

Tuhoe remembers soldiers

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Maori affairs reporter

HEMANA Waaka can't believe it took 100 years to commemorate the Tuhoe soldiers who fought in World War I but he is glad that it will now become a tradition within the tribe.

Mr Waaka was the driving force behind the Armistice Day celebrations held at Te Rewarewa Marae on Wednesday. The day involved a full haka powhiri for the dignitaries attending the celebrations, students from several Eastern Bay schools placing poppies on 75 crosses representing the Tuhoe men who fought in World War I, and a full military ceremony, as well as the presentation of replica medals to the families of Pua Tamehana and Pa Te Amo.

In 1918, Mr Tamehana received the Croix de Guerre, the French Cross, for bravery at Flanders Field and the year before Mr Te Amo had been given the Military Medal for his acts of gallantry at Passchendaele.

No one knows what happened to

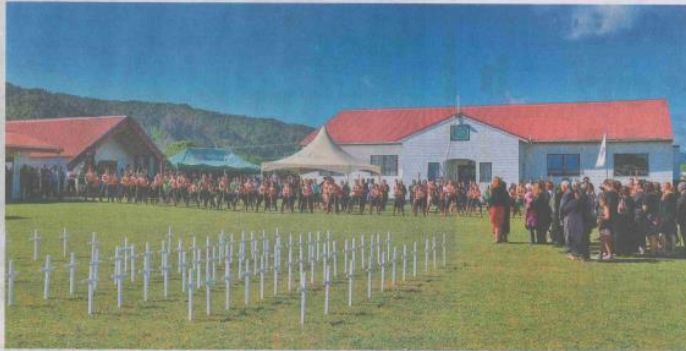
the medals, although it is thought both of the men were buried with them. The replica Croix de Guerre was presented to Mr Tamehana's eldest granddaughter by the honorary consul of the Belgian consulate Elisabeth Jacobs.

A copy of the Military Medal was presented to Mr Te Amo's family by the general representative of Le Souvenir Français for New Zealand, Olivier Schulle.

Mr Waaka said he believed the day was an "absolute success", even though it had taken 100 years to pay homage to all those from Tuhoe who fought in the war.

"It was very successful because it was the very first time that we have ever acknowledged those men for their sacrifice. I can't believe that it took us 100 years to do it and I can't believe it took us just under 100 years to recognise that these koro (old men) were awarded these medals."

Mr Waaka said he planned to host the event again next year and it would incorporate two further flags, both used by the New Zealand Native Contingent during the war.



REMEMBERING THEM: Guests are welcomed to Te Rewarewa Marae for celebrations held to mark Armistice Day. D2862-46



CHALLENGING MOMENTS: The haka party included students from Whakatane High School, Trident High School, Te Wharekura o Ruatoki, Tawera Primary School, Waimana School and Taneatua School. D2862-25



FLAGGING IT: New Zealand soldiers lower the New Zealand, French and Belgium flags during the ceremony at Te Rewarewa Marae to mark Armistice Day. D2862-38



COPYING HISTORY: The replica medals presented to families of Pua Tamehana and Pa Te Amo. D2862-03



WELCOMING THEM: Te Wharekura o Ruatoki student Akura Tiakiwal performs a traditional challenge during the powhiri to welcome a number of dignitaries and other guests to Te Rewarewa Marae. Photos Louis Klason D2862-17