



SILVER CITY ASSOCIATION

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SILVER CITY NEWSLETTER 2019

As always, the 2019 Newsletter comes with all good wishes from Sally, Keith and Paul. This year's Annual Reunion at Lydd will take place on Saturday, 13th July, which is the 65th Anniversary – to the day - of the start of commercial operations from Ferryfield in 1954. Another significant date in the history of Silver City!

2018 REUNION REPORT – SATURDAY, 14TH JULY

More than 50 members, friends, family and guests – including the Mayors of Lydd and New Romney – were present at Lydd for the 2018 Reunion, which coincided with the 70th Anniversary of the start of the Air Ferry service from Lympe on 14th July 1948. We were also pleased to welcome the family of Eoin Mekie, who had been Silver City's Chairman for many years.

Some of those who were unable to join us but who sent their good wishes were 'Spud' Murphy, Joy Parks, Judy Richards, Barry Thorn from New Zealand, Betty Leblanc from France, Audrey Kennard, Hazel Bristow, Jeremy Dixon, Peter Terry, John Mason, Sue and Liz Bryan, Bob Cooper, Ken Honey, John Shapland and Eunice Musgrave.

After an excellent buffet lunch, Paul brought those present up to date with the latest Association news and read out a message from Sir George White, the great-grandson of the founder of the Bristol Aeroplane Company, who sent his best wishes to the Association and recalled the close links between Silver City and Bristol's Freighter and Superfreighter aircraft which his father had helped to develop. Keith then said a few words to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Air Ferry.

Paul thanked Keith and Sally for their continued support for the Association. He added that a great deal of work went on behind the scenes that most members were unaware of and that Sally in particular put in a tremendous effort to look after our finances and to organise the Reunions for us. Paul also thanked Rae Bark, Malcolm Finnis and Frances Shilling for their help on the day and then wished everyone a safe journey home and hoped that he would see everyone again for the 2019 Reunion.

DEPARTURE LOUNGE

We are sad to say that a number of members have passed away since the 2018 Newsletter appeared. We have been told of the passing of Ivor Double, Raymond Brunton, Mike Hooks, Graham 'Tug' Wilson, Keith Sissons, Guy Ruffle, Peter Davis, Josephine Tranter, David Baker and John Whittemore.

Our sincere condolences go to all their families and friends and to any other Citizens who have lost loved ones during the past year.

65 YEARS OF FERRYFIELD

As previously mentioned, this year's Reunion on 13th July will coincide with the 65th Anniversary of the start of commercial operations from Ferryfield in 1954. As you may know, after deciding that Lympe was no longer suitable for the new, heavier Superfreighters, Silver City looked at a

number of possible sites for a new operating base before deciding that building a brand new airport near Lydd was the best option. A contract was awarded to Richard Costain Ltd at the end of 1953 at a price of £400,000 (over £10m today) and the new airport was completed in just six months. At 08:00 on the morning of 13th July 1954, the inaugural flight took off for Le Touquet and nearly seventy flights were made on that first day.

B.A.S. WATCHES

Last year, we received an enquiry from David Tye, whose father (William Tye) worked for Silver City at the company's Head Office in London. When William passed away in 2006, David inherited his watch and discovered that it had the initials 'B.A.S. 10' engraved on the back. The watch itself is a Longines military watch with a movement made in April 1945 that was shipped to London to Baume & Co and then cased by Dennison sometime later in 1945. Apparently, David has seen another watch on the Internet with 'B.A.S. 7' on the back.

It seems likely that B.A.S. stood for British Aviation Services but we haven't been able to find out anything more about the watch. Does anyone out there have a similar watch or can anyone shed more light on them?

PAUL'S TALKS

Paul continues to be in demand to talk to aviation and other groups about Silver City Airways. Since the last Newsletter appeared he has been to the London Balloon Club, the West London Aero Club at White Waltham, the Chiltern Aviation Society at Ruislip, the U3A Group at Leighton Buzzard, Bristol Aero Talks at Filton, the Museum of Berkshire Aviation at Woodley and the Whitewebbs Museum of Transport at Enfield. Later this year, Paul will be talking to the U3A Group in Canterbury on Wednesday, 9th October and has been invited to deliver this year's prestigious Shuttleworth Aviation Lecture at Old Warden on Saturday, 16th November. The usual comment from members of the audience is "I never knew Silver City did so much!"

These talks bring in useful income for the Association and help to keep the Silver City name alive.

PHOTOS WANTED - CAN YOU HELP?

One of the highlights of last year's Reunion was the appearance of Tom Singfield's Morris Minor van, which he has restored in British Air Ferries livery. It looked very much at home parked outside the terminal building. Tom is not only an Associate Member of the Association but is also a noted aviation historian and he is interested in buying 35mm colour slides of aircraft – "all types and sizes" he says – but prefers airliners and especially pre-1977 shots. He'd be delighted to hear from you if you have any slides tucked away that are no longer wanted. Tom can be contacted on 01403 252628 or by e-mail at tomsingfield@gmail.com.

2019 REUNION – LYDD AIRPORT, SATURDAY, 13TH JULY (12:30 – 17:30)

The Reunion will be held in the main lounge of the Biggles Bar, where there will be the usual cold buffet and bar; the entrance fee will be £12 per person – the same as last year. No need to book in advance – just turn up with your partners, family and friends. However, if you haven't been to a Reunion before, please let Sally know you're coming as this helps to estimate numbers for catering. Raffle prizes are always welcome and the income from the Reunion raffle all helps to keep us going.

AND FINALLY.....

Thank you everyone for your support for the Association. We always welcome your e-mails and letters and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Lydd on 13th July. And don't forget to let Paul have any changes to your address – either postal or e-mail.

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