



Roger Casement Branch

Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann



The Link

www.oneaircorpsbranch.com

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Branch Chairman:

Finnbar Lyons

Hon. Secretary:

Noel Murphy

Hon. Treasurer:

Patrick Lynch

PRO:

Peter Mc Glynn

Honorary Branch President:

James Nolan



Members of the RCB and ONE attended the Defence Forces Race-day at The Curragh on 20th July 2014.

L-R : John Clarke, Finnbar Lyons Branch Chairman.

Ollie O'Connor CEO ONE, Paul Cooley ONE, Peter McGlynn, Jim Nolan Branch President

Secretary's Report...

Contributed by Noel Murphy

In January, the Branch AGM took place and the existing elected officials were returned unopposed. Mr. Eamonn Tierney however, stood down and no Hon-Treasurer was elected. This post was deferred to the February Branch meeting where Mr. Pat Lynch agreed to act as Branch Treasurer.

In March, a number of members of the Branch participated in the St. Patricks Day parade at Rathcoole/Saggart, and were well received again.

During April, members attended a number of events such as ANZAC Day, Dawn and Dusk Ceremonies on 25th April. Earlier in the month, members attended the Easter Sunday ceremonies in Dublin City. On Easter Monday, members attended the annual "Maynooth 17" commemorations at Maynooth Co. Kildare.

In May, the Branch was well represented at the National Veteran's Day ceremonies in Limerick, and the Branch Banner was paraded. Members attended the IUNVA Wreath-Laying ceremony at Arbour Hill, and three Branch Collections were held during the month at the Mill Centre, Clondalkin, and the Citywest Shopping Centre.

A group of Branch members and associates will travel to the Somme for the now annual 1st July visit. The 4 day trip will take in regular ceremonies such as Mennen Gate, Guillemont, Ginchy and will also visit a number of CWG locations. This annual trip is generally arranged from the previous December, members hoping to take part in the 2016 trip should bear this in mind.

A number of important ONE fundraising events are coming up shortly: The annual Fuchsia Day Launch takes place in the Curragh Camp at 11am on Tuesday 30th June. The Curragh Race Day takes place on 19th July. The ONE Golf Classic will take place in August, details to be confirmed later. Branch Fuchsia Collection dates Clondalkin, Friday 24th July at Supervalu Centre Lucan. Any additional dates will be notified at the June or July Branch Meetings. The Branch is keen to promote the work of the Branch and ONE and regular public appearances by members in uniform are invaluable with this regard. To continue to keep up the standard, we need as many members as possible to attend any forthcoming functions which are usually notified at the monthly meetings. Thanks to all who have given of their time to attend the various events and thereby raising the Branch's profile.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

Finnbar Lyons

At our AGM in January, we had one change in the branch committee for 2015 when Eamonn Tierney who has been our treasurer since 2007, stood down. On behalf of all Branch members I would like to thank Eamonn for his diligence in managing the Branch funds and accounts over the last 7 years.

I would like to welcome our new Treasurer Pat Lynch to the committee and wish him well in his new position. The Branch Treasurers position is one of the more difficult committee jobs and I would ask all members to co-operate fully with Pat with regard to paying capitation fees, Lotto ticket sales etc. The obligations required under the new provisions of the Charities act 2009 that were introduced in several amendments during 2014, require accurate control, accounting, recording and explanation of transactions of all funds, relating to charity organisations. This places a considerable burden on all branch treasurers so any assistance from members to ease the work load will be very welcome.

On the social side of Branch activities, a 7 man colour party was provided to lead the St Patricks day parade organised by the Rathcoole and Saggart Parade committee. All the local sports clubs and organisations took part in the event and the fine weather brought out large crowds of spectators along the route from Rathcoole to Saggart village. This is the second year the Branch has been invited to lead the parade and it is good exposure and publicity for the ONE in the Baldonnell neighbourhood.

The committee is currently preparing for the ONE annual Fuchsia appeal fund-raising campaign during the month of July. Last year, the Branch had a very successful campaign and this year we hope to repeat our success. The Fuchsia appeal fund is a significant source of revenue for the organisation and I would like to ask all members to assist where possible to make this year's campaign a success.

Edition sponsored by "A member of the 1959 Apprentice Class"



The Gormanston Cadets 1960's Contributed by Michael O'Callaghan

During a meeting of the Retired Irish Airline Pilots Association it was suggested by Captain Paddy Burke that as virtually all the Aer Lingus Gormanston cadets from the 1960s had retired it would be appropriate that a reunion be organised, if not in Gormanston then in Baldonnel, inviting the Air Corps flying instructors and other Officers who were involved in the exercise of turning disparate young students into pilots.

Enquiries were made and the OC Air Corps was found to be enthusiastic for the concept and so plans were made for a reunion day. Unfortunately due to the passage of time all of the senior officers involved bar one had gone to their just rewards in the great hangar in the sky, and he, Brigadier General Barney McMahon, was too frail to attend.

The day started with light refreshment in the Officers Mess and a viewing of a digital conversion of an 8mm home movie of a day or two in Gormanston in 1963 made by Captain Michael O'Callaghan. Everyone was surprised by how young we looked back then, despite the flying gear we had to wear, and how well Baldonnel looked as the newly arrived Allouette helicopters were lined up prepared for a training detail on the ramp. Suitably refreshed, the party toured the Air Corps Museum and noted the sad remains of some the Chipmunks that were so much a part of our lives some 40 years previous.

However, everyone was impressed by the work undertaken by the Museum in recording the history of the Air Corps and preserving some of the aircraft in their care

.After that it was back to the Mess for a group photograph. This was followed by lunch and afterwards the recently retired OC Air Corps, Brigadier John O'Brien who had instructed the first class back in 1962, thanked RIALPA for organising the event. Captain Jeremy Hill replied on behalf of the gathered Aer Lingus crew in the course of which he presented Captain Tom Murphy with the remains of the harness that saved his life when Tom parked a Chipmunk on the railway embankment just short of Runway 27 at Gormanston in Summer 1963. Then followed an after dinner discourse by the late Captain Frank Thompson reminiscing about his time as an Officer and Instructor in Gormanston, in the course of which he reminded us of the various characters, commissioned, non-commissioned and other ranks, that populated the station during his stay there. All of us have our own memories of these and their names still echo through the stories that are told of our student pilot days in East Meath.

Gormanston Cadets



DH Vampire 185 Contributed by Paddy O'Meara

The attached picture of DH Vampire 185 appears to be the only Air to Air picture of an Air Corps DH Vampire available and usually generates a number of enquiries whenever it appears. I have been requested on several occasions to provide details.

Two Vampire Aircraft operating as Red Section took part in a formation flying training exercise taking off from Baldonnel on the morning of December 2nd, 1963.

The formation leader, Red 1 was flown by the then OC Fighter Sqdn, Comdt Jerry O'Connor (later Brig-Gen) with Flight-Sgt Paddy O'Meara as passenger.

Red 2 was flown by the late Lt Jim Casey with Capt. Tom McBennett as instructor.



The aircraft flew in a westerly direction and when east of Mullingar. Comdt O'Connor requested V185 to move forward temporarily to the lead position to facilitate F/S O'Meara who was taking photos of the aircraft.

Capt. Mc Bennett has confirmed the details from his flight log book. F/S O'Meara was the senior NCO I/C Fighter Sqdn at the time.

The Picture was taken in 35mm slide format and many years later when speaking to the late Paul Duffy who published Aero Ireland in the early 80's he mentioned that Air to Air pictures of the Vampire were relatively rare. I managed to locate the slide and he subsequently featured the aircraft in one of his editions.

The photo has since appeared in a number of Air Corps posters and publications and in Joe Maxwells book The Irish Air Corps-An Illustrated Guide.

News Items Visit to Flanders and the Somme

18 Roger Casement Branch members and friends will take part in the annual visit to Flanders and the Somme departing on June 29th. The Branch will participate in the Memorial Service in Guillemont, Somme on July 1 in association with the Somme Association of Northern Ireland

Dh Dove Crash Site

Members attended the Dove crash site near Newmarket on Fergus in May to replace the memorial cross which was removed for the winter period and to clean the site area.

Photo shows Branch members Paul Glynn and Bill Ryan with the land owner Michael Hannon.



News Items International Veterans Day Parade

The Roger Casement Branch was represented at the International Veterans Day Parade and ceremonies in Limerick on May 17, 2015

Photo shows Noel Murphy, Paddy O'Meara and Sean Collopy at Limerick City Hall.



Trip with Royal Munster Fusiliers Association 7th to 11th May 2015

Contributed by Tony Roe

On 7th May I flew out from Cork Airport to Paris CDG with some friends from the Munster Fusiliers Association. The main objective of the visit was to commemorate the centenary of the General Absolution given by Fr. Francis Gleeson, Chaplain of the 2nd Bn RMF to those troops who were to go into the attack next morning against the German defences at Aubers Ridge, located just outside the village of Neuve Chapelle in Northern France.

The attack began at 0535 hrs and although they reached the German trenches they were driven back by a strong counter attack and by mid-morning only some 200 men were in any state to carry on, leaving as many more killed, wounded, missing or captured.

On the evening of the centenary our group gathered at the spot on the Rue de Bois where the event happened. We were joined by the Mayor of Neuve Chapelle whose council had erected a memorial. A short ceremony was held which concluded with Monsieur le Mayor leading the gathering in a rather one sided version of the French national anthem.

Next morning we visited the site where the attack began and walked the short distance to where the German trenches would have been. During this walk some artefacts were found, including a small piece of shrapnel, a .303 cartridge case, and a full unfired round.

The very coveted piece of high ground at Vimy ridge was our next port of call, and close-by there was a memorial to the Moroccan division which fought with the French.

I did not realise that Portugal had soldiers fighting on the Allied side but we did come across their graveyard and saw that they had two Divisions in the battle. Right next door is the Indian Memorial where their losses are remembered. The Indians do not have any graves as their custom was to incinerate their dead.

In the leper area in Flanders we stopped on the road which was the boundary between the 36th Ulster and the 16th Irish Divisions and then at the Celtic cross beside the military cemetery at Wytschaete.

The grave at Loker of Maj. Willie Redmond was visited. We also saw the new cemetery at Fromelles where recently found bodies have been reburied and a new museum created to tell the story.



The famous picture of Fr Gleeson administering the Last General Absolution to the Royal Munster Fusiliers before entering battle.



The present location on the Rue de Bois.

Air Corps News

Bray Airshow: Sunday 19 July 2015

Venue: Bray Seafront, Co. Wicklow

Ireland's largest free air show takes to the skies above the East Coast on Sunday, July 19th. This family-friendly event, in association with Bray Summerfest, attracted a record-breaking 88,000 spectators last year, with similar numbers expected this year.

Shannon Airshow: Sunday 18 July 2015

Shannon Airport will deliver an air display extravaganza on July 18th to mark a key milestone in Irish aviation history – the 70th anniversary of the first commercial transatlantic flight at the airport. An estimated 40,000 people are expected at the airport for the airshow. The airshow will provide a visual treat from some of Ireland's and Europe's leading aerobatics performers, parachutists, helicopters, jet fighters and stunt fliers during the six hour event.

In addition to the sky manoeuvres on the day, there will be plenty of on-the-ground action, including a static aircraft and tank display, entertainment zone, live music and a catering zone with an array of dining choices.

SAR Topcover-29 April 2015

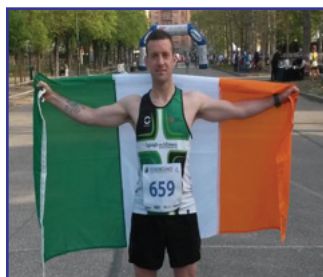
This afternoon an Air Corps CASA provided SAR top cover for the Coast Guard medical evacuation of an injured fisherman from a vessel approximately 100 nautical miles South West of Kinsale.

The CASA crew were alerted to the mission while on a Maritime patrol 150 nautical miles West of Belmullet and arrived over the Irish registered vessel at 12:40 pm.

The CASA kept a watchful eye over the helicopter as it carried out the evacuation and coordinated with Air Traffic control and the Coast Guard for a speedy transfer of the patient from Cork airport to Cork University Hospital.

World Championships 16 April 2015

Sgt Brian Ankers, of 101 Squadron, recently competed in the World Championship Open Race in Turin. This gruelling endurance event required Brian to run for 24 hours and in that time he managed to cover 198 km, finishing 5th out of 180 competitors.



Well Done Brian and congratulations on your achievement!

Irish Air Corps Commissioning

It was an especially proud moment for twin Air Corps cadets who both got their wings yesterday.

Three generations of their family looked on and beamed with pride, in what was a unique occasion at Casement Aerodrome in Baldonnel when Lt. Frank Mohan received his wings. Previously his twin brother was commissioned in the 30th Cadet Class.

Proudest of all was their father, Dundalk-based Garda Inspector, Brian Mohan, who was clearly thrilled his sons were continuing the family tradition of uniformed service to the State. Their grandmother, Theresa Mohan, and Frankie's four-month-old godson, Harry, also marked the special family event.

Currently, the 32nd Junior Cadet Class has ten (10) cadets in flight training and each cadet has approximately 12 hours flying completed to date.

The 33rd Cadet class have eight (8) cadets in military training presently and are expected to finish their military training in Sept 2015.

The 31st Junior Cadet Class were commissioned and awarded their wings.



L-R: Lts. James Northover, David Finnegan, Kevin Fitzgerald, Mark Doyle. Frank Mohan.

Trainee Technical Scheme.

At present, there are three (3) Apprentice classes in training, the 70th, 71st, 72nd classes. Interviews are underway for the 73rd class and the Irish Air Corps hope to take twenty five (25) new applicants by Sept 2015.

EAS Missions.

The Irish Air Corps recently completed its 1000th Emergency Aeromedical Service mission in partnership with the HSE. The Irish Air Corps provides daylight EAS support with a forward operating base in Athlone and from its home base in Baldonnel.

The Irish Air Corps provides a 24/7 on-call service for Air Ambulance missions both at home and abroad.

AW-139 Helicopter

