

O'Shea on Monday



ROBERT O'SHEA on a day in the life of a journalist

EVERYBODY thinks being a journalist is great fun. At dinner parties over the festive period, I was cornered on more than a few occasions by people who probed me on the exciting life I must lead.

"Of course, yes, my life is very exciting," I told them, because I know this is what they want to hear, because that is how they see us portrayed in Hollywood blockbusters, and also because it is true.

I thought I'd gone over this a few times in columns before, but obviously a couple of people weren't paying attention. So here I lay out a day in the life of a newsroom.

Typically, being a columnist, I'll get up at 7am, have a shower, head downstairs, stick on the percolator and delve into at least three of the morning papers so I can mull over The Big Issues Of The Day.

Then, at 7.30am sharp, it's back to bed again until noon or some more reassuring hour.

By midday, when I leave for the office, the paper will usually have already hit the streets.

The efficiency of the people I work with never ceases to amaze me and I never fail to tell them so when I arrive in bang on a quarter to one.

These 15 minutes before lunch are crucial to my day. Depending on my disposition after calling Hong Kong to hear the closing prices, I will head either straight home or out to get a sandwich.

On Fridays, due to the spectacular speed of my approaching deadline, I often find myself in the office a whole lot earlier than this.

When I get in at 7.30am approx the place will be a hive of activity, many of the reporters, editors and cleaning staff having been hard at work for an hour already.

The news reporters (they can be identified by their better haircuts) will have furrowed brows thanks to anxious attempts to break news stories; the sports reporters will have furrowed brows trying to remember where they parked their car last night and how they got to work.

The sports desk is easily the easiest place to work. If no sports news seems to be happening on a particular day, there is a tried-and-tested formula — which usually hangs on a wall behind the sports editor — of linking major international football stars

to major international football clubs.

It is no exaggeration to say the whole sports media industry would collapse if it wasn't for this linkage formula.

Then there are the sub-editors: small, frail creatures with shallow psychological problems.

Their job is to read all the stuff that goes into the newspaper, cut out the naughty words and slap a headline on everything.

Headline-writing is a true skill, e.g. A typical conversation during the Roy Keane transfer hiatus:

Ted (a sub-editor): I'm trying to link Roy to Real Madrid, but I can't think of a headline.

Cory (another sub-editor): Hmm. How about: "Roy eyes Real deal"?

Ted: Great!
Cory: Wait. What about: "Roy keen on Madrid"?

Ted: You're a genius!
As you can probably guess from what I have outlined above, morale can often be low in a newsroom.

This is why everybody loves a major breaking news story after the paper has gone to print.

The sub-editors come into their own when a story breaks after the presses have started running.

They leap out of their seats and run for the printers' room and once inside they shout at the top of their lungs: "Stop the Presses."

The first sub-editor to do so gets an extra 15 minutes for lunch.

While all this is going on your hard-working columnist will either be slugging down coffee in the canteen or hiding in a toilet cubicle waiting for everybody to go home.

Perhaps he has received a story over the newswire, like I did last October, which reported that clowns in operating rooms may help relax children before undergoing surgery.

Can he just stick this on to the end of the column because he thinks it is a beautiful story?

No, probably not.
That's why I am delighted to exclusively reveal that one of these clown's agents is engaged in secret negotiations with Manchester United.



WORKING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE: The work in progress at the new Cork airport terminal.

10 reasons to be cheerful about Cork's new airport

By **STEPHEN ROGERS**
Property Correspondent

FOR the last 45 years Cork has been served through thick and thin by our existing airport terminal.

However, there is little doubt that the building, described as antiquated by one airport official, is no longer of sufficient quality to meet demands.

So what improvements can we expect from our new, improved facility, brought to us at a cost of €160million?

Here are 10 reasons why the brand new terminal will make flying into and out of Cork a real treat.

1. Space

The figures say it all. The existing terminal is 11,000 square metres. Its replacement is 28,000 square metres. And every corner of that massive area has been planned so as to keep the building as open and uncomplicated as possible. The path from departure gate to aeroplane and from aircraft to baggage to the exit could not be easier to track.

2. Design

The spacious atmosphere is complimented by an amazing design. It has been a little depressing returning from two weeks holidaying in the sun to a building which is dark and unwelcoming.

The new facility has a minimalist design which makes the most of the reinforced glass encasing the whole structure. The result is that every one of the three floors is bathed in natural light and from nearly every part of the building the planes landing and taking off are visible.

3. Airbridges

Earlier this year Ryanair CEO Michael O'Leary said he would never let airbridges near his planes because they damage them. His aircraft should be safe in Cork airport as the new facility, despite having the capacity for four airbridges, will have only one.

As the terminal is further back from the runway than its predecessor, there is room for the planes to drive nose first right up to the doors of the building meaning there is only a few metres between the plane's forward doors and the exit/entrance.

4. Check-in Desks

In summer, Cork airport becomes a hive of activity and queues are inevitable. That should be hugely alleviated by the 30 desks in the new terminal.

5. Technology

The gulf in technology between the old and new terminals is best illustrated by the fact that training for the 1,500-plus staff began two months ago — seven months before the new facility starts operating.

The airport authorities say the that new technology will speed up the checking in and departures process.

6. Traffic

At peak times of the year, tailbacks in front of the old terminal are

massive but the system in front of the new terminal should correct the situation.

There will be three lanes immediately in front of the main doors which will be solely for the use of public transport and which will have drop offs either on the terminal side of the road or on the pathway on the other side of the road.

There will be another two lanes on the other side of that pathway which will be accessible by coaches and buses.

7. Parking

With the new 600-space multi-storey car park already operational and the existing land parks being expanded, there should no longer be the frantic search for a space while rushing for a flight.

As the old car park will be further from the new terminal building, an underground tunnel has been built to link it.

8. Shopping/Refreshments

There will be a whole new set of shops and food

outlets in the new location. Hughes and Hughes have secured the prime book and magazine units, while the first Starbucks outside Dublin will be a welcome addition. And to give departing passengers a final taste of Cork there is expected to be a Lennox's Fish and Chips outlet in a food market modelled on the English Market.

9. The carousels

There should be no delay in emptying the baggage off arriving planes onto the carousels as all three are 80metres long, meaning that at peak times baggage handlers should not have to wait for bags to be taken off in the arrivals terminal before they can add more.

10 Night landings

No matter how thick the renowned fog around the airport, incoming flights should be given a bright introduction to Cork as the new terminal has an impressive lighting system which, combined with the glass frame, will give an illuminated welcome to visitors and homecomers.