

Flightlines



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**Events Roundup
'The Last Dance'
'What Were They
Covered With?'**



Issue 3 - 2013



Kevin Barry, (Ireland) just about to land his Shadow at the Control-Line Home Internationals



Bill Draper, (UK Captain), prepares his Super Hawk under the watchful eye of his wife, June.

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On the Cover: Martin Sweeney at the NDMFC Scale Fly-In

***The next MACI Council Meeting will take place on Tuesday
September 17th 2013 in the Maldron Hotel, Portlaoise, at 8:00pm.***

***The views expressed within are those of the individual contributors, and not necessarily
those of the MACI Committee.***

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Editorial

So who's a right plonker then? All I wanted to do was have a nice bit of flying, so there I am loading the car when the phone rings. After taking the call I finished off the loading, not noticing that I had put my lipo sack, complete with lipo's, on the roof of the car. (I'm sure you can see where this is going!)

Part of the way to the flying site, the few brain cells I have left kicked in and I remembered where I had put the sack. Pulling over I checked the roof.....not there, checked the boot.....not there either. Turned round and retraced my journey all the way back to the house.....nothing. Back on the road to see if I had missed it, and there it was, right in the middle of the road where I had turned the car round. The first thing I saw when I retrieved it was the imprint of a tyre on the bag!

Alarm bells started ringing and I was concerned about handling the batteries in case they blew up. Pluck up courage and open the bag, (on a grass verge). What a surprise, hardly a mark on them. Back in the bag and home. I tested the batteries and everything seemed OK, so I ran them in a model in the garden and then put them on the charger. All of the cells were balanced and seemed fine, but for peace of mind I cut off the main leads, and put the batteries in a bucket of salty water for a couple of weeks before disposing of them.

Like I said earlier.....what a plonker!

The deadline for the next issue of Flightlines is September 30th. If anyone wishes to make any proposals, to make changes to the MACI Constitution, for inclusion on the agenda at the AGM, then they must be with me by this date.

Safe Flying.

Chris Clarke

THE FEENEY FILES

THE LAST DANCE

GERARD FEENEY SAYS GOODBYE TO AN OLD FRIEND...

At long last, after seventeen years of stalwart service, my beloved 'Calypso' is no more. Its demise came suddenly and unexpectedly. I bemoan its loss as it had much life left in it, but I recognise how faithful it was and look forward to what may come next.



Grainy blast from the past: Gerard (left) with Calypso, along with Longford MFC members James Lennon Jr. and Colm J. Kelly, circa 2003.

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS!

As stated here before, though I'm largely inactive these days, I try to get in a few flights per year. These usually occur just before or after Xmas, and 2012 followed a similar pattern. After a long-drawn-out repair period, the Calypso was finally ready for action again and I decided to get out and get up on December 29th.

Everything seemed on cue: the model was cleaned up after its repair and fully charged overnight, then the long-dormant O.S. 25FP started easily and ran well after its gummed-up fuel filter was replaced. It all felt dreadfully familiar and reassuring—even the weather was reasonable as I headed for the field.

No problems here either – a quick start-up and fling-off saw it climbing in time-honoured fashion. I'd not flown in a while, but all control inputs were automatic as this model's behaviour was so intimately known. I hadn't even to think what to do to get it into the first circuit. I gained a little height, did the downwind leg and then was heading back upwind again when it all went horribly wrong!

SHORT CIRCUIT

It suddenly banked a little to the right. I corrected. No response. It banked further. More correction. Nothing. As it passed the knife-edge position to enter an inverted half-loop, I twigged that something was wrong! There was zero response on all controls. Stuck at full throttle, I winced as it piled on the speed and G as it entered a terminal almost vertical dive. Looking on helplessly, I could only hope for the best in the few seconds it took to impale itself in the quagmire ground, still saturated from the recent heavy rain.

Despite the soggy earth, the impact whack and immediate transition from a screaming engine note to absolute silence was a bit unnerving. I walked to the crash site. It didn't look too badly damaged, but the external signs were misleading.



Who knew that the receiver battery would die suddenly after its long pre-flight charging session!



The damage doesn't look so bad, does it? But, all things considered, Gerard thinks a brand-new airframe is a better choice. RIP, Calypso!

There it was, firmly implanted like a cross, in more or less one piece, right beside a large rock. Its horizontal stabiliser had sheared off, the main undercarriage was badly bent and some control surfaces had come adrift. The squelch pulling it out of the wet earth revealed a prop-less engine cocooned in muck. It was a repeat performance of when the 'Bushwhacker' came to grief. I gathered up the airframe debris and trudged home balancing the bits, the flight box and the tranny, my shoes covered in muck, my clothes wet and grimy and the model facing an uncertain future.

CHARGE ACCOUNT

I didn't like the complete control failure and thought the receiver might have crapped out. If so, that would be very unusual, as I never had such a problem in the past with my Multiplex equipment. At home, after taking the wing off and cleaning up a bit (both the model bits and myself), I changed the receiver. Still nothing. Could it be that the airborne battery that was at fault? Surely not, as I had given it a full charge the night before and partially during the previous days. Only one way to find out – check it...

...Rather alarmingly, the meter readout indicated an almost flat battery. How could this be? The battery was relatively new (2008) and none of my old Multiplex nicads ever died suddenly in this manner. Mind you, this was the Ni-MH type – the same type I greatly admired in my transmitter for its superb duration.

I charged up once more for at least fourteen hours and tested again next day. What a ‘shock’ – it was still almost flat! The evidence pointed to a failed airborne battery. I couldn’t believe it and then checked my other 2008 larger-capacity airborne battery. Same result after a long overnight charge – practically dead!

I concluded that the airborne Ni-MHs were less reliable charge- and storage-wise than the older nicads. I admit I didn’t charge them as often as the tranny battery. I don’t know if that is the reason for their failure. What I do know is that I would charge airborne batteries more frequently in future, and I would not have a spare one lying about in a partially-charged but chronically unused state as I had with the larger-capacity pack, which didn’t see service since late 2008. The acquisition of a battery cyclor is also probably a good idea.

SPLIT PERSONALITY

The battery failure had severe consequences for Calypso. Though, on the surface, repairs seemed practical, the reality was different.



The O.S. 25FP after its near vertical full-throttle impact with the soggy, spongy ground. Engine has since been cleaned up, but not as yet test-run again.

The fuselage had split apart along the lower corner edges from the bottom sheet and the firewall had become dislodged. Owing to its age, the wood had become badly oil-soaked and re-gluing was not practical. Added to this, the foam wing right root had suffered major impact creasing, making it potentially unsafe, unless chunky balsa insets were grafted in place. Even doing this, I felt it'd be unsafe because the veneer outer skin would have to be removed to do the 'surgery implants.' I didn't fancy a skin-break, even with new skin inserted, at that high-stress repair point.

Reluctantly, I decided to scrap the model. Should Calypso ever become airborne in future, it'd be a completely new airframe/engine/radio package, possibly tweaked to deliver greater aerobatic performance.

And so, as the airframe was completely broken apart and its soggy wood and familiar blue/yellow Solarfilm finish went up in smoke, I felt more than a slight twinge of sadness remembering all it had done since July 1st, 1995. And what a lot it did do: several displays, two RTE 'Nationwide' appearances, various newspaper and magazine features. This simple rugged design, re-built properly from a plan-pack to originally mark the twentieth anniversary of my introduction to R/C modelling, was indeed a faithful and long-performing companion that became my trademark 'Flier.' Never before did a model last so long for me and possibly never again will one survive for quite such an extended period. Had the airborne battery not croaked, I think it'd have flown 'til either it or me fell apart! Oh well, perhaps it's time to change and move on.

FUTURE FEENEY FLIER?

This smash-up may be the incentive I need to resume the long-stalled DB 'Mascot.' It was the nicest-ever-flying trainer/sports model I have sampled in the past and it'd make a great smooth stable but aerobatic general-purpose hack in four-channel format, assuming the original flying characteristics remain intact in the re-issued kit. One thing is for sure: whatever model I get airworthy next, my radio system needs a major upgrade. I may buy a completely new set of gear and will start looking when I have some extra cash to spare. I am unconfident now to just buy a new airborne battery pack, but I may explore this option too. Whatever, I will actively check the airborne battery status much more frequently in future, as I never want a repeat of this avoidable and tragic event to creep up on me again.

Comments to: feeneyzone@eircom.net

Gerard Feeney

Scale Model Flying Association of Ireland

25th Anniversary Fly-In
at the N&DMFC site in the Little Curragh

8th September (no flying before 1:00pm)

All scale fixed wing modellers welcome.

Flying scale modellers.

Static scale models.

Part or full scale model builds.

Scale engine display.

Please come along and bring you scale model with you.
Chat about your build. Give or get advice on your
hobby.

Everything scale on the day.

Hosted by the Newbridge & District MFC.

For more information visit
www.smfai.ie

Leinster Aerobatic Championships 2013

The Model County Flying Club held the Leinster championships on Sunday 14th July.



It had been scheduled for this date but it was intended that it be hosted by Roundwood, but alas this was not possible so it was transferred to the MCFC.

MACI and the IMAAA are hoping that this can go to Roundwood for next year.

This comp., was also doubling up as the first part of this years aerobatic (F3A) team selection process.

Saturday was given to practice and tutoring.

On Sunday the weather could only be described as superb with little to no wind in the morning, which ironically became a challenge as lots of practice and set up is carried out in less than perfect conditions! Flying in that dead, heavy and muggy air is not what we are used to all here in Ireland. It requires a more subtle touch on the sticks.

A total of 3 Tier 1, 5 tier 2, 2 masters and 1 sportsman class participated with very close scoring in tiers 1 and 2.

Two rounds were flown in the morning then the BBQ was fired up by Andrew Ryan and Colette Carolan, with a succulent serving of burgers, bangers, chicken, lamb and salads with Wexford strawberries for afters! Served with the help of MCFC members and loved ones.

The afternoon turned a little breezier but still no disturbed air so that heavy feel was still there.

The challenge in tier 1 was continued by James Murphy but the win was taken by Brian Carolan with Gordan James coming in third. The standard was very high with all these guys fresh off the back of a great win in the recently held Triple Crown.

In tier 2 David Drummond held on to take the win closely followed by Mickey Blake. This was a very closely fought battle with possible promotion and team places at stake. The standard in Tier 2 is very high this year , so much so that a couple of the guys in Tier 1 are now continually looking over their shoulder.

In Masters Ger Kilbey led from start to finish which means he has now won his second competition. Ger is showing great promise and is surely a threat to the top guys for the future.



Congratulations are also due to Jimmy Hunston who completed in his first comp in the sportsman class, showing that you don't need the latest aerobatic model and the latest in high tech equipment !! Hope to see Jimmy competing again soon.



In fact F3A/model aerobatics would appear to have a bright future with all the new and young talent on show.

The equipment in use continues to develop with the IC's getting bigger and batteries for the 'E' models improving all the time while new motors and contra drive systems are emerging all the time. The models are also developing at pace in particular with a view to the ever evolving flight schedules.

A long hot enjoyable weekend was had by all, with many thanks to all the MCFC members and spouses who helped to make it a great success.

Hope to see some of you at an Aerobatic comp....soon.

Results

Tier 1

Pilot	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total	Place
Brian Carolan	1000	1000	1000	997.84	3000	1st
James Murphy	995.45	960.42	982.14	896.27	2977.53	2nd
Gordon James	950	889.58	948.66	863.07	2862.02	3rd

Tier 2

Pilot	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total	Place
David Drummond	1000	936.96	1000	1000	3000	1st
Michael Blake	993.07	1000	979.73	993.21	2986.28	2nd
Robert Telford	921.48	914.41	975.23	963.8	2860.51	3rd
Paul Houlihan	942.26	930.18	932.43	954.75	2829.44	4th
Dave King	815.24	783.78	759.01	776.02	2375.04	5th

Masters

Pilot	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total	Place
Ger Kilby	1000	1000	1000	1000	3000	1st
Rob Regan	856.07	940.4	327.81	0.0	2124	2nd

Sportsman

Pilot	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total	Place
Jimmy Huntson	316	263	241	260	839	1st

Robert Reagan

Midland MFC Scale Competition

Saturday 27th July 2013

I had been watching Weather forecasts for the week previous to the event knowing we had the option to run on either Saturday or Sunday and all week long the forecast was looking better for Saturday.

Informed Finbar early in the week we would be going with Saturday.

All hands on deck on Friday evening and we got the site ship shape and looking quite well.

Saturday morning early and contestants started arriving and we immediately got some tea and buns going .

Briefing took place at about 9.30 and we had some seven contestants in two categories seven in Clubman and one in F4C.

First to the line was Mickey Blake with a return of 646.75 and after consultation with the judges he had seen where he would make improvements.

Joe O Sullivan was second and he was the only competitor taking part in both classes and returned a good score in the Clubman's section. Dermot Gannon returned a good score of 735 for his first time in Clubman coming from the ranks of novice last year, and Dermot achieved his B cert only few weeks before in Boora.. M. Sweeney was having some teething problems with the Pitts and his score reflected same but Martin always likes to come from behind and there was three rounds to be run. Fergus O Reilly returned 689.75 which was an excellent score for his model as we had a brisk enough wind on the day. Graham Dwyer returned 683.75 but Brian Foran was leader at end of round one with 763.50. Joe O Sullivan returned 732.75 in F4C.

Round two saw Mickey Blake getting stuck in making up for his drop in round one and returning a massive 823.50 and better was to come. End of round two saw Mickey Blake take the lead followed by Brian, Martin added an extra 150 to his first round score but the Pitts was still playing up and probably needing a little more power. So at end of round two 1st Mickey 2nd Brian and Graham 3rd. The I mac training seems to be suiting all the lads and helping in the Scale routines..

As Joe was the only contestant in F4C we decided to dispense with round two and concentrate in getting through round three of Clubman's and we had just being called for dinner which consisted of burgers sausages chips and salad with tea coffee and biscuits.

Round three and with the bit firmly in his teeth Mickey returned a massive score of 861 and I did a quick calculation that Brian was going to return a massive score to beat him but this was not to be and Brian whilst flying well dropped below his first round score leaving it up to Graham to take up the challenge, he returned his best score of the day with 790.25 but was not enough to pip Mickey. So winners on the day were.

Clubman

Mickey Blake	Total	1684.50
Brian Foran		1567.25
Graham Dwyer		1560.25

F4C

Joe O Sullivan	732.75
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After the prize giving we all had a couple of flights and of course some old banter which is always part and parcel of the sport.

This has been the first Scale Competition of the current season so we were blessed with the weather in both our Fun Fly and Scale Competitions.

So I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the contestants that came and whom we rely on for all our Scale competitions and Fun Fly's so Thanks again lads and you're always welcome in Boora. To our own people that helped on Friday and the Judges and all on Saturday especially Anna and Dec Milne, a huge thank you.

Declan Heneghan

IRL4391

Scale Fly-In - The Curragh

Committee members of the Newbridge and District MFC watched and listened anxiously to weather bulletins on the days running up to their Scale Fly-In. As luck would have it, the day dawned sunny and bright with a moderate breeze and by the start of flying at 1:00pm, 16 prototypes were lined up in the pits area.



The Pits Area

Steve Quigley of the host club, with his Stearman biplane in an eye catching white and red scheme, was the first away, and made little of the fair breeze. Like the first penguin to dive in, he was soon followed.

Monoplanes and biplanes in civilian and military livery featured throughout the afternoon and early evening.

The sunshine and blue sky was a perfect backdrop to observe models in their element and drew appreciative applause. Atmosphere as much as flying is always an integral part of a fly-in where projects are discussed, information sought and tales of deering do are aired.

To mention all the prototypes and their pilots is outside the scope of this report but the accompanying photographs will give a more complete picture. However, which caught my eye? Martin Sweeney from the Laois Club had a Tucano in an overall black scheme which gave it a purposeful aspect as it turned and banked. Mark Quigley's PC9 in Air Corps grey also displayed its distinctive shape as it swept by.

A jump back in time to the 1940's saw Graham Dwyer's electric powered DeNight Special with its spatted undercarriage recall the Goodyear Races so hotly contested by the likes of Jimmy Doolittle in the USA in the 1930's and 40's. Paul and John Byrne can always be relied on to present interesting and evocative prototypes. They did not disappoint. Paul's Bucker Jungmeister, resplendent in an overall silver finish, recalls one of the great aerobatic biplanes ever produced, while John's Flybaby, in biplane format, captures a more leisurely means of air travel.

More modern travel was present in the form of a Cessna 182, ably flown by Celio Martins, another of the NDMFC. Up from Wexford, Paul Fitzgerald and his son Enda, fielded a red Super Decathlon with its striking starburst pattern, forever associated with this prototype, and flew a well presented sequence of manoeuvres.

Spectators, always welcome, were much in evidence throughout the day. A welcome visitor from Dublin, was the veteran modeller, Michael Collins. Not having spoken to Michael in years, it was a chance to reminisce. He is one of the founder members of

the Leinster Club who fly in the Phoenix Park. Along with people like Jim Power, still active in the Club they came together in the 60's, joined MACI and called it the Leinster Radio Flying Club. The Club's name has changed since then but still retains 'Leinster' in its title. Michael's brother in law, Charles McShane, Joseph Brennan, Padar Fagan, nephews Gerard Fagan and Adrian McShane, (current secretary of



Martin Sweeney

the NDMFC), all joined MACI back then and were allocated their EI numbers sequentially by the MACI, starting with 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, and 346.



Mark Quigley

Ironically, Michael told me that in the sixties and early seventies, they flew on the Curragh near the military camp. Small world.

On an aside, reminiscing, while largely positive would at times elicit comments like "he what?", "you must be joking" and "once a 'B', always a 'B'!

Our next Scale Fly-In,

scheduled for 8th September, will be the usual format, with flying commencing at 1:00pm. With the resurgence of the Scale Model Flying Association underway, the September Fly-In will be designated as a Scale Model Flying Association event. Hopefully by then, those attending would all be members of the Association. It is hoped that in the coming months, Scale enthusiasts in the clubs around the country will be approached by a Scale representative, (on behalf of the Association), from their club with a view to joining.

At the Fly-In in September there will be a FREE DRAW for members attending. What the prize will be has yet to be decided, but fear not, it will be worthwhile, (no, not a framed likeness of the Great Leader!).



Celio



Paul Fitzgerald and son

The Scale reps will also be the conduit for Scale activities and news, reporting back to the Association web-master for inclusion on the Association web-site.

Finally, the Committee of the NDMFC would like to thank all who attended the Fly-In and made it the success it was. Thanks also to those Club Members who helped organise and run the event.

Eamonn Keenan

MACI F3N

Sunday the 19th of May saw the MACIF3N descend on Carron Model Flying Club the sky was overcast but no rain and no wind could we be that lucky.

People started to arrive before 9am and there was tea/Coffee and some biscuits waiting in the clubhouse.

The one arm bandit Kieran Fitzgerald arrived with laptop and a printer to do the scoring assisted by his twin brother Brian (aka Nick Maxwell).



Pilots started to check over their machines and charge their batteries.

The pilot briefing was called running order was drawn and judges were allocated to different classes and the competition got underway with the MACI F3N set maneuvers

Judges for MACI F3N

PJ Brown Rob Norton Liam Broderick

Scores for sets

Pilot Name	Total	Normalised
Noel Campion	2214.5	1000
Barry Kennedy	1746	788
William Gaule	1770.5	800
David Nolan	1641	741
George Ryan	1558	704

There was a change of judges next

Next up to do set maneuvers MACI Intermediates F3N Judges for Intermediate
Barry Kennedy Sean Hourigan Noel Campion

Scoresfor Intermediate

Jamie Hourigan	1122.5	724
Rodney Kee	1550	1000
David Higgins	1042	672

Then Novice

Nick Robinson	472	1000
Patrick McCarthy	301	638

Next it was onto the freestyle round this is a flight of between 3 and 4 minutes where the competitor has to impress the judge's with his skill and precision.



MACI F3N novice freestyle results

Nick Robinson	184	1000
Patrick McCarty	166	902

MACI F3N Intermediate freestyle results

Jamie Hourigan	179	825
Rodney Kee	217	1000
David Higgins	193	889

MACI F3N freestyle results

Noel Campion	239	948
Barry Kennedy	235	933
William Gaule	252	1000
David Nolan	233	925
George Ryan	204	825

Next it was the MACI F3N freestyle to music this is a flight of 3 to 4 minutes where the pilot has to do a routine to music and are scored highly on harmony and creativity as well as difficulty.

MACI F3N freestyle to music.

Noel Campion	255	1000
Barry Kennedy	219	859
William Gaule	252	988
David Nolan	239	937
George Ryan	216	847

With the flying over Antony Phelan had the food barbequed and as we waited for the final results to be totaled we had a good feed.



Final results

Novice

1st Nick Robinson
2nd Patrick McCarty

Intermediate

1st Rodney Kee
2nd David Higgins
3rd Jamie Hourigan

F3N

1st Noel Campion
2nd William Gaule
3rd Barry Kennedy
4th David Nolan
5th George Ryan

With the presentation done the flight line was opened and we had some fun for the rest of the evening.

The next F3N competition is on the 16th of June at Corks Brinny flying site, see you there.

George Ryan

28th Control Line Home Internationals 2013

The weekend of June 5/6/7th saw the Home Internationals come to Southern Ireland for the first time. Four years seem to come around so fast as the last time they were held here, it was in Belfast.

This time they came to Brinny, Co. Cork, the home of Cork Model Aero Club, who pulled out all the stops to get the site in pristine condition.



Ian Galt, (Scotland), about to enter the circle for his first flight as John Kergon, (Wales) leaves.

A reception/Pilot's Briefing was arranged for 7pm on Friday night and hot

food was laid on for the weary travellers. However, by 5pm the strong winds were showing no sign of abating so Matt Quinn, Kevin Barry and Ralph McCarthy attempted to erect the marquee. Finally as the guests began to arrive, the wind died down, the sun shone and allowed us to finish the erection, just in time for us to renew old friendships and generally have a good old natter!



The Four Wise men, our Judges, John Molloy (Ireland), John Bonner (UK), Bill Grieves (Scotland) and Brian Weatherhogg (Wales).



Team Ireland: John Hamilton, Chris Gilbert, Kevin Barry with Richard O'Brien, Cork MAC Chairman who presented the prizes.

Saturday dawned with clear skies and light but variable winds, the competition started on time at 10am. Ireland were up first with Kevin Barry being the first to fly, unfortunately he was caught badly by a 180 degree wind shift.

England was up next, with Bill Draper putting up a reasonable score on the board, in turn followed by Ian Galt, Scotland and Kevin Morgan, Wales.

Two rounds were flown before lunch and the third round after.

Saturday night saw the usual banquet in the delightful setting of Inishannon House Hotel. "Food fit for a King" doesn't come close to describing the superb meal. A great night was had by all. Thanks to an unexpected sponsor, Barry's Coaches provided a minibus to shuttle everyone to and from the venue.

And so to Sunday morning. Wind a little stronger and skies fairly overcast.

Rounds 4 and 5 showed little change to the scoreboard, with Barry Robinson leading the field by a clear head, thanks to five excellent rounds with his new electric model.



"To the Victors go the spoils", winners – Team UK, Barry Robinson, Mervyn Jones and Bill Draper.

This put England into an unbeatable position, and so it ended:-

1 st	England	31,892
2 nd	Scotland	29,802
3 rd	Wales	29,107
4 th	Ireland	23,586

The prizes being presented by Richard O'Brien, Chairman Cork MAC.

My thanks go to all who helped organise and worked during the competition, to our supporters, MACI, CMAC, Belfast MFC, O'Cruaioi Catering and Barry's Coaches.

To our four Judges, John Molloy (Ireland), John Bonner (England), Bill Grieves (Scotland), and Brian Weatherhogg (Wales).

Looking forward to next year in the UK!



Kevin Morgan releases John Kergon's Cardinal.

Rising Sun Model Flying Club - Cork

Additional Vacancies for Insured Fliers

October 2013 to February 2015

**4 fliers at €165 per flier
6 fliers at €110 per flier
(No waiting time to fly)**

Contact: Dave O'Flaherty

**021 4891718
087 7714874**

What Were They Covered With?

As the title implies, the question refers to what materials were used to cover the pioneering aircraft and balloons of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Covering of course needed to be light and strong and protected by some material or substance so that it was airtight and able to withstand the weather. As can be imagined, different solutions varied from country to country.

The first hot air balloons of the Montgolfier Brothers, (1783 France), had a coarse linen envelope lined with paper to keep it airtight, but what kind of paper was used or what it was treated with, if anything, is unknown.

Subsequently the envelope materials were generally either cotton, linen or silk. Silk was the preferred material, with linen the least preferred. To weatherproof the envelope it was usual to coat them with linseed oil varnish, or to cover the envelope with a rubberised fabric.

This linseed oil varnish gave constant trouble as it remained sticky when temperatures rose, and if not stored properly it could cause spontaneous combustion. Its advantage was that it was cheap. Rubberised fabric could be bought from the rubber companies, or pure natural rubber could be dissolved in petrol, applied to the fabric and vulcanised. However, the rubberised covering deteriorated from the effect of sunlight, and was expensive.



Montgolfier Brothers Balloon.

Many experiments were carried out by the pioneers to overcome the limitations of the linseed oil varnish with various additives. All the early Wright Brothers aircraft were covered with cotton, but after treating their first glider with shellac and finding it unsatisfactory, they left subsequent machines untreated until they adopted rubberised cotton for those machines which they sold to customers.

Standardisation of covering and protective coating was still some way off, and in America, experiments centred around uncoated silk, rubberised silk, uncoated cotton, cotton treated with paraffin wax dissolved in petrol, and when Glen Curtis established his own manufacturing business, he settled for rubberised silk until 1913.

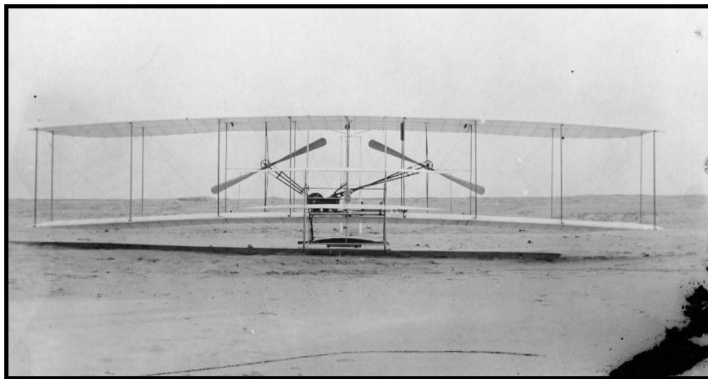
As well as in the USA, European manufacturers produced rubberised fabric and were supplied in linen, cotton or silk in different weights/strengths, with silk being the lightest and most expensive. For balloon envelopes, the rubberised fabric was laminated in layers diagonally to each other for tear resistance. It is unlikely to have been used in this way for aircraft.

Both A.V. Roe (England) and Louis Blériot (France) apparently used paper for covering their early machines, but the type of paper used and its protective treatment are not recorded. Blériot changed to rubberised fabric for his cross-channel Blériot XI in 1909. Gabriel Voisin, another French pioneer, used a flour paste to tighten the fabric of his early aircraft. Gelatine solutions were also used and it was noted at the time that this practice was a contributing factor in the death of Léon Delagrè, another French pioneer, in 1910, when he flew into a rainstorm flying a Blériot XI, and a wing collapsed.

About 1911/12, the use of linen as a covering came to the fore, after being specified by European Military Authorities.

'Dope', as a protective coating for fabric has had a curious history, having been invented in America, re-invented in Europe and put to use there, and then in turn ignored in America for some time.

In America, the glider pioneer Octave Chanute was the first to use 'dope', (a colloquialism, because workers using it became 'dopey' from inhaling the fumes), on his 1896 glider. He published his 'dope' formula shortly afterwards and reference to it was published in England, France and Germany in 1899. Subsequently in 1904, it was referred to in the French magazine 'L'Aerophile', giving impetus to its adoption.



Wright Flyer

Chanute's 'dope' was a nitro-cellulose solution, and the invention of the unproved acetone soluble cellulose acetate which followed, may have been instigated by the reprinting of his formula. It is not known whether he devised the formula or merely successfully used the solution suggested by someone else.

By 1905, the invention of cellulose acetate dope, (small pause to wipe away a tear!), was invented by the Bayer Co. in Germany and independently in America, with the Bayer Co. acquiring the USA patent in due course. By 1907, the first cellulose acetate dope was produced on a commercial scale, and in 1910 Bayer advocated its use for aircraft. It was first used by the soon to be famous German manufacturers Albatross and Rumpler.



Albatross

The use of cellulose acetate dope was quickly adopted in France by 1911. British aircraft adopted it in 1912, being initially imported from France but subsequently made under licence by late 1911. By 1913 it was being imported into the USA from England and France, and there are reports that Glen Curtis was using this 'dope' on his flying boats by the Summer of 1913.

It would be interesting to find out if replicas of early aircraft like a Wright Flyer, a Blériot XI, an Avro Triplane etc. which are increasingly being built and flown have used the 'correct' covering/weatherproofing as used on the original.....I doubt it.

Eamonn Keenan



2013 Contest Calendar



For Up-To-Date details visit

www.maci.ie

Scale

Please note

All Scale Championships, except the Scale Nationals, will be held on a Saturday. In the event of a large number of competitors or bad weather on the Saturday, then the Sunday will be utilised. Please check with the contact below, or visit the MACI web-site, on the Friday that the competition is going ahead.

August 24-25

Scale Nationals

Model County MFC

Paul Fetherstonhaugh 087 1331736 scale@maci.ie

September 8
(Not before 1:00pm)

SMFAI Fly-In (Under 60cc engines only) Curragh

Contact Adrian 0852346888 - 014411052

September 15

Scale Fly In

Midland MFC

Declan Henegan 087 2625868 declan.h@unison.ie

F3A

September 7-8

Autumn Aerobatic Activity

Cork MFC

Noel Barrett 021 2475971 nbarrett@indigo.ie

September 21-22

Back up date for first event cancelled.

Helicopter

August 17-18

Heli Nationals

Carron Tipperary

George Ryan 087-6455951 helicopter@maci.ie

Gliding

August 10

Fly-In (slopesoaring, winching, aerotow, bungee) Cork

Richard O'Brienglider@maci.ie

September 28-29

ISR Slope Fest

Mt. Leinster, Wexford

Fred Marie fred@gliderireland.net



Ready for action at the Laois Scale Fly-In in May



*Brian Foran, Graham Dwyer, Mikey Blake and Angus Balfour with Mikey's Sukhoi.
Republic of Ireland and MACI members who took part in an IMAC Competition in Tyrone Model
Flying Association's Club in Omagh on the 23rd June.*