



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

November 2013

Newsletter Update

Welcome to the November 2013 edition of the Limerick Flying Club newsletter.

Submissions to the newsletter are always welcome. You can send them by email to newsletter@limerickflyingclub.com

Many thanks to Joe Sullivan and Jack Flynn for their submissions to this newsletter.

Foncy Hobbins also submitted an article which I will include in the next edition of the

From the chair

By Joe Sullivan

It is 6 years last September since the first Tecnam arrived at Coonagh. LFC was ferried from the factory in Naples by Brendan and the late John Keane. It was the first new aircraft ever purchased by the club in its more than 70 year history and marked a sea change in how the club did its business. Since then, a second new aircraft has arrived and with that we saw the end of Rallye for good at Coonagh (the place where all good Rallyes came to die).

While Rallyes such as MikeJuliet, FoxPapa and OscarYankee served us well for many years, and proved to be a very safe aeroplanes, they were extremely difficult and costly to maintain. Finding parts was a massive problem with many a Rallye sitting in the back of the hanger for months on end. Finding the money for the repairs was, at times even more challenging.

The Tecnams revolutionised our finances in a way that was meticulously planned and executed. We had to get it right since, at the height of the tiger, we were under a lot of pressure, as most of you will remember. In the new post tiger era a different problem has emerged. There is less money for flying, fewer

students and fewer PPLs. Those who endure, fly less. Many clubs are struggling under this severe pressure. We were in some ways lucky; we were prepared, meaning we could weather the storm a little better than many clubs. Never the less we still reduced our fleet from 4 to 2 aircraft and I can still arrive to the airfield on Sunday afternoon without a booking, with a reasonable expectation of going flying. As we reach what we all hope is the beginning of the end of the worst crash in the history of the state, I believe it is high time we got back on the horse, do our bit for the country! and go back to flying.

The winter offers a very different type of flying experience and a look at my log book shows that I often do as much flying in January and February as in the spring and summer months. There are often highly stable periods of high pressure early in the year, offering wonderful "on rails" like flying, albeit with short days. I would like to encourage everybody not to abandon flying for this winter and come on out to the club at week-ends, organise short flyouts or just do some hanger flying. The committee and the CFI hope to encourage a bit more 'go places' flying in the new year, with an early spring (local) flyout and a number of other flyouts throughout the summer.

In other news we have just had our annual IAA airfield inspection and with the recent works at the field including along the runway we have had very little to do to maintain our licence this year. Could I ask everybody to continue to maintain the Visitors Book (as requested by the IAA). All visiting aircraft landing at Coonagh should be filled in to the book with aircraft details date and times and so on. The log has been sitting in the Op-Room document shelf, but has seen very few entries this year. The hedge at the bottom of 10 has also been trimmed (scalped) as requested. I would like to thank Pieter from the IAA for his time and useful advice during his recent visit.



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Online Voucher Sales

As many of you may have noticed we have temporarily lost our ability to sell vouchers online due to the demise of Gift Gallery.

But the good news is that Martin McMahon has created a new online voucher sale web page that we are currently in the process of setting up. We hope to have this operational over the next week or so to meet the Christmas voucher sale period.

We will send an email to all members as soon as the new system is publically available.

Scottish Island Tour

By Jack Flynn

The weather was looking good for the weekend ahead and the forecast for Scotland was exceptionally good. I have been looking for an opportunity like this for some time to visit the Islands west of Scotland.

So flight planning began Thursday night and Friday. After a few phone calls we had a crew together, Mike Kerrison, Brian Doyle and myself. The first flight plan was simple - I just drew a line direct from Coonagh to Oban, (EGEO). I phoned Oban with numbers from Pooleys bible, one number for the tower and one for fuel station, both were very pleasant and helpful to talk to. Especially Paul at the fuel station, he himself is an old dog at GA flying and has done a lot of touring in his time. Oban is not a customs airport but Paul gave me a phone number for customs at Glasgow to get clearance from them which I did. Again they were very helpful people, they gave me their office email address to send GAR form and that was that.

Saturday morning Alpha Mike was prepared, full to gills with fuel and with the crew onboard. At eight o'clock in the morning we opted to depart in light variable wind on one zero at Coonagh. We opened the flight plan with Shannon and we were on our way in excellent flying conditions and good visibility and it seemed like we had the whole sky to ourselves. After about an hour and before the FIR, Shannon handed us over to Belfast Aldergrove. Our track was just to the west of Belfast TMA, about ten miles south of Coleraine. Belfast informed us of parachuting at Movenis Airfield so we gave them a wide berth and tracked to the east of them.

As we coasted out over shallow coastal fog we could see Rathlin Island and Isle of Islay ahead - a really fantastic sight to see. We tracked to east of Islay and up the east coast of Jura direct for Oban. We contacted Oban 20 miles out and they let us know that two other aircraft were active in the area and that RNY 19 was in use and to report down wind right hand. Pooleys highlighted not to overfly the caravan park a few hundred meters from threshold of 19 and also high ground to the north so we had two choices of approach to 19 either over the high ground and steep decent to threshold or keep to the right of caravan site and intercept center line at 45 degrees about 200 meters from the threshold. We opted for the later and we had 1200 meters of runway to help us also, two hours forty minutes from Coonagh we were on the ground.



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EGOE Oban air field

A ten-minute walk to the hotel for some refreshment and when ready to return back to airfield the waiter offered us a drive back, (nice one).

Back at the field landing fees and fuel sorted, we met Paul at the fuel station which we had a good chat. He suggested some places to go, how to get there and do's and don'ts and so on. We fired up Alpha Mike again and departed Oban on information only for a fifteen-minute flight to Glen Forsa grass field, which is a well groomed airfield, and an excellent runway. We parked Alpha Mike almost outside the window of the airfield hotel. We had lunch here, this hotel is not a five star but a great place to stay and if I visit the islands again I will overnight in this place.



Glen Forsa airfield with hotel almost in the field

Argyll Council control some of the landing fees in the islands. £17.50 is the standard charge, then there are other fields mostly unmanned where you are obliged to leave £10 in the box provided by the hanger.

Jack Flynn



Parked up at Oban

We departed Glen Forsa and flew over very remote and sparsely populated country side, awesome scenery, mountains and seaside. Thirty-five minutes later we landed in Plockton Airfield at our own discretion, not a soul was in sight. Plockton is an unlicensed and unmanned aerodrome owned by Highland Council managed by PDG Helicopters. Plockton village is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the field if you felt like walking there, we stretched our legs here for a while before getting out the map to plan our next stop. We decided to go to Stronnoway and stay there for the night, a phone call was made and PPR was complete, airborne again, we crossed water for about ten minutes and onto the Outer Hebrides and north along the east coast of Lewis and landed at EGPO Stronnoway.

We fuelled up here again to ensure full tanks because we did not have a plan for next day (Sunday) and may not be able to get fuel. I went up to the tower to pay landing and overnight parking fees, (£22 total). Two people in the tower were very helpful and even



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organized the fire engine driver to drive us in town in a four seat fire jeep. He even drove us around the town center to show us all the hot spots and hotels. The big bombshell here is that EGPO do not open it's runway on Sundays until 11:45 UTC.

We found a hotel called "Caladh Inn" not far from town centre perfect for our needs with a bar come buffet restaurant. After a couple of beverages we walked down town for something oriental to eat which went down well. It was Scotland alright with pipe bands strutting their stuff down the street in their full traditional dress.

Sunday dawn and perfect weather for flying, we took it easy because of late opening of airfield. While we were waiting we had the maps out and decided to go to an airfield 45miles SW of Stronoway called "Sollas". We got a taxi to the field at around 11:00 and we were still the first to arrive at the terminal, eventually we got our hands on Alpha Mike, preflight and loaded up we were ready to roll at 11:45 UTC. We tracked SW over Lewis and Harris and arriving on the north coast of North Uist, by now we should be over "Sollas" airfield but we failed to see it, maps and GPS confirmed we were in the right place. Pooleys had a hard runway nearly 1000 meters long but we circled for minutes and still not sure so we left from here SE to the "Isle Of Sky". Later we were talking with Paul in Oban we told him how we did not find Sollas "Oh" he said "Sollas" is on the beach and the tide need to be out before you land, there is a fly in there every year with barbecue thrown in, that should be fun.

We continued to "Isle of Sky" and landed on a field three miles east of Broadford town, another unlicensed unmanned tarmac airfield again nobody to meet us.



Some of the remote terrain of the western Isles

We phoned Oban again to check if they were still serving fuel, they were and that is where we went next. We fuelled up again in Oban and a chat with Paul about our exploits, this is a very helpful guy to talk to If you plan to visit the Scottish western isles. Paul suggested to call to "Castle Kennedy" airfield on our way home, this field is not too far from Stranraer. We departed Oban and headed south to "Castle Kennedy" enjoying the sights and views, we found and landed at a very quiet airfield. As we cleared the runway a flex wing took off, apart from that we did not see anyone - we had the whole place to our selves again. We left "Castle Kennedy" and headed across the Irish Sea passing to the south of Strangford Lough SW to Dundalk and direct to Coonagh, what a fantastic trip, fantastic weather, what a great weekend.



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Keeping in Touch

Finally, remember that the club provides many ways for members to keep in touch with each other. The most widely used method is the club mailing list. This is a moderated email based list to which all new members are automatically subscribed. In case you miss anything, you can view the list archives at this URL at any time:

<http://lists.limerickflyingclub.com/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/members>

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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