

MACI at the Bray Air show 2nd August 2025



The MACI have recognised for a long time now that we badly need to attract new members and as one part of an overall plan it was suggested that we try and get a stand at the Bray Air show 2025.

The event organisers were contacted early in the year and after several meetings we finally secured a space, and they even waived their normal charge for us.

We organised a MACI banner for the tent and got double sided promotional leaflets to use as handouts on the day to those interested in flying RC.



John Flynn (RWMAC) did a superb job in producing a 6-minute video from various club fun fly's over the last few years for us to showcase our sport to the general public. This was played on a continuous loop throughout the day for all to enjoy.

It turned out to be a great talking point.

As part of the preparation for the day we contacted Model Heli Services and The Radio-controlled shop to let them know about our tent at the event.

Both companies have confirmed that they would be more than happy to insert a MACI leaflet into all future sales of planes. This should generate more exposure for us on an on-going basis.

A last-minute hiccup with the fire officer meant we could not use our own tent on the day. Thankfully the organisers came to our rescue and provided us with a certified tent at a nominal charge.



So, the big day finally arrived, and we had to be there early to set up – the crew arrived about 7.45am and set about decanting the models and visual aids from the cars. Barry Waugh from the Shankill Club was instrumental in providing models and the ancillary provisions usually forgotten about on the day.

The crew on the day consisted of members from the Shankill and Roundwood clubs.



Our tent position could not have been positioned better. We were given the space directly on the Centre Line of the display where the maximum crowd gathered. Beside us was East Coast radio, the IAA and the Irish Air Corps, Army & Navy – we were in fine company.



It was estimated that there would be between 40 and 50,000 attendees for the event which was later confirmed to be true, and they started arriving from about 10.00am.

The crowds only grew throughout the day and so did visitors to our stand. This event was advertised as having a Country wide appeal and we can vouch for that. We had enquiries from, Cork, Kerry, Wexford, Waterford, North Dublin, Donegal, Meath, Galway, Sligo, Wicklow, not to mention, new residents to Ireland from Brazil, Columbia, Philippines, Nigeria, China, Singapore and many more.

Our crew on the day did a fantastic job in explaining who we are and what we do. The leaflets were invaluable. The Club locator on the reverse made it easy for us to direct people to the clubs nearest to them.



Not only did we have a fine array of models on display we had a few transmitters for people to hold and temporarily love. We also gave them the opportunity to get up close and personal with some of our foam warbirds.

It was universally commented on that they had never heard of us or indeed realised that they had Clubs so near to where they live.

The trainer aircraft we brought along helped the prospective member visualise what



they could be training on in the future and how they could progress to the bigger and more exotic planes we had on display for them to see.

We were interviewed by East Coast radio, and they broadcast this piece several times throughout the afternoon. This extended our reach to not only those present but their general audience throughout the County and further afield.

We even had an arresting visit from an Garda Síochána, who were delighted to offer us their support.



RTE made an appearance and took a lot of video. They set up a few shots of young children holding the Tx behind some of the larger planes as pilots. These clips may sadly end up on the cutting room floor, but for those kids and their parents it will probably be a lifelong memory and something that will be shared with their extended family.

We were live streamed on TikTok and Facebook throughout the day as we chatted with the public with 2 social influencers posting clips to their accounts.

We also featured heavily in Facebook chats throughout the day and again later that evening, with some tags being tagged 5000 times.



There were lots of people taking selfies with the planes in the background and no doubt these will be shared with their contacts and hopefully reshared over the next few days and beyond.

Social media is the preferred method of sharing information these days and the MACI should seriously consider creating the post of social media Officer to tap into this ever-growing method of communication.

The day finally came to an end at about 8pm when we could finally disassemble and make our way home.

The crew on the day believe it was a great success and feel there should be more of these at local and regional level to inform the public and to continue to raise our profile.

The amount of publicity and exposure we got cannot be over emphasised, but the proof will be if we manage to get any new members from all of this.

The results may not be instant but for lots of people they now know we exist and perhaps when parents are looking for something different for the kids to do, they may remember us. Santa may even play his part for the New Year.

There was great interest from Moms & Dads of all ages as well as future retirees, both male and female and if only some of these materialise then it will be great for us all.

So, to all Clubs throughout the country – if you get annoying phone calls from people wanting to come along to the field to watch the planes then you can blame us. Those clubs with websites may see an increase in visitor numbers and hopefully new members and it would be great to get some feedback from you.

Finally, I would like to thank Barry Waugh and John Flynn for their stellar work throughout and those volunteers from Shankill (Dan Moss, John Power, Eoghan Power,

John Shortt) & Roundwood (Tony Mc, John Mc & Kieran T) who gave of their time and put in a huge effort on the day, without whom none of this would have been possible.



Don't let the smiles fool you, we all limped home, with sore backs, hoarse voices and looking forward to sitting down and putting our feet up for a well-deserved rest.

A special thanks to the MACI Insurance Officer, Declan Heneghan, who was ultra efficient in making sure we had the necessary paperwork in place.

This event was a great success and the lessons learnt should be built on for the future. Raising the profile of the sport is key to its success and growth into the future and an event such as this is a golden opportunity to do this on a national scale.

Report by Barry Waugh / John Flynn / Tony Greene