

## COLLEEN LEAVEY

Edited transcript of a recording of Collen Leavey interviewed by Chris Eldon Lee at the Marguerite Bay Reunion at Bowness-on-Windermere on 30th October 2010. BAS Archives reference AD6/24/1/101. Transcribed by Dawn Sutcliffe on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

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[0:00:00] Lee: This is Colleen Leavey. Recorded at the Marguerite Bay Reunion at Bowness-on-Windermere by Chris Eldon Lee on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2010. Colleen Leavey.

Leavey: I'm a divorced woman, my name's Colleen Leavey and I was Rowlands before I got married. I'm 75, my birthday is 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1935 and I was born in Port Stanley; I think it was called the King Edward Memorial Hospital, a daunting place. I grew up there and then I went up to Uruguay to Montevideo to the British school. When I came back from there, I think I was about 17, I was offered a job in Government House working for the FIDS. I never knew very much about them at all as one doesn't. I only realised that when I came back from school I was still in ankle socks and wearing a school uniform almost and all the girls that I knew as youngsters when we were all at the Falklands school, that they were all with lipstick, masses of make-up, hair dos, nylons with seams up the back and high heeled shoes. So I was sort of like a fish out of water

[0:01:37] Lee: Out of your own time?

Leavey: Yes

[0:01:39] Lee: Why did you go to Montevideo to go to school? Were you particularly bright?

Leavey: I think I was when I was young but I've lost most of that [laughs]. I've retired in age as well as thinking.

[0:01:51] Lee: So was it a convent school?

Leavey: No, no it was the British school, the only English school there and most of the girls were daughters of embassy staff or business people in Uruguay. That was a lovely time; I made friends with 2 girls in particular, and one I really liked was that her father had an estancia out there and holidays we would go out to this place. It was lovely, we rode horses and drove cattle and wore ponchos. It was absolutely fabulous. So then I wanted to work on a farm in my dreams because I knew that I liked horses very much but that never came to fruition.

[0:02:42] Lee: Did you go to that school because your parents were quite well off then?

Leavey: No, I went there it was a government scheme. My parents were divorced and of course my father must have had visiting rights in those days to me so he saw me but I lived with my mother. Yes I did fairly well at school so I can remember coming home from school one day and finding someone talking to my mother in our kitchen. My mother said 'would you like to go away to school?' and I thought 'Yes, anything than being stuck here'. So that was how that happened.

[0:03:29] Lee: So even as a child you felt that the Falkland Islands were a restriction did you?

Leavey: Not so much a restriction but I didn't feel I belonged.

[0:03:37] Lee: Do you know why you felt that?

Leavey: Well I suppose the divorce.

[0:03:42] Lee: Right of course. So fresh start really?

Leavey: Yes it was. I was obviously petrified and dead scared of what was going to happen but it worked out well. I enjoyed the time there. When I came back to Stanley I was offered a job to work at Government House for FIDS and I never knew what all this was about. I don't remember the names of the governors or anything

[0:04:16] Lee: Would it be Miles Clifford?

Leavey: Yes, oh yes I thought he was Hitler!

[0:04:21] Lee: I beg your pardon?

Leavey: I thought he was Hitler because he had a little moustache and he had that sort of (...) I don't know whether I'd seen a war film or something but I felt he wasn't who he said he was. But that was just in my dreams I guess and my imagination.

[0:04:42] Lee: So we're now talking about 1952 I guess are we?

Leavey: A bit before that I would think. There was one before him who was extremely nice but Miles Clifford was a strange man. And his wife was a very nervous little lady.

[0:05:01] Lee: What did you make of her?

Leavey: Well I felt like saying 'Well don't worry, if you want me to do anything'. Because when they had tea parties or cocktail parties they always suggested I went as a guest at these parties which was a lovely introduction for me to become more independent. I also worked as a radio announcer 'Hello this is the British Broadcasting Corporation in Port Stanley, I have some local news Mr Jim Clifton has fish for sale at the public jetty. Would you please bring your own basins' and I can remember it was so amusing and I thought 'what on earth is happening to me?' So I did that to save money to pay for my trip to England because we always called England home. Additionally, I don't know how old I would be but it was years before that the Sunderland flying boats came to Stanley, only one trip and I was fascinated and I thought 'oh I wish I could go on those'.

[0:06:19] Lee: Would you think you were a bit of an ambitious young lady?

Leavey: Yes

[0:06:22] Lee: Wanting to move on in the world?

Leavey: Oh yes, I felt I had to move away before I could do anything.

[0:06:28] Lee: So the work at Government House, were you a secretary to FIDS?

Leavey: No not to FIDS, I was just one of the staff.

[0:06:36] Lee: Actually as a domestic staff?

Leavey: No, no in the office, in FIDS office. I did a lot of the paperwork for the Fids when they came in. They had to have their kit and I can always remember being quite amused because I was such a naïve innocent little soul that when we looked through the list and had to tick who had this and who had that, I always used to get down to the one that said 'housewives' and then it said in brackets 'for the use of'! [Laughs] And I thought 'I wonder what that means?' and then I realised of course it meant a little pair of scissors, some thread and a needle or two to mend socks or whatever.

[0:07:22] Lee: Was there a family atmosphere at Government House? Did you feel as though you kind of belonged to the family or were you definitely an employee?

Leavey: It was just you fitted in. But I wouldn't have said it was (...) Well I mixed very well and particularly I think the governor before Miles Clifford, they were a lovely family. Then after Miles Clifford I can't remember who they were, but I know that one of the governors had two springer spaniels and I had a collie dog that I was given by the marines when they left the Falklands. I can remember that very well because I used to take this dog into the office and worry that those two springers would come in and would they fight, and how would I get them apart. But nothing ever happened so that was ok. In the evenings I went down to the broadcasting station and did all this, because we had everything on huge records. I used to introduce the records and play opening music and that sort of thing from discs

[0:08:35] Lee: So you were operating it were you?

Leavey: No, no they had a technician yes, he was in behind the glass. One night I was there and the dog was sitting down there and he went to sleep and he started snoring, and I didn't know how to sort of shush and stop him when I was trying to read something so that was the amusing time I had there.

[0:09:01] Lee: On that subject do you remember any radio programmes by a chap called Ellery Anderson *Expedition South*

Leavey: No

[0:09:10] Lee: No, that may have been before your time

Leavey: I think it might have been.

[0:09:13] Lee: But all this was aiming towards trying to get away from the Falklands?

Leavey: I didn't want to marry a local boy because I felt some of them were pretty rough.

[0:09:22] Lee: You knew one or two local lads though didn't you?

Leavey: I went to school with them yes. There was Rowley Summers and about 3 or 4 boys that I must have gone to school with younger.

[0:09:36] Lee: They went into FIDS?

Leavey: No

[0:09:40] Lee: Ian Biggs?

Leavey: I don't know what he did.

[0:09:44] Lee: He went south and became a Fid.

Leavey: Oh did he? I probably do but I don't sort of remember an awful lot, it's so many years ago.

[0:09:55] Lee: The other name that you might remember is Arthur Martin

Leavey: Oh my love yes, he's a sweetheart. I was very chummy with him and I was bridesmaid at his wedding. Yes, he was a great person.

[0:10:11] Lee: He still is you know, he's still with us in Hampshire

Leavey: [REDACTED] They have two grown up daughters and I can remember because I bred dogs for about 20 years as well when I lived down there in Hampshire, I moved down to Hampshire and I remember going down to see Arthur and I took two of my boys. They were so patient with me because when I went in their little porch they had slippers put out in order and I thought 'oh what a lovely family, they all have their slippers left out in the porch so that they can leave their shoes indoors'.

[0:11:02] Lee: I interviewed a chap about a year or so ago called Lofty Tyson.

Leavey: Oh I know Lofty yes, he was one of the men that came down to the Antarctic; a tall blundering sort of chap yes, very quiet. He wasn't a good conversationalist. Lofty Tyson, I don't know when he came down originally but he went down again I think. I don't know the year that he was in FIDS, or the years he was in FIDS. Yes, I got to know him.

[0:11:40] Lee: Did you see him socially?

Leavey: Quite often they had cocktail parties and things and yes I bumped into him every now and again. I think he probably wrote to me, I can't remember but we kept up this friendship and occasionally telephoned. He came over to see me when I first moved up from Southampton where I lived at the time, up north here to Dent and I brought all my dogs up with me. I had quite a few.

[0:12:20] Lee: You didn't go to the cinema with him did you, in Stanley?

Leavey: Probably did [laughs] I used to go to certain dances on the Saturday and of course everyone came and I can remember thinking ‘what can I put on to go there?’ because it’s bitterly cold and it will probably be raining or snowing when I came out but yes I think there’s certain groups of Fids that you always spoke to. John Green, I loved him as well. He was a dashing little gentleman, ADC<sup>1</sup> to the governor and used to wear those tight trousers with the gold strip down the side. Frank Elliott, he was the boss man at the time.

[0:13:09] Lee: He’s now 100 years old Frank

Leavey: Is he still alive?

[0:13:13] Lee: Yes

Leavey: My goodness

[0:13:14] Lee: Well he was last time I heard

Leavey: Yes, oh good. And then I did all the coding because everything came up in coded message from the bases.

[0:13:24] Lee: You mean the weather reports, that kind of thing?

Leavey: No, everything whatever happened. You had two books and you had to get from certain words the letters, and then go into the second book and that told you what the word was. It would take ages. I can only remember very clearly I had several codes to do and there was this particular one I started off, and it started off with ‘regretfully we have to say that Arthur Tarrant [Farrant] killed himself, shot himself yesterday’ or whatever. And I couldn’t believe, I thought ‘this is just a joke or something’ so I went out to Frank and I said ‘I’m sorry but would you mind checking over this code because I can’t work it out, they say Arthur Farrant has shot himself’ and he had. That was really sad, and I read it not so long ago where they listed obituaries and one of them was Arthur Tarrant [Farrant].

[0:14:35] Lee: Tarrant or Farrant?

Leavey: Farrant

[0:14:38] Lee: Farrant, yea. Yes he received a ‘Dear John’ letter apparently.

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<sup>1</sup> (ADC) Aide-de-Camp is an honorary volunteer position providing advice and assisting the governor’s office.

Leavey: Oh, I didn't know why. I know he was a quiet bloke, quite sort of moody. I thought he was moody but he was probably trying to cope with what was going on in his world. But I was very sad about that, but that was the only sort of bad thing that I can remember coming out of those codes.

[0:15:04] Lee: The information you were receiving, would it therefore be fairly secret information?

Leavey: Yes it was

[0:15:08] Lee: Or was it coded to avoid the Argentinians getting at it?

Leavey: I think a bit of both.

[0:15:13] Lee: So you were in a position of trust then really?

Leavey: Oh yes it was lovely. I used to sit in my little office behind Frank Elliott's and beaver away at these codes and then I had to recode things back again. It's almost like a passing thought.

[0:15:34] Lee: Did you ever make any mistakes? Any blunders or were you aware of any? Like Chinese whispers type thing?

Leavey: No I don't think so because there was nothing else that was in my world that would make me think it was gossip. Maybe there was a short sentence to say 'its bloody cold' or something like that [laughs]. And all those encoded messages had to go through to the governor because obviously he had to know. Then he and Frank went into discussions over these things and obviously they made decisions and made sure that everything was put in place. But I never got to that stage; it was just that I had to do the ground work so to speak. But it was good. I came across a photograph of Frank Elliott and me and Margaret Northwood, she was the daughter of the Head of Public Works would it be? I can't remember and they lived on a corner. We used to go out quite a lot with Rosemary Gourd and we were quite chummy. We went to the pictures in the town hall I think they were. I can't remember any of the films but I thought they were wonderful; this is where I'll be and I'll do this, that and the other. I suppose it took me a few years to save up my fare for the trip over and I then I just sort of left!

[0:17:16] Lee: Before we get to that next step in your life, tell me a bit about playing the organ at the church.

Leavey: Well I was a Sunday school teacher and I'd also had music lessons with a Mrs Robson who lived in Fitzroy road. I remember that, and I can

remember not practicing one day. I tried to practice but it was a bit boring and I wanted to do something else probably. I went there and she said 'did you enjoy this piece of music?' and I said 'oh yes'. It was where you cross over the hands and I'd forgotten now completely how that happened, but I can remember she picked me up and said 'I don't think you practised this very often did you?' and I said 'no I'm sorry I didn't'. Most girls had to go to church in the morning and then you had the children there. I had the lesson to give to the children, it was lovely, they were such sweet kids. Little holy terrors I think when they got out of church but wonderful to teach, and they were bright. There was one particular little boy, I don't remember his name, he was very bright and I enjoyed that part. Then someone said 'oh you can play, you play the organ'. I said 'play the organ, I'm not qualified to do that', and anyway it was just sort of 'you pick the hymns'. I had Rowley Summers as the chap that pumped up the organ around the side and I know he used to always come in at the last minute and I was thinking 'God I hope I can remember and don't press the wrong notes'. I think I might have once or twice but I played fairly well at the time.

[0:19:09] Lee: And at the BBC radio station, did you ever get involved in a programme called *Calling Antarctica*?

Leavey: No, no that was before my time.

[0:19:16] Lee: That was coming from London wasn't it?

Leavey: Yes it must have been

[0:19:19] Lee: And were there other Fids you remember passing through? Anybody you got to know as they passed through Stanley?

Leavey: Well I knew them all to talk to but not to sort of know very well. There were lots of names but all the photographs I've had of Fids outside the hut, in the snow up here and then big glaciers. I seem to remember someone called John Noble. I noticed in the obituary there was someone called John Noble who had died. This chap was quite artistic and I know when they came back after their time down there, this chap gave me a piece of whale bone. He'd painted on the emblem of FIDS with sailing boat and I can't think what else. But I've kept that and I hang it up in my house. He even put in two screws so that I can put some cord in it to hold it up.

[0:20:26] Lee: I'd imagine with all these young men passing through Stanley and the traditional party at the Governors house, that the young ladies of Port Stanley might be quite popular for dances mightn't they?



Leavey: Well everyone went to the dances on a Saturday night and people used to come up and ask you to dance not that I was a good dancer but I could (...)

[0:20:48] Lee: You were a lady and you're a female in a skirt I expect

Leavey: Yes, oh bound to be. And then all the boats were in and I was also invited on board all the ships that came in to the harbour. I knew all the mid shipmen and they were lovely; all well-educated chaps and good senses of humour. I kept all the invitation cards so I looked at them. I think *Veryan Bay* I had about 8 so I thought they must have been there at least 8 weeks. It said 'the' I don't know what they call it 'will pick you up at the public jetty at 7 o'clock for 7.30'.

[0:21:37] Lee: The tender

Leavey: The tender that's right. That was quite exciting and I almost felt I was on my way somehow.

[0:21:51] Lee: So how did you escape from the Falklands to England? What was the turning point?

Leavey: It was just that I had the money and my Nana gave me £100 and I thought 'God I'm a millionaires now!' So I booked my ticket.

[0:22:09] Lee: And your mother was quite agreeable to the idea of you leaving?

Leavey: We were strangers. I'd been away in those growing up years and I had wonderful friends and it was a different lifestyle and when I came back it was almost well everyone else had the life and there wasn't any crack that I could join into. So I was really pleased when I had the money and I didn't regret it. I obviously felt very sad going but I knew this is what I wanted. I came on the *RMS Andes* first class because I had enough money and I thought if I don't do anything else anywhere I'll just enjoy this trip. It was very formal and I sat at the chief engineers table. I feel if it was to go over again it would be so different. And life was so colonial. All the people I mixed with in Uruguay they were all the colonial set, so they were a big clique of things and being friendly with Elizabeth Able I think the name was; I sort of went into their homes quite often for tea or whatever. We had summer holidays and we went out to one of the seas like coming down to Lake Windermere but local, and we used to hire American bikes and ride around all the roads and paths, and that was really enjoyable. So with no regret I felt that I really needed to get away,

to escape really. Where would I end up if I stayed in the Falklands?  
Married to a local yokel? No thank you.

[0:24:12] Lee: So you arrived in the UK?

Leavey: Yes and I had a telegram just before I arrived to say that ‘please get in touch with the Crown Agents as we would like someone in the office, in FIDS office in the Crown Agents for the IGY<sup>2</sup> international year expedition run by Dr Fuchs’. So I went into the office and there was a lady called Barbara and I don’t remember her surname

[0:24:42] Lee: Hanniwell?

Leavey: I don’t know. She was working for the Crown Agents and I was in her office so to speak and I just had to do all the paperwork that I did in Stanley really for Fids and kitting them out and being the contact for their families. That only lasted a year, I never saw Dr Fuchs because he was up in Cambridge I think.

[0:25:14] Lee: He was also in the Antarctic wasn’t he? So you were mission control, the UK mission control?

Leavey: Absolutely mission control. So that was a year and (...)

[0:25:25] Lee: Sorry what did you make of London when you saw it for the first time, because some Falklanders really find it quite daunting?

Leavey: It is terribly daunting because I arrived at what is the name of the docks?

[0:25:36] Lee: Tilbury

Leavey: Tilbury docks and all I saw were these very high things with men in little boxes in the top going whizzing to and fro and picking up huge things and putting them in a hold of a ship. It was all dirty, it was very smelly and it was foggy and I thought ‘what the hell have I done?’ But I’d also got B&B booked up in Hampstead and I lived with an elderly lady there and she was wonderful. I could never go on the underground because I was too scared of that, I thought I’d fall over and be squashed or something. So I went on buses for ages and then I thought one day ‘no, I’ll go on this train’. Of course that was very complicated looking at all the blue line or the yellow line or whatever. Eventually I overcame that, so then I was coming to the end of this IGY year and I thought ‘what can I do now? I’ve

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<sup>2</sup> International Geophysical Year

got to go and do something else'. I also did night school for Pitman's secretarial so I knew a little bit more about typing. I thought I'll write to the airlines because maybe I could fly around the world as a hostie<sup>3</sup>

[0:27:03] Lee: So how long were you with the Crown agents for then? Just for one year?

Leavey: I think it was over a year but it wasn't long.

[0:27:09] Lee: Right ok. And then British Airways or was it BOAC in those days?

Leavey: BOAC, British Overseas Airways Corporation. So I wrote to them and I went up for several interviews and then they took me on. The real idea was to open up South America but I don't think they did for ages. I was assigned to Britannia 102s, the whispering giant of the time, the latest thing out. Girls I was on the course with, no one else came on Britannia's, they all went on Argonauts or Stratocruisers. So then it was petrifying, the training was quite stiff and we had to report into building 221 at Staines somewhere and that was a nissen hut<sup>4</sup>. They used to take us out in a coach to the aircraft. On my first trip, and I knew nothing about flying, I was so naïve it was amazing. I seem to think of how didn't I read it or look it up? It was always like this, the customs and things you got on the aircraft. You had to make sure all the food was in the little containers etc. and the seats were this and the belt had to be like that. The first trip I was quite sick and I took some anti-sick pills, and I can remember having to be in the middle of serving a meal, and I thought 'I'm going to be sick any minute' so I'd have to run back to the toilet and throw everything up that I'd eaten and then go back after I'd had a drink of water as though nothing had happened.

[0:29:07] Leavey: We did have a scare on the way down because we'd just left Darwin which was sweltering hot and I wasn't used to sweating all the time. The pilot called me up and said 'we've had an emergency; we've got to go into Cloncurry. One of the flying doctors has crashed and he's had a bad head injury'. We had to divert so I had to (...) 'Can I have your attention please. The captain has asked me to let you know we're taking a small diversion into Cloncurry'. That was near Alice Springs I think. We landed in this then unused aircraft thing and we got to the end of the runway and then we had to go forward and sideways and turn the plane around and the tarmac crumbled underneath the nose. So the poor old nose went slowly and elegantly down! We were there for quite a few weeks because we couldn't get out of the (...)

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<sup>3</sup> Air hostess

<sup>4</sup> A Nissen hut is a prefabricated steel structure, made from a half-cylindrical skin of corrugated steel

[0:30:20] Lee: Ground

Leavey: Yes the ground. All the locals were there in their jeeps and there were no lights on runways so they all had to put their lights full on for the pilot to land. So that was quite exhausting

[0:30:36] Lee: You were there for several weeks were you?

Leavey: Yes

[0:30:39] Lee: And all the passengers had to stay in hotels?

Leavey: Well there weren't those sorts of things in those days. I was put up with the Sherriff and his family and they were gorgeous. All the houses were up on stilts in those days because of things coming in, I don't know what, there wouldn't be crocodiles or anything. But there were obviously things that would get into the house and cause problems so yes it was lovely. It was baking hot; you had to stay in your uniform and you couldn't unpack or anything so it was a bit rough for a while. Then they managed to get some lifting and pull the aircraft around and they found it hadn't any damage. I think we were there a month, I'm not sure but they had to have some parts sent out from the UK.

[0:31:35] Lee: Whatever happened to the flying doctor?

Leavey: Another aircraft was just passing at the same time and they responded as well, but it was a light aircraft so they landed easily and took him down to Sydney I guess. So we never saw this poor pilot who was all crunched up.

[0:32:01] Lee: Obviously we're mainly talking about the Falklands in this interview so I'm just wondering if you ever went back.

Leavey: No. I never wanted to. I knew I'd made a break and I thought well I didn't have a close family because of parents being divorced, so there was never the urge to go back. There was sort of a query about what was happening in the Falklands

[0:32:26] Lee: In '84, in '82 rather?

Leavey: In '82 yes and I thought 'I wonder how they're coping'. And seeing the flashes on the news I wondered what would happen to all the people. I thought it was a war that was so unnecessary and they lost a lot of lives both with the Argies and the British.

[0:32:49] Lee: Did you mother or your family ever come to England?

Leavey: My mother was sent to England, she had several heart attacks and they'd given her three months to live. I was the eldest daughter and my sister by this time was ensconced either in Brazil or the States or somewhere with this Mick Green who was the ex-pilot, he was down south some time or other. But I never got any details because he was killed, not through a plane crash, but I think there was a big hurricane or something and their taxi was blown into the water on the way to the hotel.

[0:33:30] Lee: In which country?

Leavey: Australia. So that was a bad time for her. We weren't close either.

[0:33:38] Lee: Your mother came to England in the end?

Leavey: In the end they sent her to England and I didn't know who I was looking for. I went up to Heathrow and someone came up and said 'Oh your mother's just getting off the aircraft now'. My mother was really poorly so I had to get, like today we'd get carers in. Well I don't know what they were called in those days, probably still carers. So I had to get the people to come in and sort her and it was so expensive. She lived quite a few years and she got through the heart attacks. She had a few friends from the Falklands who came and visited and then I thought I must have a dog. So I bought 2 red setters, 2 bitches, never bred from them because they were really pet quality but I didn't know a good one from a bad one then. So then I took up as a hobby

[0:34:43] Lee: You ran dog kennels didn't you?

Leavey: Yes and I showed dogs a lot.

[0:34:47] Lee: So since that era have you had any more dealings with FIDS or British Antarctic Survey as it's called now?

Leavey: Well Fids; I've always been in touch with Arthur and Lofty. Lofty, he's a strange bloke; I don't know whether you've ever spoken to him

[0:35:07] Lee: I've met him yes, about a year ago. I did an interview with him.

Leavey: He's not a talker though and he's sort of quite stern, and he just tells you what he wants you to know. I just open my mouth and everything vomits out! He was a strange man but very kind to me. He came with another

chap and I think it was another Fid. The kennels I had, apparently had no support on the roof and if we'd had a bad storm or anything the roof would have blown off. I thought 'Oh my God'. But Lofty said 'Don't worry, I'll do that. I can come over with someone and we'll just mend it up. We'll put a few more supports in for you' which was lovely.

[0:35:56] Lee: So those early contacts have been with you for most of your life?

Leavey: Yes

[0:35:59] Lee: And now you're a member of BAS club?

Leavey: I am! I only joined a few years ago and that was Lofty. He sent me a ticket or a compliments card or something. 'I've paid your first year's membership fees to BAS' and I said 'oh that's lovely'. He said 'well I'm going next year so if you want to be my guest, it's a day thing and an evening thing'. It was somewhere near Settle, and when I drove past I thought 'am I there yet?' and I saw this young mans, it looked to be me like YMCA but it was sort of a school of some sort, it could be a summer camp for children or something. I didn't know anyone there so I had to stay with Lofty. I was going further on to do some business so I stayed at a B&B and that was the place where it was full of artificial flowers. There was lots of stairs to go up and there were all these ornaments of dogs or posies and this huge display of artificial flowers. I smiled all the time because it was really quite funny, and the lady was so posh and so lovely. I stayed there two nights and then carried on working.

[0:37:33] Lee: But BAS Club has helped you out hasn't it?

Leavey: Oh it's been wonderful yes. I think this was Lofty again. He said 'you know there's a benevolent fund?' and he said 'I've asked Leat to ring'. I said 'who the hell is Leat? I don't know anyone called Leat'. He said 'oh yes, it's Leatrice Peck' I think it was her maiden name. She lives over in Guernsey [REDACTED] So next minute 'I'm Leat!' and I thought 'I don't know anyone called Leat'. I said 'I only know a girl that used to be in the Falklands called Leatrice'. She said 'that's me!' [REDACTED] So she said 'well the benevolent of BAS' and I said 'I don't know what BAS is'. He must have then told someone, or I also spoke to Arthur but it wasn't about the benevolent fund, I just wanted to see how his health was. He had rung me to say that [REDACTED] So he must have phoned Lofty or Lofty phoned him.

[0:39:01] Lee: I think it was a conspiracy

Leavey: Yes, the two of them got together

[0:39:05] Lee: To get you this special chair

Leavey: I've got a lovely recliner chair now which is wonderful and it puts my feet up. If you press the right button it goes right down but I don't like that because I feel dizzy if I go down too much at the back.

[0:39:20] Lee: And finally here you are now at the Marguerite Bay reunion

Leavey: I must admit it's much nicer than the one I went to before which was a bit noisy and we all sat at trestle tables. There were loads of people there, Alan Precious came up and spoke to me but I didn't remember him but I remember his name now. About 3 other men came up and said who they were and I was fumbling with my brain thinking 'why won't it tell me who you are and which one you were walking up the main road'.

[0:40:01] Lee: I saw Alan on Thursday and he's 84 now.

Leavey: I thought they'd all be in their mid or late 80's

[0:40:09] Lee: He's doing fine

Leavey: Oh lovely. Well when you see him again do tell him that I came and we had an interview and I told loads of maybe stories [laughs]

[0:40:20] Lee: Colleen it's been lovely. Thank you so much

Leavey: Oh good. Well I hope you get a few little words from that, that you can put in your archives

[0:40:29] Lee: Don't worry we will

Leavey: Are you putting them in a bottle and putting them out to sea to see if they'll end up on an iceberg somewhere?

[0:40:33] Lee: They might sink [laughs]

[0:40:36] <ENDS>

Possible Extracts:

- Early school years in Montevideo [0:01:39]
- Working at Government House for FIDS in the Falklands [0:06:28]
- Involvement with coding information [0:13:24]
- Playing the organ at the church [0:17:16]
- Leaving the Falklands for England [0:21:51]
- Arriving in the UK and first impressions [0:24:12]
- Working for BOAC as an air hostess [0:27:09]
- Main contacts from FIDS [0:34:47]
- Becoming a member of BAS Club [0:35:59]