

Return to Vimy

Tour

Highlights:

- **2 April:** We will visit the Juno Beach Centre
- **3 April:** Pegasus Bridge and Verrieres Ridge
- **4 April:** The beaches of Dieppe
- **5 April:** Ypres & the Menin Gate
- **6 April:** The Somme and Beaumont-Hamel
- **7 April:** Vimy battlefield tour
- **8 April:** Hill 70 & Gunner Memorial
- **9 April:** Vimy centenary ceremonies

Fields of Fire Tours

Wolfe Island ON
K0H 2Y0

www.foftours.com

Welcome!

Welcome to the Return to Vimy Tour! Thank you for choosing to participate in this once in a lifetime event that will see the centenary of the Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge commemorated. We have designed a busy programme that will help you discover the sites of memory for the Gunners and Signalers of Canada. We will visit Juno Beach and other sites in Normandy. These will include Verrieres Ridge, where 2000 Canadian soldiers died over a two week period, and the Abbaye d'Ardenne, where 22

Canadian prisoners were brutally murdered by the SS. We will then move to Dieppe where we will examine the beaches over which the 2nd Canadian Division stormed in August 1942. After a day by the Channel in Dieppe we will move to Ypres in Belgium where we will participate in the famous ceremony at Menin Gate. After our tour near Ypres we will move to Lille for the remainder of the trip. Our first stop will be the battlefields of the Somme, where many of the lessons were learned that made Vimy

possible. Our days around Vimy will be filled with ceremonies and memories. After doing our own tour of the battlefield and local cemeteries we will attend the unveiling of the new Hill 70 monument. The Gunners will then rededicate their memorial in Thelus, while the Signalers continue to tour the battlefields near Amiens. Early on the morning of 10 April we will head back to the airport in Paris, about 2 hours away, to catch our return flights.

We Are a Big Group!

The demand for this tour was strong, so strong that we have four buses in our group. We will be around 200 in total, comprising 100 gunners and 100 signalers. We will of course be together for the major events of the trip: the Beny Cemetery, the Hill 70 ceremony and the Vimy centenary. Otherwise, we will be following the same itinerary, but not at the same time, as

200 people turning up at a museum or viewing stand, is a recipe for congestion! So each day that we are not at some big ceremony we will set out for four historical sites and then rotate through them throughout the day. The buses, identified as Gunner 1, Gunner 2, Signals 1 and Signals 2 will tour the historical sites and your guides will present at each stop.

Registration with VAC

Our group has been registered with Veterans' Affairs Canada, so they know we are coming! Once the Government makes the security requirements to access the Vimy site on 9 April clearer, we will ensure that we have all the required paperwork to ensure we can fully participate.

In 2007 attendees were asked to arrive 5 hours before the event. We can expect something similar for our trip.



Mercure Omaha Beach



Novotel Caen



Carlton Hotel Lille



Ieper Peace Village



Damier Hotel Kortrijk



Hotel Royal Caen



Mercure Hotel Dieppe

The Hotels on Our Trip

Location	Gunner 1	Gunner 2	Signals 1	Signals 2
Normandy 2-4 Apr	Mercure Omaha Beach	Novotel Caen	Mercure Omaha Beach	Royal Hotel, Caen
Dieppe 4-5 Apr	Mercure Dieppe	Hotel Europe, Dieppe	Hotel Europe, Dieppe	Hotel Windsor, Dieppe
Ypres 5-6 Apr	Damier Hotel, Kortrijk	Ieper Peace Village	Novotel, Roeselare	Ieper Peace Village
Lille 6-10 Apr	Novotel Lille	Lille Campanile Sud	Carlton Hotel, Lille	Holiday Inn Lille Ouest

Our Guides



David Patterson



Lee Windsor



Cindy Brown



Christine Jamieson

David Patterson is the proprietor of Fields of Fire Tours and an Army Reservist. He has led more than fifty tours to France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy. He is a bilingual gunner officer who commanded 2 RCA in Montreal from 1995-1998.

Brian Reid (not pictured) was born in Fort Erie, Ontario. Shortly after his 18th birthday he enlisted in the Canadian Army (Regular) in December 1957 and served in the 4th Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery as an artillery technician. He was commissioned in the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery in 1961. During a military career that spanned 37 years Brian served on regimental, staff and liaison appointments in Canada, Europe and the United States. After retiring in November 1994 he has divided his time between studying military history, hanging out near water in the summer and not shoveling snow in places like Baja California, Texas, Florida, Georgia and more recently, Arizona in the winter. Brian will probably claim that undertaking this task qualifies him as the Commonwealth's oldest PIG, or Practicing Instructor in Gunnery.

Dr. Lee Windsor is Deputy Director at The Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society at the University of New Brunswick and holds the Eaton Chair in Canadian Army Studies. He has a PhD from the University of New Brunswick. He teaches in the field of modern war, specializing in the Canadian Army experience. He is a former member of the West Nova Scotia Regiment and the 8th Canadian Hussars (Princess Louise's). On behalf of UNB and the Canadian Battlefields Foundation, he regularly guides groups of students, soldiers and the general public on study tours to battlefields in Italy, France, Belgium and Holland. His publications include *Kandahar Tour: Turning Point in Canada's Afghan Mission*, *Steel Cavalry: The 8th (New Brunswick) Hussars* and the Italian Campaign, as well as a series of book chapters, articles and government reports.



Hotel Europe Dieppe



Hotel Windsor Dieppe



Novotel Roeselare



Novotel Lille



Campanile Lille Sud



Holiday Inn Ouest Lille

Dr. Cindy Brown is the Program Coordinator and Communications Manager for the Gregg Centre. She holds a PhD from Western University. In addition to teaching on Gregg Centre study abroad programs like UNB's The Second World War in Italy and War and the Canadian Experience: Teachers' Tour of France and Flanders, Brown is an instructor and advisor with the Faculty of Arts and the Department of History.

Christine Jamieson is the social media coordinator for Fields of Fire Tours and will be keeping our tour visible to your friends and family back in Canada. She is an instructional coach at Frontenac Secondary School in Kingston Ontario and is married to David Patterson. Follow her blog at [Fields of Fire Battlefield Tours](#) and like us on [Facebook](#).

The Ceremonies on our Trip



During our trip we will participate in or attend four ceremonies on three separate days. The first will be at the Menin Gate on 5 April. We will form the guard for the nightly Last Post Ceremony held at the Gate at 2000 hrs. This moving ceremony that has been held every day since 1926, with a brief four year interruption during the German occupation of 1940-44, is run by the last Post Association with buglers provided by the Ypres Fire Department. The Signals and Gunner delegations will lay a wreath at the memorial as well.

Our second ceremony will be the unveiling of

the new Hill 70 Memorial in Loos-en-Gohelle on 8 April. This new site commemorates the first major battle of the Canadian Corps after Vimy Ridge, in August 1917. A private organization has raised the funds necessary to build the monument (<http://www.hill70.ca/>). It is not yet clear what role our group will play at this ceremony, which will be officiated by the Governor-General. Later that day the Gunners will rededicate their memorial at Thelus on Vimy Ridge, while the Signals group visits another battlefield in the area.

Our last ceremony is of course the big day on

9 April for the Vimy centenary. We will have to be at the site early due to security and congestion factors. We will not be involved in the ceremony, the official contingent will take care of that, but any serving personnel can wear their uniforms. Early in the tour, on 3 April, we will be together at the Beny-sur-Mer cemetery to honour the dead of the Normandy campaign. We will not be in uniform, but we will lay a wreath at the cemetery on behalf of the Gunners and Signalers.

So altogether – three clean DEU shirts will be required!

Passports

Although you have all provided your passport numbers to Brian Cruickshank at Merit Travel, please ensure that your passport is valid for 90 days after our planned return date 10 April 2017. So if your passport is to expire before 10 July 2017 you will need to get it renewed before our departure.

www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/apply/renew/apply-how.asp