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10 speakers (Theo Mayer, Mike Schuster, Dr. Edward L., Kevin F., Polly D., Virginia, Jim Leeke, Joseph B., Patrick Murray, Katherine Akey)

[0:00:08]

Theo Mayer: Welcome to World War One Centennial News, episode number 93. It's about World War I then, what was happening 100 years ago, and it's about World War I now. News and updates about the centennial and the commemoration. In this week's episode, we start 100 years ago, when for the first time since the United States entered the war in April of 1917, there's open talk of peace. Mike Schuster brings us the story of atrocities by both the regime and the rebels in Syria, and no, we're not mixing up our current event headlines. Dr. Edward Lengel takes us to the fight on the western front, with a very nuanced recounting of the story of Sgt. Alvin York. Dr. Virginia Dilkes tells us about her father's World War I service. Kevin Fitzpatrick & Polly DesJarlais, tell us about an upcoming one event at the New York Transit Museum. Jim Leeke shares his deep knowledge about baseball in World War I. We learn about a 100 cities/100 memorials project in Pennsylvania with Joseph Bertoline, Mayor of Springdale, Pennsylvania and Patrick Murray, quartermaster for VFW post 1437, and the buzz where Katherine Akey highlights some of the World War I posts and stories from social media. All this week on World War One Centennial News, which is brought to you by the U.S. World War One 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. We're going to jump into our Centennial time machine, and go back 100 years this week where for the first time since the United States entered the war in 1917, there is open talk of peace. Not a peace treaty, which remains a long way off, but an armistice which would end hostilities under certain terms until a final peace can be devised for the war that changed the world. We're back in 1918, in the second week of October and it's getting clear to a lot of parties that it's time to stop this war. Like so many things that one just falls into as they get started, how to stop this thing isn't simple. Who needs to talk to whom to stop the fighting. Look, many of the central powers would like to negotiate with President Wilson, but that's complicated. The United States is the last into this war, and the newest member in the conflict alongside a group of other nations. Now this is interesting, not allies. President Wilson is very careful not to call them that, but associated powers are coble adherence. So who gets to speak on their behalf? Germany and her allied central powers would really like to negotiate with Wilson. They figured that he's probably the most fair minded of the opponents, not having directly destroyed his lands, or directly threatened his civilians. Besides, he put out those 14 points. Side note, see episode 54 and 55 for details. The leaders of France and of Britain, and Italy, and Belgium, and other nations, are definitely not ready to let Wilson speak for them. They might even worry a little that the enemy could convince them to pull the United States out of the war too soon. Then there's the problem of the central powers themselves. All of them realize that the war is lost, but some are more desperate to end the fighting than others. The Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, and the Bulgarians are all more or less just over it. Germany on the other hand, is still willing and capable of fighting for a while and probably has the most to lose in making peace. That's a problem back home too. Peace talk is actually dangerous. The administration can't hide armistice discussions, but they need to keep everybody in a "war mood," determined to fight on as long as necessary in order to completely defeat the enemy. That concern is reflected in the headlines of the New York Times. Dateline October 7, 1918. Headline, Germany sends an appeal for peace. Allied capitals and people's cold to it, quick rejection expected. The story reads, all signs in Washington tonight point to a rejection by President Wilson of the latest peace notes from Germany, Austria, and Turkey. There is not a shred of evidence that the new proposals come in any form that can be regarded as acceptable by the American government. Now, Wilson doesn't immediately reject the peace notes. Instead, he confers with the leaders of France and Great Britain in order to discuss a possible response. Meanwhile, the U.S. Government and particularly Treasury Secretary William McAdoo fret that all the talk about peace, is going to dampen interest in the latest liberty lone-drive. That could be expensive and the next day in the official bulletin, the Government's Daily War Gazette, dateline Wednesday, October 9. Headline, "No armistice while Totton armies occupy invaded territories." President tells Berlin. Robert Lansing, the Secretary of State provides the official reply to the inquiry for an armistice with and we shortened it. "Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge on behalf of the president, your note of October 6. Before making a reply to the request of the Imperial German government and in order that the reply shall be as candid and straightforward as the momentous interest involved requires, does the Imperial chancellor mean that the Imperial German government accepts the terms laid down by the president in his address to the congress of the United States on the 8th of January latest? The president feels bound to say that with regard to the suggestion of an armistice, that he would not feel at liberty to propose a cessation of arms to the governments, with which the government of the United States is associated against the central powers, so long as the armies of those powers are upon their soil. The good faith of any discussion would manifestly depend upon the consent of the central powers immediately to withdraw their forces everywhere from invaded territories." This is a pretty harsh response, but it leaves the door open to possible armistice discussions, and so the conflict continues as far as the United States is concerned. Meanwhile, reports of victorious battles, but with heavy casualties over the next few days, ensure that the American people remain conscious that the war is still on in earnest, and that they have to do

their part to support it. Then a few days later, Germany replies to Wilson, but it doesn't generate any real enthusiasm. Dateline, October 13, 1918. Headline, Germany says she accepts Wilson's terms. Is ready to evacuate to gain an armistice. Reply rouses no enthusiasm in Washington. The story reads, "While the German response indicates compliance with the general principles laid down by the president, the communication leaves the details open in a manner which might negate the aims for which the American and allied governments are fighting. It can be stated without qualification, that the note from Germany is not regarded in well-informed quarters as frank and straight forward." Now although Turkey and soon Austria-Hungary would send even more conciliatory messages to Wilson, the administration and the public's mood remains all for war. Again from the New York Times on the following Monday, dateline, October 14, 1918. The headline reads, look for rejection of the German offer. Allied capitals oppose armistice plan. So for the foreseeable future, the fighting would go on at least for a while. A hundred years ago this week in the war that changed the world. Over the past few years, Syria and it's seemingly endless conflict between the Assad regime and rebelling forces have been in the news. Most of us don't really understand what's going on except that there are major western nations involved, and the conflict is causing incredible human suffering by the Syrian people. 100 years ago, it wasn't that different. Then the Ottoman empire and their allies, the Germans, are the ruling regime that have held the region for years. Meanwhile, the British and Indian forces now aided by an Arab rebel force, have been finding in the region throughout World War I. They are now pushing the Turks and Germans back in retreat, but they don't go quietly. This week, Mike Schuster, former NPR correspondent and curator for the Great War project blog, brings us a story of terrible massacre, and reprisal in those waning days of the war. A note of caution, the report contains graphic descriptions of violence that may be unsuitable for younger listeners.

[0:10:01]

Mike Schuster: Thank you Theo. The headline reads, Horrible massacre in Syria. Scenes of unspeakable violence. Women and children spared, massacre begets massacre. The special to the Great War project. Horrible developments these days a century ago in the Middle East in the last days of September a century ago, scenes of terrible violence. The British General, Edmund Allenby is leading his cavalry forces out of Palestine across the Golan Heights into Syria. Turkish and German forces murdered several hundred Arab women and children, according to historian Martin Gilbert, in an active cruel defiance for the successful harassment by the forces of the Arab revolt. On the following day reports, Gilbert's September 28th at Daraa in central Syria, where thousands of Bedouin had joined the Arab forces, wounded Turkish soldiers and prisoners were murdered as a reprisal arousing violent anti Arab feeling. Indian troops fighting under the British entered the town while the massacres were taking place. According to historian Gilbert, Arabs murdered in cold blood every Turk they came across. That was the brief note in the Fourth Cavalry Division summary of events. Slowly, the real details of the massacre emerge. The scenes are from the village of Tafas. British soldiers reached the village and discover the violence still fresh. Everywhere were bodies, reports historian Scott Anderson. Many hideously mutilated, girls and women obviously raped before being killed. Among the British soldiers who arrived in Tafas is the British officer and leader of the Arab revolt, T. E. Lawrence. In particular, reported Lawrence, he was to remember the sight of a naked pregnant woman. The details are too gruesome and horrible to report. Now surprisingly, Arab leaders who come from Tafas are with the British, and are shocked by the scenes of horror. One, the head man from Tafas at the site of his ruined village gave a horrible cry, reports Lawrence. Wrapped his head cloth about his face, puts spurs to his horse and galloped it full speed into the midst of the retiring Turkish column, and fell his self and his mayor riddled with machine gun bullets among their lance points. Lawrence instructs his lieutenants to take no prisoners. The Best of you brings me the most Turkish dead, massacre begets massacre, and it's not clear where the cycles of killing will stop. What ensued over that long day of September, 27th, reports history Anderson, was a merciless and one sided slaughter. Quite quickly, the attacking Arabs separated the fleeing Turkish column of 2,000 to three isolated sections then set to annihilating them one by one. Any Turkish or German who fell out wounded, or tried to surrender was swiftly cut down. Soon the pursuing Arabs were joined by villagers along the way, eager to strike against their oppressors of the past four years, writes Lawrence, just days after the massacres. Then we turned our machine gun on the prisoners that were taken, and made an end of them. That's the news from the Great War project, a century ago.

[0:13:27]

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 for America emerges, military stories from World War I, Dr. Edward Lengel brings us a detailed and graphic account of the actions that earned Sgt. Alvin York, the medal of honor in 1918. If you've not heard the story before, Ed's recount is particularly engaging, providing a lot of nuance that I personally hadn't heard before. Again, a note of caution that this story contains descriptions of graphic violence that may be unsuitable for younger listeners.

[0:14:01]

Dr. Edward L.: 100 years ago on October 8th, 1918, Corporal Alvin C. York stood with a group of doughboys from the 82nd all American division, guarding a group of German prisoners they had just captured in the Argonne forest. None of them realized that an enemy machine gun nest held them under observation from a nearby ridge, or that the German gunners were so trigger happy that they had no compunctions about shooting down their own men. In the moments that followed, York performed deeds that lead others to call him a hero. He just saw it as duty. The machine

gun opened fire sending out a stream of bullets, that tore into American soldiers and German prisoners alike. York's closest friend, with whom he had spent long hours studying the Bible, collapsed before his eyes in a massive blood and rags. His uniform torn nearly off his body. Several other soldiers fell and everyone hit the ground. York took cover, then let his instinct guide him about what to do next. He was a woodsman from beautiful remote Fentress County, Tennessee. His people love storytelling, good food, fellowship and music. They were strong in their faith, but they also understood violence. Nothing could intimidate them, or York. Dashing from cover to cover, York walked uphill until he could look down on the German machine gun nest. Gun pits filled with riflemen surrounded it, and the enemy infantry remained unaware of the single American soldier who had gained their flank. On slinging his rifle, York took aim and fired at the Germans one at a time. Each bullet found its mark in a head or neck, and the soldiers slumped dead in their pits, one at a time. By the time the Germans located their tormentor, it was already too late. He just kept picking them off. York killed and killed and killed again, until they were near 20 dead Germans. The machine gun barrel drooped down to the ground, and the hillside fell silent. As York paused and began heading back for the clearing, a group of Germans debushed from a nearby trench, and charged him with fixed bayonets. A later story one that York picked the Germans off like Turkeys back to front, as they obligingly ran toward him in single file but at the time, York didn't think much about it. He just dropped his rifle, pulled out his 45 pistol and killed, killed and killed. Other Americans fired at the Germans too, and helped to break up the attack. The German platoon leader fell in front of York, a bullet in his gut, shrieking in agony. York wasn't near done, but Lieutenant Vollmer, the senior German officer couldn't take anymore. Taking his life in his own hands to save those of his men, Vollmer stood up and approached York. He was lucky the American didn't turn around and shoot him between the eyes, but though York pointed his pistol at the lieutenant's head, he kept his fingers still on the trigger. "If you don't shoot any more," Vollmer begged in thickly accented English, "I will make them give up." York didn't drop his gun. His staring eyes held all the hard bitten toughness and cruelty of the Scots-Irish guerrilla fighters of the Tennessee hills. York told Vollmer, he had better do what he said and held his gun straighter, his gaze steady to reinforce the sentiment. If the German has so much as flinched, he would have perished on the spot. Vollmer carefully reached into his tunic, pulled out a whistle and blew. There was tense silence for a moment as the lieutenant shouted in German. Of course, York couldn't understand a word. As shapes emerged from the trees above him to reveal German soldiers one after another, hands in the air, York kept his pistol pointed at Vollmer's head. Then as the remaining doughboys rose and lifted their guns, York backed off a little and pointed his pistol at the newcomers. His face still set hard and staring. One German soldier tried to be a hero. He had concealed a grenade behind his back and when he got close, he threw it at the pistol wielding American Corporal. York didn't even duck. The grenades sailed past his head, and exploded behind him. Several Germans and Americans screamed, but York didn't hear them. He was too busy pumping bullets into the grenade thrower's head. There was no more resistance after that. A strange procession assembled to depart the Aregonne. Still suspicious, York kept the Vollmer and another German officer at the front of the column, his pistol pointed menacingly at their backs. The rest of the Germans followed behind in columns of twos, carrying the wounded and guarded by the other doughboys. Before they left, Vollmer asked York how many men he had. "I have plenty." The Tennessee snapped. When the American hesitated over which route to take back to his own lines, Vollmer suggested they turn North. York promptly chose to take the opposite way close to the one he had taken into the woods. As the men moved out, another German platoon appeared on the Americans leveled their rifles. Misjudging the number of doughboys guarding the column, the Germans dropped their guns and surrendered. Later, another detachment led by German lieutenant appeared and deployed for a fight. York shoved his pistol at the base of Vollmer's spine and held it steady. "Tell them to surrender." He ordered or he would kill the lieutenant and all of them too. Knowing he would be the first to go down with his guts blown out in any fight, Vollmer talked his comrades out of the woods and convinced them to join the captives. All except one, a boy who refused to drop his gun. York shot him to death. He didn't think about it, until later. As he approached the treeline, York judged that the direct approach was the best and let his column right out into the open. The rest of the battalion must've wondered why the German held hill had gone quiet, but didn't do anything about it until the strange column appeared before their eyes, and the doughboys prepared to open fire, but they didn't. Maybe they were alert or just two days than tired. Harassed only by occasional German artillery shells, the Americans and their prisoners made it across the clearing without incident. York took them up to the first American officer he saw, a lieutenant, saluted and presented his prisoners. The lieutenant asked how many prisoners he had in tow. "Honestly lieutenant, I don't know," York replied. There were 132.

[0:20:40]

Theo Mayer: Dr. Edward Lengel is an American military historian, and our segment host for America Emerges Military stories from World War I. We put links in the podcast notes for Ed's posts and his author's website. Well, that's it for 100 years ago. Let's jump back 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 the armistice are being commemorated. This week in commission news, the armistice centennial event happening in Washington D.C. Have been announced. The U.S. World War I Centennial commission has published its planned commemorative activities starting on Thursday, November 8th through Monday, November 12th. This includes a nearly week long invitation to the public for a first look at the National World War I Memorial to be built in Washington D.C. We're going to create a first look pavilion at the future site of the memorial, just two blocks east of the White House. It will be open daily from

November 8th through November 12th. Visitors will be treated to a first look at the amazing 12 foot maquette. That's a miniature of the plan larger than 60 foot long memorial sculpture. Visitors will see renderings and videos that show the park transformed into a poignant and reverend remembrance, dedicated to the men and women who served 100 years ago, and shaped the nation we know today. Additionally, there'll be other daily events in the park, honoring the many dedicated and diverse groups that served. There'll be era music with live jazz concerts from the 369th experience, wreath layings and various ceremonies to commemorate the effort, the sacrifice, and the end of the fighting. On Sunday morning and in partnership with the National Cathedral, there'll be a sacred service at the Cathedral. Open to the public and you're invited, but if you're not in D.C. We're going to be live streaming it for you. The service will also include the bells of peace national tolling, to commemorate the centennial of the armistice. Of course, now literally thousands of Americans in organizations are pledging to participate by tolling their own bells at 11:00 AM local time on this 11th day of the 11th month. Whether with their local bells or the bells of peace app. We've got information for you online. Just go to the commission's website, search for World War I commission on Google or type ww1cc.org into your browser. That's the letters W, W, the number one and the letters CC, that's Charlie and start exploring the armistice events and resources for your own local armistice commemoration. Thank you. Well those are some of the events planned for November, but coming up well before that, we'd like to highlight an event in the big apple. This is a special treat for families and all those car and train enthusiasts out there. To tell us about it, we're joined by our New York City regular, Mr. Kevin Fitzpatrick. A guy who knows a lot about New York and World War I. Kevin's the program director of the World War One Centennial Committee for New York City, a member of the East Coast Doughboys Reenactors, and now working directly with the commission. Kevin's brought in a special guest, Polly DesJarlais, education manager from the New York Transit Museum. Both of you, welcome to the podcast.

[0:24:23]

Kevin F.: Thanks for having us on.

[0:24:24]

Polly D.: Thank you.

[0:24:24]

Theo Mayer: So polly, I've never been. What's The New York Transit Museum and if I go there, what am I going to experience on a typical day?

[0:24:32]

Polly D.: The New York Transit Museum is this wonderful gem of a museum. I think we are pretty unique in the world, and being housed in a 1976 subway station. So we often have people who are coming to find us and they're looking for a grand building, and a big door. In fact, they have to come down into a subway entrance right here in downtown Brooklyn. So the Museum was founded way back in the 70s, and it was really supposed to be a temporary exhibit that was going to celebrate transit in New York City during the bicentennial celebrations. It was just a huge hit. We opened on July the 4th, '76 and we were going to close on Labor Day. Our three month tour extended to 42 years. We are one of the premier transportation museums in the entire world, and certainly in the country, with the biggest urban transportation museum here. We're dedicated really to telling and reserving the stories of mass transportation. That's everything from the extraordinary engineering feats, and those immigrant workers really who build all tunnels over 100 years ago. The communities of the city that were drastically transformed by transportation, and the ever evolving technology and design and ridership of the huge system that runs 24 hours a day, every day of the year. What you might see on a typical day, well if you come during the school year, you're going to see hundreds of school children. We welcome over 30,000 school kids every year, and some of those kids get to meet costumed educators, who portray people from the past. We tell the story about a worker who was a sand hog, who built the Montague Street Tunnel under the East river which is what the R train currently runs through. He went through this harrowing explosion called a blow out and he survived, so he became a very famous, famous guy. We tell the story about a woman in the 1870s and 80s, who designed and invention to quiet the rails of all of the elevated train lines that ran up and down Manhattan. You can wander through and see exhibits about how New York City is portrayed in comic books, or you can come and drive a bus. We have two bus cabs that you can sit in and operate, and then we have a platform with a revolving collection of about 20 vintage subway and elevating cars. Our oldest elevated trunk car dates back to 1904, and our oldest subway car is really a World War I era car. It dates from 1960.

[0:27:28]

Theo Mayer: Which brings us to World War I day at the museum. Kevin, apparently you're going to be working on helping to set up a not typical day. Tell us about that.

[0:27:39]

Kevin F.: Yes. So this is coming up on Sunday, October 21st from 11:00 to 4:00. The reason we want to go to the transit museum, it really is one of the top five destinations for museum goers in all of New York City. As a public historian, you want to go where the people are. In New York, if you want to see art, you go to the Met, but if you want

to see transit, you go to the transit museum. So what we're going to be doing is bringing about a dozen reenactors living historians, portraying doughboys, portraying women in service, women in uniform, everything from infantry, to medicine, to the veterinary corps. What's great is the collection has subway cars from the World War I era, that doughboys and their friends and family would have ridden on a century ago. So we'll have exhibitions right there on the subway platform with displays and artifacts, as well as something I'm really looking forward to seeing is inside one of the 1916 cars. We're going to have a phonograph setup playing 1918 recorded music inside.

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Theo Mayer: That's great.

[0:28:39]

Polly D.: It's going to be amazing.

[0:28:40]

Kevin F.: It's also great to go to Brooklyn, because Brooklyn gave 2,800 men and women to the war. It's also great to go to the transit museum because more than three dozen men, who worked for the transit system gave their lives in World War I and they're remembered on memorial at Grand Central Terminal. So it's very nice to have that link to the past at the transit museum.

[0:29:00]

Theo Mayer: Well Polly, do you have any other World War I related events or exhibitions in the works?

[0:29:05]

Polly D.: Coming to see our two World War I era subway cars, Kevin and the gang will be on a car from 1917 that we call a Low V, which stands for low voltage trunk car. It's about as close as we have in our collection to what an original subway car would have looked like, and it's just walking inside it and interacting with this object. It's an amazing experience. We talk a lot about time traveling here, and you really can't time travel because you're looking around this train car and the map is from this era, and the advertisements are from this area. So you're really taken back in time and you're inside this time capsule. Even as a modern New Yorker, you'll walk in and you're recognized some things, some references for today's riding. I think anybody that comes on that day apart from seeing all these incredible reenactors, will really get a sense of what it meant to travel back then. On top of our World War I day, this weekend actually, we're participating in a walking tour up in Van Cortlandt Park with the Bronx historical society where a lot of the soldiers, sailors and Marines depart in New York for France, deployed and did training exercises up in Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx. So we're going to have a fabulous walking tour up there on October the 13th, and we really hope that we're going to also participate in the bells of peace. Bell tolling on Veteran's day. When you switch on the third rail, which is what powers the subway, when you turn that on, a bell rings. So we're hoping to switch on our subrail at 11:00 AM, and then we have some bells on our oldest car, the elevated trunk cars and so we're going to be hoping to ring those also.

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Theo Mayer: That's fantastic. Well, thank you both very much for coming in. It's a definite twist on the commemoration. Thank you.

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Polly D.: Thank you.

[0:30:54]

Kevin F.: Thanks for having us on. Thank you.

[0:30:56]

Theo Mayer: Kevin Fitzpatrick and Polly DesJarlais, organizers of the upcoming World War I day at the New York Transit Museum. Learn more about the museum and the events at the links in the podcast notes. This week for our remembering veterans segment, I want to introduce you to a longtime friend and volunteer of the U.S. World War One Centennial Commission, Dr. Virginia Dilke. A member of the advisory board for the Georgia World War One Centennial Commission, and Co editor of a book about her father's service in World War I called Remembering World War I: An Engineer's Diary of the War. Charles Edward Dilke's story has been turned into a stage production called, A Year in the Trenches, written by playwright James Rana. Virginia, you've been listening in as we produce the podcast since it's genesis, as a coordinated conference for all the commissioners and volunteers way back. So it's really great to finally have you on the show. Welcome to the podcast.

[0:31:54]

Virginia: Well, thank you very much for this opportunity.

[0:31:57]

Theo Mayer: Virginia, your father was an engineer who kept a daily diary during a service in France. Tell us about that.

[0:32:03]

Virginia: Yes. He kept his daily diary from August 6, 1917 which was the day that he left the shores of the United States to fight the war in Europe, until April 19th of 1919, which is the day while serving in the army of occupation in Germany, he was granted a pass to Paris to visit with his sister which would be my aunt Marie-Louise. Combat engineers such as my father were told not to keep notes, because their notes may reflect troop movements and aid the enemy. However, he knew history was being made and he was a part of this historic event. So bearing in mind this responsibility, he would bury his notes in the soil of France before going into battle. He wrote his memoirs based on his diary, probably while he was serving in the army of occupation and completing it after he returned home.

[0:32:59]

Theo Mayer: Now, you and your sisters decided to turn your dad's diary into a memoir and publish it, then go out and talk about the book. How did that get started?

[0:33:07]

Virginia: Well, we started talking about it in 1999 and really got going in 2000. It seemed like the right thing to do with the upcoming centennial. However, progress was slow because we were all working, and we lived in three different areas of the country. We would try to arrange to meet as a family typically once a year, or we would meet at a national meeting of either the National World War I museum, or the World War I historical association. We went to the National Archives in College Park, Maryland and to the military library at Clemson University among other places. Our father used a lot of geography of France in his writing, and it took looking at old maps a good while in order to follow his footsteps. We also made a decision to include at the end of each chapter, how historians have documented what he experienced and that took a while too.

[0:34:03]

Theo Mayer: That's actually a really great approach. Now at some point in your journey, you met Sarah Cureton from the New Jersey Commission. Tell me about that.

[0:34:11]

Virginia: Yes. She has just been a wonderful context. I was a volunteer for the United States World War I Commission and as a volunteer, I asked the United States Commission if I may reach out to New Jersey because New Jersey is my native State. I called the New Jersey historical commission, and talked with the Executive Director Sarah Cureton. Well, Sarah really was quite ahead with New Jersey's World War I commemoration plans, but she was not aware a National Commission was hard at work. I was able to connect the New Jersey historical commission with United States World War I commission. After my sisters and I published our book, my New Jersey sister asked if I'd be willing to travel to New Jersey, and do a book presentation at her local library. About the same time, I was in communication with Sarah Cureton, and I mentioned I would be doing a book presentation at a local New Jersey library if she would like to come, and she said she would. After my presentation, she bought my book. Well, a few months later, Sarah emailed me and said she wanted to develop her idea to use the arts as a means to educate New Jersey's middle and high school students about World War I. She had been looking for a book written by a New Jersey author. So she asked if she could commission a play based on my father's book. His book turned out to be ideal foundation for the play, since he was in the war from beginning to end. This detailed accounts of his experiences in battle made it easy to inject other New Jersey World War I veterans into the story line, because one of Sarah's goals was to showcase New Jerseyites, who made a difference in World War I. So James Rona and dramaturge Gayle Stahlhuth researched New Jerseyites World War I veterans who would have or could have encountered my father, Sergeant Dilkes. The play entitled A Year in the Trenches was performed at the Eastland theater in fall of 2017, and spring of 2018. I would be remiss if I did not mention the play was commissioned by not only the New Jersey historical commission, but also the New Jersey State Council on the arts.

[0:36:29]

Theo Mayer: Well Virginia, it's a wonderful story and you've been on quite an adventure. What advice would you give to other people who want to pursue their family's heritage?

[0:36:39]

Virginia: Well based on my own personal journey, first of all, I would tell them to use local resources such as your library. I found my library as soon as they knew what I was trying to do, they went to all lengths to try to help me. Secondly, to read World War I references pertaining to where your relative served. For instance, even reading the autobiography of General Pershing, the two volume set was extremely helpful. Then I also would suggest get

involved with World War I organizations, and build a network. For instance, we attended symposia on World War I, especially those presented at the National World War I museum, and we talked with curator Doran Cart, and archivists Jonathan Casey. Those two bent over backwards to help us find information on our father's service. I also would say, don't be afraid to donate to these organizations and thank them for helping with your research, and give credit where credit is due. If your relative happened to serve over there, and you have the opportunity to go over there, visit the World War I American military cemeteries. Each is a treasure trove with the history of the battles fought nearby.

[0:37:53]

Theo Mayer: Well Virginia, this has been a wonderful interview. I want to thank you not only for everything you've done for the World War I Commissions and the whole centennial, but your dogged determination to get the story out. That's wonderful, thank you.

[0:38:07]

Virginia: You're welcome. Passion is the word.

[0:38:10]

Theo Mayer: Passion is the right word. Dr Virginia Dilkes is a member of the advisory board for the Georgia World War One Centennial Commission, and the daughter of a World War I veteran. Learn more about her, her father and his service at the links in the podcast notes. This week for speaking World War I where we explore the words and phrases with their origins in World War I. This is the story of men over a decade apart, seeing opportunity and acting on it. Our speaking World War One phrase this week is the Teddy Bear suit, but before we can explore the Teddy Bear suit, we had to track down the story of the Teddy Bear. Fade out, fade up in 1902, Theodore Roosevelt invited by Mississippi Governor Andrew H. Longino is on a bear hunting trip near Onward, Mississippi. Well Roosevelt, a renowned big game hunter just didn't even spot a bear. It was just one of those things. So some well meaning assistants, went and cornered a small black bear and tied it to a willow tree. Then they brought Roosevelt over to shoot the beast. Well, Teddy didn't think that that was very sporting and he refused to shoot the poor thing. Next thing you know, the story turns into a cartoon, published in the Washington Post, showing a big old teddy and a big old gun and a cute little bear with a caption that read, "Drawing the line in Mississippi." Well, that 1902 meme went viral. Cut, fade up in Brooklyn, a candy shop owner and his wife, the Mitchum's, saw the cartoon and had an idea to make a cute little stuffed toy bear, dedicated to the president who refused to shoot it, and they called it Teddy's Bear. Now that was the beginning of the ideal toy company, as well as one of the most popular plush toy ideas ever. The Teddy Bear. Fast forward to the winter of 1916, a British Royal Navy Air Service pilot, a gentleman named Sidney Cotton joined his fellow pilots as they scrambled for the mission. Now Cotton noticed that while his fellow pilots were freezing from the wind blowing through the seams of the clothing up there, he was feeling pretty cozy because he happened to have been in oil soaked overalls without seams when they scrambled. This gave him an idea. He took leave and went to London. There, he designed a one piece suit with three layers. A thin fur lining on the inside, a layer of air proof silk and an outside layer of light burberry material. The design was registered by Robinson and Cleaver on behalf of Cotton, and the suit was appropriately named the Sidcot suit after Sidney Cotton. Well, the Sidcot suit was a [inaudible] saying, and with it made of light brown material and with the inner fur lining making you look all puffy and fluffy when you wore it, it wasn't long before it got a nickname. The Teddy Bear suit. A popular flight accessory for decades, until he did plane interiors. The Teddy Bear suit, this week speaking World War I phrase. Learn more at the link in the podcast notes. In our historians corner, join us for a deep dive into one of the most American of pastimes, baseball. It's world series season, and joining us to tell us more about baseball during World War I is Jim Leeke. Author of the book, From the Dugouts to the Trenches: Baseball during the Great War. Jim, welcome.

[0:42:01]

Jim Leeke: Thanks for having me.

[0:42:03]

Theo Mayer: So Jim, when you look at the newspaper Stars and Stripes from 1918, or anywhere that era, every single issue talks about baseball. How popular was the sport in the 1910s and what's different about the game then than it is today?

[0:42:18]

Jim Leeke: Well, back then it really was the national pastime. When America entered the war in 1917, they were the two major leagues of course, and there were 22 minor leagues. So it was a very healthy game.

[0:42:30]

Theo Mayer: For the second round 1918 military draft, unlike the film actors, baseball players were dropped from the draft exemption list and that caused the series to be played really early in September. Can you tell us about that series?

[0:42:43]

Jim Leeke: The regular season ended on Labor Day and the world series started right after that. It was the very famous 1918, Chicago Cubs Boston Red Sox series. The big thing that came out of that series came in game one which was September 5th in Chicago. That was at Comiskey Park, where there are the smaller Cubs stadium. The star of the day, if not the game was a young third baseman for the Sox named Fred Thomas, who actually was in the navy and was on leave from Great Lakes to play in the game. At the Seventh-inning stretch, a military band struck up the Star-Spangled Banner, which was not yet the national anthem, but it was a very famous and popular nonetheless. The other players on the field turned to the flag and took off their caps, and put their hands over their hearts. Fred Thomas being in the service, snapped off a very correct military salute and this was noticed in the stands, and the fans began singing The Star-Spangled Banner. It got louder and louder until it was this overwhelming and almost chilling rendition, and that really was the start of The Star-Spangled Banner being played at American Baseball games. Not every game yet, but from then on, it was played each world series game and opening day. Then in World War II, began being played for every game. The other aspect of the 1918 world series was in Boston, came five B players, threatened to strike. That was a very controversial thing. Their share of the world series had been cut really without their input, and they weren't happy. On the train from Chicago to Boston, the players got together and decided not to take the field until they got a better deal. They actually had an argument, but it wasn't an argument they could make in that time at that place. The fans were in the stands waiting, among the fans were a number of wounded American troops. The players were in a no win position, and eventually cooler heads prevailed and they took the field, but they just got pummeled in the press. The players got pummeled, the owners got pummeled, the leagues got pummeled and nobody came out of it well, which is almost entirely forgotten today. Nowadays, the 1918 world series is remembered fondly, because the Red Sox won it and didn't win it again for 86 years. At the time, it was very controversial and tainted in a way.

[0:45:16]

Theo Mayer: Well now regardless of the draft, a lot of baseball players volunteered, right?

[0:45:21]

Jim Leeke: A number of players did volunteer. More often, they waited for the draft notice but there were quite a few who volunteered. The first active player to do that was Hank Gowdy. He was the catcher for the Old Boston Braves and the world series hereof for the 1914 Miracle Braves. Hank signed up in June 1917 and reported for duty the following month, and ended up as a color sergeant in the 42nd division, the famous Rainbow Division and he was in combat in France for quite a while. There were a number of former major leaguers who signed up as well, and a large percentage of those seem to end up in officer's training. Many of them went overseas as well. My favorite was a pitcher named Edward Doc Laffite, who had played for the Tigers and the Brooklyn Tip-Tops in the Federal League and Doc was a dentist. He served in a plastic surgery unit in the army in France and England. He helped repair soldiers ruined faces, very admirable and worthwhile endeavor there.

[0:46:26]

Theo Mayer: That leads us to about 100 years ago this week, when Captain Eddie Grant was killed in action. Can you tell us about him and how America reacted to his death?

[0:46:36]

Jim Leeke: Yes. Captain Eddie Grant, he was called Harvard Eddie when he played. He played 10 years in the big leagues. In fact, he was Harvard educated, he was a New York lawyer after he retired and he was one of the former players who signed up very early. He was in officer training by May 1917. He went to France with the 77th division, and I know you've dealt with this in previous podcasts. Harvard Eddie He was killed in the Aregonne forest attempting to rescue the lost battalion, which was commanded by a friend of his major Whittlese. The newspapers called Eddy Grant Baseball's first gold star, that wasn't accurate. He wasn't the first former major leaguer that died during the war, but he was certainly the biggest name. His death hit the headlines in probably every sports section in the country, and off the sports pages as well. An acquaintance of mine, the umpire Perry Lee Barber, not long ago tweeted out, Eddie Grant lives. I'd use that myself since #Eddy Grant lives because I think it's true. You saw the fairly widespread publicity last week on the centennial of his death. So it was one of the great, sad stories of World War I.

[0:47:54]

Theo Mayer: Jim Leeke is a World War I era baseball expert and author of the book, From the Dugouts to the Trenches: Baseball During the Great War. Learn more from the links in the podcast notes, which include Jim's World War I baseball website and his Twitter feed. Moving on to our 100 cities, 100 memorial segment, about the \$200,000 matching grant challenge, to rescue and focus on our local World War I Memorials. It's hard to believe that we launched this program in the spring of 2015, so long ago but that's when this week's profile project got going. Veterans of Foreign War post 1437 from Springdale, Pennsylvania. We're having their monthly meeting. When somebody showed up with a current issue of the American Legion magazine, the headline read, "A big opportunity."

Jump forward to today and we're joined by Patrick Murray, quartermaster for VFW post 1437, and the mayor of Springdale, Pennsylvania, Jo Bertoline. Gentlemen, welcome to the show.

[0:48:58]

Joseph B.: Thank you.

[0:48:59]

Patrick Murray: Thank you, good to be here.

[0:49:00]

Theo Mayer: Patrick, starting with you, your post formed a World War I committee early on in the centennial period. How did that lead to your involvement with the 100 cities/100 memorials project? Tell us about the project itself, if you would please.

[0:49:12]

Patrick Murray: Well like you said, it started with the American Legion article that was June of 2015. It was brought up in a meeting because the World War II veterans that were in the post at the time, wanted to do something about that memorial probably in the 1950s, but for whatever reasons it never materialized. When we seen this opportunity, we decided that we'll go in and see what we need to do to get it refinished. At first, we were going to have it taken off the wall and sent into Matthews Bronze in Pittsburgh to have it redone, but it was decided that that was too risky to try to take them off the wall without cracking it, or some damage to it. So we wound up getting a contractor to effect. It did work for Matthews Bronze, and they came out to the site and redid it. Along the way, they did the plaque that says veteran's memorial field too. We decided we'd do both of them.

[0:50:07]

Theo Mayer: Patrick, tell me a little bit about veteran's memorial field. What is it?

[0:50:11]

Patrick Murray: Well, it started out as a baseball field and we researched where we could. It was originally [inaudible] melon field, and we still track it down when it was renamed to [inaudible] Veteran's Memorial Field. We still haven't tracked that down good yet. We believe it was probably in the 1930s. Yeah, it started out as just a baseball field, now it's a football field. Anybody that attends the football games now, they can see the plaque hanging on that one wall down there, so we're hoping we keep bringing attention to it. More people will see it.

[0:50:41]

Theo Mayer: Well Patrick, memorial stadium in Los Angeles is a World War I Memorial and saw soldier field in Chicago. So you're in good company.

[0:50:50]

Patrick Murray: That's right. It's an honor to be in those locations and names.

[0:50:55]

Theo Mayer: Patrick, you guys went to the city council almost immediately, didn't you?

[0:50:59]

Patrick Murray: Yeah, we did because we knew that if we had to take care it off the wall, we just couldn't get out down here and do that. So we had to get the borough involved, and the city involved in it. That worked out good because they were all for doing this.

[0:51:12]

Theo Mayer: I was going to ask about the community specifically. What was Springdale's involvement in World War I?

[0:51:15]

Joseph B.: On the monument itself is 126 names on Springdale residence that served in World War I and I don't know what the population was way back then. Right now we have approximately 3,500 residents. It's just a small sleepy little town, so I'm sure we had a high percentage of our men and women serve in World War I. We just celebrated a centennial, so there's a lot of pride in our community and that wall, and these veterans here at VFW Post, they instill a sense of camaraderie to us and it's all a good thing. It really is. It's an honor to be associated with our VFW here. There are great people here. I know our post goes up to the high school once or twice a year, and gives a little speech on the history of the war, especially from our town and Kudos to our guys here.

[0:52:09]

Patrick Murray: Last Saturday, September 29th, we went down to the cemetery in Washington, PA here for ... On that plaque, the KIA is Thomas Edward's Whitesides. We had trouble trying to track down where his body was buried. We thought it was overseas, but we found out through the help of the star group in the community here, his body was brought back to the United States in 1921, and he was buried in Washington, PA cemetery. We went down there and put a wreath on it. We tried to get his day too, he was killed on September 26, 1918.

[0:52:43]

Theo Mayer: You rededicated your honor roll plaques around the anniversary of America's entry into the war. Can you tell us about that?

[0:52:50]

Patrick Murray: We had a nice little thing done at the field and what was nice about that, there were some young kids down there which then made it worthwhile too. Just want to make sure that the word got out, that the memorial was done there and what it represents to the community.

[0:53:04]

Theo Mayer: Mayor, a project like this reminds a community of its heritage and its history. Now why does that even matter?

[0:53:11]

Joseph B.: History matters quite a bit. I'm currently doing an ancestry thing with my side of the family, and it's very important and especially being from an old town like this. We have generations of family that lived in this town. The younger generations, they're interested in our past. I would have to say that the patriotism in our little town is probably second to none. We've had a team of residents, they call themselves the STAR team, which stands for a Springdale Team of Active Residents. They got together and they put up military banners all along our main street, and that got people really fired up about the [inaudible]. Flags are going up all over the place and it's just a beautiful thing. It really is, and I'm just proud to be a mayor of this town. I truly am.

[0:54:00]

Theo Mayer: Any special plans for the centennial of the armistice coming up on veteran's day?

[0:54:04]

Patrick Murray: We're going to be in D.C. On veteran's day. We're going to put a wreath down at Porter Street monument to mark the end of World War I. What we did down at the field was a couple of weeks ago, we put flags up, overreached plaque, American flag, POW/MIA flag and put a centennial World War I flag above each plaque done at the field. We're going to be in D.C. And we're hoping that we can stand alongside the Los Angeles call to see and hear our name read out as one of the winners of the award.

[0:54:34]

Theo Mayer: Fantastic, and then I get to meet you live. I'm going to come out as well.

[0:54:38]

Joseph B.: We're open to do here in Springdale is the bell ringing too at the monument down there. We're trying to get that completed, so that'll be done on the one that Sunday, November 11th.

[0:54:47]

Theo Mayer: Well thank you both and the borough for remembering World War I, and everything your community is doing for their involvement.

[0:54:53]

Joseph B.: Thank you.

[0:54:54]

Patrick Murray: Thank you very much.

[0:54:55]

Theo Mayer: Joseph Bertoline, mayor of Springdale, Pennsylvania and Patrick Murray, quartermaster for VFW post 1437 in Springdale, Pennsylvania. Learn more about the 100 cities/100 memorials program by following the link in the podcast notes. In articles and posts where we highlight the stories that you'll find in our weekly newsletter, the dispatch. Headline, A Purple Heart for Sergeant Lloyd. On October 13th at the US Army Training Center at Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina, Brigadier General Milford H. Beagle Junior, commanding general is hosting a

purple heart presentation ceremony in honor of Sergeant Perry Lloyd. A deceased World War I Veteran. Sergeant Lloyd never received this Purple Heart, which was secured a few years ago by his grandson, Perry James. Perry will accept the metal in honor of Sergeant Lloyd. Headline, we gave him a few resources and a few opportunities. Magician that he was, David Shuey spun them into gold. Chris Isleib., the Centennial Commission's director of public affairs tells us more about a remarkable historian who made an indelible mark on his nation's commemoration of the centennial of World War I. For four years, David Shuey, the history teller, performed as the U.S. World One Centennial Commission's General Pershing at over 50 events, all across the United States. Sadly, David Shuey recently lost his own personal battle with cancer. David Shuey is deeply missed. Headline, a major league baseball player died in battle 100 years ago. Mentioned earlier in today's episode, we also have an article on the website about the baseball player Eddy Grant. After his playing career ended at age 33, he enlisted in the U.S. army, leading to its most lasting distinction. He was shot while leading an effort to rescue the surrounded units of the 77th division in the Argonne forest, in Northeastern France on October 5th, 1918. Headline, write blog, War not allegory: World War I Tolkien and the Lord of the Rings. Why in all the years since its publication in 1954, has J.R.R. Tolkien's epic of the Lord of the Rings, never found it's way onto the best of list of war literature. Rachel Kambury, a publishing professional specializing in war and literature and military history, argues that the Lord of the Rings is not allegory but a war story in its own right. A World War I story. Read Kambury's enlightening posts, War not Allegory: World War I, Tolkien and the Lord of the rings, on the commissions right blog this week. Finally, our selection from the official World War One Centennial merchandise shop. Our featured item this week is our U.S. Army doughboy window decal. An easy and inexpensive way to let the world know what year it is. It features the iconic doughboy silhouette flanked by barbed wire, so prevalent during World War I. Links to our merchandise shop and all the articles we've highlighted here, are in the weekly dispatch newsletter. Subscribe at ww1cc.org/subscribe. You can also send a link request with a tweet to @TheWW1podcast, or follow the links 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 are you highlighting this week?

[0:58:32]

Katherine Akey: This week mark the centenary of another great tragedy at sea. The Scottish Island of Isle, held commemorative ceremonies this past week to remember the lives lost when the HMS Otranto sank offshore, just eight months after the tragic sinking of the SS Tuscania. 470 British and U.S. Lives were lost when The Otranto sank. You can watch videos of the ceremonies at the links in the podcast notes. Last for the week, the AUSA the Association of the United States Army, recently published a new graphic novel about Sergeant York. It's the first illustrated book published by AUSA, part of the organization's effort to expand the reach of their educational mission to a younger audience. The book was produced by who's who of talent. The script was done by Chuck Dixon, best known for his work on Marvel comics, Punisher. Dixon also worked for DC comics on Batman and Nightwing, and adapted J.R.R Tolkien's The hobbit into a graphic novel. Drawings and the cover was done by Rick Magyar, an artist, penciller and inker, who's worked for Marvel and DC on Iron Man, Defenders and more. Colors for the York novel were done by Peter Pantazis, who's worked on Justice League, Superman and Wolverine. The best part, it's all available to everyone for free. Go to ausa.org/york or follow the link in the podcast notes to read it. That's it for the buzz this week.

[1:00:03]

Theo Mayer: That wraps up episode number 93 of the award-winning World War One Centennial News podcast, thank you for listening. We also want to thank our guests, Mike Schuster, curator for the Great War project blog. Dr. Edward Lengel, military historian and author. Dr. Virginia Dilkes, citizen historian and researcher. Kevin Fitzpatrick and Polly DesJarlais, talking about the New York transit museums World War I day. Baseball historian and author, Jim Leeke. Joseph Bertoline and Patrick Murray about the 100 cities/100 memorials, awarded memorial in Springdale, Pennsylvania. Katherine Akey, World War I photography specialist and line producer for the podcast. Many thanks to Mac Nelson and Tim Crow, our interview editing team. To JL Michaud for his research. To Rachel Hurt our fall intern. I'm Theo Mayer, your producer and host. The U.S. World War One 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 One Memorials and communities of all sizes across the country. Of course, we're building America's National World War I Memorial in Washington D.C. We want to thank the commission's 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 www.onecc.org/cn that's Charlie Nancy. You'll find World War One 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 @wwonecc and we're on Facebook at WW One 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. Thank you for listening. So long.

[1:02:43]