

HISTORIC TRAIL SITES ON THE YPRES AREA CYCLE ROUTE:

1 Essex Farm Cemetery

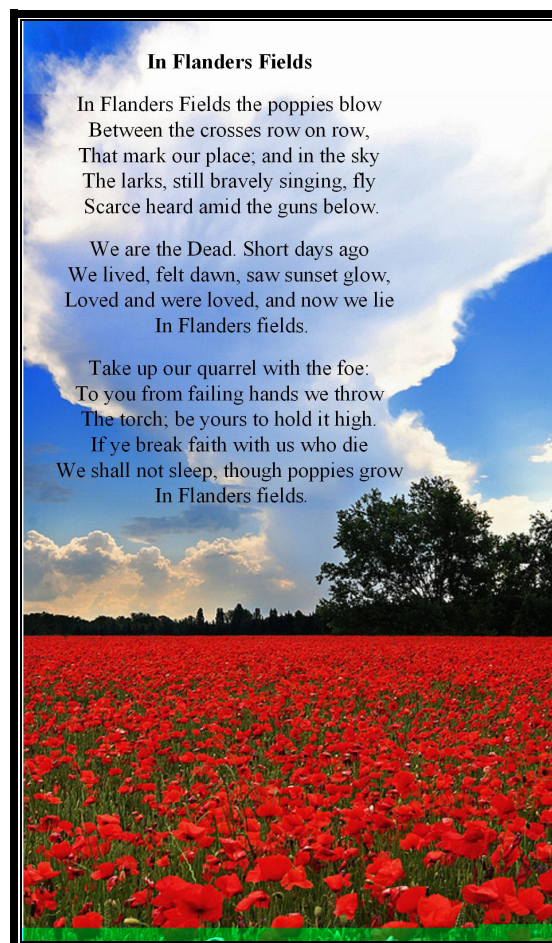
http://www.cwgc.org/search/cemetery_details.aspx?cemetery=15800&mode=1

http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/essex_farm_cemetery.htm

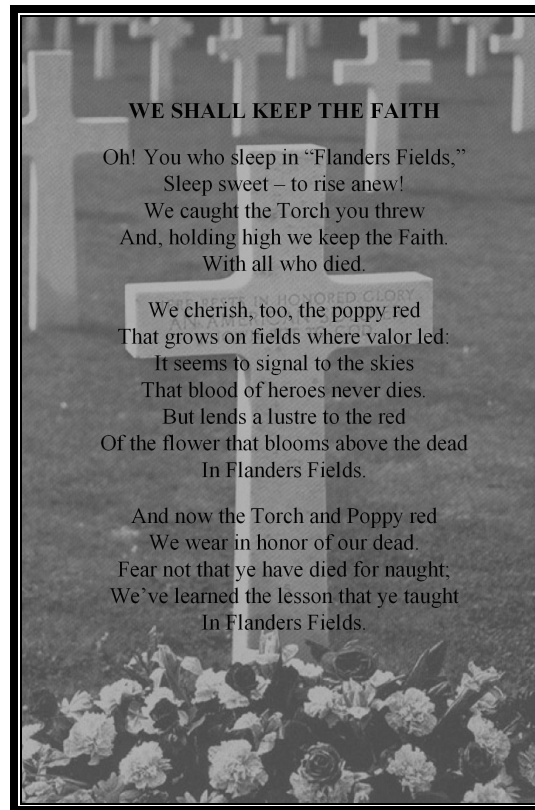
<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~dccfarr/essex.htm>

Directions: Boezinge is a village in the province of West Flanders, north of Ieper on the Diksmuidseweg road (N369). From the station turn left into M.Fochlaan and go to the roundabout, then turn right and continue to the next roundabout. Turn left and drive to the next roundabout and then turn right into Oude Veurnestraat. At the roundabout turn left onto the Diksmuidseweg, and follow the road under the motorway bridge; the Cemetery will be found on the right hand side of the road.

Description: The Essex Farm Cemetery contains 1,199 burials including that of Rifleman Valentine Joe Strudwick of the 8th Battalion who died on January 14th 1916 aged 15 – one of the youngest fatalities in the British Army in World War I. The site was an advanced aid station from April 1915 until August 1917. It was here that Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae (1872-1918), a surgeon attached to the 1st Field Artillery Brigade in the Canadian Army, wrote the poem "In Flanders Fields" which remains to this day one of the most memorable war poems ever written. McCrae wrote the poem after treating wounded soldiers for seventeen days in the Ypres Salient during the 2nd Battle of Ypres. He was particularly moved by the death of a young friend and former student Lieutenant Alexis Helmer from Ottawa who was killed by a shell burst on May 2, 1915. The poem was written by McCrae as he sat on the back of an ambulance at the aid station. In the nearby field he could see the wild poppies that appeared in the ditches. It is a lasting legacy of the terrible battle in the Ypres Salient in the spring of 1915.



It was due to the poem “In Flanders Field” that Miss Moina Michael originated the Flanders Memorial Poppy which has raised millions of dollars for veterans and their families. Miss Michael became known to millions of World War I veterans as the “Poppy Lady” and on 9 November 1918 she wrote the poem, *We Shall Keep the Faith* in answer to the *In Flanders Field* poem.



2 Friedhof Langemark German Cemetery

http://www.webmatters.net/belgium/ww1_friedhof_langemark.htm

Directions: The cemetery is easily reached from Ieper. Follow the N 313 towards Poelkapelle. At Vancouver corner with the Canadian Monument turn left for Langemark. The route is clearly marked driving through the village.

Description: 44,061 German soldiers are buried here under the oak trees, a constant in most German Military cemeteries as a representation of strength. Unlike the Commonwealth cemeteries, Langemark has a number of mass graves. As you enter the cemetery you are confronted by a mass grave of 24,917 men whose names are inscribed on the blocks around it. In the older part of the cemetery the graves are marked by granite plaques bearing up to 20 names. The graves are watched over by the statues of four of their comrades designed by Emil Krieger in 1956.



Looking across Langemark toward the mass grave.

3 Canadian Memorial at St. Julien

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Julien_Memorial

http://www.webmatters.net/belgium/ww1_stjuliaan_can.htm

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=memorials/ww1mem/stjulien>

Directions: From Ieper, take the N313 towards Roulers. The Memorial is about 7 kms northeast of Ypres, beyond the village of St. Julien at the intersection of the road crossing the N313 running from Langemark to Zonnebeke. It should take you approximately 15 minutes to reach the Memorial.

Description: The Canadian Memorial at St. Julien, also known as “The Brooding Soldier” was unveiled on July 8, 1923. The impressive granite monument rises nearly 11m above a garden of cedars trimmed into the shape of artillery shells. It is dedicated to the Canadian soldiers who died in the German gas attacks during the 2nd Battle of Ypres. The inscription on the monument reads:

THIS COLUMN MARKS THE BATTLEFIELD WHERE 18,000
CANADIANS ON THE BRITISH LEFT WITHSTOOD THE FIRST
GERMAN GAS ATTACKS THE 22ND-24TH OF APRIL 1915.
2,000 FELL AND HERE LIE BURIED



4 Tyne Cot British Military Cemetery and Memorial

<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/westfront/ypsalignt/cemeteries/tynecot.htm>

http://www.cwgc.org/search/cemetery_details.aspx?cemetery=53300&mode=1

http://www.webmatters.net/cwgc/tyne_cot.htm

Directions: Leave Ypres via its eastern exit (Menin Gate). At the traffic lights go straight on the N332 to Zonnebeke. Continue straight on through Zonnebeke and at the next major junction take the left turn to Passendale (formerly called Passchendaele). After approximately 1 kilometer Tyne Cot Military Cemetery is signposted to the left.

Description: Tyne Cot Cemetery is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world. It resides in an area fought over during the 3rd Battle of Ypres (or the Battle of Passchendaele) in 1917. The original cemetery was small with some 300 graves. Between 1919 and 1921 almost 12,000 dead were brought to Tyne Cot from surrounding battlefields. The cemetery was inaugurated in 1927 and is maintained

by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The stone wall surrounding the cemetery makes up the Memorial to the Missing and bears the names of 35,000 British and New Zealand soldiers who fell after August 16, 1917 – a continuation of the names inscribed on the Menin Gate. The Cross of Sacrifice was built on top of a German pill box in the centre of the cemetery, purportedly at the suggestion of King George V of England.



Tyne Cot Cemetery and the Cross of Sacrifice (on the right).

5 Memorial Museum of Passchendaele

<http://www.passchendaele.be/eng/homeEN.html>

<http://www.warmuseums.nl/gal/143gal.htm>

Directions: The Museum is on the road to Tyne Cot British Military Cemetery and should be reached via the 3 km cycle/walking path from the cemetery.

Description: A small but excellent museum reflecting on the British attack in 1917 that lasted 100 days for a gain of only five miles at the cost of 500,000 casualties. There are several diorama's including a remake of a British bunker network with communication and dressing post, headquarters, workplaces and dormitories. Information panels are in multiple languages and quite useful.



Part of the trench diorama (left) and uniforms from English, Scottish and French soldiers at the Passchendaele Memorial Museum.

6 Polygon Wood and Buttes New British Cemetery

http://www.cwgc.org/search/cemetery_details.aspx?cemetery=55101&mode=1

<http://www.w1battlefields.co.uk/flanders/polygonwood.html>

http://battlefields1418.50megs.com/polygon_wood.htm

Directions: Buttes New British Cemetery is located 8 Kms east of Ieper town centre on the Lange Dreve, a road leading from the Meenseweg (N8) connecting Ieper to Menen. From Ieper town centre the Meenseweg is located via Torhoutstraat and right onto Basculestraat. Basculestraat ends at a main crossroads, directly over which begins the Meenseweg. 4.7 Kms along the Meenseweg, after the Bellewaerde theme park, lies the left hand turning onto Oude Kortrijkstraat. 2 Kms along the Oude Kortrijkstraat the road crosses the A19 motorway. Immediately after this bridge is the left hand turning onto the Lotegatstraat, which borders Polygon Wood. 800 meters along the Lotegatstraat is the right hand turning onto Lange Dreve. The Cemetery is located 1 Km along the Lange Dreve on the right hand side of the road.

Description: Polygon Wood was totally destroyed during World War I. Within the wood there are two cemeteries, Polygon Wood and Buttes New British. Polygon Wood Cemetery was made at the close of the Third Battle of Ypres and contains 103 Commonwealth burials (17 unknowns) and one German grave. The Buttes New British Cemetery was created after the war and contains 2,108 burials. Because the graves were moved after the war 1,677 are unidentified. There are also two significant memorials in this cemetery: the New Zealand Memorial to the Missing which contains the names of 378 New Zealanders “who fell in the Polygon Wood Sector September 1917 to May 1918 and whose graves are known only to God” and the Australian Memorial on a butte in Polygon Wood commemorating the Fifth Australian Division.



The entrance to the Polygon Wood Cemetery (left) and the New Zealand Memorial to the Missing (right).

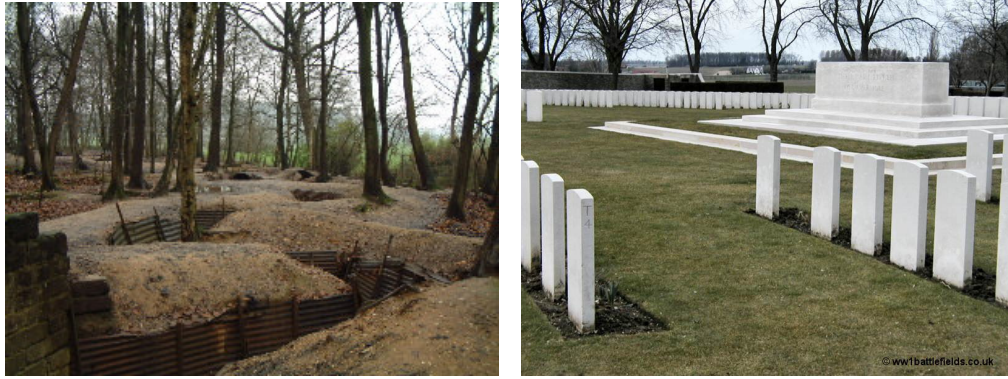
7 Sanctuary Wood (Hill 62) Cemetery and Museum

http://battlefields1418.50megs.com/sanctuary_wood.htm

http://www.w1battlefields.co.uk/flanders/sanctuary_wood.html

Directions: located just off the Menin Road; from Ieper, follow signs for Menen. Just before Hooge, turn right following signs for the Canadian Memorial on Hill 62 and Sanctuary Wood Cemetery. It is located just past the cemetery. Parking available. Entrance fee charged.

Description: The Sanctuary Wood site has a museum and rather extensive trenches that give a good idea of what it might have been like in the Ypres Salient. The area got its name during the First Battle of Ypres in 1914 when soldiers separated from their units came to this wood as a sanctuary from the fighting before rejoining their units. The cemetery is located about 100m down the road from the museum. There were originally three cemeteries in Sanctuary Wood but all were severely damaged during the Battle of Mount Sorrel in 1916 – two were never found. The current cemetery was begun in June 1916 and includes graves concentrated from 18 other sites after the war. Approximately 60% of the burials are unknown soldiers.



British trenches at Sanctuary Wood (left) and the Sanctuary Wood Cemetery (right).

8 Hill 60 and Caterpillar Crater

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/today/hill60.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Hill_60_\(Western_Front\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Hill_60_(Western_Front))

http://bujold.co.uk/html/zillebeke__the_caterpillar_cr.html

<http://www.westernfront.gov.au/zwarte-leen/hill-60.html>

Directions: located southeast of Zillebeke on Zwarteleenstraat. There is a short walk along the railway tracks from Hill 60 to the Caterpillar crater.

Description: The site of numerous battles throughout the war, the Hill 60 was heavily shelled and mined by both sides of the conflict. Much of the fighting here was underground as the Germans were well aware of the British attempts to dig mines under Hill 60 and in response dug their own exploratory tunnels. Caterpillar crater is the site of one of the mines detonated during the Battle of Messines (see the background reading at the end of this document). A memorial to the 1st Australian Tunnelling Company at the site bears damage from battles during World War II.



1st Australian Tunnelling Company Memorial, Hill 60, Zillebeke

ADDITIONAL SITES:

Flanders Field American Cemetery and Memorial

http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/ff_pict.pdf

Directions: Located on the southeastern edge of the industrial commune of Waregem, Belgium, about 1.5 miles/2.5 kms from the center of town, on the road to Oudenaarde (Audenaarde).

Description: The Flanders Field American Cemetery occupies six acres (the smallest permanent American military cemetery in Europe). It was dedicated in 1937 and contains 368 graves, including 21 unknown soldiers. These soldiers are from the four American divisions that fought in the Ypres area in October-November, 1918: 27th, 30th, 37th and 91st. A Memorial Chapel made of white Pouillenay stone sits in the center of the site. The interior includes a black and white marble altar and a mosaic ceiling. On three of the outer walls there is the inscription in French, Flemish and English:

THIS CHAPEL HAS BEEN ERECTED BY
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
IN MEMORY OF HER SOLDIERS
WHO FOUGHT AND DIED IN BELGIUM
DURING THE WORLD WAR.
THESE GRAVES ARE THE PERMANENT
AND VISIBLE SYMBOL OF THE HEROIC DEVOTION
WITH WHICH THEY GAVE THEIR LIVES
TO THE COMMON CAUSE OF HUMANITY.

Beneath the three inscriptions there are sculptured bas-relief figures meant to symbolizing Grief, Remembrance and History respectively.



The chapel at the Flanders American Cemetery.

Bayernwald – German Trenches

http://battlefields1418.50megs.com/croonaert_wood.htm

<http://www.ypres-1917.com/bayernwald.htm>

<http://www.ww1battlefields.co.uk/flanders/kemmel.html>

Directions: All visits are arranged from the Heuvelland (Kemmel) Tourist Information Office (<http://www.heuvelland.be/tourism/799-www.html>) where you will be given an access code to enter the site. Kemmel village can be found about six miles south-west of Ypres, and is reached by following the N336 out through the Lille Gate, and then turning right onto the N331 about half a mile further on (just before the level crossing).

From the tourist information centre, return to the roundabout just before it and turn left on the N331 heading back towards Ypres. Continue quite a way along, past La Laiterie Cemetery (on the left), and

then past a Demarcation stone and American Monument on the right. After the American monument take the next right turn, just after a large two-tone building on the left with the word "PREFAB" printed on it. There is a signpost here as well.

Description: This site has a whole system of restored German trenches including four bunkers. The site is further enhanced with information panels, with clear text and many wartime photographs. Adolf Hitler served here as a runner from 1914-15 and received the Iron Cross.



A German trench (left) and the largest bunker at Bayernwald.

Lone Tree Cemetery and the Pool of Peace

http://www.cwgc.org/search/cemetery_details.aspx?cemetery=9202&mode=1

http://www.webmatters.net/belgium/ww1_spanbroekmolen.htm

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/today/poolofpeace.htm>

Directions: Lone Tree Cemetery (Spanbroekmolen) is located 8.5 kilometers south of Ieper town centre, on a road leading from the Rijselseweg, N365, which connects Ieper to Wijtschate and on to Armentieres. From Ieper town centre the Rijselsestraat runs from the market square, through the Lille Gate (Rijselpoort) and directly over the crossroads with the Ieper ring road. The road name then changes to the Rijselseweg. On reaching the village of Wijtschate the first right hand turning leads onto Hospicestraat which leads onto the village square. The Kimmelstraat leads from the village square towards the cemetery. 2 kilometers along the Kimmelstraat lies the left hand turning onto Kruisstraat. The cemetery lies 1 kilometer along the Kruisstraat on the right hand side of the road.

Description: At the start of the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917, 19 mine explosions were detonated underneath the German lines at Messines. Spanbroekmolen was the largest of these mines. Most of the craters created from these mines are now gone, but Spanbroekmolen has been preserved as a memorial and called "The Pool of Peace". Adjacent to the Pool of Peace is the Lone Tree Cemetery. This is one of 19 cemeteries that which were made shortly after the start of the Battle of Messines in June, 1917. The Lone Tree Cemetery has 88 burials (9 unknown) and most internments are of soldiers who died in the offensive.



Pool of Peace

ACCOMMODATIONS

Camping

Camping Jeugdstadion Ieper

Bolwaerkstraat 1
8900 Ieper
Phone: 0032 57/21 72 82
Fax: 0032 57/21 61 21
Email: Info@Jeugdstadion.be
Web: http://www.jeugdstadion.be/contact_english.htm

Hotels and B&B's:

The Menin Gate (recommended)

Kauwekijnstraat 1
8900 Ieper
Phone: 0032 57/212 001
Fax: 0032 57/212 002
Email: info@meningate.com
Web: www.meningate.com

De Kaai

West Kaai 5 B
8900 Ieper
Phone: 0032 497/325 566
Email: patrick.breemeersch@telenet.be
Web: www.de-kaai-ieper.be

The Poppies

G. De Steursstraat 6
8900 Ieper
Phone: 0032 57/212 001
Fax: 0032 57/212 002
Email: info@thepoppies.be
Web: www.thepoppies.be

Tempelhof B&B

Tempelstraat 6
8900 Ieper
Phone: 0032 473 60 54 53
Email: info@tempelhof-ypres.be
Web: www.tempelhof-ypres.be

The Salient B&B

D'Hondstraat 27
8900 Ieper
Phone: 0032 57/212 001
Fax: 0032 57/212 002
Email: info@salient.be
Web: www.salient.be

De Iep

Poperingseweg 34
8900 Ieper
Phone: +32 57/208 811
Fax: 0032 57/208 811
Email: iep@cjt.be
Web: www.deieper.be

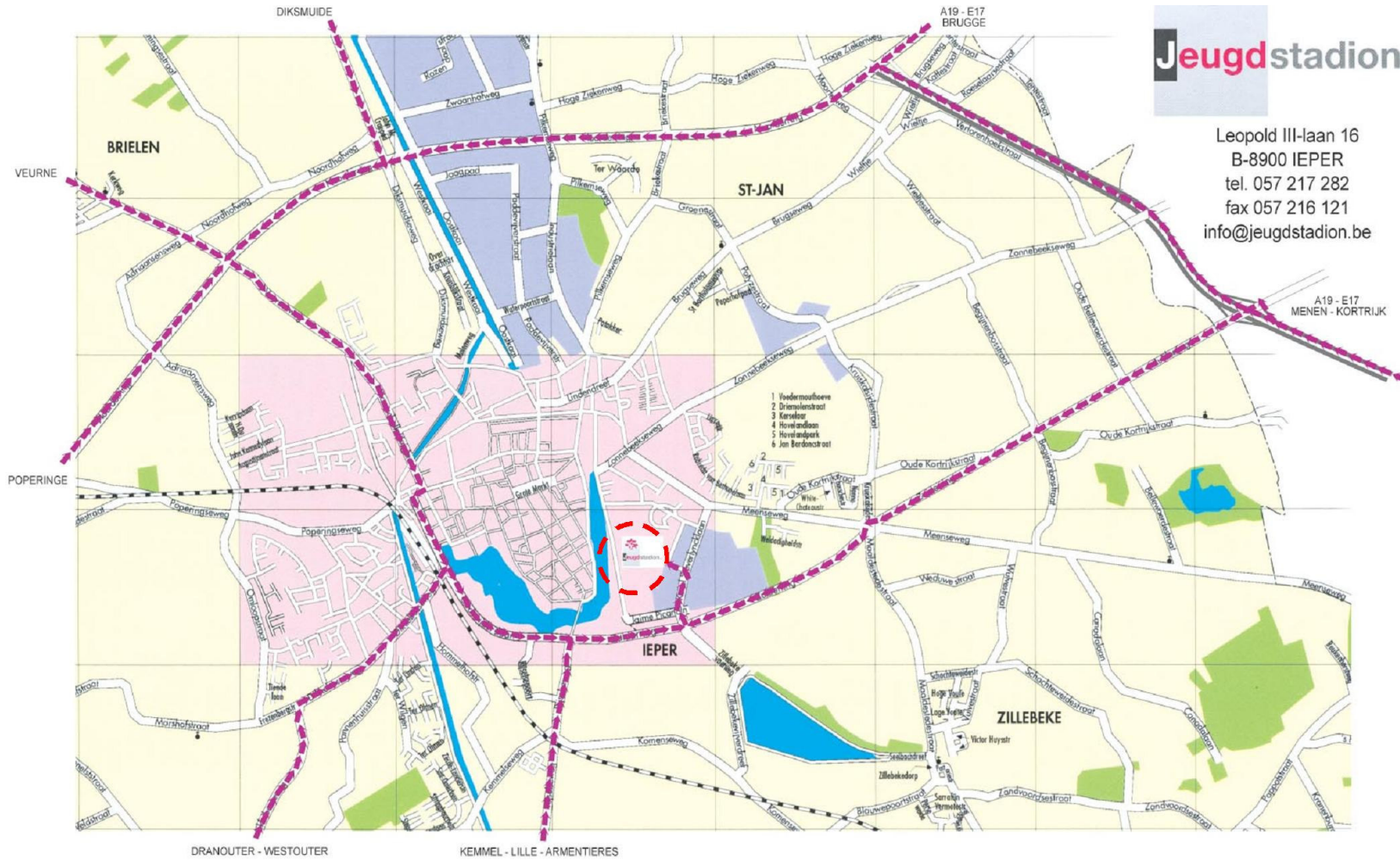
Additional accommodations can be found on the Ieper Tourist Information website at:
http://www.ieper.be/ieper_en.aspx?SGREF=13717

BICYCLE RENTAL

Camping Jeugdstadion Ieper

Bolwaerkstraat 1
8900 Ieper
Phone: 0032 57/21 72 82
Fax: 0032 57/21 61 21
Email: Info@Jeugdstadion.be
Web: http://www.jeugdstadion.be/contact_english.htm

(See map on next page for Jeugdstadion)



Map showing the location of the Jeugdstadion camping / cycle rental site east of Ieper.

