

19-03-29-assembly-2_mixdown-4.mp3 (51m 17s)

<https://jotengine.com/transcriptions/Mlc3e7JO50Zz7LuLG0IRsw>

7 speakers (Theo Mayer, Mike Shuster, Edward Lengle, Timothy Wescott, Ashlyn Weber, Ken Buckles, Melinda Buckles)

[0:00:08]

Theo Mayer: Welcome to World War 1 Centennial News episode number 116. It's about then what was happening a hundred years ago in the aftermath of World War 1, and it's about now how World War 1 is being remembered and commemorated written about and discussed and importantly it's about why and how we'll never let those events fall back into the mists of obscurity. So join us as we explore the many facets of World War 1 then and now. This week on the show we're going to explore the headlines in the news a hundred years ago in this last week of March 1919. Mike Shuster brings us a story that I'd never heard before about Korea's bid for independence and Japan's rebuff of that ambition. We're going to revisit the specifics of Woodrow Wilson's 14 points to remember them as their abandoned at the Versailles Peace Conference. Dr. Edward Lengle introduces us to Doris Kellogg who was not only a World War 1 nurse but a truck mechanic as well. We remember Frank Woodruff-Buckles America's last World War 1 veteran and we meet his descendant Ken Buckles who continues a legacy of service. Following up on our valor metals review Task Force we're joined by Dr. Timothy Wescott and Ashland Webber from Park University. For World War 1 war tech we're going to talk about a post-World War 1 one issue that's not about politics but about a new opportunity assuring in a new era of cross-Atlantic transportation built on what was learned in World War 1. All this on World War 1 Centennial News which is brought to you by the US World War 1 Centennial Commission, the Pritzker military museum and library, the star foundation the General Motors Foundation, and Wal-Mart. I'm Theo Mayer, the chief technologist for the Commission and your host. Welcome to this week's show. A hundred years ago this week the headlines of the newspapers are of course filled with the news of the Versailles Peace Conference, it's really tumultuous. What is known as the big four, that's France, the UK, the US, and Italy are seriously sparring. There are issues that are really hard to resolve with parties compromising and then pulling back all week. The French are seeking and feel they must have reparation considerations which isn't that unreasonable considering that a lot of the actual fighting and destruction happened on their turf. And of course the Italians are fighting hard to secure their territorial claims. Other interesting stories this week include what to do with the Kaiser. This is a precursor to the idea of a world court and that leaders can be responsible for war crimes. The emboldened Japanese throw a match on the California tender pile by trying to buy a bunch of the West Coast land from Mexico. And at the end of the week, trouble in northern Russia, which is a story we're going to expand on next week. With that as a set up let's jump into our centennial time machine and head back to the last week of March, 1919. Dateline Saturday, March 29, 1919. Headline, Paris debating war or peace with Bolsheviks, French demand all Tsar Valley as reparation, Japan idea of equality widens, Australians fear declaration to guard us might protect Japan's claims in Orient. You'll hear more about some of Japan's activities in the region later in the program. Meanwhile the next day some interesting articles about the Kaiser. Dateline Sunday, March 30, 1919 headline Allies proposed to put ex Kaiser on trial, suicide rather than that he declares. And the story reads, Paris March 30, Associated Press, the Commission on responsibility for the war has decided first solemnly to condemn the violation of the neutrality and all of the crimes committed by the central Empire's. Second, to urge the appointment of an international tribunal to judge all these responsible including the former German emperor, to which there's an answering headline. Headline, Kaiser says he would kill himself rather than to be tried as allies intend. Quote a king too young I made mistakes, I was nothing but a puppet laughs at idea that he ever exercised autocratic power, blames Russia for war, says it was not the monarchs but the diplomats who caused the disaster, not a broken old man. His body still electric with nervous energy but his spirit somewhat subdued. And the next day the Kaiser discussion moves to the US Senate. Dateline Monday, March 31, 1919, headline senators discuss fate of ex Kaiser, Bora and Watson see suicide as easiest way out for him others in favor of trial, Hitchcock hopes decision of commission on responsibility for war will prevail. And in the story it reads, divergent views were expressed by Senators at the Capitol today over the decision of the Paris Commission on responsibility for the war to urge the establishment of a tribunal to try the ex Kaiser for the outrages perpetrated by the Germanic powers during the war. Some senators thought that nothing could be gained by a trial of the ex Kaiser as Prussianism and not an individual was responsible for the crimes of the Germanic regimes. In the meantime the big four are arguing in Paris. Headline, big four deadlocked in Paris, French blamed for treaty delay, dispute over reparations, French renewal of demands for Saar Valley irritates Americans, American position is that this would violate the principle of self-determination, conference situation characterized as serious with possibilities of grave happenings. But by the next day things settle down. Dateline Tuesday, April 1st, 1919, headline, Paris, astir with diverse peace rumors, one says big four had very plain talk clearing the way for quick results, more progress is promised but some delegates continue to be openly pessimistic, doubt Wilson's ultimatum but he may have said that he might as well go home unless something was done. Meanwhile the West Coast fears about an Asian invasion is stirred up this week. Headline, starts inquiry of Japanese deal for Mexican lands, State Department orders embassies of Mexico to investigate the project, calls for prompt report, Washington realizes that the unwire statement raises a serious question congressman felon warns California legislature. And the next day the peace conference headlines

just keep on going. Dateline Wednesday, April 2nd, 1919, headline, Wilson getting leaders together Tsar area maybe French for only five years, league covenant revision readied, Wilson warns colleagues tells them time for talk is over results are wanted, more progress yesterday, new formula is proposed to satisfy French desire for reparation, old Tsar scheme revived latest ideas to let France control Valley until her industries are again on their feet. By Thursday things seem to be back on track. Dateline Thursday, April 3rd, 1919 headline, French accept blank check reparation without demand for specific amount, reduced demands criticized in Commons, big four seek formula, solution of reparation problem is hope for in three days. And on the same day Japan responds. Headline says Japan must join as an equal cannot tolerate stigma of racial inferiority in League says Baron McConnell, says would not force immigrants on America asks only declaration of equality. And as the week ends it's hard to say whether things move forwards or backwards. Dateline Friday, April 4, 1919, headline boundary disputes blocks all progress on treaty, big four in bad tangle, radical difference on fundamentals of territorial claims, French demands sweeping not satisfied with fullest military protection on border says American expert, Wilson makes concessions but halts at giving up principles, committee named to find middle ground. And things kind of blow up in Russia. Headline, Archangel forces are in peril, British send aid, crisis in north Russia, help rushed to Allied troops there to avert possible disaster, Shackleton urges haste, British support will follow, American engineers sent to Mermansk, strong action demanded, Wilson and Lloyd George criticized for alleged policy of compromise with Reds. And those are the headlines as reported in The New York Times a hundred years ago this week as the Versailles peace conference struggles to weave consensus and solutions out of a complex set of interests and as you'll hear later in the show with Wilson still believing in and trying to hang on to some of the elemental vision for a new world order that would prevent this kind of Cataclysm from ever happening again. Joining us now is Mike Shuster, former NPR correspondent and curator for the great war project blog. Mike when Wilson issued his visionary 14 points which we're going to review right after your segment, the world seemed enthused and enthusiastic about his new vision for a democratic self-determined world. And yet as the fighting in this global war ends and leaders gathered to consider the post-war world, Wilson's vision is not what they're interested in. In fact it proves to be more of a flash point to potential renewed conflict, like the story of Korea as your post points out this week.

[0:12:18]

Mike Shuster: Sure seems to be the case Theo. The headlines read massacre in Korea, seeking independence in Europe and around the world as Wilson sees it they all prefer to fight. This is special to the great war project. A sad little delegation of Koreans appears at the peace conference to ask for their independence so reports historian Margaret Macmillan. In the midst of the peace talks in Paris a century ago came numerous challenges like this for President Wilson. Challenges big and small. They include but are not confined to large potential states like Ireland and India, and tiny movements like the Korean delegation. Wilson is being worn down then losing his influence nearly day-by-day. Nothing was going right in Paris. One little noted challenge comes from Japan where according to historian Thomas Fleming another American ally found itself confronted by a challenge to this regional imperialist Japan. Since 1910, the Japanese had ruled Korea as a captive province. They had deposed the Korean Emperor and installed a governor-general with autocratic powers that made the Kaiser look like a shrinking violet. They banned the Korean language and ordered schools and newspapers and book publishers to use Japanese. Fleming goes on, the 20 million Koreans were not happy with this destruction of their ancient country and culture and many defiant souls fled abroad to seek help. One man Syngman Rhee headed to the United States. There he listened to the words of President Wilson enunciated as 14 points. Not surprisingly the one that hits him the hardest is Wilson's support for self-determination for small states. Rhee and others soon got the news back to Korea where massive street demonstrations erupted. Hundreds of thousands of Koreans chanted, long live Korean independence. Fleming paints a dramatic picture the Japanese responded with six infantry battalions and 13,000 special police. They beat, shot, stabbed, hacked, tortured, and occasionally burned alive these protesters with exemplary imperial zeal. The final toll according to Tokyo was 7,500 killed, 15,000 injured and 47,000 arrested. Koreans used different figures. They claimed the death toll should be multiplied by a factor of three or even more. The Japanese announced Fleming reports that the Koreans seem to have confused self-determination with independence, they were not the same for Japan was merely trying to keep order in Asia. Reports Fleming there is no record of Woodrow Wilson saying a word on behalf of the massacred Koreans. Add to this there was still plenty of unrest in Europe. President Wilson's press secretary had the distinct misfortune of informing the president as the peace conference was drawing to a close that there were no less than 14 small wars in progress and supposedly pacified Europe. That includes hostilities in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. All these armies soon began shooting at each other and their armies were not so small drawing in 600,000 soldiers in Poland, and a quarter of a million in Czechoslovakia. Yes, Wilson said wearily, they all prefer to fight so much for the war to end all wars. Then that's the news of this week a century ago from the great war project.

[0:15:47]

Theo Mayer: Mike Shuster is the curator for the great war project blog, the link to his post is in the podcast notes. As we hit another week of tracking this back and forth of the Versailles Peace Conference we thought it might be really helpful to inject some context about what seems to be going sideways. So to do that let's jump back a little over a year ago from March 1919, to January 1918. As America spinning up a huge army getting ready to engage the

enemy, inconceivably up until this moment there's actually been no explicit statement of war aims by any of the nations who are engaged in this mad destruction, like what are we going to do after it ends. It's at this moment that President Woodrow Wilson requests that a memorandum be drafted. It's assigned to a team led by his longtime advisor Colonel Edward House and his bright young 28 year old aide, a New Yorker Harvard Graduate commissioned into the Army as captain named Walter Lippmann. They drafted a document called the War Aims and the Peace Terms it Suggests. Now on January 8th 1918, Wilson presents this concept in an address to the US Congress. The document and the presentation would later become known as Wilson's 14 points, a declaration of the American fundamental war aims and post-war vision. Reviewing them, the first six points enumerate the causes of the war and urge number one, the elimination of secret treaties in favor of open agreements. Number two, free navigation of the Seas. Number three, removal of all economic barriers and establishment of equal trade between nations. Number four, the reduction of armaments. Number five, and here's one of the sticky ones, the adjustment of colonial claims and the self-determination of colonized populations in regard to their own sovereignty. And that one's going to be a biggie. The evacuation of all Russian territory by German armies. Now the next seven points proceed to rearrange the map of Europe effectively eradicating the old imperial borders of specific territories and creating independent states. Now this includes seven, the German evacuation of Belgium, that's obvious. Number eight, the release of all captured French territory particularly Alsace Lorraine. That also makes sense. Number nine, the readjustment of the frontiers of Italy into clearly recognizable lines of nationality. Okay number ten, the autonomy of Austria-Hungary. Number eleven, the release of occupied territories in the Balkan states including the establishment of political economic independence along historically established lines of allegiance and access to the sea for the not yet established Serbia. That'll be a biggie. Twelve, the assured sovereignty of Turkey apart from the Ottoman Empire as well as the rights of other nationalities to develop autonomy in that region. Number thirteen, the establishment of an independent Polish state also with access to the sea. And then finally and maybe the most visionary the fourteenth point, the creation of a world organization that would provide a system of collective security for all nations, the foundation of a League of Nations. So first consider that these points are laid out in January of 1918, way before there's any end to the war. They are globally lauded and they're the foundation of what led Germany to agree to an armistice. Now consider what's been happening at the Peace Conference as these 14 points and the vision of a new kind of a world are dismembered. We thought it'd be worth reviewing what's actually being let go of, one item at a time. Regular contributor Dr. Edward Lengle has another installment of his wonderful strong American women who served in World War 1 profiles in honor of March Women's History Month. This week Ed profiles Doris Kellogg from Buffalo New York. Not only did she serve as a nurse in World War 1 but also as a truck mechanic and not in that order.

[0:20:38]

Edward Lengle: Doris Kellogg was one of thousands of ordinary women who helped to redefine the boundaries of military service in World War 1. Over the course of several months in France in 1918, she not only worked in Red Cross hospitals but toiled as an auto mechanic, assembling trucks for service on the front lines. She also witnessed and helped to ameliorate the Wars darker side. A native of the industrial city of Buffalo, New York Doris Kellogg sailed to France in March 1918. She was one of a group of four women designated for services automobile mechanics, vital work for the American Expeditionary Forces badly needed trucks to evacuate wounded to hospitals. Women mechanics were however extremely rare and as events would prove, the military authorities hardly knew what to do with them. First though Kellogg wanted to get a taste of the real war. She got it on her second night in Paris in April when she and her fellow female mechanics were awakened by air raid sirens. While everyone else headed for the shelters, Kellogg raced out into the street. I saw the great searchlight sweeping the sky and heard the defense guns of Paris booming loudly overhead, she wrote home to her worried parents. It was thrilling the exciting part of this raid was that the Boche got over our lines without being seen so that we got a bomb or so before the warning came. Shortly afterwards a gigantic Pierce truck rumbled into Kellogg's garage carrying the chassis of a Ford ambulance ready for assembly and dispatch to the front. To her disappointment the Ford was coated in rust for it had been left out in the rain and its crate for weeks. She and the other women toiled for hours to first clean and then assemble the vehicle, continuing even when Doris's friend al badly smashed one of her fingers. The next day they towed the Ford around the garage but it wouldn't start, still too rusty. So they disassembled the engine again cleaned it and reassembled it until it hummed like a sewing machine. The four women mechanics watched it roll out of their garage with pride. After that first Ford however mechanical work dried up, not because there were no trucks to assemble, but because of what seemed to Kellogg like bureaucratic confusion and red tape. More likely they got no mechanical work to do because they were women whose more traditional roles would be to serve doughnuts or nurse wounded soldiers. Kellogg got a hand of the importance of her next assignment when she boarded a train on the Paris Metro and found herself jammed next to three young French soldiers with gruesome facial wounds. Shocks but also inspired she and the other mechanics went to visit the studio of American sculptor Anna Coleman Ladd who is constructing prosthetic casts to mask the wounds of these terribly wounded men and help them return to public society. In May Kellogg and her fellow mechanics signed up with the American Red Cross to work at a canteen near the front working with wounded French soldiers. First though they were detailed to work at the vast American Hospital at New Lee where they tended to wounded American soldiers just returning from the Battle of Cantigny and then wounded Marines returned from Bellow Wood. Although their valuable specialized skills were not being put to use the

women remain determined to do their best to a levy the suffering they had witnessed firsthand. Assigned to a French hospital at the village of Sante on the Oise River, the women continued their work, not only with French soldiers declining over and over there only half-joking offers of marriage, but German prisoners. Working with the Germans many of them have starved teenage boys dissipated the feelings of hate Kellogg had at first felt for the enemy. Tending in July to wounded from the multinational Battle of Swasant, she found herself caring for wounded Moroccans, Senegalese, Americans, Germans, and Frenchmen side by side. On November 11th, 1918 Doris Kellogg heard the bells tolling in her French village and watched crowds assembled to celebrate the Armistice. She rushed into the apartment that she shared with her fellow mechanics turn hospital workers, Al do you know what those bells mean? They mean peace she cried. With that she remembered Allen Mugsy Davis burst into tears the joy was too great and I went out on our balcony and looked up at the sky and just felt the great sensation of peace come rolling in. As it happened six huge American airplanes were soaring overhead. To Kellogg they seemed to move in time with the chimes of the bells.

[0:25:07]

Theo Mayer: Dr. Edward Lenge's blog is called, A Storyteller Hiking Through History, and it's filled with historical accounts of people that provide nuanced insights into bygone times. We have links to Ed's post and his author's website in the podcast notes. With that let's fast forward into the present with World War 1 Centennial News Now. As our regular listeners know this part of the podcast is about now and how World War 1 is being remembered and commemorated, how it's being written about and discussed taught and learned. Here is where we continue to spotlight the surprisingly numerous and significant remembrance and commemoration activities surrounding World War 1 and World War 1 themes. In last week's episode Zach Austin introduced you to the valor medals review task force. This week we got some great news about one of our key initiatives. This is from a press release that came out on Thursday, November 28th. Washington DC, Congressman Emanuel Cleaver the Second, Democrat from Missouri today introduced HR 1953, the hello girls Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2019, a bipartisan bill that would honor over 220 American women who served as phone operators with the US Army Signal Corps in France during World War 1. As phone operators, these women played a pivotal role in connecting American and French forces on the front lines of battle, helping to translate and efficiently communicate strategy. HR 1953 would award these women, the hello girls as they came to be known, with the Congressional Gold Medal the highest civilian award bestowed by Congress for their service and subsequent 60-year fight for veteran status and the benefits that they earned with it. We've got a link for you to the whole press release. In two weeks we're going to be joined by Senator Jon Tester who's shepherding the same idea through the US Senate, this is really exciting. Meanwhile this week we want to introduce you to another one of our valor metal task force partners, the George S. Rob's Center for the study of the Great War at Park University a private school in Parkville, Missouri. Joining us today to talk about their part of the program are Dr. Timothy Wescott, associate professor of history and the director of the Georgia Straub center. Joining him is Ashlyn Weber, a history major at the University who's also working on the program. Both of you welcome to the show.

[0:28:04]

Timothy Wescott: Thank you Theo, it's a pleasure to be with you today.

[0:28:07]

Ashlyn Weber: Thank you very much for having us.

[0:28:08]

Theo Mayer: So Tim, I'd like to start with you and ask you about the university's efforts on behalf of the valor medals review task force. What role are you playing and what kind of activities you guys undertaking?

[0:28:20]

Timothy Wescott: Well Center is researching, we are drafting narratives and performing genealogical outreach with the actual descendants of the service members that we're actually researching.

[0:28:34]

Theo Mayer: About how many are there?

[0:28:36]

Timothy Wescott: Between the five groups that we are researching which include Asian Americans, African Americans, Jewish Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans, we are estimating that will probably be 125 to 150 actual individual service members that we will review within the focus of the task force.

[0:29:00]

Theo Mayer: So you're developing a profile in each one of these?

[0:29:03]

Timothy Wescott: Yes in collaboration with the undergraduate history majors here at Park University, we literally are creating a biographical sketch of each service member before we begin the process looking at in detail the Medal of Honor that we may possibly recommend for.

[0:29:24]

Theo Mayer: Ashlyn what year are you?

[0:29:26]

Ashlyn Weber: I'm a Junior with Parks public history program.

[0:29:29]

Theo Mayer: That's wonderful, what kind of work are you doing for this, I guess you'd call it forensic research about African American veterans right?

[0:29:36]

Ashlyn Weber: So that's exactly what we're doing, we're collecting as much information we can get our hands on in order to write as accurate personal narrative for each man as possible. So our Park team here of undergrads with the public and military history programs and a coordinator Dr. Wescott, we all work together on a number of different fronts to create that larger narrative. One team member's focus is especially researching the individuals themselves. She creates kind of a general timeline lives that we kind of fill in as we continue on. Our member, he's focused on military citations, engagements, and mapping. He gives us a heavily detailed report of how each better was involved within the situation. He was awarded the DSC or Croix de Guerre, so we want to know all of the circumstances around events that they were involved in when they received those awards. Things like terrain, weather, the companies involved, even the location of the country they were in, we will know at some point. I even research on individuals like our first team member but I primarily focus on confirming birth dates, death dates, and hometowns. Dr. Wescott and I also worked together in creating our databases that has all of these collections of information. Each man and their corresponding armed service number, any request for information that we send the National Archives, the status of those requests, American Legion and or VFW post associations, and really any addresses or cities we have found of a veteran's connections to.

[0:31:11]

Theo Mayer: Now you threw out an acronym, DSC, stands for Distinguished Service Cross. Is that how you're investigating it? Finding people who maybe got a Distinguished Service Cross but maybe should have gotten a Medal of Honor?

[0:31:23]

Ashlyn Weber: That's correct all of these men were awarded a Distinguished Service Cross and Croix de Guerre so the question is whether or not they can be bumped up to Medal of Honor.

[0:31:33]

Theo Mayer: Ashlyn you're looking back at the history of these veterans, have you come across any specific stories that really stood out for you?

[0:31:40]

Ashlyn Weber: Well it's great you ask that, I don't want to single anybody out necessarily, but one of kind of the interesting things that we've run into is once the team comes together with all of this information the finalized narrative, it's especially interesting to see how different each veteran's life was before and after their service. We have some doctors, we have some career military, we have one House of Representatives member from Illinois, and some regular guys who just went back to the farm, they went back to their hometown and stayed there. So anyone who does genealogy would know how satisfying it is to finally see the entire story and these narratives especially for us that work on them week after week, day after day, hour after hour, it gives us a chance to write and tell every single man's story which is an opportunity many of those guys have never had before. And like Dr. Wescott mentioned, one of those ways it can be recognized and what's at the heart of its project is by possibly being awarded the Medal of Honor for some of those heroic actions that they undertook that we've researched. We don't want any of these men to be glazed over again and we want to give them as much attention as we can possibly give.

[0:32:51]

Theo Mayer: Tim, any closing thoughts?

[0:32:54]

Timothy Wescott: Theo, this project really focuses on hopefully writing some of our local and national history. Every community has a story and as a former military service member myself, these service members become like my band of brothers when I was in the military. We do want to possibly right or wrong, we want to tell these service members' stories up to 100 years later.

[0:33:24]

Theo Mayer: Well thank you both for joining us today and for the work that you're doing.

[0:33:28]

Ashlyn Weber: Thank you very much for having us.

[0:33:29]

Timothy Wescott: Thank you Theo.

[0:33:31]

Theo Mayer: Dr. Timothy Wescott the director of the George S. Rob Center for the study of the Great War and Ashlyn Weber is a history student at Park University which is a lead partner in the valor metals review task force initiative. We have links for you in the podcast notes to learn more. This week for remembering veterans, Frank Woodruff-Buckles was a United States Army corporal and the last surviving American military veteran of World War 1. Frank enlisted in the US Army in 1917 at the age of only 16 and served with a detachment at Fort Riley driving ambulances and motorcycles near the frontlines in Europe. Frank Buckles left us on February 27, 2011 at the age of 110. America and many Americans have family traditions of service and so it is here. With us today is Frank's descendant Ken Buckles, who is an educator or living history day event since 1996 and is the executive director of remembering American heroes an organization founded in 2002. Ken welcome to the podcast.

[0:34:45]

Ken Buckles: Thank you.

[0:34:46]

Theo Mayer: Well it's nice to have you here let me start with a couple of questions about you personally. How are you related to Frank Buckles?

[0:34:55]

Ken Buckles: Well it's 1992, I was curious and family genealogy and my parents had given me a list of names that had eight names on it and I recognized my great-grandfather and my grandfather and of course my father, but nobody knew what the heck it was. So I found it in bam it went to a genealogy center Mormon Church and found out with Robert Buckles descended from him and they had settled in West Virginia, Harpers Ferry. So I called information to see if there was any Buckles living in the area and in those days they connected you and he answered the phone and that started about a nine-year relationship over the phone. Just amazing incredible man fascinating life I could talk about him for hours, and he kept saying when you're going to come out when you're going to come out? So I came out when he was 99 and then I visited him every year on his farm in West Virginia until he passed. And then of course his funeral at Arlington National Cemetery.

[0:35:53]

Theo Mayer: That's a great story. Your whole family has a long history of service including your father, a Marine, can you tell us that story?

[0:36:01]

Ken Buckles: Yeah my father was a Marine and was in the van but they were sent when the North Koreans crossed the border. He was in the final withdrawal of the Chosin Reservoir, veterans that were coming out that horrible battle there and I was born in 54 and all I ever knew was that he had lots of nightmares and he drank heavily for 15 years. And then of course I went into teaching and coaching and during my career when he was 54 he committed suicide. Didn't know anything about post-traumatic stress back then but I just always thought there was something different about him. It just literally destroyed my mom who was 51 years of age and three years later she just gave up the will to live and she was gone. The ripple effect on your life is devastating and it led to me saying well let's bring veterans into the high school to talk to the students, feed them lunch, we'll recreate a Bob Hope USO show in the gym and I never knew it would just turn into this huge undertaking. It's in 23 years it's gone from being a non-profit remembering America's Heroes and high school kids came up with that name. We've taken veterans from all over the United States to over 43 high schools over 90,000 kids and what makes it so unique is my main goal is to teach young people that American men and women of all races have served and still served this country, our country. And many famous veterans have come from Tuskegee Airmen Navajo code talkers and Frank Buckles even flew out to Oregon in 2000

and 2001 and spoke to kids in the classroom. He was 99 and a 100 and he was going to come out the next year but his doctor and his daughter said he couldn't travel anymore he was not happy about it.

[0:37:47]

Theo Mayer: In doing this work can you tell us something that's happened as a result of what you did that you didn't expect?

[0:37:53]

Ken Buckles: Number one that I was never prepared for was the healing for the veterans. In the late 90s we had four different World War 1 veterans who attended and they were moved emotionally crying and everything that said they'd never been thanked or recognized for their service. None of them were able to do the ticker-tape parade in New York and they came home nobody cared. The same thing World War 2, the Korean War vets you know we would yell out like a pep assembly the Korean War is not forgotten at Milwaukee high school. The Vietnam vets it was just overwhelmingly emotional and then the other thing it led to healing, that's the number one word I want to use is the healing. Many many many have started to get post-traumatic stress counseling, mostly World War 2 and Korean War veterans and the lives change has been this phenomenal.

[0:38:46]

Theo Mayer: Well Ken what do you think about the National World War Memorial that we're building in Washington DC, what are your thoughts about that?

[0:38:53]

Ken Buckles: Well I know that was very important to Frank Buckles. It sure would be nice there was a beautiful one there with all those other memorials.

[0:39:02]

Theo Mayer: Okay if our listeners want to reach out and learn more or help with your program how can they do that?

[0:39:08]

Ken Buckles: Well we have a website they can Google remembering America's Heroes or Ken Buckles. The website is www.rahusa.us, and I'm going to be done with the book that's taken me 15 years. I have the stories of all these veterans that I've gotten to know that they never shared with anybody. Year after year I got it in there in that book will be called Remembering America's Heroes and there is a large chapter on Frank Buckles and his life story is incredible.

[0:39:40]

Theo Mayer: Oh that's great. Well I understand at the school events that you've been holding that your wife Melinda has been singing over there. Hi Melinda are you there?

[0:39:51]

Melinda Buckles: I'm here.

[0:39:52]

Theo Mayer: Nice to meet you. Hey could I ask you to sing us out with Over There please?

[0:39:57]

Melinda Buckles: I'll be happy to. Johnny get your gun get your gun get your gun, take it on the run on the run on the run, hear them calling you and me every son of Liberty, hurry right away no delay, go today, make your daddy glad to have had- (singing).

[0:40:28]

Theo Mayer: Ken Buckles, descendant of America's last World War 1 veteran Frank Woodruff-Buckles. Ken is a patriot educator and founder of the remembering American heroes organization and his wife Melinda is a pretty darn good singer. We have links for you to learn more in the podcast notes. We've been spending a lot of time looking at the political ramifications in aftermath of World War 1, some progressive and some not much so. But the aftermath of World War 1 also had profound effects on technology and new technology driven industries, take aerospace. Throughout the history of powered flight there have been a host of prizes for achieving major milestones. One of the biggest ever was to cross the Atlantic in a single jump. It was a British newspaper, The Daily Mail, who as early as 1913 offered a ten thousand pound sterling prize to accomplish this feat, now that's the equivalent of a little more than a million dollars today. Driven by World War 1 airplane technology progressed a lot so that by 1919 a whole bunch of adventuring sky pioneers were aiming for the prize. Okay the shortest distance between North America and Europe is the route between Ireland and Newfoundland, but doing that you're flying into the predominant headwinds

so the adventurers all ship their planes to Newfoundland to fly the other way. The region got so crowded with aviators that when John Alcock and Arthur Brown, the guys who win the prize, shipped their airplane to Newfoundland they couldn't find an open pasture to work in, at least not until one of the other teams failed. Now it's interesting to remember that in 1919, all planes were open cockpit. That means cold miserable and really uncomfortable. It also means you had to fly low under the weather yuck. These two pioneers converted a Vickers Vimy bomber which had twin engines and they replaced the bomb carrying capacity with extra fuel tanks. On June 15, 1919, John Alcock and Arthur Brown flew into history and a nice payday as they successfully crossed the Atlantic non-stop in spite of fog and ice. Prizes continue to drive flight innovation and it was in 1919 the same year that New York hotel operator Robert Ortague take posted a \$25,000 prize worth nearly \$400,000 today to the first person to fly from New York to Paris. That prize went unclaimed for eight years until Charles Lindbergh's flight in 1927. Now here's an interesting fact for you, Lindbergh's flight, inside of a comfy cockpit I might add, is usually heralded because it's the first solo transatlantic flight and it was. But the prize didn't specify that, he just chose to fly solo to save weight and add fuel, I didn't know that. World War 1 certainly accelerated the technology of flight and the post-war rush to claim prizes carried those innovations into an industry, all part of the aftermath of the war that changed the world. It time for articles and posts where we highlight the stories you'll find in our weekly newsletter, The Dispatch. Here are some of the articles and posts from last week's issue. Our first story, this is big news in 2019 Fleet Week New York City has World War 1 theme. The fleet is coming to New York City and World War 1 will be a part of it, that much loved annual US Navy Fleet Week in New York City, will descend upon the Greater New York area from May 22nd to 28th. Events will kick off with the traditional parade of ships past the Statue of Liberty and will blossom into an incredible series of activities, exhibits, displays, tours, concerts, and appearances. This year there'll be an added excitement as the secretary of Navy has declared that World War 1 will be included as a special theme. The US World War 1 Centennial Commission is taking the lead on its own series of activities. So join us in New York. In our second story, USS Olympia and the World War 1 Unknown Soldier is April 3 lecture topic. 2021 is the hundredth anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and this year an April 3 lunchtime lecture at the US Capitol Historical Society in Washington DC, John Brady, president of the Board of Directors flagship Olympia foundation, will share information about the USS Olympia's role in transporting the Unknown Soldier home from Europe. Our next story a prince in sky blue uniform is French salute to World War 1 aviator Norman Prince. The stories about how on April 19th, 2019 the French cultural center of Boston will present a live theater play titled A Prince in Sky Blue Uniform, paying tribute to war hero Norman Prince. It starts at 6:30 p.m. At the center. The emotional play written by Jean-Claude Leone and directed by Richard Seal pays tribute to Massachusetts born war hero Norman Prince. And a story from the states, NEH grant helps Connecticut to remember World War 1. With the help of an NEH grant, the Connecticut State Library has documented more than 450 men's and women's experiences in World War 1. Over the course of four years, the remembering World War 1 project collected nearly 5,000 images and artifacts illustrating these individual stories. This extensive and deeply personal collection was amassed through 47 public digitization events hosted by partner institutions throughout the state. And speaking of images, a century of service with the US Navy photo archive. January 2019 marked the hundredth anniversary of the creation of the US Navy's photo archive currently held at the naval history and heritage command at Washington's Navy Yard. The Navy's collection of historical records predates the National Archives established in 1934 and originally began in the office of naval records and library and NRNL. The first expansion of activities of the historical section had been the establishment on January 1st, 1919 of a pictorial branch whose purpose was to collect and file photographs illustrating activities of US and foreign navies. Read all these amazing stories through the links that you'll find in our weekly dispatch newsletter. It's a short and easy guide to lots of World War 1 news and information. Subscribe to this wonderful free weekly guide at ww1cc.org or follow the link in the podcast notes. And that wraps up episode number 116 of the award winning World War 1 Centennial News podcast, thank you for listening. We want to thank our great guests, crew, and supporters including, Mike Shuster, curator for the great war project blog, Dr. Edward Lengle, military historian and author, Professor Timothy Wescott and history Student Ashlyn Weber, Ken Buckles, descendant of the last veteran Frank Buckles, founder of the Remembering American Heroes high school program. I also want to thank his wife Melinda Buckles for singing the 1917 hit, Over There. Thank you to Mack Nelson and Tim Crowe, our interview editing team. Katz Laszlo the line producer for the show. Dave Kramer and Jael Michaud for research and script support. And I'm Theo Mayer your producer and host. The US World War 1 Centennial Commission was created by Congress to honor, commemorate, and educate about World War 1. Our programs are to inspire a national conversation and awareness about World War 1 including this podcast. We're bringing the lessons of a hundred years ago to today's educators their classrooms and to the public. We're helping to restore World War 1 memorials in communities of all sizes across the country and of course we're building America's National World War 1 Memorial in Washington DC. We want to thank the Commission's founding sponsor, the Pritzker military museum and library, as well as our other sponsors, the Star Foundation, the General Motors foundation, and Wal-mart. The podcast and a full transcript of the show can be found on our website at ww1cc.org/scn. You'll find World War 1 centennial news in all the places you get your podcast and even using your smart speakers by saying, play ww1 centennial podcast. It also works with Siri. The podcast's own Twitter handle is [@theww1podcast](https://twitter.com/theww1podcast). The commission's Twitter and Instagram handles are both [@ww1cc](https://twitter.com/ww1cc) and we're on Facebook at [ww1centennial](https://www.facebook.com/ww1centennial). Thank you for joining us and don't forget, keep the story alive for America by helping us build the memorial. Just text the letters WWI or WW1 to the phone number 91999. (singing) Thank you for listening, so long.

[0:51:09]