



Museum to Commemorate Centennial of World War I Armistice

At 11:00 on November 11, 1918, the Western front went silent as the armistice that would end the Great War began. Though the armistice would lead to peace, World War I had already begun to transform the Twentieth Century. Besides the many sociopolitical effects, the war caused authors and artists to re-invent Western art.

In commemoration of the centennial of the armistice, we have planned a series of events for the fall that will explore various aspects of the War's effects.

On September 8-9, we will hold a Reading Retreat in Piggott. The books will consider the ambulance service and its effects on writers. There is limited space available at this retreat, but the evening events are open to everyone, starting with a reading by Steve Paul, author of *Hemingway at Eighteen* (see below). Following Paul's reading, we'll have a reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres in the Pfeiffer-Janes House, followed by a screening of *A Farewell to Arms* (1932). The film version of the novel premiered in New York and Piggott. We will be recreating that premiere in the room where it happened, the New Franklin Theatre (now Madpies Tea Room), including period appropriate refreshments. The cost for the evening is \$35. It's a unique opportunity, and we hope you can join us.

Other events commemorating the armistice include three coffeehouses. The first will explore World War I's influence on poetry and music (Sept. 11), the second will explore its influence on art (Oct. 9), and the third will explore World War I literature, especially how the seminal American WWI novel came to be written in Piggott (Nov. 13). These events are free to the public and held at the Piggott City Market.

On November 9-11, we will hold a Writers' Retreat which focuses on *A Farewell to Arms*. Join us for the whole retreat, or at lunch on Saturday for the planting of a WWI memorial tree.

The history of World War I is often underrepresented in American textbooks, but it is critically important in understanding our world today. Come share that history with us this fall.



Hemingway in World War I.

Hemingway at Eighteen Author to Visit on September 8



Steve Paul

The Chicago Review Press writes: In the summer of 1917, Ernest Hemingway was an eighteen-year-old high school graduate unsure of his future. The American entry into the Great War stirred thoughts of joining the army. While many of his friends in Oak Park, Illinois, were heading to college, Hemingway couldn't make up his mind and eventually chose to begin a career in writing and journalism at the *Kansas City Star*, one of the great newspapers of its day. In six and a half months at the *Star*, Hemingway experienced a compressed, streetwise alternative to a college education that opened his eyes to urban violence, the power of literature, the hard work of writing, and a constantly swirling stage of human comedy and drama. The Kansas City experience led Hemingway into the Red Cross ambulance service in Italy, where, two weeks before his nineteenth birthday, he was dangerously wounded at the front. Award-winning writer Steve Paul takes a measure of this pivotal year when Hemingway's self-invention and transformation began—from a "modest, rather shy and diffident boy" to a confident writer who aimed to find and record the truth throughout his life. *Hemingway at Eighteen* provides a fresh perspective on Hemingway's writing, sheds new light on this young man bound for greatness, and introduces anew a legendary American writer at the very beginning of his journey.

Friends of the Museum Visit Kansas City



Union Station, Kansas City

Kansas City, Missouri, home to internationally acclaimed music, barbecue, and a bustling arts community, gave Ernest Hemingway some of his earliest writing experiences as a cub reporter at *The Kansas City Star*. It made a perfect destination for a trip by Friends of the Pfeiffers, who visited the places important to Hemingway during his early career, as he was learning journalism and preparing to join the Red Cross as an ambulance driver."

Altogether Hemingway spent more than a year in Kansas City, interspersed with regular stops in Florida, Wyoming and Piggott. By the time he left to serve as an ambulance driver in the Great War, Hemingway had covered the police beat, spending time at Union Station where he observed the people coming in and out of the city, and the General Hospital, where he received updates on victims of crime and accidents.

The HPMEC delegation was able to catch a glimpse of Hemingway's busy schedule, but it also ventured into

landmarks that sprang up after he left.

The trip kicked off a series of museum programs commemorating the centennial of the armistice ending World War One. The National World War Museum and Memorial is located across from Union Station, where 60 percent of American soldiers departed.

The project was fully completed in 1926, after Kansas City residents joined forces with the Liberty Memorial Association (formed by municipal leaders) seven years earlier to raise over \$2.5 million in only 10 days to make construction a reality. The monument features classical Egyptian Revival-style design. Since 2004, the museum has been designated by Congress as America's official World War One Museum, the Liberty Memorial received National Historic Landmark status, and both received another congressional designation effectively recognizing the Museum and Liberty Memorial as the National World War One Museum and Memorial.

Kansas City's geographic importance to a nation moving westward makes it the natural home for the Arabia Steamboat Museum. Unearthed in 1987 by a father and two sons - Bob, Greg, and David Hawley - using maps and newspaper accounts (as well as a metal detector), the vessel sank after hitting a submerged walnut tree in the Missouri River. The men discovered it over a half-mile from the river.

The Arabia was constructed in 1853 for usage in transporting people and freight on the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. The Hawleys set out to memorialize the steamboat and undertook an excavation to find everything from formal dining place settings to countless artifacts stored on board.

The museum gave the group a first hand experience of the process of preservation. They were able to observe personnel using their craft to restore and preserve pieces of the collection in an open laboratory setting.

The group also visited the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, which is housed in the home of former *Star* publisher William Rockhill Nelson. Collections and exhibits are housed on multiple levels and highlight diverse artworks from Africa, Europe, and America, including works by Modernist artists whom Hemingway admired.

The museum sits on a 22-acre site that includes the Donald J. Hall Sculpture Park that is open year-round and is free to visitors. It is home to works of famed sculptors, ranging from Henry Moore to Roxy Paine.

Finally, the group was joined by Kansas Citian Steve Paul, whose book *Hemingway at Eighteen* details Ernest's time in the city. Paul will be visiting the museum on September 8.

The trip was a great start to our celebration of the end of the war and Hemingway's role in recording his experiences there.



National World War I Memorial