



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

Almost two years ago Hilary announced that she would like to step down from her position as treasurer of the branch - which she has held since the inception of the branch in 2006. Unfortunately all these months later and we still haven't been able to fill the position completely. Time is now of the essence as Hilary will be standing down at the next AGM which will be in November. Hilary is more than happy to assist for a limited time the new chair in her other roles but this will just be for a limited period whilst replacements are found. To give you an idea of Hilary's involvement and the reliance that the branch has on her, apart from her role as treasurer she is also the newsletter editor and publisher, The Sentinel editor, the chief designer of all our programmes and literature, and she meets and greets and takes your money at every meeting. For 18 years she has held this branch together and we hold a

great debt to her. Please consider stepping up and volunteering if you are able - more than ever your branch needs you!

We will be enjoying three ten minute talks next month before our barbeque, but our Christmas meeting will also soon be upon us for which we will be seeking a similar number of short talks. If you fancy giving a presentation, please do let me know.

The WFA is running a tour from 27 to 30 September to study the battlefields of Artois 1915. The guide is Julian Whippy. He will be joined by Dr Jack Sheldon who has encyclopaedic knowledge of all things German Army on the Western Front. The cost is £750 per person, with a single supplement of £125. Full details can be found on the WFA website: www.westernfrontassociation.com.

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 13 August
Branch Summer Meeting
The Ed Shed at 7.30pm

A special evening to allow some greater social interaction than normal. There will be a couple of short talks by members along with a barbeque, and raffle. If you have anything you could donate to our raffle then we would be most grateful - all proceeds going to keep the branch alive and healthy.

Trevor Hek will be running the barbeque again this year for which we are very grateful. The choice will be the usual burger, jumbo hot dog or Halloumi in a bun. They are £4 each and this will be collected on the door along with your choice of burger etc.

The evening is an opportunity for members to bring along items for the interest of other members and enjoy an evening with others sharing your interest in the Great War.

Tuesday, 10 September
Morris Meredith Williams,
an Artist on the Western Front
Phyllida Shaw
The Ed Shed at 7.30pm

Born in Glamorgan, Morris Meredith Williams was trained in London at the Slade School of Art but working in Edinburgh, as an illustrator and teacher at Fettes College, when he joined up in April 1915. Commissioned into 17th (Service) Battalion (1st Glamorgan), the Welsh Regiment's first Bantam battalion, he later transferred to the Royal Engineers. In France from June 1916, he filled pocket-sized sketchbooks with vivid images of army life, in and behind the Front Line. These, combined with his correspondence with his wife, create a rare insight into a junior officer's days. This talk concludes with a brief look at the memorials on which they worked together after the war, including the famous frieze in the Scottish National War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle.

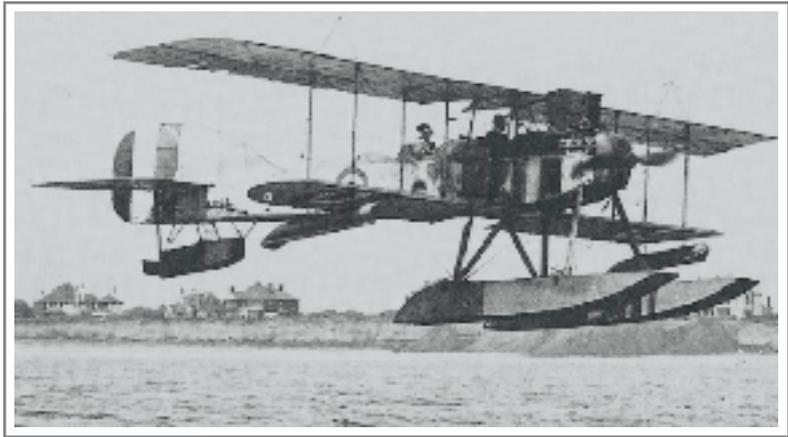
Sub-Lieutenant Herbert Joseph Page Royal Naval Air Service

Herbert Joseph Page was born in Cheltenham on 22 February 1890. He was one of three sons and a daughter born to Frederick Joseph Page and his wife Ann Eliza. His elder brother, Frederick Handley Page, was the founder of the Handley Page Aircraft Company. At the time of the Great War his family lived at Westcombe House, Berkeley Street, Cheltenham.

Herbert was a student at Cheltenham Grammar School before emigrating to Canada in about 1910. When in Canada he married, had one child and when war broke out, he was farming on Saturna Island, located between Vancouver Island and the British Columbia mainland.

In June 1915 he commenced flying instruction at Long Branch Aerodrome, Toronto, which was a pathway into the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) or the Royal Flying Corps and he obtained his flying certificate on 3 September that year and was immediately enrolled as a Flying Sub-Lieutenant in the RNAS. He travelled to England, with his wife and son, arriving on 5 October 1915 and on the 17th commenced a course at the School of Navigation, Portsmouth. Upon completing the course, he was posted to Eastbourne and after a month moved to Calshot, before arriving at (Great) Yarmouth Seaplane Station on 4 January 1916.

The aircraft based at Yarmouth flew anti-submarine and surface vessel patrols over the North Sea. At about 4pm on 15 February 1916 Sub-Lieutenant Page and his observer, Sub-Lieutenant Bernard Richards Lee took off on a patrol in a Short Type 827 Seaplane. They never returned from the patrol. Their fate is uncertain but it is likely that the aircraft



sustained a mechanical fault and was forced to land and was lost in rough seas. When it was recognised that the aircraft was overdue, all available ships were mustered to search but were recalled in the face of a south westerly gale. A Court of Inquiry determined that the machine was in perfect order before leaving and the weather conditions at time of takeoff were suitable.

Herbert Joseph Page was just short of 26 years of age when he died and is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial, the Cheltenham War Memorial and on the memorial inside Pate's Grammar School.

Graham Adams



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"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today."