

# WAR STORIES

DISPATCHES FROM THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WAR AND SOCIETY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

## Humming with Activity

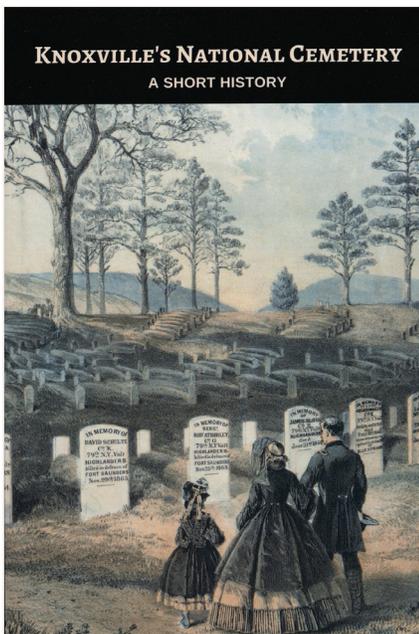
As you read this new issue of our newsletter, the center is humming with a brand new level of activity.



We are proud of the progress we are making as part of the Veterans Legacy Program. New discoveries cascade in, unexpected research leads reveal themselves, and undergraduate researchers are gaining unique experiences! We have even bigger plans for the future! Thank you for helping us realize our vision for all that our center can be!

- Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, Director

## CSWS Partnerships Produce Knoxville National Cemetery Book, Teachers' Workshop, and Video Documentary



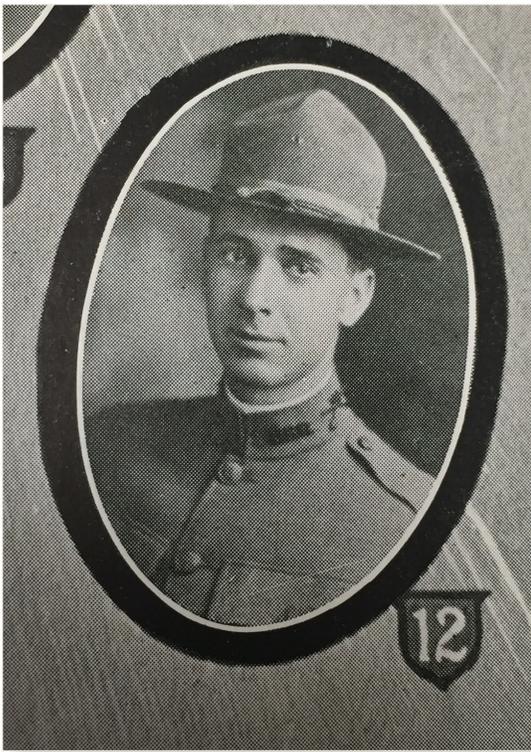
After being awarded the Veterans Legacy Program contract from the Department of Veterans Affairs earlier this year, we are thrilled to have so much good news to report. In the last several months, the student researchers have continued to investigate and document the individual stories of veterans buried in Knoxville National Cemetery. CSWS staff have made public appeals for information about these veterans on local television and at various local organizations' meetings.

There was also a dynamic teachers' workshop held at the East Tennessee Historical Society where about 17 local schoolteachers were introduced to excellent new lesson plans for K-12 education, which weave in stories of veterans buried with honors at the Knoxville National Cemetery. These lesson plans were produced by a master teacher, Katherine Petko. This was followed by a historical tour of the cemetery itself, led by local historian Jack Neely. Neely and Paul James of the Knox History Project produced a book on the KNC that is a wonderful introduction to the Civil War Era creation and history of the cemetery and also highlights some of the veterans buried there. The book received a Knox Heritage Historic Preservation award in 2018.



To order a copy of the book go to  
[knoxvillehistoryproject.org](http://knoxvillehistoryproject.org).

The most recent product of our grant work is a brief 10-minute documentary, *The Knoxville Veterans Legacy Program at University of Tennessee*. In it, we chronicle the work that has been completed to date. Please view the documentary on our Facebook page or at our website: [csws.utk.edu](http://csws.utk.edu).



**WILLIAM HUGH ECKEL**  
**(1896-1918)**

## A Decorated Hometown Hero of the First World War

Second Lieutenant William Hugh Eckel was born in 1896. The Eckel family had been pioneer settlers in East Tennessee, originally from Germany. Before World War I, Eckel had been a member of Knoxville's Boy Scout Troop 4, doing 14-mile hikes in the area. He was enrolled at University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The 1917 university record shows him in the UT Battalion. He was then sent to train at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, and was commissioned as second lieutenant.

He was sent overseas with the 117th Infantry in May 1918. In October 1918, as part of the attack on the German Hindenburg Line defenses by the 30th Division, near Ponchaux in northern France, Eckel undertook courageous assaults on German machine-gun nests. His decoration citation speaks of hand-to-hand struggles with enemies and extraordinary bravery under fire, for the cause of saving his comrades. At the moment of the fiercest fighting, he was struck by a shell and suffered wounds that led him to die two days later, October 9, 1918, in the hospital.

He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Eckel was originally buried in a British Military Cemetery at Tincourt-Boucly in the Somme, but was reinterred in the Knoxville National Cemetery April 1, 1921.

## Veterans Oral History Project Update

**JULES BERNARD,**  
**WWII ARMY AIR FORCE**

Jules Bernard, a happy warrior and self-described airplane nut, was born in Thibodaux, Louisiana, where his father worked at the Laurel Valley Plantation. He was mechanically gifted and built their first radio in the 1930s. He also built model airplanes and repaired cars. He enlisted in 1940 as an aircraft mechanic and saw service in North Africa, Corsica, Algeria, Italy, England, and worked primarily on bombers.

It was in England that a *LIFE* magazine correspondent painted a scene of Bernard on the tail of B-17, which was published in July 1943. He and a buddy acquired a camera in North Africa. When they parted ways, Bernard brought home the wide angle lens and built his career with that acquisition. After he graduated from LSU-Baton Rouge in 1949, Bernard opened a photography studio and photographed anything and everything, from babies and weddings to oil rigs. He and his wife traveled out west and camped in their car. They lived and worked in Yosemite National Park for a time, she as a camp cook and he as a telephone lineman.

In 1967, he took a job at the United States space program in Huntsville, Alabama, where his high-speed photography played a role in the development of the moon buggy. From 1971-1985, he served as head of public relations and continuing education at the University of Tennessee Space Institute in Tullahoma. Bernard has never lost his love of aircraft. In 1968, he obtained his pilot's license and, after retirement, continued to build model aircraft and volunteered many hours at the Tennessee Museum of Aviation in Sevierville, Tennessee.



*Photo: CSWS undergraduate intern Kara Gilliam and Jules Bernard following his interview for our Veterans Oral History Project, led by program coordinator Cynthia Tinker.*



## *Center for the Study of War and Society* Honors WWI Centennial

One hundred years ago, Knoxville native and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, graduate Hugh Eckel was killed in northern France during an assault on German territory. When World War I ended, Eckel was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and buried in the Knoxville National Cemetery. Visitors can see his grave in a prominent place facing the central driveway.

This is just one of many stories told November 3, 2018, when UT's Center for the Study of War and Society, in conjunction with the East Tennessee History Center, held a day of events to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I.

Free and open to the public, the activities began at the East Tennessee History Center, in downtown Knoxville. The audience heard presentations from four faculty members from UT's Department of History, on topics that ranged from the Civil War to World War I as they related to local history and commemoration:

- **Luke Harlow**, associate professor and director of graduate studies, "Civil War Memory"
- **Monica Black**, associate professor and associate department head, "Comparative Memorialization Across Countries"
- **Patricia Rutenberg**, senior lecturer, "Memorials in the United States"
- **Vejas Liulevicius**, Distinguished Professor in the Humanities and director of the CSWS, "Knoxville and World War I"

At the start of the program, the center premiered a short documentary detailing the Veteran Legacy Program in Knoxville. This program, which was created by the US Department of Veterans Affairs, seeks to produce educational outreach programs about national cemeteries with the help of local universities and schools.

The VA awarded UT's center nearly \$77,000 for initiatives to memorialize veterans. Students at the university have worked, as part of the Veterans Legacy Program, to compile previously incomplete veterans' biographies and develop learning materials about Knoxville veterans and cemeteries.



The day culminated with a historic walking tour of Knoxville National Cemetery led by local historian Jack Neely, executive director of the Knoxville History Project.

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Your donation to the Center for the Study of War and Society will be used to help a dynamic organization dedicated to the study of the relationship between war and society. We undertake a mission of public service education through our study and research in the human experience of war and peace, international conflict, and diplomatic cooperation. The center also works to preserve the voice of the American veteran through an ongoing oral history program and a large World War II archival collection. The center administers several graduate fellowships and offers an internship program for undergraduates. It is also very active in community outreach and sponsors public lectures, as well as other events and conferences.

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For more information, visit [csws.utk.edu](http://csws.utk.edu)