



*RIGHT: Cambridge MAFVA at Saumur Musée des Blindés Concours International de Maquettes, a weekend of model competition, tank mobility displays, tours of the reserves and picnics.*

# The MAFVA column

News and views from the Miniature Armoured Fighting Vehicle Association



**John Ham** describes how to set up a club travel agency.

Club trips to shows or museums benefit from travelling with companions with similar interests and allow costs to be shared. One of the most travelled clubs is Cambridge MAFVA, which organises a couple of European trips each year. Last year, visits were arranged to the Saumur Musée des Blindés model show, and to the Scale Model Challenge show in Holland. Travelling by car, we also visited other military museums en route.

At Saumur, the group stayed at the gite of MAFVA member Bill Hanna, who offers discounted rates to fellow members. The return journey coincided with the 70th Anniversary Normandy celebrations, and we visited Pegasus Bridge and its museum.

Scale Model Challenge in the autumn was our other overseas trip. Before the channel ferry, we first visited the Hannants, and the Norfolk Tank Museum ([www.norfolktankmuseum.co.uk](http://www.norfolktankmuseum.co.uk)). This is a private collection of mostly post-WW2 vehicles and memorabilia that holds open days for the public, dates on the website. Owner Steven MacHaye was kind enough to open the museum for us as a MAFVA special interest group.

Arriving in Holland the next day, and before reaching the Overloon Military Museum, we stopped off at the Dutch Liberation Museum mid-journey. This museum tells the story of the Dutch Occupation years of WW2. It has a handful of vehicles and artillery pieces, including a Sherman parked outside.

Overloon houses a large collection of mostly US WW2 vehicles, artillery, and other WW2 items. There is a lot to see here, and the vehicles are in good condition or nicely restored. The softskin items have some unusual body types such as pontoon trailers. The museum also hosts an annual combined model show and military vehicle day, where it is possible to have rides on privately owned, restored German WW2 vehicles.

Scale Model Challenge, was a very impressive show with a very high standard of competition and organisation, with Continental traders selling items less commonly seen at UK shows.

The return trip was via Bastogne in the Belgian Ardennes. The Barracks Museum here, part of the Brussels Military Museum is located in an

*BELOW LEFT: At the Norfolk Tank Museum a Fox armoured car with a Scimitar CVRT in the foreground.*

*BELOW RIGHT: A Sherman in Sherwood Rangers Markings at the Dutch Liberation Museum. The regimental museum is a regular exhibitor at the MAFVA Nationals, Duxford.*





ABOVE LEFT: GMC truck with Pontoon trailer at Overloon. ABOVE RIGHT: As big as some museums, BARC amphibian transporter at Overloon.



ABOVE LEFT: A gutted Carrier Conger at Overloon. Seen behind it is the bridge of a Valentine Bridgelayer. ABOVE RIGHT: An Sdkfz 7/2 in the Bastogne Barracks Museum workshop undergoing maintenance.

ex-army barracks, and still run by army staff. This was a specially arranged visit, and incorporated a tour of the WW2 battlefield as well as the museum. A couple of the museum staff, Roni and Bruno, both fellow modellers, took us around the battle sites and a tour of the museum, which included the workshops and close examination of exhibits. Currently in danger of being closed, the museum support site is <http://ftr.wot-news.com/2015/01/19/help-the-bastogne-barracks-museum/>

The Bastogne War Museum incorporates an impressive memorial to the American soldiers that defended Bastogne. Laid out in the shape of a US star, from the viewing platform on top of the monument, there is a panoramic view of the battlefield. The museum tells the story with a collection of uniforms and some vehicles. A very enjoyable couple of trips, which may encourage other clubs to set up their own tours.



ABOVE: Mendips MAFVA member Andy Lang's Gold Medal-winning entry at the Scale Model Challenge show. BELOW: Bastogne War Museum has a good collection of winter uniforms worn by the combatants.

### News

The MAFVA Jubilee Nationals takes place at Duxford on 21st June. The usual military vehicle show is not being held this time, but there will be other special events. Members are advised to bring their membership cards with them. Finally, there's a new MAFVA Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/MAFVA/641750925971712?ref=hl> John Ham, chairman @mafva.net

