By Shelby Hagerdon
Freshman at Wayne State College, History Major

Irvan Benjamin Lyons was a WWII veteran. He attended the State Normal School, now Wayne State College, and later died from his wounds in France during the war. Irvan represents the millions of young men who died during this war—without their story ever being told. These are the facts of his life.

Youth and School

Harvy and Sarah “Lizzie” Lyons lived in Charter Oak, Iowa, when Irvan was born on June 2, 1891. They already had three children and another four would come after Irvan’s birth. While he was still a child, they moved to a farm near Winside outside Wayne, Nebraska. He and his siblings went to school and attended church. Nevertheless, Irvan later attended the State Normal School during the winter of 1909-11. After leaving school, Irvan became a farmer near Winside.

Registration, Training

On June 5, 1917—three days after his twenty-sixth birthday—Irvan registered for the draft. He recorded being a single farmer with no dependents. He was of medium build with blue eyes and brown hair.

Drafined, Irvan left for training at Camp Cody in New Mexico on October 3. Camp Cody, which had been abandoned by William Frederick “Buffalo Bill” Cody, was the army training camp for Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota. Soldiers there prepared to leave for France. Together, the men were the 34th Division, but the camp’s desert climate gave them the nickname “Sandstorm Division.”

For a year and a half, Camp Cody saw over 30,000 men pass through. On average, they baked 10,000 loaves of bread a day to feed them all. Existing quarters consisted of tents equipped with electricity. There were eight men per tent.

The men awoke at 5:30 each morning to a band marching through the regiment. The camp also provided entertainment, with the Liberty Theatre presenting vaudeville, films, and musical comedy.

Replacements

To the dismay of the men who had trained for months, Sandstorm was chosen as a replacement division. The companies, batteries, and regiments that had been organized were divided up, and the men were transferred to other divisions. The men who did remain part of Sandstorm arrived in France in October, but they did not engage in any action as a division.

Six months after Irvan arrived in New Mexico, he left for France on June 29, 1918, twenty-eight days after his twenty-seventh birthday.

32nd Division

Irvan was transferred from the Sandstorm Division to the 125th Infantry Company M under the 32nd Division sometime after the start of the Meuse-Argonne Campaign. Due to the confusion of the war and the exact date he arrived in France is unknown.

The 32nd Division gained its fame for having for the first US soldiers to set foot in Germany during the war. The French referred to them as the Les Terribles for their tenacity and ability to fight over rough terrain others could not cross.

Their shoulder patch, a red arrow with a line crossing through the middle, represented how the division was able to break through enemy defense line in face.

The 32nd Division’s shoulder patch commemorated their ability to break through enemy lines.

In Memoriam

The Lyons family in Wayne were unaware of Irvan’s death for over two months. When notice of this passing was published in the Omaha Bee on December 18, the wrong address was used. The newspaper had Irvan’s place of birth, Charter Oak, Iowa, not his Nebraska place of residence.

The family prayed it was different Irvan Lyons. But, shortly after the announcement, the death was reported in a different paper with the correct address.

Irvan’s death wasn’t the only tragedy the family experienced that year. On November 29, Irvan’s brother Reuben died, and, on December 4, his mother, Lizzie, was lost as well.

The two died from the Spanish Flu, an epidemic which killed an estimated 20 million to 100 million people worldwide. At the time of their deaths, they were unaware of Irvan’s passing.

Back Home

While at Camp Cody, Irvan Lyons and other soldiers were frequently treated to entertainment in between their military training exercises.

The Lyons family continued their lives in Wayne. Irvan’s brother Elmer registered for the draft in WWII, but never fought. He became a farmer like his brother and father.

According to the 1940 census, Harvy, Irvan’s father, was living with Elmer and his family. Harvy died two years after the census was taken.

Moving On

Irvan’s body was not returned to Nebraska until October 15, 1921—three years after his death.

His was one of 25 Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota men to arrive that day at the Union Station in Omaha. Hugs were lowered at half-mast and services were conducted at the station. He was buried in Laurel, Nebraska. The Lyons family continued their lives in Wayne.

Making the World Safe for Democracy?

By Dr. Lloyd Ambrosius, University of Nebraska Emeritus Professor of History, with Kristi Hayek Carley

“Great War” as it was called at the time had started in the summer of 1914 and not only continued until November 1918. Germany, exhausted and alone, gave up its stalemate of Central Powers capitulated.

The large-scale conflict may have ceased that November, but conflicts continued in the postwar years. Various powers on the periphery sought to preserve or extend their empires, while others struggled to establish their national identities in new states. The Great War continued to influence domestic politics and international relations in the coming years.

New World Order

Wilson had hoped to guide Europe and other nations into a new world order. He wanted, as he proclaimed in his war message, to “make the world safe for democracy.” That vision proved far easier for the president to articulate in theory than to accomplish in practice. The world was deeply divided by competing ideologies and by imperial, national, racial, ethnic, and economic interests. A new democratic world order would prove elusive after the war.
Wilson's own modern liberalism furnished the ideological foundation for his new foreign policy, which historians have labeled as “liberal internationalism,” or, “Wilsonianism.” He envisaged a new world order that embraced the fundamental tenets of America's own national identity.

League of Nations

Wilson hoped the Great War would culminate in a new international community of liberal democracies with capitalist economies. He saw nation-states as the building blocks of this new world order. Poirot was his idea for the League of Nations, a postwar international organization that would preserve the peace by preventing future aggression across national borders. Wilson gave top priority to the creation of this new League at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919.

It promised what was later called collective security, one of the tenets of Wilsonianism. As the president conceived it, the League would consist of democratic nation-states that joined together to guarantee mutual defense against external aggression, and thereby enhance trade and cultural exchange. As a global community, the League would replace the old world order that relied on balances of power and military alliances. Each of the League's member nations could achieve national security without having to maintain large armies or navies.

Self-Determination

A second tenet of Wilsonianism was the notion of national self-determination, affirming both state sovereignty and colonial rights. Just as Americans had claimed this right during the American Revolution against the British Empire, some new nations would emerge from the dissolution of the old Russian, German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires in Europe and the Middle East.

While proclaiming the idea of national self-determination as a universal principle, Wilson did not extend it to all peoples throughout the world. He felt only nations that had achieved a mature level of political development could be entrusted to govern themselves.

International Trade

Wilson’s vision of a liberal democratic world order favored an “Open Door” in international commerce and finance as well as in travel and cultural exchange. He wanted to guarantee freedom of the seas and to remove barriers to trade and investment across borders. Wilson also called for a new system of diplomacy to facilitate international transactions more transparently. This kind of world order would facilitate the operations of international capitalism, as well as New Freedom promoted at home.

Progressive History

The final undergirding tenet of Wilsonianism was a belief in progressive history. In Wilson’s view, world history revealed a progressive pattern of development in all aspects of life as primitive peoples moved toward greater maturity over time.

The idea of progress in human history seemed self-evident to Wilson as the theory of evolution in science. The Allied powers had achieved a mature political development that fulfilled the best model for other nations.

Wilson espoused the ideology of American exceptionalism, and believed that making the world safe for democracy required the global triumph of Wilsonianism.

Ironically, while he offered the United States as the ideal model of a world, he accorded its own unexceptionalism. As the global fulfillment of its own providential history and destiny, Wilson said the United States would help other nations achieve the same blessings of liberty for themselves.

In 1917, he proclaimed that, “We are saying to all mankind, We did not set up the government in order that we might have a selfish and separate liberty, for the first time in the history of the world, come to the field of the cause of human liberty.”

He continued, “Such a time has come, and in the providence of God America will once more have an opportunity to show to the world that she was born to serve mankind.”

Idealological Framework

Despite the resistance to this new world order from other nations that Wilson encountered at the peace conference, after the war he continued to interpret international interactions within the ideological framework of American exceptionalism.

In September 1919, he stated, “It is a matter of supreme concern that the League should be a permanent religious influence for the greater cause of human liberty.”

Wilson claimed to have offered that understanding to the peacemakers at Paris and expected his fellow Americans to accept it as well. He expected the U.S. to support the Versailles Treaty with Germany, and especially the Covenant that made the new League of Nations a part of the peace settlement.

Wilson’s providential mission to reform the world challenged his fellow Americans to undertake an unprecedented role in international affairs. But while he touted his vision of a new world order, it was not reforming the world as he had promised.

Forced Compromise

At Paris foreign leaders had resisted or rejected Wilsonian ideas, forcing him to compromise. The real world did not match the utopian vision of a community of nations based on modern liberalism. The Allies pursued their own national interests, although they agreed sufficiently to draft the Versailles Treaty. Germany challenged the peace settlement in a more fulsome way when it went through the Treaty of Versailles as revised. After it had defeated the treaty, the Germans evaded its requirements and sought its revision.

The peace conference represented only the victors. It had excluded Lenin's Bolshevik regime, which Wilson had offered to help. After it had defeated the treaty, the Germans evaded its requirements and sought its revision.

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WOODROW WILSON: Advocate for peace...but at what cost?

By Paul Vickery, Ph.D.

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Woodrow Wilson became Democratic machine politics, Wilson into both academia and state. 1885, Wilson had married Augusta, Georgia. By Jefferson Davis being Confederate President Carolina. grew up in the charred come from the South and I Beethoven and Bach? German composers such as attitude that promoted the disastrous of all wars. Civic...
William Jennings Bryan was born March 19, 1860 in Salem, Illinois. When he realized there was little chance of getting into politics in his home state, he moved to Nebraska in 1887, where he was elected Congressman three years later. He was a three-time Presidential nominee of the Democratic Party. In 1896, he was the youngest ever to throw his hat into the race, at 36 years old. He also ran in 1900 and 1908.

Bryan was a passionate Protestant but also a thoughtful, educated man who died peacefully in his sleep after the trial ended. During his lifetime, only the men who became president as well known or perhaps as effective in shaping the direction of American life through political and legal change as Bryan. Yet now he is the largely forgotten man of this period in American political and cultural history.

Bryan spoke throughout the country during three presidential campaigns, rallying crowds with his “Cross of Gold” speech. Bryan spoke at colleges and universities across Midwestern America, Professor Kachel retired as Head of the Theatre Program at Tulsa Community College in 1999. Although retired, he has taught part-time in religious studies and humanities at TCC, using his Ph.D. studies in Religion and Society from Columbia University (1975). He graduated magna cum laude from Union Theological Seminary, NYC, in 1965 and was a campus minister at Penn and Michigan universities until 1975.

His work today is touring in first-person performances as William Jennings Bryan, General William Tecumseh Sherman, Sir Winston Churchill, William Shakespeare, Joseph Mallord William Turner, or H.G. Wells. Since the summer of 2010 he has presented General Robert E. Lee in Oklahoma, Colorado, and Nevada Chautauqua programs as well as at the University of Kansas. In the summer of 2008, he was invited to present William Jennings Bryan in Dayton, Tennessee, for the annual July reenactment of the Scopes Trial in the historic courtroom where it happened. The climax of this performance was the recreation of Clarence Darrow’s cross-examination of Bryan during the final full day of this famous trial. Beginning in 2006, Dr. Kachel has worked with First Matter’s Watts Wacker, a futurist, presenting several of these Chautauqua characters while adding new character sketches of P.T. Barnum, Thomas A. Edison, Louis Pasteur, and Frank Lloyd Wright at meetings for Genworth Insurance, Hasbro Toys, T.B.G. Landscaping, Inc, and R.J. Reynolds American.

Democratic Faith

So, why is Bryan lost to our political memory? As a “passionate progressive conservative” he was a genuine paradox for later political commentators and scholars. As concern for minority rights against possible majority tyranny grew, our legal system has moved to trust procedural rules and deliberative processes rather than electoral politics and legislative reform.

Bryan believed even when he lost that “in the long run, given enough time, the people will form the questions, they will find the answers, and make the changes that will be best for all.” This was his democratic faith, perhaps as important to him as his evangelical protestant faith in shaping his actions, his ideas, and his hopes for the American future.

Bryan bet his life on the will of the majority. Minorities can only rule through force, so “Let the People Rule!”

A. Theodore Kachel

PG 4 The Chautauqua Reader 2018
By Helen Lewis

Jane Addams: Activist who championed human dignity

Like other educated, middle-class, 19th-century women who chose not to marry, Jane Addams struggled for many years to discover her path to a productive life of useful service to others. As founder of a settlement house, educator, author, labor agitator, peace advocate, and suffragist, Jane Addams promoted publicly her interpretation of democratic ideals, while maintaining a lifestyle that modeled her beliefs.

Born in Cedarville, Illinois, September 6, 1860, Jane Addams developed her social graces from her stepmother and her social graces from her father. Early in her career to become a fortunate children influ- enced her desire to assist the poor. After graduating from Rockford Seminary in 1881, she began what would become an eighteen-year search for purpose in her life.

Finding Direction

Upon visiting Toynbee Hall, a settlement house in London’s impoverished East End, Addams received her inspiration for her life’s direction: to found a settlement house in Chicago.

She established Hull House in 1889 to serve Chicago’s many immigrant families. Through this endeavor, Jane Addams fulfilled her dream of working among the poor while also creating possible opportunities to develop public lives.

Concerned for her neighbors’ needs for education, childcare, and medical service, Addams recruited kindergarten teachers, nursery workers, physicians, and visiting nurses.

From Hull House came the founder of the first juvenile detention center, fourteen schools in twelve years as a teacher, and fourteen schools in twelve years as a teacher.

Vulning Heritage

Determining to benefit others balanced by flexibility in how she could best assist those ends led Addams to work with the new Sociology Department of the University of Chicago. Her openness to new theories led her to adapt psychological and sociological studies to her philosophy. Hull House, thus developing a model of social reform based on community research.

Yet, her genuine respect and compassion for the underprivileged combined with her sincere appreciation for the value of other people’s heritages allowed her to adjust programs at Hull House to provide what her neighbors wanted, not just what Addams or others thought they needed. She believed that for social assistance to succeed, those in need had to identify what could best help them raise themselves out of poverty.

This trust in social democracy informed Jane Addams’ personal life as well as her political activities. Detesting snobbery and pity, Addams influenced others to join her in creating conditions that allowed her neighbors in Ward 19 to improve their own lives, rather than perpetuating the “charity work” that created a sense of inferiority in the giver and a sense of inferiority in the receiver.

Voting Rights

Addams’ social morality influenced her to assume the causes of the marginal. Even without the right to vote herself, the fully exerted pressure on local officials to make possible the means for others to achieve the American ideal of a decent life.

Exposing Democracy

Ironically, Addams frequently spoke as the “majority of one” when expressing dissent for all. But even when her ideas were met with scorn, she never lacked an audience. Nor did she ever show public opinion to dissease the dignity and worth of the individual. She steadfastly argued for the social claim to replace the family claim on the “right to vote.” Addams books express concern for the marginal individuals, especially children and women.

JANE ADDAMS:
Activist who championed human dignity

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By the time of her death, May 21, 1935, the world had become her neighborhood.

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Helen Lewis

Helen M. Lewis teaches Humanities and English at Western Iowa Tech Community College in Sioux City, Iowa. She also serves on numerous college, community, and state committees and boards. A Pennsylvanian by birth, Lewis attended fourteen schools in twelve years as a Navy child. With that foundation, Chautauqua travel feels quite comfortable.

A long-time fan of Chautauqua, Lewis became part of the Great Plains Chautauqua in 1999, portraying Jane Addams in “Behold Our New Century.” Lewis learned much by working with veteran Chautauqua Charles Pace as Booker T. Washington. Besides bringing Addams to many humanities audiences since 2002, Lewis has also portrayed Nebraska’s own Grace Abbott. Lewis reunited with Pace—he was her colonel and she as Grace Abbott—in Kearney, Nebraska for the “Vision for America: Notable Nebraska Reformers” Chautauqua.
William Edward Burghardt Du Bois’ ideas provide insight for understanding how one man helped turn his vision for a more democratic America into a concrete reality. Du Bois used scholarship, activism, and art to build an interracial coalition of leaders that mobilized the black public to transcend the obstacles embodied in the idea and ideology of white supremacy and so advanced democracy in America.

He was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1868. Du Bois, Harvard University’s first black Ph.D. (1896), working alone in 1868. Du Bois, Harvard started the emergence of “the Black Atlantic,” the international artistic and intellectual coalition of black artists on both sides of the Atlantic in 1900. As he informs us in “Dusk of Dawn”: “I prepared an exhibit of art and photography showing the condition of the Negro for the Paris Exposition which gained a Grand Prize. I became a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1900 and was made a fellow in 1904.”

This international representation of black life began the 20th century’s very close association of black writers, artists, musicians, and entertainers with the French public and that continues to this day. Examples of the participants include such luminaries as: Josephine Baker, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Miles Davis, Langston Hughes, and Gordon Parks, and many others. Following the Atlanta white race riot (1906) and the Springfield, Illinois, white race riot (1908), Du Bois became convinced that scholarship, while necessary, must be empowered by public action to stop the terror of lynching that was then emergent in American society.

This realization set in motion a creative coalition of white New York liberals, along with a select group of black leaders who, in 1909, founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.). This organization directly challenged the doctrine of white supremacy and the segregation laws that sprang from it.

Representing NAACP

Throughout these developments Du Bois quickly became the national personification of the NAACP. As founding editor of The Crisis: A Record of the Darker People (1910-1934), the monthly publication of the NAACP, Du Bois’ vision was quickly absorbed by tens of thousands of readers around the country and the world. Beginning with publication of 1,000 copies of 1910 issues, in excess of 100,000 copies of The Crisis were sold by 1918.

Combined with his many national public speaking tours, and several trips abroad, Du Bois helped build “the Association,” root and branch, into a national force for change.

Making Truth Reality

Blacks were lynched by the scores yearly, on a national basis. And, as the Great War progressed, so did the terror. Du Bois lamented about the year 1919, “During that year, 77 Negroes were lynched, of whom one was a woman and 11 were soldiers; of these, 14 were burned, 11 of them being burned alive. Du Bois understood that the implications of scientific knowledge would require generations before its meaning would have practical effect upon social behavior, and upon federal law. Therefore, his democratic vision required political mobilization to turn scientific truth into political reality.

Though destroying the legal basis of white supremacy was the agreed upon outcome, goal, there still arose an internal conflict: a conflict over the means, the timeable, and the degree of acceptable compromise in accomplishing that goal, between the two schools of thought that guided the race.

By 1915, this disagreement between Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, the most powerful black leader of the time (and some would argue, of all time) came to an end with Washington’s death. Thus, by a 1925 vintage point, Du Bois was the greatest champion of (while at the same time blocking homes) with the emerging group of young artists in the vanguard of the “New Negro” Arts Movement, now known as the Harlem Renaissance.

Arguing About Arts

The conflict centered on the propaganda potential of the arts in society. Some scholars date the Movement’s beginning in 1921, when The Crisis published Langston Hughes’ poem, “A Negro Speaks of Rivers.” This flowering of black artistic expression in music, dance, theater, the visual and plastic arts, photography, and especially literature reflects a difference in concept more than a difference of generation.

Du Bois argued that the arts should be used to propagate the “explicit” idea of a co-equal black humanity, as an explicit counter to the idea of white supremacy, rather than as the arts-for-arts-sake stance that the “Young Turks” demanded. To illustrate his point, Du Bois wrote the novel "The Dark Princess,” the second

Proving Science Wrong

Du Bois and a coalition of white and black scholars published ground-breaking research that convincingly argued that race was socially constructed and not genetically determined as science at that time asserted. His publication, The Philadelphia Negro (1899), and the partly series he edited, The Atlanta University Studies (1896-1917), produced a body of scholarship that still serves as a model of urban sociology scholarship.

Uniting Black Artists

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Combined with his many national public speaking tours, and several trips abroad, Du Bois helped build “the Association,” root and branch, into a national force for change.

Making Truth Reality

Blacks were lynched by the scores yearly, on a national basis. And, as the Great War progressed, so did the terror. Du Bois lamented about the year 1919, “During that year, 77 Negroes were lynched, of whom one was a woman and 11 were soldiers; of these, 14 were burned, 11 of them being burned alive. Du Bois understood that the implications of scientific knowledge would require generations before its meaning would have practical effect upon social behavior, and upon federal law. Therefore, his democratic vision required political mobilization to turn scientific truth into political reality.

Though destroying the legal basis of white supremacy was the agreed upon outcome, goal, there still arose an internal conflict: a conflict over the means, the timeable, and the degree of acceptable compromise in accomplishing that goal, between the two schools of thought that guided the race.

By 1915, this disagreement between Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, the most powerful black leader of the time (and some would argue, of all time) came to an end with Washington’s death. Thus, by a 1925 vintage point, Du Bois was the greatest champion of (while at the same time blocking homes) with the emerging group of young artists in the vanguard of the “New Negro” Arts Movement, now known as the Harlem Renaissance.

Arguing About Arts

The conflict centered on the propaganda potential of the arts in society. Some scholars date the Movement’s beginning in 1921, when The Crisis published Langston Hughes’ poem, “A Negro Speaks of Rivers.” This flowering of black artistic expression in music, dance, theater, the visual and plastic arts, photography, and especially literature reflects a difference in concept more than a difference of generation.

Du Bois argued that the arts should be used to propagate the “explicit” idea of a co-equal black humanity, as an explicit counter to the idea of white supremacy, rather than as the arts-for-arts-sake stance that the “Young Turks” demanded. To illustrate his point, Du Bois wrote the novel “The Dark Princess,” the second

Lasting Legacy

Historians all agree he left a lasting legacy in each of the following domains: scholarship, art, and activism. His most lasting is his publications, including 22 single-authored books. His other academic legacies include founding the sociology department at Atlanta University, as well as being the founding editor of the scholarly journal, Phylon: A Quarterly Review of Race and Culture.

In 1913, his colleague William Ferris made the following comment about Du Bois: “He holds a place in our nation’s culture: “Du Bois is one of the few men in history who was hurled on the throne of leadership by the dynamic force of the written word... who leaped to the front as a leader and became the head of a popular movement through impressing his personality upon men by means of a book.”

His activist legacy, of course, includes the founding of his organization The Niagara Movement, into the founding membership of the NAACP, and The Crisis, arguably the most influential black news publication ever. Du Bois wrote slowly, but most significantly, through a series of United States Supreme Court cases. Two in particular confirmed the wisdom of employing the courtroom as a site for structural political change. First, was the case against the all-white primary election system in 1944. Prior to this case, in the solid democratic south, the Democratic Party was run as a “private club” that barred blacks from participation, really. A decade later, the 1954 Brown vs. the Board of Education case struck down the legal basis for white supremacy.
EDITH WHARTON: Brilliant light in the Roaring Twenties

By Karen Varunch

Edith Wharton once said, “There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.” Wharton truly did shine brilliantly. Even in her own day, according to biographer Connie Nordhielm Wooldridge, she was thought to be the most accomplished and admired American writer of the times.

She was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize and her books became immediate bestsellers. However, besides her impact on the “feminist” literature, Wharton was a powerhouse of relief activity during World War I, profoundly affecting her role in society. As an author and World War I social worker, Wharton was able to contribute to the rebuilding of her beloved France.

Prolific Author

So began Wharton’s illustrious career in writing, producing an impressive quantity and quality of work over her lifetime. She published 23 novels, numerous short stories, articles, volumes of poetry, and many non-fiction books, including travelogues of her extensive journeys through Europe, books on architecture and gardens, and first-hand accounts of World War I. A dedicated professional, Wharton documented every morning of her craft, working at least two to three hours a day.

This commitment to a writer’s life did not come easy. As she states in her autobiography, “I had to fight my way through a fog of indifference, if not despair.” Wharton was able to overcome that disappointment and establish herself as an acclaimed writer. According to biographer R.W.B. Lewis, she earned as much as $200,000 a year from the sales of her books in the 1920s, a considerable income in those days.

Also, she was considered to be a significant American writer. She was a master of satire and irony. Many of her novels explored the issues of class and hypocrisy and encouraged American involvement.

Committed to Serve

When the Great War began, Wharton immediately immersed herself in projects for the war effort. One of her first initiatives was to begin a workroom for women refugees in Paris. Not thinking the war would last long, she left the workroom in capable hands, to visit her friend Henry James for an extended stay in Florence.

It soon became apparent that the war would continue. Wharton could have stayed safely away from the war zone, but instead made her way back to Paris. For the remainder of the war, she would work tirelessly, helping wounded soldiers and many orphans.

Edith was good at raising money, but she also used her skills as a writer to help fund the war effort. She edited a book of essays, poems and artwork from artists around Europe. All proceeds from “The Book of the Homeless,” published in 1916, went to support those directly affected by the war. The book included personalities and artists of the day, including her dear friend Henry James. Still, more money was needed.

Edith Wharton, born into wealth, Wharton deftly combined her training in law with a lively social and garden life, as well as a Chautauqua scholar.

Born into wealth, Wharton deftly combined her training in law with a lively social and garden life, as well as a Chautauqua scholar.

Passion for Europe

Born into a wealthy New York society family, Wharton spent much of her childhood in Europe. As an adult, she divided her time between America and Europe, eventually settling in France.

Wharton passionately adored European architecture and gardens and wrote about these topics. She also created a stir in America with the first book she ever published, “The Decoration of Houses.” Written with architect Ogden Codman, Jr., their book celebrated simplicity of design inside houses as well as out. The first edition sold out quickly and the book became a touchstone for a new design movement in America, according to biographer R.W.B. Lewis.

Wharton continued writing through the decade of the 1920s. Sadly, while she had been considered to be a brave writer in her early days, taking chances and writing about real human experiences, by the 1920s, she was considered to be outmoded.

Contemporary writers such as T. S. Eliot and James Joyce looked upon her work as old-fashioned, according to Mary Carney. However, several Jazz Age writers still admired Edith Wharton.

In her autobiography, Wharton related a comical story of when F. Scott Fitzgerald came to visit, visibly nervous at meeting the great writer. In fact, Helen Kiliou said that Wharton’s novel “Glimpses of the Moon” was an important influence on Fitzgerald’s “The Great Gatsby.” But it was “Glimpses of the Moon,” that Carney states, “became identified as evidence of Wharton’s outmoded sensibilities and style,” despite its popularity and success at the time.

Perhaps Wharton is not considered as modern as the writers of the Roaring Twenties. Still, her work has lasted the test of time. She was certainly honored in her day, receiving both the Pulitzer and an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Yale University in 1923, the first woman to receive this honor.

Wharton continues to be read, and films have been made of her novels, including “Age of Innocence” and “Ethan Frome.” But, while she is celebrated as a novelist and writer, few Americans are familiar with her work. In 1923, the first woman to receive this honor.

Wharton novels have been popular adaptations for film and theatre. Actors Katherine Cornell portrayed Countess Ellen Olenska in a 1929 dramatization of “The Age of Innocence.”

Karen Varunch
Karen Varunch of West Virginia is a traditional storyteller, as well as a Chautauqua scholar.

She has toured nationally and internationally with her play “Coal Camp Memories,” based on oral history and the Chautauqua Reader
The History of Chautauqua in Nebraska

Traveling Chautauquas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries brought the world to rural communities in Nebraska.

Chautauqua combined programs of political oratory and lectures about health, science, and the humanities, with entertainment, such as opera singers and stage performances of Shakespeare. Audiences heard about nature from their neighbors and their views with their neighbors. For many rural Nebraskans, Chautauqua was the most important week of the year.

The success of the Crete Chautauqua encouraged businessmen in Beatrice to start a similar enterprise in 1889. Other Chautauqua programs sprang up across the state. Tent cities blossomed for week-long periods at the Chautauqua camp in Beatrice. Some people camped while hundreds drove in, returning home to farm chores by night.

Chautauqua Circuits

At the turn of the 20th century, Chautauqua circuits were created. National Chautauqua promoters would roll into town, put up a big tent, and overnight, towns would be transformed into bustling cultural centers. Tent cities still appeared, but the Chautauqua circuits emphasized entertainment and more than just the opportunity to become historians. You Chautauqua Camp provides students in 4th-8th grades the opportunity to become historians.

In 1887, Kearney had its first Chautauqua circuit. Kearney had “the vision and ideals that make for permanent Chautauquas.” At that point, the idea of Chautauqua appeared to be a permanent one and, for many years, Nebraska citizens looked forward to the Chautauqua that packed the benches to participate in the Crete Chautauqua, giving it the reputation of the greatest in Nebraska. Some people attended the Crete Chautauqua, giving it the reputation of the greatest in the Missouri Valley.

According to Edna Luce’s “Chautauqua,” the 1907 circuit brought campers to Kearney who would “enjoy the beauty of the living situation of the life amid the cool breezes and the shade of the park.” Local’s gathered at Third Ward City Park to hear orators and such musical performances as the Williams’ Original Dixie Jubilee Singers.

World War I was a brutal conflict in which many men faced danger and death. On one hand, the war’s development became believed by readers both then and now. How did the view of the war change in the literature as time passed from the beginning of the war to the time after the war? How did these works help the country to deal with the aftermath of the war? What is their value for readers today?

Presented by Charles Everett Pace

Religion in American Politics: From Bryan to Bush

The emergence of a “religious right” especially in the Republican Party has raised many questions about the role of religion in American’s political life. We go “beyond the future” by looking at how Bryan was influenced by his Protestant Evangelical faith to seek progressive reforms in his political campaigns and crusades. What is now seen as a religious vision that only leads to conservative economic and political movements found in Bryan just the opposite sense of what his religious faith demanded of him as a political leader. We will look at one of his most famous Chautauqua speeches, “The Prince of Peace,” to uncover how he made this turn from conservative faith to progressive politics.

Presented by A. Theodore Kachel

Youth Chautauqua Camp

For children grades 4 through 8 • Registration required

This workshop will introduce students to the story of the 369th Infantry Regiment, “The Harlem Hellfighters,” one of the most decorated American fighting units in the war as well as the role of African-American soldiers in the war. The 369th served with the French and spent 191 days under continuous fire, the longest stretch of any American regiment. Also portrayed that person under the test in the final camp day at the Chautauqua evening presentation. The camp encourages students to uncover fascinating local stories and learn valuable research and performance skills in the process.

Modern Chautauqua

Humanities Nebraska (HN) rekindled the tradition in 1984 with modern Chautauquas that use public forum and discussion to focus on a particular historical era or cultural movement. HN has brought humanities-based Chautauqua programs to communities all across this great state.

Humanities Nebraska is honored to continue its Chautauqua tradition by partnering with the Humanities of Wayne and Sidney to present “World War I: Legacies of a Forgotten War” in 2018.

Presented by Ann Birney & Joyce Thierer

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Spanish Influenza was an epidemic disease that started on the Great Plains of America. It was caused by an epidemic disease that started in Haskell County, Kansas. During the outbreak, a Haskell County man went to Fort Riley to visit his brother while, unbeknownst to him, his child fell under the pall of the epidemic at home. Another soldier had a five-day furball in February and spent it at Haskell. He returned to Fort Riley as a soldier at Fort Riley came from a farm in Haskell. His patients were formerly, Embark for Europe, they carried the virus unknowingly to Embark for France. Estaples was the staging area for millions of allied troops, so the disease quickly spread to the trenches, and, as troops returned home, to the world. The deaths were staggering – eight million in India, 49 million in Japan, and approximately 675,000 in the U.S. Worldwide, between 50 and 100 million people died, or 3%-6% of the population. The largest number of cases were reported among soldiers enrolled in the Student Army Training Corps on the campus of Nebraska Normal School. The administration converted the dormitories and the Industrial Arts Building into hospitals for the care of the sick, who were in essence ‘quarantined’ patients. Nebraska State Normal School (now called Wayne State College) closed down in mid-October and sent students home. In Hastings, the college was quarantined, and military pickets were called to prevent students from leaving. In Norfolk, 101 homes were quarantined. Authorities in Sidney quarantined the town without a single case of the flu being reported as a precautionary measure. In the end, 20,000 people were infected with the virus in Nebraska, leading to an estimated 1,500 deaths. Then, the disease dissipated almost as fast as it arrived. No one knows why the virus ceased to be deadly, but one theory is that it may have mutated to a less violent form. On October 11, 1918, the ban against public gatherings in Wayne came to an end. By the time the ban was lifted on Armistice Day, November 11, the epidemic was waning worldwide. For many, the deaths were remembered as war casualties and not as Spanish Flu. Teaching us that the prevention of the spread of the flu became the major fight.
**Schedule of Events**

**ONGOING**
World War I posters from the WSC Library Collection, Peterson Fine Arts 210

**THURSDAY, MAY 31**
6:30 p.m. Lecture by Karen Shoemaker, author of “The Meaning of Names,” Wayne Public Library

**THURSDAY, MAY 31 THROUGH SUNDAY, JUNE 3**
7 p.m. “Spirit, Destiny: An American Hero” animated film, the Majestic Theatre, $10

**MONDAY, JUNE 4**
11:10 a.m. Music of the WWI Era 1914-1918* by Jack Imdieke, Ramsey Center, 410 N Pearl St., Suite B
1-1:5 p.m. Youth Chautauqua Camp, Wayne Public Library *Preregistration required
3-5 p.m. “Remembering the Family Story” workshop, hosted by the Wayne State College Department of Language and Literature, Wayne Public Library

**TUESDAY, JUNE 5**
1-1:5 p.m. Youth Chautauqua Camp, Wayne Public Library

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6**
1-1:5 p.m. Youth Chautauqua Camp, Wayne Public Library
6:30 p.m. Meet the Chautauquans, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, Wayne State College (WSC)

**THURSDAY, JUNE 7**
10:30 a.m. Meet of Bison: Black Units in WWI by Charles Everett Pace (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
12:30 p.m. Picketing the President, Helen Lewis (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
1-1:5 p.m. Youth Chautauqua Camp, Wayne Public Library
2 p.m. “Women of WWII,” Karen Varanch (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
6:30 p.m. The Front Porch Pickers, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
7 p.m. Paul Vickery as President Woodrow Wilson, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
3:30 p.m. An evening with Williams Bryan (Ted Kachel), Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC

**FRIDAY, JUNE 8**
10:30 a.m. “WWI Weapons,” Paul Vickery (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
12:30 p.m. “Opposition to the Great War,” Ted Kachel (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
1-1:5 p.m. Youth Chautauqua Camp, Ramsey Theatre, Wayne State College
2 p.m. “Winning Hearts and Minds,” Charles Everett Pace (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
5:30 p.m. Meal by Rotary Club of Wayne, Willow Bowl, Wayne State College (free with donation)
6 p.m. Youth Chautauqua presentations, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
7:15 p.m. Paul Vickery as President Woodrow Wilson, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
7:30 p.m. An evening with June Addams (Helen Lewis), Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
9 p.m. Chautauqua After Hours, Johnnie Byrd Brewing Company, 121 N. Pearl St. (www.johnniebyrd.beer), $5

**SATURDAY, JUNE 9**
10:30 a.m. “Post War Relief Efforts,” Helen Lewis, (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
12:30 p.m. “German-Americans in WWI,” Paul Vickery (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
2 p.m. “Literature of the 1920s,” Karen Varanch (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
6:30 p.m. Wayne Community Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, Room 210, Wayne State College
7:15 p.m. Paul Vickery as President Woodrow Wilson, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
7:30 p.m. An evening with W.E.B. Du Bois (Charles Everett Pace), Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
9 p.m. Chautauqua After Hours, Johnnie Byrd Brewing Company, 121 N. Pearl St. (www.johnniebyrd.beer), $5

**SUNDAY, JUNE 10**
2 p.m. “Religion in American Politics: From Bryan to Bush,” Ted Kachel (Adult Workshop), Gardner Building, Room 115, WSC
3:30-4:30 p.m. Historical Presentations and Reception, Wayne County Historical Museum, 7th and Lincoln Streets
6:30 p.m. Local Entertainment, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
7:15 p.m. Paul Vickery as President Woodrow Wilson, Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC
7:30 p.m. An evening with Edith Wharton (Karen Vuranch), Ramsey Theatre, Peterson Fine Arts Building, WSC

*Presentations only, not part of the Nebraska Chautauqua agenda.*

Adult workshops are scheduled to last approximately one hour.

For more information and a mobile-friendly agenda, please visit www.NebraskaChautauqua.org