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**Theo Mayer:** Welcome to World War One Centennial News. It's about World War One then, what was happening 100 years ago, and it's about World War One now, news and updates about the centennial and the commemoration. Today is September 27th, 2017 and our guests this week are Mike Shuster from the Great War Project blog, Mayor Ann Roth from the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials project in Swanton, Ohio, and Christy Leskovar, author of One Night in a Bad Inn and Finding the Bad Inn. World War One Centennial News is brought to you by the US World War One Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum and Library. I'm Theo Mayer, the chief technologist for the commission and your host. Welcome to the show. We've gone back in time 100 years to explore the war that changed the world. It's the last week of September, 1917 so let's take a look at what happened this month. The pages of the official bulletin are overflowing with articles about food, the food administration, and their impact on the war effort with articles about food appearing nearly every day. Here are a few of note. Dateline, September 12, 1917. Headline, government not to seize food supplies held in homes. There is no truth in a widely circulated statement that the government expects to take food supplies from any family. Both the Food Administration and the Department of Agriculture join in a statement to counteract what seems to be deliberate propaganda to the effect that the government intends to take from every family all canned goods put up in excess of 100 quarts. So apparently this is one of many variations of a rumor that the government's about to seize everybody's food. Dateline, September 17th, 1917. Headline, slogan, food will win the war, don't waste it. Emblazoned on huge signs throughout the country. Through the cooperation of advertising companies, the Treasury Department, municipal authorities, and electorate light companies, the US Food Administration is, without cost, putting on a national outdoor advertising campaign that is probably the biggest thing of the sort ever undertaken. The slogan, food will win the war, don't waste it, is being emblazoned in every large city in the country on immense signs on public buildings. These signs are uniform in general design in paint for daytime display and illuminated by electric light for night. Dateline, September 20th, 1917. Headline, American people will have full diet and still supplying pressing needs of Allies. The supplies in the world's larder for the next 12 months are now known. They are too short to support our allies unless every man, woman, and child enters national service by conserving food and supporting the Food Administration. Dateline, September 20th, 1917. Headline, Big European demand upon America for meat will continue after the war. The immediate problem is to furnish increased meat supplies to the Allies to maintain them during the war. The impact of European demand upon our animal products will be maintained for a long period of years after peace. We must undertake to meet the demands not only during the war so that it enables our allies to continue to fight, but we must be prepared to meet the demand after the war. So food is a big topic of national discussion during the month of September 100 years ago this week. And also in the news, casualty supports start to trickle into the bulletin this month. Only a few thousand American soldiers have made it to Europe and their primary task is training, preparing, training, and preparing. Despite their small numbers and their relative distance from the front, war is war and casualties start to become an evermore frequent occurrence. Soldiers get killed during a German air raid on a hospital, others in an air raid on an encampment. Two aviators die in a mid air collision during training exercises while a third dies in an undisclosed accident. Others die from meningitis or heart disease. Though tragic, these deaths are just a glimpse of what's to come with life in the trenches, artillery fire, bombings, gas, and the flu epidemic. These are the challenges yet to come. Go to our website to catch up on all the stories from 100 years ago this month. You can read the full daily issue of the official bulletin, the government's war gazette, published at the order of President Wilson as the government's voice of the war. You'll find daily issues that we republish on the centennial anniversary of their original published date at [ww1cc.org/bulletin](http://ww1cc.org/bulletin). Outside of the official bulletin, which is essentially the government's propaganda machine, other reports appear of a continuing and steady rise of anti-war sentiment. We're joined by Mike Shuster, former NPR correspondent and curator for the Great War Project blog to tell us more about the ongoing and perhaps evermore active anti-war movement in the US. Welcome, Mike.

[0:06:02]

**Mike Shuster:** Thank you, Theo. Here's the headline, In the US, a growing anti-war movement threatens Wilson's ability to join the war. Enter the Wobblies, the loose canon of the labor movement. This is special to the Great War Project. When President Woodrow Wilson declared war on imperial Germany, there were many anti-war opponents in the United States. There were those who based their opposition to the war on religious views, also pacifists, conscientious objectors, anti-war activists. Once called up and sent to Army training camps, many changed their minds and succumbed to putting on a uniform, but how this change was accomplished, reports historian Thomas Fleming, is not a pretty story. Harassed camp commanders, already grappling with shortages of everything, had little time to give much thought to the techniques of persuasion. At most camps, the [inaudible] were left to the untender mercies of sergeants and lieutenants who called them yellow-bellies, cowards and pro-German. Fleming reports the Mennonites, who resisted all forms of persuasion, had a particularly bad time. At one camp, a Mennonite resistor was

scrubbed with brushes dipped in lye. Sadists in another camp billeted them with men infected with venereal disease. Not too surprisingly, many resisted this brutal treatment then were court marshaled. Some 110 were sentenced to the Fort Leavenworth, Kansas Army prison for terms ranging from 10 to 30 years. One martyr to his faith and conscience wrote to his parents from his prison cell, "You can't imagine how it is to be hated. If it wasn't for Christ, it would be impossible." This, according to historian, Fleming meant deep trouble for the radical union, the industrial workers of the world, also known as the IWW or the Wobblies. The Wobblies were the loose canons of the labor movement. The IWW aimed at unionizing the unskilled and uneducated workers, largely ignored by the other craft unions in the labor movement. Wobbly rhetoric reeked with class warfare and calls for revolution. Their constitution candidly declared that they were out to abolish the wage system. So, Fleming writes, not too surprisingly, the IWW took a dim view of Wilson's war. While being opposed to the imperial government of Germany, the IWW leader, Big Bill Haywood proclaimed, "We are likewise opposed to the industrial oligarchy of this country." The strike was the weapon of choice for the Wobblies. By mid year in 1917, the Wobblies were conducting strikes across the United States involving tens of thousands of workers and miners in the lumber and copper industries. They had launched strikes in the aircraft industry and in the construction of barracks for the thousands of trainees. They interrupted the flow of weaponry to the British and French, Fleming reports. The owners of the mines and industrialists backed by the newspapers charged that the Germans and German money were behind these treasonous actions. They used the courts to put them away. On September 28th, a century ago, reports historian Fleming, 166 IWW officers were indicted using their own words to prove that they had violated 11 laws related to the war, conspired to interfere with employers trying to fulfill vital government contracts urged fellow Wobblies to refuse to register for the draft and plotted to create insubordination in the armed forces. Observed Fleming, there was little doubt about what the Wilson administration had in mind. "Our purpose, as I understand it," wrote one government attorney in Philadelphia, "Is to put the IWW out of business," and that's some of the news from the Great War Project 100 years ago this week.

[0:09:46]

**Theo Mayer:** Thank you, Mike. That was Mike Shuster from the Great War Project blog with a look at some of the anti-war sentiment in some parts of America 100 years ago this month. Whether they're pro-war or not, America's entry into this global conflict is now touching the lives of most every American. Reflecting this, on September 24th, 1917 composer Maceo Pinkard publishes *Those Draftin Blues*, a sorrowful tune with a message that resonates with many across the country. (Singing) That was Maceo Pinkard's 1917 song, *Those Draftin Blues*, as orchestrated and rerecorded in 1940 by the Count Basie Band. If you'd like to see videos about World War One, we invite you to visit our friends at the Great War Channel on YouTube. They've been covering World War One since the centennial of when the war broke in 2014 and from a more European perspective. Highlights of the last few weeks include, we're coming to Italy and Slovenia, which is an announcement of their new plans to produce some episodes on their next road trip through Europe, inside a British World War One airbase, which comes from their last road trip to the UK, a history and battle story, British advance at Passchendaele, and an interesting episode called the Serbian uniforms of World War One. Follow the link in the podcast notes or search for the Great War on YouTube. We've moved forward in time to the present. Welcome to World War One centennial news now. This part of the program is not about history. Instead, it's about how the centennial of the war that changed the world is being commemorated today. We'll begin our September 2017 wrap up with some news from the Commission. On September 13th, during the commission's quarterly meeting in Washington, DC, commissioner Terry Hamby was elected as the new chair for the commission. Commissioner Hamby follows chairman Robert J. Dalessandro who had led the US World War One Centennial Commission since 2014. "This is a huge honor for me," Commissioner Hamby said during the acceptance. "Both my father and my great uncle served in World War One. My great uncle was lost in the Battle of the Meuse-Argonne. I will put my whole heart into this job." Commissioner Hamby is a Vietnam era veteran serving in the Navy during the war and later in the Army Reserve, retiring in 1993 after 26 years of service. Learn more about this great veteran, entrepreneur, and new chair of the US World War One Centennial Commission by following the link in the podcast notes. Early next month on October 9th, the United States Mint is going to unveil their design for a World War One commemorative coin. The design was selected by the Mint with a jury competition resulting in their selection of a 2018 World War One American Veterans centennial silver dollar. The press announcement revealing their design will coincide with AUSA, The Association of the United States Army Conference in Washington DC. Also coming in 2018 will be five silver metals honoring the individual branches of the US military, the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. This week for our activities and events segment, we're going to profile our pick of the week selected from the US National World War One centennial events register that you'll find at [ww1cc.org/events](http://ww1cc.org/events), where we're compiling and recording the World War One commemoration events from around the country. Our pick of the week is from Newport, Rhode Island, and here's the story. In 1917, when America declared war on Germany, Bernardo Cardines was a tailor living peacefully in Newport, Rhode Island. Cardines was an immigrant from Italy who emigrated alone to America in 1909 at the tender age of only 14. Cardines, like many American immigrants, registered for the draft and went on to serve with the 78th Division in the American expeditionary forces. He fought at San Mihiel and was killed in action during a raid on German positions in September of 1918. This month, on Friday, September 29th, the Rhode Island World War One Centennial Commission will rededicate the Bernardo Cardines Memorial Baseball Field. This field is one of the oldest baseball fields in the US and was originally dedicated in September of 1936 in memory of Private Cardines. The rededication

is free to the public and will include a unique commemorative event, namely an Army Navy baseball game that will be played by students from the US Naval War College and they're going to play the game dressed in period baseball uniforms. That sounds like great fun. Learn more about the ceremony and Private Cardines by following the link in the podcast notes. And now for our feature, speaking World War One, where we explore today's words and phrases that are rooted in a century ago. This week the word's not really a word, but an abbreviation that you would not have guessed was birthed during World War One. The phrase is OMG. One hundred years ago this month on September 9th, 1917, a retired admiral of the British Navy, Lord Fisher, fired off a letter to Winston Churchill. The two men often wrote one another about various naval aspects of the ongoing war and in this letter on this day, he wrote, "My dear sir, I hear that there's a new order of knighthood in the Lapis. OMG, oh my god, shower it on the admiralty." Now, we're not really sure what he was prattling about, but on this day he did coin the term. While you may have always believed that OMG was a texting term from a California 18-year-old mall rat, the first ever documented use of the term is between two English gentleman during World War One. OMG, that's so cray cray, and we have a link for you to the article where we found this story in the podcast notes. This was a big week in the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials program. On Wednesday, September 27th, the US World War One Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum and Library announced the first 50 official World War One Centennial memorials. It's only half of them because ever since the April 6th centennial of the US declaration of war, the awareness, interest and focus on local World War One memorials around the country has really blossomed. So instead of just extending the submission period to give some of these new projects a chance to participate, the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials program decided to name the first 50 awardees now and then to open the grant awards competition for a second round. Everyone who was in the first round but didn't get an award automatically goes into round two which is already underway and will run until January 15th, 2018. Meanwhile, the first 50 World War One Centennial memorials are officially designated and the grants are awarded. We have one of those projects with us here today with the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials project from Swanton, Ohio. Joining us to talk about the project is Ann Roth, the mayor of the village of Swanton. Welcome Mayor Roth.

**[0:18:56]**

**Ann Roth:** Thank you.

**[0:18:57]**

**Theo Mayer:** Mayor Roth, how did you react to the announcement that you're one of the awardees?

**[0:19:01]**

**Ann Roth:** Well, I'm very thrilled. I'm thrilled for the village of Swanton, not only to be recognized but to receive the monetary award. We put a lot into this project and even though we were able to finance the actual restoration of our doughboy statue through donations throughout the community, there was still a lot of work that had to be done in order to prepare for that and to rebuild the actual monument and its site, so we really appreciate being awarded this financial contribution towards our project.

**[0:19:32]**

**Theo Mayer:** Okay. So as the mayor of a community that's undertaken one of these projects, what's been the most memorable effect on the community?

**[0:19:39]**

**Ann Roth:** For over 30 years the statue had been vandalized and the statue was in great disrepair, and it was over 30 years when we finally responded to people's requests. So I would say the biggest reward in doing this project was literally the joy that it brought the veterans of all armed services and those who had considered that such a personal presence in their life throughout the village of Swanton, those who have lived here their entire lives and they watched the statue go into decay. What we were able to do by restoring it was to restore their faith in the community and to give them something to be really proud of again. Personally from the veterans, I know how much they appreciated it because they have expressed that to me many, many times.

**[0:20:33]**

**Theo Mayer:** What are your plans for a rededication?

**[0:20:35]**

**Ann Roth:** Our project actually started in 2014 and we were able to complete the restoration and the complete rebuilding of the site and we had a rededication ceremony on Memorial Day, May 25th, 2015 and we had a great attendance in our Memorial Park, which is where the statue is located. I gave the presentation and provided a lot of the research that had gone into not only the restoration but the entire history on the statue itself, The Spirit of the American Doughboy, and it was very well received by the whole community.

**[0:21:15]**

**Theo Mayer:** So Mayor, what kind of a coalition came together to make this happen?

**[0:21:21]**

**Ann Roth:** Well, the coalition basically was the previous administrator and myself, obviously with the blessing of the council at the time. I was provided also a lot of research by a citizen by the name of Bill Witt, who had done so much research in 2001. He brought me his entire box of files. As the word got out in the local newspapers that we were undertaking this project, a few phone calls came in from others that remembered and had information to offer, such as we originally identified 12 young men that succumbed to the war, whether it be through a direct injury or disease, and through research found out there actually were two more that really should be named and so they were also placed on a new plaque. So a lot of people did contribute individually and we did receive very generous donations from many organizations in town in order to cover the expenses of the actual restoration to the statue itself.

**[0:22:19]**

**Theo Mayer:** Okay. So were there any veteran service organizations involved?

**[0:22:24]**

**Ann Roth:** Absolutely. I wrote letters appealing for their participation and monetary donation and I wrote letters to the American Legion. The American Legion here in Swanton, Ohio has three divisions. I received monies from all three. The Swanton VFW contributed along with our local Rotary Club, our local Swanton Lions Club and our Swanton Corn Festival Committee, and that is the committee that is in charge of our annual festival in the summer and along with I had others approach me just privately from the community and make donations toward it, and of course the village as well undertook a large expense, so it was a whole community project.

**[0:23:10]**

**Theo Mayer:** Mayor Roth, thank you so much for taking on this challenge and for being here with us today.

**[0:23:15]**

**Ann Roth:** Well we are very grateful to the commission for awarding us and also grateful to be recognized in this endeavor. So we are very, very appreciative of all the work that has gone into this and the Commission that has headed this.

**[0:23:32]**

**Theo Mayer:** That was Ann Roth, mayor of the village of Swanton, Ohio. We're going to continue to profile the submitting teams and their unique and amazing projects on the show over the coming months. You can see a list of the awardees, learn about the program, and see how your community might involve itself at [ww1cc.org/100memorials](http://ww1cc.org/100memorials) or follow the link in the podcast notes. In our Remember The Veterans section, today we wanted to feature an incredible story that follows our next guest from a career as a mechanical engineer as she turns into a historical sleuth and author. With us today is Christy Leskovar to tell us more about her book, *One Night in a Bad Inn*, and *Finding the Bad Inn: Discovering My Family's Hidden Past*. Welcome, Christy.

**[0:24:23]**

**Christy:** Hello Theo. Great to be here.

**[0:24:24]**

**Theo Mayer:** So Christy, your interest in your family's history and specifically its involvement with the first World War started when you found out about a murder on your family's ranch in Montana. Tell us about that.

**[0:24:35]**

**Christy:** Yes, that's right. I had gone to my hometown of Butte, Montana for a family funeral, and while there as happens, a family gathers and lots of family stories pour forth, and while I was at my Auntie Ila's house out in Whitehall, across the continental divide from Butte, she brought out a box and started taking things out of the box. Imagine a family gathering, we're all chit chatting, chit chatting, and not really aware of what's coming out of this box and it's being passed from person to person and I get this piece of paper in my hand and it's a rap sheet from the prison for an Archie Hughes and the crime is second degree murder, and I say to my mother, "Who is this?" And she says, "That's your uncle Archie, Grandma's brother." Well, I barely even knew I had... I don't think I even knew I had an uncle Archie, which this would explain why I didn't know about this. So these stories go on and on and one little aside there, my mom did say to me, "Thank God your father didn't know this or he never would have married me." Anyway. Thank God he did. So anyway, the stories keep going and then this prompts my Aunt Mary to talk about this fire on their ranch out in eastern Montana and there was a dead body found in the ruins, believed to be the man who lived there, my great grandfather and then my great grandmother, Sarah, was arrested for his murder. I was working as an engineer for Bechtel at that time here in Las Vegas and just sitting on my patio one afternoon, this idea just popped in my head. I was going to go find out what happened and write a book about it and it's kind of ironic that I

decided to write a book before I even knew what happened, but then that led to writing a book about, a complete story, about my great grandparents and grandparents, which is what led me to what they then called The Great War, the first World War, because my grandfather, Peter Thompson, who fought in the American Army. So that led me to all this research about the First World War so I could tell his story in vivid detail.

[0:26:34]

**Theo Mayer:** Christy, so many people who have family ties to the war are finding it daunting to conduct detailed research on their own. With your experience, what advice can you give those people who are interested in following your footsteps?

[0:26:47]

**Christy:** Well, I will say it is daunting, it can be daunting. One thing, I started this research in 1997 and that was the Jurassic period of the Internet. So the resources we have online now just did not exist or they were unreliable, you know, early days of the Internet, you really didn't know what sources you could trust. So what I would start for anybody, anybody who wants to research a relative in the First World War, first thing, if you haven't already, it's good to read about the war so you can kind of get some context which will make what you find make more sense. Then the other thing I would do, this sounds so simple, but Google their name. You just never know what you're going to get with that. Or you could Google their name and First World War, World War One, that sort of thing. Now, next thing you want to do is get their service records. At the time I got my grandfather's service records, they were in St. Louis and I believe it was through the National Archives and I think it still is, so you could go to the National Archives website probably to get that contact information and then they will send you his service records and what his service records will tell you are his division, brigade, regiment, that sort of thing, which is what you will need if you want to go further. You will need to know what regiment he was in, what division, what brigade, even what battalion is also helpful. Now when I was writing *One Night in a Bad Inn*, it is a nonfiction book, but I wrote it in the style of a novel. I wanted you to feel like you were with Peter on the battlefield and I wanted everything to be specific to him, not general to a soldier in the war, but specific to him. So the kind of research I did is probably far more detailed than what a person would do who just wants to know about their relative. One thing that is going to give you a good picture of what they went through is the regimental history. The regimental history is written by the soldiers who were in that regiment after the war. It's kind of hit or miss where you can find those. So what I was doing, because I wanted to get so detailed, is I went to the level of the field messages. Field messages that were sent across the battlefield and letters. I read letters by the soldiers. I read all of the citations for the men who were decorated in Peter's regiment. So it was really a big jigsaw puzzle to get all these little pieces together to paint a picture of what was happening with Peter.

[0:29:13]

**Theo Mayer:** That's some great advice, Christy. Thanks so much for joining us today.

[0:29:16]

**Christy:** Thanks for having me on.

[0:29:18]

**Theo Mayer:** That was Christy Leskovar, author of the books *One Night in a Bad Inn* and *Finding the Bad Inn: Discovering My Family's Hidden Past*, which you can learn about and purchase with the links in the podcast notes. This week in our articles and posts segment where we explore the World War One Centennial Commission's rapidly growing website at [ww1cc.org](http://ww1cc.org). From the news section comes an article about an upcoming plan to study a sunken World War One cruiser. The Navy has announced plans to survey the wreck of the World War One US Navy cruiser *San Diego*, on which six American sailors lost their lives when she sank as a result of enemy action off the coast of New York in July of 1918. The survey's objective is to assess the condition of the wreck site and to determine if the ship, the only major warship lost by the United States, was sunk as a result of a German submarine launched torpedo or a mine. Ultimately, the data gathered will help inform the management of the sunken craft, which lies only a few miles south of Long Island. The announcement comes just weeks after the 99th anniversary of the sinking and the survey, which was planned for September 11th to 15th, is timed to allow the researchers to conduct a thorough examination of the site and prepare, then release their findings around the date of the 100th anniversary. Underwater archeology is always really cool. So follow the expedition by following the link in the podcast notes. It's time for an update about our *WWrite Blog*, which explores World War One's influence on contemporary writing and scholarship. This week's post is their only crime, African American World War One poet James Seamon Cotter Jr. A monster of war and not of war. That's how James Seamon Cotter, Jr. Describes the genocide and racism that make up an important part of World War One's history and memory. You'll find all this in his poem, *Oh Little David, Play on Your Harp*. This week, World War One poetry specialist, Connie Ruzich, returns to the *WWrite Blog* to discuss Cotter, a forerunner of the African American cultural renaissance of the 1920s. Don't miss this tribute to a powerful poetic voice at [ww1cc.org/wwrite](http://ww1cc.org/wwrite). Or go to the link in the podcast notes. That brings us to *The Buzz*, the centennial of World War

One this week in social media with Catherine Ackey. Catherine, you have a bunch of articles to tell us about today. Take it away.

**[0:32:06]**

**Catherine** : Thanks Theo. Here are some of the most interesting stories and photos we've shared on Facebook and Instagram in the last month. A review we shared highlights a new temporary exhibit at the Met focusing on the impact of World War One on visual artists. A photograph we posted on Instagram shows soldiers learning to handle and fire pistols at Camp Upton on Long Island New York. An article from War History Online outlines technologies first developed during World War One that are still in use by the armed forces today. We shared the story of Arlington Cemetery holding its first ever service honoring military members who have died by suicide. Another link talks about an exhibit at Bangkok's National Library exploring the Kingdom of Siam's role in World War One. A piece from the Washington Post sheds light on the often overlooked contributions of African American Army doctors in World War One. We also shared some really great photos from the Camp Doughboy festivities on Governors Island as well as the remarkable image of the World War One memorial in Memorial Park in Jacksonville, Florida during the height of Hurricane Irma's impact. And last but not least, we posted recently the story of a Belgian marine archeologist beginning the long work of excavating a newly discovered World War One U-boat off the shores of Belgium, a submarine that contains an estimated 23 German bodies. Check out these stories by following the links in the podcast notes or go to [ww1cc.org/social](http://ww1cc.org/social) to view all the great content we've been sharing in the last few weeks. And that's it for The Buzz.

**[0:33:43]**

**Theo Mayer**: Thanks Catherine. And that's also at for World War One Centennial News for this week. We want to thank our guests, Mike Shuster from the Great War Project blog with a look at anti-war sentiment in the US; Mayor Ann Roth, telling us about the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials project in Swanton, Ohio; Christy Leskovar, giving us an insight into her journey to learn more about her family's service; Catherine Ackey, the Commission's social media director and also the line producer for the show. And I'm Theo Mayer, your host. The US World War One Centennial Commission was created by Congress to honor, commemorate, and educate about World War One. Our programs are to inspire a national conversation and awareness about World War One. This program is a part of that. We're bringing the lessons of 100 years ago into today's classrooms. We're helping to restore World War One memorials in communities of all sizes across the country, and of course we're building America's National World War One Memorial in Washington DC. We want to thank the Commission's founding sponsor, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library for their support. The podcast can be found on our website at [ww1cc.org/cn](http://ww1cc.org/cn) and on iTunes and Google Play at WW1 Centennial News. Our Twitter and Instagram handles are both @WW1CC. We're on Facebook at WW1 Centennial. Thank you for joining us again this week and don't forget to share the stories that you're hearing here with someone about the war that changed the world. (Singing) OMG my dear fellow. I think it's time to tip a pint or two, don't you? So long.

**[0:36:28]**