



# LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

[www.limerickflyingclub.com](http://www.limerickflyingclub.com)

Oct 2011

## Canadian Adventure...

By Foncey Hobbins

The view of Lake Ontario after take-off from Norman Rogers Airport (CYGK) at Kingston in Canada has to be one of the most beautiful sights in the world, imply breathtaking! I doubt if I would ever get tired of looking at it. But after turning East we enjoyed even more superb scenery as the 'Thousand Islands' in that magnificent lake spread out in front of us as we climbed to 2500 feet in our rented Cessna 172. I felt a sudden sense of privilege and almost awe just to be up there where I've always known I belong. Terry and I had travelled a long way from Ireland to sample Canadian skies but just being there at that moment in command of an aeroplane in a new land, a new place was very special indeed.



I have been a private pilot for most of my life and the desire to fly never leaves me. In fact it gets stronger by the day and my wish to fly in the USA or Canada was settled when I saw the location at Kingston, Ontario on the Internet. My eager emails and phone calls to the flight school there were treated with ease and courtesy. Transport Canada issued us with our validations after faxing our details and made life easy for us. I booked the flights and we flew from Dublin, with eager anticipation of a new adventure.

The weather behaved perfectly as we set out that Sunday morning to Brockville (CNL3), 55 nautical miles distant, perched close to the mighty St. Lawrence river, a landmark of such significance it would be hard to get lost! We were looking forward to the much advertised breakfast and the delightful airfield soon appeared. Our GPS back-up proved totally unreliable with satellites coming and going, even though the USA was just across the river! Good old fashioned map reading proved invaluable and we announced our arrival on their Unicom frequency. We taxied in, got marshalled to our parking spot by a club member and we were supplied with smiles, coffee and free hats!



The Piper Colts, Cubs, Cessna's and more came and went without trouble. We longed to just sit and watch for hours but a soon to qualify student required the Cessna so we departed, heading west into a beautiful sky. On arrival at Kingston we advised our intentions and I found it hard to take my eyes from the view as we received calm, friendly instructions to land. It had been the perfect morning's flying, more to come tomorrow!

During the following week we flew to such places as Lindsay (CNF4), Morrisburg (CYPQ), and Peterborough where I spied a lone DC3 as we flew overhead. Alas, I did not get the



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chance to check that fine old machine out! We enjoyed these flights to new airfields and the Cessna 206 floatplanes were an added attraction to us as we parked our Cessna 172 at Lindsay.



The small but very friendly café served a cheap but excellent lunch, no landing fees here and an air of rest and relaxation was the abiding feeling. We flew on to Peterborough and advised RCAF Trenton as we entered their zone. No problem with that so we tracked towards our now familiar base that was still such a magical location.

This new land to us, but old to its natives over which we flew was mostly flat but beautiful too, especially the abundance of lakes. On a night flight we were awe struck by the myriad of lights like lanterns on the night ferries and in the houses scattered throughout the islands. The old but reliable Cessna behaved well and most days we had unlimited visibility. Why had we travelled so far across the world to fly? It was the challenge, the adventure, plus the experience of operating an aircraft in a foreign country. And those entries in the logbook are to be treasured! To say it was worth it is a gross understatement.

In Coonagh we used to fly French Rallyes that served us well but they have now been

replaced by the new breed, Rotax powered Tecnams from Italy. We now operate two of those and have to convert our brains to realising that we have no toe brakes! They take getting used to but they are incredibly fuel efficient which is nice when you come to pay the cheque!

I like to fly wherever I am. I have been lucky enough to fly in England, France and Australia, flying over the Barrier Reef is a spectacular memory, also in a Cessna 152. And now Canada! The final cross country flight on a clear day was not as nice as the air became extremely turbulent and a dangerous looking sky descended across our path dead ahead. As we headed towards the St. Lawrence River I decided to divert to our alternate Brockville nearby. This time it was deserted but we were glad to be down and we needed fuel anyway. The friendly manager of the resident FBO gave us a rapid-fire history lesson on colonial powers when he heard we were Irish! He also provided welcome radar pictures of the angry weather front blocking our way. We advised our base and sat it out for a while longer and finally took-off into a grey but improving sky, but the air was still very bumpy up there and we were happy to see runway 25 at Kingston dead ahead at ten miles. We received a straight in approach and for once I was very glad to be on terra firma!





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Flying in Canada was a pleasure and I hope to return but who knows what's on the horizon? I have sampled some great moments and learnt a lot from flying and have so many treasured moments. Our flight home to Ireland took ten hours in the Air Canada Boeing 777 but that was a pleasure too!

I am going back up in the sky soon again, realising that I am very lucky to be able to fly as a private pilot, wherever I am. I got to see the Wright Flyer in the Smithsonian a few years ago and I thank the Wright brothers for inventing the aeroplane so that I can fly. It is more than a privilege; it is truly special to experience the joy of flight.

## **The troubled 'Master'...**

By Gerry Humphries

Most light aircraft have a battery master switch which, by grounding a permanently live wire at the back of the switch, activates a solenoid close to the battery. I recently had an interesting snag in the air which I found confusing and that could have caused a few extra heartbeats in different circumstances. Shortly after getting airborne I noticed an unusual background 'hum' on the intercom. Then I noticed that the numbers on the radio's digital display were brighter than normal and seemed to be 'pulsing'. Then I noticed the voltmeter was higher than normal at around 15 volts. Switching off the alternator, seemed to have the desired effect and brought the voltage down to normal, but then everything went off, except of course, the engine, the trusty Garmin 296 and all the vacuum-driven instruments. There followed a confusing period of attempted fault analysis where cycling the battery master seemed to solve the problem, but then things went horribly wrong again. I decided to switch everything off and go home. On the ground, when turning 'on and off' the master switch it sounded like the master solenoid was somehow 'weak' - it seemed to have lost some of its normal healthy 'clunk' - and occasionally

it failed to operate at all. Having just come back from an excellent ILAS electrical seminar by Mark Castle (a little knowledge is a dangerous thing?) I decided that the problem was an 'alternator over-voltage incident plus master solenoid snag' and I got busy with the credit card on the Internet. Later I thought about something Mark said on the course which seemed obvious at the time, but which I had just ignored, 'simple things first, the most common snag is a bad earth'. I went to the hangar and had a good look at all the connections but nothing was obvious. But then I discovered that moving the wires at the back of the master switch caused the solenoid to engage momentarily, Bingo! Suddenly the cause was obvious, the live wire to the master switch had come off and was waving around, sometimes where it was meant to be, but also sometimes it was disconnected entirely or occasionally it was grounded on bodywork. I even found the offending screw on the cockpit floor. That screw is now loctite'd in place. The next time you go flying with your instructor and you feel like doing some emergency drills training why not switch off the master for a moment on the ground to see what happens. Of course the engine will be unaffected as it generates its own 'sparks' but you lose all electrical services including radio, transponder, flaps, etc. It might seem a little scary the first time you do it, but believe me it will be much less drama when it happens for real if you have seen it in your own time before-hand!

## **Ground training...**

By S N Walsh

We are glad to announce that this season's groundschool is in full swing for a couple of weeks. There was a rather disappointing assembly meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September but at least interest was expressed by the students and the instructors who attended. After that Mark Lloyd made a special effort to contact all who had expressed an interest previously and by the 22<sup>nd</sup> September the classes got under



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way with a healthy 10 students. This year we are also making full use of the Internet by presenting the classes live on line for anybody who is unable to attend in person on a particular night. This lack of attendee could also be the Instructor of course and the option does exist to be able to present the class from an outside location if that is necessary. The online effort is in no way meant to replace the face to face presence but to enhance it and make the course more inclusive. For many years now we have had our course notes on a special website page, made known to students, but this year this was made more inclusive by the fact that all the Instructors have submitted their notes for publication. There is also the option of email where a student can pose questions if they were to have any confusing issue during their study.

## Electrical flight controls of A320...

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) invite you to a lecture and technical visit to Atlantic AirVenture flight training centre in Shannon on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October at 1900. The evening will start with light refreshments followed by a lecture by MR David Ward on the electrical flight control system of the Airbus A320. There will be an opportunity to see the B737-800 simulator in action and also to see the museum of old aircraft parts etc. The event is free of charge and is open to non-members of the IET, so do please come along. Flights in the simulators will not be free, but every effort will be made to accommodate anybody who is interested in having a go.

## EI-ATP in Miami Airport...

In last month's issue we published a picture of a Luton Minor which had spent a lot of its life in Coonagh during the 1960s. Thanks to Foncy who correctly indentified the machine and confirmed that it now hangs from the roof of Miami International Airport. No prize though

sorry! But the mind boggles about how it got there and why; are there any suggestions?

## Another summer of discontent...

I don't think that anybody is under any illusion that the weather this summer has been awful. This seems to have vented its special fury on most weekends and flying activity has been very seriously curtailed on many occasions. Even the planned fly-out got disrupted. In fact a bit of good news is that the weather was in a very kind mood for our fly-in and BBQ which was a great success on the planned weekend.

There was of course quite an amount of flying done during the weekdays and long evenings thanks to the availability of Instructors who had time at their disposal outside of weekend. Now that the winter is back again we can only hope that things won't grind to a halt completely and hopefully the runway won't have to be snow ploughed again this year. At least there were some exciting pictures of the car-pushed table.

## Deadline...

Thanks to everyone who contributed articles for this month. The deadline for the next issue is **8<sup>th</sup> November**. Please contribute articles of some kind and help to keep the Newsletter interesting and topical, cheers ED.

### 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](mailto:newscoonagh@gmail.com) or give in person or by post. You chose the subject you wish, information, gossip, fun, logistics, or anything else.

### Disclaimer

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