



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

Feb 2012

Condolences to Mr Desmond Deeney and the family on the recent death of his father Gerry. We didn't see much of Gerry in recent times but he was very active in Coonagh in the older days of the Shannon Flying Services and associated company facilities ✚

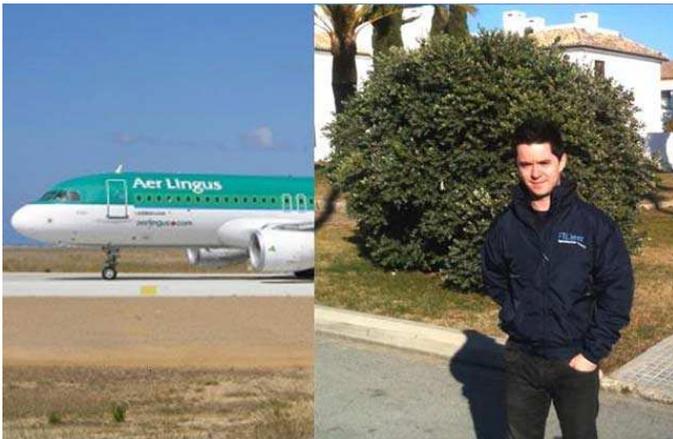
Advanced flight planning...

By Bob Martin

About now we can be assured that there are active plans afoot across North Africa for the annual 'fly-out' to northern climes for the summer break and breeding season. The word from the front lines is that those birds are now in training and are mobilising their elite dive bombing squadrons for active deployment at the earliest opportunity. From our point of view this will involve a massive and sustained sneak attack around our hangar. Their main targets are the hanger floor and the planes. So folks where do we stand on the deployment of countermeasures?

Congratulations...

By David O'Dowd



Aer Lingus selected 20 from the initial 2011 applications, 9 of us already had PPLs.

So I'm off for 60 weeks to Jerez in Spain for the full integrated course with FTE. It will lead to a CPL/MIR. After that I return to Dublin for

the A320 type rating. I should be on the line by Jun 2013 all going well.

I am looking forward to the challenge of it all (except the runway here is way too big for my Coonagh influenced liking, there really is no place like home!).

It is nice to see that our 'National' airline has finally started recognising the potential of those who are interested in flying and have showed an aptitude for that by having a PPL etc. Up to recently we were under the impression that previous flying qualifications were in fact a disadvantage for selection as Aer Lingus pilots. Hope common sense prevails forthwith. ED.

Air Corps fatal incident...

The report of the incident in Connemara which involved the loss of two Air Corps crew has been published. The report can be read in full on the Accident Investigation unit website at <http://www.aaiu.ie> When there go to recent reports and you should have no problem finding the item.

Witness to a Tragedy...

By Foncy Hobbins

The DC7C of Alitalia took off from Rome on 25/2/1960 heading for New York with a fuel stop at Shannon Airport. I was sound asleep that Sunday morning in a dream world when it touched down at Shannon in the early hours. The Douglas DC7, one of my favourite aircraft was now in its twilight years as the premier Trans Atlantic passenger aircraft as Boeing jets in particular were already on the route but it still offered superb comfort and reliability. Built by Douglas it was another fine product from that excellent manufacturer. At the airport the passengers disembarked and even though it was early morning some would have sampled Irish coffees, while others would have shopped in the famous duty free shops. Shannon was a



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

Feb 2012

busy place then as a fuel stop for tired crews after crossing the Atlantic, or setting out, fuel tanks topped up as those mighty prop liners departed on the long haul, next stop America. I had a free run of the place at that time and I thrilled to the mighty roar of giant prop liners as they taxied in or took off. I was not there on that morning but soon I was to see a terrible sight. The ramp was probably busy with other long haul carriers such as Air France, KLM, Pan Am, Sabena, Seaboard, TWA, and others. The Esso tankers fuelled I-DUVO while the crew readied her for the long flight. I was often woken up in those days by my father who worked at the airport, offering green ice cream or other delicacies from Air France flights. It was going to be different this Sunday morning.



Photo F.Hobbins. Note: I-DUVE at Shannon, not the aircraft mentioned in this article.

The DC7, I-DUVO taxied out on runway 05, as it was at the time and lined up, ready for departure. The time was 2:35 am and all aboard would probably had been settling down for the long flight. The four mighty Wright 3350 radial piston engines, each rated at 3,400hp, gave a mighty roar as it surged forward, the rumble heard across the sleeping countryside slowly gathering speed, the heavy load holding her back. But then airspeed was gained and it

climbed out slowly over county Clare. Below all was quiet in the dark on the Newmarket-on-Fergus road as the airliner clawed upwards for altitude. The plane climbed very slowly, full of fuel, food, a crew of twelve and forty passengers. A few seconds later it smashed into a tiny church and disintegrated into terrible wreckage spread across the fields of Clare.

I was woken up later that February morning, the 26th, and less than an hour later I stood amid appalling wreckage, scattered over a very wide area. I was unaware of the fatalities, the human tragedy, but even then my young mind was overwhelmed by the destruction all around me. I walked with my father and my brother through the fields, while observing the rescue services going about their grim task. We should not have been there really and today that would be properly forbidden. What had happened I asked but nobody could answer that question? I have travelled that country road many times over the years and would glance towards that sad spot and a few years ago I walked across those same fields to the ruins of the tiny Clonloghan Church and cemetery, a quiet, peaceful place but in my minds eye I could easily recall the awful tragedy of that morning. Years later, while researching aircraft accidents I came on the inconclusive report which stated, "the aircraft lost height, the left wing and Nos.1 and 2 propellers struck the stone wall of Clonloghan Church, hitting the ground at 170-180 knots. No definite evidence leading to a particular reason was found. The only conclusion was that it lost height in the turn-out and struck the ground". Eleven crew and twenty three of the forty passengers lost their lives. I-DUVO serial number C/N 45231 was written off that day in 1960. I had been witness to a tragedy, which is a memory that still lingers.

I-DUVO was a regular visitor to Shannon over the years and I had seen her and other DC7s of the fleet on the ramp at Shannon. Those



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

Feb 2012

were the days when you could get quite close to those aerial knights of the sky from the balcony over looking the apron. Alitalia, Italy's national airline was a regular user of Shannon on the Atlantic routes and I became quite familiar with their fleet in the early 60s.

Our ex-cfi and member, Tony Doyle was on duty in ATC for that particular departure in 1960. He has described the fireball that was visible from the tower, in a video interview for Atlantic Air Venture in Shannon, if anybody is interested in hearing his personal account. ED.

Letter to the editor...

While perusing the Club Newsletters online I came across your queries about EI-ATP which now hangs in the terminal building at Miami International airport. Having gained his PPL by the summer of 1969 Bryan Carpenter was anxious to obtain a CPL, and with his usual resourcefulness decided to purchase a small aircraft to build up his hours. He arrived at Coonagh that summer with the disassembled Luton Minor on a trailer, having purchased it in the UK. It was painted in silver overall and it bore the UK registration of G-ASCY.

Bryan re-sprayed the aircraft himself with the red and white sunburst colour scheme which it still carries, and with the Irish reg. of EI-ATP. He then assembled it and I think it was an engineer from Shannon that signed it off. It then had to be test flown for issue of a C of A (no permits then) and I was delegated to do the test flight by the Department. Now, I am 6' 3" tall and weighed just under 200lbs then (I wish I still did!), and the Luton had a twin cylinder JAP engine of only 35 hp but I decided to give it a try!

On 12 September I squeezed into the tiny cockpit, Bryan swung the prop and the little JAP engine fired up sounding more like a motorcycle than an aircraft! The controls were

basic with no adjustment, no trim and no brakes, but the take off from 28 was straightforward and we lifted off quite quickly. But the rate of climb with my weight on board was slow, it took over 5 minutes to reach 2000' the lack of elevator trim was noticeable and the handling characteristics were quite sloppy. Anyway, the flight was successful, stall at less than 30 knots and it didn't break-up at VNE! Bryan subsequently flew many hours in it at less than 1.5 gph!

So how did EI-ATP get to Miami? After Bryan got his CPL it was purchased by a business colleague of Bryan's at Shannon, Des McCarthy an aircraft dealer. Some of the older LFC members might remember the 'Yellow Peril', the US Navy N3N3 and other vintage aircraft including the Zaunkoenig at Shannon which Bryan and Des McCarthy were involved with. Des sold EI-ATP to the USA in July 1973, and it ended up on display at Miami. I doubt that it flew there under it's own power!



Attached is a rather poor quality photo of Bryan Carpenter in the Luton at Coonagh.

Hayden Lawford.

Mind the ladies, please...

By S N Walsh

The door of the 'Ladies' tends to stick very firmly if fully closed. I recently nearly got



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

Feb 2012

locked in and I only managed to open the door from the inside, with great difficulty. No don't ask what I was doing in there, not important! What is probably more important though is to warn any visitors that there is the possibility of getting locked into it, and as the song says 'they were there from Sunday to Saturday, nobody knew they were there'.

Club AGM...

This year's AGM will take place in early March. Official notification will be sent to all members, most likely by email distribution soon.

This is an important occasion so do please make an effort to be present on the night. It is the event where you get a chance to propose and elect committee members. Also there is the opportunity to discuss any important matters with the current and newly elected committee and of course you get your chance to vote on various important issues including the election of committee members.

Another pilot in progress...

Mr Denis McNeilis has joined the coveted ranks of the release from a ground-locked existence. Denis completed his first solo flight in Coonagh on Sunday 18th December 2011.



Photo: Mark Lloyd.

Who was in charge...

In common with most clubs we are actively trying to generate a plaque which will have the names and years in office of past chairmen.

The names are fairly easy to remember for many of us people who have been around from the establishment of Limerick Flying Club in 1971 up to the present time. However the chronology escapes most of us. We are therefore seeking any assistance that you can give to us as regards who was in office and during which years. If we cannot get full absolute confirmation of the actual dates, we may have to settle for the decade, at least up to the 90s.

These are all the names. If anybody can think of somebody who has been left out we would appreciate your help with the addition, please.

Bryan Carpenter, Jock Dunlop, Des Deeney, Steve Canavan, Sean C. Walsh, Ali Khan, Jim Keane, Don Wallace, Ger Mulconroy, David Fielding, Tom O'Shaughnessy, Gerry Humphreys, Michael Beston, Joe Johnston.

Many of us believe that Eamon Cassidy and possibly John Keane may have served also, but we are very uncertain about those two.

Articles

The LFC Newsletter is published in the first week of the each month. Articles, letters, etc. must reach the Editor at least two days before distribution. Club members, and non-members interested in our club, or flying are invited to write. Please email it to newscoonagh@gmail.com or give in person or by post. You chose the subject you wish, information, gossip, fun, logistics, or anything else.

Disclaimer

The articles, opinions and ideas published in the LFC Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Limerick Flying Club (Coonagh) Limited Committee or its officers, who accept no liability for the articles or for any statements made.