



Roger Casement Branch of Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann Teoranta (ONET)



The Link

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Honorary Branch President: **James Nolan**

New GOC Air Corps appointed

Congratulations to the newly promoted General Officer Commanding, Irish Air Corps and Director of Military Aviation, Brigadier General Rory O'Connor.



Brig Gen O'Connor enlisted in the Irish Air Corps as an Apprentice in 1982, and was posted to Tech Wing where he completed his four year Apprenticeship in Aug 1986 before being awarded a Cadetship in October 1986. Brig Gen O'Connor was Commissioned as a 2/Lt in 1988 and received his Military Pilot Wings in 1989.

He is a Qualified Flight Instructor and Examiner and has logged in excess of 5,500hrs, having flown numerous types (including the SIAI Marchetti, Fouga Magister, Cessna FR172, King Air 200, Gulfstream G-IV and Pilatus PC-9M) and has flown all over the world as an operational pilot. He acted as Project Lead for the introduction of the PC-9M aircraft into service with the Irish Air Corps between 2002 and 2005.

Having commanded at all levels within the Irish Air Corps, and served in EUFOR Tchad/RCA as Air Intelligence Chief in 2008, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel in 2016. Brig Gen O'Connor holds a Masters in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies from NUI Maynooth as well as a Masters from the War Studies Dept, Kings' College London.

#StrengthenTheNation

Óglaigh na hÉireann / Irish Defence Forces



Glasnevin Cemetery June 2019.

Unveiling of Memorial for Irish men and women who served with the RAF/L/R. Noel Murphy, Denis Barry, BG Rory O'Connor, Frank Donnelly, Frank Walsh. Frank Brian RAF Association Flag Bearer.

Changes to the Production of the LINK Newsletter

The Link Newsletter was introduced in 2007 as part of an updating programme to improve the administration programme within the Branch and to improve communications with the existing members and to assist in the recruitment of former Air Corps members. A new website and email and social media systems were also initiated. The measures introduced coupled with the introduction of the distinctive Air Corps style headgear resulted in a marked increase in the Branch Membership enabling the Branch to become the largest in the ONE system. These measures also resulted in the increase of contributions to the ONE Headquarters in support of the hostels for disadvantaged members of the Defence Forces.

It was decided from day one that costs related to the production of the Newsletter should not be paid from the Branch's funds. In the 12 years since the Link has been published, over 50 editions have been produced and each copy has been sponsored by an external donor. The name of the respective donor is displayed on the front page of each copy.

Donors have included, Aviation Companies, former Air Corps individuals, Collections at class reunion events etc.

Regretfully, our sponsorship pool has dried up which has resulted in only the Edition 01-19 being issued for the first quarter of 2019. It should also be mentioned that the cost of postage has considerably increased since the introduction of the Newsletter.

It has been decided as an interim measure until the funding situation is clarified that the edition 02-19 which was due to be issued in June 2019 will be available in an on-line format only. The copy will be emailed to members with the required email addresses and will also be published on the Branch website and Branch Facebook.

Members should ensure that their respective email addresses are lodged with the Hon-Secretary. We regret any inconvenience that this adjustment may cause.

Upcoming Events 2019

Sunday October 13th

Thursday December 5th

Annual Mass for deceased members
Casement Aerodrome @1000hrs.

Annual Christmas Lunch

West County Hotel, Chapelizod @1300hrs.

Visit to the Somme July 2019

Members of the Roger Casement Branch completed their annual visit to the Somme on the Somme Memorial Day July 1st. It was the eleventh occasion on which the Branch was represented at the ceremonies.

Highlight of the trip was the Memorial Service in Guillemont to honour the dead of the 16th Irish Division and the 36th Ulster Division which is organised by the Somme Association of Northern Ireland. Representatives from the Irish Government and the Department of Defence were present at the ceremony and laid wreaths. The Roger Casement Branch is now integrated into the service and is listed in the Order of Service.



The 16th Division Memorial Cross at Guillemont Church. I/R. Sean Ryan, Noel Murphy, Paddy O'Meara, Richard Murphy (Picture taken during the French heat wave.)



Paddy O'Meara, Deputy Chairman, Roger Casement Branch and Lt-Col Paul Walkely OC 2nd Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment delivered the Exhortation in both English and Irish.



Richard and Noel visiting the on-going excavations of the Mine Tunnels in La Boisselle,



73 Apprentice Class Graduation 10 May 2019.

New Air Corps Apprentice Awards

The Roger Casement Branch conferred awards to the top three apprentices from the 75th Apprentice Class who graduated on the 10th May 2019. Bronze, Silver and Gold medals were awarded to the students who achieved the highest grades.

The awards were presented by the Branch President Jim Nolan as a symbol of the comradery that exists across the entire family of those that have served and continue to serve the State. The gold medallion was awarded to Air Woman Daisy Tysall.

We wish all the apprentices every success in their future careers.



Gold, Silver and Bronze medallions awarded to the top apprentices



A replacement cross has been placed at the site near Newmarket on Fergus Co.Clare.



DH DOVE Wreath Laying

The 50th anniversary Memorial Service was held on the site in 2011.

DH DOVE 188 CRASH SITE.

A number of members of the Roger Casement Branch attended the Crash site of DH Dove 188 during June for a periodic clean-up of the site. A new Cross was erected to replace the cross which was put in place for the memorial service which was held on the site on the 50th anniversary of the tragic accident in 2011.

The accident occurred on January 27th 1961 with the loss of four lives.

Ar dheis lámh Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

Somme Commemoration Service, Ennis WW1 Memorial July 2019.



Branch Members
Sean Collopy
and
J.C.
O'Sullivan



Garrett Ryan,
President, Patrick
Sarsfield Branch,
Cllr. Cathal Crowe,
Mayor of Clare,
Sean Collopy,
Roger Casement
Branch.

Air Corps Sports Role of Honour

Caleb Crone, Winner of SFC Medals with both Dublin and Cork.

Caleb was a member of the 1937 (2ND) 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 McDermot 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.)

Air Corps News

Busy Time for the Air Corps

July 29.

What can we do with a day and a half? In the past 36 hours the Air Corps has completed 3 Air Ambulance missions and 2 dedicated Mountain Rescue Missions for cardiac and trauma patients, five of these were completed by No.3 Operations with some of our AW139 Helicopters. While our Casa Aircraft transferred a patient from Cork to the UK for specialist Care. All our Crews will be ready to do it again tomorrow. The Air Corps also took part in the spectacular Bray Air Show.



An AW 139 helicopter crew performed an Air Ambulance role on Croagh Patrick on Reek Saturday and Sunday transporting injured patients to safety and to Castlebar Hospital.

Bray Air Show 2019

Some spectacular pictures of Air Corps Aircraft performing at the Air Show:



An Aer Lingus A320 aircraft flying in formation with 5 Air Corps PC9's



Spectacular PC9 Formation



Unusual Smoke pattern from the PC9.

The Dept. of Defence Black Knights Parachute Display Team was in action Jumping from AW135 helicopter.

