

In the early part of 1987, when we on the BAET Council knew of the proposed opening of a new airport in Docklands, it was decided that we should try to produce a cover or covers, with a view to having them flown on the first flights from the airport.

The initial task of finding out all there was to know fell to Council Member Peter Sadler, our Ballooning member. He laid the groundwork with numerous phone calls and secured the necessary information such as Airport Managers of the two known Airlines to be using the new 'London City Airport' and even obtained copies of the Airline logos. Having reported all this back to Council, I then took over the task of approaching a printer, local to me, purchasing 300 envelopes from them and then dealing with them on BAET logs plus the Airlines logos, a draft of the wording to be used at bottom left of cover and a mock-up of what the covers would look like when completed. I am indebted to Peter Sadler for his network used in this respect.

The printer duly produced a proof which I approved and proceeded to produce 150 for Brynmor Airways and 150 for Eurocity Express. When the final count was taken we had 150 for Brynmor and 149 for Eurocity a discrepancy of one, hence the numbering on the reverse!

The airport was due to open on the 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1987 so I had to make sure that each batch of covers was duly parcelled, with the appropriate details on each outer wrapper and delivered by me to the respective Airline Managers early on the 25<sup>th</sup> October.

I had previously, upon receipt of these covers from the printer, to stick the stamps upon these and also to address (in pencil) each cover to me at my address. The Post Office will not cancel stamps in this way unless so addressed because of their regulations.

And as it was that I found myself at the new airport on the 25<sup>th</sup> October. All was bustle and haste, last minute nailing of this piece of wood to that piece of fence, a dab of paint here and there, a brush up of this piece of concrete and a bush planted on the decorative walkway to the entrance "It will be alright on the night" as a saying to mind as the workmen hurried to finish their appointed tasks!

I duly handed the covers over to the Managers with last minute words of explanation and thanks for their offering to fly them for us, also as a

sweetened I promised them each 6 of the covers when fully serviced for distribution  
as where they liked. After this I returned home.

Next day I retraced my steps to London City Airport to hopefully  
pick up the covers which by this time should have been flown out to Paris  
and returned.

I called on the Brynmar Manager, Tony Bull, and in spite of his  
busy workload he took time out to trace the Stewards of their first  
flight out and back and retrieved our covers from her. I thanked him  
and his staff for their kindness and sought out the Curcivity Manager  
who had beaten. To his and my horror we found the Curcivity covers  
were flown out to Paris but instead of remaining on the aircraft for the  
return flight they had been off-loaded and held there!

Robotic phone calls and telex messages to Paris failed to locate them  
in time for a later return flight, and as I had to meet a 6.30 pm  
deadline at St. Pauls Head Post Office to hand over the covers for date-  
stamping of that day's date, I had to leave the Airport and dash five-pm  
intended) back to London. I duly handed the covers over to Mr Eldridge  
of their Philatelic Bureau with the promise to pick them up again the  
following evening and hopefully leave the Curcivity covers for servicing but  
unfortunately met with the 26<sup>th</sup> October date since this again is against  
P.O. regulations. And so the next day 27<sup>th</sup> October again found me at  
London City Airport and yet again I had to wait until 3.30 before  
being able to collect the missing/delayed covers. Much apologies from  
Chm. Leadbeater and his staff I thanked them and again, rushed up to  
St Pauls collected the Brynmar covers and left the Curcivity ones, which I  
picked up the following evening after leaving my office. So after 3  
visits to London City Airport and 2 to the Head P.O. St Pauls I finally  
had both batches of covers datestamped. I next took them back to the  
Bureau to have the additional cachets printed thereon giving details of  
flight times, Registration and Pilots etc and when this was done I then had  
to rub out my pencilled address from each cover, phew! what a performance  
but I hope you will think it worthwhile to own a pair of covers  
which are quite unique since no other were carried on their first  
flights on this historic occasion of the opening of the London City Airport,  
Dorsetland  
Peter G Little.