Knee Deep Into History
Battlefield Tours

102nd Inf. Regt. and Yankee Division WW1 Battlefield Tour
14 – 20 April 2027 (7 days / 6 nights)



2023 tour members outside the Yankee Division caves on the Chemin des Dames

Get knee deep into history following in the footsteps of the 102nd Inf. Regt. and other units of the Yankee Division during WW1. **This 7-day tour, led by experienced guides Randy Gaulke and Markus Klauer, will bring the WW1 experiences of the YD's doughboys and officers to life.** Site visits include the caves along the Chemin des Dames, Belleau Wood and vicinity, the St. Mihiel Salient and the Meuse-Argonne. The itinerary also highlights post-war reconstruction efforts in the area, including funding from wealthy New England families.

The tour celebrates the 108-year-old special relationship between the State of Connecticut and the French Commune of Seicheprey with a vin d'honneur (tentative) to remember the German raid on Seicheprey. And the tour will include a private tour of le Château de Boucq, including many then and now photos. During its stay in the Toul Sector, the Château served as YD headquarters. Today, it is a popular wedding venue.

Finally, a portion of your participation will support the "Veterans' Memory Project" of the Connecticut Veterans Foundation, a 501(c)3.

Sign up today to ensure your space in this small-group battlefield tour!

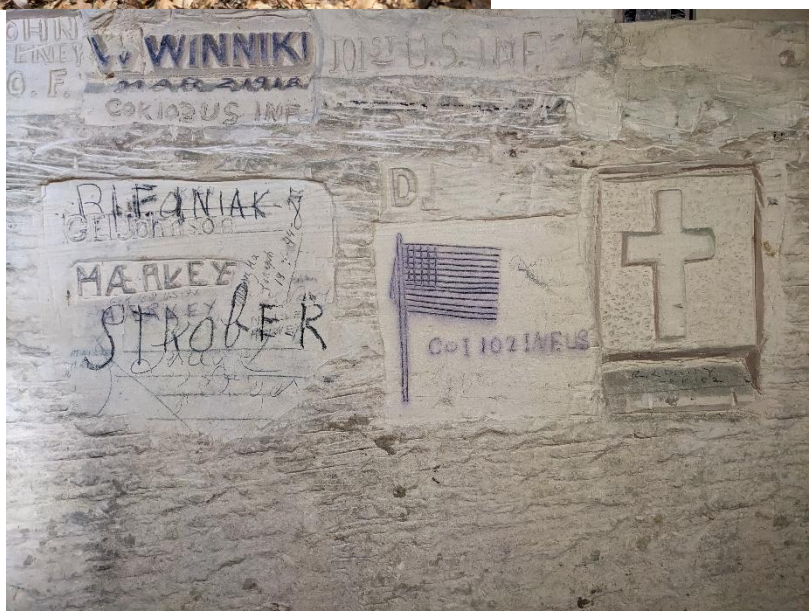


Top: Remembering a YD soldier who died during the Seicheprey Raid and reading his last letter home.

Middle: Photographing barbed wire remains along the St. Mihiel Salient front lines.

Bottom: Some of the many YD carvings in the caves along the Chemin des Dames.





Itinerary: (Subject to Modifications)

Day 1, Wednesday, 14 April. Pick-up at CDG Airport. Depart CDG by 11:00am. Drive to the Aisne-Marne. Visit the Aisne-Marne American Memorial on Hill 204 and Château-Thierry in the context of the German Spring Offensives. (May/June 1918) Afternoon champagne tasting. Hotel in Château-Thierry TBD.

Day 2, Thursday, 15 April. Belleau Wood and vicinity, including the Yankee Division Church, built by funds from veterans. We'll also visit the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery as well as the church at Bézu-le-Guéry, which was used as a hospital. (June/July 1918) Hotel in Château-Thierry TBD.

Day 3, Friday, 16 April. Drive to the Chemin des Dames and tour the YD caves around Braye-en-Laonnais. (February 1918) Then we'll drive to Verdun. Down time in Verdun. Hotel in Verdun TBD.

Day 4, Saturday, 17 April. Morning focus on the YD training in the "Toul Sector," (April – June 1918) stretching from Apremont-la-Foret to almost Flirey and rear areas including Beaumont, Mandres and Ansauville, but excluding YD Headquarters at Boucq. (April – June 1918) The highlight of the day will be a focus on the German raid on Seicheprey (20 April 1918), including an afternoon ceremony and a vin d'honneur in the Village—organized by Mayor Gérard ANDRE and citizens of Seicheprey. Stay at the Hotel Lac de Madine in Heudicourt.

Day 5, Sunday, 18 April. Exploration of the YD role in the St. Mihiel Offensive (Sept. 1918), including the advance along the Tranchée de Calonne, a front-line walk, Hattonchâtel and Vigneulles. The story of Belle Skinner and other wealthy New Englanders who supported the re-building of France. We will also visit the Montsec American Memorial, the St. Mihiel American Cemetery and the German Military Cemetery in Thiaucourt. Stay at the Hotel Lac de Madine in Heudicourt.

Day 6, Monday, 19 April. Visit to the YD headquarters town of Boucq and the Château de Boucq, where we will have the opportunity to line up many famous then and now photos. Afternoon drive north to the Meuse-Argonne Sector with a focus on YD's role at the end of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. (Oct. – Nov. 1918) Stay overnight in Verdun. Hotel TBD.

Day 7, Tuesday, 20 April.
Morning visit to the Montfaucon American Memorial and the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery. Afternoon departure for CDG airport.

Tour Overview

Tour Price (based on double occupancy)	$3,675
Single Room Supplement	$485

Tour Price Includes*

- TWO military historian guides who understand both sides of the story and who speak multiple languages and understand European culture
    - Local guides at specific sites as needed
- 3-Star accommodations, typically in European family-owned hotel / restaurants
- Transportation typically in comfortable 9-person people movers with A/C or in cars
- Almost all meals, except those specified as “on your own” in the itinerary
- Water, soda and snacks available in the van
- Cultural outings (calvados tasting, church tour, etc.) and shopping time on trips longer than a few days
- Admission fees to all sites

Tour Price Excludes*

- Transportation to and from the starting point and lodging and transportation before or after the tour’s start and end times; for example, the cost of a hotel night for participants who choose to arrive early.
- Dinner drinks
- Dinners or lunches specifically excluded in the tour brochure
- Souvenirs and gifts

*See KDIH’s 2027 Terms and Conditions for full details.

Questions or concerns? Contact Randy Gaulke at kneedeepintohistory@gmail.com or 908.451.0252.



Dinner and discussion during the 2023 tour

Knee Deep Into History's Tour Philosophy

Knee Deep Into History LLC was founded by Randy Gaulke in 2020 after he spent eight months in 2017-18 as a freelance guide to the American battlefields of WW1. During those eight months (and the prior forty years) Randy's tour philosophy has evolved. We:

1. TAKE clients into the field,
2. GUIDE small-group tours (12 max.),
3. PROMOTE a balanced view of both sides,
4. OFFER tours for passionate history buffs, and
5. BRIDGE cultures.

What to Expect from a KDIH Small-Group Tour

A KDIH small-group tour offers you the opportunity to experience history and European culture in an intimate setting!

KDIH tours are designed for the real history enthusiast, which means that you will be surrounded by like-minded participants on every tour. By limiting tour size to twelve participants maximum, we maintain a low ratio of participants to guides, delivering a very different experience than a large bus with thirty participants.

The small-group tour concept is flexible and allows for itinerary modification. For example, on a 2024 Ardennes tour we had family members representing four GIs who served in different units, and we were able to visit sites of significance for each family group.

KDIH tours include walks of moderate length and duration (1-2 miles over 60-90 minutes) on many days, as walking the ground helps one gain an appreciation of the combat from a soldier's perspective. Participants concerned about walking this distance are welcome to remain with the van.

Once participants join the tour, everything is taken care of. We are generally in the field from 9:00am to somewhere around 5:00pm. Breakfast is always served at the hotel prior to departure. Lunch usually consists of sandwiches "in the field", with beverages and snacks available in the van when an afternoon pick-me-up is needed. Participants are encouraged to pack sturdy clothing for the field and to pack nicer clothing for evening meals. (Our Clothing Guidelines brochure offers good advice.)

Clients appreciate our traditional European multi-course dinners, offering participants and guides a chance to discuss the day's experiences and exchange views on critical events, leaders, etc. By selecting three-star hotel/restaurant combinations and, in some cases, in-town restaurants, we encourage participants to experience fine European dining. (Our Hotel Guidelines brochure can help travelers prepare for the differences between U.S. and traditional European hotels.)

Spouses and mature young adults are welcome, but there is limited down time for sightseeing, and it is not possible to take a day off in town when switching hotels.

Finally, KDIH tour guides are comfortable living and working in Europe, and excel at helping Americans bridge European culture. We can certainly help with problems that arise.

Meet Tour Guides Randy Gaulke and Markus Klauer



Randy Gaulke has been studying military history for decades as a wargamer, reenactor and battlefield visitor. In 2017 he left the corporate world and during 2017-18 he lived and worked eight months in France as a freelance guide to the WW1 battlefields during the WW1 Centennial. His experiences during those eight months convinced him to follow his passion and start a tour business. Randy has visited and guided tours of the WW2 battlefields since 2008. Over his life he has lived in Europe more than three years. He speaks fluent English and German and intermediate French. Randy lives in Winchester, VA, not far from the National Archives.

Markus Klauer is a retired Bundeswehr officer whose military career included five years in an armored battalion and professional work with American and French units. Like Randy, Markus has been studying military history and visiting the battlefield for decades. He has written five books in German covering WW1 and his website can be viewed at https://gb-weltriegsbuch.de. Since retiring in 2018 Markus has been expanding his battlefield research to the battles of WW2, including the Ardennes, Sedan 1940, Normandy and the Seelow Heights near Berlin. Markus lives in Waterloo, Belgium, and he speaks German, English and French fluently.

Randy and Markus have known each other for 30+ years. Their first major collaboration was a Small-Group Battlefield Walk Tour and a Meet and Greet Dinner during the 2018 Centennial Commemoration. 2027 marks their seventh season of collaboration as Knee Deep Into History. Both share a deep love of historical research and a desire to get their clients into the field. Both understand the "other side" and both strive to present a balanced view of combat.



Soldiers of 102nd Inf. Regt. coming out of the line near the Bois de Belleu to rest, 12 Nov. 1918

Feedback from Recent Tour Participants

"Randy / Markus, honestly we didn't know what we were getting into. Kirk and I started this trip as average history fans with a curiosity. We are ending this trip with a much deeper understanding, appreciation and respect. The curiosity is now fueled with a passion. Your model of in-depth battlefield tours is unique and not for the average tour participant. Your model is best for what we were looking for. Furthermore, the personal connection I made with (tour participant) Andy to "randomly" learn about my grandfather's story wasn't random. I now feel closer to him, his POW story and the experiences he endured. This trip and this group made that connection. And for that, I thank you my friends. All the best!"

David Fouche, Florida, June 2026

"Randy & Markus, just wanted to say that this was a fantastic trip. You guys were as prepared as I have ever seen. We asked a tremendous amount of "destinations" and must see locations—and you guys killed it!!! You covered three large battles and did a fantastic job in providing key stories, facts and battles in a way that we could easily follow. Thanks again for a great week."

John Molnar, Virginia, Sept. 2024

"Dear Randy and Markus, what a well-conceived and well-managed expedition! The route was efficiently planned and you provided appropriate context to make things clear when we were out of (chronological) sequence. You offered the right level of detail for a general audience, while being able to discuss in more detail and bringing in the perspective of others. To a degree, we all discovered the Yankee Division together.

There were many highlights—places I've wanted to see, memorable cemetery visits and wreath-layings, a feel for rural France. The group worked well together and enjoyed each other and you were catalysts to just the right degree. Merci beaucoup! And I hope to be able to travel with you again."

Andy German, Connecticut, April 2023



2023 participants posing at the Montsec American Memorial

2027 Tour Registration Form
102nd Inf. Regt. and Yankee Division WW1 Battlefield Tour
14 – 20 April 2027

Note: Complete this form only if you are sending your registration manually!

Participants: _____ (Names and ages)

_____

Primary Contact: _____

Address: _____

Contact Email(s): _____

Contact Phone(s): _____

Rooms Needed: _____ Double rooms _____ Single rooms

Emergency Contacts: _____

Emergency Phones: _____

Health Concerns: **Per the Terms and Conditions, participant are required to factually state any health issues that could affect their participation on this trip. Please outline these concerns in a brief letter.**

Other Needs: _____

_____

Signatures: _____

_____

Remember: To complete your registration you must send: 1) signed copies of the registration form, 2) signed copies of the 2027 Terms and Conditions page 4, and 3) a $600 per person deposit. Deposits can be paid by check, PayPal, Venmo or Zelle. Ask Randy Gaulke for payment details.

Please mail / email / text a copy of this form to:
Randy Gaulke, 124 East Clifford Street, Winchester, VA 22601 USA
kneedeepintohistory@gmail.com 908.451.0252