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8 speakers (Theo, Mike, Zack, Allison, Andrew, Rex, Jerry, Katherine)

[0:00:08]

**Theo:** Welcome to World War I Centennial News. It's about World War I then. What was happening 100 years ago this week. And it's about World War I now, news and updates about the centennial and the commemoration. Today is October 11, 2017, and our guests this week are Mike Shuster from the Great War Project Blog, Allison Finkelstein and Zack Wilske from the USCIS History Office and Library, Andrew Capets from the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials Project in Trafford, Pennsylvania, Rex Passion, author of the World War I book and now website The Lost Sketchbooks, and Jerry Michaud, executive director of the Roll of Honor Foundation. World War I Centennial News is brought to you by the U.S. World War I 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. Our theme this week is going to focus on the youth of America. How young people were folded into the war effort then, 100 years ago, and we also want to tell you more about our current educational initiatives in our World War I Centennial News Now section. In an article, World War I Support from the Homefront, written by Richard Zuber, a North Carolinian historian. Zuber helps to frame the issue. "When most people hear the word 'war,' they think of soldiers and sailors, guns and battles, death and destruction." Those are all part of war, but historians also study everything and everyone affected by conflicts. This is especially true of what military historians call a total war. In discussing how women and even the elderly aided in the total war effort in 1917, Zuber notes, "Children work just as hard as the adults and contributed a great deal. Boy scouts participated in patriotic rallies and the Liberty Loan Drives. The Woodcraft Girls distributed food pledge cards and enrolled as Pota-triots, entering a competition for growing the largest potato crops. The Campfire Girls babysat for women working in the war plants and helped the Red Cross roll bandages and make dressings for the wounded. Girl Scouts were involved in all of these activities and sold war bonds, made scrap books for hospitals and wrapped Christmas packages for soldiers." Okay, with that as a set up, let's jump into our wayback machine and see what was happening for America's youth and education 100 years ago this week. Welcome to 1917. It's the second week of October, and the Wilson administration offers several articles this week in its official bulletin about education and teaching patriotism to the youth of America. Dateline, October 9, 1917. Headline. Influence of the war on teaching history. Now, this article tries to frame America's entry into the war in terms that teachers might impart. In the article, which is speaking to teachers, the U.S. Bureau of Education states, "The nation has finally been drawn into the Great War, a war that demands for its successful prosecution not only efficient and courageous service in the Army and the Navy but also the loyal cooperation of millions of men and women who are not enrolled in the fighting forces nor directly responsible for the civil administration on which these forces depend." Interestingly, the article goes on to frame the fight as being between the free and democratic society and hereditary monarchies. "We have as clear an interest in international law as individuals have in the laws of society. That was said long before the steam ship, the submarine and the wireless had broken down our splendid isolation. No one can take an intelligent part in a great conflict for the safety of democracy unless they really are interested in and know something about nations other than their own. About the difference between a Republican government like our own or that of France, or the scarcely less democratic constitution of Great Britain on the one side, and in sharp contrast to all of these, a strongly monarchical government like that of the German Empire in which most important measures affecting the national welfare may be practically determined by a single hereditary sovereign or a small group of such sovereigns." In the article, there is no reference to the growing Socialism in Europe and especially Russia, nor of the powerful dictatorships that would be so prominent in the next generation. Dateline, October 13, 1917. Headline. Lesson leaflets on patriotism intended for permanent course in public schools. The story reads, "The plan for educational administrators is to educate a rising generation how to conduct the business of living. A wide variety of topics treated in pamphlets prepared to suit pupils of various grades will be supplied." Now, the article goes on to read, "In order to bring the lessons of patriotism and of national and international relations within the comprehension of children, the instruction in conservation which will be given in American schools this year at the insistence of President Wilson will begin with and emphasize home and local problems. A series of lesson leaflets will be issued monthly by the Food Administration and the Bureau of Education throughout the present school year. The plan is to educate a rising generation that will know better than its predecessors how to conduct the business of living." Now, this theme for lessons about the business of living comes up a number of times, but it's not elaborated on leaving one to wonder just what the Wilson Administration actually meant. Regardless, a panoply of headlines to reveal a theme that the government is thinking about the nation's youth and their role in the war effort. Here is a whole bunch of them. On October 2nd, "American schoolchildren to be given lessons in community and natural life in democracy was requested by president." Then on October 6th, "Leaflets as guides to schoolteachers sent by U.S. Commissions to teach children democracy's meaning." Followed on October 10th, "Work of the American Boy Scouts commended in promoting the sale of Liberty Loan Bonds." And earlier in the month, "President appeals to schoolchildren of nation to enroll in Red Cross service," followed by, "War topics at high school commencements recommended by Commissioner Claxton." And, "School bells ring out call for Liberty Loan subscriptions." And, "Schools with shop work

departments urged to continue during summer to train skilled mechanics and high-grade helpers." And finally, "Program of school activities during the war suggested to educational institutions." From the Great War Project Blog, we're now joined by Mike Shuster, former NPR Correspondent and curator for the Great War Project. Mike is going to tell us about the collapsing Eastern front as Russia stalls and Germany develops a new naval and storm trooper prowess in the Baltic Sea Offensive. Welcome, Mike.

**[0:08:53]**

**Mike:** Thanks, Theo. Here are the headlines from the Great War Project Blog. "Russia collapsing on land and sea." "Million railway workers on strike block movement of troops to the front." "Germans using storm troop tactics." This is special to the Great War Project. "More turmoil in Russia these days a century ago." "At this moment, the Germans are expecting the entire Eastern front to collapse." "On October 8th, more than a million Russian railway workers go on strike, making the movement of troops to the front virtually impossible, reports historian Martin Gilbert." "The Germans launch an operation against several Russian-held islands in the Baltic Sea in both the Gulf of Riga and the Gulf of Finland. These two bodies of water border the approach to Latvia and Finland, and beyond to Petrograd, the Russian capital." "The Germans introduce new methods," writes historian Michael Neiberg, "In a series of Baltic offensives that prove to be the beginning of the end for the liberal Kerensky's provisional government in Petrograd. The Germans use amphibious warfare to capture islands, but the real innovations come on land. They develop so-called storm troop tactics. All armies had been working on something similar," reports Neiberg, "But at Riga in the Baltic, the Germans successfully put all the pieces together for the first time. They form an armada of warships including 11 battleships and 19 steamers carrying 23,000 soldiers and 5,000 horses. But Russian defense of the islands has become impossible, reports the Admiral-in-Command because the sailors had turned revolutionary. He later writes, 'The influence of Bolshevik propaganda on the masses is enormous. I was defending one island,' he reports, "And the troops actually melted away before my eyes.' The Germans occupy the island and take another 5,000 Russian prisoners. Elsewhere, in the naval approaches to the Russian capital, the Russians fear the possibility that the Germans will mount an amphibious landing in the Gulf of Finland. Attacking the islands gives the Germans the ability to drive the unstable politics in Petrograd closer to collapse, so the Germans quickly assemble operation Albion, an enormous concentration of German naval power intended to seize an archipelago of small islands in the approach to Petrograd in a further blow at a tottering Russia. They throw 10 battleships into the fight along with numerous other smaller warships intended to transport 25,000 soldiers. Initially, the fighting did not go well for the invading Germans, but eventually the Germans seized the initiative." Reports historian Martin Gilbert, "While the German army was making quick work of Russian defenders on the islands, the German navy was clearing the waters of Russian ships. It was to be Imperial Russia's last campaign in the First World War. A new Soviet Russia was about to take its place." That's some of the news from the Great War Project, this day a century ago.

**[0:11:51]**

**Theo:** Thank you, Mike. That was Mike Shuster from the Great War Project Blog. This week in the Great War in the sky, America begins to mass produce a two seater bomber. Although through all of World War I America never produced or fielded a single American fighter plane, we did manufacture a whole bunch of them. This week, 100 years ago, the U.S. Army Air Service put in an order for thousands of British-designed de Havilland DH4 planes. The version that they ordered were to be delivered with the U.S.-made, American Liberty 12-cylinder engine rather than the Rolls-Royce engine of the British version. It was slow going at first, but in the end, the Dayton-Wright Company delivered over 3,100 of them. General Motors, 1,600 of them. And the Standard Aircraft Corporation another 160. It all started 100 years ago this week in the war in the sky. You can follow the war in the sky by checking in to our comprehensive timeline curated by former fighter pilot, Air Force General and author R.G. Head. Go to [ww1cc.org/warinthesky](http://ww1cc.org/warinthesky), all lowercase, or follow the link in the podcast notes. To watch videos about World War I, we recommend our friends at the Great War Channel on YouTube. They offer well over 400 episodes about World War I and from a more European perspective. New episodes for this week include Sabotage in the Desert. Then, Indy Neidell takes viewers' questions in an Out of the Trenches segment which is always popular with the regular viewers. This time, electricity, the Wright Brothers, and hip-firing MGs. And finally an episode called Evolution of the British Battle Tanks in World War I. 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 I Centennial News Now. This part of the program is not about history but about how the centennial of the war that changed the world is being commemorated today. In this week's commission news, a follow up on the U.S. Mint's unveiling of the 2018 World War I Centennial silver dollar. The unveiling happened on October 9th and was hosted by the Acting Secretary of the U.S. Army, Ryan McCarthy during an AUSA meeting in Washington, D.C., also known as the National Meeting of the Association of the U.S. Army. This was followed up on October 10th with the unveiling of the designs for five silver medals that will be issued in conjunction with the centennial silver dollar. Each medal, composed of 90% silver, pays homage to the branches of the U.S. Armed Forces that were active in World War I. We set up a website at [ww1cc.org/coin](http://ww1cc.org/coin) where you'll find the press releases with detailed information, the presentations and bios of the speakers, lots of links and images. The coins and medals will be available in early 1918. Just follow the link in the podcast notes for more information. In an update for #countdowntoveteransday, we wanted to let you know about the official World War I centennial commemoration flags that honor the memory of our World War I Doughboys. There's a wonderful full-sized, three foot

by five foot flag, and also small 12 inch by 8 inch ground stake flags designed to make an ideal marker for veterans' resting places. Both feature the centennial graphics and the doughboy icon. The flags are manufactured out of high quality nylon material and, of course, they are made in the USA. They are available exclusively at the World War I Centennial Commission's official merchandise shop which you'll find under the commemorate menu or by following the link in the podcast notes. But hurry. Don't wait. Supplies are limited and orders are shipped in seven to ten days. Rush orders carry a 20% surcharge. Many individual government agencies are commemorating the First World War. Today, we'd like to highlight the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Joining us are Allison Finkelstein and Zack Wilske, historians at the USCIS History Office and Library. Welcome to both of you.

**[0:16:27]**

**Zack:** Hi.

**[0:16:28]**

**Allison:** Thank you for having us today.

**[0:16:29]**

**Theo:** Okay, let's start with you, Zack. In 1914, how was this area of the government organized?

**[0:16:35]**

**Zack:** In 1914, immigration and naturalization were administered through two separate bureaus under the newly created Department of Labor. There was the Bureau of Immigration which was charged with overseeing the inspection and admission of immigrants into the United States. And there was the Bureau of Naturalization which was in charge of overseeing naturalization courts across the country, as well as keeping records of all the naturalizations that were performed in those courts. By 1914, they had started developing programs for Americanization or civic education of immigrants. Just before the United States declared war in April of 1917, the Bureau of Immigration stationed officers at ports around the country. At those ports were German ships. As soon as the United States declared war, those immigration officers along with customs officers seized the ships and detained all of the German crew members and officers. The Bureau of Immigration also had to issue permits to enter and leave the country to aliens, and also increase their border patrol and inspection, especially looking for aliens who were not permitted to leave the country and also draft evaders who may be trying to leave the country at the Canadian and Mexican borders. On the side of naturalization, the Act of May 9, 1918 exempted members of the military from many of the requirements of naturalization which allowed them to become citizens in a very short time so that foreign-born members of the armed services could naturalize before they were shipped abroad. The act was passed in May of 1918. By the end of June of 1918, more than 63,000 members of the military were naturalized and over 300,000 were naturalized in total. That's including those naturalized during the war and in the years after as veterans of World War I. And finally, the Act of May 9, 1918 which authorized military naturalization also gave the Bureau of Naturalization the authority to publish its first federal textbook on citizenship which became the base as far as the Americanization program.

**[0:18:24]**

**Theo:** Allison, stories about about immigrants, not even citizens yet, that came to America and found themselves going back over there to fight in countries that they immigrated from like Italy. Are there any specific stories like that that come to mind?

**[0:18:39]**

**Allison:** Yes, certainly. You are exactly correct that immigrants served in great numbers in the American military in World War I, and to this day, there are many Americans who can trace their own family's history back to their relative's service. We always like to remind people that foreign-born soldiers actually composed over 18% of the U.S. Army during the war which is really quite a lot. It's these individual stories are unique, they're inspiring, and they really vary by the different countries where the immigrant service members came from and the different experiences that they had. The one that I want to talk to you about today is the story of an immigrant named Ludovicus van Iersel who immigrated to the U.S. From Holland in 1917. He enlisted in the army very soon after he arrived in the country, and he actually went on to receive the Medal of Honor for his service. In 1983, he filled out a U.S. Army questionnaire that asked him about his service in World War I. Today, this questionnaire is in the collection of the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. When I was doing research on Ludovicus van Iersel, I found a response to one of these questions that I think really epitomizes the experiences of these immigrants in the military. The question asked him what he learned about America or Americans during World War I. His response, and this is unedited, taken from his handwritten answer, was, "I learned to get along and respect all my people came into contact with. Just wonderful." I really think this quote shows the impact of this experience on van Iersel's life. He actually went on to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II. He was in the Pacific Theater, and today he is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. The story of van Iersel and other immigrants like him are a lot of stories that we hope to share as part of our own office's initiative to commemorate World War I.

**[0:20:42]**

**Zack:** I would just like to add that immigrants' experience in World War I is not limited to the military, but they were involved on the homefront as well as volunteers and things like that, like all other Americans. But also during World War I there was a shortage of labor due to the fact that many civilians had entered the army. There was a special labor program to bring in temporary Mexican laborers to the United States. During the war and in the years immediately following, over 70,000 Mexican agricultural, railroad and mine workers came to the United States to perform much needed labor on the homefront.

**[0:21:13]**

**Theo:** So, to the both of you, the USCIS has a brand new web page about World War I. What are we going to find there and how about some of your other World War I centennial activities?

**[0:21:25]**

**Allison:** We were really excited to debut our new World War I centennial web page over the summer. Right now, we have two articles. One on immigrants in the military and the other on the start of the war. Some of the interesting facts that Zack shared with us about the immigration service and German detainees. That's actually just one of a few World War I centennial projects that we are working on. We are spearheading a project for the Department of Homeland Security which we call the World War I Poster Series. What we're doing is we gathered our colleagues across different historical offices within the Department of Homeland Security, and we are going to be releasing a set of posters that act kind of like museum panels to interpret the history of World War I from a DHS perspective. Obviously, the Department of Homeland Security did not exist during World War I, but like USCIS, many of the components can look back to World War I and find history there that they participated in. So, we're having five posters. One for us, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. One for the U.S. Coast Guard which many of your listeners know played a very important role in the First World War. One for Customs and Border Patrol and one for the Secret Service. In addition to these four individual posters, we're going to be producing one poster that represents the Department of Homeland Security as a whole that employees and the American public can understand how our functions today relate to what different federal agencies did during World War I. Our end goal here is to really instill a sense of connection to our predecessors who served in the federal government during World War I and teach people about some lesser known aspects of World War I history.

**[0:23:12]**

**Theo:** Okay, thank you both so much for speaking with us today.

**[0:23:15]**

**Zack:** Okay. Thank you.

**[0:23:17]**

**Allison:** Thank you.

**[0:23:17]**

**Theo:** That was Allison Finkelstein and Zack Wilske, historians at the USCIS History Office and Library. Learn more about the USCIS and World War I by following the link in the podcast notes. Now we're going to combine our events and our updates from the states. We're going to the Badger State, Wisconsin where they're holding the World War 100 Symposium at the University of Wisconsin on the Madison Campus. This is going to happen on October 27th. The symposium was put together by the university and the Wisconsin World War I Centennial Committee. This is a great example about how the State World War I Centennial Commissions are nurturing and supporting World War I commemorative events. The World War I 100 Symposium will premiere the documentary film Dawn of the Red Arrow which follows the Wisconsin National Guard in 1917 when the iconic 32nd Red Arrow Division was born and earned its place in history on the battlefields of France in World War I. The program is filled with great events, experts, subjects and speakers including participation by Sir Hugh Strond, considered by many as the preeminent historian on World War I and who joined us here on the podcast in episode 32. Then on November 2nd, Sir Hugh will be speaking at the National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City at a free, evening public event in advance of the museum's second international symposium on World War I. 1917, America Joins the Fight features renowned scholars from across the world. Follow the link in the podcast notes for information and access to these symposia and other great World War I commemoration events happening around the country. As a reminder, we invite you to add your own event to the National U.S. World War I Centennial Events Register. Go to [ww1cc.org/events](http://ww1cc.org/events). Click on the big red button and post your World War I commemoration event for all to discover. As we mentioned last week. We just added a new category for social media events. If you're planning a Facebook Live, a webinar, a livestream, World War I hackathon, or other online World War I commemorative event, get it posted and let our community of interest know. Follow the link in the podcast notes. And now for our feature, Speaking World War I, where we explore today's words and phrases that are rooted in the war. English is constantly absorbing new words from other languages. This

week's word for Speaking World War I comes from working in close quarters with Urdu-speaking soldiers from the British Colonial Forces. In Urdu, koozie means pleasure or convenience, and in World War I, the phrase spread amongst the soldiers in the trenches transforming as these words often do into a word that means easy or comfortable, cushy. And you thought that word came from cushion, no. Cushion came from the Latin for hip or thigh. In World War I, the troops also used cushy to describe a wound that was non-fatal but could potentially get you sent home or at least away from the front lines. In 1915, an English physician wrote, "When you're in the trenches a cushy wound seems like the most desirable thing in the world." Cushy, this week's Speaking World War I word. A most desirable way to get hit during World War I. See the podcast notes to learn more. It's time for 100 Cities, 100 Memorials Project Profile. Round 2 of the \$200,000 matching grant program is open, so you can apply for a matching grant to rescue, restore or build a World War I memorial in your community, but you have to submit the application before January 15th. Last week, we profiled a project from Ridgewood, New Jersey. This week, we head to Trafford, Pennsylvania. Joining us is Andrew Capets, a member of the Trafford Veterans' Memorial Renovation Committee and author of a new book, Good War, Great Men: A Commemoration of the 313th Machine Gun Battalion of World War I. Welcome, Andrew.

**[0:27:45]**

**Andrew:** Hi, Theo. I'm honored to be here.

**[0:27:47]**

**Theo:** Andrew, in your application your motto was, "Our memorial, our community, and our project." Who all came together to restore this memorial?

**[0:27:55]**

**Andrew:** Well, Theo, we got together as a group in 2011 to make plans to install a new memorial in Trafford dedicated to those from Trafford who served in the global war on terror. One of our committee members was Jim Fike. He's the father of Robert Fike who was killed on June 11, 2010 in Afghanistan. Our group was headed by Ray Peduzzi, a former Marine, former high school principal and a former mayor of Trafford. He truly rallied our community together to get this project done. When we did get together, like a lot of memorial planners, we saw the effects that weather had on the old memorials. The sidewalks, the gazebos, the entire park really in dire need of repair.

**[0:28:38]**

**Theo:** So, your World War I memorial was originally dedicated in 1919. That's earlier than most. Tell us about the dedication.

**[0:28:46]**

**Andrew:** I found a newspaper article that reported just two of Trafford's men listed on the memorial as being killed. Just before we re-dedicated our park, a local resident passed away, and her son approached us with an original memorial program from 1919. In this program, it listed not two men killed, but four men killed while serving. The other two names were Franklin Denning and Nicola Elmo. For the World War I history buffs listening, you may be familiar with the book *Toward the Flame* written by Hervey Allen. Franklin Denning that I'm referring to is actually lieutenant Franklin Denning who was killed in the village of [inaudible]. His name was actually on the first bronze casting, but Nicola Elmo was not on that casting. We're really not sure why Nick wasn't included. I did the research on Nicola Elmo, found that we was killed just seven days before the armistice was signed. I was able to track down a great-niece of Nicola Elmo. Her name is Martha McSorley, living in Maryland. We invited her to our Memorial Day celebration where we as community added Nick's name to the memorial, thus making the total number of names on our memorial 122. The story doesn't end there. Nick Elmo is buried in Flanders Fields American Cemetery in Belgium. A local news station covered our story about adding Nick. In about six to eight months later, I was contacted by a Belgian author named Patrick Lenore. He was contacted by Nick's grandson and great-granddaughter who saw our story on the internet and asked if Patrick would contact me so that they could meet their distant cousin Martha. The family shared a photograph which shows the grandson and great-granddaughter standing next to Nick's headstone in Belgium. I included that photo in our grant project.

**[0:30:42]**

**Theo:** Andrew, I've seen the before and after images of the memorial, and it's really beautiful. Do you have any Veterans' Day plans for this year?

**[0:30:50]**

**Andrew:** Yes. Actually, in our countdown to Veterans' Day, when people found out about us winning the grant from the World War I Centennial Commission, the idea came up to create a GoFundMe account. We, in our countdown to Veterans' Day, have a Maintain the Trafford Veterans' Memorial on the GoFundMe site.

**[0:31:10]**

**Theo:** You produced a really nice video for the project. Tell us about that.

**[0:31:14]**

**Andrew:** Sure. I actually pulled together some of the photos we had over the time period that we were working on the project, and I got my 13 year old son Jacob to help me put this together into a video truly hoping to inspire other communities across the nation to look for their memorials in their towns and be inspired by what we were able to accomplish in our community.

**[0:31:34]**

**Theo:** Andrew, congratulations on being a round one awardee. And for your whole group, doing such a great job on behalf of our World War I Doughboys. You surely do speak for them.

**[0:31:46]**

**Andrew:** Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to be here.

**[0:31:49]**

**Theo:** That was Andrew Capets, member of the Trafford Veterans' Memorial Renovation Committee and author of the new book *Good Wars, Great Men: A Commemoration to the 313th Machine Gun Battalion of World War I*. We're going to continue to profile not only awardees, but also teams that are continuing on into round two which is now open for submissions. Learn more about the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials program at [ww1cc.org/100memorials](http://ww1cc.org/100memorials), or follow the link in the podcast notes. Ahoy, teachers and learners. With education as our theme this week, we're happy to announce the launch of the commission's new education website at [ww1cc.org/edu](http://ww1cc.org/edu), all lowercase. The site is filled with resources for teachers and learners, access to our semi-monthly educator newsletter and more. A brand new idea is that registered educators are eligible to submit information and images about the work that they've done with students to teach and commemorate America's involvement in the First World War. Check out the new website, and if you're an educator, register to submit your programs and share them with others. We invite you to follow the link in the podcast notes. In our Remember the Veterans section today, we have with us Rex Passion, author of the book *The Lost Sketchbooks: A Young Artist in the Great War*. Welcome, Rex.

**[0:33:21]**

**Rex:** Hi, Theo. How are you?

**[0:33:22]**

**Theo:** I'm well, thank you. So, Rex, what is *The Lost Sketchbooks* about and how did you wind up writing the book?

**[0:33:29]**

**Rex:** This whole thing started one day in 2009 when a friend of mine asked me if I'd help him with a website to commemorate his father who was a major book and magazine illustrator in the '20s and '30s. Ned brought over a number of boxes of his father's papers, magazines that he did illustrations in, and book jackets and drawings from when he was a kid. One of the boxes I opened up, and it was full of these canvas-bound sketchbooks that looked rather old, and I was interested in them. I opened them up, and I was amazed when I found all of these amazing pencil drawings from World War I. As I went through and scanned the images out of these things, I realized that I had to do a book about this because these are very intimate, very personal drawings from, basically, every day of the two years he was in the army. Ed Shenton, which is Ned's father was an art student in Philadelphia in 1917 when he decided to join the army and went in and enlisted in Company B of the 103rd Engineers of the Philadelphia Armory. Just before we went off to training camp, he loaded up on these sketchbooks and graphite sticks and water color set and headed off to training at Camp Mead in Maryland. He basically drew every day he was in the army. All together, he did 500 drawings, and that was the impetus for doing the book. I felt it was something that really needed to be shared because it was such a complete history of this one man's time in the army.

**[0:35:14]**

**Theo:** So, Rex, it really sounds like a treasure trove of discovery. The book is really beautiful, and the art is amazing. Is there one sketch that stands out for you in particular?

**[0:35:24]**

**Rex:** Really, there is. Two of the sketchbooks in there were very interesting. The sketchbooks are six inches by nine inches as they were purchased at Wanamaker's, but there were two of them that were cut in half, so they were basically six by four and a half. I did some research on that, and I found that when soldiers first landed in France, the officers came to them and would say, "You can't take anything with you that you can't carry on your back." So, in order to make his pack a little lighter, he cut his sketchbooks in half. And also that allowed him to keep them in the pocket of his pants or even to put underneath his helmet when it was raining. There were these two sketchbooks that were smaller size. I started going through them, and I came upon this amazing drawing. A number of soldiers spread

out across a very shallow trench with their rifles and bayonets sticking up. They obviously are in sort of distress. The writing on it said, "Front line trench, evening. Shell shocked and exhausted men waiting for darkness to be taken out." It was only later when I was doing some research that I found out exactly what the story of that was. I was very fortunate to find online a history of Company B, and the 103rd Engineers, which was written in 1929 by several officers of the Company. It goes through, day by day, exactly what the Company was doing, and they dovetailed perfectly with Ed Shenton's drawings. This drawing was done on the 18th of July 1918 as the German army was crossing the Marne and trying to take Paris. As the 109th was being decimated by the Prussian guards, the engineers were called up as reserve infantry and occupied what was called a trench, but actually it was described as a drainage ditch. It was only about two feet deep. That drawing is a drawing of that exact time and that exact place, and I thought that was pretty amazing.

**[0:37:33]**

**Theo:** So, you've just completed and launched a new website. If I go to [ww1cc.org/sketch](http://ww1cc.org/sketch), what am I going to find?

**[0:37:43]**

**Rex:** Whenever you write a book like this, you do a whole lot of research, and you get a whole lot of details that never make it into the book. A lot of the information that I got from this history of Company B called Soldiers of the Castle never made it into the book, but it's all very interesting day by day stuff which I can include on the website, and also some of the history that was related to the things that Ed Shenton was drawing about. One of the main things that I wanted to do, in keeping with this 100 years ago theme, a lot of Ed Shenton's drawings were dated or could be dated through where he was, and I've been posting now to the website sketches that were done 100 years ago. Right now, 100 years ago, Ed Shenton was at Camp Hancock in Georgia, and so I'm putting up on the site drawings that he did of his training in Camp Hancock 100 years ago.

**[0:38:40]**

**Theo:** So, you're saying we can follow his experience day by day. That's really great.

**[0:38:45]**

**Rex:** Yeah, exactly. You can follow it day by day. So much of looking at World War I, the history is compressed. We read a book and the book covers four years or something like this, but what I'm realizing going through this is exactly what his timeframe was like being in training. He's been in training camp now since July, and I think back on July and what the weather was like and how long ago that was. I really get a feeling of how he progressed on a day by day basis through his training.

**[0:39:20]**

**Theo:** Rex, thank you so much for joining us.

**[0:39:23]**

**Rex:** Well, thanks a lot for giving me the opportunity.

**[0:39:25]**

**Theo:** That was Rex Passion, author of The Lost Sketchbooks and curator of the website at [ww1cc.org/sketch](http://ww1cc.org/sketch), all lowercase. Follow the link in the podcast notes for the website, Rex's Facebook page and to order the book. And now for a second interview in our Remembering the Veterans segment as we #countdowntoveteransday. Joining us is Jerry Michaud, executive director of the Roll of Honor Foundation. Welcome, Jerry.

**[0:39:56]**

**Jerry:** Hi. Glad to be here.

**[0:39:58]**

**Theo:** Jerry, tell us a little bit about the Roll of Honor Foundation and what it does to help remember our veterans.

**[0:40:04]**

**Jerry:** The Roll of Honor Foundation's mission is to honor the military service of the men and women of America's armed forces, to educate the public about that legacy and encourage public service among future generations. We provide a free online registry of U.S. Service men and women which allows current and former military members and their families to display their military experience, records of achievement and photos in a digital, visual biography. Our ambition, which is a big one, is to document the entire U.S. Military service history from Lexington and Concord to today's deployment through the individual histories of America's military. Our highly interactive site allows for families, students and others to learn more about their veteran's military service through individual pages that depict awards, units, training, engagements and other elements in a vivid, graphic profile. By clicking on individual ribbons or unit insignia, you can learn more about those elements. Currently, there are more than three million serviceperson's

profiles on the Roll of Honor, and we're adding new ones every day. With more than 43 million Americans having served in the armed forces since 1776, we have a lot of work ahead of us.

**[0:41:14]**

**Theo:** You sure do. Now, you created a World War I section this past year, and the World War I Centennial Commission and the Roll of Honor are working on a really unique collaboration. Can you tell us about it?

**[0:41:26]**

**Jerry:** Sure. We developed this World War I National Memorial Roll of Honor. It's [www.rollofhonor.org/ww1](http://www.rollofhonor.org/ww1). It was designed to get individual visibility to the millions of Doughboys, pilots, sailors and nurses of the war that changed the world, detailing their ranks, units, battles, awards, other elements of their service. We want to make sure that everyone who took a stand for freedom, serving their country in the military, surviving extremely tough circumstances and possibly facing death will not go unnoticed or forgotten. Currently, we have more than 350,000 World War I profiles have been created. We intend to include the more than four million U.S. Military personnel who participated in the war that changed the world. This virtual memorial is currently accessible through the Centennial Commission's website. Visitors can search for their relative's name and state to find their profile on the Roll of Honor. If you can't find the current profile, that means we haven't created one yet. You can submit a request and any information, histories, photos, memoirs, etc. You can provide so our researchers can build a profile, and we'll send it to you for your approval before it is published. We encourage everyone to add information and photos to existing profiles and even submit a story of service which will be matched directly with the Centennial Commission's stories of service. So, whatever is on the Centennial Commission's stories of service will also be on the Roll of Honor.

**[0:42:50]**

**Theo:** So, you're saying that if I submit a story of service on either website, it will be added to my veteran's profile, right?

**[0:42:56]**

**Jerry:** That's correct. Also, I want to say that in development, we're building a Find Your Veteran page, name to be changed if needed, with the commission, which will be a direct search for a veteran on the Centennial Commission's site. Because we're powering it, it will go directly to a Roll of Honor profile. From there you can interact with that. World War I was fought by individuals. They should be honored individually.

**[0:43:20]**

**Theo:** We worked together, actually, to create the ability for people to get tribute wreaths for their veterans. In that process, they are actually contributing to the National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C. When they do that and they can get them, I guess, gold and silver and platinum and so forth. When they get a tribute wreath for the profile, how much of that money goes to the Roll of Honor and how much goes to building the National World War I Memorial in Washington?

**[0:43:48]**

**Jerry:** 100% goes to building the national memorial. We don't collect any of that. It goes directly to the donation site on the Centennial Commission's site. So, there's no cost from our point of view. That's a service we're providing. People can go to an active profile of their relative and make a donation in that relative's name to the national memorial. There will be a wreath appearing on the profile with your name as a donor, and you can have your friends, your relatives add to that profile with more and more wreaths. Millions of wreaths. As many as the donations.

**[0:44:23]**

**Theo:** Jerry, thank you so much for being here today and for the Roll of Honor's great work in profiling those who served.

**[0:44:29]**

**Jerry:** Terrific. Thank you very much. Glad to be a part.

**[0:44:32]**

**Theo:** That was Jerry Michaud, executive director of the Roll of Honor Foundation. You can learn more about the Roll of Honor and their collaboration with the World War I Centennial Commission's website by following the link in the podcast notes. This week, in our Articles and Post segment where we explore the World War I Centennial Commission's rapidly growing website. We've now published over 3,200 articles. If you read one article a day, it would take you eight years and nine months to read the whole website as it sits right now. A new article this week under [ww1cc.org/news](http://ww1cc.org/news) is about Anna Coleman Ladd and her unusual work with World War I veterans. Ladd was an American sculptor who studies sculpture in Paris and Rome before World War I. After the war broke out, she devoted her time to giving soldiers whose faces were disfigured by gas or explosives or other wounds artistic prosthetic masks.

Cosmetic surgery as we know it today didn't exist, but there was relief from disfigurement. See the article featuring before and after photographs that show how World War I soldiers' horrific facial injuries were surgically repaired and then covered with the sculptured prosthetics that Ladd developed. Just follow the link in the podcast notes. Now for an update on our Write Blog which explores World War I's influence on contemporary writing and scholarship. This week's post is God Armeth the Patriot. These words come from Thomas Croft Neibaur, the first Mormon to receive the Medal of Honor during World War I for his heroism during the Muse-Argonne Offensive. This is known as one of the bloodiest battles in American military history. Writer Benjamin Sonnenberg returns to the Write Blog this week with another riveting short story inspired by Neibaur's letters from home. Delve into Neibaur's legendary experience in World War I with his captivating, well-researched fictional narrative by visiting [ww1cc.org/wwrite](http://ww1cc.org/wwrite). And that brings us to The Buzz. The centennial of World War I this week in social media with Katherine Akey. Katherine, take it away.

**[0:47:02]**

**Katherine:** Thanks, Theo. Last week, we mentioned the re-dedication of new sculptures of General Pershing and the Marquis de Lafayette in Versailles. The ceremony went very smoothly, and now the statues are in their rightful places overlooking the Avenue des Etats-Unis. If you want to see images from the ceremony and images of the statues, you should check out the Facebook page for the Souvenir AEF en Haute-Marne, a French-based page commemorating the American Expeditionary Force's time in the Haute-Marne region of France. Find it and view many images and articles from the ceremony at Versailles by following the link in the podcast notes. Finally this week, we'll close out by celebrating Buster Keaton whose birthday was celebrated last week and commemorated by the National World War I Museum and Memorial with a little video clip and a story. Keaton served with the 40th Infantry Division and carried his sense of humor and mischievousness with him throughout his service. A little anecdote to close us out. While with his battalion in Camp Upton, Buster observed how the officers, who were allowed to come and go in and out of camp, dressed in just their uniform shirts and ties and saluted the sentries. Buster took off his tunic, hopped into the back of his girlfriend's Packard Roadster and drove past the military police, giving that lazy salute that had them convinced that he was like any other officer. He returned that night after a fabulous dinner out with his girl, and the next day the unit left for France. Learn more at the link in the podcast notes, and that's it this week for The Buzz.

**[0:48:34]**

**Theo:** That's a really funny story. Thank you, Katherine. And that's World War I Centennial News for this week. We want to thank our guests. Mike Shuster for his update on the situation in Russia. Allison Finkelstein and Zack Wilske talking with us about the USCIS commemoration of the war. Andrew Capets from the 100 Cities, 100 Memorials project in Trafford, Pennsylvania. Rex Passion, speaking with us about his World War I book and now website, The Lost Sketchbooks. Jerry Michaud telling us about the Roll of Honor Foundation and their collaboration with the commission. Katherine Akey, the commission's social media director and also the line producer for this show. And I'm Theo Mayer, your host. The U.S. World War I Centennial Commission was created by Congress to honor, commemorate and educate about World War I. Our programs are to inspire a national conversation and awareness about World War I. 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 I memorials in communities of all sizes across our country. And, of course, we're building America's National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C. If you like the work that we're doing, please support it with a tax deductible donation at [ww1cc.org/donate](http://ww1cc.org/donate), all lowercase. Any amount is appreciated. 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). On iTunes and Google Play at WW1 Centennial News. And we're on Amazon Echo or other Alexa-enabled devices. Just ask Alexa, "Alexa, play WW1 Centennial News Podcast." Our Twitter and Instagram handles are both @ww1cc, and we're on Facebook at WW1 Centennial. Thank you for joining us, and don't forget to share the stories that you're hearing here today with someone about the war that changed the world. Hey, I'm just sitting here on my tushy, sitting on a cushy, cushy cushion listening to the World War I Centennial News Podcast. Life is good. So long.

**[0:51:31]**