



CHELTENHAM & GLOUCESTER BRANCH of THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

As always, thank you to everyone who donated 'unwanted' Christmas presents for this month's raffle. All fundraising efforts that we can make on behalf of the branch are important - whether it's to help cover the costs of speakers or room hire, or for other branch interests such as wreaths for Armistice Day or to lay on branch trips, or to supplement the expenses of our War Graves Project. Without these extra monies coming in it would make it increasingly difficult to cover all bases.

A little bit of forewarning that our May meeting (on the 14th) shall be starting slightly earlier - at 7.15pm. We have been approached by an old member of ours, Gareth Williams, who is now teaching at Kingham Hill School. Gareth has two pupils who wish to make a five minute presentation each on one of the fallen from their school war memorial. I'm sure you'll agree that this is most worthwhile to give the boys the opportunity, and important for the branch to engage with a (relatively) local school. So, please do put a note in your diaries to arrive slightly earlier on that date.

An exhibition, *Art of the Great War*, is at The Guildhall, Worcester from 2 February to 1 March

2019. It is a remarkable collection of original artworks gathered by John Noott. The exhibition features paintings, prints and drawings that bring to life varied aspects of the First World War from those who served either on the frontline or on the home front. John's father had served in the Royal Army Medical Corps in the Great War and John has always been interested in this period in history. He has collected works of art from the time from both well-known and amateur artists. The exhibition is open on Monday to Saturday, 9.30am to 4.30pm and entry is free.

Warhorse to Horsepower at the Tank Museum, Bovington, ends on 16 May 2019. The exhibition explores the transition from Cavalry to armoured vehicles, before during and after the First World War. With the original vehicles and model horses, a host of interactive displays and dramatic imagery, *Warhorse to Horsepower* has a multi-generational appeal and does justice to the experience of both men and horses 1914-1939. Entry to the exhibition is £12.50 for adults, £7.50 for children, concessions £9 and family tickets are available. www.tankmuseum.com.

Peter

Future branch events

Tuesday, 12 March

*From the Good Soldier to the Emperor:
The Austro-Hungarian Army 1914-1918*

Alan Wakefield

National Star College at 7.30pm

Tuesday, 9 April

Tiger Hunting

John Bourne

National Star College at 7.30pm

Despite a generally bad press, and grave problems, this multi-ethnic force remained in the field with its cohesion intact until the final months of the war.



John's informative, thought provoking and often amusing talk *Tiger Hunting* explores the evolution of commander and senior officer selection for duty on the Western Front. The process of identification, promotion and rejection is examined as the British Army sought ever more effective qualities for front line leadership.



Private Albert Thomas Blunt (5704) Army Cyclist Corps

Albert Blunt was born on 31 July 1892, one of eleven children born to Thomas and Mary Ann Blunt, of Kingsholm, Gloucester.

He joined the Army Special Reserve on a six year engagement on 3 January 1910 and was posted to the 2nd Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment in July of that year, acquiring the number 9356. Along with the battalion he was posted to Tiensin, China in September 1913.

Following the outbreak of war, the 2nd Glosters were recalled to the UK, arriving on 8 November 1914 and joined the BEF in France on 19 December 1914, remaining there until 27 November 1915. Whilst on a home leave Albert married Beatrice Ellen Mary Hannis at St Mark's Church, Kingsholm on 6 November 1915.

Whilst serving with the BEF Albert transferred to the Divisional Cyclists Section and when this became the Army Cyclist Corps he became part



of the 16th Corps Cyclists. He was posted to Salonika on 28 November 1915 and became an officer's servant.

Like so many who served on the Salonika Front, Albert contracted malaria and during leave in England was admitted to Kingston-upon-Thames Military Hospital on 13 August 1918, transferring to Horton (County of London) War Hospital, Epsom the following day. His condition deteriorated and he died, as a result of acute lumbur pneumonia, on 17 August 1918, aged 26.

He returned to Gloucester for burial in Gloucester Old Cemetery on 22 August. His brother, Private Ernest Sidney Blunt, was killed in action on 15 June 1918, whilst serving with the 1/5th Glosters in Italy and is buried in Boscon British Cemetery.

Graham Adams
for the Gloucestershire War Graves Project

The Colin Hardy Memorial Prize

The Colin Hardy Memorial Prize is a new competition to foster interest and scholarship in the First World War among young historians aged 16 to 19.

Colin's family invite papers of between 3,000 and 6,000 words (excluding the bibliography) on any subject associated with the First World War. Original ideas and perspectives, along with evidence of primary research, are strongly encouraged.

The winner will receive an award of £1,000 and the runner-up will receive £500. If an entrant's school offers formal support, the award will be split equally between the successful entrant and their school. The deadline for submission of work is 30 April 2019.

For further information, please e-mail the admin co-ordinator, David Williams: ColinHardyMemorialPrize@westernfrontassociation.com.

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