Agenda

To hear this:

• About the Commission
• About the Commemoration
• Current status
The World War One Centennial Commission

• Chartered by Congress in 2013
  • *Public Law 112-272*

• Members appointed by the President, Congressional leaders, VFW, American Legion, and National World War One Museum in Kansas City, MO

• Commissioners serve without compensation

• Commission expires July 2019
The Commissioners

Mr. John E. Hamilton
Maj. Gen. Alfred Valenzuela, USA (Ret.)

Chairman (Acting)
Col. Rob Dalessandro, USA (Ret.)

Mr. Edwin Fountain

Dr. Libby O’Connell

Maj. Gen. Alfred Valenzuela, USA (Ret.)

Mr. James Nutter, Sr.

Col. Tom Moe, USAF (Ret.)

Mr. Jerry Hester

Dr. Mary Cohen

Mr. James Whitfield

Dr. Monique Brouillet Seefried
The World War One Centennial Commission

World War One Centennial Commission
Chairman (Acting)
Col. Rob Dalessandro, USA (Ret.)

Commissioner
Maj. General Alfred Valenzuela, USA (Ret.)
(Appointed by the President)

Commissioner
Dr. Libby O’Connell
(Appointed by the President)

Commissioner
Monique Brouillet Seefried, Ph.D.
(Appointed by the Speaker of the House)

Commissioner
Col. Tom Moe, USAF (Ret.)
(Appointed by the Speaker of the House)

Commissioner
Edwin L. Fountain
(Appointed by the Senate Majority Leader)

Commissioner
Dr. Mary Davidson Cohen
(Appointed by The Liberty Memorial Association)

Commissioner
Col. Rob Dalessandro, USA (Ret.)
(Appointed by the House Minority Leader)

Commissioner
James B. Nutter, Sr.
(Appointed by the Senate Majority Leader)

Commissioner
James S. Whitfield
(Appointed by The American Legion)

Commissioner
Jerry L. Hester
(Appointed by the Senate Minority Leader)

Commissioner
John E. Hamilton
(Appointed by The Veterans of Foreign Wars)
Commission Duties

• Plan and execute commemorative programs and projects

• Encourage private organizations and State and local governments to organize and participate in commemorative activities

• Facilitate and coordinate commemorative activities throughout the U.S.

• Establish clearinghouse for information about centennial events

• Make recommendations to Congress and the President

from Public Law 112-272
Commission Focus

The Commission’s activities will focus on:

• **Educating** the American people about the causes and consequences of the conflict, and America’s role in the war

• **Honoring** the more than 4 million Americans who served during World War One, and the 116,516 who gave their lives

• **Commemorating** the efforts of all Americans who served in the war, both in the military and on the home front
Commission Activities

- Educational Programs
- Conferences
- Commemorative Programs and Events
- Outreach to Stakeholders

All conferences, programs, and events described here are proposals only; no conference, program, or event will take place without funds being raised to cover all costs.
Educational Programs

• In partnership with other organizations
• Reflecting best current scholarship, with diverse viewpoints and perspectives
• Customized for all school levels
• Coordinated with conferences
• Wide distribution of teaching materials
• Accessible by general public
Educational Programs

• A&E History Channel
  – Several original series
    • *The World Wars* aired 2014
  – History Classroom programming
  – Curriculum resources
  – MOOC
  – Newsletters
  – Essay Contests
Educational Programs

- Commission resolutions of support passed
  - The Great War Project
    - Public radio series
  - America’s Great War
    - Four-hour documentary TV series
  - National History Day
    - Student guides to World War One

NPR legend Mike Schuster
Producer, The Great War Project
Conferences

• Partner with other organizations
• Reflecting best current scholarship, with diverse viewpoints and perspectives
• Accessible to general audiences and students
• Coordinated with educational efforts
• Wide distribution
  – Webcasts
  – Podcasts
  – Social Media
Conferences

“The Lusitania Conference”  
May 2015

– Proposed site: National Press Club in Washington, DC
– U.S. foreign policy, public opinion, and service of Americans in foreign forces in the first years of the war
– Sinking of the Lusitania, the Zimmerman telegram, and other events that led to U.S. entry into the war
Conferences

• “A War to End All Wars”
  2016
  – How the Great War fundamentally changed war and warfare: new weapons, technologies, and tactics
  – The effects of modern, “total war” on civilian populations, and the emerging laws of war
Conferences

• “A Call to Arms”
  April 2017
  – 100th anniversary of America’s entry in the war
  – Wilson’s foreign policy and the “14 points”
  – Keynote foreign policy address by the new U.S. President

“The world must be made safe for democracy.”
“World War I was a transformative moment in African-American history. What began as a seemingly distant European conflict soon became an event with revolutionary implications for the social, economic, and political future of black people. The war directly impacted all African Americans, male and female, northerner and southerner, soldier and civilian...Recognizing the significance of World War I is essential to developing a full understanding of modern African-American history and the struggle for black freedom.”

--Chad Williams, Hamilton College

Africana Age, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
Conferences

“A Little Bit of Everything”
A Conference on Ethnic Minorities serving in the U.S. Armed Forces in World War One 2018

– 500,000 immigrants were inducted during World War One
– 20% of entire adult Native American male population served

“You could not imagine a more extraordinary gathering than this American army, there is a little bit of everything: Greeks, Italians, Turks, Indians, Spanish... Among the Americans are sons of emigrated Frenchmen and sons of emigrated Germans. I asked one son of a Frenchman if these Germans were coming willingly to fight their brothers and cousins, he squarely answered me: ‘yes!’”

-- A French soldier in 1917 describing the heterogeneous character of American troops
Conferences

• “The Doughboy”
  2018
  – The challenge of taking a peacetime Army, Navy, and Marine Corps to a wartime footing
  – The role of U.S. forces in the final stages of the war
  – The influence of World War One experience on the U.S. military
Conferences

• “They Also Served”

The Role of American Women in World War One
2018

“I earnestly feel like doing whatever I can do best and will mean the most to my country, and will answer any call I can fill.”

-- Nora Capps Reid
Norfolk, VA

“A pivotal time for women.”
Conferences

• The Legacy of The Great War
  Spring 2019
  – Held at the National World War One Museum in Kansas City
  – World War I as precursor to World War II, the Cold War, and conflicts today
  – Lessons learned for “winning the peace”
Programs and Events

• The Commission will encourage events intended to commemorate and raise popular awareness of U.S. involvement in World War One

• The Commission will support other organizations sponsoring similar events, in the United States and abroad
Events

• Capitol Kickoff – June 10, 2014
  – A Congressional Reception on Capitol Hill to raise awareness of and gain support for the upcoming commemoration of World War One
Events

• World War One Commemoration “Trade Fair”
  June 14, 2014
  – Coordination meeting for individuals and groups involved in centennial activities, events, products, and services
  – Networking and briefing on the Commission’s plan
• “One Century Later”
  July 27, 2014
  — At the National World War One Museum in Kansas City
  — Webcast worldwide
  — Panel of experts discussion
  • Insight into the relevant stories of the Great War
  • Enduring influence of World War One on the culture, technological advancement, and global conflicts of today

Dr. Mitch Yockelson
Archivist, NARA

Dr. Graydon Tunstall
University of South Florida

Dr. Chad Williams
Brandeis University

Ms Barbara Pinto
Moderator
Formerly of ABC News

John Hendren
Chicago Bureau Chief
Al Jazeera

Sponsored by the
Arts and Entertainment Network
Events

• Prayer services marking the centennial of the beginning of World War One  
  July 27, 2014

• Nationwide scope
• Developed as result of partnership with Washington National Cathedral
• All faiths invited to participate
Events

• **11/11/2018: National Memorial Service**
  
  – Ecumenical event at Washington National Cathedral, and services at Arlington National Cemetery, to commemorate the armistice in November 1918
  – All US Presidents and international heads of state invited to attend
  – Similar services encouraged throughout the country
  – Webcast worldwide
Events

• “Welcome Home”
  Memorial Day week, 2019

– Ticker tape parade and tall ships review in New York City to commemorate the centennial of the return of the U.S. service members from the war
Programs

• National World War One Memorial in Pershing Park, Washington, DC

  – Enabling Legislation introduced
  – Design competition RFP developed
  – Fundraising underway
Programs

• Our Flag Was Still There: Baseball and the Star-Spangled Banner
  – Events throughout the 2018 baseball season marking the 1918 start of the tradition of playing the national anthem at baseball games and other events.
  – Extend to other major league and college sports events

Game One of the 1918 World Series between the Red Sox and Cubs marked the first time "The Star Spangled Banner" was performed at a major league game. During the seventh inning stretch, the band began playing the song due to the fact that the country was now involved in World War I.
Supporting Other Organizations

• “Silent Night”
  Christmas 2014
  – International Day of Peace events, following UK-French-Belgian efforts
    • International moment of silence
    • US flags at half staff
    • Soccer games across the country

A cross in Comines-Warneton, Belgium, in 1999, celebrating the site of the Christmas Truce in 1914.
Supporting Other Organizations

• **Battle of the Meuse-Argonne Memorial Service**

2018

- Commemoration of the campaign that ended the war, and the largest engagement of U.S. forces in history
- In partnership with the American Battlefield Monuments Commission (ABMC) and the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery and Memorial
Supporting Other Organizations

- **Lafayette Escadrille Memorial Re-dedication**
  Spring 2016
  - Commemoration of service in World War I by American citizens before the U.S. entered the war
  - USAF and private groups raising funds for restoration of the memorial
Supporting Other Organizations

• **Verdun Conference**
  France, 2016
  – Commemoration of one of the bloodiest battles of the war, and the effect the carnage had on global public opinion
  – French event, with support from the Commission
Supporting Other Organizations

- National Doughnut Day
  - First Friday of June each year
  - Created by The Salvation Army in 1938 to honor the men and women who served doughnuts to soldiers during the war
Supporting Other Organizations

• Rose Parade and other parades, 2017-18
  – Floats commemorating the United States efforts in World War One, and saluting all those who served
  – Recognition of local families whose ancestors served
  – Recognition of local business which existed during war
Discussion