



The Gilmour Reserve Tunnellers' Memorial

In 2016 at the Gilmour Reserve in Waihi, the Tunnellers' Memorial was officially opened.

The Tunnellers' Memorial commemorates miners who served at war, particularly in the tunnels in Arras, France during World War 1.

One such tunneller was Frederick Ernest Smale, born 1894. As a young man he attended the Karangahake School of Mines, where he was a top pupil and in 1915 won a scholarship.

Frederick was working as a mine surveyor for the Waihi Gold Mining Company when he enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in October 1916.

A month later he left New Zealand as part of reinforcements for the Tunnelling Company that was serving on the Western Front.

Frederick joined the Tunnellers in France as a Sapper in early May 1917, following the Battle of Arras in which they had played a key role. The Company built roads and dug trenches around Arras, work they continued into 1918. Military life seems to have suited Frederick. He was promoted to lance-corporal in December 1917 and to second corporal two months later.

In early March 1918 he fell ill with trench fever, a highly contagious disease transmitted by lice in the trenches. His condition deteriorated and later that month he was evacuated to No. 2 London General

Hospital in England. By April 3rd he was considered 'dangerously ill'. The following day, Frederick died from typhoid. He was 24 years old.

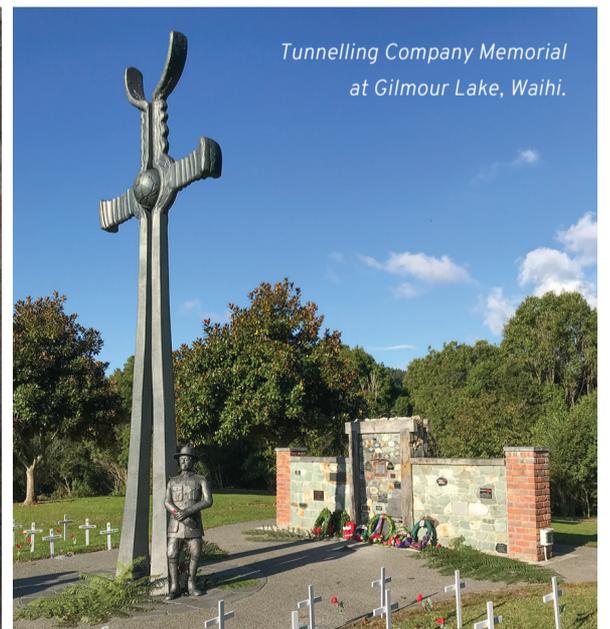
The New Zealand Tunnelling Company is unique in our military history. The Company existed only during the First World War and despite the fact that they were the first company to arrive at

the Western Front and the last to leave, the Waihi memorial was the first in New Zealand to be dedicated to them.

The memorial is a large 'T' shape - to signify the tunnellers - protruding from the ground, with 'Rangi' the statue standing next to it and a commemorative stone wall nearby.

Some of the rocks within the wall were provided by ancestors of returned servicemen. It also features bricks from the original Thames High School building, and timber retrieved from the historic underground workings of the Martha Mine that was over 100 years old.

In the centre of the wall itself is a pickaxe, which had travelled with the tunnellers from New Zealand to France and was used underground in the war. In 2015 it was brought to New Zealand by the Mayor of Arras, completing its near 100-year round trip.



Sources:

www.nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/tunnelling-company-memorial
www.nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/frederick-ernest-smale

Correnso and Project Martha Community Meeting

Our next Correnso and Project Martha Community Meeting will be held on Thursday the 19th of May from 5:30 to 7:30pm. This meeting is designed to provide an update to affected residents within the Correnso and Project Martha (including Rex) mining areas about works undertaken since the previous meeting.

The meeting will be held in the OceanaGold Education Centre on the corner of Moresby Ave and Savage Rd. In the mean time, if you have any questions please visit or call the Project Information Office.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CONTACT US.

Community Engagement Line: 0800 924 444 | Project Information Office: 86 Seddon St., Waihi.
Email us via our website: www.waihigold.co.nz

NOTE: WE ARE NOT CURRENTLY BLASTING IN THE MARTHA OPEN PIT. CHANGES TO THIS WILL BE NOTIFIED.