

European military history museums: a personal electronic and bibliographic survey

We have divided this compilation into three parts: (1) an annotated list of selected European military museums, with Websites, arranged by country; (2) a partially annotated list of general military museum Websites; and (3) an annotated bibliography of publications on military museums. In Part 1 we focus on traditional military museums of relatively broad scope that we believe to be of particular importance or interest, not only to the general public and military historians, but also to museum professionals, historians of technology and art historians. We daresay that scholars of many other stripes might find a visit to such museums instructive. One sociologist of our acquaintance certainly did. In addition to the selected museums, we have, where possible, suggested Websites that identify (and in many cases link to) other military museums in the same country.

With a few exceptions, Part 1 does not include museums centred on single units (e.g. regimental museums), branches (e.g. tanks), topics (e.g. Cabinet War Rooms), events (e.g. D-day) or other relatively narrow topics. It also excludes, again with some exceptions, naval museums, military aviation museums, and arms and armour collections (whether independent or in art museums); such museums require lists of their own. Museums and collections of this kind are included in Part 2, which lists Websites of a more general nature than those addressed in Part 1. Those interested in military museums may find these sites, which we have partially annotated, useful for further exploration. Finally, Part 3 offers a brief annotated bibliography of recent publications on military museums.

Part 1: List by country of selected European military museums

Austria

Heeresgeschichtliches Museum (Military History Museum), Vienna, <http://www.hgm.or.at>. Although focused on the military history of the Habsburg Empire from the sixteenth century to the First World War, Vienna's oldest museum houses some of the world's finest collections of militaria, with notable holdings of arms and armour, firearms, artillery, and military art.

For other Austrian (and Austro-Hungarian) military museums, see the section of the Links list from 'Austro-Hungarian Land Forces

1848–1918’, by Glenn Jewison and Jörg C Steiner, which covers military museums and archives in Austria and Hungary: <http://www.austro-hungarian-army.co.uk/links.htm>.

Belgium

Musée Royal de l’Armée et d’Histoire Militaire (Royal Museum of Army and Military History), Brussels, <http://www.klm-mra.be>. Centred on the military history of Belgium since the eighteenth century, with wide-ranging collections of arms, uniforms, flags and military art, this traditional military museum especially emphasises the world wars.

Musée d’Armes de Liège (Arms Museum of Liège), <http://www.museedarmes.be>. Founded by the city and its gun manufacturers in the late nineteenth century, this museum is devoted entirely to the history of small arms from the fourteenth century to the present. At the time of writing it was undergoing renovation, its collections inaccessible.

For other Belgian military museums, see Belgium in ABCollection: Militaria: Military Museums Directory, <http://www.abcollection.com/eng/museum/summary.php>.

Bulgaria

Natsionalen Voyennoistoricheski Muzey (National Museum of Military History), Sofia, http://www.md.government.bg/nvim/_bg/index.html.

For other Bulgarian military museums, see Balkan Military History: Bulgaria Military History Tour, <http://members.aol.com/balkandave/frmcon.htm>.

Czech Republic

Voyenský Historický Ústav (Military Historical Institute), Prague, <http://www.militarymuseum.cz>. In addition to military historical exhibits at its headquarters, the institute maintains the new military historical museum (moved from Schwartzberg Palace) in the Mihulka Powder Tower at Prague Castle, which now relies on up-to-date storytelling through vignettes.

For other Czech military museums and memorials, see CZeCOT: Tourist Server of the Czech Republic: Military, http://www.czecot.com/?id_tema=28. See also Prague, Heart of Europe: Museums, http://www.heartofeurope.cz/museum_6.html.

Denmark

Tøjhusmuseet – Dansk Forsvarsmuseum (Arsenal Museum – Danish Armed Forces Museum), Copenhagen, <http://www.thm.dk>.

For other Danish military museums, see Danish Military Historie: Museums, http://www.milhist.dk/index_uk.htm.

Finland

Sotamuseon julkaisu (Military Museum of Finland), Helsinki, <http://www.mpkk.fi/en/museum>.

For other Finnish military and naval museums, see Maanpuolustuskeakoulu: Sotamuseo, <http://www.mpkk.fi/fi/sotamuseo/>. See also Royal Swedish Academy of War Science: Finland: Museums, <http://cgi.kkrva.se/eng/mwi/finland/museums.shtml>; and List of Finnish museums, <http://www.axishistory.com/index.php?id=157>.

France

Musée de l'Armée (Army Museum)/Musée National d'Armes et d'Histoire Militaire (National Museum of Arms and Military History), Paris, <http://www.invalides.org/>. Located in the Invalides, the French Army Museum mixes very impressive but traditional displays of Napoleonic War memorabilia and straightforward accounts of later wars, with an exotic presentation of oriental arms and armour as *objets d'art*, a remarkable display of large-scale models of fortified cities, and a stunning exhibit of the history of artillery through models.

For descriptions and links to other French military museums, see the section on France in ABCollection: Militaria: Military Museums Directory, <http://www.abcollection.com/eng/museum/summary.php>.

Germany

Militärhistorisches Museum (Military Historical Museum), Dresden, <http://www.milhistmuseum.de>. Formerly the Saxon Army Museum, the German Military Historical Museum and the East German Army Museum, this museum took its present identity after reunification. A temporary exhibition hall is open to the public while a splendid new facility is under construction, scheduled to open in 2008.

Bayerisches Armeemuseum Ingolstadt (Bavarian Army Museum in Ingolstadt), near Munich, <http://www.bayerisches-armeemuseum.de>.

Wehrgeschichtliches Museum Schloss Rastatt (Military History Museum in Rastatt Castle), Rastatt, near Karlsruhe, <http://www.wgm-rastatt.de>.

For descriptions and links to other German military museums, see the section on Germany in ABCollection: Militaria: Military Museums Directory, <http://www.abcollection.com/eng/museum/summary.php>.

Greece

Polemiko Mouseio (War Museum), Athens. No Website identified, but see the illustrated description under museums at the Hellenic Ministry of Culture Website, <http://www.culture.gr>. Founded in 1975, this museum devotes considerable space to premodern military activities, from prehistory through antiquity to Byzantine and Turkish rule, before turning to the wars of independence, the Balkan wars and the world wars.

For other military museums in Greece, see the Website Hellenic Army Military Museums, <http://www.army.gr/n/e/archive/museums/>.

Hungary

Hadtörténeti Intézet és Múzeum (Museum of Military History), Budapest, <http://www.militaria.hu>.

For other Hungarian (and Austro-Hungarian) military museums, see the section of the Links list at 'Austro-Hungarian Land Forces 1848–1918', by Glenn Jewison and Jörg C Steiner, which covers military museums and archives in Austria and Hungary: <http://www.austro-hungarian-army.co.uk/links.htm>.

Italy

For military museums in Italy, see Italian Kits: Museums, <http://www.italiankits.it/museums.html>. See also the Website Military Museums in Rome, http://www.liveinrome.com/museums/military_museums.htm.

Luxembourg

Musée National d'Histoire Militaire (National Museum of Military History), Diekirch, <http://www.nat-military-museum.lu>. Primarily devoted to the Battle of the Bulge.

For descriptions and links to other Luxembourg military museums, see the section on Luxembourg at ABCollection: Militaria: Military Museums Directory, <http://www.abcollection.com/eng/museum/summary.php>.

The Netherlands

Koninklijk Nederlands Leger- en Wapenmuseum Generaal Hofer (Royal Dutch Army and Weapons Museum), Delft, <http://www.legermuseum.nl>. Commonly known as the Legermuseum and housed along a canal in the formidable seventeenth-century Armamentarium (Arsenal), this exciting museum combines solid permanent exhibitions with innovative temporary shows.

Norway

Forsvarsmuseet (Norwegian Armed Forces Museum), Oslo, <http://www.mil.no/felles.fmu/>. Centrally located in Oslo at the former Akershus fortress, this relatively modest museum exhibits Norwegian military history from the Vikings to the present quite conventionally.

Poland

Lubuskie Military Museum, Letnica, <http://free.polbox.pl/leszekch/>. Displays aircraft, helicopters and heavy military equipment. Also links to a number of other Polish military museums.

Wielkopolskie Muzeum Wojskowe (Polish Military Museum), Poznań, <http://www.mnp.art.pl/oddz4.html>.

Muzeum Wojska Polskiego (Polish Military Museum), Warsaw, <http://www.muzeumwp.pl>.

Portugal

Museu Militar (Military Museum), Lisbon, <http://geira.pt/mmilitar/>. This one-time artillery museum occupies the site of a former shipyard gun foundry and arsenal; although its collections have expanded and the building has been refurbished, it remains a fairly conventional military museum with stronger than usual artillery holdings.

Romania

Muzeul Militar National (National Military Museum), Bucharest, <http://muzeu.mapn.ro/>. Like most military museums, the Romanian version is chronologically organised, covering the full sweep from antiquity to the present, with excellent displays and dioramas, and unusually fine large-scale maps.

Russia

Tsentral'niy Muzey Vooruzhennykh Sil (Central Armed Forces Museum), Moscow, <http://www.armymuseum.ru>.

Serbia

Vojni Muzej (Military Museum), Belgrade, no Website located.

Spain

Museo del Ejército (Army Museum), Madrid, no Website located. Situated in an elegant old building, this was a classic military museum of the old school. But no longer. The army museum is now in the process of transferring itself to the Alcázar, the old hilltop fortress in Toledo, while the old building is now part of the Prado.

Sweden

Armémuseum (Royal Army Museum), Stockholm, <http://www.armemuseum.org/>. Open again after years of renovation, this museum sets a new standard for museum storytelling, though perhaps at the expense of displaying real objects. It offers a chronological account of Swedish military history, relying chiefly on life-size tableaux to dramatise such activities as recruiting, foraging, families, field repairs and fighting.

For other Swedish military and naval museums, see Royal Swedish Academy of War Science: Sweden: Museums, <http://cgi.kkrva.se/eng/mwi/sweden/museums.shtml>.

Switzerland

For Swiss military museums, see Schweitzer Armeemuseum: Military Museums and Collections in Switzerland, <http://www.musee-armee.ch/>.

United Kingdom

Imperial War Museum, London, <http://www.iwm.org.uk>. Contentious name and weird location (it occupies the one-time Bethlehem Hospital (Bedlam) for the Insane) aside, this is one of the great military museums, a pioneer in expanding its scope to deal with the larger social implications of military affairs. It commemorates and displays objects related to Britain and the Commonwealth in the world wars of the twentieth century and in later conflicts.

National Army Museum, London, <http://www.national-army-museum.ac.uk>. This is the other half of British military history, the story of the British army to the First World War, emphasising the experience of the soldier and featuring an exceptional military art collection.

Royal Armouries, Leeds, <http://www.armouries.org.uk/>. Formerly in the Tower of London, the Royal Armouries has now acquired a large new building, where its extensive collections of arms and armour can be displayed and where special exhibitions can be mounted to good effect.

For descriptions and links to other United Kingdom military museums, see A–Z of [British] Military Museums, <http://www.army.mod.uk/ceremonialandheritage/museums/>. See also UK Directory: Military Museums: ‘Naval and Maritime Museums in the British Isles’, by Martin H Evans and Janet West: <http://www.cus.cam.ac.uk/~mhe1000/>; and <http://www.ukdirectory.co.uk/Library/Category681880.html>, which includes naval and aircraft museums.

Part 2: Selected general military museum Websites, including Websites for naval, military aviation, and arms and armour collections

ABCcollection: Militaria: Military Museums Directory, <http://www.abcollection.com/eng/museum/summary.php>. Directory of military museums and exhibitions related to military history, located in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, and Great Britain, most with Websites.

Academie des Armes Anciennes, <http://www.academie-des-armes-anciennes.com/>. Detailed discussion of several museums.

Aerofiles: Museums and Public Access Displays, <http://www.aerofiles.com/museums.html>. Includes US and Canadian museums, civil air as well as military.

Aircraft and Aviation Museums, http://www.fleetairarmarchive.net/Museums/Museums_aircraft2000A-Z.htm.

Aircraft Museums, http://www.travelcentre.com.au/travel/Aviation/aircraft_museums.htm.

The AirNet Web Site: Aviation Links: Aviation Museums (not UK or US), <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/airnet/museums.html>. Includes civil as well as military aviation, with separate links to UK and US museums.

American Society of Arms Collectors, <http://www.americansocietyofarmcollectors.org/museums>. American and European museums.

Arms and Armor, <http://www.armor.com/2000/links.html>. Includes links to a number of arms and armour museums and collections in Europe and America.

Aviation Museums of the World, <http://www.airaffair.com/Library/museums.html>.

Danish Naval History: Maritime Links – Maritime and Naval Museums, http://www.navalhistory.dk/Common_files/LinksSider/usLinksMilitary.htm. Emphasis on Danish and Scandinavian museums, but worldwide in scope.

DMOZ Open Directory Project: Reference: Museums: Military, <http://dmoz.org/Reference/Museums/Military/>.

European Maritime Museums Sites, <http://www.maritimemuseums.net/europe.html>.

Frazier Historical Arms Museum (Louisville, KY): Related links section, <http://www.frazierarmsmuseum.org/links.html>. Includes

museums with important arms and armour collections, as well as other resources.

Militaria on the Web: Military Museum Guide, <http://www.arbeia.demon.co.uk/museums/index3.htm>.

Military Aircraft Museums, <http://www.richard-seaman.com/Aircraft/Museums/>.

Military.com Museum & Memorial Guide, http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourceSubmittedFileView?file=museums_museum_guide.htm.

Military Museum Resources, http://www.cbel.com/military_museums/.

Military Museums and History Links, <http://www.qmmuseum.lee.army.mil/links.html>.

Military Museums and Memorials in the Yahoo Directory, http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/History/By_Subject/Military_History/Museums_and_Memorials/.

Military World, Links to Museums, <http://www.militaryworld.com/dir/History/Museums/>. Primarily US.

Mother of All Maritime Links: John's Nautical Links List, page 32: Museums, Museum Ships & Preservation Efforts, <http://www.boat-links.com/linklists/boatlink-32.html>.

Museums, <http://home.planet.nl/~whitestar/museums.htm>. Listing of European military museums that display vehicles.

Museums of Weapons and Military History, <http://users.swing.be/sw017995/museum.htm>.

Naval and Maritime Museums: Europe, <http://www.bruzelius.info/Nautica/Museums/mmeu.html>.

Naval and Maritime Museums List, <http://www.bb62museum.org/wrldnmus.html>.

Olive-Drab Military Museums, http://www.olive-drab.com/od_history_museums.php3.

Veteran and Military Museums and Memorials, <http://members.aol.com/veterans/warlib6m.htm>. Links to a large number of Websites, primarily US and Canada.

War and Remembrance – WWII Memorials to Visit in Europe, by James Martin, <http://goeurope.about.com/cs/germany/a/warmemorials.htm>. With links to sites all over the continent.

War Museums: Place of Remembrance throughout Europe, <http://www.warmuseums.nl/>.

War Museums Itinerary, by Elisabetta Corselli, <http://www.museumland.com/Itguerra/>. Interesting short reviews of war, naval, air and other military-relevant museums.

World Wide Web Virtual Library: Naval and Maritime: Museums, <http://vlnavmar.usnaweb.org/museums.html>.

Part 3: Select bibliography of European military museums

Humbert, J M and Dumarche, L, *Guide des Musées d'Histoire Militaire: 400 Musées en France* (Paris: Charles-Lavauzelle, 1982)

Kavanagh, G, *Museums and the First World War: A Social History* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1994)

Kristy, B H, 'Museum collections as historical sources', in Higham, R and Mrozek, D J (eds), *A Guide to the Sources of United States Military History: Supplement IV* (North Haven, CT: Archon Books, 1998), pp543–80. A broad bibliographical survey that expands in several directions the earlier reviews in the same series by Lundeberg, *qv*.

Lundeberg, P K, 'Military museums', in Jessup, J E and Ketz, L B (eds), *Encyclopedia of the American Military: Studies of the History, Traditions, Policies, Institutions, and Roles of the Armed Forces in War and Peace*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994), Vol. 3, pp2133–57. Although now somewhat dated, provides a useful discussion and substantial bibliography that goes beyond specifically American museums.

Lundeberg, P K, 'Museums collections as historical resources', in Higham, R and Mrozek, D J (eds), *A Guide to the Sources of United States Military History: Supplement III* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1993), pp374–426. Unlike the author's earlier essays in the series, this essay is not limited to American museums and includes a far larger bibliography.

Robertson, I G, 'Museums, military', in Corvisier, A (ed.), *A Dictionary of Military History and the Art of War*, trans. Turner, C, English edn revised, expanded and ed. by Childs, J (Oxford/Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994), pp540–3. Describes the changing functions of military museums.

Thwaites, P, *Presenting Arms: Museum Presentations of British Military History, 1660–1900* (London/New York: Leicester University Press, 1996). A substantial discussion of the broad problems in exhibiting military history as well as specifically British issues; includes a list of museums and bibliography.

Westrate, J L, *European Military Museums: A Survey of Their Philosophy, Facilities, Programs, and Management* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1961). Although outdated in detail, the broad discussion remains worthwhile.

Wise, T and Wise, S, *A Guide to [British] Military Museums and Other Places of Military Interest*, 8th edn (Knighton, Powys: Imperial Press, 1994)

Wood, S, 'Museums, military', in Holmes, R (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) pp668–9. A concise survey of the history of military museums.