



Squawk 1961

The news letter for members of the Ulster Flying Club

Issue 6 December 2006

Message from the Chairman



Time also flies and we thought this a suitable juncture to regroup and report on the activities of the club and its members over the last year and speak to ongoing activities, work in progress and forthcoming events. Firstly I think we are all reasonably settled in our new clubhouse and negotiations are currently ongoing to secure a tenant for the vacant section of the building who can provide catering facilities for members and visitors. Secondly members will have seen completion of the refurbishment of the main hangar and spotted construction of the first in a series of new hangars, commissioned by members, on the western side of the field. Other hangar development is contemplated on the eastern side and to that end negotiations for the lease for a portion of land on the North Eastern boundary, which would provide easier access to that area, are underway with Ards Council. If agreed this will consolidate our holdings on the airfield.

We have secured the continuation of Jet A1 fuel and a smaller tanker than that which was necessary during the Tellus Project has been made available to us by BP. As a result of that a fuel bund will shortly be constructed to meet safety needs and CAA requirements. Our next major project is the construction of a taxiway from the triangle to the apron and this should ease congestion and facilitate movements on the airfield generally. Estimates are currently being sought.

What then of the Castlebawn development? As some will have read in the local press the realignment of the Comber Road A20 distributor is the subject of a vesting order and its impact on our operations out of and into 16/34 is the subject of discussions with DRD and WD and RT Taggart who represent the interests of the developers. Members will be kept informed.

As you will read from the following articles there is a lot going on and a considerable buzz of activity and indeed of aircraft of all types. The beautiful weather in the summer this year has enabled the number of hours flown by UFC aircraft to total 2737 hours which exceeds that achieved in previous years and is above our business plan expectations. Well done everyone.



Looking ahead to 2007, the date set for the Ulster Air show is Saturday the 23rd June. Tenders for the events management will be sought shortly by the Council who sponsor the event. Air show Director Jeff will be looking for volunteers to assist with the event in due course, so pencil it in your diaries, whether assisting or spectating. Worth remembering, as the next article shows, the proud history of the airfield and the UFC. We are now in much better shape in all respects to ensure a healthy future.

Safe Flying and Seasons Greetings to all.

Ron Armstrong



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Improving Communications (Saving Paper and costs!)

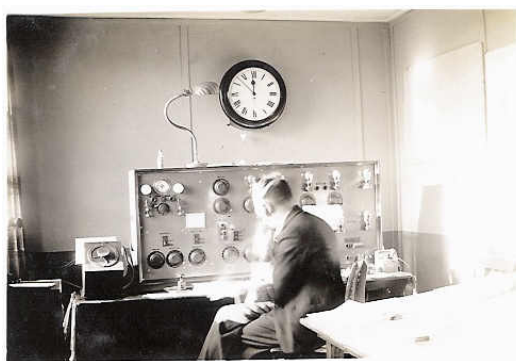
Contact by email is instant and effortless and it is our objective to capture as many members email address's as possible. Then we can contact members more frequently. To encourage you to ensure you have your email registered, all email addresses captured will be put in a draw for a one hour flight in a Cessna 172 so send an email to mckittrick@easy.com or henrymiskimmon@btinternet.com to be in with a chance.

Future editions of Squawk will be emailed and placed on the club web site www.ulsterflyingclub.com. A small amount of hard copies will be available in the club.

A trip down memory lane

The Airfield at Newtownards was officially opened by Lord Londonderry as an Airport on 31 August 1934. It was formerly a racecourse donated by the Seventh Marquess of Londonderry. The airport can claim to be Northern Ireland's first civil airport as Aldergrove was still wholly an RAF station. When established, Newtownards Airport comprised about 50 acres of prepared and levelled grassland, together with a hangar and a temporary clubhouse accommodating a radio station, general offices and catering facilities. (see below). Ards was in fact preferred by the airline operators of the 1930s and from 1934-1938 it served as the civil airport for Belfast under the management of Airwork Limited of Heston. Flt-Lt R W Bryant was Chief Pilot and Airport Manager.

A De Havilland Rapide at Newtownards in 1935



The radio operator calibrates the newly installed air ground radio equipment. In 1936 this was state of the art equipment.

During the Second World War the airfield was used both by the Army as a training base and as a relief landing ground for Sydenham. It had a significant role in gunnery training with target towing aircraft on ground to air and air to air tasks. After the war the airfield was opened again for commercial flying with Silver City Airways operating a car ferry service to and from Stranraer's Castle Kennedy airfield.



AGM 9th June 2006

The Ulster Flying Clubs Annual General Meeting was held in the club house on the 9th June with about 80 members in attendance. This was the first AGM to be held in the new club house since the opening last year. The chairman, Ron Armstrong welcomed everyone and reflected how the club was still going strong 45 years on after its reconstitution way back in 1961. A lot of energy over the past year had been directed at consolidating our position within the new club house and ironing out any of the teething problems in the new building. In addition, refurbishment of the main hangar was now being completed and the airfield had only recently been re-licensed by the CAA. Ron indicated that the outlook for the club looked bright despite the growing economic and regulatory pressures on general aviation.

The Treasurer, Henry Miskimmon updated members with a summary of the financial position. For the second year in a row the club had made a small profit whilst making considerable progress in paying off outstanding loans on aircraft. The net worth of the club had now grown to £715, 859.

The meeting concluded with the normal formalities including election of officers.

Don't become an Airspace Infringement Statistic!!

As part of the UK's continuing campaign to reduce airspace infringements the CAA has issued a free kneeboard insert for general aviation pilots that can be used in both pre-flight planning and as an aid for radio communication when airborne. The double sided kneeboard document is laminated and contains information on :-

- How to check NOTAMS
- How to check temporary airspace restrictions
- Best practice when airborne- navigation and transponder use
- Radio phraseology when making a request to transit controlled airspace. Remember that your chances of transiting the Belfast City zone will be greatly increased if your R/T is concise and professional.

The document will be inserted in various GA magazines this month. However, the CFI, David Hodgkinson has organized to receive a supply directly from the CAA so please do contact him. In its unlaminated form it can be downloaded free from the ON TRACK website at www.flyontrack.co.uk

If you are trained to use radio navigation such as VORs or DMEs, you can perhaps **fix your own position**, but if you are a bit overworked and feel pressured due to this unfamiliar situation, all the work can be done for you simply and quickly. If you are **not sure of your position**, tell the unit you are speaking with at the time. If you stray into any airspace you shouldn't just because you were reluctant to admit you were unsure, you'll wish afterwards that you'd done it early.

If you have never spoken as a **practice** on 121.5, why not make a point of doing a **practice unsure of position** next time you have an instructor hour or club check? - or just get a brief from an instructor on what to do, and do it yourself next time airborne.

Chief Flying Instructor Snippets

Aerodrome Developments

One of the audit themes this year was the safeguarding of on aerodrome developments. It is a condition of our licence that a procedure is put in place to ensure that prior CAA permission is obtained for all developments on the airfield. I hope to have this in place shortly and that will greatly assist members who may wish to build a hangar on the airfield

Phantom Mast at Killinchy

Anybody spot the 603 amsl mast at Killinchy? Well, surprisingly neither have I! The only mast there is a 15m mobile phone mast yet the "big" one is shown on both the latest versions of the 1:250,000 and 1:500,000 charts. I have spoken to the CAA charts section and they are investigating

Newtownards Link Road

I am continuing to keep a close eye on the proposed route of the new link road from the Portaferry Road to the Comber Road. This route passes close to the Runway 16 threshold and any infringement on the agreed boundary fence could reduce safety margins for landing and departing aircraft. I will continue to monitor the situation carefully.

David Hodgkinson

Guinness World Record

On the 10th September, 2006, Bavarian Garages hosted a thrilling event on the airfield. The aim was to achieve the largest ever car mosaic - using only Bavarian MINI's. The Guinness World Record at that time was achieved by MINI DRIVER ITALIA, when 192 MINI's were parked in the Italian flag formation, in April 2004. Here in Newtownards 224 MINI's were parked to spell out the word 'MINI', in a very impressive formation. In the process £3707.63 was raised for Whizz-Kidz Charity which will benefit young children throughout the UK by providing them with customised mobility equipment, giving more children both the independence and the freedom to enjoy their own adventures.



Wings Night 1 July 2006



Photos from our Summer BBQ and Wings award ceremony; the venue was our commercial side of the club building. About 72 members and guests gathered for the awards followed by a BBQ and dancing to "New Dimenzion" Once again the weather was kind to us, thank goodness as one member had solved the drinking and driving problem – he pitched a tent!!



The Campbelltown Sortie 23 July 2006



Building on the success of the fly out to Islay last August we decided to repeat the exercise this July by a fly-out to Campbelltown to coincide with The Mull of Kintyre Air Weekend based at the field. This time at least 31 aircraft were known to have left Newtownards for the show. The weather was kind to us and we enjoyed a superb show with entertainment from a Rockwell B-1B Lancer, which flew a low pass along the runway, then pointed up to the sky and disappeared, leaving a perfectly circular hole in the cloud that remained for about 15 minutes! As usual the aircraft displays were spectacular. However a new one for me was the display by the Caledonian Chipmunks and it was fantastic to see aircraft that we are familiar with doing their graceful routine. On the ground there was much going on, a full funfair, vintage car display, motorcycle stunt display and memorabilia stands.

Another great full day out with an early evening flight back to Ards.

On a serious note I was met by "Strathclyde's finest" (special branch), who had traveled from Glasgow to check the GAR reports. Initially they said they had only received 5 GARs from Newtownards pilots and this was challenged. However it resulted in a stern chat from plod. That said the following Monday I received a call from the same officer to say that he had actually received 22 GAR forms. He is now my best friend, but more importantly a good ally. So well done those of you who forwarded the forms to BOTH Strathclyde and Belfast special branch, and a reminder to those who didn't that you not only risk a run in with the law but reduce the chances of our succeeding in making the GAR procedure more flexible in its application to general aviation. **Martin McKittrick**



Dates for your diary

The possibility of a new tenant within the commercial section of the clubhouse brings all sorts of opportunities for social events in the future, here are a few events in the pipeline:

Boxing Day

(26 December 2006)

Everyone is cordially invited to the airfield on Boxing Day where traditionally soup and drinks are served and tales of aviation "daring do" are swapped. This normally takes place in the vicinity of the main hangar. Who knows the weather may be good and a bit of flying may take place!

AAIB

Towards the end of February, possibly the beginning of March we have arranged a presentation from Ron Shimmons on the work of the Air Accident Investigation Branch based in Farnborough. Arrangements are still in the early stages so watch this space for further details including date, time and venue.

Life Boat



We have secured a unique opportunity to visit the lifeboat station at Donaghadee; parties of 12 members will.....

- Attend a lecture on survival at sea
- Visit the lifeboat

Any interested members can secure a place by emailing Martin on mckittrick@easy.com or Henry at henrymiskimmon@btinternet.com

It is likely the visits will take place on a Sunday.

- Attend the crew's training meeting