



ROGER CASEMENT BRANCH
OGLAIGH NAISIUNTA NA HEIREANN



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The Link

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Wreath laying ceremony at Béal na mBláth. See story on page 2.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN..

The launching of the new website marks another milestone in the history of the Roger Casement Branch. The website opens the door to all former Air Corps members throughout the world to the existence and aims of the Casement Branch. It may take a little time for the site to be discovered but it would help if members could pass on the website address to former colleagues.

The Branch greatly appreciates the invaluable assistance given by Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald of the Air Corps Press Office in putting the website together.

The Roger Casement Branch celebrates its 30th Birthday this year. Some of the founder members have passed on but it is encouraging that a number of the founder members are still with us. A lot has been achieved since the Branch was founded, notably the erection of the Memorial Monument and the installation

of the Memorial book in the station church. The Annual Mass for Deceased members and the Christmas Lunch are well attended and eagerly looked forward to.

In recent times the Introduction of the Link newsletter and the Branch website are significant. The approval given by the Board of ONET and by the Department of Defence for the Branch Members to wear the distinctive Air Corps style head dress marked a further milestone.

The Casement Branch is now the largest Branch within ONET and continues to enjoy excellent relations with the other branches and with the GOC, Senior Staff and members of the Air Corps.

It is planned that the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the Branch will be marked at the Annual Christmas Lunch so a large attendance is encouraged to mark this special occasion.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Roger Casement Branch is 30 years in existence this year. The Branch has flourished to become the largest branch in ONET. This is due to the dedication of the committee members and to the support given by the ordinary members down through the years.

During the past year there has been a significant increase in interest in the Casement Branch, particularly since the change of headdress to the forage cap. We welcome this increase as it helps to keep even more former colleagues in touch with each other.

As a further development in communicating with former Air Corps members, we now have a Website dedicated to the Roger Casement Branch. The website compliments the newsletter 'The Link' which is published on a quarterly basis. The website will also make it easier for the overseas members to keep up to date with events.

The Branch membership continues to grow. This enables the Branch to provide increased support to the ONET houses for homeless ex-servicemen.

The monthly meetings of the Branch are well attended and all members are encouraged to attend and to participate in the various discussions.

At the request of some members we are including a bank standing order form for any member who wishes to have their membership fee paid by standing order in January of each year.

There is an increase in the number of class reunions taking place. These provide an opportunity for colleagues who are members of the Branch to encourage their classmates to join up.

The Museum working group is still very busy in Baldonnel. The group usually attends on Wednesdays of each week.

If you are interested in attending, contact Eamonn Tierney 086 1671634.



EDITION SPONSORED BY
MATT KENNEDY
AND A MEMBER OF THE
1946 CLASS

BRANCH MEMBERS TRIP TO WEST CORK



Clockwise from top left; Group taken at the Crossbarry Memorial, Mick and Marie Prince at the Monument in Beal na Blath, Finbar Lyons, Mick Prince, Mick Reddy and Tim Malone at the Michael Collins Birthplace, Paddy O'Meara and Tim Malone at the Henry Ford garden in Ballinascorthy, Branch Secretary Ben Downey takes a ride in the Model T Ford

A group of fourteen Branch Members had an early start on August 25 for a two day visit to the historic sites of the War of Independence and Civil War.

This was an intense and wide ranging tour to the many places of historic interest.

Day 1 included visits to Collins Barracks Museum in Cork City, then on to the site of the Crossbarry ambush. Lunch was had at the the Munster Arms Hotel in Bandon which was known as Lee's Hotel at the time and where

Michael Collins spent his last night before the fatal ambush at Beal na Blath.

In the afternoon the Branch Chairman laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch at the Memorial Monument at Beal na Blath. The tour continued to Kilmichael to the site of the ambush in 1920 and then on to the birthplace of Sam Maguire.

On day 2 after a very pleasant stay in the Dunmore House Hotel over looking Clonakilty Bay, the tour continued, taking in Woodfield,

the birthplace of Michael Collins to the school where he attended and also viewed the impressive statue of Collins in Clonakilty.

At Skibereen the group visited the cemetery where 9,000 victims of the famine are buried.

We were also fortunate in having a knowledgeable tour guide as the coach driver. The trip was enjoyed by one and all and great credit is due to the Social Committee and to Finbar Lyons for putting the impressive programme together.

CASEMENT BRANCH WINS ONET GOLF CLASSIC

Right; Brendan Barden, Paddy Donnelly, Bill O'Neill, Sean Whelan. Far right; Team Manager and selector, Tim Malone



The Annual O.N.E Annual Golf outing was held in The Curragh Golf Club on Mon 17 Aug. The competition was a 'Scramble' format. It was a glorious sunny day and all of the players enjoyed playing the course and meeting with other O.N.E members.

The Roger Casement Branch was the eventual winners of the Slattery Cup as the leading ONE team.

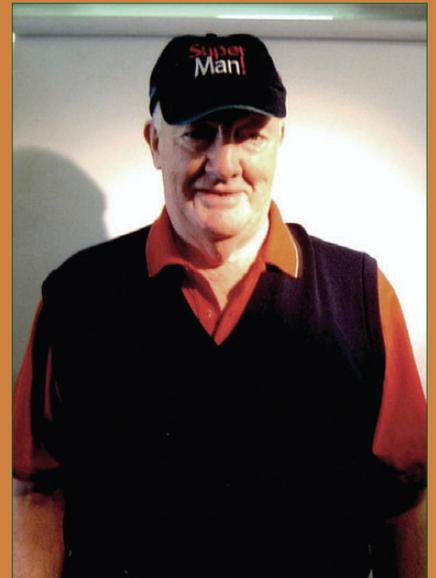
The team which was managed and selected

by Tim Malone was comprised of Bill O'Neill (captain), Brendan Barden, Paddy Donnelly and Sean Whelan.

They had a great score of 59 strokes, getting 8 real "Birdies" during the round.

This was a great achievement for the team, when you consider that approx 40 teams were entered in the competition.

The team is looking forward to defending the Cup in 2010.



ANNIVERSARIES AND EVENTS:

CLASS REUNION

The 1969 Apprentice Class will be holding their 40th reunion in the West Grove Hotel, Clane, Co. Kildare on Sat. October 17, 2009. Contact : Jim Kennrick; 087 207 3435 ; Matt Ward; 086 364 0007 or Donal Lowry; 086 256 3785.

ONET TRIP TO USA;

ONET will be participating in the St Patrick's weekend parade in Brooklyn, New York in 2010.

Price includes, Flight. Hotel, Transfers, Visit to Westpoint Academy, Visit to Police Headquarters, Parade and Post Parade reception.

Depart Dublin on Thursday 18 March returning on Wednesday 24th.

Total price : €999.00 (exchange rate 31 July, 2009)

Places are limited and will be granted on first come first served basis.

Contact: Martin Caffrey; 087 559 301 or Gillian at 01 458 0600



COMMEMORATION CEREMONIES AT FLANDERS AND THE SOMME

Two members of the Roger Casement Branch had the honour of attending the memorial ceremonies at the World War One battlefields in Belgium and France on July 1, 2009.

Tony Roe and Branch Chairman Paddy O'Meara joined up with a group of O.N.E. Members from Cork led by Jerry Conroy and participated in four wreath laying ceremonies. They also visited a number of cemeteries in the Ypres Salient and at the British Front at the Somme. A visit to the impressive Irish Peace Park was also included. The visit coincided with the annual July 1st commemoration ceremonies.

On 1 July 1916, at precisely 7.30 am, after the simultaneous explosion of several huge mines, and moving close behind the barrage of the allied artillery, the British and French infantry advanced from their trenches.

The number of casualties suffered on that single tragic day was 58,000 including some 20,000 killed.

Little mention has been made of the tens of thousands of young Irishmen who fought and died particularly during the summer of 1916.

Irishmen served in the 16TH (Irish) Division and in the 36th (Ulster) Division which was mainly comprised of Unionists. Irish Regiments included the Munster and Dublin Fusiliers, the Leinster Regiment, Connaught Rangers, Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Royal Irish Regiment.

It is also evident by reference to the names of dead soldiers on various monuments, that large numbers of Irishmen also served with various commonwealth armies particularly from Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

In recent years, progress has been made in remembering and honouring our fellow countrymen who took part in the conflict when, with the support of the Irish



Tony Roe and Paddy O'Meara at the Somme Memorial at Thiepval. Historic service at the Ulster Memorial Tower when members of ONE and The Royal Irish Regiment Veterans jointly laid wreaths. Tony Roe and Paddy O'Meara with Brig-Gen Tom Behan at the Ulster Memorial Tower July 1, 2009.

Government the Irish Peace Park near Ypres was created.

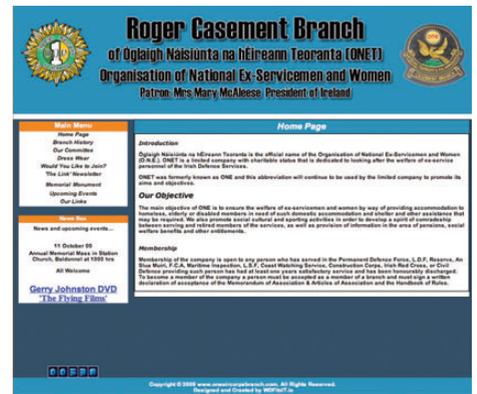
It was also significant that a serving Irish Brig-General in uniform represented the Government at the various memorial services in France.

The Roger Casement Branch was represented at the wreath laying ceremony at the Somme Memorial ceremony in Thiepval. The Chairman later took part in a historic ceremony at the Ulster Memorial Tower when wreaths were laid jointly with retired members of the Royal Irish Regiment to honour deceased members of the 36th (Ulster) Division.

A further wreath was laid at the 16th (Irish) Division Memorial in Guillemont. We also had the opportunity of participating in wreath laying ceremonies at the Menin Gate in Ypres.

During the visit to the Thiepval Memorial, Tony located the inscribed names of two uncles of Branch member Frank Donnelly. It is ironic that both the brothers from Dublin were killed on the same day, September 9th, 1916.

Access to the Somme area is now relatively easy from Ireland with daily flights to Beauvais from Dublin and Shannon. A visit to this historic area should be a must or all Irish people where fellow countrymen from every corner of Ireland, many of whom still in their teens, made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of Freedom.



A new Website has been launched by The Roger Casement Branch.

The website will be particularly interesting to former Air Corps members who are based overseas and it is hoped that the membership will increase as a result of this new development.

The impressive website has been professionally designed and produced by WD Fitz I.T. Solutions Ltd and provides details of the Branch History, committee members and membership details. An article on the O.N.E. Memorial Monument in Casement Aerodrome and copies of The Link newsletter are also included.

All members are invited to view the Website and are encouraged to notify any interested friends and colleagues of the Website. The site address is www.oneaircorpsbranch.com.



FLYING FILMS MEMORIAL WINDOW

Following the successful Flying Films reunion in September 2008, it was decided to install a memorial stained glass window in the station church in Baldonnel as a permanent commemoration of the historic film period. It was also decided to add a memorial plaque to remember those who died during the filming operations.

The window was financed by donations received from former Air Corps personnel many of whom had participated in the filming activities.

The dedication ceremony was carried out by the station chaplain Fr Gerry Carroll on July 22, 2009. Approximately 50 guests were in attendance including members of the Liddy

and Boddington families. Brig-Gen Ralph James and Col Paul Fry were also present.

The window was designed and manufactured by Alan Tomlin of Irish Stained Glass Windows Ltd.

The committee Chairman, Paddy O'Meara in welcoming the guests expressed his gratitude for the kind donations received and to the members of the committee for their support and dedication in organising the reunion and for the completion of the window project. Special thanks to Geoffrey O'Byrne-White CEO of CityJet and Louise McEnerney for their generous support and assistance. Guests were entertained in the Officers Mess after the dedication ceremony.





WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Photo taken sometime in the 50's. Back Row L-R; Tony Mannion, Ned Meehan, Tim Malone, Noel Kelly, Hank Lennon, Sean Molloy, Paddy Goodman, Tommy Higgins
Front: L-R; B.P.Murray, Marko Stephens, Maxi Mc Guckian, Jimmy Leen, Tommy Keaveney

LAUNCH OF MICHAEL WHELAN'S BOOK

ON HURTING GROUND
Poetic Silhouettes

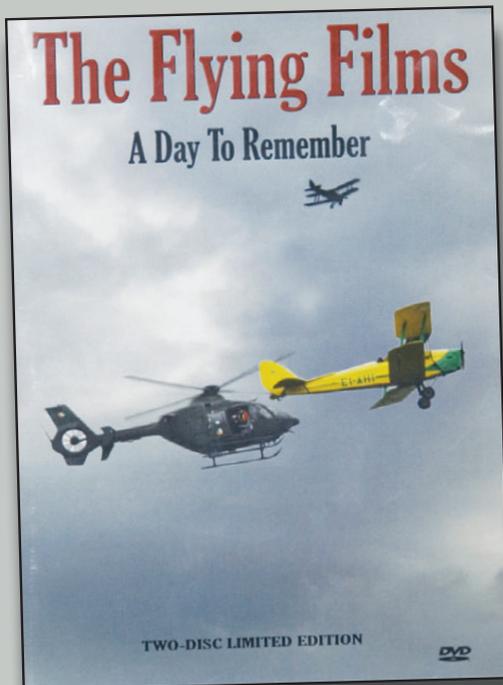
On soldiers, history, love and tragedy

Michael Whelan is a historian and writer living in Tallaght and currently a serving member of the Irish Air Corps. He has published many articles on Irish history etc. and a book on the Irish involvement in the Congo in the 1960s.

Michael has recently completed a collection of poems and illustrations, which have been brought together in a book titled 'On Hurting Ground' which was launched by the Heritage officer for South Dublin County Council on Aug 20th.

There are a limited number of books printed and Michael and his family wish to give all of the proceeds from the publication to the Marie Keating Foundation and the Irish Heart Foundation in Ireland as a mark of respect to his mother and her sister. The poems are about his mother's death, his experiences as a peacekeeper in Lebanon and Kosovo and historical topics.

Copies may be obtained from Michael at the Air Corps Museum or call 087 410 3764.



THE FLYING FILMS

Gerry Johnston worked as a Special Effects Specialist for Ardmore Studios during the making of the Flying Films in the sixties.

Gerry has produced a double disc limited edition DVD which was filmed during the Flying Films Reunion ceremonies which took place in Baldonnel in September 2008.

The DVD's contain lots of action during the making of the films together with interviews and shots taken at the Reunion.

Many familiar faces are to be seen of Air Corps personnel who served during that momentous period.

The DVD may be purchased from Gerry Johnston at Ardmore Studios,

Herbert Rd, Bray, Co. Wicklow. Tel. 353 1 276 0590 or by mobile phone 086 258 3019.
Email: gerryj@sfx-ireland.com
Cost : €15.00

CUIMHNIMIS

Let us remember those who have died recently.

SEAN TREACY

PAT COSTELLOE

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

11 OCTOBER 09

Annual Memorial Mass in Station Church, Baldonnel at 1000 hrs.
Families and Friends welcome.

17 OCTOBER 09

The 1969 Apprentice Class is planning a 40th reunion.
For details contact Donal Lowry at 01 821 0942 or 086 256 3785

09 DECEMBER 09

Annual Christmas Lunch. West County Hotel, Dublin at 1300 hrs
Contact any committee member.
Early booking recommended

FORMER ROGER CASEMENT BRANCH CHAIRMEN

The Branch is 30 years old this year. The following is a list of Chairmen since its founding in 1979.

W.Walsh	1979/80
J.Nolan	1981/82/83
F.O'Toole	1984/85
J.Lynch	1986/87/88/90/91
J.Conway	1992/93/94

W.Walsh	1995
J.Nolan	1996/97/98/99
W.Duggan	2000/01/02
J.Conway	2003/04/05/06
P.O'Meara	2007/08/09

