



Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

18 September 2017

The Governor-General is pleased to announce the following honorary awards within the General Division of the Order of Australia:

ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

Honorary Medal (OAM) in the General Division

Lieutenant Colonel Freddy Edy DECLERCK (Retd), Langemark, Belgium
For service to Australia – Belgium relations

Mr Gilbert DELEU, Comines, Belgium
For service to Australia – Belgium relations

Mr Francois MAEKELBERG, Comines, Belgium
For service to Australia – Belgium relations.

By His Excellency's Command

Mark Fraser LVO OAM
Official Secretary to the Governor-General

AWARDED AN HONORARY MEDAL (OAM)

IN THE GENERAL DIVISION OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

Lieutenant Colonel Freddy Edy DECLERCK (Retd), Langemark, Belgium
For service to Australia – Belgium relations.

Lieutenant Colonel Freddy Declerck, in his capacity as Chairman of the Memorial Museum of Passchendaele 1917 and also as the President of the Passchendaele Society of Belgium has provided invaluable assistance and friendship to Australia with his ongoing commitment to the commemoration of Australian service in Flanders during World War One. Colonel Declerck has played an important role in strengthening the relationship between Australia and Belgium by facilitating and supporting a range of remembrance activities, including initiating the Anzac Day Dawn Service in Polygon Wood at Butte's new British Cemetery.

The award, in the context of the ANZAC Centenary, is also an affirmation of the importance of Belgium to the people of Australia.

Mr Gilbert DELEU, Comines, Belgium
For service to Australia – Belgium relations.

Mr Gilbert Deleu, in his capacity as Mayor of Comines-Warneton has provided invaluable assistance and friendship to Australia with his ongoing commitment to the commemoration of Australian service in Belgium during World War One. Mr Deleu has played an important role in strengthening the relationship between Australia and Belgium by facilitating and supporting a range of remembrance activities, including the service at Toronto Avenue Cemetery, the Christmas Tree Memorial and the Plugstreet Experience Interpretation Centre, which is part of the Australian Remembrance Trail.

The award, in the context of the ANZAC Centenary, is also an affirmation of the importance of Belgium to the people of Australia.

Mr Francois MAEKELBERG, Comines, Belgium
For service to Australia – Belgium relations.

Mr Francois Maekelberg, as a local historian, has contributed to the commemoration of Australian service in Belgium during World War One. He has served as Chairman of the Comines Veteran's Association since 2001 and is a principal organiser of commemoration activities in the municipality of Comines-Warneton. These include the ANZAC Day commemoration services, monthly 'Last Post' ceremonies and 'grave adoption' ceremonies at local cemeteries.

Mr Maekelberg has strengthened the relationship between Australia and Belgium by supporting remembrance activities as a local historian, and his achievements are significant.

Mr Maekelberg's service is commendable and worthy of recognition.