

## A Patriotic Call to Yarn

On 16<sup>th</sup> October the National Army Museum launches their 'Patriotic Call to Yarn' project commemorating all those who paid the ultimate sacrifice on an important day in history when the first soldiers left New Zealand for Europe and the First World War.

On 16<sup>th</sup> October 1914 over 8,000 New Zealand troops and their horses left Wellington harbour and New Zealand shores bound for Egypt. They left thinking, "it will all be over by Christmas", that it was an adventure of a lifetime, the opportunity for overseas travel. Little did they know what awaited them on the other side of the world.

Over the course of the next four to five years on the battlefields of Gallipoli and later Europe, New Zealand lost 18,166 men and women to the ravages of war.

Back home the war effort was strong as the women realised they also could 'do their bit'.

***"For the empire and for freedom, we all must do our bit, the men go forth to battle, the women wait and knit"***  
*Lady Annette Liverpool*

Patriotic associations were formed all over the country with over 5 million pounds raised. Women got together and knitted and stitched items of clothing for the soldiers including balaclavas, shirts, underclothing, socks and darning kits.

In honour of all these men and women 100 years ago, the National Army Museum is seeking assistance from the general public of New Zealand to make a patriotic 'call to yarn' by producing one hand crafted poppy for each servicemen and women lost by our nation in the Great War. That is 18,166 poppies!

These very special tributes will be on show at the National Army Museum in the form of a cascading waterfall of poppies in the Museum's memorial area.

Poppy project co-ordinator, Alison Jones says "We hope to achieve this target by 2018, so we can establish a cascading waterfall of poppies in the Museum's Roimata Pounamu – Tears on Greenstone area. We have already had a wonderful response with over 1,000 poppies made."

Poppies can be knitted, crocheted, sewn or hand crafted in anyway and there are several different patterns available to assist people in their contributions. For more information see [www.armymuseum.co.nz](http://www.armymuseum.co.nz).