AUSTRALIA

FOLLOWING **AUSTRALIAN** FOOTSTEPS

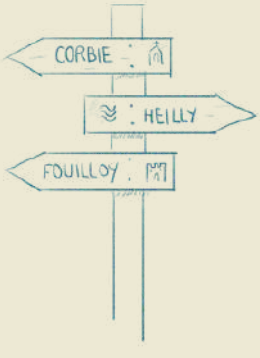
in Val de Somme

©Department of Veterans' Affairs - Wake Up Amiens

VAL DE SOMME
terres d'histoires à partager

WELCOME TO
the Val de Somme

Welcome to the Val de Somme, a place to explore and unwind, just outside Amiens. Here, three valleys intertwine to create landscapes that are both wild and restorative. Meandering rivers, enchanting marshes and hidden trails invite visitors to slow down and discover something new around every corner. But the Val de Somme is also a land shaped by history. Walking through the streets of Corbie is a journey through centuries of history, while Villers-Bretonneux offers a vivid insight into the region's industrial past and the importance of reconstruction following the two World Wars.Throughout the Val de Somme, architectural landmarks, archaeological remains and places of remembrance bear witness to the richness and diversity of the area's heritage. From ancient history to the First World War, the landscape itself tells the story of a territory shaped by the people and events that have left their mark on it.



WHERE ARE WE ?
1 Chemin de Halage - 80800 Corbie - France
officedetourisme@valdesomme.com
www.valdesomme-tourisme.com
03 22 96 95 76

WHO ARE WE ?

THE VAL DE SOMME TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE : YOUR LOCAL TOURISM PARTNER

Located in Corbie, along the Somme Valley cycle route and beside the canal, the new Val de Somme Tourism Centre welcomes visitors in a modern, welcoming and environmentally conscious setting.

Our team shares local expertise and personalised advice on the destination, from heritage sites and walking and cycling routes to outdoor activities and local experiences. The Tourism Centre also offers a range of services for travellers, including 24/7 toilets and showers, bicycle parking and charging points, as well as a shop featuring local products, maps, guides and souvenirs. Throughout the year, we also organise guided tours, nature activities, workshops and special events, including the popular Les Fantômes du Vendredi immersive experience in Corbie.

OPENING TIMES

LOW SEASON

From 1st november to 30th april

Tuesday to saturday

From 10am to 12:30am and from 1:30pm to 5pm

MID SEASON

From 1st may to 30th june and from 1st september to 31st october

Tuesday to Saturday

From 10am to 12:30am and from 1:30pm to 6pm

HIGH SEASON

From 1st july to 31st august

Wednesday to Saturday from 10am to 18pm

Sunday from 10 am to 12:30am and from 1:30pm to 6pm

Opening hours subject to change

THE MUST-SEES

You may already know

©Department of Veterans' Affairs - Morgan Kessler

Shaped by Australian history, the Val de Somme is home to several ANZAC memorial sites, commemorating World War 1 battles. A unique way to experience Australia's heritage in the heart of France.

THE AUSTRALIAN *National memorial*

Unveiled in 1939, this memorial commemorates the 11,000 Australian soldiers who went missing during the First World War and have no known grave. Walk through the Commonwealth cemetery, admire the imposing monument, then climb to the top of the tower for a breathtaking panoramic view of the former battlefields and, in the distance, the city of Amiens.

THE SIR JOHN MONASH *Centre*

This immersive multimedia center tells the story of Australian troops on the Western Front through interactive installations.
New | Discover the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux from a new perspective through their brand-new virtual reality experience.

photos © Department of Veterans' Affairs - Morgan Kessler

WHERE ?
Route de Villers-Bretonneux - 80800 FOUILLOY
+333 60 62 01 40 - www.sjmc.gov.au

THE FRANCO AUSTRALIAN

museum

Located on the first floor of Victoria School (built in 1927), the Franco-Australian Museum tells the story of the Australian Expeditionary Force, especially on the Western Front in 1918. It features exhibitions of photos, uniforms, weapons, letters, and personal belongings.

WHERE ? Franco-australian museum
9 rue Victoria, 80800 Villers-Bretonneux
+333 22 96 80 79 - www.museeaustralien.com

THE ADELAÏDE

Cemetery

The Adelaide Cemetery, located in Villers-Bretonneux, was established in June 1918. After the Armistice, graves from smaller cemeteries in the surrounding area were relocated here. Today, the cemetery stands as one of the many lasting reminders of the Australian sacrifice in the Val de Somme.

On 2 November 1993, **the remains of the Australian Unknown Soldier** were exhumed here before being transferred to Canberra, where they now rest at the Australian War Memorial.

WHERE ?
Adelaïde Cemetery
119 Rue d'Amiens, 80800 Villers-Bretonneux
More informations : www.cwgc.org / +333 21 21 52 75

© Valentin Cardon - Trésors en Nord

THE AUSTRALIAN CORPS *memorial park*

Located on the heights of Le Hamel, this memorial commemorates the Allied victory of 4 July 1918, led by General John Monash. Around twenty panels detail this innovative battle, won in just 93 minutes through a combined strategy. The memorial features the Australian Armed Forces badge and an excerpt from George Clemenceau's speech after the victory.

WHERE ?
4 Chemin de Sailly-Laurette, 80800 Le Hamel

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION *memorial*

Built on the heights above Sailly-le-Sec, the memorial to the 3rd Australian Division was built in 1919–1920 to honour the division's actions in the area.

On 27 March 1918, the division's leading battalions marched from this position toward Heilly to hold a former French defensive line between the Ancre River and the Somme River. This occurred during the German spring offensive launched on 21 March 1918, which followed the breakthrough near Saint-Quentin and aimed to reach Amiens. The Australians managed to stop the German advance before the town.

WHERE ?
North of Sailly-le-Sec
RD1 - 80800 SAILLY-LE-SEC

HIDDEN GEMS

you shouldn't miss

58TH DIVISION
Memorial

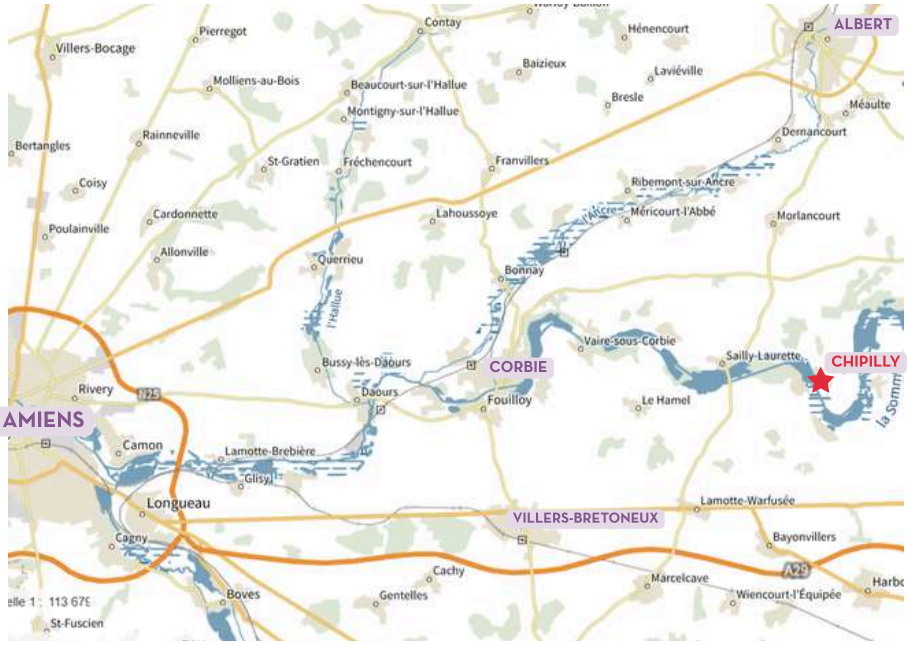
Located in the village of Chipilly, this unusual memorial commemorates the men of the 58th Division who fought to liberate the village in August 1918. It is particularly distinctive for also **honouring the animals** that suffered and served during the conflict.

Chipilly was also the scene of a remarkable military action involving **six Australian soldiers**. When a British unit halted its advance, Company Quartermaster Sergeant Jack Hayes and five of his men took the initiative and entered the village. They neutralised several German positions and established a machine-gun post that cut off the enemy's retreat, playing a decisive role in the capture of the town.
Their actions were later recognised by historians as crucial to the assault, although they were notably absent from the British report of the operation. The sector subsequently came under Australian control as the Allied advance continued.

WHERE ?
2 Rue d'Etinehem, 80340 CHIPILLY

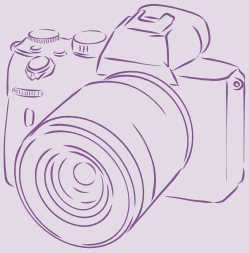
The ruins of Chipilly the day after it was taken by the 58th Division aided by a regiment of the 33rd Division of the American Army, 10 August 1918, IWM, Q6939

The liberation of Chipilly is a compelling example of the initiative and effectiveness of Australian troops during the **Battle of Amiens**.
Photographs taken in the aftermath of the battle offer a striking glimpse of the devastation suffered by the village and are available online.
The memorial stands opposite the village war memorial and church, creating a powerful setting for remembrance and reflection.



AN EASY STOP BETWEEN ALBERT AND VILLERS-BRETONNEUX

Located along the route between Albert and Villers-Bretonneux, Chipilly is **an easy stop to add to an existing coach itinerary**. Convenient parking right next to the memorial makes it particularly easy for groups to stop, visit the site and continue their journey.



A little extra

Just a mile from the memorial, the **Belvédère du Camp César** offers beautiful views over the eastern Somme Valley towards Bray, where Allied troops continued their advance in August 1918.

DAOURS
communal cemetery extension

During the Battle of the Somme, Daours was an important medical centre. Several Casualty Clearing Stations were established in the village and nearby Vecquemont, both located on the evacuation route between the front line and Amiens. An extension was added to the village cemetery to bury soldiers who died from their wounds.

In 1917, the medical stations moved closer to the troops, but Daours continued to accommodate military units. During the German advance of April 1918, the front line came dangerously close to the village. In August, Casualty Clearing Stations returned to support the Allied advance, treating many wounded Australian soldiers.

Daours was also used by the Australian Army to billet troops throughout 1918. Numerous photographs taken by Australian military authorities offer a fascinating glimpse of life in the village during the war.

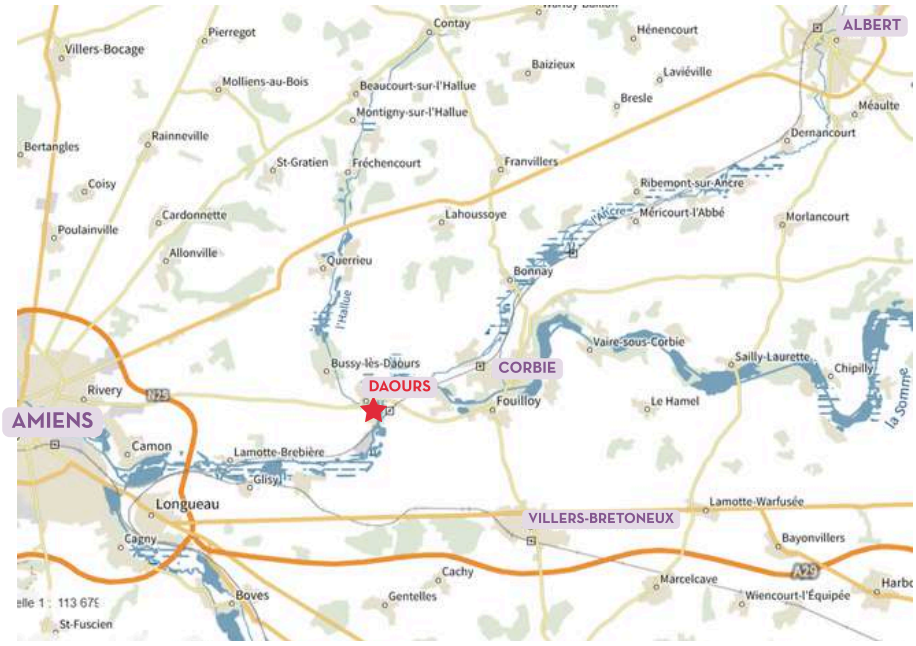
25 Rue de Pont Noyelle, 80800 Daours

On 3 July 1918, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Navy Joseph Cook addressed the 4th Australian Division in Daours, just before its attack on Le Hamel. This visit to the front, with Primer Minister Hughes was recorded on film.

←
Mr Joseph Cook (right) addressing the 4th Division at Daours, 3rd July 1918, AWM, E02649.

A CHAPTER OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

A large car park is located close to the cemetery, making it easy for coach groups to stop nearby.
The neighbouring village of **Bussy-lès-Daours is just a short distance away**, offering the opportunity to combine both villages in the same visit and discover the place where Georges Clemenceau addressed Australian troops to express France's admiration for their bravery.



A lesser known australian story

DISCOVER THE GRAVE OF PRIVATE IRWIN
Born on Gomeroi Country in New South Wales, William Allan Irwin enlisted in 1916 and served with the 33rd Battalion on the Western Front.

Awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the only Aboriginal soldier mentioned in Charles Bean's official history of the war, he was mortally wounded on 1 September 1918 after capturing three German machine-gun posts at Mont Saint-Quentin.
He is buried at Daours Communal Cemetery Extension, Plot VIII, Row B, Grave 32.

In April 2025, he was made an Honorary Citizen of the Val de Somme.

© Valentin Cardon

LAMOTTE-WARFUSÉE

the first town liberated

On **8 August 1918**, the villages of Warfusée-Abancourt and Lamotte-en-Santerre (Lamotte-Warfusée) were the first two villages liberated by the Australian Corps during the offensive.
The “Green Line”, the primary objective of the attack, laid east of both villages.

Covered by thick fog and supported by tanks, Australian troops succeeded in liberating the villages as early as 7 a.m. Caught by surprise, German forces offered only limited resistance. Around 1,200 prisoners were captured, while Australian losses amounted to approximately 150 men.

Rebuilt after the war, the church of Lamotte-Warfusée is now considered one of the most remarkable churches in the Val de Somme, with its distinctive spire and striking Byzantine-inspired architecture.

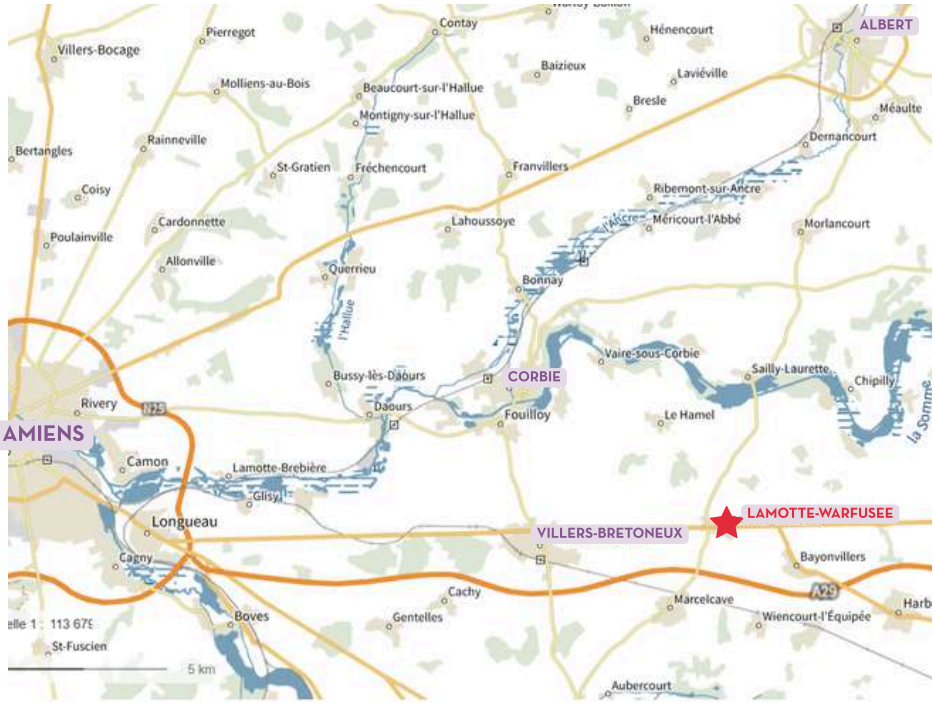
Eglise Saint-Pierre, 80800 Lamotte-Warfusée

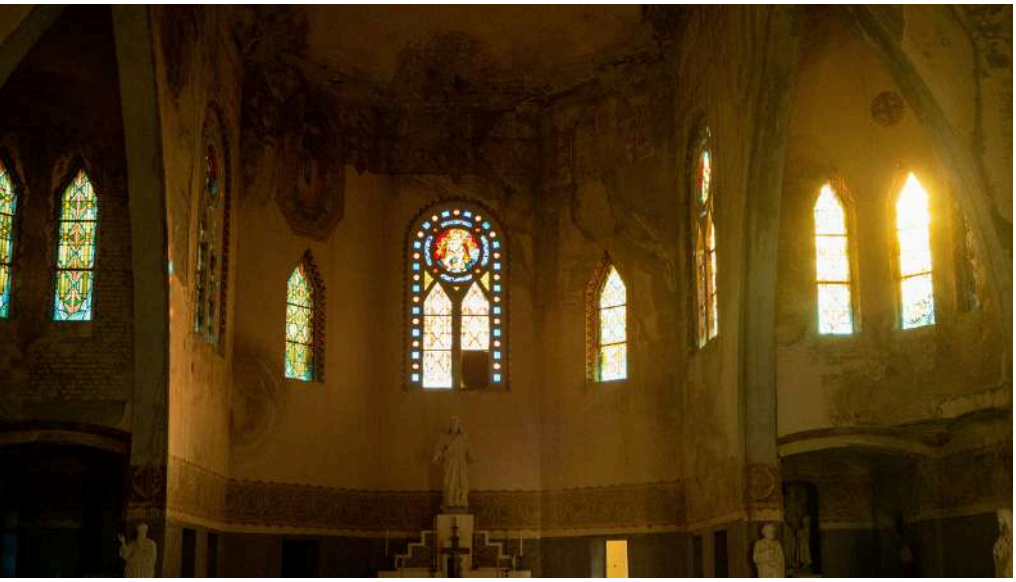
To preserve the element of surprise, no preliminary bombardment was carried out before the Allied attack. However, after five months of German occupation and fighting, Lamotte-Warfusée and the neighbouring village were largely destroyed.

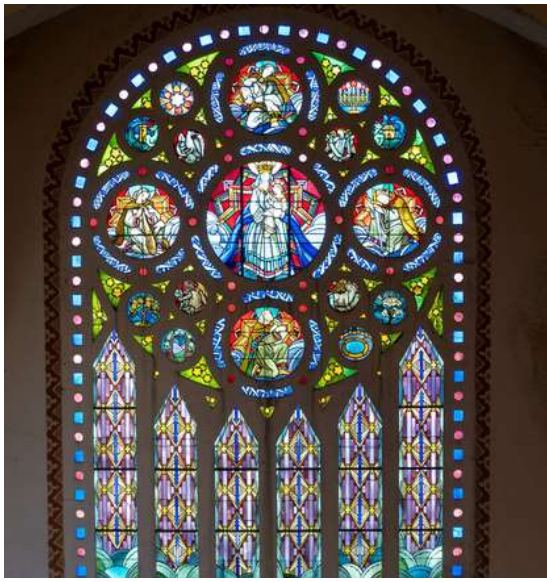
Lamotte-en-Santerre (Lamotte-Warfusée), the village on the day it was retaken by the Australians. The church. August 1918. ECPAD

THE NEXT STEP AFTER LE HAMEL

From the Le Hamel Memorial, the distinctive spire of Lamotte-Warfusée Church can already be seen in the distance. Just a short drive away, the village offers an opportunity to continue following the Australian advance of August 1918 while discovering one of the Val de Somme's most remarkable post-war churches.







photos © Valentin Cardon

54 Route nationale, 80720 Lamotte-Warfusée

The French side of the Battle of the Somme

As you head down towards the « route de Péronne », and turn right at the war memorial, you will see a house where a meeting was held to review the attack plans of the French 2nd Colonial Infantry Division, scheduled for 1 July 1916.

This division was tasked with capturing the sectors of Dompierre, Herbécourt and Flaucourt from the Germans. This assault was a success for the French troops.

CORBIE
behind the lines

Corbie has been shaped by history for more than 1300 years. From the foundation of its famous abbey in 657 to the Industrial Revolution, the town has witnessed sieges, wars and major turning points from the Spanish siege of 1636 to the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. But Corbie's wartime story did not end there. During the First World War, the town became an important base behind the lines, welcoming thousands of soldiers and serving as a centre for military hospitals during the Battle of the Somme. Although heavily damaged by German shelling in the spring of 1918, traces of this military past can still be found throughout the town. **Explore the places where soldiers lived**, rested and recovered, and discover a different side of the Battle of the Somme away from the front line.

THE TRACES OF WAR

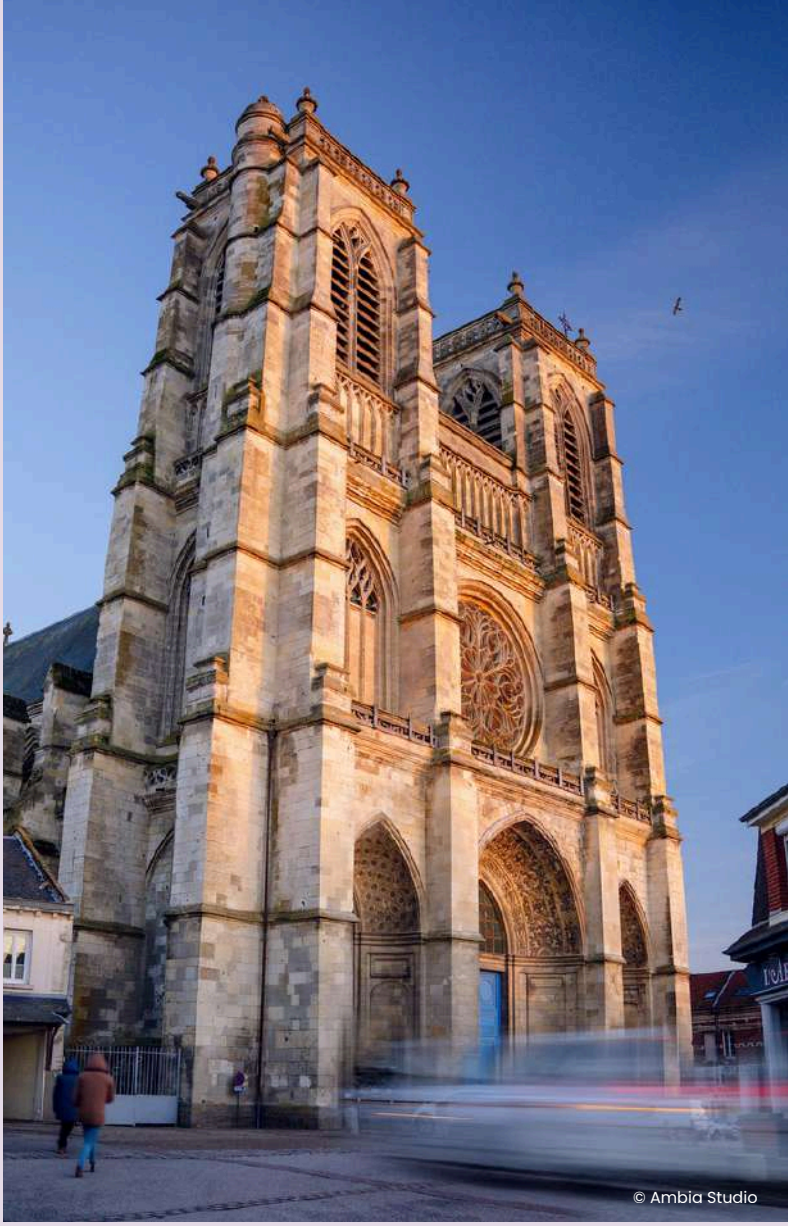
Many places, such as the house shown in the photograph, are still standing today. Many of the buildings that once housed military hospitals can still be identified, while a wealth of photographs allows visitors to immerse themselves in Corbie's wartime history and imagine what life was like in the town during the First World War.

→
Australian, French, British and American officers outside British Town Major's office at Corbie, 25 May 1918.
IWM Q 78346

A DIFFERENT SIDE OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

Discover Corbie, a fascinating stop between Albert and Amiens, where soldiers rested, recovered and lived during the war. With a large car park and a wide choice of restaurants, it is an easy stop to add to your itinerary.

© Max Coquards - Bestjobers



© Ambia Studio

A LITTLE EXTRA

DISCOVER THE ROYAL ABBEY OF CORBIE
As a local institution, the Tourism Office can arrange **guided tours** of churches throughout the Val de Somme. Discover the beautiful church of Corbie, its remarkable relics, and the story of how it survived the two World Wars. We can also **provide historical information and itinerary suggestions** to help you organise your visit.

TO BOOK A GUIDED TOUR
The abbey church of Corbie / Guided tour of Corbie / Climb to the Top of the Abbey Tower and many more possibilites... Contact us !
+333 22 96 95 76 - officedetourisme@valdesomme.com

WANT TO SEE MORE ?

Remembrance in Perspective

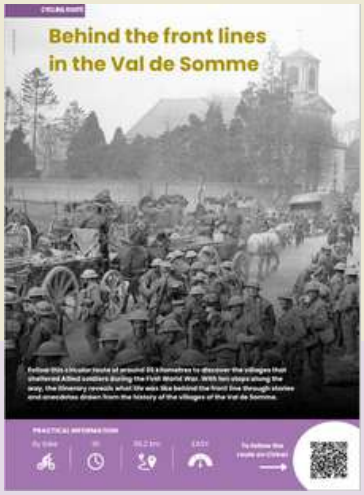
Travel through the Val de Somme and discover the «**Remembrance in Perspective**» tour. This tour is made up of four memorial works, depicting four historical figures who have distinguished themselves in the Val de Somme during the First World War. These works of art are made according to a new and unusual manufacturing method called '**anamorphosis**'. This original process plays with perspective such as an optical illusion. Explore the territory in search of these anamorphoses! As you travel, you will discover the different memory sites of the Val de Somme!

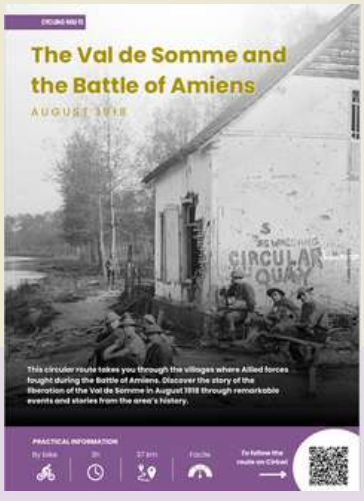
CARTE DU CIRCUIT
TOUR MAP

Discover more :
https://fr.valdesomme-tourisme.com/medias/files/depliant-memoire-en-perspectives-1.pdf

Cycling Routes

Discover the First World War history of the Val de Somme by bike. Two circular routes take you through the villages where Allied soldiers were stationed, fought and passed through during the conflict. From life behind the front line to the fighting and liberation of August 1918, **follow in the footsteps** of the men who lived through these decisive moments. Along the way, stories, anecdotes and remarkable events reveal the experiences of Allied troops across the Val de Somme.





Discover the two routes :

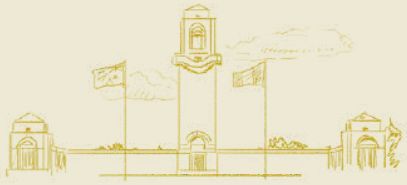
Behind the front lines in the Val de Somme
The Val de Somme and the Battle of Amiens

WE *remember* THEM

Remembering those who fought and lived through the First World War is an important part of our work. Through commemorations, guided tours, educational projects and remembrance events, we help keep their stories alive.

©Department of Veterans' Affairs

© Pascal Leclerc



APRIL, THE MONTH
of remembrance

A strong bond was forged between the inhabitants of the Val de Somme and the soldiers who fought here. A lasting spirit of solidarity and friendship grew from these shared experiences.

After the war, the reconstruction of the devastated villages further strengthened these ties and left a lasting mark on the local landscape. Every year, on **Anzac Day**, Australians, New Zealanders and French people come together to remember this shared history. Every April, Val de Somme Tourism organises the "**Mois de la Mémoire**" (*the month of remembrance*), a series of guided tours exploring the area's sites of remembrance. Through these visits, we help local communities better understand the stories behind these places and keep their memory alive.

HONORARY CITIZEN
of the Val de Somme

In April 2025, **Private William Allan Irwin** became the first person to be named an **Honorary Citizen of the Val de Somme**, in recognition of his courage, dedication and sacrifice.
Born on Gomeroi Country in New South Wales, Irwin served with the 33rd Australian Battalion on the Western Front. He was the only Aboriginal soldier mentioned in Charles Bean's official history of the war.

A day of tribute was held in his honour on 18 April 2025, organized by the Val de Somme Tourist Office, in the presence of his great-nephew, Peter Milliken. His journey was also documented in the film *Bringing His Spirit Home*.

ANZAC STAND
welcoming visitors

Every year, the Val de Somme Tourism team runs a stand at the Australian National Memorial providing visitors with information about the history of the ANZACs in the Val de Somme.
It is an opportunity to welcome our Australian visitors, introduce them to the remembrance sites around Villers-Bretonneux, and share the French perspective on the conflict.

We also help local residents register for the **Dawn Service** and provide practical information about attending the ceremony.

COMMEMORATING
The battle of Le Hamel

On 4 July 1918, Australian and Allied forces under General John Monash captured Le Hamel in just 93 minutes. The battle became a landmark in the First World War, thanks to the remarkable coordination of the Allied forces. Every year, the anniversary is commemorated at the Le Hamel Australian Memorial at sunset, bringing together music, remembrance and storytelling in the heart of the former battlefield.

Bands, pipers and drummers perform a concert combining brass band music and bagpipes, interwoven with a narration that follows the battle minute by minute, bringing the events of 4 July 1918 to life.
An atmospheric way to discover the story of Le Hamel and the Australian soldiers who fought there.

WHEN ?
The commemoration is held each year on the weekend closest to the anniversary.

© Ambia Studio

© Max Coquards - Bestjobers

DISCOVER
the old town of Corbie

Our team can arrange a guided tour of Corbie. Discover how the town was used during the First World War, particularly as a centre for military hospitals during the Battle of the Somme, and how the soldiers stationed here endured the intense shelling of 1918, which ultimately reshaped the town.

A REMARKABLE
variety of churches

As a local institution, the Tourism Office can arrange visits to churches throughout the Val de Somme.
Discover the beautiful church of Corbie, its remarkable relics, and the story of how it survived the two World Wars.
Or explore the beautiful interior of Villers-Bretonneux Church and the cross erected beside it in memory of the Australian troops who fought to liberate the town.
The Val de Somme brings together 33 towns and villages, and 33 churches, each with its distinctive character and history. We invite you to discover them with us!

photos © Ambia Studio

EXPLORE
the rebuilt town of Villers-Bretonneux

Step into the **history of Villers-Bretonneux** and discover how the First World War shaped the town we see today. From its former textile industry to the **fierce battle of 1918**, explore the places and stories that reveal the impact of the conflict and the remarkable reconstruction that followed.
Discover the **strong ties forged between Villers-Bretonneux and Australia**, and how this shared history continues to shape the town. Along the way, admire the imposing Saint-Jean-Baptiste church, rebuilt in 1929 in a striking Neo-Romanesque-Byzantine style.

The visit offers a perfect complement to the **Franco-Australian Museum**, bringing the town's history and its Australian connection to life beyond the museum walls.

YOUR LOCAL PARTNER
for tailor-made programmes

As your local partner in the Val de Somme, we can assist you with **itinerary planning, provide reliable historical information, and connect you with local accommodation providers, restaurants and tourism partners** to help you build your programme.

VAL DE SOMME
terres d'**histoires** à partager

Maison du tourisme du Val de Somme

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