



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



The Link

Issue 01/22 November 2022

Branch Chairman: Denis Barry 087 297 0929

Hon. Secretary: Noel Murphy 087 6342941 Treasurer: Patrick Lynch 083 147 0659

PRO: Peter Mc Glynn Phone: 086 401 1154

Link Editor: Paddy O'Meara

E: onerogercasementbranch@gmail.com

Honorary Branch President: James Nolan

www.oneaircorpsbranch.com



The Memorial Stone was unveiled by Brig-Gen O'Connor assisted by Capt. Eugene Mohan.

Unveiling of Memorial Marker Stone.

The GOC Air Corps Brig-Gen Rory O'Connor unveiled a Memorial Marker stone at the site of the tragic accident to DH Dove 188 on 30th August 2022. The accident occurred on 27 January 1961 near Newmarket on Fergus Co, Clare when the aircraft was on final approach to Shannon Airport. There were 4 fatalities including two Air Corps pilots and two Air Traffic Control assistants. There was one survivor.

A service was held on the site on the 50th anniversary of the accident in 2011 by the Roger Casement Branch and a wooden cross was placed on the site. This cross has now been replaced by a permanent Grey Granite stone suitably engraved in both English and Irish kindly provided by the GOC Air Corps.



Hello, I hope everyone is keeping well and that we have put all our trials and tribulations of the past few years behind us. I especially look forward to all the activities that we had to park over the bad times can being refreshed and resumed again. The year gone by has been a time of great achievement by the Air Corps in celebrating the centenary of its foundation. A lot of work and preparation was put into the activities of the year and congratulations are due to the GOC and all the members of the Air Corps for their efforts.



During the Centenary Celebrations it was great to see and meet with former friends and colleagues at some of the open day event that were held during the year – memories are made of these happenings and long may the contacts be maintained. On mentioning maintaining contact one of the most successful ways, we in the Roger Casement Branch have in keeping the bond together was through our "Link" publication which we issued every quarter since 2007. Many of you may wonder how the "Link" comes about, well the whole thing is really down to one man. This man collects and collates all the news items and photographs for each issue, sets them and submits the finished item to the printers for publication. Sounds simple doesn't it ! Not really, to put the publication into your hand requires a lot of graft. The man who has taken this upon himself is our own member and past chairman of the Branch, Paddy O'Meara he deserved great thanks for what he has achieved on our behalf. Now the sad news Paddy has informed me that it is now time for him to hand over the mantle to someone else, so after presiding over 53 issues of the "Link" since 2007 this will be the last from the pen of Paddy. Thanks, Paddy, for all your great work we will miss your contribution every Quarter.

By the time you get this issue into your hand we will be getting closer to Christmas so as chairman of the Roger Casement Branch I would like to send festive greetings to all our members and their families and hope that the future holds bright for us all.

I would also like to include greetings to the General Officer Commanding Air Corps, Brigadier General Rory O'Connor and all serving members of the Air Corps and to thank you all for the help you have given to our Branch over the year.

I would like include in my greeting, members of the Irish Defence Forces, serving overseas I hope you will all stay safe and healthy over 2023.

On behalf of the Roger Casement Branch ONE I wish you all a very Christmas and Prosperous new Year.

Denis Barry

Paddy O'Meara recalls some Highlights of his time as Branch Chairman:

Paddy was elected Chairman of the Roger Casement Branch in January 2007 replacing the outgoing Chairman Jim Conway. He served as Chairman for a period of 5 years followed by a period of 10 years as Deputy Chairman. (2012-2022)

Initially he concentrated on updating the internal and external communications systems which entailed the introduction of an email system, Social media and the launch of a Branch Website. A new quarterly Newsletter was also established which he continued to produce and edit during this entire period.

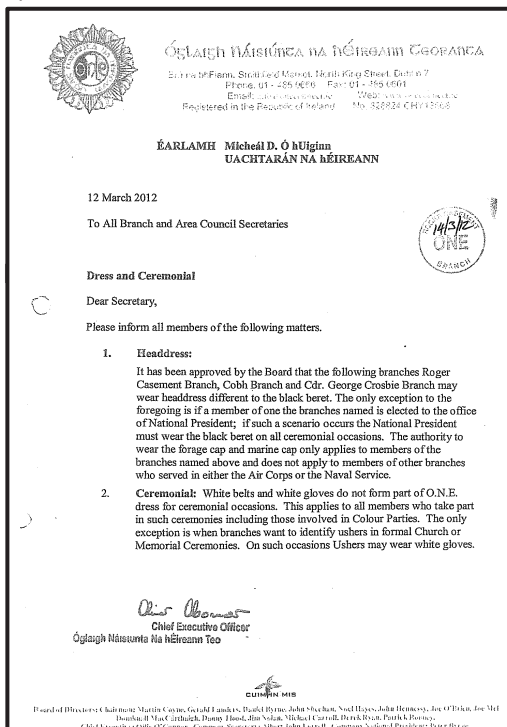
The following is a summary of some of the projects completed during this period:

1.New Headdress for the Roger Casement Branch.

During a visit to Lourdes to attend the International Military Pilgrimage in 2008, Paddy noticed that Aviation Veterans from many of the visiting countries invariably were wearing a distinctive common headdress I.E. a common blue forage type cap. The Air Corps had adopted a distinctive blue uniform some years previously with a similar headdress. As all members of the Branch had served in the Air Corps he proposed that Branch members would adopt this form of headdress which would reinforce their connection with the Air Corps and with the International Aviation brotherhood.

At that time there were approximately 40 separate branches within the ONE system and all wore the black beret as standard head-gear. An application was made to the ONE Board to introduce the Aviation style Headdress. A review of the ONE rules was on-going at the time and Paddy was invited to make the case for change at a plenary session of the delegates at the ONE AGM which was held in Dundalk that year. With encouragement from the Navy Delegates, it was agreed that the matter would be decided by the Board of ONE. Needless to say he lost no time in canvassing the board members for their support for the motion. Eventually the request was approved and then took several more months to agree a system to permit the Branch to purchase the head-gear from the Air Corps as required. The support of the GOC Air Corps at the time was greatly appreciated. The support of the Naval Service veterans was also appreciated and as expected the Naval Branches have since introduced new distinctive head-gear also.

The introduction of the new head-gear has attracted many former Air Corps members to join the Branch. The new headdress was worn By Branch Members for the first time in 2012 at the funeral of its former Chairman Jim Conway and it was also worn the same year at the Annual Easter Commemoration Service in Arbour Hill.



2. Annual trip to the WW1 Battlefields in Flanders and the Somme.

In July 2008 my good friend and fellow Branch member the late Tony Roe [Retd. Comdt.] travelled to Flanders and the Somme, rented a car and visited the major Battle sites and memorials particularly where Irish troops were engaged. We were very impressed with the Services and with the contacts we made. The following year we travelled again but with two extra passengers to fill the car. In following years the numbers travelling gradually increased to 20. The trips ceased for two years due to the pandemic but the Branch made a return to the Guillemont Memorial Service in 2022 when 6 members attended. 11 trips have now been made to the Flanders and Somme regions.



Guillemont is a small village in the Somme Region where the 16th Irish Division and the 36th Ulster Division fought side by side. The Annual Memorial Service is organised by the Somme Association of Northern Ireland and over the years the Roger Casement Branch has become integrated in the Memorial Service to the extent that Paddy O'Meara is included in the Order of Service for the delivery of the Exhortation in company with the Senior British Officer on duty. The prayer is recited in both English and Irish. The Ceremony is attended by a representative from the Irish Government usually at Ministerial level and the Irish Defence Forces are usually represented by a Brigadier General. Other Diplomatic, Military and local political officials attend the Memorial Service.



2016 Guillemont, Somme, Paddy O'Meara with Lt. Gen. the O'Murchu.

3.Link Newsletter

The first edition of the new magazine type newsletter was issued in Summer 2007 and continued to be issued to Branch members on a quarterly basis for a period of 15 years. Details of the Branch's activities and many articles of Air Corps History and of Air Corps personalities are also included. Items of current Air Corps news are provided by the Air Corps Press Officer.

It was agreed initially that Branch funds would not be used in the production of the magazine so sponsorship was sought from various aviation Companies and from various class reunions and from individuals. This continued for the first 50 editions when with the increasing cost of postage it was decided to circulate further editions of the Newsletter by email with resultant savings in printing and postage costs. To date, 54 editions of the Newsletter have been issued.

Somme Visit 2022

Following an absence of two years due to the Covid Pandemic a group of members from the Roger Casement Branch revisited the Somme Area in France to participate in the annual WW1 ceremonies. Highlight of the visit was the participation of the Branch in the service in Guillemont where the troops from the 16th Irish Division and the 36th Ulster Division fought and died side by side in this sector of the Somme Battleground.

The Irish Government was represented by the Ambassador to France and the Irish Defence Forces was represented by Brig-General Ger. Buckley.

This was the 11th occasion for the Roger Casement Branch to attend the Ceremony.



Branch members with Brig-Gen Buckley and members of the Royal Irish Regiment outside the Church in Guillemont.



Branch members at the 16th Division Cross in Guillemont.

Veterans Day Casement Aerodrome

An invitation was extended by the GOC Air Corps to former members of the Air Corps to visit Casement Aerodrome as part of the Air Corps 100th anniversary ceremonies on July 20th, 2022.

A large number of former members were in attendance and thoroughly enjoyed meeting old comrades and the festivities. Many of the old aircraft were on display and food was available.

During the day some aircraft arrived which were due to participate in the Bray Air Show over the following weekend including two aircraft from the UK Battle of Britain Flight, the Lancaster Bomber and a Hawker Hurricane. These aircraft were escorted to Baldonnel by a flight of 4 x PC9 Air Corps Aircraft.



Group enjoying the reunion



L-R: Finnbar Lyons (1953 DE); Paddy Mullen, (1956 Apps); Paddy Goodman 1952 DE)



Members of the 1956 (20th) Apprentice Class. Celebrated their 66th Anniversary in 2022; L-R Carpenter, O'Meara, Martin, Coughlan, Kinsella, Mullen, McDonald. Front: Cowman, Lynam,

CUIMHNIMIS

~ Let us remember those who have died. ~

Aidan Howard	John Mitchell
Rodney Butler	John Davis
Sean Staunton	Stephen Houlihan
John Reddy	Harry Goff
Bill Doherty	Addie Patterson

Air Corps News

No 1 Operations Wing – A Look back AT 2022

101 SQUADRON:

101 Squadron

19th March 2022. Casa C253 conducted a neonatal Air Ambulance flight from Lublin, Poland, to Dublin, Ireland. The Ukrainian infant was transferred from a maternity hospital in Kyiv to Crumlin Children's hospital, along with his mother and four siblings.

In a joint effort of 101 Squadron and the HSE's Neonatal Transport Team, the patient received ongoing medical treatment and support services here in Ireland. 101 Squadron continued to carry out a number of Air ambulance flights transferring Ukrainian patients and their families to Ireland.



104 Squadron:

15th July 2022. "280" won Concours d'Elegance award for the best static display aircraft on its first visit to RIAT (Royal International Air Tattoo).

The aircraft paint scheme is an homage to the camouflage pattern from the Emergency (WWII) era, and appropriate National identifier markings.

