



SILVER CITY ASSOCIATION

President: Mr. K. Dagwell, 31 Exmoor Drive, Salvington, Worthing, West Sussex BN13 2PJ (01903 261514)

Chairman: Mr. P. Ross FRGS, 20 Fishery Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1ND (01442 267160)

Secretary: Mrs. S. Maycock, 14 Prescott House, Rolfe Lane, New Romney, Kent TN28 8JR (01797 366346)

SILVER CITY NEWSLETTER 2022

Hello everyone! As always, this Newsletter comes with all good wishes from Sally, Keith and Paul. It seems extraordinary that we haven't met since 2019 and every time we think we are getting back to something approaching 'normality', the dreaded Covid virus raises its ugly head again and we have to re-think our plans. However, we are intending to go ahead with a Reunion on Saturday, 16th July but with some changes from previous years. More details appear later in this Newsletter.

We hope that you and your loved ones are all keeping well despite all the problems that the world seems to be sending us.

DEPARTURE LOUNGE

Since the 2021 Newsletter was published, we have heard that the following Citizens have passed away: Jean Bucknell (in 2019), John Owen (in 2020), Colin Street and Geoff Wilson. Geoff in particular was a regular attendee at the Reunions and his daughter, Sally-Ann, has written an item about his time with Silver City which includes some reminiscences from Vic Marks. We are sure you will find it interesting.

Our sincere condolences go to everyone who has lost loved ones during the past year.

PAUL'S TALKS

Paul's talks about Silver City have started up again and are providing a useful source of income for the Association. After giving a talk on Zoom to the Farnborough U3A Group in July last year, talks to live audiences started again at the Haverhill Aviation Society in October and the Smallfield Aviation Group in November. So far this year, Paul has given a talk to the Lutterworth Railway Society in February and is due to speak to the Tadley & District U3A Group in April and the Hemel Hempstead Probus Club in May. As you can see, interest in Silver City is pretty widespread! If you know of a club or society that would be interested in having a talk, do let Paul know.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

For some years, the Association has had two grades of membership. Former employees of Silver City and its associated companies joined as Full Members while those who were interested in the company's history and activities were later able to join as Associate Members. In recent years, the majority of new members have been Associates and this is likely to continue in the future. Paul, Keith and Sally have discussed this and have decided that there is really no benefit in continuing with this division and that everyone should be regarded as Full Members. We hope you agree. Anyone joining now will pay a one-off fee of £10.

KENT TRANSPORT HISTORY CENTRE

In last year's Newsletter, we mentioned plans by Deborah Holmes and her partner to set up a display telling the story of transport in Kent. We have now had an update from Deborah – including news about their de Havilland Dove project – and this is what she told us:

“With a few others, our long-term goal is to create a Transport History Centre in Kent. Not strictly a museum but an ‘open to all’ place where odd memories and information can have a home and find its wider context within the area. Silver City had always been something I knew about, along with Invicta Airways, but only in the past few years have I really had the spare resources to study it in depth. As part of this, I made a study of all the aircraft used by Silver City and their eventual fate and the results were actually quite sad. Some DC3s remain but all of the Bristol Freighters were scrapped. The idea of a locally connected aircraft for our centre appealed greatly but space would be very limited so any aircraft would need to be much smaller than a DC3 and transportable.

“One day, a phone call came in: “Deb, was it a Dove you wanted?”. The Dove in question turned out to be ex-Hunting Air Surveys G-ARHX which had ended up at the South Yorkshire Air Museum but had a very uncertain future. By disconnecting the rational brain, a deal was made and the task of rescuing G-ARHX started last year and was completed by the summer. It is currently in storage near Maidstone and the long-term plan is to complete a static restoration and display it as G-AOYC, which was a very hard-working Silver City Dove.

“At the site, we are starting with very little and facilities for people working there will have to come first, before any restoration group can form. In the meantime, the myriad of missing, damaged and orphaned parts is slowly being sorted through and a list made for hunting down replacements. It may still be another five years until the Dove is completed and assistance is needed. If you are local and have some spare time, you would be very welcome or, if you are further afield, we are always looking for help from people who can research, hunt for parts or pester local contacts for that holy grail of 30 litres of spare Aircraft Grey paint. When complete, it will be the only aircraft in the world in Silver City colours, so it will be very special.

“For Kent Transportation History, our Facebook group is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1756215321182409>.

The Kent Silver City Dove Project is: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1427131174300169>.”

2022 REUNION – LYDD GOLF CLUB, SATURDAY, 16TH JULY (12:30 – 17:30)

For many years, we have enjoyed the hospitality of the Biggles Bar at Lydd Airport for our Annual Reunion. Unfortunately, due to changes at the airport, this won't be available as the venue for our gathering. However, thanks to Sally's efforts, we have found a new location for this year's event in the shape of Lydd Golf Club which is next door to Ferryfield. The post code is TN29 9LS. We have booked the Conservatory Room at the Club for our exclusive use and this should be a very pleasant place to meet as it opens on to a lawn area – so fingers crossed for good weather!

There will be no charge for the Reunion this year but we do ask that you let Sally know by Friday, 8th July if you plan to come so that we have an idea of numbers for the buffet. You can contact her by phone or e-mail (please note her new address) – or even by post! If there is any last-minute change of plan, we will only contact those people who have told us they are coming.

AND FINALLY.....

Thank you everyone for your continued 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 Golf Club on Saturday, 16th July. And don't forget to let Paul have any changes to your address – either postal or e-mail.

Keith Dagwell (President) keith.dagwell@ntlworld.com

Paul Ross (Chairman) paulross446@gmail.com

Sally Maycock (Secretary) matsally39@gmail.com