

Military Heritage Tourism Baltic Countries

Asnate Ziemele
Baltic Country Holidays, Latvia

Interreg



Co-funded by
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Latvia – Lithuania



**Strong Yesterday –
Free Today!**

Interreg



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Estonia – Latvia



Lauku Ceļotājs
Baltic Country Holidays

Military heritage as a tourism product

To develop a common tourism product - to provide an attractive, modern, and information-rich tourist experience, and to promote the military facilities as accessible, understandable, and safe for visitors, especially for young people/school-aged youth.



Military tourism platform:

<https://militaryheritagetourism.info>



MILITARY
HERITAGE
TOURISM

EN LV ET LT DE RU

START

HISTORY

MAP

MILITARY *

TOURING ROUTES

EVENTS

INFO *

ABOUT US

SEARCH



LOGIN



Visitors of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have access to military heritage locations such as museums, fortifications, military equipment, trails, bunkers, battle sites, military towns, infrastructural objects, as well as memorial sites which speak to the era from the beginning of World War I in 1914 and the establishment of all three countries' independence in 1918, till the period of restoration of independence in 1990/1991.

Military heritage locations have descriptions, related memory stories, historical and present-day photographs, tourism services and recommendations on travel routes. There is also information about a great many lesser known and less often visited sites that nevertheless are important historical locations of military heritage in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.



HISTORY



SITES



TOURING ROUTES



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Web portal <https://militaryheritagetourism.info/> content

- **845 military objects: 35 bunkers, 19 military equipment, 45 battle sites, 407 memorial sites, 123 museums, 19 trails, 22 military towns, 122 infrastructure objects and 53 fortifications;**
- **The 7 large timeline sections** are divided into **264 smaller timeline sections;**
- **Descriptions of 129 historical topics;**
- **300 Military Heritage tourism stories** (tales, personal memories and evidence about the military heritage locations and their history);
- **26 tours** (with a total of **112 day** descriptions);
- **Between objects, topics, timelines and stories there are a total of 5158 links;**
- **106 user comments;**
- **64 objects** have their **tourism programs** added;
- **1155 attachments of GPS coordinates** (objects, stories, topics, etc.).

Historical periods and Timeline

1914 - 1918

World War I

Description

Timeline

1918 - 1920

Wars of Independence

Description

Timeline

1920 - 1940

Independence of the Baltic States

Description

Timeline

1939 - 1945

World War II

Description

Timeline

1944 - 1957

National Partisan Movement

Description

Timeline

1945 - 1991

Soviet Occupation and the Cold War

Description

Timeline

1991 - ...

Restored Independence

Description

Timeline

World War I (1914-1918)

Before the establishment of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian states, soldiers from the territories of the Russian Empire, which later became national states, served in the Imperial Russian Army during World War I. Although all three countries proclaimed independence at the end of the war, this did not bring peace for their people.



Proclamation of the republic of Latvia

In February 1918, the German military occupied present-day Vidzeme and Latgale. In March of the same year, Soviet Russia signed the Litovsk Treaty, in which it waived all power in present-day Latvia. In October, the Latvian national political organisation known as the Democratic Bloc, submitted a document to Germany in which it announced the desire of the Latvian people to establish an internationally recognised independent state, fully expecting the German military to withdraw from the region once that was achieved. On November 18, 1918, with the help of the allies from World War I, the National Council proclaimed an independent Republic of Latvia.



Proclamation of the republic of Estonia

A truce in World War I was organised after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Estonians



Proclamation of the republic of Lithuania

On 16 February 1918, the Council of Lithuania proclaimed the restoration of the Lithuanian

German warships bombard the coasts of Kurzeme

On August 2, around 8:00 PM, the German Imperial Fleet ships "Augsburg" and "Magdeburg" started to fire cannon shots at Liepāja for around half an hour. Old Liepāja was bombarded, as were factories in New Liepāja and the military port. Guns were aimed at local beaches, which had lots of visitors, a bathhouse, a hospital and villas in the Jūrmala park. Another target was the Liepāja lighthouse, but it was strong enough to withstand the barrage. After firing 420 shots, the ships retreated toward Sweden. They didn't cause much damage, but people in Liepāja were shocked enough to start to leave the city.

On August 16 and 17, German ships bombarded the lighthouse at Akmeņrags. On August 19, German marines tried to overtake the lighthouse at Uževa, but they were beaten back by local border guards. Later German cannons from ships destroyed the lighthouse. Finally, in November, there was the first aviation raid over Liepāja, dropping several bombs onto Liepāja.

Next period: Period I - Wars of Independence 1918 - 1920

Read more about historical periods

Sites

- Memorial sites
- Museums
- Fortifications
- Military equipment
- Trails
- Bunkers
- Battle sites
- Military towns
- Infrastructure



MEMORIAL SITES

Memorials, monuments, graveyards, commemorative plaques, inscriptions, public commemorative places



MUSEUMS

General collections, public collections, museums



FORTIFICATIONS

General fortifications, bunkers, pillboxes, light fortifications



MILITARY EQUIPMENT

Armoured cars, jeeps, tanks, trucks, military aircraft, military equipment



TRAILS

Walking, cycling, horse, sled, snow



BUNKERS

General fortifications



BATTLE SITES

General battle sites, battle sites, battle sites, battle sites, battle sites



MILITARY TOWNS

General military towns, military towns, military towns, military towns, military towns



INFRASTRUCTURE

General infrastructure, infrastructure, infrastructure, infrastructure, infrastructure

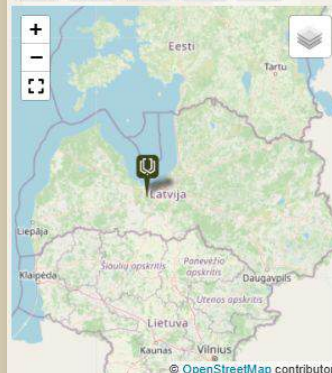
An example of a site description

The Christmas Battle museum and outdoor exhibition

Museum



Ziemeasvētku kauju muzejs. Avots: Latvijas Lauku tūrisma asociācija "Lauku ceļotājs".



56.8300,23.7019 [Open with](#)

1 Mangali, Valgundes pag., Jelgavas novads, Latvija
+371 28349259, +371 67228147
www.karamuzejs.lv/zm
mangali@karamuzejs.lv
Ziemeasvētku kauju muzejs



The Christmas Battle Memorial Park and Museum is located in Jelgava municipality, Valgunde parish, in the Mangali homestead. This museum is a branch of the Latvian War Museum. It was opened in 2005 and is located in the area where Christmas Battles took place. Unique World War I fortifications still remain in locations where battles took place. The indoor exhibit contains objects found in the battlefield. The open-air exposition has reconstructed fortifications. There are tourist routes and informative trails in the vicinity of the museum. The open-air exposition of World War I fortifications and indoor exhibits are available to visitors every day. Unique evidence of World War I fortifications can still be found in the vicinity of Ložmetējkaisns. There is a 27 m tall observation tower that provides a panoramic view of the area where the Christmas Battle took place. The Christmas Battle is probably the best known and most dramatic event of World War I in Latvia. It has a special place in Latvia's military and cultural history. This engagement is mainly associated with the attack of Latvian Riflemen on the German Army units in extremely harsh and unfavourable conditions. And it was also a unique situation where a large-scale combat operation was started without artillery support.

Used sources and references:

translated by [Google](#) [Show original](#)

Official website of the Latvian War Museum. Available: <http://www.karamuzejs.lv/lv/zm.aspx> [Viewed: March 21, 2021].

Bērziņš, V. Latvian Riflemen: Drama and Tragedy. Riga: Publishing House of the Latvian Institute of [No Title] 995.

Educational programs

Latvian archer in Christmas battles

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In the Christmas Battle Museum - an authentic battlefield of World War I, we will create an idea for young people about the role of a person in war conditions, the daily life of soldiers and participation in battles. With an insight into military discipline and various interactive tasks focused on team building, we will create emotions that will make you think. After the lesson, you can use the bonfire site and a 7 km long informative walking trail through the battlefields on the territory of the museum.

Your comments

Šobrīd Mangaju māju apkaimē notiek restaurācijas darbi.

Juris Smajinskis

1914 - 1918 [WWI](#) [WWI](#)

Related timeline

- 1916 The front line at Riga and the Daugava River
- 1914 - 1918 World War I
- January 1917 Battles and counterattacks

Related topics

- Christmas Battles
- Latvian Riflemen in the First World War
- German rampart
- Landeswehr. Baltic Landesver
- General Rudolf Bangersky
- 1. Daugavgrīva Latvian Riflemen Regiment

Related stories

An entry in the diary of the moment when soldiers learn about preparing for the Christmas battles.

Latvian riflemen and their officers were informed at the last minute about the start of the battle. Rūdolfs Ivanovs, a non-commissioned officer of the 5th Zemgale Latvian Rifle Regiment, described in the diary the last evening before the start of the battle. A short, but bright and...

Creation of defensive positions.

The description looks at the battlefield fortification in general. It is based on the experience of the First World War and the situation when it is necessary to organize extensive work on the fortifications. powered by [Google](#) Translate.

About Christmas battles

The Christmas battle ended on January 11. The Latvian riflemen of the heavily fortified position of the German army - Ložmetējkaisns - managed to take the battle on the third day. The price of Christmas battles was very high. Hundreds of Latvian and other Russian army soldiers...

Jan 3, 2025, 12:44:19 PM

Military Heritage Stories



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Soviet aviation raids on the outskirts of Liepāja in October and December 1944

At the end of World War II, the German forces in Courland were able to successfully defend themselves for seven months, as the German Navy maintained combat capability until the end of World War II and supplied Army Group North and later Army Group Courland. The main port was Liepāja, through which 80% of all cargo was delivered and shipped, Liepāja thus became an important target for the Soviet Baltic Navy and long-range aviation.

WWII



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Rauna Freedom Monument or



Discovery at the site of the Grieze filtration camp

Various objects belonging to former soldiers are often found at the site of the Grieze filtration camp and along the roads leading to it. Soldiers, arrested civilians, prisoners of war, etc. disposed of them for various reasons, both to avoid being identified and to avoid being subjected to "special attention".

WWII



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Russian military planes crash in Ledurga and Zvārde landfill

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At the beginning of 1992, two Soviet MiG-27 D planes crashed on one day in mysterious circumstances with an interval of 40 minutes in Ledurga and Zvārde landfill.

WWII

the checklist and was shot without trial in 1934.

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A guest from Sweden in the airspace of the Kõpu peninsula



translated by [Google](#) [Show original](#)

Jānis Lapiņš and the sketch of the first Latvian red - white - red flag

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The creation of the Latvian national flag took place during the First World War. In 1915, when creating the flags of the Latvian Rifle Battalion, some artists offered red-white-red colors for the flag cast. After the teacher and journalist Jānis Lapiņš threw the red-white-red flag in the second half of 1916, it was made by his student, Marianna Straumane, a teacher at the Valmiera Refugee Shelter. It is the first known and actually made Latvian national flag, which has also survived to this day.

WWI



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An entry in the diary of the moment when soldiers learn about preparing for the Christmas

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Aizpuru half manor in the War of Independence

Aizpuru Half Manor, Aizpute district, Kalvene municipality, is the westernmost place in Latvia to which Colonel Oskars Kalpaks' separate battalion retreated.

Halfway between Rudbārži and Kalvenē, on the side of the road, is the Aizpore cemetery. There is a monument and 12 memorials to the volunteer soldiers of Oskars Kalpaka's battalion.

WWI

Recollections of Olev Metsmaa

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The base of seaplanes was built in Papissaare and the air defense batteries of Kiirassaare were built.

WWI



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"Back in Mazirbe" (excerpt)

A sharp event from the life of Vilnis Blumbergs, when coming to Mazirbe to visit his aunt, turned

Topics

- Military events and processes
- Military individuals and personalities
- Military groups and formations
- Political groups and public organisations
- Political events, regimes and situations
- Military buildings, complexes, territories and weapons
- Crimes against individuals and humanity, criminal regimes
- Awards



Military events and processes

Battles, sieges, the Kurzeme Cauldron, crises, operations, attacks, liberation, occupation and forcing



Military individuals and personalities

Colonels, generals, commanders of armies and battle units



Military groups and formations

Brigades, companies, armies, divisions, battalions, guerrillas, forest brethren, legionnaires, Karelians, Finnish jäegers, garrisons, Latvians in the Russian Empire, Latvian riflemen during World War I, the Northern Boys, the resistance movement



Political groups and public organisations

Political parties, the first social organisations, Bolsheviks, the National Security Committee, the KGB, the National Council



Political events, regimes and situations

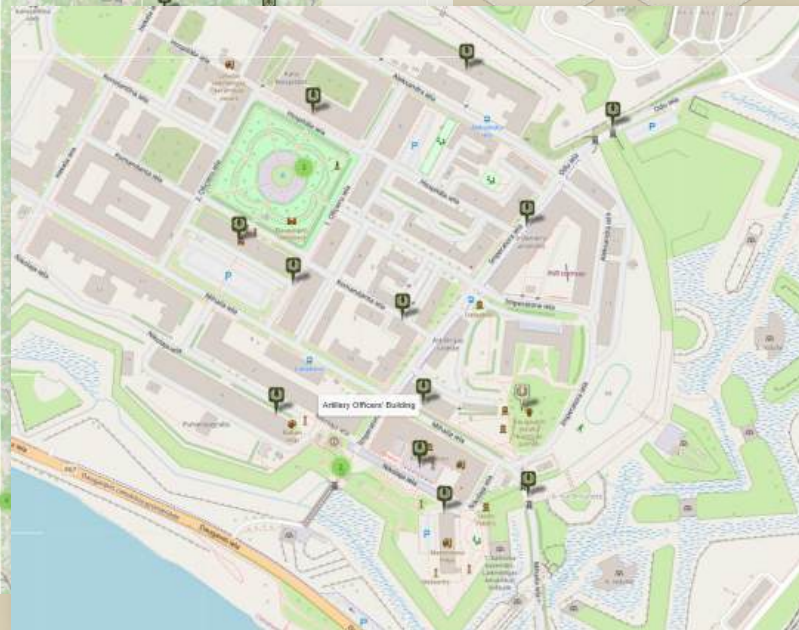
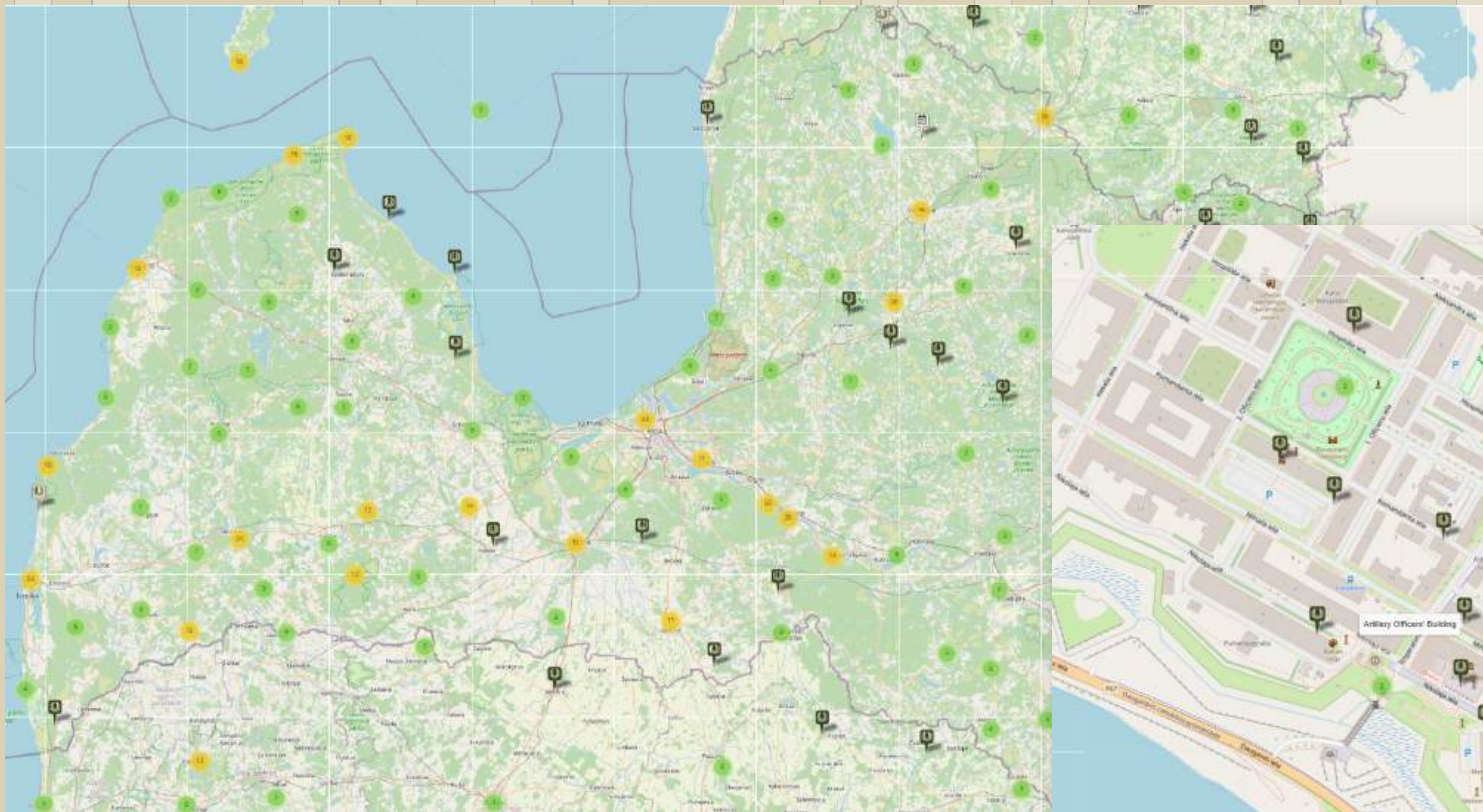
Proclamation of independence, pacts, peace negotiations and treaties, the Cold War, the Iron Curtain, the arms race, the National Renaissance



Military buildings, complexes, territories and weapons

Caponiers, barricades, dugouts, wartime railroads, the Military Port, bases, pillboxes, missile and other military bases, fortifications, barriers, coastal defence batteries, missiles


Interactive map



Military Heritage Sites with educational programs

Sites with programs as list

Sites with programs as map




Ogre History and Art Museum

Once in the battles for Latvia

The period after the First World War was a time of turmoil and great change in many parts of the world. Countries borders and territories were rearranged, new states were born and new countries were created. Latvia was also founded in 1918. How did it happen, where and when? Who made this brave and strong the water to the battlefield and fought for their homeland? Why were the soldiers of our parents and grandfathers for their home? The story of the Latvian War of Independence, the struggle of its state. The struggle of the nation to understand and knowledge of historically important events and people for our country, without whose bravery the country of Latvia would not have been a reality.

powered by: Google




Preiļi Museum of History and Applied Arts exhibition "Jāzeps Basko - air coachman"

To think about the Holocaust is to think about yourself

The exhibition is held in two parts. In the first room of the program, students will see the exhibition "Holocaust doesn't for us" at the Museum of History and Applied Arts of Preiļi and learn about the history and culture of the Jewish community of Preiļi. By getting acquainted with the story of Jāzeps Basko, a Jewish girl from Preiļi, who was working on the city's Jewish cemetery under the USSR, the students then an emotional encounter with the tragic reality of the Holocaust in Preiļi in the summer of 1941. Lesson 2 is a field trip to the Preiļi Holocaust Memorial, during which students learn about the Holocaust tragedy, Jewish culture, and preserving the memory of the victims in Preiļi today.

The goals of the program are to strengthen the understanding of the events of World War II and the Holocaust in...




Ploksīnē Military Town

Tour of the former military town


Near Lake Rauda, in the forests of Ploksīnē, in 1920 the construction of the underground base for the Latvian army began. The base was built in 1920 at the end of December. The first combat unit was stationed at the base for four 30-year-olds. 4-5-1000 troops (medium-range soldiers, soldiers armed with machine guns) and soldiers were deployed in close units. They were intended to destroy the German army's positions.

The base's construction required a large amount of military equipment and supplies and money and personnel. For this purpose, a town with 100 buildings was established with 1000 men. The entire facility occupied an area of about 12 hectares, surrounded by a mine and a protective fence.




"Jāzeps" Aviation Museum

Edukacīnā programma

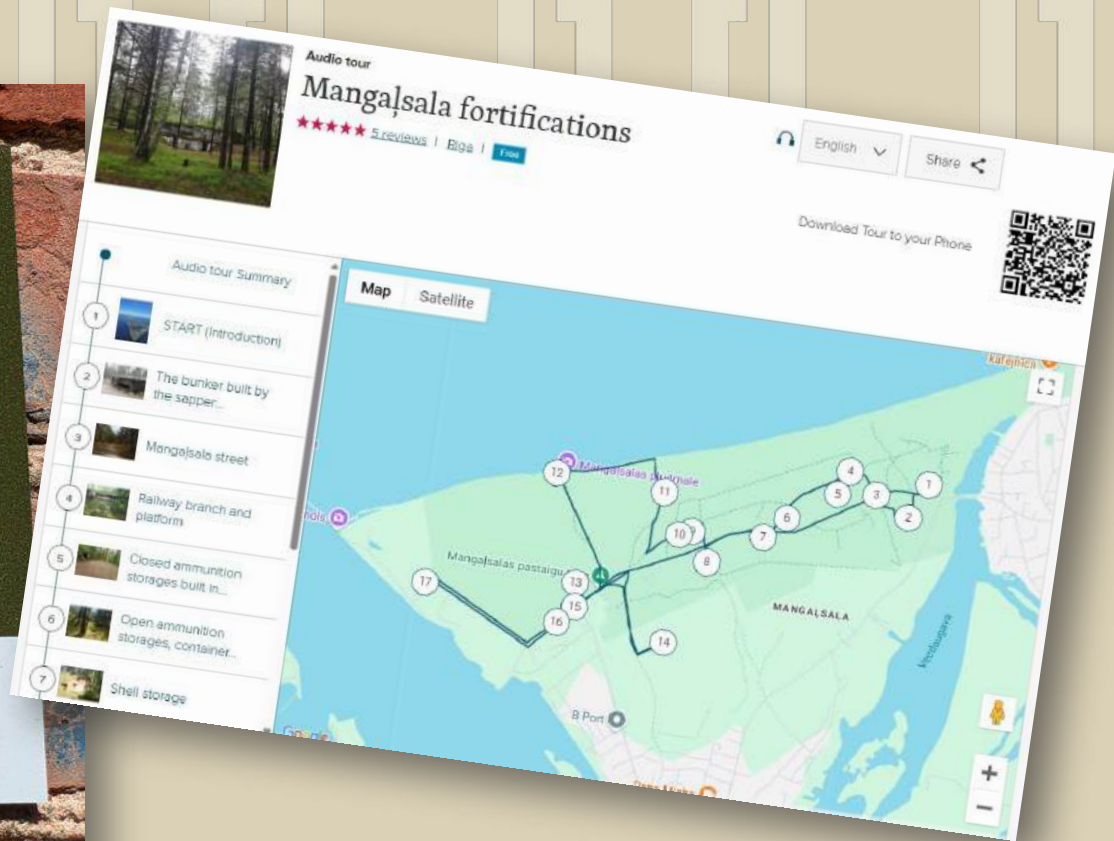


Cēsis history and art museum in the New Castle of Cēsis



Military theme park in Valga

Audio guides



Common military heritage network



Guidelines: Use of military heritage in tourism



KARINIO PAVELDO
PANAUDOJIMO BALTIJOS
ŠALYSE TURIZME GAIRĒS



SÕJAAJALOOPÄRANDI
KASUTAMINE TURISMIS
Eestis ja Lätis
JUHENDMATERJAL



VADLĪNIJAS
MILITĀRĀ MANTOJUMA
IZMANTOŠANA TŪRISMĀ
LATVIJĀ UN IGAUNIJĀ



New publications



Social media

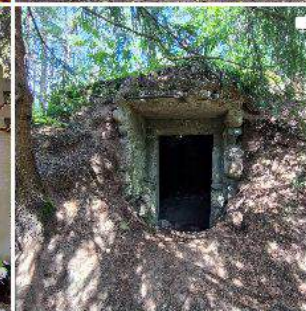
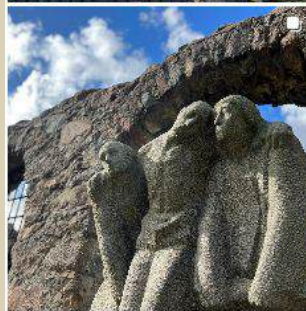
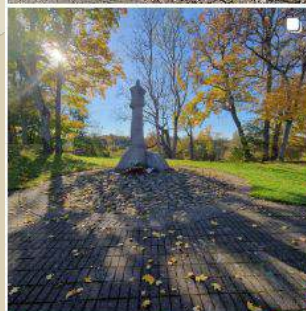


Military Heritage Tourism
Publicēja Katrīna Seržante
12. Septembris

This week, in September 10-11, partners of project "Extending the Baltic military heritage tourism product in Lithuania and South Latvia" met in Klaipėda, Lithuania, to discuss the work done in the project so far and next tasks.

Project partners also visited two military heritage tourism objects in Lithuania:

- ✕ ship-museum M52 "Soduvis" in Klaipėda. The purpose of the ship was once mine-hunting, detection and destruction;
- ✕ museum exposition in the coastal defense batt... Skatīt vairāk



Military heritage tourism video



<https://youtu.be/7iRNozNCNIQ>



11. January, 2025
14:00 – 19:00
Latvia

Strong Yesterday, Free Today.



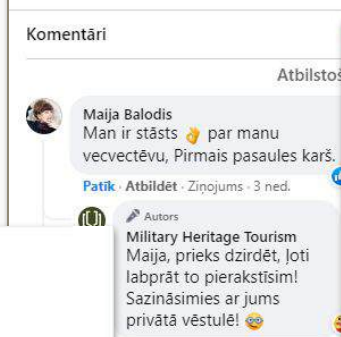
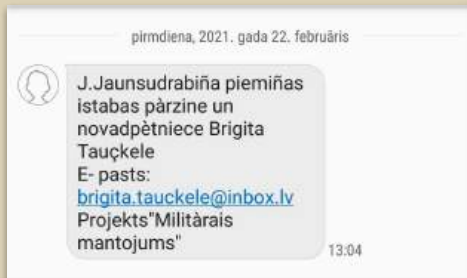
Christmas Battle Commemoration Event



- | | |
|-------|--|
| 14:00 | <p>Meeting at the <u>Antinā Cemetery</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Christmas battle reenactment with First World War soldier uniforms, weapons, and equipment;Visit to the bunkers and trenches. |
| 15:00 | <p>Gathering at the <u>Christmas Battle Museum "Mangalī"</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Solemn pledge by the Youth Guard;Oath-taking ceremony of the 52nd Combat Support Battalion of the National Guard;Demonstrations of the National Armed Forces' weapons and equipment;Military Heritage Tourism project Military Heritage 2 tent and stand – Baltic States' military heritage tourism map;Meeting with the Military Heritage 2 project team from Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania;Bonfire with hot tea and pies. |
| 16:00 | <p>Torch-lit procession from the Christmas Battle Museum "Mangalī" to Ložmetējkalns - the Machine-gun Hill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Distance – approximately 7 km;Duration – about one and a half hours. |
| 17:30 | <p>Commemorative event and moment of remembrance at <u>Ložmetējkalns</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Speeches by state officials, representatives of the National Armed Forces, National Guard, Jelgava district municipality;Meeting with scouts at the tent camp;Arrival of the torch-lit procession;Orchestra and music;Army field kitchen (warm porridge and tea);Singing and music. |

Share historical stories you know:

military@celotajs.lv



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