

# NEWS RELEASE



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REAL PEOPLE. REAL STORIES.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Museum After Hours Year-Long Program Series Explores World Wars

TOPEKA—Eighty thousand Kansans served in World War I. Two hundred and twenty-seven thousand served in World War II. Kansans made great sacrifices during these world wars. The wars also brought great impact to our communities; German prisoners-of-war worked on our farms, memorials and monuments honored our soldiers, new technology and weaponry changed our future.

The Kansas Museum of History presents Museum After Hours, a year-long program series that explores these impacts of the world wars. These programs complement the Kansas Museum of History's special exhibit, *Captured: The Extraordinary Adventures of Colonel Hughes*, and are held in recognition of the 100th anniversary of World War I. These are the upcoming programs in our Museum After Hours series:

6:30 p.m. Friday, August 12, 2016

"From Fatherland to Farmland: German POWs in the Great Plains" by Matt Thompson, independent public historian and former registrar, Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum. During World War II many German prisoners found themselves performing agricultural labor in states like Kansas, where they also developed a significant, albeit unofficial, cultural dialogue with the American citizens who lived nearby. The presentation addresses some of the political, social, and economic factors that led to such arrangements and offers some analysis of their longer term consequences.

6:30 p.m. Friday, September 9, 2016

"Do Your Bit—Knit!" by Stacie Petersen, registrar, The National World War I Museum and Memorial. Thousands of people unable to serve in the military picked up their needles and knitted for loved ones and their nations during World War I. Stacie Petersen addresses the history of knitting during World War I.

6:30 p.m. Friday, October 14, 2016

"World War I Memorials and Monuments" by Jim Heiman, Metropolitan Community College, Independence, Missouri. By the very nature of war, the first rituals for Kansas City area soldiers killed in combat were conducted locally in public ceremonies before they could ever be recognized in private services. But even when the bodies of the dead were disinterred from the battlefields and cemeteries in France and brought back to Kansas City, private services soon gave way to public pilgrimages as semi-annual observances at the cemeteries began to include public monuments and memorials outside of the cemeteries. This presentation examines how Kansas City area war memorials at prominent places in both the Kansas and Missouri sides of the city became part of the public pilgrimages that ritualized war remembrance as private grief became public mourning.

6:30 p.m. Friday, November 18, 2016

"J.R.R. Tolkien and the Battle of the Somme" by Jonathan R. Casey, archivist, and Edward Jones Research Center manager, The National World War I Museum and Memorial. This overview of Tolkien's war service focuses particularly on the Somme, July through October 1916, and how his war experience may have influenced his literary work, namely *The Hobbit* and the *Lord Of The Rings*. The presentation includes images from the World War I Museum's collections that match passages from the books.

6:30 p.m. Friday, December 9, 2016

"Toy Soldiers and Baby Dolls: Toys of the War Years" by Laura S. Taylor, curator of interpretation, National Museum of Toys and Miniatures. The early part of the 20th century was a period of great toy-making innovation. More than playthings, these important artifacts reflect the historical time period in which they were made, from global conflict and economic depression to shifting attitudes in childrearing.

6:30 p.m. Friday, January 13, 2017

"The U.S. Doughboy Over There: What He Carried and What He Dragged Home" by Charlie Pautler, museum director, Shawnee Town. The program explores the material trappings of the U.S. soldier in WWI by examining original uniforms and equipment. The typical U.S. soldier brought back souvenirs from his time at the front, which will also be highlighted and discussed.

6:30 p.m. Friday, February 10, 2017

"Make Way for Democracy!: African Americans in World War I" by Lora Vogt, curator of education, The National World War I Museum and Memorial. The program features The National World War I Museum's online exhibit about African Americans in World War I.

6:30 p.m. Friday, March 10, 2017

"A Kansas Nurse in the B.E.F., 1918: With the Tommies. Letters and other Memories from Florence Edith Hemphill, U.S. Army Nurse Corps, British Expeditionary Force in World War I" by Doran Cart, senior curator, The National World War I Museum and Memorial. Nurse Florence Hemphill was from southeast Kansas but served in the British Army in World War I. Her letters are preserved at The National World War I Museum and Memorial and have been edited and published by curator Doran Cart.

6:30 p.m. Friday, April 14, 2017

"The Development of Chemical Warfare" by Kip Lindberg, director, Chemical Corps Museum, U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. The First World War saw the implementation of many types of new weapons. However, it was the introduction of poison gas that caught the World's attention, and has held it for the past century. The program will cover the development of chemical warfare in World War I: why poisonous gas use was initiated, what gases were used and what were their effects, and what is the legacy of chemical warfare 100 years later.

6:30 p.m. Friday, May 12, 2017

"Serving America While Serving Time" by Kori Thompson, instructor, Hutchinson Community College. As the U.S. came closer to entering World War I, men volunteered for service, including six inmates from the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory. Many people questioned their morality and ability to serve. This presentation tells the story of these men and why, in 1918, the Kansas adjutant general instructed the draft boards and recruitment offices to induct them into service. Nearly 250 inmates and former inmates were either drafted or enlisted and served in some capacity during World War I, and some even died in combat.

6:30 p.m. Friday, June 9, 2017

"Doughboys and Doughnut Girls: The Salvation Army and WWI" by Chris Cantwell, assistant professor of history, University of Missouri, Kansas City.

Support for Museum After Hours comes from Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area. The Kansas Museum of History is located at 6425 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka. For more information, call 785-272-8681, ext. 415, or visit [kshs.org/museum](http://kshs.org/museum).

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