



## Remembrance Day 2023

In a time now beyond living memory, our forefathers fought in the war to end all wars, or so they were promised, A war that would be the first real clash of industrial nations. These nations, the most powerful on the planet, would commit to total war, not face off in some field at dawn with horse, cannon, and musket. They would face each other across a whole continent, from the mountains to the sea, and with all their wealth and industrial might.

Horse and cavalry would be replaced with trenches, wire and later, tanks. Twenty thousand men could be lost in a single day, and sadly, they were. These men would fight bullets, bayonets, shells and wire. Many times, more would die from disease than gas or shell. And even after this war, to end all wars, the Spanish Flu, the world's deadliest of all viruses, would kill an estimated 50 million people.

All this shows why they wanted everyone to remember the public outcry from such losses was unimaginable and never seen before. Every city, town and village across the Commonwealth would lose some of their young men; in some villages and small towns, not a single man would return. Generations of bloodlines that stretch the millennia would end and be lost forever. Please contemplate those words for a minute, look out your window and imagine, just for a second, no brothers, uncles, fathers or sons. Just older men and boys if you are lucky. Like mine, this will fill your heart with great sadness; some of you will even shed a tear, and there is nothing wrong with that, I have shed many for the men I have lost. Sadly, it was not the war to end all wars, and since 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, we have fought many more. War has indeed become much more lethal and even more global.

Today, I would ask you to remember wherever you are. I would ask you to stop and share this sacred moment in time with our Commonwealth family from the UK to New Zealand and everywhere in between. I would ask this Saturday morning if you can stand with us at our sacred ground, our Cenotaph. It will only take a moment of your time, or like many, without fuss, press pause and reflect wherever you are.

Remembrance is as relevant today as it ever was. Wherever you are and whatever you are doing, please remember that as you read this, we have young men and women manning the walls to ensure our way of life continues, just as our forefathers did.

Lest We Forget.

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***Remembrance Day can be a challenging time for Veterans and their families. For those who need urgent assistance, help is available via Open Arms on 1800 011 046 (24 hrs) & Lifeline 13 11 14 (24 hrs)***