



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

Apr 2010

AGM and New Personnel

The club AGM was convened in Hotel Greenhills Ennis Road on 4th March. The usual reports and reading of minutes etc were presented and then the election of new committee members took place. Some old faces departed the committee platform. There will be a full line-up in the next issue and on the Webpage.

From the New Chairperson

By Joe Johnston

Dear Members,

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Joe Johnston. I have been a member of Limerick Flying Club since 2002 and have been a member of the committee for the last two years. Since joining the committee I have been responsible for aircraft maintenance. I have held a PPL for 7 years, own a Jabiru UL450 and to date have logged around 800 hours. I am also currently half way through building a Vans RV7.

This year I have been elected as Chairman of Limerick Flying Club. In my current role I will still have responsibility for aircraft maintenance. It is my hope that I can use my Chairmanship to push through some of my long held goals for the club starting with a more open and accountable committee. To this end it has been agreed at the first meeting of the new committee that the names and responsibilities of each committee member will be published in the newsletter and put up on the notice board so no member should be in any doubt where to direct their queries. Also agreed was that committee meetings would be more regular, on the first Wednesday of every month and a report of same published in the next newsletter. I would also like to see the membership running of the club.

It is hard to find a club in Ireland with a cheaper flying rate than our own. I don't believe it is correct that members should take this for granted. There is lots of work around the airfield that needs to be done and it would be a shame to have to increase the hourly rate in order to have a safe and well kept airfield in order to carry out our operations. All we need is for each and every member to become a part and take interest in their club.

In an effort to include members more, the committee intend to set up some sort of structured maintenance where-by all members will be asked to take on some sort of responsibility or task. This is not to take away from the sterling work of the duty pilots but even here I have heard that numbers are dwindling. There will be more on this over the next few weeks.

As some of you have been aware there were a few maintenance problems over the last few weeks. EI-LFC was found to have a retaining bolt broken on the right hand undercarriage during a planned maintenance check. It was agreed to bring forward its annual and also renew all the undercarriage bolts. A report has been sent to the manufacturer on the matter. EI-JPK has had a starter problem and a new one has been fitted along with a new battery (at great expense). It was also due for a 600 hour check which required the nose gear to be removed so it was thought prudent to have the undercarriage bolts replaced and its annual completed all at the same time. The starter motor and battery problem I believe were a result of the starter being cranked until it flattened the small on-board battery which is not capable of supplying the sufficient power that is required for very cold weather starting. Hence it will now be a standard operating practise to use the portable ground power unit for the first start of the day. The reason being that we will not flatten the on-board battery and prevent putting



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excessive stresses on the starter. If you have any queries please consult with an instructor.

EI-DOY has just completed a 50 hour check and is flying well.

EI-BFP is unfortunately for operational reasons coming to the end of her serviceable life. What a life it has been clocking up around 13000 hours in 33 years of pure unadulterated circuit bashing. I noted in her logbooks that she once did 13 hours flying on one June day at Weston. Just think of the logistics of doing all that flying in one day. What are we doing wrong? But all is not lost as I have a cunning plan that might see the engine live on at Coonagh but that's for next month's news.

I have this month received a letter from Trevor Young requesting hangarage for his near completed sport cruiser. I intend to bring this request to the next committee meeting. If any one has an opinion on this or any other matter raised I would appreciate the feed back.

Safe Flying,
Joe Johnston, Chairman.

Social Events Co-ordinator

By Harry McNamara

Hi all, I agreed with the committee that my committee role will be to help co-ordinate special event activities in the club. This will include Fly-outs, Young Eagles Day, Fly-in and Spot Landing competition and any other events.

We will endeavour to organise a full fly-out, perhaps overnight towards the end of July. Again we may well dove-tail our destination with a fly-in. I will keep you posted.

The Young Eagles Day is scheduled to be held in June. I am currently co-ordinating a date

with Jane Magill and her Air Venture operation. Provisional date being discussed is 19th June. Any PPL who wishes to fly with the Young Eagles on the day needs to be a member of the EAA and be registered as a YED pilot. This can be done on www.eaa.org Those who are already members must renew their subs for the flights to qualify as YED flights. Please discuss this with Jane or me if you require further information.

In regard to the Fly-in and Spot Landing, the weather has gotten the better of us over the last few years. We will shortly pick and promote a day and hope the weather the Gods are kind to us. I anticipate this will be towards late August. I need to check what other fly-ins are on and avoid a clash. We will put it on the agenda for the next committee meeting at the start of April.

However the big event the club has decided to support has absolutely nothing to do with flying. That said it is an opportunity for us to utilise a skill we have as pilots, radio communications. As was mentioned at the AGM, the Irish Special Olympics are being held in Limerick this year on the 9th to the 13th June. The games will involve some 1,900 intellectually disabled athletes and sports persons from all over Ireland. When you add their coaches, mentors and families we are looking at an influx of up to 10,000 people to Limerick for the games. The organisers have a need for some 3,500 volunteers to work in all areas of the games. These include stewarding, security, health care, transport, catering and logistics. Logistics will involve helping with communications. This is where we in Limerick Flying Club can play a role. The organisers have the use of the now decommissioned Garda radios, the force having recently been equipped with new encrypted radio technology. Basically they need people working in the radio base helping to co-ordinate transport, stewarding, logistics and emergencies. I



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personally have volunteered to work in this area of the games. The committee has agreed to encourage members to get involved as a team. We feel several benefits will accrue from our involvement. For those who are shy or nervous about using the flight radios, these will get some good experience. We as a group are familiar with the language and procedures on the use of radios. It will hopefully be good craic and there is no doubt we will be giving to those who will appreciate our efforts, both on and off the field. Finally it might generate some good PR for the club, something we should never refuse.

For more information on the Special Olympics I encourage a logon to www.specialolympics.ie If you decide you can assist (it will need you to use a couple of days of annual leave!), then I would love to hear from you by the 26th March. Unfortunately because of Garda vetting which is required for all volunteers, time is now of the essence. The first thing you will need to do is register online as a volunteer at the aforementioned web site. Please specify logistics as the area in which you have an interest. On Monday I am due to have discussions with Neil Carney who is the Games Director. (For your information, Neil was the director of the Volvo Ocean Race visit to Galway last year). What will come of these discussions will be more precise information on the role we can play including the logistics of where the radio base will be located, the extent of the communications operation required and the hours of operation. There will be seven venues in use and a huge transport fleet. UL will be the main base of operations. As soon as I have more information I will forward it to you. In the meantime I would appreciate declarations of interest in helping out with this unique and worthwhile project. Please reply by email to this email (which is my work one) or to my home as included in the CC above. Mobile for texts or calls is (087) 2449034.

Thank you all in anticipation of your support. A number of you have already indicated an interest which is fantastic. The more the merrier, it will enable us divide the workload.

PS: I will be also continuing to administer the Development Fund. More about that in the next few weeks.

This important article missed the deadline for last month. However some people may still be needed so if anyone is interested it may be worth pursuing. Please contact Harry, ED.

Treasure Hunt of the sky

By Foncy Hobbins

LIMERICK FLYING CLUB TREASURE HUNT



SAT 17 APRIL between 1000 and 1700

Open to club members & private owners.

1st, 2nd, 3rd Prizes will be awarded.

Rules and information will be provided to the participants on the day. Please enter your name on the sheet in the Ops. room.

Contact-Foncy Hobbins (087) 9895488
ajhobbins@eircom.net



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Club Security, or Lack of it

By Mike McGrath

It has been brought to my attention that on a number of occasions lately the keys have been left in the fuel bowser at the end of the day. If you are the duty officer it is your responsibility to ensure that the club is left secure at the end of the flying day. For members flying during the week you are responsible to ensure everything is left secure. This will become more important as the weather improves and evening flying makes a return. It only takes a few minutes to check everything is put away and secured. We don't need to make life easier for "non-members" to help themselves to our facilities!

This concern has also been emphasised by input from Jim Keane as follows, 'Mike your concerns are correct. It is every pilot's/club member's duty when finished with a club facility to leave it in a secure way not necessarily a must for the duty pilot. Lock up fuel, hanger and club house and 'Bar//Restaurant' when finished with it. The way to handle that is, if anybody uplifts fuel they lock up the bowser immediately after fuelling an aeroplane. The same goes for locking up the hanger, club house etc. When finished with it lock it up. On the morning of March 11th last at 0930 I found the fuel bowser unlocked and the lock inside in the bowser (beside the fuel hose).

Irish aviation by the 100s

By Eddie Ryan

In this very significant year in the long history of aviation it may well be a good time to bring to the notice of aviators in the club its importance. Below are the six historical dates associated with the centenary celebrations.

March 1909 Short Brothers received an order from the Wright Brothers to manufacture six

aircraft, thus making Shorts the first aircraft manufacturing company in the world.

November 5 1909 Irish Aero Club was formed as the first association to promote aviation in Ireland.

31 December 1909 Harry Ferguson was the first person in Ireland to construct and fly his own aeroplane at Hillsborough, Co Down.

August 1910 Lillian Bland became the first in the world to construct and fly her own aircraft at Carnmoney, Co Down.

29/30 August 1910 First aviation meeting at, air display in Ireland took place at Lepordstown racecourse Co Dublin.

11 September 1910 Robert Loraine became the first person to fly across the Irish sea, ditching off Howth Head, Co. Dublin.

As some of these historical events will be celebrated by some flying clubs in Ireland. What about one of the oldest flying clubs in the country, our own Limerick Flying Club, attempting something that would commemorate such Irish Aeronautical History.

Checks

By Gerry Humphries

I had a shaky start to my basic jet training at Cranwell. We were supposed to memorise all the checklists and it was frowned on if you did not have everything off 'pat'. I've always had some sort of mental block learning by 'rote' and for the life of me was always getting stuck with checklists in the early days. My instructor and I had what I can only describe as a 'personality clash', as a result whenever we flew together I was more anxious to improve my image in his eyes than anything else. On one of the early



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dual flights I forgot the flaps in my pre take-off checks. I knew something was wrong, but my mind refused to come up with the missing item. The instructor told me to put the pins back in the ejection seat (making the seat safe) and then made me climb out and walk back to the squadron, almost 2 miles in full view of a whole RAF station. I can remember it like it was yesterday, ashamed, furious, livid, defiant, angry and more. I'm not sure I learned anything constructive at the time since I was trying so hard, but it did get me thinking about checklists. Eventually I overcame my mental block and related the check-list to the physical checks, moving around the cockpit in a logical way. Success came with practice, repetition and total focus on the job and not on the instructor. I now have a set of checks seared into my brain so deeply that I still involuntarily check 'Armament Master switches off every time I taxi off the runway, even in a Tecnam! Checklists are vital in flying. Multi crew aircraft use a 'challenge and response' technique whereby 2 crew-members are involved and go through a printed checklist methodically for just about every action they do, every time they do it. Similarly for emergencies, they use the checklist every time. For us in the single pilot G.A. world I would say that we all need to remember some checks by heart, pre take-off vital actions, pre-landing checks, and immediate actions for major emergencies like fire and engine failure are essential to have in your head. Interestingly the RAF used to place great emphasis on smoke and fumes drills, something we don't tend to emphasise much in General Aviation. However, I would say it is something we should all think about and have a plan for, it's a potentially serious situation.

One of the problems with checklists, whether memorised or followed from a page, is that they can become an end in themselves, we simply run through them for the sake of it without thinking and without achieving the aim. A

classic is doing the 'wrong' thing with a switch, something simple like a fuel pump can be switched 'off' instead of 'on'. More expensive and embarrassing is putting the wheels up instead of down, easily done. Every now and then I have to have a talk with myself and remind myself of the importance of not getting complacent with checks, familiarity breeds contempt, but in aviation the phrase 'win some lose some' is not good enough. You only lose once in flying. We never stop learning, the most vivid and lasting lessons come from personal experience, but in aviation there are too many lessons to learn them all in that way. Checks represent the distillation of years of experience from cock-ups that happen over and over again. Treat checklists with respect, be familiar with them, and try to think of the logic involved. Neil Rankin has produced an excellent set of checks for the club aircraft, don't rely on a copy being always in the aircraft, have your own. If you fly different aircraft then develop a 'common' set.

One of my favourite movies is a comedy called 'As Good as it Gets' starring Jack Nicholson. Jack's character Melvin Udall is a writer with an obsessive compulsive disorder. He has routines for everything, eating, walking on pavements, locking his apartment door, putting on his slippers. His whole life revolves around doing the same thing in the same way every time. We pilots should all have a little of this in us, an obsessive compulsion to do the checks, and develop good habits around aircraft that we never depart from whatever the circumstances. Never leave a tow-bar connected. Never touch a prop without treating it as live. Never fly without enough fuel. Happy flying!

Just a thought

By Jim Keane

Thanks for including my pictures in the last issue. What I see there is a club member who



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went out flying on a day, made observations and brought them back. Hopefully it will encourage other club members to do something similar. As we know we have some PPLs in Coonagh who after getting the licence never go further than 10 miles from the field. A very competent PPL of c. 8 years standing recently asked me to accompany him on his first trip to EINN! Could we through the newsletter encourage low time, or recently qualified PPLs in particular, to fly to other airfields, submit a brief article on their trip with a few pictures for inclusion in the next issue. That would be a news item for the club but hopefully it would encourage others to do similar trips. If possible one trip should be included per newsletter, provided of course that one is submitted.

A very proud young man



The picture of Harry Humphries shortly after his first solo in Coonagh. Harry as we know is the Youngest person ever to achieve first solo at Coonagh, at least during the lifetime of the present club. We unfortunately do not have

accurate records of the events that may have taken place in the old Shannon Aero club and Shannon Flying Services, both of which have preceded the present club by many years.

Ironically about a week after Harry's solo, Michael Blake paid us a visit in his Jodel D9 light aircraft. Michael was also among the few people who went solo in Coonagh at a very tender age. The aircraft that Michael is now flying, and owns, was also flown by another very young first solo person and club instructor, Danny Lyons R.I.P. who was very unfortunately killed in a motor accident some years ago.



Since Michael left Ireland to live in Chicago a few years ago he has qualified for an American multi-engine Instrument Rated commercial licence. That is only a little bit of his achievements though. He has flown the Atlantic a few times in single engine aircraft at least one of them as slow as a Cessna 172. That has been some experience and we look forward to an article from Michael soon which will give us an account of that wonderful experience. We may also in due course, see some pictures of the frozen Greenland wasteland that he had to fly over. Those will be pictures that most of our PPLs will not be able to produce, at least while they are flying in command of a little aircraft.



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Who knows when other young people like Harry and Michael will rise to fame and achieve very enviable feats and perform very wonderful events. We look forward with interest, and best wishes to all young pilots.

An interesting picture

Thanks Gerry



The mind boggles, but I am sure they know exactly what they are doing. Maybe Gerry will fill us in some time.

Why Bother?

By S N Walsh

A legitimate question I suppose. In those days of what we think is mass communication we have ourselves surrounded by twitter, text messages, mobile phones, emails, social networking sites, Internet forums and maybe even more that an old fool like me may not have even heard of. Why then should we need a newsletter? I often think about that also. However most of the other communication means are self regulated and topics crop up and down, appear and disappear, without any particular reason or time scale. I would suggest that it is therefore difficult to focus on a theme and progress it to any kind of conclusion. That is not to suggest that the communications are

trivial or without merit, but many of them may well be.

The purpose of the club newsletter is hopefully to focus attention on the important items of information that are relevant to the members in any one month. All the other forms of contact are still in place, but even though that is the case it is disappointing to realise how long it takes to get some messages through to most of the members. How many times have we all heard that an event or party etc was not notified and many missed out on the fun, although there had been posters, word of mouth and all the other talking devices already mentioned in full swing for weeks.

A little criticism that was often mentioned was that there was a very poor secretariat and general communication between the committee and the members. I am glad to see that the new chair intends to address that lack and we all look forward to a more open and informed community. In that regard I hope that this monthly newsletter will help to spread the word to as wide an audience as possible. Of course it cannot do that if you don't read it, so please at least pick out the less boring bits, take them on board and try to remember what they are.

Articles

The LFC Newsletter is published monthly, in the first week of the month. All articles, letters, etc. must reach the Editor at least two days before distribution. All club members, and non-members who are interested in our club, or flying, are invited to publish articles. Please submit your article by email to newscoonagh@gmail.com or in person or by post. They may on any subject you wish, information, gossip, fun, logistics, or anything else.

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