

WHAT WE FIND

How to: Uncover your school's First World War story

DO THINGS IN AN ORDER

Historians check every clue from a bunch of different angles. They find a clue and then they try and think of as many different places they could find evidence to back their clue up. Papers Past, Cenotaph and Google will be your friends. Make sure you check each clue in all three of these.

USE CENOTAPH, PAPERS PAST, TIMEFRAMES, DIGITAL NZ AND NZ ARCHWAY TO FURTHER YOUR RESEARCH



YOU'LL HAVE TO UNRAVEL PARTS OF THE STORY ON YOUR OWN

Your school might have burnt down, moved sites, or have been merged into another school. In 1920 your community might have planted trees that have since been cut down, given trophies that got stolen, or unveiled a Roll of Honour that has been put in a cupboard.



Masterton School Cadets

IN 1909 MILITARY TRAINING WAS COMPULSORY FOR BOYS AGED 12 AND UP

Junior Cadets had to complete 52 hours of training a year and often drilled on school grounds wearing uniforms and carrying dummy rifles. In 1912 the system was disbanded but many secondary schools retained their cadet force. Lots of soldiers list their School Cadets on their Attestation as their previous military experience.



FIND OUT WHAT YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY DID FOR PEACE DAY AND ARBOR DAY

- The Government declared 19th and 21st July 1919 to be Peace Day Celebrations.
- Some schools also planted memorial trees for Arbor Day (on August 4th) although the official commemoration of Arbor Day had stopped in 1914.

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU'RE TOLD

What you call your school might not actually be its only name. Even the "school" bit of your school name might have changed. It might have been a District High School, Model Country School, Native School, Normal School, Public School or a Technical College.

START WITH THE NEWSPAPER

The First World War was a massive event for New Zealand - almost every death, wounding, return, unveiling, memorial or Roll of Honour was reported in the paper - start there.



OVER 80% OF NEW ZEALAND'S WAR MEMORIALS

have only the names of those who died. In Australia over 80% include those who served. Schools are the exception - in schools we often put the names of students and teachers who served and died. Those who were killed are usually marked with an asterisk.

BE PREPARED TO PERSEVERE WHEN THINGS GET HARD

Historians know they won't always find what they are looking for the first time. Think - how can I change the way I am searching online to get a better result? Remember a single soldier's name can lead to a school; a school can lead to an honours board; an honours board can lead to a soldier's name. Everything connects.

FOCUS ON TWO SETS OF DATES

1914-1918 (this is when the First World War happened),

1920-23 (it took a while for people to fundraise enough money to pay for a memorial after the war, that plus the time to make things meant that memorials don't start being unveiled until about 1920).

FIND YOUR OWN CLUE

Every town in New Zealand has a First World War story. Historians use documents to discover clues and stories that other people have forgotten.

You are looking for one piece of evidence that your community did something to commemorate a First World War soldier. Begin by searching online using your school name or the name of your community.