



# Roger Casement Branch

## of Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hEireann Teoranta (ONET)



# The Link

[www.oneaircorpsbranch.com](http://www.oneaircorpsbranch.com)

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**BEST BRANCH AWARD :**  
L/R : **Jim Nolan, Director ONET,**  
**Peter Mc Glynn,**  
**PRO Roger Casement Branch,**  
**Martin Coyne, Director ONET,**  
**Ollie O'Connor, CEO, ONET.**



### Roger Casement Branch wins the Best Branch Award

The Roger Casement Branch was awarded the perpetual trophy for Best Branch by ONET CEO Ollie O'Connor at the company AGM which was held in Wexford on 8/9 June 2013.

It is the first occasion for the Branch to receive this coveted trophy in its thirty four year old history.

The Roger Casement Branch which is predominately comprised of retired Air Corps members is the largest branch in the ONE network with in excess of 150 paid-up members.

Since 2007, the Branch has set up a website and social network systems and produces a quarterly newsletter The Link which is circulated to the members. This newsletter which provides updated details of former members also provides details of present developments in the Air Corps and is seen on the website by many hundreds of former Air Corps personnel. It is significant that every edition of the Newsletter has been sponsored by former Air Corps classes or individuals or by aviation related organisations.

The Branch also makes a substantial annual donation from its fund raising projects to ONET in support of the hostels for homeless for needy former members of the Defence Forces.

A member of the Branch, Jim Nolan, also served as National President of ONET.

The Branch holds its monthly meeting in Casement Aerodrome and appreciates the great support and encouragement given by successive Air Corps GOC's and serving Air Corps members. Members of the Branch pay an active part in the maintenance and care of the Air Corps museum.

The present award recognises the contribution that the Branch has made in support of ONET's objectives but also pays tribute to the pioneering founder members of the Branch and the successive Chairmen and members who have developed the Branch to its present status as 'Branch of the Year'

### Branch History

In late 1979 it was decided to form a Branch of the O.N.E. which would have close links with the Air Corps and have Baldonnel as its base. In this way, the Branch through the ONE organisation would provide help and assistance where necessary to camp personnel at the time of their discharge.

With the kind permission of the GOC Air Corps, the Branch was named "The Roger Casement Branch" and was permitted to hold their meetings in Casement Aerodrome. From that meagre beginning, the Branch has grown from strength to strength and is now held in high regard within the O.N.E. organisation.

The success of the Branch stems primarily from the support and activities of the members and with the help and co-operation from GOC Air Corps and the personnel in Casement Aerodrome.

Apart from keeping to the mission of maintaining contact with former colleagues, a number of significant events have been undertaken by the Roger Casement Branch including:

- The creation of the O.N.E. Memorial Garden in Casement Aerodrome with the unique Monument to the memory of deceased former Air Corps members.
- An Annual Mass of Commemoration which is held in October each year in the Garrison Church in Casement Aerodrome.
- A Memorial Book containing the inscribed names of the deceased personnel is located in a special cabinet in the church.
- The presentation of a unit flag designed by a member of the Branch to the Apprentice Training School.
- A presentation to the GOC Air Corps of a book of copies of the letters of Roger Casement.

The GOC Air Corps allocated an office in the Museum area for use by the Branch. Each year a number of trips to places of historical interest are arranged as well as events which provide an opportunity for former colleagues to meet and renew acquaintances, for example, the annual lunch at Christmas creates an opportunity for retired personnel who have previously served in the Air Corps to socialise and renew acquaintances with each other. This is a very popular event and has become a favourite reunion of former colleagues.

The highlight of the year is the Annual Memorial Mass which is held in the Garrison Church in Casement Aerodrome on the second Sunday of October.

Deceased former Air Corps members are remembered at the Mass and a wreath is laid at the adjoining memorial monument. The church is normally filled to capacity with former Air Corps personnel and families of deceased members.

Personnel who have served in any part of the Defence Forces are very welcome to join the Roger Casement Branch and to attend the Branch Meeting which is held on the third Thursday of each month at 20.00 hours in the NCO's Mess, Casement Aerodrome.

*Edition sponsored by a member of the 1959  
Apprentice Class*



## From the Chairman....

First I would like to congratulate all our branch members on winning the Best Branch award for 2013.

The foundations for achieving and maintaining our active and dynamic Branch have been put in place over many years by various committees and members and this came to fruition this year in winning the award. Thank you all for your loyalty and commitment to the Branch and a special word of thanks to our delegates who attended the annual convention and AGM in Wexford on the 8th and 9th of June and brought back the coveted award!

We are at that time of the year again when fund raising is on the company agenda. We have already completed a successful Branch flag-day programme during May and the annual Fuchsia Appeal sales campaign is being launched by CEO, Ollie O'Connor on the 27/6/2013. The campaign will run all through the month of July and the Branch already has its collection programme in place.

Finnbar Lyons

## Secretary's Report

March to June have been very busy months for the branch as on the 15th/16th March the Branch organised a display of Air Corps artefacts at St. Finian's Hall Newcastle as part of The Gathering St. Patricks festivals. On St Patricks Day, 8 members including a colour party led the Lucan Parade, unfortunately although we were invited to take part in other parades we did not have sufficient volunteers available.

In April, members went to St. Conleth's Branch Annual Mass, and attended the Dawn Ceremony for Anzac Day on 25th April at Grangegorman Cemetery. In May the Branch were invited to send a party to parade at the Bratacha Festival of Flags and Emblems at Dun Laoghaire, and marched with other ONE/IUNVA members.

The Branch was represented at the Leinster Area Council meeting recently.

Over May and June, Branch Flag Days took place at Superquinn Lucan, The Mill Shopping Centre Clondalkin and Citywest Saggart, and were very well received by members of the public who donated very generously.

A large turnout of Branch members at the Annual Blessing of the Fleet at Casement Aerodrome on 17th May at the invitation of GOC Air Corps. Members accepted an invitation to the Grand Canal Dock Dublin Waterways Regatta (barges and small craft) in mid-May and organised by Peadar Clancy Branch.

The Branch was well represented at the IUNVA Arbour Hill Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony on 19th May, and laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch.

Three members attended the Annual Convention in Wexford in early June, and were pleased to accept the Branch of the Year Award.

In early June, the organisers of the 200th Anniversary Celebrations for St. Finian's Church Newcastle requested a colour party for Mass Honours, and afterwards the Branch made an official presentation of Associate Branch Membership to Dr. Rosaline Dwyer, Heritage Officer South Dublin County Council.



L/R : RCB Members. Jim Nolan, John Condon, Peter McGlynn, John Clarke, Derek Ryan, at the presentation ceremony.

## Newcastle Community Bicentenary Celebrations

On Sunday the 16/June/2013 Newcastle Parish Community, Co Dublin, held a special Mass, and monument unveiling ceremony to celebrate the bicentenary of the building of St Finian's church in the village. This beautiful Gothic style church was built in 1813, 16 years before the Catholic Relief Act was passed in the House of Commons, which granted Catholic emancipation in Britain and Ireland.

The Chief Celebrant was Most Rev. Diarmuid Martin Archbishop of Dublin assisted by Most Rev. Eamonn Walsh, Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin, Very Rev. Enda Cunningham P.P. Newcastle, and priests from the local villages of Rathcoole, Saggart, and Lucan.

The Roger Casement Branch was invited to take part in the ceremonies and provide a Colour Party and Honour Guard at the Mass and also to provide a Colour Party and Guard of Honour for the unveiling of the bicentenary granite monument in the church grounds. We had a turnout of 14 branch members with invited guests Mr Ollie O'Connor CEO ONET, and Mr Isadore Fleming, former president of the Leinster Area Council ONET, also in attendance.

After the monument unveiling ceremony, the Archbishop took time to meet all the members of the Guard of Honour.

It was a great honour for our branch to take part in a Baldonnell neighbourhood community celebration and we are grateful to the Newcastle Parish Committee for their kind invitation and for the great reception we received. I would like to thank our long standing branch member and former ONET National President, Mr Jim Nolan, who resides in Newcastle, for coordinating all the protocols with the parish committee and with the Mass celebrants, to allow for the branch's participation.

It was a very memorable day for the Roger Casement Branch.

Finnbar Lyons



Newcastle Community Bicentenary. L/R. F. Lyons, Chairman, F. Donnelly, T. Roe, Piper John Brennan, Archbishop Martin, J. McCann, N. Murphy, J. Clarke, P. McGlynn, J. Condon



RCB Members. John Berns, John Condon and Paddy Goodman having a word with the Archbishop.

## AIR CORPS PERSONNEL IN THE CONGO

Air Corps RSM John McCormack has published a series of Congo Photographs on the NCO's Mess Facebook pages. The most recent postings include many pictures of Air Corps Pipe Band members who served with the UN in the Congo with the 34th Battalion.

Some of the band members are currently members of the Roger Casement Branch.

The Band departed Baldonnell in 1961 for a 6 months tour of duty. They were originally based in Kamina before moving to Elizabethville in Katanga Province.

The personnel, as members of the Battalion participated in a range of military duties as well as the band parades.

Sgt Paddy McLoughlin being the senior NCO with the band also looked after Battalion welfare and carried out Platoon Sergeant duties.

The following is a sample of some of the photos which are displayed by kind permission of RSM McCormack.



Front: L/R: A/m M.Leddon, A/m M.Mooney, A/m E.Murphy, Cpl. C.Higgins. A/m T.Mulcahy, A/m J.Grant Back Row, L/R: A/m P.Lynam, A/m P.Mulcahy, A/m J.Galway, A/m M.Coveney, Cpl. F.Donnelly, A/m T. Kilcoyne, A/m E. Roche, Cpl. J. Colbert, Sgt. P. Mc Loughlin Missing from photo, Cpl Peter Mc Manus.



L/R: Cpl F.Donnelly, Cpl.J. Colbert, Pte N.Smith, Cpl. P.McManus  
With an interpreter.



L/R: A/m Myles Mooney, Cpl. Charlie Higgins, Cpl. Frank Donnelly, Cpl. Jim Colbert (at rear), A/m Terry Mulcahy.



L/R: Cpl F.Donnelly.  
A/m A. Raeside.  
Sgt.P. Mc Loughlin.  
(Archie Raeside was a photographer with the 33rd Battalion and met up with his Air Corps colleagues shortly after their arrival.)



L/R:Cpl. J.Colbert, Pte N.Smith, Cpl. P.Mc Manus



### ANNUAL BLESSING OF THE FLEET CEREMONY.

The Branch was represented at the Blessing of the Fleet Ceremony by kind invitation of the GOC.

The ceremony was carried out by Rev Jerry Carroll CF on May 17th.

L/R; T. Roe, J. McCann, P.McLoughlin, N.Murphy, Brig-Gen Paul Fry, P.O'Meara, F.Donnelly, J.Nolan, J.Condon, M.Murphy, A.Raeside.

## Air Corps News

### JFK ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN NEW ROSS

The final military element of the JFK celebration in Co. Wexford was a spectacular fly-past by the Air Corps of 4 x PC 9's and a Casa maritime patrol aircraft. The Defence Forces were very proud to have been involved with the ceremony and surrounding events.

The Air Corps pipe band also participated in the ceremonies in New Ross.



### FOUGA MAGISTER 216 DEPARTS FOR NATIONAL MUSEUM



Fouga Magister 216 departs Casement Aerodrome to join the DH Vampire and the Miles Magister in the National Museum, Collins Barracks.

### BUSY TIME FOR HELICOPTER WING

Air Corps technicians carrying out a daily inspection on an AW139 in Finner camp taken by Sgt Tracey Walsh from No 3 Operations Wing.

Over the last few days the Helicopter Wing has been busy providing support for the G8 summit; parachuting over the Curragh Camp; conducting training with the Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) Course and Army Sniper Instructor Course; and assisting with the LE Roisin during its ship readiness exercises off the coast of Cork.

On June 19th, while refuelling at Cork airport during a training exercise with the Naval service, AW277 was re-tasked and subsequently completed a time critical Air Ambulance from Cork Airport to the Phoenix Park. The crew met with the patient and arrived in Dublin 50 minutes later.

Well done to all involved.

