On 11 November 2011, ninety-three years after the armistice that ended World War I, President Nicolas Sarkozy officially helped open the Musée de la Grande Guerre in Meaux, near the bloody Marne River battle sites of 1914 and 1918, as well as near Disneyland Paris. The new museum included a reconstituted battlefield with a “no man's land” plus three-dimensional projections to “revive the hell of a trench.” Speaking at its groundbreaking in 2010, Frédéric Mitterrand, then Minister of Culture and Communications, stated that the museum’s architecture of the trenches would produce an intimate memory, conveying real flesh and blood. He added that it would also “reinforce the cultural and tourist appeal” of the Marne region. A crowning recognition of Jean-Pierre Verney’s amassing of some 50,000 documents and objects relating to the war, which forms the basis of its collection, the museum has welcomed more than 460,000 visitors since it opened. Philippe Dagen suggested in *Le Monde* in 2011 that the high quality of the exhibitions and the attention to detail might distract visitors’ attention from the true horror of the war. Edward Rothstein, a *New York Times* reporter, wrote: “the real focus of the museum was not on the military or the political issues, but on the personal.”

In this paper I maintain that the museum, with its re-created landscapes of battlefield tourism is, by its nature, a simulacrum or *simulacre,* defined in both English and French as an illusion, or something possessing the form or appearance of a certain thing, without possessing its substance or proper qualities *(Oxford English Dictionary* and *Trésor de la Langue Française).* Having visited the museum in 2012, I will focus on how it presents its architectural simulacra of trenches and battleground landscapes to its 21st century visitors, including the many groups of school children who form an important niche tourism audience. Although displaying artifacts from many nations, the Meaux museum is very much an icon of France’s national heritage honoring its wartime soldiers and civilians. Its very creation there as a way to keep Verney’s collection in France is a significant part of this narrative of national heritage.

Publications: Books (selected list)

* Tourism and the Tourist Imagination in World War II France: From the German Conquest through the Creation of Memory (to be published by Cornell University Press).
* Co-Editor, Food and France: What Food Studies Can Teach Us about History, Special issue, French Historical Studies, 38:2 (April 2015).
* Editor, Historical Dictionary of World War II France: The Occupation, Vichy and the Resistance, 1938- 1946. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998.
* Collaborationism in France during the Second World War. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1980.

Publications: Articles and Chapters in Books (selected list since 2011)

* “Join the Marines and See the World”: The Confluence of Tourism, Memory, Migration and War,” in Sabine Marschall, ed., Memory, Tourism, and Migration (to be published by Routledge).
* “The Other Side: Studying the Collaborationists in World War II France,” in Manu Braganca and Fransiska Louwagie, eds., Ego-Histories: Historians at Work on World War II France (to be published by Palgrave Macmillan).
* “Tourism Governance in France: The Role of a dirigiste State,” to be published in Tourism Governance, edited by Amir Gohar, Tourism Studies Working Group, University of California Berkeley.
* “Comment” and “Concluding Thoughts,” in “Teaching Tourism History Round Table,” Journal of Tourism History, 8:1 (April 2016), 57-84.
* “Touring the Field: The Infrastructure of Tourism History Scholarship,” Journal of Tourism History, 7:1- 2 (September 2015), 135-156.
* “’Defensive Architecture' and World War II: The Maginot Line in Memory and Tourism,” in Józef Niżnik, ed., XXth Century Wars in European Memory (Berne, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2013), 14-29.
* “Reinventions of a Spa Town: The Unique Case of Vichy,” in John K. Walton, ed., Mineral Spring Resorts in Global Perspective (Abingdon, Oxford, U.K.: Routledge, 2013), pp. 153-173.
* “World War II Tourism in France,” in David Picard and Mike Robinson, eds., Emotion in Motion: Tourism, Affect and Transformation (Farnham, Surrey, U.K.: Ashgate, 2012), 179-198.
* “The Evolving Popularity of Tourist Sites in France: What Can Be Learned from French Statistical Publications?” Journal of Tourism History, 3:2 (August 2011), 91-107.

Professional Organizations (selected):

* International Commission for the History of Travel and Tourism 2013-present: General Secretary.