



NHILL ANSON NEWSLETTER

Issue No 22. 11-6-2013

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Highlights in this newsletter

- Work Starts on Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre
- Aeradio Building
- Anson work proceeding
- Link Trainer restoration starting

Board Members Turn First Sod

Tuesday 4th of June was the day work started on the new building. NAHC members have been so long wondering if this was ever going to happen that they have been regularly checking the first stage, the base fill and compaction, just to make sure they are not dreaming. The first sod was turned by President Rob Lynch and Project Manager for the Avro Anson restoration, Mick Kingwill.



1. Rob Lynch says a few appropriate words while Mick Kingwill gets ready with the shovel. Left to right: Richard Williams contractor, Michael Kingwill NAHC Board member, Rob Lynch NAHC President, Hindmarch Shire Councillors Wendy Robins and Ron Lowe, Len Creek and Joan Bennett NAHC Board members. 2. Richard Williams clears the base of old fill, bitumen and mallee stumps.

It is hoped that the building will be completed within three months.

NAHC Host a Community Meeting on 27th May 2013

The Nhill community was invited to a meeting at the Senior Citizens Clubrooms to discuss the importance of the **Nhill Aeradio Station** built in 1938/39.

The purpose of this Community Consultation was to commence planning the restoration of the Nhill Aeradio Station which featured the most advanced Aviation Radio Communication and Guidance system in use between 1939 and 1970. The Aeradio Station is a major component in the **Nhill Aerodrome Master Plan**, administered by the Hindmarsh Shire.

Guest speaker, Mr Roger Meyer OAM, is President of the Civil Aviation Historical Society Airways Museum located at the Essendon Aerodrome complex. Roger was an Engineer in the Department of Civil Aviation, which had seventeen of these Aeradio (short for Aeronautical Radio) stations constructed in 1938/39. Roger explained that the Nhill Aeradio Station is by far the best preserved example of these buildings remaining in Australia – mainly due to it being built on concrete blocks rather than redgum.

Roger's illustrated presentation emphasised the important contribution of the Aeradio Stations to Australian aviation communication and guidance. This national network was set up by the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) along the main air routes in Australia.

- DCA established the Lorenz radio navigation system across Australia
- The system initially consisted of 17 Aeradio Stations, including Nhill,
- At each site, DCA purchased land, provided Town power, phone lines and access roads,
- AWA designed, constructed and installed radio and electronic equipment, and operated the Aeradio Stations for the first year, and then handed them over to DCA operators.
- 70 Stations in Australia and New Guinea were in place until the introduction of satellites in the 1980s,
- The Nhill Aeradio Station closed in 1970,
- Most of the original Stations in Australia have been either demolished, modified or have disintegrated.

The Nhill Aeradio Station is unique. There has not been pressure for alternate uses of the site thus providing the best opportunity for restoration. Detailed examination of the Nhill site is the starting point for a much broader national project.



Two new photos provided by Beverly Edge whose father, Allan Taylor was in charge of the Aeradio Station in 1965.

The Department of Civil Aviation changed in 1973 to become the Department of Transport (1973 – 1982), Department of Aviation (1982-1987), Civil Aviation Authority (1988-1995), Airservices Australia (1995 to present). Airservices Australia manages Australia's airspace, which is 1/9th of the world's airspace. The Civil Aviation Safety Authority is the regulator of all civil aviation activity in Australia.

Roger's presentation was followed by the launch of the Wimmera Regional Library's Culture Victoria Video – featuring Roger Meyer and NAHC Board members – Rob Lynch, Max Carland and Merv Schneider. This video featured the Nhill Aeradio Station.

Open discussion followed with questions and comments about the importance of this facility during and after World War 2 – and the sharing of personal memories among those present.

Possibilities for restoration includes re-creation in the radio room:

1. equipment racks – some radio equipment has been collected from Adelaide. More is available from Adelaide and from the Airways Museum at Essendon,
2. console on the table,
3. display area,
4. open up the Lorenz building, with technical details,
5. replication, supported by diagrams, and
6. interpretive materials in display cases.

Rob Lynch, NAHC President, warmly thanked Roger for his presentation – and for this visit to Nhill to once again inspect the Aeradio Station and discuss these possibilities with NAHC Board members.

Avro Anson Restoration

Work continues on many fronts with the Avro Anson.



1. Len Creek has the rear stabiliser almost complete.
2. Whimpey Reichelt with the first engine complete.



3 & 4. Mick Kingwill is rebuilding the original nose cone that was cut from the cabin with an axe.

Every part of the restoration comes with its own problems. Len had a section in the centre of the rear stabiliser that was missing and had to be fabricated almost by guesswork. The curved shape of the leading edge was another difficulty he overcame by cutting thin strips of timber from an old church pew then laminating and gluing the steam-bent timber to the required shape.

Whimpey has handled with ease what others would consider almost impossible. Engine parts have been scattered throughout his workshop, sent off for electroplating, cleaned, measured and assembled into what looks like a new engine. It is interesting to note that one engine Whimpey had for parts was taken apart by its previous owner with an Oxy Torch, an indication of the complexity of radial engines.

Mick has been working on the firewall and the nose cone. The firewall is a fragile disc behind the engine designed to stop the wing catching fire from the heat of the engine. One of Mick's problems is caused by the British idea of making threads on connections different so that oil hoses and fuel lines cannot be interchanged. After 60 years new hoses must be built and finding new connections is almost impossible.

Mick has also had problems with the nose cone. Our original was cut from the cabin with an axe so he has had to replace many panels from other nose cones we were able to accumulate. One particular problem was curving the bracing ribs to the right diameter so after a day messing about trying to panel beat them into shape Mick decided to make his own machine to do the job. He is adamant that the job must be done properly.



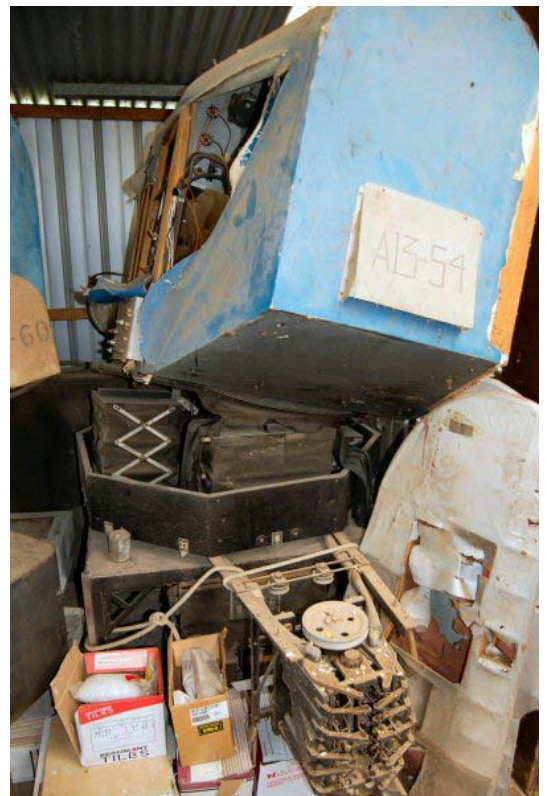
5 & 6. The firewall is ready for dozens of hoses to be attached

Link Trainer Restoration

Work is about to start on restoration of the two Link Trainers we have in our workshop. One is to be returned to 'as is' working condition with service maintenance and some 'spit and polish'. The other will need a full restoration to bring it back into service.

The NAHC Board has appointed Neil Thomas as Project Manager with Alan Conquer and Bill Day assisting with their specialised skills in electrical power supply and electronics. John Deckert is to be the Board representative.

Link Trainers are the first Flight Simulators built especially for training pilots to fly by instruments, particularly at night. They were first built about 1936 and it is hoped that this one will be fully restored.



Comments Welcome

The NAHC welcomes comment about the organisation and any of the articles that appear in the Nhill Anson Newsletter. A restructure of the mailing system and the archives will take place during the next few months as time permits and there are still more items of interest yet to be published. Write to John at admin@nhillaviationheritagecentre.com.au

Free Newsletter

This newsletter is free to anyone interested in the Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre and any of its projects. However, this newsletter is also the only way the committee has of easily sending reminders to those who wish to support our cause by being a member.

Membership of the Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre Inc. is valid for a financial year commencing 1st July.

Your support for this community organisation is highly valued and assists the Management Committee to continue with the projects aimed at preserving the aviation heritage of Nhill and District.

Join now for only \$30.00.

Click on this link to use our secure Pay Pal account:

<http://nhillaviationheritagecentre.com.au/members-1.htm>

OR BY Cheque payable to NAHC Inc. PO Box 42 Nhill Vic 3418.

Is this the first newsletter you have received?

New email addresses are constantly being added to our list. If you do not wish to be part of our group then please contact admin@nhillaviationheritagecentre.com.au and make your request known.

A message to our supporters

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