



**Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre Inc.**

PO Box 42, Nhill Vic 3418

[www.nhillaviationheritagecentre.com.au](http://www.nhillaviationheritagecentre.com.au)

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## **NAHC Inc President's Report, 2012 Annual General Meeting**

I am pleased to present my report for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

The Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre has continued to consolidate its position in the community whilst working towards our objectives as outlined in the Statement of Purpose.

We have held eleven Board meetings in the rooms with a Nelson Street shop front window generously provided free of charge by Mr Gary Driscoll and Mr Andrew McIllree, proprietors of the Commercial Hotel Nhill. As well as holding meetings there, we store and display mainly Second World War artefacts relevant to the RAAF Air Base at the Nhill Aerodrome. This keeps our profile in the public domain and is a point of interest to locals and travellers alike.

Prior to the last AGM two members resigned from the board, Chris Weeks and Lesley Stephan. Lesley's resignation was due to ill health and we have missed her, particularly in the role of Treasurer. Janet Rowe kindly assisted Treasurer Len Creek until the AGM. Janet, we are so very grateful for your help at a difficult time. We gained two new members, namely Brian Creek and Allen Scott who have fitted in well.

**Planning:** Ms Jean Roberts from Melbourne guides our planning sessions. We are most fortunate to have Jean's interest and involvement. She donates her time and expertise to the NAHC which is greatly valued. We continue to work towards the Centenary of Flight in Nhill in 2019.

With Jean's assistance we developed a **Promotions Strategy**. Adopted in April this year it is intended to ensure clarity and consistency in NAHC promotions based on our Statement of Purpose. Our reputation is a key element of the Strategy as is our commitment to wise governance. The Strategy guides our working relationships with other organizations and authorities, groups and individuals.

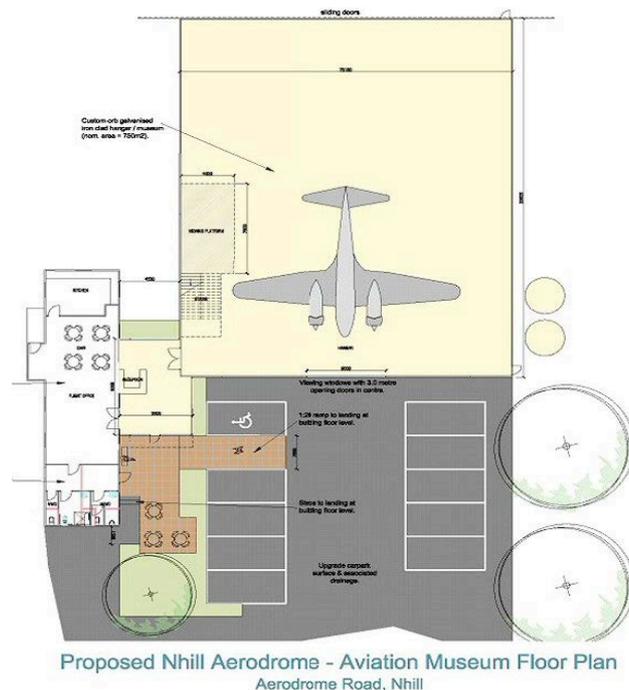
## **Nhill Aerodrome Master Plan:**

The NAHC was well represented on the Advisory Committee which developed the Master Plan for the Hindmarsh Shire Council. I chaired the Committee and Joan Bennett helped as Secretary.

The Master Plan was accepted by Council in April this year, and the Committee was given authority to implement the Plan in conjunction with the Hindmarsh Shire Council.

**Hindmarsh Shire Council:** I am pleased to acknowledge the co-operation and commitment to our projects by the Councillors, Officers and Staff of the Shire.

Our current and future plans for development are based on the Shire-owned Nhill Aerodrome. I am confident that our combined efforts will positively impact upon the future prosperity of this region, as well as the improvement of Aerodrome facilities.



**Avro Anson Restoration:** Remarkable progress continues under the guiding hand of Project Manager Mick Kingwill. Mick's work is meticulous, and with colleagues Len Creek and Wimpey Reichelt working on the tail plane and engine respectively, are doing a magnificent job of restoration. Tony Clark, aviation historian who has spent twenty (20) years raising funds for a Beaufort restoration in Queensland, said that we have achieved in three years more than they have in twenty. And the workmanship is of world class standard.



The NAHC has accumulated many Avro Anson parts and pieces (auctions, gifts, Ebay) which are stored in private sheds around Nhill. In May the Board had an Assets Inspection of property stored in McLeod's shed, Wheeler's barn and the workshop sheds of Len Creek, Mick Kingwill and Wimpey Reichelt. I thank all these shed owners for their generosity in giving us space.

**Artefacts and Archives:** In April this year Ms Jean Roberts delivered a folder from Kevin O'Reilly containing photocopies of letters 1922-39 documenting the journey from local paddocks to the current Aerodrome site. This is a valuable resource. I thank Kevin for continuing to donate \$5 per sale of the book 'In Just Five Years' to the NAHC.

Amongst many examples of generosity, I will highlight two. Trevor Borgelt and I travelled to the RAAF Air Base at Edinburgh South Australia to collect a

donation of a WW2 cloud based searchlight. This was the first recognition of the NAHC from an active RAAF Base, so it was all new territory. The second example happened in Nhill. Widow of Ivan Morrow, Mrs Bev Morrow, gave the NAHC a Military Power Plant similar to those used at the Nhill Aerodrome RAAF Air Base in the Second World War. Part of its history is its use as a backup generator at the Nhill Hospital.

**Flight Office Renovation:** A variation was obtained by the Hindmarsh Shire from the Commonwealth which enabled the spending of \$57,000 on the restoration of the Flight Office. The \$57,000 grant was previously made as a Commonwealth contribution to the erection of a new hangar at the Aerodrome to house



the restored Avro Anson, but the grant had to be expended by December 2011. As we did not have sufficient funds to commence such a large project, it was decided to renovate the Flight Office which was also a priority action – hence the variation. D.S. and S.J. Leyonhjelm were contracted to replace the roof and spouting, reline the interior walls and replace the windows, all in keeping with the WW2 original fittings. Daryl Leyonhjelm and his men worked co-operatively with volunteer Board members to complete the job on time and budget. Steve Braybrook did the necessary electrical work, and I thank Daryl and Steve sincerely for their co-operation at a busy time. Painting was commenced by members, and will be completed by October 20<sup>th</sup> this year for the Fly In.

The NAHC is indebted to the men from the **Nhill Men's Shed** for restoring the original doors – thank you for your hard work and for your interest in our project.

**New Hangar project:** We welcomed the exciting news that Hindmarsh Shire Council had allocated \$355,000 to our project from the State Regional Growth Fund. We have since had further meetings with Mr Bob Ahrens at Ahrens' Headquarters in Sheoak Log, South Australia. Mr Ahrens has undertaken to prepare detailed costing of our project.

Because of our long term relationship with the Ahrens Company and their generous support, the Minister for Local Government – the Hon. Jeanette Powell – granted an exemption from the regulation requiring Local Government to go to tender. We look forward eagerly to big things happening in the next financial year.

**Nhill A & P Society and the Vintage Machinery Committee:** Thank you for helping us throughout the year. In particular we appreciate the allocation of a display stand at the 2011 Nhill Show. The NAHC display aroused much interest and was good publicity and promotion.

**Nhill Free Press:** We are pleased to work with and support our community newspaper. During Volunteer Week we submitted a two hundred (200) word editorial at the request of the Press.

**The Anson Newsletter:** is an effective way to communicate our achievements and news. John Deckert and his committee have sent four (4) newsletters to three hundred and fifty (350) email contacts in the reporting period.

**The Web Site:** is a work in progress. Since March this year Anthony Carland has been helping John Deckert further develop the Site. Thanks Anthony, we can now receive memberships and donations via PayPal.

**NAHC Membership:** Numbers increased in the reporting period from eighty five (85) to ninety five (95). This steady growth was the outcome of consistent effort by the Board. We must continually challenge ourselves to obtain more members.

**Board performance:** Outstanding progress measured against the Statement of Purpose has been made, and is, in one sense, proof of the effectiveness of the Board. Volunteer Board members have work commitments and busy life styles, and I appreciate the dedication and efforts of each and every one.

**Thank you:** I am most grateful to the community of Nhill for their words of encouragement and their support. This confirms in my mind the value of what we are doing, for, and on behalf of, our community.

***Rob Lynch*** President, Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre Inc