

The Friends of Fort Trumbull State Park Welcome Alex Dubois as their September speaker on *The Art of War- World War I Posters*



On Thursday evening, September 28, 2017, at 7 p.m., The Friends of Fort Trumbull State Park will continue their 2017 series on World War I by welcoming Alex Dubois the Curator of Collections at the Litchfield Historical Society. Mr. Dubois will speak on *The Art of War: World War I Posters*.

In July 1914, World War I began in Europe; however, it took three years until the U.S. entered the conflict. In those three years, the problem facing the administration of Woodrow Wilson was how to convince a basically isolationist population who agreed with the song “I Didn’t Raise my Son to be a Soldier”, to one who would adopt “Over There” as one of the most popular songs of the era. Through the use of posters, they hoped to inspire people to enlist, to support their country on the home front, and to fear the evil enemy we were about to fight in a just war that required our participation and not our neutrality.

In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson decided to form the Committee on Public Information with the Division of Pictorial Publicity. As its chairman, he enlisted George Creed, who convinced Charles Dana Gibson, a prominent illustrator, to persuade his colleagues to support the war effort. In total, some 300 artists, painters, designers, illustrators and 33 cartoonists produced works for 58 separate government agencies.



The force of this artwork greatly contributed to the Allied victory. These posters were pasted on the sides of buildings, put in the windows of homes, posted in workplaces, published in magazines and placed in cable car windows. Who could ever forget the stern poster of Uncle Sam pointing to the viewer with the inscription saying, "I Want You for U.S. Army". One high government official stated, "Charles Dana Gibson and the Division of Pictorial Publicity did work of immense value in helping to win the war."

Mr. Dubois will speak about the large collection of World War I posters maintained by the Litchfield Historical Society. This collection ranges from widely-distributed government posters (Liberty Loans, United States Food Administration), to posters for relief efforts (American Red Cross), to those created within the Litchfield community (War Rallies, Red Cross chapter activities). In addition, his presentation will also include posters held in institutions across the world to tell the greater story of World War I poster creation.

Mr. Dubois, who has served as the Curator Collections at the Litchfield Historical Society for the past two years, is a graduate of Stonehill College with a B.A. in European History. In 2015, he was awarded the Master of Arts in Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program. He has also worked at The National Museum of Toys and Miniatures in Kansas City, Missouri, and served in various capacities at the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, The Farmers' Museum and Fenimore Art Museum, and the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

The presentation will take place at the Fort Trumbull Conference Center, 90 Walbach Street, New London, CT. The public is welcome to attend this free presentation. New members are always welcome. Come early as seating is limited.