



Menin Gate - Last Post

Silent crowds wait for the stroke of eight o'clock underneath the Menin Gate. Then the volunteer buglers from the Last Post Association raise their instruments to play the Last Post. Nothing quite prepares you for the powerful emotion of experiencing this moving ceremony at first hand.

Ceremony

Traditionally, the Last Post ceremony consists of a parade, with traffic halted, a call to attention, the Last Post, the Exhortation, one minute's silence, the Lament, the laying of a wreath, flags, banners, standards and reveille.

Whether all of these elements are present on a particular evening depends on the occasion and on the participation of groups and individuals. For many years, the Last Post ceremony lasted barely two minutes. Until the 1980s, those watching could often be counted on the fingers of one hand. On special commemorative occasions or when eminent visitors were present, a more extensive ceremony was organised. After 1990, however, the extended version became the norm. As the event became better known, more and more associations and schools asked to be allowed to take part in the Last Post ceremony. These days, it is watched by at least 100 people every day. In the summer, the number of those present can even reach 1,000.

Practical information

The Last Post ceremony takes place at 8 pm every day of the year. There is no entrance fee and no need for prior reservation. On busy days, crowds begin to assemble at the Menin Gate at least 30 minutes before the event begins. It is possible to request a special extended version of the ceremony. Individuals or groups may, for example, wish to lay a wreath or bring musicians or a choir. The Last Post Association is happy to consider such requests, but applications should be made well in advance. These extended ceremonies are also public and also begin at 8 pm.