



Roger Casement Branch

Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann



The Link

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Roger Casement Branch attended the Ceremony in Guillemont on July 1, 2015. Also in attendance, Minister of State, Heather Humphries and Brig-Gen Murray Piggott.

The new memorial at the site of the Football match which took place during the Christmas Truce 1914 near Messinnes, Flanders.



France and Flanders 2015, 29th June to 2nd July

On 29th June we set off from Dublin Airport for the sixth successive year on our annual trip to various sites and locations connected with WW1. On arrival at Brussels Airport we were met by our 22 seater coach and driver, as this year we had decided to relax rather than hire and drive ourselves.

We were based in Ieper (Ypres) and having arrived at the Ariane hotel fresh and relaxed we had time to arrange for some wreaths and to later attend the Menin Gate ceremony. We paraded with two flags in a prominent position, laid a wreath during the ceremony and our piper Jack Power played some airs to entertain the crowds afterwards.

This year we paid tribute to two Irish airmen who are hailed as "aces" when we attended at the graves of George McElroy and Mick Mannock who are buried quite close to each other in the same cemetery in Laventie.

Another highlight was a visit to the newly commissioned memorial to the 1914 Christmas Truce and Football Match which was dedicated on Christmas Day 2014 beside Prowse Point Cemetery.

Prompted by Pat Collopy (our Limerick agent) we paid our respects at the grave of Sgt. Dave Gallagher the first All Black Tour captain who was killed in action on 4th Oct 1917 at Passchendaele fighting with the NZ force. He was born in Ramelton Co. Donegal.

We also found the site of the battle at Mouse Trap Farm where the Dublin Fusiliers suffered some horrendous losses during a Gas attack. On July 1st we travelled down to the Somme area in France. After visiting a number of sites in the area, we attended, along with our friends from The Somme Association of Northern Ireland, the Guillemont Commemoration Ceremony in memory of the liberation of that village by the 16th Irish Division in mid Sept 1916 which was one of the last and most intense actions of "The Battle of the Somme".

Contributed by Tony Roe.

Irish All-Black remembered.

RCB member Sean Collopy was a former member of the 1971 Apprentice class and travelled to Flanders and The Somme with the RCB group in July 2015.

Sean has a special interest in rugby having played as a front-row forward for the Shannon Rugby Club. He is presently a member of the Thomond Park staff.

During the visit, the Limerick man laid a wreath at the grave of Sergeant Dave Gallagher at Nine Elms Cemetery in Passchendaele. The Branch piper played a lament at the graveside and prayers were recited by the group.

Gallagher was one of 13 All Black players killed during WW1. He captained New Zealand on their 1905/6 tour of Britain, France and North America and was mortally wounded during an offensive on Gravenstafel Spur on October 4, 1917. He was 44 years old.

David Gallagher was born at Ramelton, County Donegal on 30 October 1873, the son of James Gallagher, a shopkeeper, and his wife, Maria McCloskie, a teacher. In May 1878 the Gallaghers sailed from Belfast on the Lady Jocelyn in the second party of emigrants for George Vesey Stewart's Katikati Special Settlement in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand.



Sean Collopy at the grave of Sgt. Dave Gallagher in Flanders.

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



AIR CORPS FORMER MEMBERS WHO WON ALL-IRELAND SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALS

Caleb Crone, Dublin/Cork

Caleb was a member of the 1937 Air Corps Apprentice Class. He grew up in Killavullen Co. Cork where his father was station master for a while. He played for the St. Marys Club in Saggart during his Air Corps Service in Baldonnel. He won an All-Ireland medal with Dublin in 1942 being one of the five St. Mary's players on the Dublin team. He later went on to win a second winners medal with Cork in 1945. He is quite unique in the GAA being only one of two players who have won winners medals with different counties. He also played for both Leinster and Munster in the Railway Cup competitions.

He was honoured when elected to the **Cork Team of the Century** on the occasion of the GAA Centenary in 1984. Caleb retired from the Air Corps with the rank of Sergeant and joined Aer Lingus where he worked as a technician in the Simulator Training Department. He settled in Saggart after marrying a local girl, Annie Mc Dermot and had two sons Colm and Denis. Colm sadly passed away in 2000 and Denis still lives in the Saggart area. He was related to TV and Radio pundit George Hook who has often proudly spoken about him. Caleb regretfully died in 1958 at a relatively young age and is buried in Saggart Cemetery.

(Appreciation, Denis Crone; Diarmuid O Donnabhain, C.L.G. Co. Chorcaí.)



Sean Wynne, Mayo

Sean was a member of the 1942 Air Corps Apprentice Class. He came on as a sub in the successful Mayo team who beat Louth in the 1950 final.

He was the first choice goalkeeper in 1951 with the successful Mayo team which defeated Meath in the final.

Sean Wynne, regarded as one of the best goal-minders of his era played in goals for the Air Corps Gaelic Football team during his time served there. The following excerpts were taken from a scrapbook compiled by Sean's wife.

Sean Wynne stars for Air Corps Air Corps 1-6 Civil Service 0-6

The defence took most of the credit for the Air Corps win in the Dublin S.F.L. at Islandbridge. Sean Wynne in goal was in great form and foiled several scoring bids by the Service forwards in the first period.

Air Corps not Troubled Air Corps 2-7 U.C.D. 1-3 The Air Corps dominated the first and early part of the second half before the College livened up considerably and Sean Wynne got plenty to do in the Air Corps goal.

Valuable Points for Air Corps Air Corps 1-2 Geraldines 0-2

In this Dublin S.F.L. match outstanding players for the winners were Wynne, Creehan, Creedon and Cotter.



Sean went on to play for his home team the Ballina Stephenites and the Mayo Senior Team winning two All-Ireland medals in 1950 and 1951 (holding his net intact through all his games), two National League medals and one Railway Cup Medal.

After leaving the Air Corps with the rank of Sergeant he went on to work in the Sugar factories in Carlow and Tuam before becoming the chief maintenance fitter for Texaco covering an area from Limerick to Letterkenny.

He had a great interest in youth development being Scout Unit leader in Ballina and also chairman of Bord na n'Og. Sean is remembered fondly in Ballina and Mayo and an annual tournament for young footballers is arranged each year by the Stephenites club for the Sean Wynne Cup.

Sean regretfully passed away in 1991 and is buried in Leigue Cemetery, Ballina.

(Appreciation Eamon Wynne and Terry Riley)

1953 Connacht Final



Wynne, the Mayo goalkeeper, goes down to block a low shot from Roscommon during the Connacht Senior Football Final at Roscommon

Johnny Boyle, Dublin

Johnny was a member of the first Air Corps Direct Entrance Course in 1949.

He initially played for Kildare but the Dublin selectors saw his potential and as he was born in Dublin he was eligible to declare for them.

He played in the All-Ireland final for Dublin against Kerry 1955. Dublin lost that match but came back three years later to beat Derry and win that elusive All-Ireland medal to add to his provincial Championship medal which he won with Leinster the same year. The successful 1958 team included many famous players including Kevin Heffernan, Ollie Freeney, Cathal O'Leary and the Timmons Brothers.

Johnny was also an international basketball player. He emigrated to New Zealand where he worked in the aviation industry and later moved to Australia where he now lives with his wife Peggy. It turned out that Peggy from Clondalkin had two sisters Ann and Mary who also married Air Corps members Christy Ryan from Tipperary and John Mahon from Mallow.

A profile of Johnny appeared in the 3/07 edition of The Link Newsletter. (Appreciation Johnny Boyle)



Johnny Boyle with grandson in Australia in 2007.

Mick Garrett, Galway

Mick was a member of the 1953 Air Corps Apprentice Class. He appeared in four All Ireland finals for Galway.

His first appearance was in the 1959 final losing to Kerry and was Captain of the 1963 Galway team which lost to Dublin. He played in the successful Galway teams that won the All Ireland Championships in 1964 and 1965.

During his Air Corps service Mick spent a number of years in Gormanston and played for the St. Vincents East Meath team. He played for Meath in 1957 and 1958. He later moved back to Baldonnel and was attached to Fighter Squadron.

After leaving the Air Corps he returned to Galway and worked on the Corrib drainage scheme and later joined Waterways Ireland.

He then lived in Portumna but played his football with Tuam Stars. Mick is now retired and lives in Tuam.

Mick won 7 Connaught Championship medals in addition to his two All-Ireland medals. During this period he also won a number of All-Army Medals as part of the Air Corps Golden Years team. (Appreciation Mick Garrett)



An elite number of former Air Corps members are the proud holders of elusive All-Ireland Senior Football winner's medals. Seven former members have been identified as the holders of winners medals and a further five members played in All-Ireland finals and received runners-up medals.
No winners of senior hurling medals have been identified.



Mick attended the 60th Anniversary reunion of 1953 Apprentice Class

Back L-R. T.Mc.Cormack, **M.Garrett**, PJ McCaffrey, J.Douglas, S.Reddington, S.Noonan.

Front L-R. M.O'Donnell, T.Purcell, M.Derham, F.Donnelly, E.Lally, D.O'Regan

Pat (Red) Collier, Meath

Red Collier played for Meath in the 1966 final losing to Galway. He was successful the following year when Meath beat Cork in the 1967 final. Red played for the St Patricks club in Stamullen and was a member of the Air Corps team during the Golden Years, winning All-Army Championship and Medical Services medals. He also played for Meath in the 1968 No Compromise Rules game against Australia. The following is an excerpt from an article which appeared in a local journal:

"At five feet six and eleven and a half stone in his prime, Pat "The Red" Collier could fairly have been described as "a hardy bit of stuff" when he played for Meath. A tearaway wing back, his buttly aspect and shock of ginger hair made him a distinctive presence on the field and a real favourite among Royal County supporters."

Red was a member of the Technical Store's staff in the Gormanston Air Station and after his period in service in the Air Corps he established a Tarmacadam and concrete business in Co. Meath which continues in business to the present time.



Noel Lucey, Kerry

Noel was a member of the 1955 Air Corps Apprentice Class. He was a member of the successful Kerry team in 1962 and his brother Jimmy was also a member of the team. Both players were members of the Defence Forces. Noel was unfortunately sent off earlier in the Munster final together with a Cork player following an altercation. He was suspended for the Semi Final but returned for the final against Roscommon.

Noel Lucey (Left) during the 1962 All Ireland Final.



Jim Gavin, Dublin



Picture shows Jim with RSM John McCormack holding Sam in the NCO's Mess.

Jim was a member of the successful Dublin team in 1995. He has been the Dublin senior football manager since 2012 and previously managed the under-21 football team to All-Ireland success.

He now works as a flight operations inspector with the Irish Aviation Authority having retired from the Air Corps where he held the position of Chief Flying Instructor with the rank of Commandant.

Jim is one of the few Air Corps pilots who has flown the restored Avro Cadet C7 biplane which is now located in the Air Corps museum.

After the success of Dublin in the 2013 final, Jim took the Sam Maguire cup to Casement Aerodrome.



Daithi Murphy, Offaly (formerly Air Corps and Aer Lingus)

The late Daithi Murphy was a member of the Offaly Substitute panel for the 1972 final and was awarded a winners medal.

Runners Up medal holders

In addition to the holders of Winners medals a number of Air Corps personnel has played in All-Ireland Finals and received Runners-Up medals;

Charlie Wrenn and Harry Donnelly for Offaly against Down in 1961.

Vincent Lucey for Kerry against Galway in 1965. (See M. Garrett above)

Eugene McCarthy and J.J.Murphy for Cork against Meath in 1967 (See P. Collier above)

CUIMHNIMIS ~ *Let us remember those who have died.*

PAT GREENE

MICK BOHANE

NOEL TALBOT

THOMAS (VINNIE) COSGROVE

GEORGE WELDON

CHARLIE MORGAN

TOM SAMPEY

*The Garda EC-135 Helicopter
which is operated by the Air
Corps, patrols over Dublin.*



Air Corps News

Busy week for Heli's, August 14, 2015

This week the Air Corps has completed 11 air ambulance missions, including two to the UK for young children requiring specialist treatment.

Heli Rescue on Sandymount Strand, August 3, 2015

The Garda Air Support Unit was carrying out a patrol of Dublin City Centre this morning when the crew observed two people walking on Sandymount Strand that, unbeknownst to them, had been cut off by the incoming tide. The crew contacted the Coastguard and made their way to the area. They advised the stranded persons, via the Skyshout (loudhailer) that help was on its way.

The Garda helicopter landed and took on board one person and their dog before the Coastguard helicopter arrived and landed to pick up the remaining person and their dog.

The Garda Air Support Unit is based in Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel. It has a crew of three, an Air Corps pilot and two Garda.

Great Service being provided by the Air Corps Helicopter Services. Well done to all concerned.



*The Helicopter spots the two persons cut off
by the sea on Sandymount Strand.*

UP COMING EVENTS

Branch Annual Mass for Deceased Members.

Sunday October 11 at 1000 hrs in Casement Aerodrome.
Refreshments will be served after the wreath laying ceremony.



Annual Christmas Lunch

Thursday December 10 at 1300 hrs. West County Hotel, Chapelizod.
Tickets are €35.00 each and may be purchased by sending a cheque to any member of the committee payable to Roger Casement Branch not later than Friday November 27.

Tickets are available on first come first served basis.

Donations of spot prizes are very welcome.



Memorial Service

A Memorial Service for the late Mick Bohane who died in the USA will be held on Saturday September 26 at 12 Noon in Moycarkey Parish Church (near Thurles). A celebration of his life will be held afterwards.

The family will welcome any member who knew Mick to attend.