

PRESS KIT 2022

BRING HISTORY ALIVE



AIRBORNE ★ MUSEUM SAINTE-MÈRE-ÉGLISE

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THE AIRBORNE MUSEUM, a constantly evolving museum

After the construction phase that birthed the **Operation Neptune building back in May 2014**, then the **Ronald Reagan Conference Center in 2016**, the Airborne Museum has entered a new **renovation phase since 2019**.

First of all, **the shop and the ticketing** have been renovated and enlarged in **2019**, then the **Neptune hall** has been enhanced and ameliorated in **February 2021**. Finally, in **2022**, **the C-47 building unveils an entirely remastered scenography**.

In **2024**, the museum will **inaugurate a new building** which will welcome our WACO glider, wholly dedicated to this particular theme. The **historical and iconic WACO building** of the Airborne Museum will be **reimagined** to welcome a new journey dedicated to **« Sainte-Mère-Eglise under occupation »**.

These expansions and renovations aim to enhance our building's quality, thus allowing a better preservation and valorization of our collections, but also to rethink our museography chronologically and thematically, and to propose an attractive and immersive scenography for our more than 200 000 annual visitors.



2019 - 2022 : Renovation phase

2022 - The entirely renovated C-47 building

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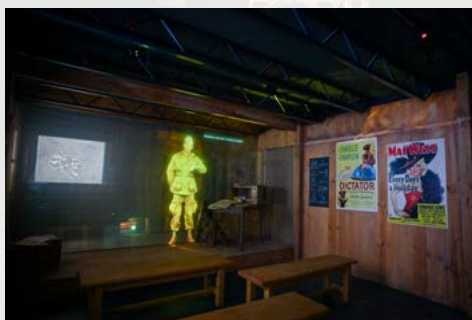
This new visiting experience is designed to be :

EDUCATIONAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL : From the birth of the American airborne troops in June 1940, to their boarding for D-Day in Great Britain, the visitor can **understand the sequence of events, assess the gravity and diversity of the operations conducted, discover the key characters but also the simpler soldiers, and finally cross the ally and german standpoints.**

EMBODIED : An homage is paid to these men who strived for the creation of the paratroopers, who conceived disinformation operations, or who participated in the D-Day, all through items having belonged to them, archive films, interviews, testimonies, or true-to-life statues.

ENGAGING : Thanks to **the diverse range of tools mobilized**, the visitor is permanently **solicited and surprised**, alternately **moved** by an interview of a veteran narrating his side of the story of the D-Day, **alert** during the briefing given by the hologram of an officer, a bit **anxious** when putting on his parachute harness in order to virtually experience a jump, or even **captivated** by the discovery of the marvelously highlighted and explained collections.

ADAPTED TO ALL PUBLICS : Because of the international aim of the museum, all texts are translated in english. Among the mediation tools, **different reading levels** are available, thus able to satisfy both the beginner and the fan. For **hard of hearing persons**, all films and videos are subtitled both in french and english. **As for the children, they have a dedicated path** with adapted visuals and texts.



2021 - The enhanced operation neptune building's hall

Since the beginning of 2021, the hall of Operation Neptune's building has been gifted with new museographical hubs:

- **The war medicine** highlighted by the exhibition of an ambulance with a reconstituted scene within the vehicle.



- **The history of Sainte-Mère-Eglise's temporary cemeteries** emphasized through a wall on which the names and faces of the fallen soldiers on the battlefield appear then disappear. The film presenting the three cemeteries and the funerals of Theodore Roosevelt is still there. As in the past, it will surely move our visitors.



- **Civilians during the Liberation.** In this part, we discuss the dichotomy between the bombing-related destructions and the first meetings between civilians and American soldiers.



- **The building of Memory and remembrance.** The cemeteries, the ceremonies, the return of the veterans, the cinema, so much factors having elevated Sainte-Mère-Eglise as a major place of memory.
- **After Normandy.** By means of a historical timeline and videos, visitors can follow the progression of the ally troops into Germany.

OPÉRATION NEPTUNE

Début février 1944, le haut commandement allié détaille les plans de la plus grande opération de débarquement de tous les temps, l'Opération Neptune. Cette opération correspond à la phase d'assaut du plan Overlord qui vise à ouvrir un nouveau front en Europe de l'Ouest.

Cet assaut sur les côtes Normandes, voit de multiples actions être menées le Jour-J : des bombardements aérien et naval ciblent les défenses allemandes du Mur de l'Atlantique suivis par le largage de milliers de parachutistes et le débarquement des troupes sur cinq secteurs de plages codées Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno et Sword Beach.

Le 6 juin 1944, ce sont plus de 150 000 soldats alliés qui débarquent en Normandie ! Une fois les secteurs de plage conquis, l'opération Neptune se poursuit par la mise en place de ports artificiels et de structures logistiques importantes, pour prendre fin officiellement le 30 juin 1944.

In early February 1944, Allied High Commanders drew up plans for the largest landing operation ever, Operation Neptune. This operation was the assault phase of Operation Overlord, which aimed to open a new front in Western Europe.

This assault on the Normandy coast was the scene of numerous actions: air and naval bombing attacks on German defenses along the Atlantic Wall, followed by the dropping of thousands of paratroopers and the landing of troops on five beach sectors codenamed Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword Beach.

On June 6, 1944, more than 150,000 Allied troops landed in Normandy. After the beach sectors were taken, Operation Neptune continued with the installation of artificial harbors and major logistical structures, ending on June 30, 1944.

Angleterre Juin

PRÉPARATIFS
ET EMBARQUEMENT
PREPARATIONS
AND BOARDING

A partir de
00:20
Normandie
6 juin

MISSION
Parach
la 101^e
MISSION
Dropping
101st Airb

2019 - An improved reception

Renovated and expanded, the ticketing and the shop are now offering a great space to our visitors.

The new ticketing is now clearer, more spacious and allows the museum to comfortably greet large groups. A large reception desk allows to open two checkouts, thus limiting the waiting time, but also to hand our Histopad tablets all while explaining their use.

In **2021, a historical timeline has also been added to the greeting space.** It marks the key phases of the Normandy D-Day to the visitors, presenting the sequence of events, hence allowing a better comprehension :

- 00h 15: arrival of the first parachutists.
- 4h00: landing of the gliders.
- 6h30 : naval landing in Utah Beach.

As for the shop, it earned more space and greater clarity. Our visitors can now locate themselves better, making finding the desired memorabilia easier. The product range has been expanded, diversifying our gift offer, in order to satisfy to the best of our ability our physical visitors, as well as the virtual ones, thanks to the online shop.





The cost and funders of these renovations

The refurbishment of the C-47 is part of a **global project of approximately 3.3 million euros encompassing the renovation works of the reception and the shop as well as the transformations of the Operation Neptune hall.**

The renovation works of the C-47 building alone have cost roughly 2.2 million euros.


For this, the museum has been able to count on **the support of Europe (FEDER fund)**, up to 1.5 million euros, and the **Normandy Region**, up to 420 000 euros.

As for the Airborne Museum, it has been able to self-finance the renovations up to 1.1 million euros.





**2024 : Creation of a new structure and
renovation of the WACO building**



2024 : New structure dedicated to the gliders and renovation of the WACO building

For the 80th anniversary of the D-Day, the Airborne Museum will open a whole new structure dedicated to the gliders, and offer a newly renovated WACO building.

As of today, the original space of the museum is devoted to the gliders and their use during the Normandy Landing. It welcomes an exceptionally historical piece: an authentic WACO glider. It's the only specimen available in France for the public, in this state of conservation. Visitors of the museum have the privilege of being able to board upon the glider to imagine the feelings experienced by a soldier in 1944.

In order to answer conservation, public greeting and content expansion requirements, **a new, more than 1000m2 large structure will be built towards the museum's south entry.** It will welcome the legendary WACO and will be **the first building entirely dedicated to the World War II gliders of that caliber.** 60 years after its arrival in the Airborne Museum, the glider will finally have a matching shrine.

As for the old historical building and its iconic architecture, its scenography will be renovated and revamped. An overview of **the life and times of the locals of SME since the arrival of the Germans in July 1940, until the Liberation,** will be available at the beginning of the visit.

Expropriation, rationing, displacements control, obligatory labour, curfew and resistance will be discussed, as well as the German forces on the spot: who and how much were they? Where were they based? How was the cohabitation? Etc. Very interesting subjects for our visitors !



2022 NEWS

Temporary exhibition, 6th June festivities with the Geronimo Camp as a culmination, conferences: an exciting agenda ahead !

AIRBORNE
SAINTE MÈRE ÉGLISE



MUSEUM



ASSAULT BY AIR

Parachutists of the Second World War

from 21st april 2022

Temporary exhibition

« ASSAULT BY AIR »

Starting from April 21st, the Airborne Museum will present a brand new temporary exhibition: « Assault by air »

Through numerous, often novel items and artifacts, uniforms and testimonies, the Airborne Museum offers an exhibition that retraces **parachutist history within the different armies implicated in WWII.**

- Why, how and when were created the airborne troops ?
- On what type of operations were they engaged ?
- On which operational theater have they fought ?

As many answers as countries. Whether these countries belong to Allies like USA, UK, Canada, Poland or USSR and France (Free France but also Vichy), or to the Axis forces: Germany, Italy, Japan.

Through a wonderful collection, gathered for the first time, mainly emanating from private collections, with pieces as rare as equipment belongings of a British veteran of the Bruneval Raid of 1942, the testimony of an ancient Free France SAS, the extraordinary story of these elite troops will be honored.

And to go further....

A conference weekend on October 1st and 2nd

Saturday:

- «Soviet parachutists» by Gaston Erlom
- «Air Infantry french parachutists» by Rémy Longetti
- «German parachutists» by Julien Chevalier
- «British parachutists» by Jean-Louis Perquin
- «French parachutists from the CIA to the SAS (2nd and 3rd RCP 1940-45)» by Jean-Christophe Dumont

Sunday:

- «French parachutists from the CIA number 1 to 1st RCP 1940-45 » by Guillaume Morelli
- «Italian and japanese parachutists» by Dominique Lormier
- «American parachutists» by Eric Belloc

Conferences free and open to all.

GERONIMO CAMP - From 3rd to 6th June 2022

As happens every year, the Airborne Museum organizes, from Friday 3rd to Monday 6th June 2022, an American reconstitution camp near the museum, **open and free to all**.

With numerous historic vehicles, a plethora of scenes and demonstrations, the Geronimo Camp is an staple of the Normandy D-Day festivities and has now become **one of the biggest American reconstitution camps of France**.

In order to best illustrate the climate and life scenes of a Normandy military camp, the museum calls several seasoned reenacting associations such as V for Victory, MVCG Bretagne, 39th ITD, Enfer Normand and Eure Liberté 44.

Couples, families, fans or collectors, everyone will be able to discover the universe of the American Forces through the camp alleys. The reenactors will be available during the whole event to discuss with the visitors, make demonstrations and even sometimes, for the luckiest, invite to get aboard a vehicle.

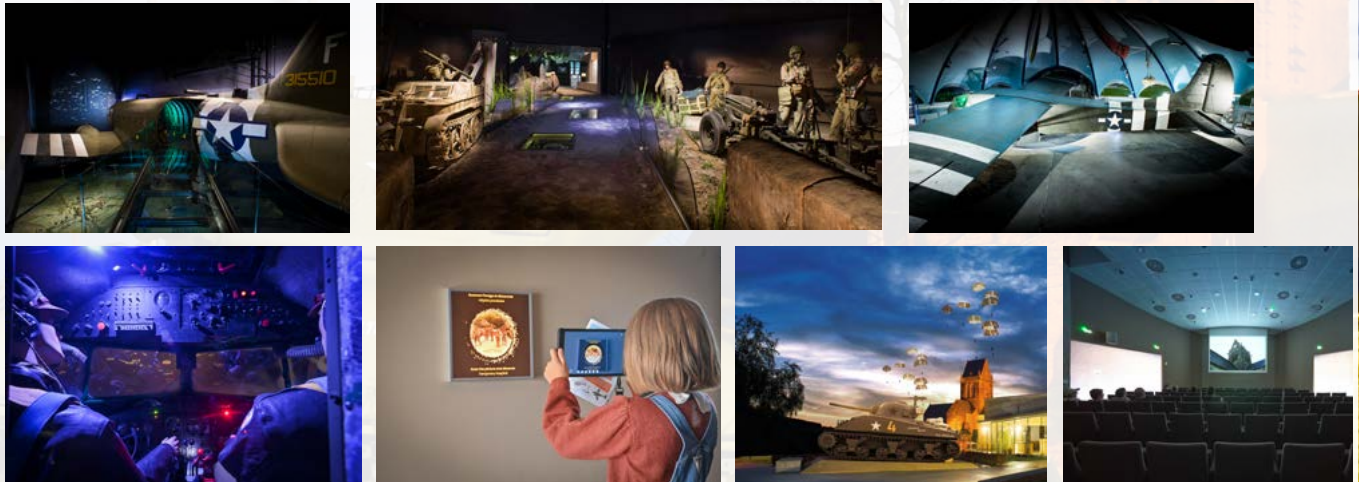


PHOTO LIBRARY AND RESOURCES

GENERIC PHOTOS OF THE MUSEUM

Photo credit: ©airborne museum

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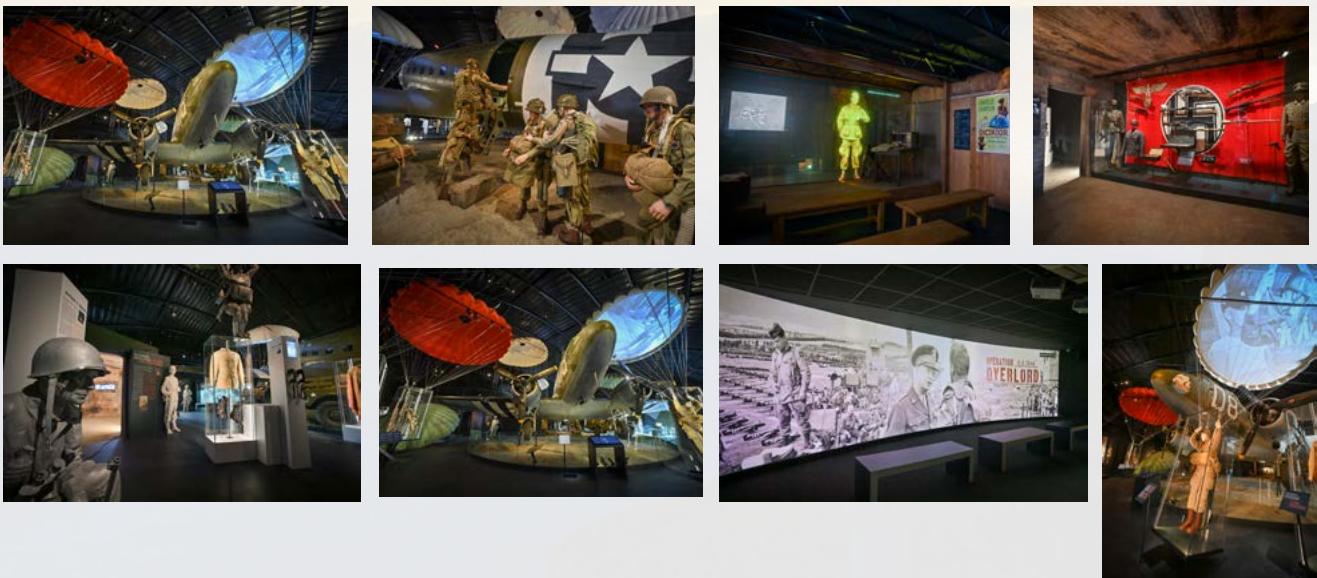


C-47 BUILDING PHOTOS

You will find in the link below a selection of photos from the different rooms of the C-47 building.

Photo credit ©airborne museum

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1b0Cci_VFkrGduj3wJzqq6BOpaBNVcA4H?usp=sharing



C-47 BUILDING VIDEO

A video has been created to present our brand new C-47 building :

<https://youtu.be/ZCJlvXDDRhM>



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

TIMETABLES

- From may to august : 9h-19h
- April and september : 9h30-18h30
- October to march : 10h-18h

Closed in december and january except school holidays.

PRICES

- Adult : 9.90 €
- Child (6 to 16 years old) : 6.00 €
- Family (minimum 2 adults and 2 children paying) : 28 €

PRESS CONTACT

Magali MALLET

02 33 41 78 02

direction@airborne-museum.org