



# THE UNITED STATES WORLD WAR ONE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

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## **In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I**

“In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I” is a commemorative ceremony hosted by the Congressionally-authorized United States World War I Centennial Commission. The commemoration, taking place at the National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. entry into the Great War.

The multi-media presentation, telling the compelling story of the U.S. decision to enter into World War I, will feature reading of passages from significant and representative American writings of a century ago, including selections from speeches, journalism, literature, and poetry, as well as performance of important music of the time. Invited American program participants include the President of the United States, Congressional leadership, and descendants of U.S. World War I veterans, including relatives of the acclaimed General George S. Patton, who served in the newly formed U.S. Tank Corps of the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I and would later go on to command the U.S. Seventh Army in the Mediterranean and European theaters of World War II, and General John J.

Pershing, who commanded the American Expeditionary Force on the Western Front in World War I. Heads of State from certain nations are invited to read passages reflecting the reaction of their respective nations to the U.S. entry into the war in 1917.

The colorful and awe-inspiring ceremony will also include commemorative flyovers by U.S. aircraft and *Patrouille de France*, the precision aerobatic demonstration team of the French Air Force, as well as the U.S. First Infantry Division Band and Color Guard, Native American Color Guard, Army and Air Force legacy units that served during World War I, and special video presentations and musical performances from the World War I period.

The main event in Kansas City will be complimented by state and local events across the nation, organized by state-based WWI centennial commemoration organizations and others. Students across the nation will be able to participate in this historic event which will be live-streamed, learning how WWI changed the United States and the world through both the performance and available educational materials.

## About the World War I Centennial Commission

The Commission was established by the World War I Centennial Commission Act, passed by the 112th Congress and signed by President Barack Obama on January 16, 2013, and is responsible for planning, developing, and executing programs, projects, and activities to commemorate the centennial of World War I. The mission is to educate the country's citizens about the causes, courses and consequences of the war; honor the heroism and sacrifice of those Americans who served, and

commemorate the Great War through public programs and initiatives. To learn more about the Commission activities, visit [www.ww1cc.org/tools](http://www.ww1cc.org/tools).

To further the mission, the Commission is leading the effort to build the National World War I Memorial at Pershing Park in Washington, D.C. to honor the 4.7 million American veterans who served. To learn more about the Memorial, visit [www.ww1cc.org/memorial](http://www.ww1cc.org/memorial).

## About the National World War I Museum and Memorial

The National World War I Museum and Memorial is America's leading institution dedicated to remembering, interpreting and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. The Museum holds the most diverse collection of World War I objects and documents in the world and is the second-oldest public museum dedicated to preserving the objects, history and experiences of the war. The Museum takes visitors of all ages on an epic journey through a

transformative period and shares deeply personal stories of courage, honor, patriotism and sacrifice. Designated by Congress as America's National World War I Museum and Memorial and located in downtown Kansas City, Mo., the National World War I Museum and Memorial inspires thought, dialogue and learning to make the experiences of the Great War era meaningful and relevant for present and future generations. To learn more, visit [www.theworldwar.org](http://www.theworldwar.org).

## World War I Centennial Commission Social Media

To follow the World War I Centennial Commission's "In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I" social media campaign use the hashtag #WW1CentennialKC.



WW1Centennial



WW1CC



WorldWar1Centennial

## Logos



THE UNITED STATES  
**WORLD WAR ONE**  
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

# PRITZKER MILITARY

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## MUSEUM & LIBRARY

The Commission's founding sponsor is the Pritzker Military Museum and Library (PMML) in Chicago, Ill. PMML is a nonpartisan research institution dedicated to enhancing public understanding of military history and the sacrifices made by America's veterans and service members. To learn more about PMML, visit [www.pritzkermilitary.org](http://www.pritzkermilitary.org).



The presenting sponsor for "In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I" is the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) in Kansas City, Mo. The VFW is a nonprofit veterans service organization comprised of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, guard and reserve forces. To learn more about the VFW, visit [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org).

## **In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I Ceremony Participants**

- Flyover – United States B-2 Bomber, Patrouille de France,
- The National Anthem- Performed by John Brancy, Baritone, and the 1st Infantry Division Band
- Introductory Video - Narrated by Kevin Costner
- “Alexander’s Ragtime Band”- Performed by 1st Infantry Division Band
- “When The Lusitania Went Down”- Performed Michael Bader, Yang Thou and graduate students from The UMKC Conservatory of Music
- “Suite No. 1 in G minor”- Performed by Matt Rombaum, Associate Principal Violist, Kansas City Symphony
- “If He Can Fight Like He Can Love, Good Night, Germany”- Performed by Samantha Gossard, Mezzo Soprano; Alla Wijnands, Violin and Bram Wijnands, Piano
- “Over There”- Performed by John Brancy, Peter Dugan, 1st Infantry Division Band, U.S. Army Europe Chorus and the cast. Video footage of U.S. Army Europe Chorus from station in Sembach, Germany
- National Commander Charles E. Schmidt, The American Legion
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Delta Battery, 1st Battalion, 129th Field Artillery Regiment
- First Infantry Division Color Guard

### **Media Credentialing**

To request media credentials to “In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I” please fill out the entire Media Credentialing Form at [ww1cc.org/april6](http://ww1cc.org/april6). Because space is limited, the World War I Centennial Commission will review credentials applications and will notify you if your application is confirmed.

### **Interview Requests**

If you would like to request an interview with the WWI Centennial Commission or any of their subject-matter experts please email Paulo Sibaja at [PSibaja@SusanDavis.com](mailto:PSibaja@SusanDavis.com) or call 202.414.0798.

### **General Media Inquiries**

For general media inquiries, please contact Paulo Sibaja at [PSibaja@SusanDavis.com](mailto:PSibaja@SusanDavis.com) or call 202.414.0798.

## FAQs

- **Why are we commemorating the U.S. entry into WWI?**

The “Great War” changed the history of our nation, and our world, forever. The World War I Centennial Commission is honoring the heroism and sacrifice of those Americans who served by commemorating the Great War through public programs and initiatives, including the national commemorative ceremony, “In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry in World War I.”

- **When is the national commemorative ceremony?**

The national commemorative ceremony will be held on the 100-year anniversary of the United State’s entry into WWI, April 6, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. CST.

- **Where will the national commemorative ceremony be held?**

“In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry in World War I” will take place at The National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri.

- **What is the World War I Centennial Commission?**

The World War I Centennial Commission was established by the World War I Centennial Commission Act, passed by the 112th Congress and signed by President Barack Obama on January 16, 2013. The Commission is mandated to plan, develop, and

execute programs, projects, and activities to commemorate the centennial of World War I. The mission is to educate the country’s citizens about the causes, courses and consequences of the war; honor the heroism and sacrifice of those Americans who served, and commemorate the Great War through public programs and initiatives. To learn more about the Commission activities, visit [ww1cc.org/tools](http://ww1cc.org/tools).

To further the mission, the Commission is leading the effort to build the National World War I Memorial at Pershing Park in Washington, D.C. to honor the 4.7 million American veterans who served. To learn more about the Memorial, visit [ww1cc.org/memorial](http://ww1cc.org/memorial).

- **What time does the national commemorative ceremony begin?**

The national commemorative ceremony begins at 11 a.m. CST. The general public must be inside the ceremony gates by 9 a.m. CST.

- **Can I attend the national commemorative ceremony?**

Yes, a limited number of tickets to attend the event will be offered to the general public based on space available. Guests must register in advance at [ww1cc.org/april6](http://ww1cc.org/april6) to reserve a ticket.

Please bring your ticket and a valid photo I.D. to the ceremony gates by 9:00 a.m. CST the day of the event.

- **Why were only a few Heads of State invited to participate in the ceremony?**

The WWICC used the following criteria to select nations invited to actively participate in the April 6 national commemorative ceremony in Kansas City, Missouri:

*“Nations under the command of which US soldiers fought until the creation of an independent American Army, and that U.S. Armed Forces fought against.”*

Those nations are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and the United

Kingdom. In addition, the Heads of State of all World War I participatory nations were invited to attend, whether their respective nation was sovereign or part of an empire or another nation no longer in existence.

- **Who is attending?**

Invited guests include the President of the United States, Senators, Representatives, Governors, descendants of U.S. World War I veterans, Heads of State from all World War I participatory nations, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and many more.

## **In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I Announcement Press Release**

### **U.S. World War I Centennial Commission Announces Centennial Commemoration of U.S. Entry into World War I**

**Washington, D.C.** — The United States World War I Centennial Commission today officially announced the national ceremony commemorating the centennial of the United States entry into World War I, a war that changed the nation and the world forever.

The national ceremony, “In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I,” will be held on April 6, 2017 at the National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City, Mo. Invited attendees include the President of the United States; Congressional leadership; Cabinet members; State governors; U.S. military leaders; veteran organizations; representatives from U.S. military legacy units that trace their history back to World War I; descendants of significant American WWI figures; and other organizations, dignitaries, and VIPs. International invitees include the Heads of State of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the United Kingdom, and all other nations whose people were involved in the Great War.

On April 6, 1917, after much debate, the United States entered World War I. The ceremony in Kansas City, and complementary events around the nation, will encourage every American to reflect on what that moment meant, how it continues to influence the nation, and how every American family, then and now, is linked to that perilous time.

“The April 6 ceremony in Kansas City is an important element of the national conversation about World War I,” said Dan Dayton, executive director of the World War I Centennial Commission. “Why should we care? Because we are all products of World War I. The entire country was involved— everyone has a story. The Commission’s goal is to inspire you to find your personal story and connection.”

“In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I” will consist principally of the reading of passages from significant and representative American writings of a century ago about the U.S. decision to enter the war, including selections from speeches, journalism, literature, poetry, and performance of important music of the time. Invited American readers include the President of the United States, Congressional leadership, and descendants of U.S. World War I veterans. Certain Heads of State from other nations are invited to read passages reflecting the reaction of their respective nations to the U.S. entry into the war in 1917.

The ceremony will also include flyovers by U.S. aircraft and *Patrouille de France*, as well as a military band, color guard, ceremonial units, and video productions. Students across the nation will participate in this historic event, learning how WWI changed the United States and the world.

America’s entry into the Great War created profound change throughout the country. WWI military Historian and archivist at the National Archives and Records Administration Mitchell Yockelson explains that “although the union was again whole after the end of the American Civil War, the United States remained fractured. Recovery was slow until the turning point of reconciliation occurred 52 years later. On April 6, 1917, Americans cast aside past sectional and political differences, donned the same uniform and fought as one under a singular president and field commander in the Great War.”

World War I Centennial Commissioner Dr. Monique Seefried said it is critical that the nation remember the momentous events of World War I.

“It is so important to understand the debate that was going on within the United States about entering World War I. In reaching that decision, the nation became united for the first time in decades. Our goal was to bring peace to a world that had become inflamed. The subsequent decisions and actions taken 100 years ago helped shape and define the world we live in today.”

Designated by the U.S. Congress in 2004 as the official museum dedicated to WWI, and in 2014 as America's National World War I Museum and Memorial, the Museum is uniquely positioned to host the official Commission event. “It’s a fitting tribute to those who served in the Great War that we commemorate the entry of the United States into World War I in the very same place where millions of visitors from across the world have paid tribute for nearly a century,” said National World War I Museum and Memorial President and CEO and World War I Commissioner Dr. Matthew Naylor. “The National World War I Museum and Memorial is committed to remembering, understanding and interpreting the Great War and its enduring impact and this event underscores how this calamitous conflict continues to significantly affect everyone to this day.”

The ceremony launches an 18-month long commemoration period of the United States’ involvement in WWI, marked by anniversaries of specific events of the war, including major engagements of U.S. forces, key local dates, and more. More information on key events can be found at [www.ww1cc.org/events](http://www.ww1cc.org/events).