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11 speakers (Theo Mayer, Dr. Edward Lengel, Katherine Akey, Rob Laplander, Mike Schuster, Dr. Tom Jackson, Mark Foster, Dr. Erik Villard, Steve Scully, John King, Mark Fastoso)

[0:00:08]

Theo Mayer: Welcome to World War I Centennial News, episode number 92. 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. Before we get going, I want to talk to you about our free Bells of Peace app for iPhone and Android. Now, this was its first week out with hundreds and hundreds of you going to the app store, searching for Bells of Peace, and downloading the app. Now, it's out there. We're getting some great feedback about what people like most about it. First of all, anyone paying attention to World War I, the free app is a great countdown timer to the centennial of the Armistice. Of course, you get to audition and pick from seven different kinds of bells, which I noticed they're being used for all sorts of things in manual mode from stopping and starting meetings to a ship's bell announcing dinner over Alexa at my house. It's actually a lot more than bells. It's an Armistice participation app. It has its own news channel where we'll be publishing Armistice information like live stream links for 11/11, schedules of events in DC, major updates from states, and all sorts of Armistice special information. Maybe most intriguing and why I wanted to talk about it this morning before the show is because it has its own Armistice social channel integrated with all the regular ones. What do I mean by that? Well, you can use the app on your phone to post your Armistice preparation and events with photos, videos and texts to the entire centennial community right out of your phone. Your posts from the app, curated by us to make sure that only legitimate posts get on, will appear to all app users and on the national website for the Armistice. Even if you don't have a social media account. Now, if you do have a social media account, anything that you hashtag with toll the bells, #tollthebells, will show up in our curation dashboard, and we'll post it to the app and to the site. Now, this is an experiment in creating a special interest social media channel for a major national historical event. We hope you'll download the app and join Bells of Peace: The Armistice of World War I remembered. In this week's episode, it's the beginning of October, and we have our October overview round table discussion with Katherine Akey, Dr. Edward Lengel, and I. Rob Laplander joins us from France to talk about the Lost Battalion. Mike Schuster updates us on the dizzying October changes a hundred years ago. We're joined by Dr. Tom Jackson, Executive Director of the Georgia WWI Centennial Commission. Mark Foster, a citizen historian, tells us about his experience researching his grandfather's WWI service. Dr. Erik Villard, from the Center of Military History, introduces us to the army's incredible WWI website. It's really more than a website. It's a resource. We're going to learn about a new upcoming documentary about the Lost Battalion from the film makers who created it. The Buzz, where Katherine Akey highlights some WWI centennial posts and stories from social media. All this week on WWI Centennial News, which is brought to you by the US WWI Centennial Commission, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, and The Starr Foundation. I'm Theo Mayer, the Chief Technologist for the commission and your host. Welcome to the show. How do you even do an overview of October 1918? Well, that was the question on the table. As Dr. Edward Lengel, Katherine Akey, and I got together for our popular monthly overview round table of what happened a hundred years ago, what follows is our conversation. Ed starting with you, what's the overarching theme on October?

[0:04:26]

Dr. Edward Lengel: The cracking of the Hindenburg Line, which is the final German line of defense on the western front. This is the month that marks the final defeat of the German Army in the field. It's interesting, of course, later on, the Germans are going to deny that their army was ever really defeated. They're going to claim that it's revolutions at home that ended the world. In fact, they're heavily defeated on the western front this month. This is also the month that marks the collapsed of the central powers as a coalition. They began to fall apart both militarily but also diplomatically. This is the beginning of the end. It's clear, by this point, that the war is going to end in 1918.

[0:05:11]

Theo Mayer: Well the big event that everybody is focused on is the Battle of the Meuse-Argonne. What's the story there

[0:05:18]

Dr. Edward Lengel: The Meuse-Argonne Offensive continues to slug forward for the first two weeks of October and reaches a crescendo around October 14th, 15th, 16th as American forces cracked the central German strong point in the Meuse-Argonne, at a place called The Heights of Cunel and Romagne. Douglas MacArthur is involved in this action. He claims that he's the guy who found the gap in the German wire that allowed the final German strong point to be broken. Co-incidentally all of the other soldiers who would have witness MacArthur finding the gap were killed. MacArthur said that he led the scouting party toward the wire, and that during a bombardment, all of his fellow scouts were killed, and only he survived, and that he brought a word back of the gap and the wire. Whether that's true or not,

we don't know, the American forces are able to break through. The important thing to remember is the first two weeks of October in the Meuse-Argonne, as well as elsewhere, we experienced very heavy fighting, high casualty rates. This is the month in which Charles Whittlesey and George McMurtry. The leaders of the Lost Battalion, the 77th division are surrounded and almost wiped up. There continues to be very heavy fighting.

[0:06:39]

Theo Mayer: Katherine, you mentioned that there are actually actions going on all over the place, and we shouldn't just concentrate on what happened on the Meuse-Argonne.

[0:06:47]

Katherine Akey: Yeah. I mean, of course, we want to have a focus on the Americans and what the American forces were tied up in, but it's important to remember that the Belgians, the French, the British, and their imperial armies, they're all still fighting on the western front. Then, they have a lot of successes this month. The Fifth Battle of Ypres, the Battle of Canal du Nord, sunken tank canal, Battle of Cambrai, Battle of Courtrai, lots of battles going on. The real theme of all of this is that the allies are gaining kilometers, miles and miles with each push, which, for years of this war, was basically unheard of. You did not move very far. They're capturing thousands of German prisoners, sometimes tens of thousands of German prisoners in a matter of days, hundreds of their guns, and they're recapturing towns and cities that are strategic like Ostend, or Douay, or Zeebrugge, some of these towns that are on the coast or have railheads in them. They're rolling up and punching through the Hindenburg Line, and just getting rid of all the German reinforcements and all the German defenses that have been protected up to this point just by being at the very back of the fighting.

[0:08:00]

Theo Mayer: Now the British are also wrapping things up in the Middle East, aren't they?

[0:08:04]

Katherine Akey: Yes, there's a lot of action in the Middle East. Last month, we were talking a lot about the Battle of Megiddo. That technically ends on October first when the British Desert Mounted Core, a cavalry unit, captures Damascus. The battle was a complete lost for the Ottoman Empire, who starts a not so strategic retreat, basically, getting ass out of dodge as they can, as fast as they can. The British chased after them, something known as The Pursuit to Hairatan. They chased these retreating Ottoman forces back through Lebanon, all the way to Syria, where, eventually, they catch up with them. At the end of the month, the conflict ends between the Ottoman Empire and the allies. They signed up peace treaty with the allied forces. Prince Faisal, the leader of the Arab rebellion, leads his forces into Damascus. That whole saga of the Arab uprising comes to a close.

[0:08:59]

Dr. Edward Lengel: French forces are active in the Middle East as well. They captured Beirut in October. British and other forces are advancing through Mesopotamia at the same time. In one interesting episode, one well-known American, namely Kermit Roosevelt, son of Theodore Roosevelt is active in Mesopotamia at this time driving Rolls-Royce armored cars around what would later become a rock embedded with British forces.

[0:09:28]

Theo Mayer: Ed, there's a big change in the war on the seas. Could you talk about that?

[0:09:33]

Dr. Edward Lengel: After all the drama that brought the United States into the war in the first place and the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare early in 1917, the German suspends submarine warfare in October of 1918, essentially, bringing the war on the seas to a close. The German surface fleet has been held up in its ports on the North Sea and the Baltic for the past couple of years. The German sailors are rapidly approaching the point of an all-out mutiny. Some of their officers have been proposing the idea that they take the entire German fleet out for one last suicide attack on the British in the North Sea. This quickly becomes clear that the German sailors will never accept that. Their mood is rapidly becoming mutinous. We'll find the results of that next month.

[0:10:29]

Theo Mayer: Speaking of mutinous, there are revolutions building and, in fact, partly, the German government claims that that is what ended the war, right?

[0:10:39]

Dr. Edward Lengel: Yeah. The blockade of Germany has really taken hold by this point. The German civilians are suffering a great deal. We're seeing revolutionary feelings spreading across Central Europe, which will erupt toward the end of October in Vienna and the Budapest, but is rapidly approaching in Germany as well

[0:11:02]

Theo Mayer: Hey, Katherine. There are some things going on in the war in the sky that point to the future of air warfare.

[0:11:08]

Katherine Akey: The first is over the course of October, the US Army Signal Corps is starting to experiment with something called the Kettering Bug, It's an unmanned aircraft. Effectively, a drone is the term we would use for it today. It doesn't do so well on its first few test flights, but it does eventually work successfully, but not in time to be used during the war. It's just another little signal of the kinds of aerial warfare we'll see later in the 20th Century. Additionally, the first all-US Marine Corps air combat action takes place on October 14th when eight Airco aircraft go and bomb a German-held town in Belgium. Additionally, my favorite air story from this month circles around Belgium flying ace Willy Coppens. Willy Coppens is known as the best balloon buster of the war. He liked to target those observation balloons, firing on them, and blowing them up.

[0:12:07]

Theo Mayer: The US ace in that is the guy name Frank Luke, but this is a Belgian ace?

[0:12:12]

Katherine Akey: This is a Belgian ace. He's actually got a better score than Frank Luke altogether having shot down 34 observation balloons over the course of the war. The Germans know him. He's been bothering them and shooting down their balloons for months at this point. They decide to lure him into a trap by loading an observation balloon basket with explosives. Then, as he went to shoot down the balloon, it would blow up with a lot of energy, and take them down with it. Instead of that, he actually just flies right through the explosion and emerges unharmed.

[0:12:49]

Theo Mayer: There's a lot of stuff that happens in terms of the reformation of Europe and Eastern Europe, and the formation of countries, and the Balkans that appear and disappear. People aren't necessarily fighting the Germans, or the Americans, or the French. They're all in a giant cauldron. What was that all about?

[0:13:10]

Dr. Edward Lengel: It's almost the situation of chaos in Easter Europe. We see the rise of new nations of the independent Czechoslovakia, of Yugoslavia, of Poland, and the Polish Army, which is fighting fought against the Germans and the Russians is recognized as a cobelligerent power. As Austria-Hungary begins to spin into disarray, the Hungarians are battling with other nationalities in the Balkans sinks, and especially the Romanians and many others. A number of small republics appear and disappear.

[0:13:48]

Katherine Akey: As the Balkans are convulsing and shifting, there's still fighting going on in Italy on the Italian front, up really high in the part of the Alps known as the Dolomites. This last battle in that front, the Battle of Vittorio Veneto is a major Italian assault on Austria-Hungarian positions. One year after that, really disasters Battle of Caporetto where the Italians lost handily. The assault was really intense. They fired over two and a half million shells in a course of a week. That's over 350,000 shells per day, a lot of archery fire Ultimately, Austria-Hungary is badly, badly beaten. They actually order a general retreat from all positions in Northern Italy. Their forces are officially pulling completely out of that fighting front at the end of October.

[0:14:41]

Theo Mayer: As we record this, we're 39 days from Armistice. Armistice doesn't just happen. This month has to be the countdown process for getting there. Would one or both of you run down with some of the events are that, eventually, created an Armistice on the 11th of November?

[0:15:00]

Dr. Edward Lengel: The German and Austria-Hungarian Governments have recognized by the beginning of October that they're going to have to ask for an Armistice and that the war is going to need to end this month. On October 4th, they began the process of sending notes to President Woodrow Wilson, who because of the 14 points, they view him as the friendliest of the allied leaders. They sent notes to him proposing an Armistice. Wilson, then, replies to them demanding that they evacuate the occupied territories. When they accept those terms, he, then, ramps up the terms, and requires a number of other things, including that the allies will only negotiate with a democratic German government, which, of course, leads to increased political turmoil in Germany and the other countries.

[0:15:56]

Theo Mayer: Out with the Kaiser is what he's saying.

[0:15:58]

Dr. Edward Lengel: He's saying out with the Kaiser, but also Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who have been governing more or less as dictators in Germany through 1918. This ends with Ludendorff's resignation on October 27th. He's gone. Clearly, the Kaiser is going to follow him pretty soon. The Austria-Hungarians, the Turks, the Bulgarians are not going to wait for the Germans to come to terms with an Armistice. The Germans are still fighting as hard as they can. The Turks actually withdraw from the war at the end of October. The Austria-Hungarians are in the process of withdrawing from the war by that time as well.

[0:16:43]

Theo Mayer: Our first action in the war and the beginning of the turnaround was actually a Sam Hill. That feels like it was just yesterday. Here we are in a month when it's actually looking like it's wrapping up.

[0:16:57]

Dr. Edward Lengel: That creates almost the false impression that the Germans were already defeated when the Americans came in, that they were on the run, that there was no serious fighting going on. This takes a good four to six weeks from Sam Hill up through the climax of the Meuse-Argonne in mid-October of very hard, very heavy fighting before we reach the point that the Germans finally break. We have other important battles in which Americans are involved, the Blanc Mont and the Champagne Region in which the marines are involved. The African-American 93rd Division is involved in very heavy fighting in these periods. It's building up in October to a climax. Then, a very sudden climax of the German forces.

[0:17:47]

Katherine Akey: I would also mention, it's very easy for us to throw out all these battle names and talk about how much ground they're covering or what towns they recapture. Every single one of these battles, these multi-day, multi-week battles is 30,000 casualties or 12,000 casualties. It's thousands of humans are losing their lives to make this happen, to move this war forward towards an end. The fighting and the dying, the scale of it is not going down. It's just continuing. We're just "making progress."

[0:18:19]

Theo Mayer: I've been trying to wrap my head around the speed of events. It's just staggering.

[0:18:25]

Dr. Edward Lengel: Yeah, it is partly tug of war, but it's also a perception on the part of the allies. Especially, the Americans that they just have to keep pounding, and pounding, and pounding the Germans without lead-up. If anything, they even have to accelerate the rate of attack around now, so that the Germans don't get any time to relax that we're really pushing them into a complete capitulation. That's one reason, in some ways, that the casualty levels practically rise through this period.

[0:18:57]

Theo Mayer: As a wrap-up, what would be the two phrases that you would summarize October 1918 with?

[0:19:06]

Dr. Edward Lengel: Defeat of the German army in the field and the beginning of the Armistice negotiations.

[0:19:14]

Theo Mayer: I have one too. It's almost unfathomable how much is going on. Katherine, what about you?

[0:19:19]

Katherine Akey: I would say it feels like we're at the climax, but we're actually in the falling action of the war. Again, this is informed by our being able to look back with the hindsight of history. It's incredibly busy. Things are changing very fast, but we're not at the climax of this war. We're at that falling action, not really falling into a proper day because the war just comes to a crashing, crashing stop in November. We're on a very slippery, fast-moving, downward slope towards that finish.

[0:20:01]

Theo Mayer: There are really two fable stories in American World War I lore. Interestingly, they both surround the first few weeks of October. One is the story of Sgt. Alvin York. The other, the story of the Lost Battalion. Both became larger than life, spun up by popular media and the desire to turn the war into adventure and saga. The real story, the actual events are probably more dramatic, more human, more emotional, and certainly more painful than the fictionalized ones. What they share in common is the humility, valor, willing sacrifice and character of some remarkable Americans. Ordinary men in extraordinary circumstance. We're joined by Rob Laplander, citizen historian

and author of Finding the Lost Battalion: Beyond the Rumors, Myths, and Legends of America's Famous World War I Epic. Rob, welcome back to the podcast.

[0:20:58]

Rob Laplander: How are you there, sir?

[0:20:59]

Theo Mayer: Good. Hey, Rob, you're coming in all the way from France.

[0:21:02]

Rob Laplander: Yes, sir. We are just outside of Binarville, France where the Lost Battalion was trapped for five days on a hillside in the Charlevaux Ravine. We are just about three kilometers away. I'd like to be doing this from in the pocket but there's no cell coverage there, sorry.

[0:21:22]

Theo Mayer: Well, I'm not surprised. It's a bit remote. Rob, to start with, who is the Lost Battalion, and how did they wind up getting lost?

[0:21:30]

Rob Laplander: The Lost Battalion is actually a group of about 700 men who were trapped a kilometer and a half ahead of the alliance for five days starting October 7, 1918. If it's the '20s or '30s, you'd know all about it. It was a very popular story at the time. About 700 men went into the ravine. At the end of the five-day siege, 194 walked out. It took 72% casualties. It was one of the most over-reported stories of the war. The most significant thing about it, I think, is that Lost Battalion is a misnomer. They weren't lost in a sense that nobody knew where they were. Everybody knew where they were. Even the guys would tell you, "Everybody knew where we were. Even the Germans knew where we were." The lost men think they were in a situation that it didn't look like they were going to get out off.

[0:22:22]

Theo Mayer: Rob, your book, The Lost Battalion, is actually titled Finding the Lost Battalion: Beyond the Rumors, Myths, Legends of America's Famous World War I Epic. That piques the question, what are the myths and misconceptions about the epic?

[0:22:36]

Rob Laplander: There's always been this misconception that the leader of the Lost Battalion, Charles Whittlesey, had them in the wrong spot or that he charged ahead in some moment of glory, and put them in a situation that was untenable. Neither one of those stories is true. Whittlesey was exactly where he said he was. He was given specific and direct orders, and he followed them when nobody else did. Another myth is that he sent out the wrong coordinates from where he was, which led to an American artillery barrage directly down on their position. That's not true at all. There were several different factors. They were involved in how that happened, but it had absolutely nothing to do with Charles Whittlesey.

[0:23:21]

Theo Mayer: There was a barrage that came down on them?

[0:23:24]

Rob Laplander: Yes. On October 4th, for a period of time, there was an American barrage that landed directly on the position. They had to endure for almost two and a half hours.

[0:23:34]

Theo Mayer: How did they wind up getting found?

[0:23:37]

Rob Laplander: Whittlesey and his men sat on that hillside for five days. In the meantime, the rest of the regiment and their assistant regiment, the 307, fought very hard to get them out, to get over the hill, and into that ravine, so that they could link up with their flanks. It helped pry the line loose, so that the Germans had no choice but to actually pull out. There was about 7:30 p.m. On October 7th that the Germans evacuated the area and company B of the 307 managed to come in on right flank and hooked up with Whittlesey. By that time, however, the damage has been done. Only 194 were able to walk out on their own power.

[0:24:22]

Theo Mayer: Now, they tried to resupply Whittlesey by air. We had a story about that last week. What was that about?

[0:24:29]

Rob Laplander: The 50th Aero Squadron tried very hard to come in into the ravine and drop packages. The problem was Whittlesey's men were dug in so deep. If they could be seen from the air, then they could be seen from the hills around them. If they were seen from the hills around them, they'd be killed.

[0:24:46]

Theo Mayer: When they finally came out, there are already cameras and reporters all set up, and they got turned into a media story, didn't it?

[0:24:56]

Rob Laplander: Well, even before they were out of the pocket, as early as October 5th, the first newspaper articles were appearing in the newspapers at home about them. They were already heroes even before they were out of the pocket. When they walked out of the position on October 8th, there were cameras there, and reporters, and there's actually film footage that was taken of them coming out.

[0:25:19]

Theo Mayer: Rob, you're there now. What's it like walking the space on the centennial of the event?

[0:25:26]

Rob Laplander: We were here 10 years ago for the 90th. It was a very moving experience then. Now, being here on the hillside each day that they were there, 100 years to the minute that they were there, this is a story that I've lived with for the better part of 21 or 22 years. My kids know this story. My wife knows this story. You can't swing a dead cat in my house without hitting something Lost Battalion. Here we are the 100th Anniversary on this hillside. It's an extremely moving thing to be part of the centennial of World War I to begin with. Now, to be allowed to be part of this, to have this honor of standing on this hillside in the fox holes that they were in a hundred years ago and to know what happened here, it defies the scripts in any way, and it's very, very moving.

[0:26:22]

Theo Mayer: Rob Laplander is an author, citizen historian, and importantly, the force behind the Doughboy MIA Project, which cracks all of the still missing US service personnel from the war. We have links to both his book and the Doughboy MIA site in the podcast notes. Now, as we discussed in the round table, the wheels of change are spinning at a dizzying rate, but not for the men with their boots on the ground, fighting as fierce, losses are horrific, as the national leaderships begin to face the reality that the war must end. Wilson's insistence that he will not negotiate terms with the Kaiser or his military regime has a profound effect. Here, with a great overview of these tectonic shifts in geopolitical terms is Mike Schuster, former NPR correspondent and curator for The Great War Project blog. Mike, how would you characterize this moment in the war?

[0:27:18]

Mike Schuster: Theo, I think, we might say faithful would be a good word. The headline reads, "Generals to the Kaiser, the War Cannot Go on. Talk of an Armistice, Bulgaria in Turmoil but Fighting is Still Ferocious. Special to the Great War Project. A century ago, one by one and day by day, Germany and its allies are crumbling. On September 27th 'more than 23,000 German prisoners had been taken,' reports historian Martin Gilbert. Elsewhere on the front line of the Western Front, a six-hour artillery bombardment with more than seven hundred allied tanks are in action. By then, more than a thousand aircraft have joined the fight, supporting the Allied effort with more than seven hundred tons of bombs dropped." 'By nightfall,' writes Gilbert, 'the attacking forces had taken 10,000 prisoners and two-hundred guns.' Even by the standards of the Western Front, the scale of the German losses is astounding: Thirty-three thousand prisoners in one day. The British launch another massive offensive on September 28th at Ypres, the third attack to break the German hold there. Five-hundred aircraft are in the sky. Belgian troops were also in action that day, recapturing Passchendaele, which had been lost a year earlier, 'the scene of such terrible slaughter,' writes historian Gilbert. On the Salonica front in mountainous Greece, more than 10,000 Bulgarian and German soldiers are taken prisoner in the third week of September. Then a significant move to end the fighting. 'On September 28th,' writes Gilbert, 'Bulgaria with British and Greek troops already on her soil began armistice talks with the French and British in Salonica.' They are 'the first to succeed in calling off the fight.' Top German political leaders then weigh in. They tell the German Kaiser that Germany must join the armistice talks. They tell the Kaiser on September 29th that 'The war cannot go on.' Why? According to historian Martin Gilbert, 'Germany's top two military leaders tell the Kaiser, this is not about the will and ability of the German soldier to fight. No, it is also President Wilson's deep reluctance to negotiate in any way with the Kaiser himself or his military chiefs.' So, Gilbert reports: 'the Kaiser signs a proclamation establishing a Parliamentary regime. In the space of a single day Germany's militarism and autocracy were all but over.' But the battles continued, 'nowhere more fiercely than on the Meuse-Argonne Front. On

September 29th, the fourth day of the battle, American forces were brought to a halt, partly by the unflagging German defense, partly by the incredible chaos that had developed in their lines of supply and communication.' Observes one visitor to General Pershing at the French Front, 'His soldiers were dying bravely but they were not advancing or very little, and their losses were very heavy. All that great body of men which the American army represented was literally struck with paralysis.' Then 'hostilities on the Bulgarian front,' reports Gilbert, 'ended at noon on September 30th. That leaves Bulgaria in turmoil, and with no chance of Germany providing reinforcements. The Bulgarian collapse was a blow to Germany and Austria, both of which were suddenly cut off from all land links with their ally Turkey. At the beginning of October, a century ago, the situation looks dire for Germany, but fighting is ferocious nevertheless.'" That's news from the Great War Project this week a century ago.

[0:30:49]

Theo Mayer: Mike Schuster is the curator for the Great War Project Blog. The link to his post is in the podcast notes. That's it for a hundred years ago. Let's jump back into the present with World War I Centennial News Now. Now, this part of the podcast focuses on now, the Centennial Commemoration of the events of World War I and, of course, the upcoming Centennial of the Armistice. This week in Commission News, State Centennial Organizations and the US World War I Centennial Commission gathered in Chicago last week for an event we called To Honor and Remember. The event was graciously hosted by the Commission's Founding Sponsor, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library. It was a wonderful event with Col. Pritzker warmly welcoming everybody to the museum's historic site. There was a keynote by Col. Gerald York, the grandson of Sgt. Alvin York, followed by a panel on how we're going to archive the incredible work that has been accomplished over the past several years by the Commission, the States, and individuals in commemorating World War I. There were lots of other events and thank-yous to all who've dedicated so much over the past years to the centennial. We have links to the event video for you in the podcast notes. Update on Bells of Peace, the national tolling for the Armistice. It's really taking off. States, cities, and hundreds of individuals are pleading to participate. Two notable additions this last week. The Secretary of the Navy issued an all-nav bulletin, 072-18. Here's an excerpt. "The US Navy and US Marine Corps will participate in this event. Commander's Intent. (A), Purpose: Recognize the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI. (B), Method: Execute a global recognition of Armistice Day through a coordinated Department of the Navy wide bell ringing ceremony. On Sunday, 11 November at 1100, toll your bells 21 times with a five-second interval between each toll. Groups that do not have bells can render the salute by other available means." Now, we also got word late last week that the Washington Capital Dome is going to toll its bell. We're pretty excited about what's happening. We're nearly up to 30 state proclamations and we're gunning for 50. We launched a new campaign for cities and counties to do proclamations just starting last week. This coming week, we're going to cross our first 1000 individuals signing up to participate using the app. Join them by searching for Bells of Peace in your app store. This week in our updates from the states. We're heading to the state that was home to two US presidents directly involved in World War I, the State of Georgia. Woodrow Wilson's boyhood home was in Augusta. The era's US Assistant Secretary of the Navy and future President Franklin D. Roosevelt built his famous little White House at Warm Springs, Georgia. In 1945, it's also where he died. To learn more about Georgia and World War I, we're joined by Dr. Tom Jackson, Executive Director of the Georgia World War I Centennial Commission and retired Vice President for Public Affairs at the University of Georgia. Tom, it's wonderful to have you on the show.

[0:34:21]

Dr. Tom Jackson: Hello, Theo. Thank you for the opportunity.

[0:34:24]

Theo Mayer: Tom, Georgia was an early entrant into the State World War I Commemoration. Could you tell our audience a little bit about how Georgia and the Georgia Commission got started in all these?

[0:34:34]

Dr. Tom Jackson: Well, Theo, we had a prime mover in the form of Dr. Monique Seefried, who's one of your National Centennial Commission commissioners. Dr. Seefried influenced the governor of Georgia, who is our neighbor, and the Georgia legislator to adopt and create and a Georgia World War I Centennial Commission in its 2015 session. Two commissioners appointed by the governor, two by the lieutenant governor, and two by the speaker of the house gathered in late 2015, and we had been on board ever since.

[0:35:03]

Theo Mayer: A story I didn't know. Your team has done a stellar job in uncovering and telling the story of Georgia in World War I. Could you tell us a bit about Georgia during 1916 through '19?

[0:35:15]

Dr. Tom Jackson: Georgians shared America's isolationist attitude that "I'm" and the state had a particular economic pinch with exports of cotton, tobacco, timber. Naval stores to the markets in Germany, and Austria-Hungary were stopped by the British naval blockade of Europe. When US entry into the war came in April of 1917, patriotic purpose

swept Georgia. Ultimately, more than a half million men were registered for the draft in Georgia. More than 100,000 men and women served in military or support role. Many of the Americans who fought in the European theater, as many as half went overseas came from Georgia camp. This included places like Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Fort Oglethorpe near Chattanooga in Georgia, and Fort Screven in Tybee Island. There were war training camps. Camp Gordon in Chamblee, Camp Hancock in Augusta, Camp Wheeler in Macon among others. Flight school at Souther Field in Americus trained almost 2000 military pilots for combat over front. Charles Lindbergh took his first flight at Souther Field. Near war's end, Columbus was chosen to house the army's school of art leading to construction of Fort Benning's, today, the nation's leading center for infantry training and ground maneuvers. Of course, infantry and armor makeup the Fort Benning Maneuver Center as an enduring legacy of World War I in Georgia. It's particular difficult to determine precisely how many Georgians died in World War I. Unfortunately, the memorial records of today listed only the white soldiers. The primary efforts of our commission here in Georgia has been to identify all Georgians who died in service on the war and it revealed a large number of black soldiers. The latest count is 1228 who made the ultimate sacrifice. It brings the total number of Georgians who died in uniform, 3700, and we hope to honor them all in this centennial observance.

[0:37:10]

Theo Mayer: Well, Tom, members of your commission literally went from county courthouse to county courthouse re-recording the names on the local memorials to help build that list, didn't they?

[0:37:20]

Dr. Tom Jackson: They did. In particular, Dr. Lamar Veatch, who's the retired state librarian has been our prime mover in that. He's been all over Georgia. There are 159 counties. I think he's been in everyone. The listeners can go to our website and see this photographic database of all of these monuments. They're quite colorful. They're quite varied. There's an interesting tour through the state and through the way that local people were commemorating the war at the time.

[0:37:46]

Theo Mayer: What do you think is the most important thing that resulted from your team and your commission's efforts?

[0:37:52]

Dr. Tom Jackson: I would say the most important thing is that commemoration on the African-American service in the war. The identification of 1228 people who have not previously properly been memorialized. We've had many other things that we've done. We had a grant through the Georgia Department of Education to support development of World War I curriculum to be integrated into the History courses in 5th, 6th, and 8th grade, and in high school because, as you might suspect, World War I, sometimes, gets short shrift in the history courses. We had a statewide History Day Program in conjunction with the Georgia Humanities Council that awarded two top winners in World War I-themed projects with trips to Washington DC for this November's events. In the summer, one went to France for centennial events there, the grand prize. The website is a legacy of the Commission in its own right with the memorial sites around the state of history and updated listing of all Georgians who died. The names are there by county. They can be searched. We had exhibits at many places around the state, the Atlanta History Center, the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. We erected a State Historical Marker commemorating the tragic loss of Georgian's lives and the wreck of the troop ship Otranto off Ireland right before the end of the war, the worst troop ship disaster during the war. We're erecting a sculpture of the first African-American military aviator, a Georgia native, Eugene Bullard, a native of Columbus, Georgia. This will be located at the US Air Force Museum of Aviation at Warner Robins if all the technical aspects can be worked out with that. Bullard was never allowed to fly for the US. He had to fly for France because he was an African-American. We worked with the Georgia Department of Transportation to plant memorial poppies along the Moina Michael Highway, just the highway between Atlanta and Athens in honor of Ms. Michael's whirlwind development of the buddy poppies to support veterans. She was a faculty member at the University of Georgia and the prime mover behind the idea of the buddy poppy. We helped encourage and promote local centennial events all around the state. Our thanks to museums and local communities who have done lectures, and performances, and seminars throughout the past four years.

[0:40:04]

Theo Mayer: You've really had an amazing program. What are the plans for the Armistice? Also, the other question I wanted to ask you is, what happens after the Armistice?

[0:40:13]

Dr. Tom Jackson: We have a large program, a formal state observance planned for the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month coming up on Sunday, November 11th, at the Atlantic History Center. It will be the state observance. It will open with patriotic music, followed by participation in the Bells of Peace, ringing precisely at 11:00, and then some appropriate remarks. Actually, the way the legislation was set up that got us off to such an early start, perhaps

get us to an early end as well, we expire July of 2019. Our main remaining project is to complete the statue of aviator, Eugene Bullard, and to have it erected and dedicated. We would hope to do that during Black History Month this coming February. If not, certainly before July.

[0:40:59]

Theo Mayer: Dr. Tom Jackson, Executive Director of the Georgia World War I Centennial Commission. Learn more about the commission and the Centennial of World War I in Georgia by visiting the links in the podcast notes. This week, in our segment on Remembering Veterans, we're joined by the grandson of a World War I veteran whose story of uncovering his family's heritage was pretty inspirational. Mark Foster know next to nothing about his grandfather, John Foster, except that he was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. As he started to go through his family's heirlooms, letters, photographs, and newspaper articles, he began a journey of discovery about his grandfather. Mark, thank you for joining us on the podcast.

[0:41:42]

Mark Foster: Good morning, Theo. Thank you for having me.

[0:41:45]

Theo Mayer: Mark, this voyage of discovery, what launched it and how did you begin to uncover your grandfather's story of service in World War I?

[0:41:53]

Mark Foster: I had found a box of my father's memories. Going through it, actually, it was headed to the garbage. I was cleaning out the basement. I better take a look at these things. Next thing you know, I start going through. I find letters from my grandfather from the front. I found the letter from his commanding officer to our family that he had passed. Then, of course, the one that started all of this trouble is an article that I found from 1936 regarding a changing of the headstone. At that point, I was starting my family tree, and I figured we had no pictures of my grandfather. I figured a picture of the headstone would be a nice addition to the family tree. I requested one. The article from changing the headstone, it was mismarked at Arlington where he was from Kansas. At that point, I ordered that picture. Sure, as heck, it was still Kansas. Now, that got me fired up. I wrote every state legislator. I wrote the local paper. Two people responded, Congressman Jesse Jackson and the Journal Register in Springfield reporter, Dave Bakke, interested in the story. Next thing you know, the ball is rolling. I get a phone call from Arlington National Cemetery that, yeah, all we need is a letter from the family requesting a change in the headstone, which I did. At that point, I had advised Dave Bakke. He says, "Mark, this sounds interesting. I think I'm going to do an article." It ended up on the front page of the Journal Register, "Headstone to change 93 Years Later." I was familiar with the First Division Museum in Wheaton, Illinois. I had thought maybe they might be interested in this because John was a member of the First Division. I sent this off to them. Two weeks later, I get a letter that John Chester maybe eligible for the silver star. Once again, I started writing letters. Next thing you know, I get a very impressive letter from the Awards and Declarations Branch in Fort Knox that, yes, in fact, he was eligible for the silver star. That's pretty much my story there.

[0:44:27]

Theo Mayer: That's quite a story. You published your findings on the Commission's Story of Service Catalog, which is going to preserve that story and your grandfather's service for posterity. How did you find the stories of service? What was it like submitting it

[0:44:42]

Mark Foster: Well, my wife goes nuts with me. I will spend pretty much an hour every single day looking into the World War I. Hit Google, hit anything that is related to my grandfather. One day, the Commission website came up. The more I delve into it, I found the story. They might be interested in this story, but as lengthy as it was, I was concerned it would be chopped to the shreds, and it was not. They accepted it fully and, in fact, sent copies of the link to all my relatives nationwide. They are just thrilled that it is now saved for posterity.

[0:45:28]

Theo Mayer: Many people know that their ancestors served but don't know the story. What advice would you give to others who want to uncover their own family's heritage the way you did?

[0:45:40]

Mark Foster: Gosh. Again, patience.

[0:45:42]

Theo Mayer: Maybe with a little dedication to boot.

[0:45:45]

Mark Foster: Exactly. Sit there, and you find a link, follow the link. I've just really started with the Commission website. I know, generally, where my grandfather was killed. I've been trying to Google Earth it. The idea that I can punch in a website, and here, the Google Earth will show up is thrilling to me. It's become a mission for me.

[0:46:11]

Theo Mayer: It's really a delight to talk to you. Congratulations on having done this.

[0:46:16]

Mark Foster: Well, thank you. I sure do appreciate the opportunity to speak about my efforts.

[0:46:22]

Theo Mayer: Mark Foster is the grandson of World War I veteran, Josh Foster. Learn more about his grandfather at the links in the podcast notes. Now, you can also preserve your own ancestor story, making it a permanent part of the national record by using the Commission's Stories of Service website. You'll find it at ww1cc.org/stories. To help you get going with that story of service for your family, we suggest that you listen to our interview with Debra Dudek in our podcast episode number 80. Debra Dudek is the author of a great, simple, and short book called *The World War I Genealogy Research Guide: Tracing American Military and Noncombatant Ancestors*. It may not be the catchiest of titles, but it really describes the book, which is available in print and as an e-book on Amazon.com. I bought a copy on Amazon, and I was so impressed, but I sent one to our executive director as well. I'm excited about our next guest because of the organization that he represents. For our Remember Veterans segment, we're joined by the Digital Historian for the US Army Center for Military History, Dr. Erik Villard. Dr. Villard has been on-point for the army's World War I Commemoration website. Erik, welcome to the podcast.

[0:47:42]

Dr. Erik Villard: Thank you for having me.

[0:47:44]

Theo Mayer: Erik, the US Army Center for Military History, the CMH has had its own history tracing back to the Civil War. Your primary responsibility is to be a historical resource to the army itself, right?

[0:47:56]

Dr. Erik Villard: Right, that is our principal mission. We provide the historic confirmation that the army staff and the various army organizations would need for their institutional education and memory. We also have a secondary but important role in providing this information to the public and to the veteran community as well. We are able to accomplish both missions, I think quite seamlessly because when we do this work for the army and making sure we are the agency that gets the information correct for the army decision-making process, it's also that high standard of scholarship is something that we can share with the public.

[0:48:36]

Theo Mayer: Erik, what's the idea for the public-facing side?

[0:48:39]

Dr. Erik Villard: Well, we have a multi-pronged commemoration effort for the First World War. The website is a World War I subsite that is divided in 30 chapter. Each chapter comes out on a monthly basis. The first part of the website traces the evolution of the army in the period before 1917. Then, the meat of the website talks about the experience of the ADF in World War I. Then, the concluding chapters talk about what happens after the Armistice.

[0:49:12]

Theo Mayer: It's really comprehensive. You really worked hard at that. You did a great job. What's the visitor experience like when you get there?

[0:49:20]

Dr. Erik Villard: Well, I designed the interface like a multifunction display. It's a type of device. It's used in a lot of military vehicles where you basically have a central screen. Then, you have option buttons on the side and bottom. Depending on where you want to go and what you want to look, those option buttons may change. All the material is scooped together on paper-sized documents. The advantage of that is when you download it, all the photos, and texts, and anything else saves the edit. It's a very easy way to view and share the material. I think there's something for everyone. It's designed to be downloaded. It's great for educators. You can just download entire lessons as JPEGs, PowerPoint, or PDF. Just as a whole range of material. Again, it really is optimized for educators.

[0:50:12]

Theo Mayer: Erik, what happened from 1917 to 1919 to the organization called US Army? There's precedent in history for that kind of expansion and growth. Can you talk about that just for a moment?

[0:50:27]

Dr. Erik Villard: I think it's fair to say that the modern United States Army was born in the First World War. The army that we have with us today owes much of its organization to the First World War. It was also a period of great technological change. For example, I have aerial photography, which really revolutionized the fighting in World War I because you, now, had the ability to send a plane above, take very detailed photographs of enemy trenches and artillery placements. Then, provide that information to your commanders. It really gave commanders a situation awareness that we take for granted now with all our satellite imagery and cellphone. I'm releasing these files, so that you can get a sense of the scale and complexity of these battles in Google Earth on your own computer.

[0:51:22]

Theo Mayer: Erik, one last question, this is for you personally, for everyone who've fallen into this and dig into it, it's a voyage of discovery. What's the most memorable for you to learn from pulling all these together?

[0:51:35]

Dr. Erik Villard: It's been a remarkable opportunity for me because my background, I am a Vietnam War historian. Now, I've done some work with the First World War. I actually wrote my dissertation on Camp Lewis, which was a training camp in Washington State, but I hadn't done a lot with World War I. It gave me a chance to really dive deep. I think the thing that impressed me the most is the photographic record. You realize that if you look at these photos, at these individuals, they don't seem like they're distant history. They seem like they could be us. I think that's the most striking thing, even though a century seems like a long time, and you look at this stuff, you realize, "No, it's still very much with us."

[0:52:19]

Theo Mayer: Dr. Erik Villard is the Digital Historian at the US Army Center for Military History. Learn more about the center and see their really compelling website by visiting the links in the podcast notes. You can also direct tweet a link request to @theww1podcast. That's @thewww1podcast. Now, during our history segment, we dug into the story of the Lost Battalion. For our spotlight on the media, we're going to take a deeper dive into the story starting with our regular podcast contributor, Dr. Edward Lengel. His new book is called *Never in Finer Company: The Men of the Great Wars Lost Battalion*. Recently, Ed and film historian, Anjali Singh appeared on C-SPAN Real America. Here's a clip.

[0:53:07]

Steve Scully: Up next, we will show you in its entirety a silent film from 1919. First, to explain this film, Edward Lengel who's the author of the new book, *Never in Finer Company*. We thank you for joining us on American History TV. Anjali Singh, who is a historian of silent films. Let me begin with your interest in the Lost Battalion. Where does it come from and why?

[0:53:28]

Dr. Edward Lengel: It's the most powerful human story of the entire First World War and the most powerful human story I've read in American military history. It's very intimate. It's about a small group of individuals who came from very different backgrounds. Many of them from deep poverty. Many of them were immigrants. Some of them had not even been naturalized. Others were farmers and ranchers from the west who came together and endured a common struggle. They've bonded together. They became part of the American story. I've walked on the side of the battlefield itself, which you can still do today. You can see the rifle pits, the trenches that these soldiers dug there in the woods, and you can get an intense sense of what they experienced.

[0:54:19]

Theo Mayer: Ed is also one of the key interviews in a new documentary about the Lost Battalion.

[0:54:28]

Dr. Edward Lengel: Charles Whittlesey remains an enigma. I don't think he really wanted anybody to know him deep down. He was a very complicated individual. He's haunted by a sense of responsibility for every single man who died in that pocket. Ultimately, he carries the burden of every death on himself. They begin to appear in his dreams. In one dream, he is carried back to a moment in the pocket where for one brief moment, he fell asleep. One brief moment, only to wake up, cheek to cheek with a dead man. That comes back to him in his dreams. He can't sleep.

[0:55:20]

Theo Mayer: That clip is from the new documentary titled *The Lost Battalion* produced by Mark Fastoso, John King, and Luis Blandon. Now, best of all, Mark and John are with us here today to talk about it. Gentlemen, the Lost

Battalion is one of the better-known sagas in the First World War. What inspired you guys to tell the story as a documentary?

[0:55:40]

John King: I was talking to Ed Lengel about his book. We were musing about what this would be as a documentary if we're going to do that. He said the magic words to me, "There's film footage of the Lost Battalion from the Meuse-Argonne offensive." As a film maker, you always want to be in that. Sure enough, there were cameras that filmed them marching out of the woods after they were relieved. I thought, "Wow, all this footage we had of the Meuse-Argonne offensive, how many can we tie to an actual unit?" We found out, Damon Runyon, the great sports reporter was right there alive. He interviewed. He wrote about that. That footage and that story, that inspired me to say, "Hey, there's something here to document. We can look at these men in the eye." I thought about that footage of them coming out. Immediately, I said, "Why did they film it? It's not combat. It's just guys marching." All those together, I started to think this is a really layered story. Immediately, I just said, "I think we should do this because this footage allows people to start to connect to relate. It's the real thing. It's the real people." I thought it was just super compelling.

[0:56:54]

Theo Mayer: For your documentary, you went out, and you interviewed a real who's who lineup of experts, including Ed Lengel. What was the thing that each of you learned that really sticks out for you after going through all that. Let me start with you Mark.

[0:57:07]

Mark Fastoso: Well, what I learned is, why do we even know about the Lost Battalion? How many battalions fought the Meuse-Argonne offensive? This is the only one people know about. That became really what I was interested in finding out. What I discovered is that Charles Whittlesey and the Lost Battalion, their story is totally entwined with the story of Damon Runyon and the newspapers. Damon Runyon was tasked to go to the Meuse-Argonne and send back stories of New Yorkers to make the people at home feel good. He met Charles Whittlesey for probably 15 minutes. That's why we know about the Last Battalion. It's really a story about how America wants heroes, how they create heroes, what the media does, and what that does to the men who have to take on the mantle of being heroes.

[0:57:55]

Theo Mayer: John, as you got into this, what was the thing that struck you the most?

[0:57:59]

John King: One of the things that really stayed with me is this issue of the interaction of storytelling and real history or history in the media because, of course, now, we see in our country, the media is sometimes part of the story, and the media is helping create the story at the same time. It's really fascinating that this is the story where that same dynamic was happening, that something was happening, reality was happening, the battle was happening. The media, through Damon Runyon and others, ended up telling the story but, also, constructing history. Some of your listeners, I'm sure, know about the Go to Hell Whittlesey comment. The idea that some of these famous phrases or famous phrase in American history is really partly a social construction or a media and social construction. That was really powerful, and it is powerful to me. That's one of the storylines of our film.

[0:58:42]

Theo Mayer: I really like the angle that you're going for. It, actually, leads directly into conversations that Katherine Akey and I have had. Katherine's my cohort and the show's line producer. She's got a real soft spot for Whittlesey because we've talked about him before and since that he suffered with PTSD. In the end, he committed suicide. Do you actually get into that in the film?

[0:59:03]

John King: Yeah, we do. I mean, that's really what the storyline arrives to. I have a soft spot for Whittlesey. I'm not sure how you cut it. The hope is that when viewers watch, they start to feel a little bit of the pressure he's under. It won't stop. By the end before he commits suicide, people will get a sense that's what's going to happen, and they're going to feel heartbroken about that.

[0:59:25]

Mark Fastoso: We definitely deal with what happens with Whittlesey and Damon Runyon after the war, but we really go into the battle and what they experienced because there is what happens after, but there is the actual trauma. You mentioned PTSD, you can't reup, or listen to, or watch anything about the Lost Battalion without realizing every single person there, including Whittlesey, must have experienced some kind of posttraumatic stress or some kind of traumatic distress. You've got this double combination of some of the most intense trauma a human can experience, combined with what happens after war, which is a media trauma or a social trauma that happens to him and

continues to happen. One really interesting thing that viewers or listeners might not be aware of is how Damon Runyon's life is completely different after the war. It's really fascinating that you have this trajectory of Whittlesey's life going in one direction, and Damon Runyon, who is just reporting on it go in a completely different direction.

[1:00:14]

Theo Mayer: Where and how can we see the documentary?

[1:00:17]

John King: Website, EchoFilmsProductions.com. There will be information there. You should be handled for small fee, rent it from there. It's an hour-long show. That's where you can see it now.

[1:00:30]

Theo Mayer: Perfect, gentlemen. Well, I really, really look forward to seeing it. Thank you so much for coming on.

[1:00:35]

John King: Thank you Theo.

[1:00:36]

Mark Fastoso: Thank you for having us.

[1:00:37]

Theo Mayer: Mark Fastoso, John King, and Luis Blandon are the producers behind the new documentary about the Lost Battalion. Learn more at the links in the podcast notes. This week on World War I War Tech, pigeons. Now, let's face it, pigeons are everywhere. Now, although, they annoy some people, I've loved them since I was a kid. Feeding them in the cities when we lived in Europe, I had a special affinity for the one that bombed my mom, walking elegantly down the Champs-Élysées wearing a big stylish '50s black hat. Splat. Then, we moved to Asia, to Hong Kong in the late '50s, and I learned that they were tasty. Everybody has pigeon stories, and so does World War I. Before we dig into the history, here's some remarkable pigeon facts. Pigeons can fly 60 miles an hour and cover 700 miles in a single day. That's pretty good. Homing pigeons can sense the earth's magnetic field and use it to find their way home from pretty much anywhere. Now, pigeons are one of six species of animals that can recognize themselves in a mirror. I didn't know that. Pigeons can be trained to recognize every letter in the alphabet. The bottom line, pigeons are smart, have skills, and they're pretty much all around amazing. I apologize to the ones that I ate. Using pigeons as message carriers goes way back. According to journalist and pigeon expert, Andrew Blackman, people have revered pigeons for 10,000 years. Nearly every significant past civilization utilized pigeons for communications, including the Ancient Greeks, Romans, Persians, and Chinese. Genghis Khan and the Mongols used them to communicate across the largest land empire in history. Blackman sums up the history of humans, and pigeons with, "It was a pigeon that delivered the results of the first Olympics in 776 BC. It was a pigeon that first brought news of Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo more than 2500 years later." Another piece of history. During the Franco-Prussian War, pigeons carried messages from, and encircled Paris to unoccupied France, establishing the general principle that carrier pigeons make communications possible in the duress of circumstances. According to the Smithsonian's Mike Dash, pigeons have a lot to recommend them in war time. They eat very little, they're easy to transport, and betray nothing of their point of origin or their destination. You can't really torture a pigeon into talking. For World War I, pigeons flew fast with doggone determination for remarkably dangerous skies. The speedy pigeon was absolutely crucial to communications on the battlefield, especially for advancing troops who didn't have access to more established forms of communications. Apropos to today show theme, units that had been cut off from the rest of the army, which brings us to Cher Ami, a pigeon credited with helping to save the 194 survivors of the Lost Battalion. Now, according to the lore, Cher Ami was the last pigeon in the coop as the 77th was being battered by friendly fire. Cher Ami was sent bearing a desperate message to hold fire, suffering several wounds flying through a maelstrom of shrapnel and gunfire. Although Lost Battalion myth busters will tell you that first word about friendly fire on the 77th location got back to headquarters just a few minutes before Cher Ami arrived, by the time, the gallant bird made it back behind American lines, he or she, and I've heard both, had lost an eye, been wounded in the breast, and had one leg attached by literally a thread, the same leg with the message container. Now, first word to start shelling them or not, grateful soldiers fitted Cher Ami with a wooden leg. The pigeon received the French Croix De Guerre for bravery. Cher Ami died in 1919 as possibly the most decorated pigeon in history. You can visit Cher Mai today when you go the Smithsonian Washington, perched next to fellow World War I hero Sgt. Stubby. Pigeons, this week's World War I war tech. In articles and post where we highlight the stories you'll find in our weekly newsletter, The Dispatch. Headline: "National History Day Launches Who They Were Program for US World War I Centennial Commission. National History Day, a partner to the US World I Centennial Commission announced the launch of Who They Were, a program that mobilizes students and educators across the country to learn about the communities World War I story and to participate in local centennial observations. Educators and students can participate into the summer of 2019." Headline, Task and Purpose. Writing on the Task and Purpose Veteran's News website, Jeff Schogol asks, "Why 100 years after World War I, a national memorial in Washington remains unfinished." Headline:

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Remembers World War I. "On Friday, September 21, the National Museum of the Air Force, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, hosted a dedication ceremony for the new World War I Airmen Memorial. This memorial-unveiling event was held in conjunction with a weekend of World War I activities and took place on the centennial of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive." Headline, "Young Reader Assesses World War I Literature. Brayden Turnage, aged seven, of Ashland, Ohio, got really interested in World War I this summer, when he went to a presentation about the Memorial. Then he found out that the Red Baron was real, and not just a co-star with Snoopy on the roller coaster at Ohio's Cedar Point amusement park. An avid reader, Brayden has read several books about World War I that he found at his school library and on Amazon.com. In an interview with a young guy born almost a century after, we asked Brayden about what aspects of World War I history interest him the most." Finally, our selection from our official World War I Centennial Merchandise shop. Our featured item this week is our Bells of Peace Commemorative Coin. This coin was created to mark the Centennial Commemoration of Armistice Day, November 11, 1918, when the fighting ended in Europe. The design showcases the iconic American bellboy and the bells of peace logo. A link to our merchandise shop and all the articles we've highlighted here are in our weekly dispatched newsletter. Subscribe at ww1cc.org/subscribe 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 post did you pick this week?

[1:07:54]

Katherine Akey: This week, the Associated Press Published an article titled 40 World War I Soldiers Killed on the Same Day on 1918 to be Honored. The article highlights the recent commemoration in the Hudson Valley centered around the 40 Orange County residents who serve in companies E and L of the 107th regiment of the Army's 27th Infantry Division. These 40 men lost their lives altogether on September 29, 1918 when allied forces breached the Hindenburg Line in Northern France. Read the article and learn more about the 27th Infantry at the links on the podcast notes. Blast for the week, something pretty exciting, the Imperial War Museum recently published a new trailer for Peter Jackson's film, They Shall Not Grow Old. This new film uses original footage from the Imperial War Museum's archive, much of it previously unseen, along with BBC and Imperial War Museum interviews with servicemen who fought in the conflict. The footage has been colorized, converted to 3D, and transformed with modern production techniques to present never-before-seen detail. Follow the link on the podcast notes to see the channel for yourself, and to learn how, where, and when you may be able to watch the film. That's it for the buzz this week.

[1:09:16]

Theo Mayer: That wraps up episode number 92 of the award-winning World War I Centennial News Podcast. Thank you for listening. We want to thank our guests, Dr. Edward Lengel, military historian and author. Rob Laplander, author, citizen historian, and the driving force behind Doughboy MIA. Mike Schuster, curator for the Great War Project Blog. Dr. Tom Jackson, Executive Director of the Georgia World War I Centennial Commission. Mark Foster, grandson of World War I veteran John Foster. Dr. Erik Villard, Digital Historian at the US Army Center for Military History. Mark Fastoso and John King, two of the producers of the new documentary titled the Lost Battalion. Katherine Akey, World War I photography specialist and line producer for the podcast. Many thanks to Mac Nelson and Tim Crowe, our interview editing team. To JL Michoud for his research. To Rachel Hurt, our Fall intern. I'm Theo Mayer, your producer and 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 100 years ago to today's educators and the classrooms. We're helping to restore World War 1 memorials in communities of all sizes across the country. Of course, we're building America's National World War I Memorial in Washington DC. We want to thank the Commission's founding sponsor, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, as well as the Starr Foundation for their support. The podcast and the full transcript to the show can be found on our website at ww1cc.org/cn. You'll find World War I Centennial News in all the places you get your podcast, and even using your smart speaker by saying, play WW1 Centennial News Podcast. The podcast twitter handle is [@theww1podcast](https://twitter.com/theww1podcast). The Commission's Twitter and Instagram handles are both [@www1cc](https://www.ww1cc.org). We're on Facebook at WW1centennial. Thank you for joining us. Don't forget to share the stories that you're hearing here today about the war that changed the world. Thank you for joining us. So long.

[1:12:21]