

Program: Postcards of World War I
Speaker: Chuck Hazelrigg, RPh, DDS
Introduced by: Marty Meisenheimer
Attendance: 109
Scribe: Dick Carter
Editor: Bonnie Carter

Dr. Hazelrigg is a graduate of Butler University in pharmacy and pediatric dentistry. He collects vintage Indiana postcards of small towns, drug stores, sanitariums, asylums and even prisons. He presented a Sciencetech Club talk in 2014 about the history of Hook's Drug stores. (Email: cchazelrigg@sbcglobal.net)

What started as a hobby in collecting World War I postcards has now escalated to a collection of nearly 200 rare, mostly German, over 100-year-old postcards of the First World War. A PowerPoint presentation of numerous postcards was shown. Chuck has placed them in the following major groupings: battlegrounds; wounded soldiers; prisoners of war; weapons; civilians & children; cemeteries; foods; and the start & end of the war. In the past year or so, a different WW I postcard was brought to Chuck's attention from his source in Germany. It is a hand-drawn watercolor picture on a postcard by a military person, illustrating a cartoon or caricature of the war. These are rare and difficult to find. Every picture in this 138-slide presentation is a postcard and many are RPPC (Real Photo Post Cards). In 1907 Kodak enabled customers to make postcards from the pictures they took. Federal legislation permitted senders to include a message on the back of the postcard providing the means for a massive annotated and dated photo history that has been spreading throughout the world.

Chuck also reminded us of some recognized names from that time period. The Sopwith Camel was a British First World War single-seat biplane fighter aircraft introduced on the Western Front in 1917, developed by the Sopwith Aviation Company. This airplane was named for the noticeable hump on the structure that was used to prevent the machine guns from freezing at high altitudes. In many airplanes, synchronization gearing mechanisms allowed machine guns to shoot from behind the propellers, in synchrony with open gaps in the propeller positions, allowing bullets to safely go towards the targets, and generally not disabling that aircraft unless the mechanism got damaged. Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen (May 2, 1892– April 21, 1918), also known as the "Red Baron", was a fighter pilot with the German Air Force during World War I. He is considered the ace-of-aces of the war, being officially credited with 80 air combat victories. No postcards of Snoopy were shown!

The flu pandemic is said to have originated at a military complex in Kansas in March 1918. Soldiers from that facility were sent to Europe in May, prior to the 1918 November Armistice. Those soldiers are believed to have spread the infection, resulting in a flu pandemic that killed 50 million people worldwide. World War I had caused 16 million deaths.



Chuck Hozelrigg