

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INDIANA WORLD WAR MEMORIAL AND WAR MUSEUM

Prepared by David M. Hart and Frances Colley
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A. General Questions about the Indiana World War Memorial

1. When was the Indiana World War Memorial built?

[The brochure states that construction began between 1926 and 1928 but that it took some decades for the memorial to be completed. Carved into the stone arch above the entrance on Pennsylvania St. (eastern side) is "Erected A.D. MCMXXVII" or 1927.]

2. What "World War" inspired the building of the IWWM?

[The First World War which lasted from 1914 to 1918. The U.S. entered the war in 1917 on the side of the Allied Powers.]

3. What is the name of the sculpture on the southern steps of the IWWM and what does it depict and what does it refer to?

[The name is the "Pro Patria Sculpture". It depicts a man draped with a flag. "Pro patria" is Latin for "for one's country". In the Museum the last room covering WW1 has is a copy of Wilfred Owen's war poem "The Old Lie" (but not attributed to him) on display. Wilfred Owen is the most famous British anti-war poet. He died in 1918 from his wounds. The final line comes from an Ode by the Latin poet Horace which reads "dulce et decorem est pro patria mori" ("it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country"). But Owen says in the poem that dying for one's country is a "lie" so it puzzles me that this poem is so prominently displayed in the Museum. Note also that in the Civil War section a bullet-riddled flag draped the body of Sgt. Major] Blanchard.

4. Inscribed above the main, northern entrance are some words which state the purpose of the IWWM. What is its purpose?

["to (help us) appreciate the privileges of citizenship; to inspire patriotism; and to (encourage) respect for law"]

B. The First Era (1775-1848)

1. In the War of Independence against the British Empire the Surrender of Fort Sackville on February 25, 1779 was important because it handed control of the Northwest Territory (present day Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin) to the American revolutionaries. Who surrendered to whom, and what shape are the British officers' hats?

[Unnamed British officers surrender to the American George Rogers Clark. The British officers are wearing a triangular "tricorne" hat.]

2. The song "Yankee Doodle Dandy" was a patriotic song which was sung at the first July 4th celebration in Philadelphia in 1777. It was originally written by a British doctor in 1758 to make fun of the American colonists, but new words were put to the music to turn it into an American patriotic song. What was the original meaning of the words "Yankee" and "Doodle"?

["Janke" was a common Dutch name of the period and this was changed to "Yankee" to mean any locally-born person. "Doodle" meant a fool or simple-minded person. So the combination of "Yankee Doodle" was not meant as a compliment. When "Yankee Doodle" stuck a feather in his cap and called it "macaroni" the macaroni referred to was an officer's insignia which the British thought the American officers who fought in the revolutionary armies didn't deserve.]

3. In the war against Mexico in 1846-47 what provinces or territories did the US acquire as a result of its military victories?

[New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, California, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado.]

C. The American Civil War (1861-1865)

1. A bullet-riddled flag was wrapped around the body of Sgt. Major Asa Blanchard who was killed in the Battle of Gettysburg on July 1, 1863. How many bullet holes are in the bottom red stripe? How many bullet holes are there in total?

[24. Who knows! Too many to count!]

2. What is the world's tallest Christmas tree and how high is it?

[Between November and January each year the Indianapolis Soldiers and Sailors Monument, built to commemorate the Civil War, is decorated as a Christmas tree. At 284.5 feet it is claimed to be the tallest Christmas Tree in the world.]

D. The First World War (1914-1918)

1. What countries fought in WW1? Who were members of the "Allied Powers"? Who were members of the "Central Powers"? When did the US enter the war and what side did it support?

[The main Allied Powers were Britain (and its empire and colonies including Australia and New Zealand (the "ANZACS"), and Canada), France (and its colonies), Belgium, Russia. The main Central Powers were Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey. The US entered the war in April 2, 1917 on the side of the Allied Powers.]

2. One of the bloodiest battles in WW1 was the Battle of the Somme (a river in north-eastern France) between July and November, 1916. How many British soldiers (and their allies, known as the British Expeditionary Force – or BEF) died? How many German soldiers died?

[The BEF suffered 420,000 soldiers killed. The Germans suffered 650,000 soldiers killed. So in 5 months over 1 million men died: i.e. nearly 200,000 per month, 50,000 per week, or 7,000 per day.]

3. Before radio or TV, propaganda posters were a common way to appeal to large numbers of ordinary people to support the war. In one American poster a young woman dressed as a soldier says "Gee, I wish were a man. I'd join the ..." What branch of the military did she want to join? Why did she say this?

[This is one of the most famous posters done by the American graphic designer William Christie. "Christie's girl" as she was known, wanted to join the Marines. She is urging young American men to join the armed services. At this time there was no conscription to force young men to serve in the army or marines so the military depended upon voluntary enlistment.]

4. Another kind of propaganda poster urged men in the colonies of the British Empire to fight for the "mother country" many thousands of miles away. In one of these posters a young colonial soldier says "Are you helping your overseas PALS in the Final Knockout?" He is asking young men in what countries

to join the army and fight in Europe?

[Australia, New Zealand and Canada.]

5. In WW1 most deaths in battle were caused by machine guns or shrapnel (sharp pieces of broken metal) from artillery shells. Yet soldiers were also expected to use a long knife (or bayonet) attached to the end of their rifle to kill the enemy in charges made from their trenches. How long was a French bayonet and what shape was the blade? Why do you think it was shaped in this way?

[The French bayonet on display is about 20 inches in length. The blade was shaped with grooves or "flutes" so that the wound it caused would be uneven in shape and thus not heal quickly. The blade was designed so that it would also break off pieces of uniform which would become stuck inside the wound. The intention was that if the bayonet thrust did not kill straight away then the infection from the wound would eventually kill the victim.]

6. The traditional soldier's helmet was designed to be ceremonial (for parades) not to protect the head from injury from bullets or shrapnel. In WW1 we see the development of steel helmets designed to protect the head. However, some old-fashioned German helmets were still used. What is on top of the German Picklehaube helmet?

[A brass colored spike.]

7. In WW1 soldiers dug deep trenches in the ground in order to seek shelter from machine guns and artillery. Much of their time was not spent fighting but waiting for something to happen. In their spare time the soldiers created "trench art". What did they use for their art and what did they "draw"?

[The examples on display are spent brass artillery shell casings which have drawings of flowers pressed or beaten into them.]

8. In the museum there is a display of a trench (which you can

walk through) like the many that were dug for hundreds of miles in north-eastern France and Belgium. How deep is the trench, what was used to reinforce the muddy sides of the trench, what is strung along the top of the trench, and what is its purpose?

[The trench is about 2 metres deep, or 7 feet; the walls are reinforced with wooden beams and sand bags; and along one side there is barbed wire (invented to fence off farm land in the American West but here used to entangle and delay any attacker) and on the other side telephone cables. WW1 was the first war in which telephone communication played an important role but it was of limited value because the cables were easily broken by artillery fire and thus needed constant repairs.]

9. WW1 was the first “modern war” in which mass-produced machinery was used for killing, such as trucks, tanks, airplanes, machine guns, artillery. Yet, some older technology was used in creative ways. What is on the handle bars of the Italian army bicycle? How useful would this have been as a weapon?

[The bicycle has a double-barrelled, pistol calibre machine gun attached to it. It looks very dangerous and clumsy to use. How would you aim it? How would you fire the guns while riding it?]

10. WW1 was described at the time as “The Great War” or “the war to end all wars” because of the terrible number of casualties. How many people were killed or wounded between 1914 and 1918?

[Dead: Indiana – 3,354; US - 364,800; Allied Powers – 22,104,209; Central Powers – 15,404,477. Total deaths – 37,876,840. Australia – 58,132.

Wounded: Indiana – 5,766; US – 234,300; Allied Powers – 12,831,004; Central Powers – 8,388,448. Total wounded – 21,459,518. Australia – 156,228.]

E. The Second World War (1939-1945)

1. WW2 broke out in Europe when Germany invaded its eastern neighbor Poland in September 1939. What countries were members of the "Axis Powers"? What countries were members of the "Allied Powers"? When did the US enter the war and why?

[The Axis Powers were made up of Germany, the Empire of Japan, and Italy. The Allied Powers were made up of Britain (and its colonies and allies), France (and its colonies), the Soviet Union (Russia). The US joined the Allies after it was attacked by Japan at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in December 1941.]

2. The Museum has a copy of The Indianapolis Times newspaper of Monday December 8, 1941 announcing the entry of the US into WW2. What are the headlines?

["F.D.R. (Franklin Delano Roosevelt) asks Congress to Declare war on Japs"]

3. Who was Ernie Pyle and why is he famous?

[Ernie Pyle was one of the most famous combat newspaper reporters in WW2. He was born in Indiana and killed in the Pacific theatre on April 18, 1945. He was popular among the soldiers for reporting the war from their perspective. He lived with the ordinary soldiers, ate their meals and slept in their tents.]

4. African Americans were not allowed to serve in the Army alongside their white compatriots until the Korean War. In WW2 they had to fight in segregated units. What name was given to the all-black 92nd Infantry Division which fought in Italy in August 1944? What was the name given to the all-black fighter and bomber pilots from Tennessee?

[The "Buffalo Soldiers". The "Tuskegee Airman" of whom 450 served overseas and 150 died.]

5. Japanese women would make a hand-stitched scarf for each soldier to wear around his waist to remind him of home. How many stitches were in these scarves?

[1,000.]

6. By the 1940s technology had progressed to the point that machine guns could be made small and light enough to be carried by individual soldiers. What was the nickname given to the standard sub-machine gun issued to the German army? What was the nickname given to the American equivalent?

[The German Army sub-machine gun was called the "burp gun" (probably because of the sound it made when fired); the American Army sub-machine gun was called the "grease gun" named because of its similar look to a grease gun used in car maintenance.]

7. After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the Imperial Japanese Army occupied most of East Asia (China) and South East Asia (Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines (which was an American colony)) and attacked the northern most part of Australia (the city of Dawin). 70,000 American and Filipino prisoners of war were taken in April 1942 and forced to march to a prisoner of war camp on the Bataan Peninsula. What was this event called, how many prisoners were taken, and how many survived the march?

[The Bataan Death March. There were 70,000 American and Filipino POWs of whom 16,000 died on the way to the POW camp on the Bataan Peninsula. The POWs died from a combination of malnutrition, disease, and brutal treatment by the Japanese soldiers. General MacArthur withdrew his forces to Australia and from there planned to retake the Philippines.]

F. The Korean War (1950-1954)

1. Which countries fought in the Korean War?

[Korea had been a Japanese colony. At the end of WW2 the northern part was occupied by the Soviet Army and the southern part was occupied by the American Army. Border disputes erupted into war in 1950. North Korea was supported by the Soviet Union (Russia) and China. South Korea was supported by the US and other powers (including Australia).]

2. What famous TV show is set in the Korean War and what does its name stand for?

[M*A*S*H – Mobile Army Surgical Hospital.]

3. Helicopters were first used in the Korean War. One of their most important uses was in bringing wounded soldiers to MASH units so their injuries could be operated on quickly, thus saving many lives. The Museum has a Korean War era helicopter. How many stretchers for injured soldiers could it carry? What is the number painted on its front window?

[Two – one on each side for balance. 407.]

4. In the Korean War “war dogs” in the “K9 Corps” were used by the Army extensively. How many dogs were used and what were they used for?

[1,500. They were used as sentries and scouts. The dogs’ acute sense of smell and hearing meant they could detect enemy soldiers quite easily.]

The Hall of Heroes

1. Along the walls of the steps leading up to the Hall of Heroes are lists of Hoosiers who served in the Army, Marines and Navy. Find someone with the same last name as yours, write down their full name and whether they were killed or injured.

[I found on the lists of Navy personnel 9 "Harts" and 1 "Colley". On the Army and Marine lists I found 1 "Colley" and a "Clyde Hart" who had died.]