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## NEWS

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Wilton Library captures moments from the Great War on May 20

Wilton, CT – The sepia-toned photos of great-grandpa in his new uniform before he headed off to the Great War are loose in a box in the attic. Or perhaps some fragile letters are carefully wrapped and in a bin in the basement. Wherever these artifacts are stored from people’s parents, grand- and great-grandparents, now is the time to bring them to Wilton Library for *World War One Memorabilia Digitization Day*, on May 20, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The library is partnering with the CT State Library for this special program commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States’ entry into the Great War.

During this four-hour event, digital archive specialists from the CT State Library will scan and photograph people’s memorabilia, briefly interview them for cataloguing purposes, and then upload the photos into the State’s growing online World War One collection. Families can bring in photos, medals, mementos, uniforms – anything that relates directly to the Great War. The whole process takes about fifteen minutes after which the items will be returned to participants. This project by the State was recently awarded a Common Heritage grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

According to Michael Bellacosa, community engagement manager at Wilton Library, “We are delighted to be co-hosting this program with the CT State Library. As we move further from this generation who participated in the war, it is important to keep these memories alive. This database is an exciting convergence of preserving old memories with new technology so that future generations may freely access this history.”

Elaine Tai-Lauria, executive director of Wilton Library noted, “It is quite empowering for people to be able to bring their loved ones’ mementos, have them digitized and entered into the State’s online collection. Essentially, participants will be contributing to Connecticut history

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right before their own eyes. This is such a unique project, Wilton's American Legion Post 86 will be gathering some of their WWI mementos to have them preserved online for others to see."

"American Legion Post 86 is pleased to support and participate in the upcoming WWI digitization day," said Bill Glass, Senior Vice Commander of American Legion Post 86 in Wilton. "The namesake of our Post, Wilton resident James B. Whipple, was killed in action in Belleau Aisne, France in 1918, and we have several pieces of memorabilia relating to his service that we plan to have digitized."

The State will be bringing in the equipment – scanners, cameras, recording devices and stations will be set up in the Brubeck Room. While the archivists are cataloguing items, attendees will be able to peruse books and other resources on World War I. People may even want to spend time learning about guided genealogy research on their ancestors from that period.

Wilton Library is located at 137 Old Ridgefield Road in the heart of Wilton Center. For more information, contact Michael Bellacosa at [mbellacosa@wiltonlibrary.org](mailto:mbellacosa@wiltonlibrary.org); 203-762-6318.

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**Caption:** Wilton Library and the CT State Library are partnering for a *World War One Memorabilia Digitization Day* at Wilton Library on Saturday, May 20, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. During this time, families may bring in their WWI mementos to be photographed, scanned, digitized and uploaded to the State's online World War One collection. No charge or registration. Visit [www.wiltonlibrary.org](http://www.wiltonlibrary.org) for more details or contact Michael Bellacosa, [mbellacosa@wiltonlibrary.org](mailto:mbellacosa@wiltonlibrary.org), 203-762-6318. Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road, Wilton, CT; [www.wiltonlibrary.org](http://www.wiltonlibrary.org); 203-762-3950. Photo credit: Wilton Historical Society/Permanent Collection/Gift of Elfriede and Carl Yoder/World War I Navy Uniform, 1918