



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

1 Augus2016

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A GREAT DAY!



Former Chairmen and present Chairman-from the left- Jim Keane, Mike Beston, Gerry Humphries, Joe Sullivan, Sean C Walsh, Ger Mulconry, Sean McInerney, Joe Johnston.

Thank you to those who helped out. Joe Sullivan, our current Chairman spoke eloquently and we have received very favourable feedback about the day out which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

14th May at Coonagh- no, not a fly-in but without doubt one of the best days in a long time at our club for the Ex-Chairmen Gathering! What weather, what food and what a great turnout of former chairmen, their wives, children in some cases and to cap it all the arrival totally unannounced of four superb Vans RV's from the UK-routing Scotland-Sligo-Coonagh! The day was the brainchild of member Sean Walsh who unveiled his fine plaque of the former Chairmen, many of whom attended and enjoyed the day out. The plaque now hangs proudly in the clubhouse. It was great to see so many attending and many old acquaintances were renewed and a lot of old stories retold in a delightfully happy atmosphere. Our airfield looked very presentable indeed thanks to those who have maintained it in a very fine condition. We hope to have some of the visitors on the day back for Fly-In later on in August. Let's hope we get similar weather!





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First flight in an Mk 26 Spitfire

Gerry Humphreys.



I guess it's every pilot's dream to have a go in a Spitfire... unfortunately unless you have a lot of cash or are one of the select few with an 'in' to the warbird scene, it remains a dream for most. The Mk 26 spitfire has changed that for many; an 80% scale homebuilt kit with an 8-cylinder Jabiru engine; the package looks and sounds fantastic, almost indistinguishable from the real thing in the air; more than 80% of the fun for less than 10% of the cost of a Merlin-powered original. The Mk 26 has a passionate following around the world as an affordable way to own and fly the legend that is every schoolboy's dream...

I was recently asked to ferry one from the UK to its new owner in Germany; I had inspected the aircraft and was impressed with the build quality; the builder and his partner were retired De Havilland aircraft engineers and had between them built more aircraft than I'd had hot breakfasts... This was the first Mk 26 to be completed in the UK and was indeed a high quality piece of work.

Every detail had been thought out, right down to the 'guns' button on the specially constructed joystick which doubled as a transmit switch!



The cockpit is snug – especially if both seats are occupied but it is really well thought out, and I was pleased to see in place of the normal gunsight a Garmin 296 wired in.





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The plan was to fly in formation with my friend Brad in EI HUM---I always wanted to be Spitfire Lead! We set off from the UK base into lowish cloud and not brilliant visibility around the north of London past such historic bases as North Weald and Biggin Hill. Brad had a radio snag which meant we were communicating by using hand signals; not a big deal as I was happy up front with him sticking like glue... We approached the cliffs of Dover and I felt I had to take a snap of the cliffs with that iconic wing in the frame...

(The Cliffs of Dover from a Spitfire)



Things got exciting just then as a couple of Dutch F16's with the same idea going the opposite way flashed about 100 ft. underneath us! I decided to pull up a bit and head 'sausage side' across the channel. Soon France came into view and the weather picked up nicely. Coasting in near Calais the French controllers were a little slow on the uptake wanting to know our life story and asking me to spell 'Spitfire' phonetically- where has this bloke been all his life I thought? And I don't care if the maximum number of letters in an ICAO-compliant call sign is 7--we are calling ourselves Spitfire whether you like it or not!! Eventually they started a conversation in French with some other aircraft and left us alone to fly over the cornfields towards the famous Flanders Poppy Fields near the Somme where so many died in the First World War.

(There may be trouble ahead...)



The 8-cylinder Jabiru up front was purring away happily, Brad was still on my wing and life was good...



(There's your problem...)

Suddenly there was a definite vibration. I thought no, this couldn't be happening, 1800 feet up, standing corn everywhere and I've never even put the gear down in one of these things! Thank God for Garmin, 'go to nearest airfield'-nav sorted, St Omer 4.5 miles away, groundspeed 140kts, two minutes. 'PAN PAN PAN—Spitfire Lead, engine trouble diverting St Omer'. Lille ATC confirmed my choice and left me to get on with it. The vibration got worse. I tried the fuel pump and applied the electric carb heat, but no joy. A quick glance showed



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nothing amiss on the gauges, however there was obviously something horribly wrong up front. My main preoccupation was then to get the gear down; an unusual electric system of switches, locking levers and visual indicators, which could apparently be overloaded if

Both were operated at once. Thankfully it worked as advertised and then I spotted St Omer's runway around two miles away. Oh, and by now the engine had stopped! Plan A had been to circle and land into wind, now it was simple- just get it on the ground anywhere that was not standing corn. Experimenting a bit with flap it soon became apparent that I might just get away with a downwind landing on whatever runway that was about a mile ahead. I made it, my first landing in a Spitfire!

Seconds later Brad arrived in EI-HUM not realising why I had landed downwind and parked on the end of a random runway at a deserted airfield in France. We had a look under the hood and immediately saw what looked like a con-rod failure, which led to it punching a hole in the crankcase. This particular Spitfire was not going anywhere for a while. Fortunately around the corner of this very famous airfield's hangar was a nice restaurant (Michelin 1* I since discovered) where we had a wonderful lunch. Afterwards the owner, who happened to also have the keys to the hangar, was amazed to find how we ended up in his restaurant--'le service' was immediately abandoned and he brought his mates for a photo session!



('Le Chef de St Omer')

As Douglas Bader said to his HQ during the Battle of Britain-'don't send me good pilots... just lucky ones!!'

(Thank you to Gerry for this excellent article). FH

News-

- Our second hangar now has brand new doors that not only look well but also are a huge improvement on the old system. Dermot Walsh of Dromkeen Sheds carried out the work and an excellent job was completed.
- The crew of Challenger D-BTLT must have got the fright of their lives on 8 April en-route to Dublin while over the UK as two RAF Typhoons intercepted it as they had lost contact with air traffic control! The Typhoons went supersonic in the climb causing sonic booms! The Challenger was escorted to Cardiff, where the crew were interrogated and later allowed to continue their flight to Dublin. Plenty to talk about on that flight! I must check the radio!!
- Darby O'Kennedy, he of the RAF, Aer Lingus and former owner and operator of Weston Airfield died on 15 May aged 102! He was long time pilot and instructor at Weston where we bought various Rallyes throughout the years. As they say-a legend in aviation. RIP.
- Connaught Airport (EIKN) has changed it's runway headings to 08/26-watch for that on your next visit.
- GAR Form- if you intend flying to Haverfordwest (EGFE) in Wales you must fill out a General Aviation Report (GAR) form and email it to the appropriate Border Security Force area. BE WARNED-they must receive it so in order to ensure a no hassle flight send your completed form to the following 3 email addresses-
 - 1.[ncu@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk/](mailto:ncu@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)
 - 2.DPP.PORTSINFO@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk



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The Payoff

Dedicated to Frank Crismon (1903-1990)

By Capt. G. C. Kehmeier (United Airlines, Ret.)

"I ought to make you buy a ticket to ride this airline!" The chief pilot's words were scalding. I had just transferred from San Francisco to Denver. Frank Crismon, my new boss, was giving me a route check between Denver and Salt Lake City.

"Any man who flies for me will know this route," he continued. "'Fourteen thousand feet will clear Kings Peak' is not adequate. You had better know that Kings Peak is exactly 13,498 feet high. Bitter Creek is not 'about 7,000 feet.' It is exactly 7,185 feet, and the identifying code for the beacon is dash dot dash. 'I'm putting you on probation for one month, and then I'll ride with you again. If you want to work for me, you had better start studying!'"

Wow! He wasn't kidding! For a month, I pored over sectional charts, auto road maps, Jeppesen approach charts, and topographic quadrangle maps. I learned the elevation and code for every airway beacon between the West Coast and Chicago. I learned the frequencies, runway lengths, and approach procedures for every airport. From city road maps, I plotted the streets that would funnel me to the various runways at each city.

A month later he was on my trip.

"What is the length of the north-south runway at Milford?" "Fifty-one fifty."

"How high is Antelope Island?" "Sixty-seven hundred feet. "If your radio fails on an Ogden-Salt Lake approach, what should you do?" "Make a right turn to 290 degrees and climb to 13,000 feet."

"What is the elevation of the Upper Red Butte beacon?" "Seventy-three hundred."

How high is the Laramie Field?" "Seventy-two fifty. This lasted for the three hours from Denver to Salt Lake City.

"I'm going to turn you loose on your own.

Remember what you have learned. I don't want to ever have to scrape you off some hillside with a book on your lap!"

Twenty years later, I was the Captain on a Boeing 720 from San Francisco to Chicago.



We were cruising in the cold, clear air at 37,000 feet. South of Grand Junction a deep low-pressure area fed moist air upslope into Denver, causing snow, low ceilings, and restricted visibility. The forecast for Chicago's O'Hare Field was 200 feet and one-half mile, barely minimums. Over the Utah-Colorado border, the backbone of the continent showed white in the noonday sun. I switched on the intercom and gave the passengers the word-

"We are over Grand Junction at the confluence of the Gunnison and Colorado Rivers. On our right and a little ahead is the Switzerland of America--the rugged San Juan Mountains. In 14 minutes we will cross the Continental Divide west of Denver. We will arrive O'Hare 3.30pm Chicago time." Over Glenwood Springs, the generator overheats. "Number 2 won't stay on the bus," the engineer advised. He placed the essential power selector to number 3. The power failure light went out for a couple of seconds and then came on again, glowing ominously. "Smoke is coming out of the main power shield," the engineer yelled. "Hand me the goggles." The engineer reached behind the observer's seat, unzipped a small container, and handed the copilot and me each a pair of ski goggles. The smoke was getting thick. I slipped the oxygen mask that is stored above the left side of the pilot's seat over my nose and mouth. By pressing a button on the control wheel, I could talk to the copilot and the engineer through the battery-powered intercom. By flipping a switch, either of us could talk to the passengers.



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"Emergency descent!" I closed the thrust levers. The engines that had been purring quietly like a giant vacuum cleaner since San Francisco spooled down to a quiet rumble. I established a turn to the left and pulled the speed brake lever to extend the flight spoilers. "Gear down. Advise passengers to fasten seat belts and no smoking."

I held the nose forward, and the mountains along the Continental Divide came up rapidly. The smoke was thinning. "Bring cabin altitude to 14,000 feet," I ordered.

At 14,000 feet over Fraser, we leveled and retracted the gear and speed brakes. The engineer opened the ram air switch and the smoke disappeared. We removed our goggles and masks. Fuel is vital to the life of a big jet, and electricity is almost as vital. The artificial horizon and other electronic instruments, with which I navigated and made approaches through the clouds, were now so much tin and brass. All I had left was the altimeter, the airspeed, and the magnetic compass--simple instruments that guided airplanes 35 years earlier.

"Advise passengers we are making a Denver stop. "The last Denver weather was 300 feet with visibility one-half mile in heavy snow. Wind was northeast at 15 knots with gusts to 20," the copilot volunteered. I know. I heard it."

The clouds merged against the mountains above Golden. Boulder was in the clear. To the northeast, the stratus clouds were thick like the wool on the back of a Rambouillet buck before shearing.

I dropped the nose and we moved over the red sandstone buildings of the University of Colorado. We headed southeast and picked up the Denver-Boulder turnpike. "We will fly the turnpike to the Broomfield turnoff, then east on Broomfield Road to Colorado Boulevard, then south to 26th Avenue, then east to Runway 8." The copilot, a San Francisco reserve, gave me a doubtful look. One doesn't scud-run to the end of the runway under a 300-foot ceiling in a big jet.

Coming south on Colorado Boulevard, we were down to 100 feet above the highway. Lose it and I would have to pull up into the clouds and fly the gauges when I had no gauges. Hang onto it and I

would get into Stapleton Field. I picked up the golf course and started a turn to the left. "Gear down and 30 degrees. "The copilot moved a lever with a little wheel on it. He placed the flap lever in the 30-degree slot. I shoved the thrust levers forward." Don't let me get less than 150 knots. I'm outside."

I counted the avenues as they slid underneath-- 30th, 29th, and 28th. I remembered that there was neither a 31st nor a 27th. I picked up 26th. The snow was slanting out of the northeast. The poplar trees and power lines showed starkly through the storm. With electrical power gone, we had no windshield heat. Fortunately, the snow was not sticking. "Let me know when you see a school on your side and hack my time at five-second intervals from the east side of the schoolyard. Ten seconds. There it is the yard is full of kids. Starting time now! From the east side of the schoolyard, I counted Kearney, then Krameria, Leydon, Locust. Remember the double lane for Monaco Parkway, Magnolia, Niagara, and Newport. Time the speed at 130 knots. Eight blocks to the end of the runway. Oneida, Olive, Pontiac, Poplar. From Quebec to Syracuse, the cross streets disappear; figure eight seconds. Keep 26th Avenue under the right side of the nose.

"Full flaps. "Dead ahead, glowing dimly in the swirling snow, were the three green lights marking the east end of Runway 8. We crossed 20 feet above the center green light and touched down in a crab to the left. I aligned the nose to the runway with the right rudder, dropped the nose wheel, popped the speed brakes, and brought in reverse thrust.

It took us 10 minutes to find the terminal in the swirling whiteout. We saw the dim, flashing red light atop the building indicating the field was closed to all traffic.

A mechanic materialized out of the snow carrying two wands. He waved me into the gate. I set the parking brake. "We have ground power," the engineer advised. "Cut the engines." The bagpipe skirl of sound spiraled down to silence. "My hat is off to you, skipper. I don't know how you ever found this airport. "I used to fly for an ornery old chief pilot who made me learn the route," I replied as I hung up my headset and scratched the top of my



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head where it itched!

(Frank Crismon passed away at his home in Denver on 25 Jan 1990).

(Thanks to Fergus Glendon for sending on this very interesting story). FH

EVENTS 2016-

- 1 August Birr Airshow
- 6 August Newcastle Festival of Flight
- 7 August Kilkenny BBQ Fly-In
- 20-21 August LFC Fly-In
- 21 August Rose of Tralee Festival
- 26-29 August Anglo Irish 21st Anniv Fly-In Clonbollogue
- 27-28 August Fly-Out Limerick Flying Club- (contact Joe Sullivan)
- 3-4 September Air Waves, Portrush
- 10-11 September Sligo Fly-In

THE JEFF WALTON CROSS COUNTRY FUND-

Our former insrtuctor, Jeff Walton has very generously donated his flying credit to our club and is to be distriuted to' new PPLs. In the following way-

1. Each 'NEW' PPL shall receive 2.5 hours(€325) credit to their account, to be used for cross country flying only.
2. The flights MUST be to an airfield or airfields at least 25 nautical miles from Coonagh, and be conducted in a CLUB aircraft.
3. If these conditions are NOT met during a flight then the credit cannot be used for it.

NOTE: To qualify for these grants Finian Gaule(Treasurer), myself or some other member of the committee must be informed in order to distribute the grant. Jeff will also be advised and will contact the pilot concerned.

MEMBERS-We need more members to commit to a Duty Pilot Roster at weekends as not enough are doing their duty slot-please sign up for that as soon as possible.

WANTED-STORIES/ARTICLES/PHOTOS- Please send in an article, story, incident to do with flying-why not tell us about your story
We need other contributions on anything to do with aviation-let's have them! Ed.

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 newsletter@limerickflyingclub.com or in person or by post. They may on any subject you wish, information, gossip, fun, logistics, or anything else.

Disclaimer

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