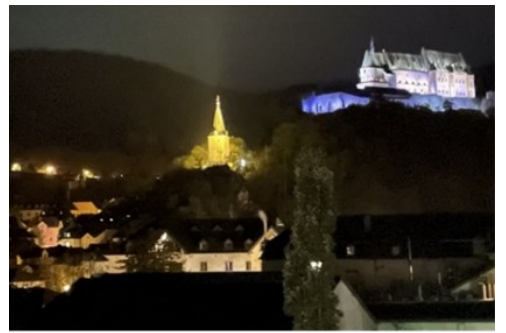


## u3a Luxembourg Short Break

The u3a trip to Luxembourg was a great success; interesting and informative every step of the way. Even the weather cooperated! We broke our journey at Tournai, famous for being the first Belgian town liberated after D day. Then on to Luxembourg: looking out of the hotel window this was our fairytale view – the spectacular floodlit castle.



A drive through the city by coach and then a walking tour with a super enthusiastic guide. We learnt that children start school speaking Luxembourgish. French is soon added to the curriculum, then German, English and even a fifth language, Portuguese or Dutch! The cathedral was stunning and we were lucky to visit during a service when the huge nave was filled with choral and organ music and illuminated by the stained glass windows.

We watched the guards patrolling in front of the Duke's palace and then came across this intriguing Stars and Stripes memorial which you can see in the foreground. Every kilometre of the route the allies took to liberate Europe is marked with these stone markers, 1146 in all. It's called the Liberty Road (*La voie de la Liberté*).



Our guide for the Dietrich War Museum was a charismatic ex-soldier. Unusually the museum used photos and eye witness accounts to reconstruct wartime scenes. They had an authentic enigma encoder which the Allies managed to “crack” at Bletchley park using the genius of the mathematician Alan Turing.

On an early morning visit we made our way to Vianden Castle, still shrouded in mist. Dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century the castle is a formidable fortress offering a captivating glimpse into



Luxembourg's turbulent past. It's strategic hilltop location, fortified walls, and intricate detailing illustrates the engineering brilliance of that era.



We had a tourist train trip round the German city of Trier in the Moselle wine region. In the afternoon we toured the St Martin vineyard cellars, carved into the rock, followed by a generous “tasting”.



Mullerthall is Luxembourg's little Switzerland, known for its fascinating sandstone formations and beautiful hilly landscape. Those who reached the Hohllay cave were excited to see the unusual cavern, created by cutting into the rock to make circular millstones .

stop on the homeward journey - famous as the town where Adolph Sax developed the saxophone. Huge colourful instruments brighten the bridge into the town centre.

Throughout our stay, Sandra was always there to answer questions, add interesting comments and to keep a careful eye on everyone. She also had a ready supply of chocolate bars!

*Phil & Jan Sumner*

