



Lost Battalion and I Corps Battlefield Tour

With Robert Laplander and Randy Gaulke

4-7 October, 2018



Overview:

- This four-day tour will focus on the Lost Battalion and other key battles of I Corps, First Army, AEF.
 - It will include one full day dedicated to the events of the Lost Battalion, additional time for other 77th division sites, and approximately two-and-a-half days covering the other divisions.
 - It will also include ceremonies commemorating the release of Whittlesey's last pigeon on 4 October and the relief of the LB on 7 October.
- Tour is being offered by long-time LB researcher, Robert Laplander, and tour guide, Randy Gaulke.
- Group size is limited to fifteen participants; making it easier to travel where a bus cannot go.
- Tour participants should be in good physical shape; as the group will be "in the field" from approximately 9:00am to 5:00pm – 6:00pm.
- To the extent possible, the tour can be modified to cover sites where an ancestor fought.
- The tour will begin every morning at 9:00am at the Hôtel du Commerce in Aubréville.
 - Participants are responsible for booking their own transportation and lodging.
 - Participants are encouraged, but not required, to stay at the Hôtel du Commerce, Aubréville
 - Randy and Robert can suggest lodging alternatives.

Pricing and Payment Details:

- Price for the tour will be **\$500/\$540 per person excluding/including Saturday's farewell dinner.**
- A deposit of \$125 (25%) is required to reserve your participation in the tour.
- The \$375 (75%) balance **is due by Sept. 4, 2018.**
- A full refund—for any reason—is available until Sept. 4.
- Participants who cancel after Sept. 4, 2018 will only receive a 50% refund; regardless of reason.
- Payment can be made via PayPal or checks.
 - Send PayPal payments to lavarences@meuse-argonne.com.
 - **Be sure to note that it is for the Lost Battalion Tour.**
 - Checks can be sent to Randy Gaulke, 584 Valley Road, Gillette, NJ 07933 USA.

Minimum and Maximum Size:

- The tour is limited to fifteen participants maximum. There is no minimum number required.

Insurance and Health Considerations:

- Participants—especially those with pre-existing medical conditions—**are strongly encouraged** to obtain travel insurance that covers them medically overseas—including medical transport to the USA.
- Portions of the group hikes will take place over uneven terrain and on the steep slopes of hills. Ideally, participants will be part mountain goat 🐐.

Clothing and Practical Considerations:

- The hikes will take place rain or shine.
 - Being in early October, there is a good chance for Indian Summer; but there is an equally good chance of cold, damp and rainy weather.
- Randy has found the combination of a long-sleeve shirt, a good wool sweater and a light/medium layer for wind/rain protection covers participants for almost any weather.
- Sturdy footwear (that will get muddy) is also required. Randy prefers hiking boots that come above the ankle because of the protection they give; but footwear is a personal choice.
- Some of Randy's 2017 clients benefitted greatly from hiking poles.

Lodging:

- Participants are encouraged, but not required, to stay at the Hôtel du Commerce, Aubréville.
- The Hôtel du Commerce will hold a block of rooms until 30 June.
- Participants will receive a password to book a hotel after they book their tour reservation.

Daily Schedule:

- Participants are responsible for their own breakfasts.
- Participants will assemble at the Hôtel du Commerce at 9:00am sharp!!! After a short briefing the tour will depart.
- Lunch will be "in the field." **Participants are required to purchase and bring their food and beverages with them. They can stay in the car until lunch time.**
- Hikers will return to the Hôtel du Commerce between 5:00pm and 6:00pm.
- Participants are responsible for their own dinners.
- Assuming the tour has more than eight participants, one or two participants will need to volunteer as additional drivers.

Detailed Itinerary: (Subject to change for hunts or other unexpected events.)

Thursday, 4 October—Lost Battalion Saga

- Lost Battalion Walk led by Robert Laplander
- Logistics permitting, release of a carrier pigeon at 3:00pm

Friday, 5 October—77th & 28th Divisions in the Argonne Forest

- Binarville, tour of German Morolager
- Lachalade, Church used as triage facility, site of WW2 CWGC Bomber Crew Graves
- 77th & 28th Division Jump-Off Lines by Haute Chevauchée
- Ruins of German regimental cemetery on D38
- Abris du Kronprinz German camp (aka Champ Mahaut)
- German “Noltelager” and other German installations SW of Montblainville
- Le Chêne Tendu: 28th Div. Assault, German cemetery, Blinknetzstelle and Borrieswaldlager
- Apremont, several then and now stops around town
- Varennes, Pennsylvania Memorial and vicinity then and now opportunities

Saturday, 6 October—35th and 1st Divisions

- Neuilly, Church used as hospital and location of SA and YMCA huts
- Vauquois Hill, famous for mining war and 35th Division jump-off lines
 - Tour of the underground tunnels included
- Cheppy, area of Gen. Patton’s wounding and Missouri Memorial
- Bois de Montrebeau, Harry Truman’s artillery action and 35th Division story
- Exermont, story of 35th Division collapse and 1st Division taking over on 1 October
- Hike around Hill 263, “Remains of Company D” book summary and walk
- Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, Romagne: Visit to Visitors Center, select graves and end-of-day flag lowering ceremony
- Ending dinner, Hôtel du Commerce, Aubréville (Starting at 19h30.)

Sunday, 7 October—82nd, 77th and 78th Divisions Advancing

- Châtel-Chéhéry
 - Description of Hunter Liggett’s “oblique assault” by the 82nd
 - Sgt. York Marker by Mairie and other then and now photos
 - Visit to Harry Rupert’s Exhibition on Doughboys in the town
- Chevières, crash and grave site of Hamilton Coolidge, 94th Aero Squadron
 - Modest wreath-laying ceremony
- Grandpré and vicinity, various then and now stops showing assault by the 77th and 78th Divisions
- St. Juvin, crossing site of the Aire River and various then and now stops
 - Stop also at historic church
- Champigneulle, Kriemhilde Stellung ran just in front of town
- 19h30 evening commemoration of relief of the LB in “The Pocket”

About Robert Laplander:--TO BE UPDATED

- Robert has been researching the events and personalities of the Lost Battalion for over thirty years.
- His book, "Finding the Lost Battalion: Beyond the Rumors, Myths and Legends of America's Famous WW1 Epic," has been the standard on this unit, and it is now in its third printing.
- Robert's 'coffee table' book, "Faces of the Lost Battalion," will be released in March 2018, and his biography on Lost Battalion commander Charles Whittlesey, "Soldier Socialist – Patriot Pacifist," is set for an August, 2018 release.
- Robert also had considerable screen time in PBS' "American Experience: The Great War."

About Randy Gaulke:

- Randy has also been studying the Great War and touring its battlefields for over thirty years.
- Most recently, he quit his day job in early 2017 and spent six months in France as a freelance battlefield tour guide; and this has given him a very thorough knowledge of the events during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.
- In 2018 he will be living in France from mid-September to mid-November; again working as a freelance tour guide.

Registration Form:

Main Contact: _____

Others: _____

Contact Address: _____

Nationality: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Age(s): _____

Initial here: _____ The participants understand that the bulk of this tour will be "in the field" and will include walking in forests, on uneven ground, and also along some steep hill slopes.

Remember to pay via PayPal or by sending a check to Randy Gaulke. (See page 2.) The fee is \$500 excluding and \$540 including the farewell dinner on Saturday, 6 October.

Please send a hardcopy to: Randy Gaulke, 584 Valley Road, Gillette, NJ 07933 or email an image of this form to lavarenes@meuse-argonne.com.