



ARMED FORCES TOURS

Poppy Travel is the travel arm of The Royal British Legion, who provide financial, social and emotional support to the serving and ex-Service community. The Royal British Legion has been organising tours to battlefields since 1927, taking parties of Service men and women, relatives and veterans. The Royal British Legion is rapidly expanding Poppy Travel's service for schools with 'curriculum led' Battlefield Tours for primary and secondary schools.

The Royal British Legion provides guided battlefield tours for the Armed Forces as part of its commitments as the guardians of national Remembrance. It regards the educating the nation's youth about Remembrance as a high priority. Battlefield tours, Realities of War Tours and staff rides are an opportunity for the Legion to ensure that it has an understanding of the modern armed forces and the approaches to realities for war.

Our guides have been identified by the MOD as having empathy and understanding of the human dimension to warfare, the capability to communicate with modern servicemen and women and skills in partnering the development of using battlefield visits to demonstrate the realities of war.

Through **Poppy Travel**, The Royal British Legion provides experienced & accredited battlefield guides as part of its commitment as the guardians of national Remembrance, and regards Remembrance education of the nation's youth as an extremely high priority. For many Service men and women this is their first exposure to the charity and probably the best opportunity they have to experience our charitable work.



Our tours are also an opportunity for the Legion's ex-military guides to pass on their experience and connect with a new generation of soldiers, and is also an opportunity for the Legion to ensure that it has an understanding of the modern Armed Forces of today.



OUR SERVICES

Poppy Travel provides **several important services** for Armed Forces Units.

Military Battlefield Tours provide a guided tour for units seeking to explore military history in worldwide locations. Our customers are from a wide range of cap badges to destinations from France to the Far East. These include the following:

- 243 Field Hosp RAMC(V) Ypres and the Somme
- 7th Battalion The Rifles - (Ypres and Calais)
- Kings Royal Hussars - (Normandy)
- FANY - (Normandy)
- Land Warfare Centre BG LAD REME – Normandy
- Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Association – Gallipoli
- RMCS - France/Belgium
- MOD Defence Intelligence Training – Gallipoli
- Queens Lancashire Association - (Gallipoli)
- MOD DEC - Normandy/ and St Nazaire
- 216 Sig Sqn; MOD DEC – Brittany
- Queen's Assoc – Operation Market Garden
- MOD DEC – Arnhem and Nijmegen
- Wales UOTC - Normandy
- QARANC Association – Turkey
- Yeomanry Association - South Africa



Realities of War Tours

In 2000 we were asked to provide battlefield tour guides for Army Recruits as an experiment to enhance recruitment. Since then this project has grown into the Realities of War Programme. Over the last six years we have worked with the ETS staff at AFC Harrogate to develop a tour programme that supports the educational syllabus for junior soldier training. This year we have started taking ITCC Infantry recruits on a new “Certificate in Service Values and Ethics” Level 1 Qualification developed by Poppy Travel and Darlington College. In 2008 we took over 7,000 soldiers in training to the battlefields of the world wars.

We provide an operational insight through the eyes of the Service men and women of the past. We focus on the individual soldiers’ experience, geared to the learning styles, military knowledge and intellect of young people. We can draw on the experience of serving officers and NCOs to compare the past with current operational practice. **From April 2009 Poppy Travel will be providing Realities of War Tours for all Army recruits.**

Battlefield Studies and Staff Rides

Poppy Travel provides guides who work with military staff to design and lead Staff Rides and Battlefield Studies, identifying the ground and historical examples to support the strategic, operational and tactical topics under study. Our recent customers and **destinations** include the following:

- One star HQ Staff Ride based on the Ardennes, with unit analysis of relevant lessons learned from British and US operations in 1944-5.
- TA Brigade Specialist training Team battlefield study of the battle of Monte Cassino. Similar battlefield studies, geared at unit level were conducted for two TA infantry units.
- A specialist Battlefield Study for a TA Field Hospital, to examine the moral component of fighting power, based on examples from the Great War.



- A Battlefield Study for a regular infantry battalion to examine the ground aspects of ‘Operation Market Garden’ prior to an Afghanistan deployment.
- A Training Regiment Battlefield Study of battle in Belgium and France supporting subunit stands on the battles of Waterloo, Mons, Le Cateau, Cambrai and the Battle of the Bulge in 1944

OUR GUIDES

Our guides are the key to the quality of Poppy Travel’s service. We use a professional ‘best practice’ approach to guiding, using only guides with the military history, knowledge and competence to develop the appropriate style to match the composition of the tour group, and adapting the itinerary to accommodate unit training objectives.

Poppy Travel guides are supported by a common knowledge base and by extensive training. We have a team of over thirty guides; each one carefully selected and trained to meet the requirements of our 21st century Armed Forces, embodying total commitment to the history and traditions of the Armed Forces, thus helping to lay the foundations for its future.

Almost all our guides have operational military service and are part of its history. They include veterans from the Second World War, Borneo, Northern Ireland, Oman, Falklands as well as both Gulf Wars and Afghanistan. Several guides are still serving.

As representatives of The Royal British Legion they are a spiritual link of support for the Armed Forces that was born after the Great War, with each guide having a deep commitment to the aims of our programme. Many work in day-to-day roles with veterans and/or the Forces.

All our guides have demonstrated their competence for communicating with the young adults joining the Armed Forces in an accessible and engaging manner, and come armed with relevant examples of individual experiences with which soldiers can empathize.

The tools and techniques include the workbooks developed by the Armed Forces used by AFC Harrogate and can enable military staff to provide full input - including the following:

- Low Level TEWTs to engage soldiers in mental activity; practice their communications skills and teamwork.
- Re-enactment and role-play, where appropriate, to enable the soldiers to empathize with those in whose footsteps they tread.
- Engaging training team staff through comparison with historic and current solutions for tactical problems and a participative approach to leading their particular Tour.

Guides are selected and trained by Colonel Christopher Newbould CBE, The Royal British Legion’s Chief Battlefield Guide and Chief Validator of the Guild of Battlefield Guides. He is assisted by Frank Baldwin, the Education member of the Council of the Guild of Battlefield Guides.

Apart from a wide experience and depth of knowledge, their basic requisite is a talent for story telling with the ability to engage a young audience. We also have a training programme to ensure that our guides understand today’s Armed Forces, and we are also continually developing imaginative techniques to help the different levels within the Forces to learn from Battlefield Study by active learning.

Poppy Travel guides have been thoroughly briefed to interpret 'Remembrance in the Field.' Guides provide Remembrance poppy crosses for every person and a wreath for the group to lay in a place of memory special to them. If required, our guides can provide a short brief on the history and role of The Royal British Legion and the services it provides for the serving and ex-Service community.

COMPLETE WORLD TRAVEL

Poppy Travel works in partnership with its chosen ATOL/ABTA accredited Tour Operator, **Complete World Travel**. Poppy Travel is responsible for the content and design of the tour, with **Complete World Travel** providing the administration support along with all travel and hotel bookings.

The Royal British Legion through Poppy Travel has chosen to work with **Complete World Travel** for the following reasons which benefit its military customers:

- Complete World Travel provides the bonding for **ABTA and ATOL protection** that provides a **total financial guarantee** for ALL our travellers. Tours are sold through Complete World Travel's **fully bonded** Poppy Travel Account.
- Our agreement with Complete World Travel provides Poppy Travel total control of tour content. All itineraries are designed by us to meet military objectives that we understand.
- Complete World Travel has the buying power to buy accommodation and travel at best rates, thus providing best value for our soldiers on their Battlefield Studies.
- Complete World Travel has flexible booking arrangements which mean that they do not require individual deposits from soldiers and can change numbers at shorter notice than our competitors, thus simplifying administration for the unit and minimising the need for cancellation charges from someone who is not travelling.
- Complete World Travel has the operational, staff backup and expertise to solve any issues on tour with travel services, i.e.: coaches, accommodation etc.
- The company is a robust and profitable British business providing us with a reliable and fully bonded travel partner.
- The combination of the Legion's financial strength and extensive liability insurance minimizes any risk for the Armed Forces.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND/OR BOOKING A TOUR

Call **Poppy Travel** on: **01622 716 729** or email **info@poppytravel.org.uk**