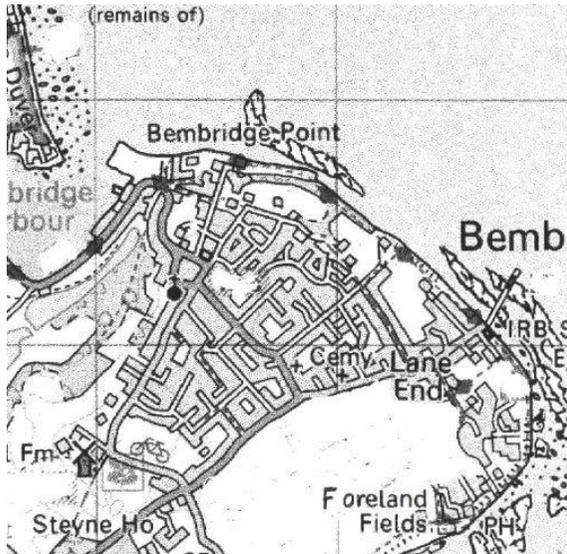


Map of Bembridge (right) in 1916 which shows both the Harbour and Foreland sites.



Bembridge WW1 Airfields



Unknown Pilot of a DH6 aircraft

**Bembridge War Memorial Gardens
Church Road, Bembridge**

**November 2018
Commemorating the end of WW1**

Published & Printed by Bembridge Parish Council,
with information from the Bembridge Heritage
Society

Bembridge WW1 Airfields Memorial Plaques

In February 2018 Kenneth P. Bannerman Director General of the 'Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust' contacted Bembridge Parish Council seeking any information on the two airfields that were located in Bembridge during WW1.

In conjunction with the Bembridge Heritage Society the Parish Council were able to supply the Conservation Trust detailed information of the two Airfields. One, a Seaplane base located at the Point and an Air Field located at Forelands.

In recognition the Conservation Trust supplied two Granite Memorial Plaques, each weighing 35 Kilograms. The Plaques were made by the Memorial firm 'Phoenix Marble and Granite' near Bournemouth.

As no evidence of the presence of the two Airfields longer exists it was decided to locate the Plaques in the Bembridge Memorial Gardens as a fitting tribute to the Hundredth Anniversary to the end of WW1.

As part of the restoration of the War Memorial the surrounding base stone work which was laid in 1920 was made of Ventnor Rag, which is no longer available, and has been replaced with York Stone as approved by the Isle of Wight Conservation Officer. The Ventnor Rag has been retained and now forms the Plinths that support the two Memorial Plaques.

RFC Bembridge Point

Runway, water. Established in 1916 by the RFC (later to become the Royal Air Force) at Bembridge Point as part of the Solent defence scheme. Initially with 4 short 184 floatplanes operated by 412 and 413 flights.

These planes had to taxi out of the harbour so they could take off and land again to the north-west of St Helens fort. These aircraft patrols were designed to keep enemy submarines submerged and not allow them to surface.

Temporary hangars were built on the slipway.

Flight Commander of this base was Major Maclaurin who is buried in St Lukes Cemetery, Lane End Road.



RFC Forelands

Runway, flat grassland. Established in June 1918, the RFC opened an airfield on 51 acres at Lane End to be later known as Foreland, in order to provide air cover for the Island.



Temporary Bessoneaux hangars were erected and a dozen DH6 aircraft were based there. Their patrols were also anti-submarine and to be used as 'scare' patrols.



This station was closed at the end of WW1 in 1919 and the land sold in 1920.

Sadly no trace of its former use remains today.