



# Foyne's Aviation & Maritime Museum Ltd.

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OUTLINE OF PROPOSALS  
FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AN  
AVIATION AND MARITIME MUSEUM  
AT  
FOYNES  
COUNTY LIMERICK

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DIRECTORS: Brian Cullen (Chairman), Michael Hanley (Vice Chairman), Margaret O'Shaughnessy (Secretary), John Finucane,  
Jim Beary, Ina Reddan, Frank O'Malley, Michael Daly, Brian Murphy, Barry O'Shea.

REGISTERED OFFICE: ARAS IDE, FOYNES, CO. LIMERICK. REGISTRATION NO: 134834

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#### FOYNES - THE CENTRE OF THE FLYING BOAT WORLD

Foynes, Co. Limerick, has been an important seaport since the middle of the last century. But during the late 1930s and early 1940s, this tranquil town on the Shannon Estuary was transformed into a major international flying boat base. Foynes became a fulcrum point for air traffic between North America and Europe. Passengers travelling, for example from New York to London, had to pass through Foynes. International businessmen, famous politicians, film stars, service men and refugees from the war in Europe, travelling from anywhere in Europe to anywhere in North America, had to come to Foynes. For a few years Foynes was the centre of the Western World.

After two years of proving flights, the summer of 1939 saw the inauguration of the scheduled commercial passenger and airmail service between North America and Europe.

On June 28th, Pan American Airways Flight 607A - YANKEE CLIPPER (Boeing B 314) - landed at Foynes to inaugurate the first scheduled airmail service on the Northern route, New York-Southampton via Canada, Newfoundland and Ireland. This plane was piloted by Capt. H.E. Gray and, in addition to mail, carried 20 invited U.S. Government and Pan American Airways observers, including Mr. Juan E. Trippe, President P.A.A.

YANKEE CLIPPER, this time piloted by Capt. A.E. La Porte, landed again at Foynes on July 8th with 17 passengers, to inaugurate the commercial passenger service, using the Northern route, between New York and Southampton.

Then on the 5th August, Imperial Airways (later BOAC, and now British Airways) flying the CARIBOU (Short S.30) and piloted by Capt. J.C. Kelly-Rogers, landed at Foynes with a complement of mail in transit from Southampton to New York to inaugurate their North Atlantic service.

**FOYNES AVIATION & MARITIME MUSEUM**

To celebrate in 1989 the 50th Anniversary of the inauguration of the scheduled commercial passenger and airmail service between North America and Europe, the Foynes and District Community Council proposes to tell the story of Foynes, during this brief, but brilliant, period in the history of aviation through the development of the Foynes Aviation & Maritime Museum. The Museum will be located in the former Flying Boat Terminal Buildings in Foynes.

In June 1987, The Foynes & District Community Council contacted the West Limerick County Development Team and Shannon Development, with a view to establishing a steering committee to research and develop the project idea, and since then a committee comprising representatives of the above bodies and Aer Rianta, together with other interested parties, have been meeting to bring the project to fruition, assisted by an enterprise worker funded by FAS.

A limited company - Foynes Aviation & Maritime Museum Ltd. - was incorporated in August 1988 with a share capital of £1m. divided into ten thousand shares of £100 each. This Company will develop the project and, subsequently, manage it. The services of an architect, heritage interpretation advisor and social historian were engaged to design the conversion of the former Flying Boat Terminal Buildings, to plan the museum content and interpretative displays and carry out archival research.

A lease has been obtained from Foynes Harbour Trustees, the owners of former Flying Boat Terminal Buildings, for the south wing and part of the east wing of these buildings, together with the internal courtyard, comprising in all some 4,070 sq. ft.

## DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

### PHASE ONE (AVIATION)

#### BUILDING WORK

The reconstruction of the museum buildings commenced in November 1988. This work will provide an entrance/reception area, audio-visual theatre, exhibition areas and accommodation for library/archives, administration and services, including museum shop and coffee bar. The detailing of this work will be evocative of terminal buildings of 1930/40 era. This reconstruction work is scheduled for completion in March 1989 and the fitting out of the exhibition area for completion in June 1989.

#### EXHIBITION THEMES

The criteria used in the selection of the exhibition were that the Museum should have human interest, authenticity, relevance to the Flying Boat era and World War II, capacity for variation and expansion and positive tourist market orientation.

The themes planned in this phase, for opening in July 1989, may be summarised as follows:

- (i) Entrance/Reception/Information area. Photographs, atmosphere of flying boat base of the period recreated, information leaflets.
- (ii) Introductory exhibition. Foynes the 'Centre of the World', graphics, photographs, brief history, links with other flying boat bases, celebrated visitors, etc.
- (iii) Audio Visual Theatre. Audience capacity 30 people. 10 minute film show using, where possible, original film material.
- (iv) Five Years at Foynes. Interpretive display of Foynes during the war, global events, intelligence reports, refugees, etc.
- (v) Radio/Navigation/Meteorological Display (Experiential approach). Control Room, Instruments, Navigation equipment, Flight routes, Flight corridors.

The cost of Phase One is estimated to be of the order of £300,000.

**CONTINUOUS PHASE (AVIATION)**

- A. **Continuous Phase:** Concurrently with Phase One, negotiations are in progress to acquire an actual flying boat to be stationed at Foynes.

**PHASE TWO (AVIATION)**

- B. **Phase Two:** Outline concepts for this stage include:

- (a) The detailing of one passenger's or pilot's experience of a journey from North America to Europe or Africa during the flying boat era.
- (b) A themed section dealing with the history of flight, how a flying boat flies, experimental flights (Mayo composite) and transatlantic mail.
- (c) A resource centre for the study of transatlantic aviation.

**PHASE THREE (MARITIME)**

- C. **Phase Three:** This phase will tell the story of the development of the Port of Foynes and the history of maritime trade on the Shannon Estuary through interpretive displays, etc.

TOURISM IMPACT

Since the concept of the Museum was initiated, very considerable interest has been expressed in the project, both nationally and internationally. Contacts have been established with the two major carriers of that era - Pan American and British Airways (then Imperial Airways). These airlines also intend to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the inauguration of the Transatlantic Flying Boat Service, which was a major milestone in commercial civil aviation history. Links have been established with other flying boat bases in the U.S., Canada, U.K. and France, and there are real possibilities of establishing formal, or informal, twinning arrangements between all these locations. Contact has also been made with a number of general aviation museums in all of those countries.

Amongst the personalities of the flying boat era, who have taken a personal interest in the project, is Maureen O'Hara Blair, whose late husband Capt. Charles Blair was an outstanding pilot of that period. She has offered to make her own personal memorabilia and those of her late husband available to the Museum.

The project will have both general and specialist appeal and memorabilia and stories that link with all of Ireland's major tourist markets. It is expected that a number of airlines will link themselves to the project, some of which have already agreed to invest in it. This interest will carry through to the marketing aspect of their operations and it is anticipated that they will feature and publicise the Museum, where appropriate. It will also be featured in all the Shannon Region's tourism publications.

It is expected that there will be enormous interest internationally from the T.V., Radio and Press in the Civil Aviation milestone which is being celebrated, as well as nationally in the opening of the Museum and its subsequent operation.

LIST OF DIRECTORS

Brian Cullen (Chairman)

Margaret O'Shaughnessy (Secretary)

Jim Beary

Ina Reddan

Barry O'Shea

Michael Daly

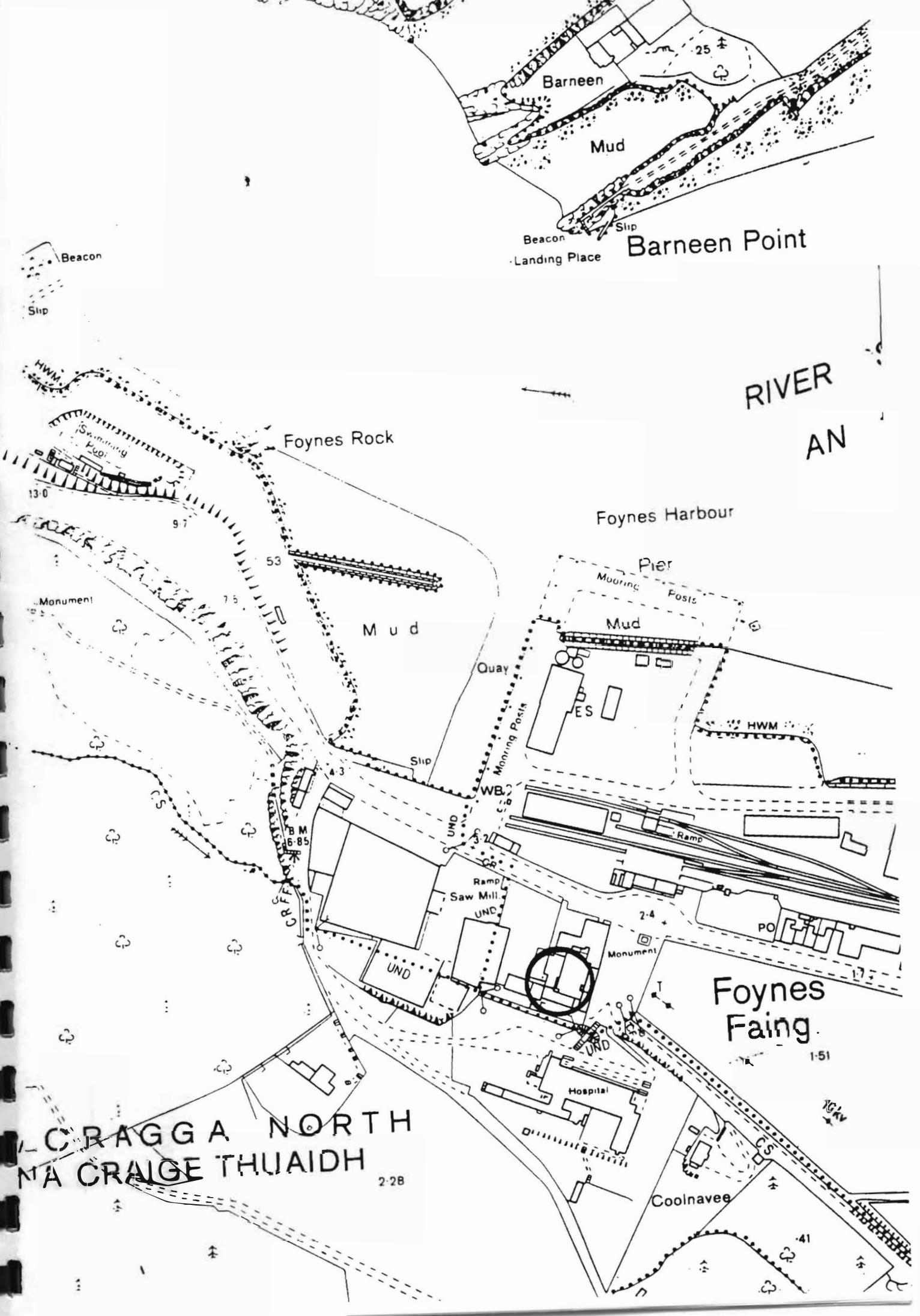
Michael Hanley

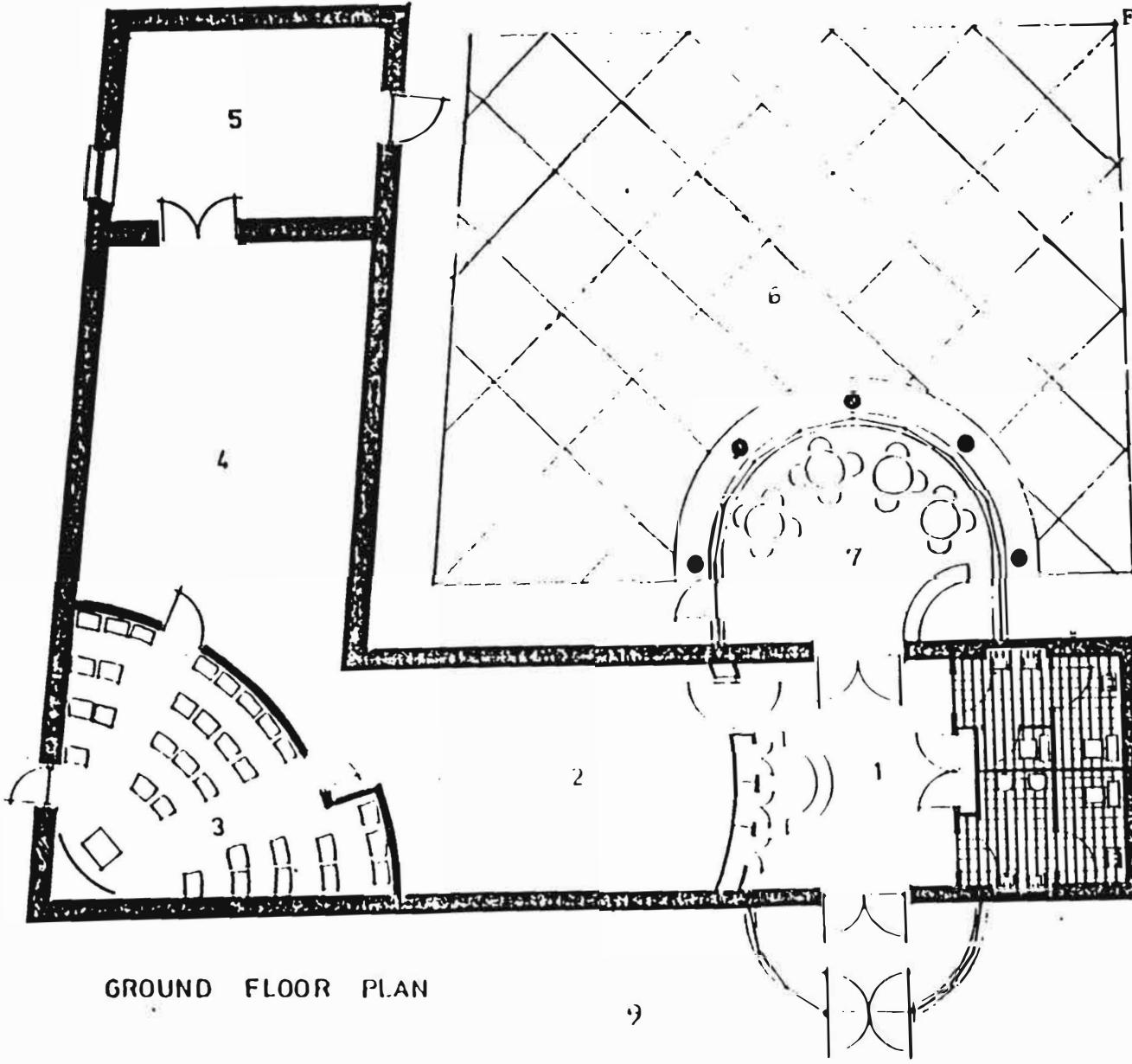
John Finucane

Tom McInerney

P.J. McGoldrick

Brian Murphy





FOYNES AVIATION AND MARITIME MUSEUM

L E G E N D

- 1 ENTRANCE
- 2 INTRODUCTORY EXHIBITION
- 3 AUDIO VISUAL DISPLAY
- 4 FIVE YEARS AT FOYNES EXHIBITION
- 5 RADIO & METEORLOGICAL DISPLAY
- 6 COURTYARD
- 7 SHOP
- 8 HARBOUR TRUSTEES OFFICES
- 9 THE SQUARE

BRIAN  
GRIJIBB  
ARCHITECT

# WESTERN UNION PRESS MESSAGE

R. E. WHITE  
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARYTON  
GENERAL OF THE CHAMPS

J. C. WILLETT  
Vice President

RELEASE TO BOOK A

TWS PAID

PORIWASHINGON, June 28--AT 12:30 AM EDST TODAY, CAPT. HAROLD E. GRAY ABCARD THE PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS FLYINGBOAT YANKEE CLIPPER REPORTED HIS POSITION AS 583 MILES NORTHEAST OF BOTWOOD, NEWFOUNDLAND, SOUND FOR FOYNES, IRELAND. MEANWHILE THE BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR MR. TRIPPE WAS IN FULL SWING AS THE CLIPPER BEGAN TO CLIMB TO HIGHER ALTITUDE FOR MORE FAVORABLE WINDS ALCFT.

PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS....ICCA

28<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 1939