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7 speakers (Theo Mayer, Mike Schuster, Indy Neidell, Dennis Skupinski, Jessica Brummer, Emma Sundberg, Katherine Akey)

[0:00:09]

**Theo Mayer:** Welcome to World War I Centennial News, episode number 87. It's about World War I then, what was happening a hundred years ago, and it's about World War I now, news and updates about the centennial and the commemoration. Last week on our podcast Twitter channel, @TheWW1Podcast, that's at T-H-E, W-W, the number one, podcast, we ran a very popular series of posts following up on our observation balloon theme. We want to thank our listeners for the many dozens of reposts. You helped create one of the biggest single day podcast downloads for us ever. Over Twitter, you can ask us questions, make comments, get a link that you missed, and as you did, share our stories because after all, this is more than just a podcast, it's a conversation about the war that changed the world. In this episode for 100 years ago this week, we focus on Labor Day 1918 in a series of fascinating connections. Mike Schuster updates us on the Allied advances through previously captured territory, Dennis Skupinski joins us from the Michigan Centennial Commission, we visit Nebraska with Jessica Brummer and Emma Sunberg from the Durham Museum in Omaha, and The Buzz with Katherine Akey highlights some of the World War I posts and stories from social media. World War I Centennial News is brought to you by the US World War I Centennial Commission, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, and the Star Foundation. I'm Theo Mayer the Chief Technologist for the Commission and your host. Welcome to the show. Now, we're going to delay our September 1918 overview for a week. Instead, we're going to kick off the first week of September and the Labor Day weekend with a look at some amazing domestic events from a hundred years ago and weave together Labor Day, the unions, sedition, bombs, baseball, the Babe, and Butte, Montana as we jump into our centennial time machine to explore the war that changed the world. We're back in 1918 and this week the nation celebrates Labor Day, a holiday with an interesting heritage and a pretty big role in 1918. The holiday has its genesis in the late 1800s as the trade union and labor movement grew. In the US, a September holiday called Labor Day was first proposed in the early 1880s. By the time it became an official federal holiday in 1894, 30 US states were already celebrating Labor Day. This year, 1918, is the 24th anniversary of the holiday and the Wilson Administration is determined to make this the biggest Labor Day celebration in the nation's history to remind the American worker of their important role in the war effort. Now, most labor unions are strong supporters of the war. It's an opportune time to leverage the war requirements for recognition and higher wages for their workers. The unions are helping to minimize strikes as wages soar and full employment is reached and the unions blossom. The American Federation of Labor, the AFL membership soars to 2.4 million members in 1917. To keep the factories running smoothly, in April of this year in 1918, President Wilson establishes the National War Labor Board, which literally forces management to negotiate with the existing labor unions. In these days, the government is strongly pro-labor and the big unions, the AFL and the Railway Brotherhoods, are pro war, strongly encouraging their young men to enlist in the military, but not all unions are onboard with this. This is exemplified by the anti-war, socialist-leaning IWW, the Industrial Workers of the World, also known as the Wobblies. The Wobblies feel that war represents a struggle among capitalists in which the rich are getting richer and the working poor are the pawns, dying at the hands of other pawns with their blood flowing into the wallets of the capitalists. The IWW's anti-war stance makes it highly unpopular in this patriotic national moment. Indeed, one Wobbly, Frank Little, who is the IWW's most outspoken war opponent is lynched in Butte, Montana in August of 1917, just four months after the war had been declared and, as our regular listeners may remember, the combination laws starting with the Espionage Act of 1917 and then strengthened by the Sedition Act of 1918, gives the government sweeping powers to hammer down dissent of any kind at this time, and they do. Okay, we'll get back to that in a moment. Meanwhile, it's Labor Day Monday, September 2nd, 1918 and America holds its biggest Labor Day parade in the nation's history with 100,000 union members marching down 5th Avenue in New York, while the most public, fascinating technology of the day, airplanes, fly overhead dropping leaflets. It's a big day. Just two days later, on Thursday September 4th, the shocking headline in the New York Times reads, "Dateline September 4, 1918. Headline, IWW Bomb Kills Four in Chicago. Explosion shatters Post Office federal building where [inaudible] held conspiracy trials. Woman and sailor among the dead." The story reads, "Four persons, one woman and one sailor were killed this afternoon and dozens more injured when a bomb of terrific force was exploded in the Adam Street entrance of the Chicago Post Office building. The blast was so powerful it tore down an 18-inch wall, hurled tons of debris about, and wreaked havoc in the entire north end of the building. Police and government operatives at once began to work on the theory that the members of the IWW, or some of their anarchist sympathizers, placed the bomb." Well, though it was never actually proved, suspicion from the bombing falls on the IWW. I mean, the Wilson Administration has effectively declared war on the Wobblies. In April of this year, the government arrests 100 IWW members and puts them on trial. One of the IWW founders, big Bill Haywood, is among them and after the longest trial in the nation's history, he's convicted and just happens to be in a holding cell in that very building when the bomb goes off. Meanwhile, in June, the government arrests another founder of the IWW. After he delivers an anti-war speech in Canton, Ohio, Eugene Debs is arrested, tried, and sentenced to 10 years in prison

under the Sedition Act. Given all this, it's no surprise that the suspicion immediately falls on the IWW. Haywood denies it saying, "Uh-uh. No IWW member would be so foolish as to do such a thing. It must have been German fear propaganda." Despite the fact that a large percentage of the Chicago public and the police believe that the IWW was involved in the bombing, no convictions were ever made and the case remains unsolved. Well, this bombing sort of freaks out the City of Chicago. There's a lot going on. There's a war on and over at Comiskey Park, tomorrow, on September 5th, is the opening game of the 1918 World Series. (Singing). It's the Boston Red Sox versus the Cubs. (Singing). The 1918 season is ended early and the World Series is being played in September because of the war. Just a couple of weeks ago Secretary of War, Newton Baker, clearly not a baseball fan, announces that baseball players of draft age are not exempt from the draft like the movie actors are. He declares that the work or fight order for baseball players is effective as of September 1. You're going to war, boys. Well, that forces the premature end of the regular season and the 1918 World Series will be the only one played entirely in the month of September. Neither the players or the fans seem to have their head in the game. It's a pretty lackluster, forgettable six game series with no more than three runs in any one game, each team is shut out once, and not a single home run in the series. Not very exciting unless you like great pitching. Starting pitchers, Babe Ruth and Carl Mays account for all the Red Sox wins in the series, winning two games each and clinching the 1918 series for the Red Sox. Well, the bombing on September 4th doesn't really lighten the mood in Chicago whatsoever. In a city jittery over the bombing and weary of the war, game one of the series on September 5th attracts fewer than 20,000 fans, the smallest World Series crowd in years. During the seventh inning stretch, the Navy Band, who's the official band for the game, decides to play the Star Spangled Banner ... And suddenly, spontaneously, the entire stadium, which has been down and subdued, joins in a swelling patriotic chorus. (Singing). Now, it's important to realize that in September of 1918, playing the Star Spangled Banner is not a standard part for any kind of ballgame. In fact, the Star Spangled Banner is not even the official National Anthem, but in this moment in 1918, the spontaneous outpouring of sentiment, enthusiasm, and patriotism, is picked up on and written about by the Chicago papers. In the future, a number of historians will see this moment as the genesis for the song, not only being played at sports events, but becoming the National Anthem of the nation. Another moment that shapes our every day lives today, courtesy of the war that changed the world. (Singing). Now, we turn our lens from America to Europe with Mike Schuster, former NPR correspondent and curator for the Great War Project Blog. Mike, in your post this week, you trace the uplift in the Allied moral as they turn years of desperate struggle for mere survival into an unerring advance over recaptured lands, stained with the history of defeat and lost comrades. Now, though the dying continues, this must be a very heady time for the French and British, and a real emergence for the Americans.

**[0:12:20]**

**Mike Schuster:** Yeah, no question about that Theo. The headline reads, "Continuous attacks on the Western front. German line collapsing, Germans surrendering everywhere. An American officer and the tank, it will kill many Germans," and this is special to the Great War Project. "By these days, a century ago, German morale is low and plunging lower," so reports historian Martin Gilbert. "Considerable Allied advances were made throughout the Western Front. Top French commander Marshal Foch was so confident that he reported to the French Prime Minister that he could secure victory in 1919," according to historian Gilbert. The top British general, Sir Douglas Haig, is even more confident now. He expressed his confidence that victory would come before the end of 1918. Yet for every victorious headline, there was a somber subtext. The Allies have not won the war yet and despite the imbalance in troop strength on the Western Front, the Germans outnumber the Allies in troop strength by 42 divisions to 32. "In the Allied armies, there was a sense of purpose, even exhilaration," reports historian Gilbert. "One by one the scenes of the most desperate fighting on the Somme in 1916 were erased." "Each day," Gilbert reports, "the Germans continue to be pushed back." The details are impressive. On August 25th, Mametz Wood was captured. It had been the scene of ferocious fighting and heavy casualties in 1916. On August 25th, the Germans withdraw 10 miles on a 55-mile long front. On August 27th, British troops overrun Delville Wood, yet another scene of slaughter and defeat in 1916. "Two days later the Germans begin the evacuation of Flanders," historian Gilbert reports, all the towns and villages, hills and rivers they had conquered earlier. The German command decides on a purely defensive strategy. "The Germans were to be given no respite on the Western Front," reports historian Gilbert. As August ended, ferocious Allied assaults were made against them. It seems as though the Germans and the Austrians were falling back everywhere at the hands of the French, the British, and the Americans. The last days of August were a particularly good period for the Allies, so on September 3rd, reports Gilbert, the French Commanding General, Marshal Foch, "Gave the order for continual attacks along the whole length of the Western Front." By contrast, that same day, the German Command issued a top-secret order to stop defeatist talk by German soldiers on leave. In the first week of September, a century ago, the Germans are evacuating positions in Northern France that they've occupied for years and these withdrawals are coming just as the Allies have amassed an enormous arsenal of weaponry, more than 3,000 guns, 40,000 tons of ammunition. The Allies have assembled 12,000 hospital beds to deal with the inevitable wounded to come. It is to be an enormous offensive. It will take place at a spot called the St Mihiel Salient. Among the officers leading American soldiers into battle is one Lieutenant Colonel, George S. Patton. His weapon of choice, the tank. He tells his men, "American tanks do not surrender as long as one tank can go forward and attack." "The tank's presence," announces Patton, "will save the lives of hundreds of infantrymen and kill many Germans." That's some of the news from the Great War Project this week, a century ago in The Great War.

**[0:15:50]**

**Theo Mayer:** Mike Schuster is the curator for the Great War Project Blog. The link to his post is in the podcast notes. This week, our friends at the Great War Channel on YouTube have published a bio-special on John J Pershing, General of the Armies in 1918. Here's host, Indy Neidell, as he introduces the episode.

**[0:16:12]**

**Indy Neidell:** I'm Indy Neidell, welcome to a Great War Bio-Special episode about John Pershing. He was an American General. Not as charismatic as a Patton or a MacArthur, but no American Field Commander before or since was given a freer hand to conduct military operations. He created an American Army pretty much from nothing and led America's geo-political debut as a world power. The first commander since George Washington to be called General of the Armies, John J. Pershing.

**[0:16:43]**

**Theo Mayer:** To see the entire episode, search for The Great War on YouTube or follow the link in the podcast notes. That's this week's look back a century ago. It's time to fast forward into the present with World War I Centennial News Now. This part of the podcast focuses on now and how the centennial of World War I and the upcoming Centennial of the Armistice are being commemorated. This week in Commission News, I'm very excited to let you know that we have officially launched the local Armistice Day initiative called Your ACE or Your Armistice Centennial Events. A website that tells you all about it is live at [WW1CC.org/YourACE](http://WW1CC.org/YourACE). There you'll find three great programs, starting with Bells of Peace, which is a national bell tolling on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. This year is the Centennial of the Armistice, the moment the shooting stopped on the Western Front and after years of war and carnage, the world thankfully started on the road to peace. It's a really important moment to commemorate. The 11th day of the 11th month is, of course, now known as Veteran's Day. We already have six states where the governors have created proclamations supporting the bell tollings in all their communities. There's three more coming out shortly, plus a whole bunch in the works. In addition, we have over 160 local organizations already signed up and now, we're waiting to hear from you. States, cities, posts, chapters, civic organizations, churches, retirement communities, and individuals, sign up. It's easy. Just go to [WW1CC.org/YourACE](http://WW1CC.org/YourACE). What if you don't have a bell or what if you're holding your annual Veteran's Day event at a local memorial or cemetery where there aren't any bells, or what if you're just simply an individual who wants to honor your ancestor who served? No problem. We're also producing a Bells of Peace participation app for your Apple or Android Smart Phone. Just have the app open before 11AM local time on November 11th and all the phones will toll together 21 times, five seconds apart. You can even pick the kind of bell that tolls or toll it manually. That's it for 11AM on the 11th, but what about the rest of the weekend? We've been fond of saying for a long time that one day's just not enough to commemorate our veterans, but before we go there, a quick backstory. As you know, but some of our listeners may not know, there is no World War I Memorial in our nation's capital. World War II, yes, Korea, yes. Vietnam, yes. World War I, no. As you may also know, the US World War I Centennial Commission's going to get one built, but the law says that it may not be built with tax dollars, so only private funding can be used. Well, you can help the veterans of World War I get this long overdue memorial and at the same time, provide your community with a really great World War I Armistice Film Festival over the entire Veteran's Day weekend, from Friday the 9th through Monday the 12th of November. If your organization donates \$500 or more to the National World War I Memorial in Washington DC, we can offer you public performance rights to hold a World War I Armistice Film Festival in your community. Here's how it works. We got together with some really great film and documentary producers who've created World War I films over the commemoration period and everyone has agreed to support this. You provide the location and the playback capability. It can be indoors, outdoors, auditorium, a church, a school, or a movie house. We'll provide you with an amazing package of films that you can run as often as you want over the Veteran's Day weekend. You can even charge for attendance for your organization as a fundraiser or to raise even more money for the National Memorial. You can see the whole program by going to [WW1CC.org/YourACE](http://WW1CC.org/YourACE), that's W-W, the number one, C-C dot org, forward slash, Y-O-U-R A-C-E or you can send a link request tweet to [@TheWW1Podcast](https://twitter.com/TheWW1Podcast). Here's the film list that we'll send to the organizations who sign up. Pershing's Path to Glory, 40-minute documentary. The Hello Girls, 55-minute documentary. Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero, PG, one hour, 24 minutes. It's an animated film. You'll also receive The Millionaires' Unit, a two-hour documentary, plus you're going to get two bonus short films, Lafayette Escadrille, a 10-minute documentary preview from the producers of The Millionaires' Unit. It's their next film. Finally, A Soldier's Journey. You can hold a premier showing of the new US World War I Centennial Commission sponsored short film, which tells the story of World War I through the elements of a sculpture being created by the sculptor, Sabin Howard, for the National World War I Memorial. Contact us here through the podcast Twitter channel [@TheWW1Podcast](https://twitter.com/TheWW1Podcast) or via the program's web page at [WW1CC.org/YourACE](http://WW1CC.org/YourACE), Y-O-U-R A-C-E or by following the link in the podcast notes. This week in our updates from the states, we're headed to the Great Lake State, Michigan. Michigan began the Centennial Commemoration with an ad hoc commemorative team, but then through the unerring efforts of our next guest, on July 13th, 2017, Michigan's Governor, Rick Snyder, signed SB 248, an act to create a commission to commemorate the centennial of World War I. The bill was introduced by Senator Rebekah Warren of Ann Arbor. I met our next guest in the fall of 2016 when he stepped up to create the website for the Michigan

Centennial of World War I. His name is Dennis Skupinski and today he's the chair of the Michigan World War I Centennial Commission. Dennis, welcome to the podcast.

[0:23:35]

**Dennis Skupinsk:** Why thank you, Theo.

[0:23:37]

**Theo Mayer:** Dennis, take us back to the early days as you and your colleagues were out there, they were all shouting, "Hey, you know, there was a war before World War II, it was World War I." How did you guys get started?

[0:23:48]

**Dennis Skupinsk:** Well, actually, it was in spring of 2012 when I was looking for a group to join, so I figured out what I really want to do, which is World War. Then I looked up in the state and they didn't have a Centennial Commission, so I went to the Michigan Historic Commission and gave a presentation in April. Everybody thought it was a good idea, but I didn't have a champion. Eventually, once they formed a National World War I Centennial Commission, I was able to get some heavyweights, such as Rebekah Wilson from the National World War I Centennial group to call Rebekah Warren and then those two got along real good, so they managed to craft some legislation and actually get it introduced in 2016. It didn't get through the senate that year, but the next year they got it through.

[0:24:33]

**Theo Mayer:** Your story happened in a lot of places because it is the war that everybody forgot, so it took people like you and some support to actually get the commissions going. One thing I noticed when we first started working together, that you really like to make videos and you're still making a video every month. What got you going in that direction?

[0:24:53]

**Dennis Skupinsk:** Well, one of the things I was doing was going to a marketing luncheon that they have in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan. They've got a lot of creative people there, and entrepreneurs. One of the things they had was marketing in the future and they're talking about how people are going from PCs to tablets to cell phones and people also are reading less and they're watching more videos. I only do historic events, historic people, but last month, we had our World War I Centennial event and I'm just putting that video together, so we're showing actions. We had a couple bands play World War I music, we had the World War I [markit] here. We've had re-enactors, we've had people doing different things, and now I'm able to record all that and put into a video form so people in the future can say, "Oh, look at what they did during the World War I Centennial," and actually see people and hear things and sort of relive it, even if you weren't there. That's one of the reasons why I went to video.

[0:25:49]

**Theo Mayer:** Not an easy choice because it's a lot of work, but a really, really great approach. Your state is part of Susan Mennenga Midwest State Coalition. Susan is part of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library Organization, who's our commission's founding sponsor. How has Susan been able to help you support Michigan's efforts?

[0:26:06]

**Dennis Skupinsk:** Well, one of the things is she's involved with the national commission, so I'm battling the state people here and what she does, she gives me an outside perspective of what's going on. When sort of like in the military, when you need the heavy artillery, I call her.

[0:26:22]

**Theo Mayer:** Dennis, what are some of the activities that you've done this year?

[0:26:26]

**Dennis Skupinsk:** Okay, well one of the things we've done during the springtime was we sort of went from heavy metal to band, Sabaton, which I'm not sure if everybody knows, but they write songs about usually military history, about battles and things and they've had about 15 songs, give or take, on World War I. They came through Michigan and we went to their concert and gave an award of excellence, so they actually had us up on stage and they did a whole, nice presentation for us. We've got that video clip on our web page. Then, we, about a couple of months later, we went to the Archdiocese of Detroit because they had The Tallis Scholars, which is a renaissance choir group from the United Kingdom come in and we had a flag ceremony at the beginning there for the remembrance of the First World War. Then, we did our World War I Centennial event in August at the Michigan Military Heritage Museum in Grass Lake and there, besides the World War I [market], we have a trench that we built. We also have 30 uniforms from around the world of over 12 countries on display and World War I posters. What we're doing in the future is in November 8th at the state capital, we're going to be doing a bell ringing event. One of my people, Jerry Benson, is someone whose job it is and has a degree in bell ringing at the University of Michigan, so they put together a little

program at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor's going to be ringing on Veteran's Day. Also, we're doing a Veteran's Day parade in Detroit and a Christmas parade in Lansing. They're all about the same time.

**[0:27:58]**

**Theo Mayer:** Excellent. Beyond Armistice, what's going to happen to the commission going forward?

**[0:28:03]**

**Dennis Skupinsk:** Well, one of the things is the war didn't end in Michigan when the armistice was signed because we still had the North Russian Expeditionary Force, the Polar Bears, over in North Russia and they fought some of their biggest battles after the armistice was signed, so we still, we want to be focusing on them. They didn't come back to Detroit until July. Also, Harry Hill Bandholtz was with a peace delegation in Hungary after the war and in October of 1919, he was the person who saved the Hungarian National Treasures in the Hungarian National Museum. His riding crop is in the museum, along with the censor stamp and he has a statue of him in Budapest, so we also want to be bringing up stuff about him. Also, he was the father to military police. There's still a lot to do in 2019 and even though our commission ends end of December, we're still going to be doing things for another year or two.

**[0:29:00]**

**Theo Mayer:** Well, Dennis, it sounds like you're doing great work and even when the commission goes away, you started without official sanction, you're going to continue on after it. Great work, sir.

**[0:29:10]**

**Dennis Skupinsk:** Well, thank you Theo.

**[0:29:11]**

**Theo Mayer:** Dennis Skupinski is the chair of Michigan's World War I Centennial Commission. Learn more about the commission and its projects and its programs by visiting the links in the podcast notes. For our Remembering Veterans segment, we're heading over to Nebraska to learn more about some wonderful local World War I museum exhibitions and programs at the Durham Museum. The Durham Museum in Omaha recently opened Fighting for the Good Life: Nebraskan Memories of World War I. The exhibit was created by crowdsourcing objects, stories, and oral histories from Nebraskans and is accompanied by a series of lectures and screenings. Here to tell us more about the exhibit programming and Nebraskan World War I are Jessica Brummer, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, and Emma Sundberg, Curator at the Durham Museum. Welcome to both of you.

**[0:30:05]**

**Jessica Brummer:** Thank you.

**[0:30:06]**

**Emma Sundberg:** Thank you.

**[0:30:07]**

**Theo Mayer:** Jessica, tell us a little bit about the Durham Museum. What's its mission?

**[0:30:11]**

**Jessica Brummer:** The Durham Museum is a local history museum located in Omaha, Nebraska. We are actually housed in the former Union Station in Omaha, so a big part of our mission is to obviously share the history of the region, but also tie that history to the national story, which is exactly what this exhibition about World War I does.

**[0:30:35]**

**Theo Mayer:** Emma, this exhibition was created by working with the public. How do you do that?

**[0:30:40]**

**Emma Sundberg:** Yes, we decided that because we wanted to talk about the importance of World War I in our community, that we wanted as many community voices to participate as possible. One way we thought about this was do a crowdsourcer where we actually worked with our marketing department and create just a shout out to the community that got into the local newspapers, went on to our Facebook and social media asking, does anybody have objects and stories from your family members who had served from Nebraska, in Nebraska at the time, that they might be willing to share with us? We did this I'd say about the fall in 2017 for about three months or so. We had over a hundred people submit with images of some of their materials, [inaudible] digital copies of letters, and just emailing stories. It really surprised us we had such a difference of objects. We had what you might expect, being uniform pieces of the metals, but also postcards of love stories of a soldier and his sweetheart back home who would later end up getting married, dog tags stamping kit that I had personally had never seen before as an object, so it really

ranged in topic, also in location. For us, in Omaha, that was really great. Our city does have historic district in South Omaha, for immigrants, so that was the crowdsource portion of the exhibit.

**[0:32:03]**

**Theo Mayer:** As you were doing Fighting for a Good Life, what was Nebraska's experience like during the years and during the war?

**[0:32:10]**

**Emma Sundberg:** Well, it is, I would say actually fairly similar to a lot of other cities in the country. They were trying to work out the way of how they would respond to it. Of course, earlier, in 1914, it was actually fairly good economically, but then as we progress into it, we joined with the rest of the country in fervor of supporting freedom and fighting for the cause. Nurses, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Liberty Bond Drive, probably one of the more interesting pieces that I discover ... I'm not from Nebraska, so this is all very, very fun for me, nationally Omaha had the North Omaha Ballooning School and the concept of using balloons, very similar to hot air balloons, as aerial observance, like reconnaissance. Fort Omaha is still around today. It just has a museum as well, but we, in our crowdsource, were very lucky to have a few balloonist materials sent in, which allowed us to explore this story. It's kind of one of those small facets that you don't think of in this modern time that that was something that we would have done.

**[0:33:12]**

**Theo Mayer:** Well, you know, Emma, last week's theme, we had a big section on observation balloons and the people that flew it and were known as balloonatics.

**[0:33:20]**

**Emma Sundberg:** That would make sense.

**[0:33:22]**

**Theo Mayer:** Okay, so tell us about, the Fighting for the Good Life, you've got a whole program that you've built around it with lectures and showings and stuff. Could you tell us a bit about that?

**[0:33:32]**

**Jessica Brummer:** Yeah, so one of the things that we looked at during the crowdsource were what were the themes that were coming out and as Emma mentioned, a really big one was all of the letters and journals and personal stories that we received. We have planned several lectures, but the first of which we have Lynn Heidelbaugh, who is the curator at the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum coming to speak about that topic. At the same time, we have a whole host of lectures by local scholars, both from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, who will be talking on different topics. We will be doing a film screening of Black Jack Pershing: Love and War, here at the museum. We've had some tours focusing on the Spanish flu. One of the really fun objects that we received in the crowdsource was a violin. The story behind that was that the gentleman who played the violin, when it was discovered that he could play the violin, he was pulled off the front line to play as the morale boosting activity and very well may have saved his life, so we were able to bring in a violinist to perform music of the time period. We've just really tried to take the themes that are within the show and develop a whole host of programming for our audience to come enjoy as well.

**[0:34:59]**

**Theo Mayer:** Let me ask you really quickly, how's the public been responding?

**[0:35:02]**

**Jessica Brummer:** Well, very, very well. I will say we had a large opening day activity when the exhibit opened and we had a wonderful turnout. This has given our community the opportunity to have conversations about it.

**[0:35:18]**

**Theo Mayer:** Well, congratulations. Sounds like a great project. What you guys are doing is kind of holding up the flag, so thank you very much.

**[0:35:24]**

**Emma Sundberg:** Yeah.

**[0:35:24]**

**Jessica Brummer:** You're welcome. Thank you.

**[0:35:25]**

**Emma Sundberg:** Thank you.

**[0:35:26]**

**Theo Mayer:** Learn more about the museum and its focus on Nebraska and World War I through the links in the podcast notes. For our International Report, there are a lot of things going on in Europe over the coming weeks as we head towards the Armistice. For example, last week hundreds of volunteers from 18 countries gathered in the French town of Verdun. These volunteers were re-enactors dressed as World War I soldiers. They populated reconstructed field kitchens, first aid posts, and command posts, posing for photographs and living out the life of a soldier from a century before for the visitors, but although some re-enactors were placed out in the old battlefields, they didn't reenact any fighting out of respect for the sites, which have since become a symbol of peace. Instead, German and Polish re-enactors shared tips about military clothes and history, anecdotes with their French, Australian, and English neighbors at the local encampment. We've included a number of links in the podcast notes about the incredible event, so that you can learn more and see some of the photographs. Also, the Washington Post in their travel section recently published an article summarizing many important American cemeteries, memorials, and upcoming commemorations all across the France and Belgium. If you're planning a trip to the Western Front, whether this autumn or beyond, this article is a great resource for the memorials, museums, and towns to visit. You'll also find links to it in the podcast notes. In education this week, the latest World War I Education Newsletter is out. Issue number 14 is medicine and shell shock and features articles on the incredible medical advancements and the horrific mental and medical traumas of the war. This issue includes resources for teaching about the history of shell shock and psychological therapy, Anna Coleman Ladd's prosthetic masks, advances in antiseptics, and contemporary advancements in the understanding of shell shock and PTSD. The newsletter is published by the National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City and in partnership with the World War I Centennial Commission. You can sign up for the Education Newsletters at [WW1CC.org/subscribe](http://WW1CC.org/subscribe) or follow the links in the podcast notes. On the same theme, medicine in the Great War. This week's World War I War Tech highlights a humble, but important medical advancement of World War I, the Thomas splint. Well, say you got into some kind of accident. Maybe riding a bike, bungee jumping, playing tackle football on Thanksgiving, or engaging in some other risky activity, and the result was a broken femur. Even today, your leg would probably be placed in a Thomas splint. Named after its inventor, British surgeon Hugh Owen Thomas, the Thomas splint is a very common orthopedic apparatus used to stabilize and immobilize the leg after a traumatic injury. For the fighting men of World War I, who suffered from all manners of leg trauma, this was not always the case. According to British orthopedist, PM Robinson and MJ O'Meara, at the beginning of the First World War, the management of femoral fractures was such that most soldiers with these injuries died. Historian Louise Bell credits Dr. Thomas' nephew, Robert Jones, for introducing the Thomas splint to the battlefield where it had an enormously positive impact. The Thomas splint significantly improved a soldier's chances of surviving a terrible leg wound. Contemporary British military accounts show a 60% drop in mortality rate for soldiers with that type of injury. In conjunction with other battlefield medicine improvements, such as the ambulance and more efficient evacuation systems, the Thomas splint and the highly trained medics who administered it under fire saved countless lives in the British Army. The Thomas splint, a great war lifesaver and so well designed that we still use it today. On World War I War Tech, read more and check out the design by following the links in the podcast notes. For this edition of Speaking World War I, where we examine the words and phrases from the war, here's an interesting one. What image does body snatcher conjure up for you? Maybe an old horror movie or an alien parasite invading human hosts. It does for me, but for the men of the AEF, body snatcher had a completely different connotation. For them, body snatcher was the nickname given to stretcher bearers. According to a compellation of American military slang from World War I, these guys bravely snatched the bodies of wounded men from the killing zone, risking their own lives to move their comrades to medical aid. According to retired US Naval Corpsman, John [Haig], American stretcher bearers underwent a mandatory 10-week training course before they could serve at the front. Of course, no amount of training can truly prepare you for the carnage and the chaos of battle and our body snatchers both learned and improvised on the job. The Army surgeons knew that the first line care provided by the bearers would often be the difference between life and death. Indeed, as the war progressed, stretcher bearing became a profession unto itself and the men who mastered it, left behind a powerful legacy. [Haig], the corpsman concludes that the word done by the stretcher bearers during World War I and the relationship they had with doctors at the next level of care, can still be seen today. Body snatchers, brave, innovative, life-saving heroes of World War I and this week's phrase for speaking World War I. Follow the links in the podcast notes to learn more. This week in articles and posts, where we highlight stories you'll find in our weekly newsletter, The Dispatch. Headline, More States Join Bells of Peace Initiative. The Governors of Alabama, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, and Missouri will soon be joined by Hawaii, Nebraska, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and Virginia in issuing proclamations that promote Bells of Peace, and initiative asking all their citizens to toll the bells on November 11th, 2018. Headline, Ceremony Casts New Light on Nearly Forgotten SF Document to World War I Fallen. There was a solemn ceremony at noon on Saturday, August 25th and Hero's Grove, the site of a nearly forgotten monument in Golden Gate Park to honor 761 San Franciscans who died in the War to End All Wars only a century ago. The monument is an 18-ton granite stone carved with the names of 748 men and 13 women from San Francisco who died in World War I. Headline, Quincy, Illinois. African American Physician Who Served in World War I Was Mover, Shaker. The Herald-Whig newspaper in Quincy, Illinois continued its fine World War I coverage recently with an in-

depth profile of Dr. Hosea J. Nichols, one of the 104 doctors of African-American descent who were physicians in World War I. Finally, our selection from our official World War I Centennial Merchandise Shop. Our featured item this week is the book, *Lest We Forget: The Great War*. In the book, the story of World War I is told through the memorable art it spawned, including posters from nations involved in the conflict and a taut narrative account of the war's signal events, its major personalities and, its tragic consequences. Plus, timely period photographs that illustrate the awful realities of this revolutionary conflict. Links to our merchandise shop and all the articles we've highlighted here are in the weekly Dispatch Newsletter. Subscribe at [WW1CC.org/subscribe](http://WW1CC.org/subscribe). You can also send a link request with a tweet @TheWW1Podcast or follow the link in the podcast notes. That brings us to The Buzz, the Centennial of World War I this week in social media with Katherine Akey. Katherine, what posts do you have for us this week?

**[0:44:13]**

**Katherine Akey:** Hello, Theo. We have a couple links and follow-ups this week about commemorative events taking place over in Europe. We have a link in the podcast notes for you to an album of images on Facebook from the group, Mémoire et Histoire Aisne showcasing their recent homage to Quentin Roosevelt over in France. The event, an album, includes World War I era ambulances and planes, displays on field medicine, the war of rebuilt trenches, and much more. Last for the week, the New York Times has been running a series for a few months now called The 52 Places Traveler, in which a few of their columnists visit each destination on the Times' 52 Places To Go in 2018 list. This dispatch comes from [Ypres] Belgium. It took the number 46 spot on the list this year. The Dispatch is a beautiful, moving description of the columnists first person experience of the haunting fields of Belgium, but it also includes recommendations for other sights to see and things to enjoy in the [Ypres] area, including local Trappist beers. Read it and find the article in the podcast notes. That's it this week for The Buzz.

**[0:45:30]**

**Theo Mayer:** That's wraps up episode 87 of World War I Centennial News. Thank you for listening. We also want to thank our guests. Mike Schuster, curator for The Great War Project Blog. Dennis Skupinski, Chair of the Michigan Centennial Commission. Jessica Brummer and Emma Sundberg from the Durham Museum in Omaha, Nebraska. Katherine Akey, World War I Photography Specialist and Line Producer for the podcast. Many thanks to Mac Nelson and Tim Crow, our wonderful sound editing team, and welcome back to JL Michaud, who was our summer intern and is now a regular researcher on the show as he continues his studies. I'm Theo Mayer, your host. The US 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, including this podcast. We're bringing the lessons of a hundred years ago to today's educators and their classrooms. We're helping to restore World War I memorials in communities of all sizes across the country and, of course, we're building America's National World War I Memorial in Washington DC. We want to thank the commissions founding sponsor, The Pritzker Military Museum and Library, as well as the Star Foundation for their support. The podcast and a full transcript of the show can be found on our website at [WW1CC.org/CN](http://WW1CC.org/CN). You'll find World War I Centennial News in all the places you get your podcasts and even using your smart speaker by saying, "Play WW1 Centennial News Podcast." The podcast Twitter handle is @TheWW1Podcast. The commission's 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 about the war that changed the world. (Singing). Thank you for joining us this week. So long.

**[0:48:11]**