

EXPLORING

World Wars in Europe

..... By Penny Musco

I'd read and watched enough movies about them
— finally I got to see where they took place

I've been interested in World War II nearly all my life, undoubtedly because my parents, maternal grandparents and in-laws all served either in the armed forces or in war-related industries then. I discovered YouTube's "The Great War" series during WWI's centennial, and was drawn into its history as well.

So, it's not surprising that when I read about Trafalgar's WWI and WWII Battlefields tour, I lost no time in booking it with my AAA Travel Agent.

In London, our group of Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians and other Americans proceeded to the Imperial War Museums after preliminary sightseeing. Several of them had arrived a day earlier to see the Churchill War Rooms, something I wished I'd thought of. Before ferrying to the continent, we stopped at Portsmouth to view the only surviving British warship from the 1915 Gallipoli campaign.



The Churchill War Rooms

Pointe du Hoc





BEACHES AND BATTLEFIELDS

What an electrifying experience to at last set foot on the Normandy beaches! I tried to imagine what it must have been like for the soldiers coming ashore amid the chaos and noise of a relentless barrage from the concrete bunkers into which we peered. At Pointe du Hoc, we wandered the cliffs pockmarked with now-weedy bomb craters.

WWI's Somme battlefields are also dotted with poignant remembrances. At the towering Villers-Bretonneux memorial, I grew misty-eyed at a gravestone reading simply, "Our Dearly Loved Boy."

Among Paris' many attractions is the Arc de Triomphe, dedicated to veterans, WWII Resistance fighters and others, and the location of France's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier from the First World War. En route to Lille, we visited WWI British Commonwealth sites and La Coupole World War II Museum (the current tour now includes Dunkirk).

Ypres, Belgium, has some of the most moving WWI commemorations. Essex Farm Cemetery is where Lt. Col. John McCrae wrote his well-known poem, "In Flanders Fields." We took in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, a tribute to the thousands who fell defending the city. The observance has been held each evening since 1929 (except during German occupation during WWII). We were fortunate to be there for the extended program, which includes a wreath-laying and recitation from Laurence Binyon's 1914 elegy, "For the Fallen": "They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them."

Heading to Amsterdam, we stopped at the National Liberation Museum 1944-1945, as well as the Arnhem bridge, whose capture was dramatized in *A Bridge Too Far*.

NO. FEES. PERIOD.¹

Available to all AAA members, Discover Bank has just removed all fees for all deposit accounts!¹ While many major banks may charge you to maintain an account or tack on additional fees, a new account from Discover has **no. fees. period.**¹ That means more money in your pocket. Open an account today!

- Online Savings Accounts³
- Money Market Accounts²
- Certificate of Deposits (CDs)
- IRA CDs

Open an account today!

Call **1.800.347.7056**

Visit AAA.com/Deposits

Mention Invitation Code: **MMNOFEE1**

¹Outgoing wire transfers are subject to a service charge. You may be charged a fee by a non-Discover ATM if it is not part of the 60,000+ ATMs in our no-fee network.

²Federal law limits the number of certain types of withdrawals and transfers from a Money Market to a combined total of six per calendar month per account. There is no limit on the number of withdrawals by ATM or by Official Check mailed to you. If you exceed these transaction limitations during any calendar month we may refuse to pay each transaction in excess of the limitations. If you exceed these limits on more than an occasional basis, we reserve the right to close your account.

³Federal law limits the number of certain types of withdrawals and transfers from a Savings Account to a combined total of six per calendar month per account. There is no limit on the number of withdrawals by Official Check mailed to you. If you exceed these transaction limitations during any calendar month we may refuse to pay each transaction in excess of the limitations. If you exceed these limits on more than an occasional basis, we reserve the right to close your account.

©2019 Discover Bank, Member FDIC



Discover Bank
Member
FDIC

DISCOVER
BANK

WeatherTech®
American Manufacturing Done Right™



Laser Measured
FloorLiner™



Available in Black, Tan and Grey
(Cocoa Available for Select Applications)



Cargo/Trunk Liner

WeatherTech®
Pet Feeding System 



SPECIAL OFFER!
Mention this ad & SAVE

WeatherTech.com
800-441-6287



Proudly Designed, Engineered
and Manufactured in the USA



Canadian Customers
WeatherTech.ca



European Customers
WeatherTech.eu

© 2019 by MacNeil IP LLC
Stainless Steel Bowl is Certified Under NSF Home Products P461



Last Post Ceremony at
the Menin Gate

MORE REMINDERS

Perhaps the most popular site in Amsterdam is Anne Frank's house. However, I decided to take a short train ride to another WWII-related residence. The Ten Boom family hid Jews, and several of them paid the ultimate price for it. Their home, a short walk from the Haarlem station, conducts tours.

As I flew home, I reflected on how relatively few prominent reminders we have of these 20th-century wars in the U.S. Certainly there's Pearl Harbor, memorials on the National Mall and other museums, plaques and statues scattered across the country. But for Europeans, the signs are everywhere: sprawling battlefields still turning up unexploded ordnance, prominent cenotaphs and expansive cemeteries continually testify to deadly clashes fought literally in their backyards.

Now, I'll always think of the French woman who pulled aside our tour guide to let him know, "We still remember."

Madame, so will I. 📍



National Liberation Museum

COMMEMORATE WORLD WARS I & II IN THE U.S.

Visit AAA.com/Go for military museums, former camps, retired battle crafts and other historic stops around the country. You'll find the list online at the end of this article!



Member Savings

AAA Members receive **\$40** per person credit to use toward an optional Trafalgar excursion when you book through AAA.