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10 speakers (Theo Mayer, Mike Shuster, Dr. Lengel, Luca Angeli, Laura Adie, Kevin Smith, Cast Album, Cara Reichel, Peter Mills, Ben Moss)

[0:00:07]

Theo Mayer: Welcome to World War I Centennial News, episode number 123. It's about then. What was happening 100 years ago in the aftermath of World War I, and it's about now, how World War I is being remembered and commemorated, written about and discussed, learned and taught, but most important it's about why and how. We'll never let those events fall back into the midst of obscurity. Join us as we explore the many facets of World War I then and now. This week on the show we're going to open with Mike Shuster's post that tells us what happened as Germany capitulates and signs the peace treaty. Then we're going to come back over the pond to the US and look at how the US legislature is looking at the events in Paris. After that, Dr. Edward Lengel reviews number five of his top 10 selections of World War I memoirs, this week a touch of the supernatural with Canadian, Will Bird's Ghosts Have Warm Hands. In commission news, we're doing another preview related to Fleet Week, New York as we talk with Laura Adie and Kevin Smith, two living historians that will be on hand in New York this week. For remembering veterans, Luca Angeli showcases his documenting of Italian immigrants who went back over there, serving in the US Army during World War I. Finally, Cara Reichel, Peter Mills, and Ben Moss will be on hand to tell us about The Hello Girls cast album release, just in time for Memorial Day. It's a jam-packed episode of World War I centennial news, which is brought to you by the US World War I Centennial Commission, the Pritzger Military Museum and Library, the Star Foundation, the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, and the Richard Lounsbery Foundation. I'm Theo Mayer, the Chief Technologist for the commission and your host. Welcome to the show. What's known in history as the Treaty of Versailles that started with the German Empire agreeing to an armistice last November 100 years ago, an armistice that was based on the content of a historic document created by the Woodrow Wilson administration known as the 14 points. It was a formula for peace. It has over the past months, transformed into a social, political, economic, and military punitive sledge hammer that will inevitably propel the world back into a global war in just 20 years. This treaty is effectively force fed to Germany with an ultimatum to sign or face complete destruction to the German nation, and more important, to the German people. With that as a reminder of the conditions on the ground in Europe, we join Mike Shuster, former NPR correspondent and curator for the Great War Project blog. Mike brings us, what I consider to be his most dramatic post in this powerful series tracking the events at the Paris peace conference. It's such a defining moment in history where we know the outcome but the participants don't. Mike, over to you.

[0:03:27]

Mike Shuster: Thank you, Theo. The headline reads: The Germans Sign, Conclude Resistance is Futile, Double Cross at Scapa Flow, and Wilson Takes Charge. This is special to the Great War Project. President Wilson digs in his heels. He will make no changes in the draft treaty despite pressure from a growing number of delegates to do so, so reports a story by Thomas Fleming. When the British PM, Lloyd George learns of Wilson's unmovable stance, he does another back flip of his own and abandons his effort to modify the treaty. Meanwhile, the liberal German government huddles in the town of Weimer in southwestern Germany. The Germans have been left with no good choices. A refusal to sign, writes Fleming, would mean a renewal of the British Blockade and the invasion of Germany. The nation would collapse into chaotic fragments. So, sign the treaty and let the Allies learn that Germany would not and could not fulfill most of its terms. The German cabinet is deadlocked, half argue in favor of signing, half reject the treaty. The irreconcilables were especially incensed by the war guilt clause, Fleming reports, and the articles that required the surrender of the Kaiser for trial as a war criminal along with an as yet unnamed list of generals and admirals. There is no agreement among the Germans. The liberal German government collapses. Only two days left in the allied ultimatum, sign or face invasion. Then, a shot from the German side. News reaches Paris of an event that scotches any hope the allies would accept the deletion of the shame paragraphs. The German fleet interned at sea at Scapa Flow north of Scotland is scuttled on orders from its commanding admiral. The admiral decided the navy's honor required him to send the five battle cruisers, nine battle ships, seven cruisers, and 50 destroyers to the bottom of the sea to prevent them from being used to bomb German ports in the new war that seemed likely to erupt at any moment. British PM, Lloyd George and the rest of the British delegation are enraged and not a little mortified by the way the Germans got away with this double cross under the noses of their grand fleet. The French wonder aloud if the British let it happen to make sure they remained the world's dominant sea power. French PM, Clemenceau had expected to get a hefty percentage of the German ships. According to Fleming, Woodrow Wilson took charge of the situation. He told the Germans the time for discussion has passed. His threat is merciless. The Germans have less 24 hours to sign or be invaded by 30 divisions backed by aircraft and a renewed blockade that would cut off every scrap of food from the outside world. The Germans reckon they would fight again if the military calculated there was even the smallest assurance the German army could hold its own. But the German leaders, political and military, quickly conclude resistance is hopeless. Before time runs out, they face the fact that to resist is suicidal. The German leaders send a note to Paris. Yielding to overwhelming force, the government of the

German Republic declares that it is ready to accept and sign the conditions of peace imposed by the allied and associated powers. That's some of the news from the Great War Project a century ago.

[0:06:42]

Theo Mayer: Mike Shuster is the curator for the Great War Project blog. The link to his post is in the podcast notes. The story of the Paris Peace Conference not only plays out in the halls of Versailles, in Germany's Weimer, in the United Kingdom's parliament, but also here in America's Washing, DC. This week World War I Centennial News researcher and writer Dave Kramer explores the events on this side of the pond. The negotiations in Paris have been tortuous for Woodrow Wilson and things are no easier for him at home. As Mike Shuster told us, the Germans finally decide to sign the treaty, even over the objections of their so-called irreconcilables. It's a very different story here in the States. We also have a group in the United States dubbed the irreconcilables. But unlike Germany, they hold the power to either ratify or kill the peace treaty to be completed in June. It seems hard to believe that Woodrow Wilson does not seem to take the Senate opposition to the treaty more seriously. The signs have been there for a long time. On November 5, 1918, just days before the jubilation of an armistice to end the Great War, the US midterm elections hand the president a stunning defeat. Wilson Democrats lose control of both the House and the Senate to the Republicans. It is the Senate that gives the thumbs up or thumbs down for international treaties for the United States. By November 21, the Senate Republicans make it clear that they expect to have representation on the US Peace Commission. Citing earlier precedents, and based on the idea that these representatives will be better able to explain the reasoning behind complex or controversial terms of the treaty. The Washington Post believes that Wilson will grant their request. He doesn't and the Senate isn't very appreciative. It's not the terms of the peace treaty gradually being hammered out in Paris that caused the problems. It's the League of Nations. Republican senators believe the League will undermine US sovereignty. An important concession that they seek is to separate the league charter from the peace treaty. What do these anti-League senators object to? Many feel that the League will force the US to enter into wars in defense of other league members and wars that may not hold any national interest for us. They worry that it will threaten the Monroe Doctrine, which largely keeps European and Asian powers out of the Western Hemisphere. In essence, they fear that the League will limit our own sovereignty and power. Sadly, not all objections are as rational as these. At least one southern senator, a Democrat raises the race issue. Worrying that the League will be controlled, in his words, by black and brown people. Most of all though, anti-League sentiment simply reflects a desire to return to the good old days, the isolationist days before our involvement with the world and the World War. Wilson does have some strong Republican allies in Herbert Hoover and former president, William Howard Taft. Taft especially speaks out loudly and often to support both the treaty and America's participation in the League of Nations. He even tours the nation during February 1919 stumping for treaty approval. This effort is countered by Idaho Senator William Bora, the leader of the irreconcilables, who begins his own tour in late February purposely visiting many of the same cities as Taft. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts opposes the treaty as it's written and offers 14 resolutions to modify it. Wilson resists him. The only change he fights for in Europe is a clause that protects the Monroe Doctrine. All of Lodge's other resolutions supported by a cadre of 37 senators are simply brushed aside. Lodge becomes the leader of the senators opposed to joining the League. Even at this time, 100 years ago, as the treaty rushes forward in its final form, members of the US Senate make a last ditch effort to force revisions including separating the League charter from the peace treaty, as they have requested from the very beginning. Wilson and other European nations have no interest in this. In fact, Wilson's core strategy is that the League membership by Germany will resolve many of the punitive issues of the peace demands. Some senators threaten to form a delegation from the Senate to travel to Paris to represent their revisions in person, in opposition to their own president. But Lodge urges them to wait until the Senate can review the entire treaty. What about the United States people? We know that the League had a great deal of popular support. Wilson claimed in February that an overwhelming majority of Americans supported it. Was that true? Overall, a majority of newspaper editors across the country supported the League according to a poll by Literary Digest, although some of the papers in the largest cities opposed it. Another poll of American college students and faculty shows less than 10% opposed to the treaty with 45% in favor of the League and treaty as is and 50% in favor of the League and treaty with some modifications. During the spring of 1919, Congress receives many letters and petitions urging acceptance of both the peace treaty and membership in the League of Nations including one signed by 20,000 California women. Does this all add up to Wilson's "overwhelming majority?" It's hard to say. But the League of Nations is certainly a hot topic of discussion in schools and churches and barbershops all over the country as the drama plays out in the spring and summer 100 years ago in the aftermath of the war that changed the world. Okay, it's time to shift focus from the unsettling experience of waging peace to the truly unsettling experience of waging war. For this, we're joined by regular contributor, historian Dr. Edward Lengel who continues his series of posts that profile his top 10 selections from the many, many hundreds of published personal accounts from World War I. This week Ed profiles Canadian Will Bird's Ghosts Have Warm Hands.

[0:13:38]

Dr. Lengel: Superstition is a common element in the experience of warfare. Some soldiers left accounts of premonitions of death came true or of bibles or prayer books that stopped bullets. Many worried about jinxes that might bring them closer to death or use some form of good luck charm to ward off injury. Others lent credence to

popular tales of supernatural manifestations such as the celebrated Angels of Mons who supposedly appeared over the skies of Belgium to assist hard-pressed English soldiers in fighting off a German attack in 1914. After the war, distraught parents including English author, Arthur Conan Doyle investigated spiritualism as a means of reconnecting with their lost loved ones. Amid all of these tales and anecdotes, Canadian soldier Will Bird's story is unique. A member of the 42nd Royal Highlanders or Canadian Black Watch, he participated in several major battles on the western front from 1916 to 1918. Throughout these experiences, he felt the presence of his younger brother, Steven who had managed to get to the front before Will and had been killed in action in 1915. On one occasion, Will was certain that his brother saved his life. Will Bird's compelling war memoir, *Ghosts Have Warm Hands* stands number five on my list of the top 10 finest published personal accounts of World War I. A farm worker from Nova Scotia, Canada, 23-year-old Will Bird joined his brother Steven in seeking to enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force at the beginning of World War I. While Steven got in right away, however, Will was rejected because of bad teeth and returned to work on a farm in Alberta. As Steven set off for training, he left Will with a final promise, "If I don't come back," he said, "I'll try to find some way to keep an eye on you." While working on the farm in 1915, Will learned of his brother's death in France, blown to pieces by a German mine. Grief stricken, he immediately returned to the recruiting office and this time he was accepted thanks to a relaxation of the army's health standards. Assigned to the Canadian Black Watch, Bird was sent to France at the end of 1916. Thanks to a case of the mumps, he missed the Battle of Vimy Ridge in April 1917, but soon afterwards returned to the front and entered into the thick of the fighting. The battles in which he participated included Passchendaele and Cambrai, all compelling in his 1930 memoir, *And We Go On*, and expanded upon in his 1968 book, *Ghosts Have Warm Hands*. One night in 1917 near Vimy Ridge, Will Bird worked with a wiring party in no man's land. Finishing after midnight, he joined a group of other soldiers in a dugout and soon fell fast asleep. Early the next morning, as Will later described it, "The ground sheet pegged over our heads was pulled free fell on my face rousing me. Then a firm warm hand seized one of mine and pulled me up to a sitting position. It was very early as first sunshine was glittering on the dew wet grass. I was annoyed that I should have to do some chore after being out so late. I tried to pull free, but the grip held, and as I came to a sitting up position my other hand was seized and I had a look at my visitor." It was his brother, Steven. "Get your gear, the apparition said softly, and Will followed him away in a dream-fogged daze to some nearby ruins. There his brother disappeared before Will came to his senses. Looking everywhere to find Steven without success, Will collapsed exhausted and dozed for a time before one of his comrades shook him awake. The rest of his squad had been trying to find some sign of Will but were increasingly certain he was dead. Earlier that morning a German shell had landed on the dugout in which he had been sheltering, killing every man there. How, the other soldiers asked, had Will escaped death?" Fifty years passed before he tried to explain. By then, he had another ghost to put to rest. His own son, also named Steven, had been killed in the second World War.

[0:17:51]

Theo Mayer: Dr. Edward Lengel's blog is called a storyteller hiking through history and it's filled with first person perspectives and accounts that provide a nuanced insight into the era. We have links to Ed's posts and his author's website in podcast notes. With that, it's time to fast forward into the present with World War I Centennial News Now. During this part of the podcast, we explore how World War I is being remembered and commemorated today. Here is where we spotlight the ongoing remembrances and commemoration activities surrounding World War I and World War I themes. Because we're coming up on Memorial Day, we're focusing this week's segments on a series of stories that remember veterans. Our first segment looks at a group of immigrant soldiers that served in World War I. The *New Colossus* is a sonnet that American poet Emma Lazarus wrote in 1883 to raise money for the construction of a pedestal for the Statue of Liberty. In 1903, the poem was cast into a bronze plaque and mounted inside the pedestal's lower level. The most famous part of the sonnet reads, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, send these, the homeless, the tempest tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door." America has always been a nation of immigrants, and so it was in 1917 when we entered World War I on the side of the Allies and constituted a draft to grow our military from a small standing army to a major fighting force. A huge number of immigrants were swept into national service. One such group were Italians, many recent come to America suddenly finding themselves returning to Europe in uniform as part of the US Army. Our next guest, Luca Angeli has been curating this information including a section on the commission's website called, *Back Over There, Italian Immigrants Serving in the US Army*. Luca, welcome to the podcast.

[0:20:11]

Luca Angeli: Thank you Theo, thank you for having me here.

[0:20:14]

Theo Mayer: Luca, before we talk about the Italian immigrants and the website, tell us a little bit about yourself and why you took on this project.

[0:20:21]

Luca Angeli: Sure, there's a strong tie between my personal life and this project, since I myself spent 13 years in the United States. Although we cannot really compare the early 1900s with the 2000s, I have lived some of the dynamics of immigration and I have experienced a [inaudible] life abroad. When I moved to Chicago, I wanted to learn more about my great-grandfather who had preceded me exactly 100 years before spending three years in the mine fields of southern Colorado, and so I started to look into it and to check the resources available for retrieving information, for checking facts, etc, etc. When my great-grandfather to Italy and he lived World War I as a soldier in a foreign army. At that time, it was the Austrian-Hungarian army because my family comes from a part of Italy that saw the Austrian domination, so it was under the Austrian army. I started to be fascinated by the subject of the first war lived through the eyes of common people in a foreign environment. My next step was to join a few World War I forums and I got in touch with people seeking information or relatives who had emigrated to the US and they had fought and died with the American army in France. But to add information on each one of them so that we can document somehow the experiences as civilian as well as soldier, remembering not only their death, but especially their lives and dreams. By doing that, I believe we fully understand the sacrifice and fully understand the value of social integration. This is basically why I [inaudible] taking up this huge task.

[0:21:53]

Theo Mayer: But Luca, when you started to do the research to pull this information together, how do you compile the information? How many of these men did you find?

[0:22:01]

Luca Angeli: I did start looking into databases because it is virtually impossible to say how many served because the US assembled four million men of which 25% or more were not born in America. I would say that a good estimate is [inaudible] served. On those I focused and I narrowed down to the ones that were born in Italy, so they were not first generation immigrants and they were all veterans. I excluded the veterans who made it back somehow from France. By doing that, I narrowed it down to 3,100 names and I was also able to retrieve around 550 portraits and it's an ongoing project. What happened is that the information after the war was actually collected in a good manner. The information was there but then we stumbled into some issues of communication between the War Department and the Italian government. It happens that all these names were not actually recorded and they did not surface in what is called the honor roll in Italy which has been done and was being compiled after the war by the Fascists. The American documentation gives four big databases that reveal a ton of information. One is the draft registry that has been mentioned in your intro. One is the service records that every state has accessible, some sort of form of service records. Some states issued in the '20s a [inaudible], which you can extract names, and recently the mission archives released all the burial papers of all casualties, all fallen soldiers that were buried in France and not transferred to their countries or the national cemeteries in the United States. If you take these four databases, they have a humongous number of records, but all of them they carry some different information that if you cross them with church records or if you cross them with some other immigration documents like the Ellis Island database, you can firmly identify who on these distorted names, misspelled names, fake names are real persons, real individuals that at one point decided to cross the ocean and were absolutely overwhelmed by the events, and they had to come back and fight with a foreign army and lost their lives.

[0:24:18]

Theo Mayer: When we talk to people who have done World War I projects, and we do all the time, there's always cases and persons or stories that stick out for them. Do you have any particular story that you can tell us about?

[0:24:30]

Luca Angeli: One that was really striking was this young man called Luigi Ciarullo, that he was just 20 years old from a little, tiny village called Ripacandida in southern Italy in the Portenza. I sat down with his family in Altoona in Pennsylvania in the mine fields. They came to the US in 1906 and shortly after a tragedy, a family tragedy because his father murdered his mother. He found himself orphaned because his father claimed insanity, so he was not sentenced to death but he was sentenced to life in prison in Pittsburgh. He grew up with his aunt and when America joined the war, he went voluntarily in the Pennsylvania National Guard to serve over there and he lost his life in the second Battle of the Marne on the 15th of July, 1918 when a shell landed in a dugout where he was hiding with another six men. Of these six men, two were born in Italy. The thing that struck me that he prepared a will just before leaving for France. In this will, he was just asking for a pardon for his father. When this became public, they just pardoned his father. It was kind of [inaudible] that even if he had lived such tragedy, his family values were really, really stuck deep into him. Every story is a life, every story has something to say. This project is trying really to give back some of these stories to make them emerge, to stress the importance of why they came to the United States and what happened to their lives and their dreams.

[0:25:58]

Theo Mayer: Luca, a last question for you. If one of our listeners has an Italian ancestor who fought in World War I, and they don't find them in the list, how can they contact you to give you the information?

[0:26:09]

Luca Angeli: They can contact me for the information but also my email is info@backoverthere.com. I have two websites, I did transpose one in Italian that is www.backoverthere.com, which is at the moment just in Italian. The Centennial Commission hosts the whole database, so the primary information is there in the Centennial Commission website and I can be contacted and I actually invite everyone who has some information or is seeking information on Italian born veterans to contact me at info@backoverthere.com because this project can only thrive with the community effort.

[0:26:44]

Theo Mayer: That makes sense. Thank you Luca, both for coming and on the program and most of all, for all of the effort and the work that you're doing to put this information together for the Italian doughboys, thank you.

[0:26:53]

Luca Angeli: Thank you.

[0:26:54]

Theo Mayer: Luca Angeli is the curator for Back Over There, Italian immigrants serving in the US Army during World War I. You can find his site and database at ww1cc.org/backoverthere, all one word, all lower case. We have links for you in the podcast notes to the site on the commission server and Luca's Italian language site. The next remembering veteran segment is connected to our upcoming activities at Fleet Week in New York. First, an update. I want to invite you to our Fleet Week landing page on the commission's website. You can just go to the home page. If you Google WW1 centennial or WW1 commission, you'll find us. Our Fleet Week New York site is filled with information about New York and the sea services in World War I. We have a full schedule of events and happenings in New York during Fleet Week. If you're there, come join us. If you're not, starting on Wednesday the 22nd through Memorial Day, we'll be posting lots of great images and galleries on the site. If you'd like to track it all on social media, just follow or post to the hashtags [ww1](#) and [fleetweeknyc](#). One of the very exciting World War I elements that we're sponsoring at Fleet Week is a group of living historians who are going to be located at various key events. These are men and women who have studied and embraced the era and the persona of people from that era literally the past into the present. A notable group of living historians focused on World War I, and the sea services specifically, are from the Philadelphia Independence Seaport Museum home of the Cruiser Olympia, the ship that carried home many of our doughboys who sadly died over there including the first unknown. With us today are two of these living historians of the more than 20 that'll be joining us in New York. Laura Adie, the head of the female crew, and Kevin Smith, one of the founders of the crew and one of the curators for the Cruiser Olympia. Laura, Kevin welcome to the podcast.

[0:29:04]

Laura Adie: Thanks for having us.

[0:29:05]

Kevin Smith: Yeah, thanks for having us.

[0:29:07]

Theo Mayer: Kevin, let me begin with you. Can you give our listeners a quick overview of the museum, the Cruiser Olympia, and what visitors experience when they go for a visit?

[0:29:15]

Kevin Smith: Yeah, of course. The Cruiser Olympia is part of the Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia. It's a maritime museum that focuses on the history of maritime trade, industry, and actually the ecosystem of the Delaware River and other waterways throughout the United States. A good part of our mission is actually the history of the US Navy. We have a program called the Sail, Steam, and Stealth Program. That focuses on our three ships, we have two historic ships and one replica. The Diligence, a replica cutter from the Quasi-American War and the submarine Becuna from World War II, and of course the Cruiser Olympia, which served in the Spanish-American War and World War I. Olympia is actually the flagship of our collection, very literally as it is a flagship and sort of embassy for the United States. She served in the US Navy for 27 years and visitors coming aboard can actually see the ship, walk around through it, and experience the ship as it would have been actually mostly in World War I.

[0:30:11]

Theo Mayer: Laura, tell us a little bit about the Living Historian Crew. How many of you are there? How do you find members? Something I think is both appropriate and really brilliant, how did you decide to include a women's crew?

[0:30:22]

Laura Adie: The Living History Crew was started several years ago, Kevin was one of the founders of that as a way to bring the ship to life. It can really hard in a static museum setting to get a sense of what daily life was like for the crew members. By having a living history crew of about two dozen people that are active members coming aboard once or twice or month usually, it really adds another layer to the museum experience for people. The members come from a little bit of everywhere. We have a very good Facebook presence with the Living History Crew, and a lot of people interact with that. My husband and I actually, were friends with some people who were already living history crew members and got interested through some other re-enacting that we did. As far as how I came to start the women's section of the living history crew, I happened to be scrolling through Pinterest one day as one does and found this picture that I couldn't figure what in the world I was looking at. It was a young woman obviously in the 1910s saluting. She had a navy jumper on with a long skirt and boots, and I just had to figure what this was. I went down a rabbit hole and found out about the Yeoman F Program. Starting in March 1917, the Naval Reserve started enlisting women as yeomen, the clerical staff of the Navy to help support the Navy as it ramped up when the US became involved in the war. Over 11,000 young women served in the Navy during World War I in this capacity. I thought it was just something that people needed to know about. It was nothing that I'd ever heard about before or seen before. Then it was also a historically accurate way to incorporate women's history to the story of the Olympia in World War I. The first woman who enlisted in fact was from Philadelphia and worked at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, so it had a local tie as well.

[0:32:28]

Theo Mayer: Great story. Back to you, Kevin. The Living Historian Crew is coming to New York for Fleet Week. One of the places that we'll find you a lot of the time is on the USS New York as expected tens of thousands of visitors come aboard. This is a really modern vessel. How are you guys going to tie into that? How do you envision that?

[0:32:48]

Kevin Smith: We will be on the USS New York and also the USS [inaudible] at Staten Island. We're going to represent the Navy as it was exactly 100 years ago in 1919 and that's very relevant to our crew. Serving on Olympia so to speak, with the Living History Crew, this ship was in the war still or at the aftermath of the war from 1919 to 1921 up until she brought home the Unknown Soldier. We're going to be representing that as a whole, the mission of the ship, which was also the mission of the Navy doing the humanitarian aid, providing experience in the medical field for people suffering from the flu epidemic that was rampaging through the whole world really. Getting that general history out that a lot of people don't know about. What happened right after the war and what was the US Navy doing about? The other side of that story, which our Living History Crew is very good at and we do all the time on the ship itself, is we're also going to bring sea bags, ditty boxes, semaphore gear, all this equipment with us to show how the Navy lived back then.

[0:33:48]

Theo Mayer: You're not just people in costumes and you're not exactly actors. This is a special type of educator who is teaching by literally you're channeling the past. First, how did you get into this? Second, few gigs are equally immersive. What's been the most challenging thing about this for you personally?

[0:34:04]

Kevin Smith: For me, I started as an employee for the Independence Seaport Museum as a restoration worker, ship keeper. Eventually, the curators and the librarians introduced me to the library and I saw all the diaries, stories, and photos that we have in our collection. Looking through the diaries and looking the photos and seeing these guys standing around on the same ship that I worked on, it got me kind of a personal connection, which again, I feel like a lot of our Living History Crew shares. Our biggest challenge is to represent those veterans and tell their stories to the people that come by every day. The challenge to that is being able to provide a very accurate story because what we have is of course, photographs and diaries. There's not a whole lot of things that are more detailed like how to trice up a hammock? How do you set up a mess table? How do you oil an ash hoist, clean the dishes? All the kind of crew stuff that a lot of visitors are looking for. It took us years. To me, that's one of the biggest challenges for any Living History Crew, but especially here where the ship itself is so unique, even for the time period.

[0:35:04]

Theo Mayer: A similar question for you Laura, being a living historian and interacting with the public has certainly got to be filled with special moments. Can you pick a particularly memorable moment for you in having done this work?

[0:35:15]

Laura Adie: We were at Fort Mott in New Jersey. We had been there a few months prior at another event and I had a visitor who had come before, talked to me and the other women who were portraying the yeomen and came back again with his grandmother's service records and gave me copies of them. She had been in the Navy in World War I and it really had a personal connection, and he wanted to bring that and share that information, photographed all of the information about where was recruited, where she served, and all of that and shared that with us. That really

made it all worthwhile doing all of the preparation and research to really connect to somebody even though, as Kevin was saying, it's out of living memory but the descendants of these people are still around.

[0:36:04]

Kevin Smith: I have a story that's connected. One time this little old lady came up and she was asking me about the ship and all that. She eventually came out and said her father served on board. Her father was the medical officer of Olympia. I said, "We know where the medical officer's quarters were, would you like to see them?" Of course, she was like, "Oh yes, I want to see where my father was on the ship." When I brought her into that state room, I unlocked the door, slid it open, let her stand in there. As soon as she walked in, she just came to tears. I almost teared up myself. It was a very touching moment.

[0:36:37]

Theo Mayer: Great stories from both of you. Thank you both for joining us today and for coming to Fleet Week in New York 2019. You're going to be bringing a very special experience to the event. Thank you both.

[0:36:46]

Laura Adie: Thank you.

[0:36:47]

Kevin Smith: Thank you for having us.

[0:36:49]

Theo Mayer: Kevin Smith and Laura Adie are members of the Living Historian Crew from Philadelphia's Independence Seaport Museum, home of the Cruiser Olympia. They and their other crew members are going to be joining us at Fleet Week in New York where the commission will be hosting various World War I themed events between May 22 through Memorial Day May 27. Of course, we have a bunch of links for you in the podcast notes. One last story that remembers veterans in time for Memorial Day. We have news concerning the Hello Girls, the telephone switchboard operators who served so valiantly in the US Army in World War I and then fought equally valiantly for decades afterwards for their recognition rights as veterans. They've become very special and the sort of the central characters of the World War I Centennial Commemoration. Elizabeth Cobb's book, Jim Ferris' documentary, the Senate and House Congressional Gold Medal legislations, and of course, the New York stage musical, The Hello Girls. All these manifestations have become regular topics and friends of our podcast. This week we're excited to bring you another chapter in that story. The cast album for the musical is being released just in time for Memorial Day.

[0:38:06]

Cast Album: Ladies, this is the G3 board, these are the fighting lines, and we expect they will all be in use almost all of the time. (singing) Every advance, every retreat, every artillery barrage will be called in over these lines. (singing) Once the drive begins, shifts will be four hours on, four hours off, sleep when you can. (singing). Chief Banker, how long will we be on that rotation? Until the war is over.

[0:38:46]

Theo Mayer: To give us the highlights of this great project are Cara Reichel, the director, Peter Mills, the composer, lyricist, and co-orchestrator, both alumni of the podcast, and a new guest, Ben Moss, the music director, co-orchestrator, and cast member. Hi, guys.

[0:39:02]

Cara Reichel: Hello.

[0:39:02]

Peter Mills: Hey.

[0:39:03]

Ben Moss: Hi.

[0:39:06]

Theo Mayer: Who wants to lead off and give us an overview of the album? Cara, how about you?

[0:39:11]

Cara Reichel: Okay, great. I will say that Pete as the composer and co-orchestrator and Ben as co-orchestrator and our music director. They are the real musical experts and they were really the champions of this project, seeing it through from helping conceive how it was going to be edited and made into a recorded version that represents the

music but also tells the story. We were really hoping to create a CD or a recording that someone could listen to all the way through, and even if you're not getting every single scene, you can still hear all the music and get a sense of the story. I guess that's the overview. We just really believe in this story and wanted to reach a much wider audience.

[0:39:49]

Theo Mayer: Peter, tell us about making the album.

[0:39:51]

Peter Mills: It was a whirlwind process because we had a very small window when all of the cast was available to come to the studio and do it, so we had to plan it out very carefully and find a way to do it within I think four days total in the studio. We were working in a small studio where we could only accommodate a few people at a time, and of course, it's a fairly big show. There are 10 in the cast and a drummer. We had to get in pieces. We had a first day where we got the piano bass and the drums all recorded. Then in the subsequent days, we would have a few of the cast members come in and record their vocals and then also record their instrumental parts. It was like a giant jigsaw puzzle that we only fully assembled after everyone had come in and recorded all their pieces.

[0:40:39]

Theo Mayer: Ben, what were some of the big challenges in getting it done besides the scheduling of everybody?

[0:40:43]

Ben Moss: As your listeners may or may not remember, the show is all actor musicians and all of us in the cast were very accustomed to playing this music as a group, playing this music in the context of the play, playing this music while we danced and jumped and ran around, which at first was extremely difficult, but by the end of our run, it was second nature. To suddenly strip everything away and put just one musician into the booth and say, let's run this song and play all of your parts, it was a little bit of an adjustment for all of us. Also, of course, the scrutiny that your performance comes under when you are able to rewind and listen closely and take another take. Our cast was extremely up to the task, but it was a fun transition for us at the beginning.

[0:41:36]

Cara Reichel: A new way of thinking.

[0:41:37]

Ben Moss: Yes.

[0:41:37]

Cara Reichel: A new way of thinking about the material.

[0:41:39]

Ben Moss: Yes, definitely. But we were very lucky to have the amount of time that we had. Actually, on a normal cast album, you have a certain amount of time with your orchestra, and then you get a certain amount of time with your cast. We were able to schedule in everybody well within the time that our unions allowed. But this ultimately resulted in us having more time to record the album, which was great, and I think is very clear on the recording.

[0:42:05]

Theo Mayer: Cara, where could I buy the album?

[0:42:07]

Cara Reichel: It's going to be on all the main platforms where you would go to buy an album. We're going to be iTunes, we're going to be on amazon.com. You can also go to broadwayrecords.com, that's the distributor. We also have set up a website for the show, thehellogirlsmusical.com. You can go there and you can also see some video clips from the show on that website and then you can click through and order the full cast recording. You can also on the website see pictures of all the cast members and listen to the recording and be able to also see some of the visuals.

[0:42:41]

Theo Mayer: If I get the product, do I get the lyrics with it?

[0:42:44]

Cara Reichel: Pete, why don't you take that one?

[0:42:46]

Peter Mills: Yes, the CD comes with a booklet that contains all of the lyrics that are on the CD. I actually don't know how it works with digital downloads, Cara.

[0:42:55]

Cara Reichel: When you purchase a digital download, you also get a PDF of the CD booklet. It's worth mentioning that the actual stage play was two hours and 15 minutes long. It was a full length evening at the theater. For this CD, we focused on the songs and we got it down to about 70 minutes worth of material. You can really listen straight through and the booklet does include all the lyrics to the songs, but also there are scenes that are within the songs that are in there, so you can really get a sense of the whole story.

[0:43:24]

Theo Mayer: When is the album releasing?

[0:43:26]

Cara Reichel: The album is releasing publicly on Thursday, May 23, so right before Memorial Day Weekend.

[0:43:33]

Theo Mayer: Good timing, I think it's a great memorial product, actually. Now, you each get to review the album. If it were the one liner quote for the album from the reviewer, Ben, what would yours be?

[0:43:45]

Ben Moss: Mine would be award nominated musical, book, and score all distilled into one perfect album.

[0:43:55]

Theo Mayer: Perfect. Okay, we're going onto you Cara, you're up.

[0:44:00]

Cara Reichel: I'm going to riff off one of our reviews for that production that we did in December. The cast was as triumphant as the story of the show itself. I feel like this cast has just been an extraordinary group of people to work with, and I'm so glad we recorded their performances for posterity.

[0:44:19]

Theo Mayer: Great answer. Peter.

[0:44:20]

Peter Mills: A fascinating story told with everything from ragtime to rock by the hardest working actor/musician cast in show business.

[0:44:28]

Theo Mayer: Ben, you get the last word. What tune should we play the segment out on?

[0:44:33]

Ben Moss: I think there's only one song on the album that would really do the show justice and that would be the title song, Hello Girls, where our heroines are making their way into Paris and meeting all the service members who are so appreciative of the war saving work that they are going to do.

[0:44:52]

Cast Album: (singing)

[0:44:52]

Theo Mayer: Cara Reichel, the director, Peter Mills, the composer, and Ben Moss, the music director of the musical *The Hello Girls*, which has just released the cast album. We have links for you in the podcast notes and how to get a copy. It's time for articles and posts where we highlight the stories you'll find in our weekly newsletter, *The Dispatch*.
Headline: NFL Donates \$1 Million to The National World War I Memorial in Washington DC. The US World War I Centennial Commission announced today that the National Football League, the NFL, has contributed \$1 million to the construction of the memorial. World War I and football have deep ties. Read the story in *The Dispatch*.
Headline: Memorial Day Weekend Events Honor Nation's Heroes in Kansas City. The National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City serves as a fitting place to honor and recognize the men and women who sacrificed their lives while serving their country. Admission to the museum and memorial is free for veterans and active duty military personnel while the general public comes in at half price all Memorial Day weekend. The amazing museum and memorial offers a wide variety of events during the weekend for guests of all ages.
Headline: Teacher to eulogize World War I Soldiers From Wild Rose, Wisconsin Who Died in 1918. Private Sylvester Machinski was married and

the father of three children when he died during World War I. He was a farm boy who grew up in Wild Rose, then moved to the Chicago area enlisting in the US Army in June 1917. He became one of the 116,516 Americans who died in military service during the war. Now, a century later, an Almond-Bancroft high school social studies teacher named Joseph Nowinski will deliver the soldier's eulogy in France as part of a program offered through National History Day and sponsored by the US World War I Centennial Commission and the Pritzger Military Museum and Library. **Headline: Belongings of Burlington World War I Soldier Returned to American Legion Post 273.** When Claire Lohr was in her 30s and helping her grandmother, Mildred Parker McGallier clean out her Washington, DC home, she rummaged through many items that had familiar names of family members she knew, but there was one item, a leather military bible that caught her eye. She opened it and saw a name scribbled inside. Who is Leonard Milliken she asked her grandmother? **Headline: Iowa's World War I Soldiers in White Honored With Special Ceremony at State Capital.** On May 5, Iowa's Soldiers in White were honored again with a special tribute to the women who served during the Great War. A new bronze plaque was dedicated to those nurses next to a World War II memorial at the state capital. The original dedication ceremony was held in 1921. The bronze plaque is meant to be a lasting symbol for generations to come. Access all these amazing stories and more through the summary paragraphs and links that you'll find in our weekly Dispatch newsletter. It's our short and easy guide to lots of World War I news and information. Subscribe to this wonderful free weekly guide at www1cc.org/subscribe or follow the links in the podcast notes. That wraps up episode number 123 of the award-winning World War I Centennial News Podcast. Thank you for listening. We want to thank our great guests, talented crew, and our supporters including Mike Shuster, curator for the Great War Project blog. Dr. Edward Lengel, historian, author, and lecturer. Luca Angeli, curator for Back Over There. Living Historians Kevin Smith and Laura Adie. Cara Reichel, Peter Mills, and Ben Moss from The Hello Girls, The Musical. Thanks to Mac Nelson and Tim Crow, our interview editing team. Cats Laslow, the line producer for the show. Dave Kramer and JL Michou for research and script support. I'm Theo Mayer, your producer and host. The US World War I Centennial Commission was created by Congress to honor, commemorate and educate about World War I. Our programs are to inspire a national conversation and awareness about World War I including this podcast. We're bringing the lessons of 100 years ago to today's educators, their classrooms, and the public. We're helping to restore World War I memorials in communities of all sizes across the country, and of course, we're building America's National World War I Memorial in Washington, DC. We want to thank the commission's founding sponsor, the Pritzger Military Museum and Library, as well as our other supporters, the Star Foundation, the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, and the Richard Lounsbery Foundation. The podcast and a full transcript of the show can be found on our website at www1cc.org/cn. You'll find World War I Centennial News in all the places that you get your podcasts, even on YouTube, asking Siri, or using your smart speaker by saying play WW1 Centennial News podcast. The podcast Twitter handle is [@theww1podcast](https://twitter.com/theww1podcast). The commission's Twitter and Instagram handles are both [@ww1cc](https://twitter.com/ww1cc) and we're on Facebook at WW1 Centennial. 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 and make a contribution. (singing) Thank you for listening to this week's show. So long.

[0:54:40]