arawhata



Ngāti Rānana L-R Logan Carroll, Aritaku Robens,  
Geraldine Williamson, Tamara Fleming, Sam Martin



Logan Carroll, Aritaku Robens, Geraldine Williamson





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## THE BENCH CEREMONY - THE PEOPLE







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## ANZAC COMMEMORATIONS AT THE NZ LIBERATION MUSEUM - TE ARAWHATA

2024 will be the first Anzac Day in Le Quesnoy since Te Arawhata opened its doors. As is tradition in Le Quesnoy, Anzac Day is celebrated on the nearest Sunday to April 25. We have an incredibly special weekend of remembrance and commemoration planned with events over the week from 25 - 28 April 2024.

If you are travelling through France or visiting other Western Front remembrance sites in Northern France, we look forward to welcoming you to Te Arawhata.

At 11am Sunday 28 April, the Le Quesnoy Anzac Ceremony will take place. This will be attended by dignitaries from New Zealand and France, locals and Kiwi visitors. This will be followed by a public reception for all to enjoy. It is a unique and emotional service where the efforts of the New Zealand troops during the liberation are remembered with deep gratitude by the people of Le Quesnoy.

On Saturday 27 April we will host a ticketed Anzac Dinner for New Zealand visitors and French locals to share a special evening together. This will be a three course meal of authentic local French cuisine.

We would love you to spend the weekend in Le Quesnoy to take the opportunity to become a part of this community.

From Anzac Day itself on 25 April through to 28 April we will have tours of the museum and the ramparts on offer. The Le Quesnoy New Zealand Association also holds events on Saturday 27 April you can be a part of.



**Please go to our website to book and for more details.**

**<https://nzliberationmuseum.com/anzac-day/>**





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## TE ARAWHATA MERCHANDISE

This a special offer for our New Zealand supporters. Our shop at the museum is very popular but it is a bit far away for New Zealand shoppers. We have had many requests to have a merch sale in NZ, so here it is.

The items available are: black t-shirts, long sleeved merino tops, and black or white caps, all with the Te Arawhata logo.

Please visit our website where you can select your item and fill out an order form. After that you will be emailed to arrange payment and shipping.

**For now this is a limited offer but one we hope to repeat.**

**Go to: <https://nzliberationmuseum.com/te-arawhata-merchandise/>**







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## OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNSHIPS

Please let us know if you are interested in an internship at the museum. We have had some extraordinary people come to stay and work in the museum so far, and this programme provides us with an opportunity to share the work we are doing with skilled New Zealanders on their OE.

For more information:

[info@nzliberationmuseum.com](mailto:info@nzliberationmuseum.com)



## PLEASE DONATE

If you, or anyone you know, is keen to be part of this project, please contact:

[info@nzmmtlq.nz](mailto:info@nzmmtlq.nz)

or go to the Donate page at

[nzliberationmuseum.com/donate](https://nzliberationmuseum.com/donate).

You can make a donation here, no matter how big or small, and have your name recorded on our website - forever part of the museum story.

# DONATE

This is a charitable project  
that has been entirely  
funded by donations from  
generous supporters.

## THE WEBSITE

For more news and information  
please head to our website at:

<https://nzliberationmuseum.com/>

