



AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

RECORDING THE NATION'S AVIATION HERITAGE

Aviation Historical Society of Australia (Inc). A0083658P, ARBN 092 671 773, ABN 60 092 671 773  
PO Box 461, Lilydale, Victoria 3140, Australia.

## AHSA 2022 PRESIDENTS REPORT

The year 2022 has been a busy year for the AHSA. As a result the President's Report for the AGM is this year a whole litany of things that have happened in the past year and perhaps touch on what may happen in the forthcoming year.

I do thank the work that the AHSA committee has put in over the last year. Vice President, Derek Buckmaster. Secretary, Mark Pilkington. Membership Secretary, David E. Knight. Treasurer, Robert Van Woerkom. Other committee & team members are Dion Makowski, GPCAPT David Fredericks (RAAF) and Phil Vabre with cameo appearances by our journal editor, Neil Follett.

COVID-19 and the Pandemic. The virus has not been kind to the AHSA with face to face meetings wearing masks. Zoom on-line meetings have come into their own being and no doubt will be a feature our future and indeed for everyone.

I cannot recall the passing of any members due to the virus. I hope that non-loss of any member continues. Take care and please mask up if going to an event where there are lots of people. The virus is still with us. Take care!

Floods. The extensive floods in Queensland and Victoria and more particularly in NSW have no doubt affected AHSA members in those states.

Without first hand knowledge I can only suspect that some members will have had their paper and photographic collections affected by the floods. My sympathy is with you. I do hope that you can rise to the top again.

COVID and the floods have had a devastating effect on aviation events across Australia.

Many have been cancelled or at least postponed, some several times. We live in changing times. Turn the clock back 20 years and there was no COVID and floods were almost unheard of.

Avalon. We plan to have an AHSA presence at the Avalon Australian International Airshow in March next year. The show promises to be a tad different from the previous few years.

There is a new CEO replacing Ian Honnery who has been in that role since the inception of the event. The crowd line has been moved back from its previous location. The daily entry fees have risen to nearly \$89 for an adult. Entry will be via on-line pre-booked tickets. There is to be a limit on the number of spectators. The Avalon East landing airstrip for visiting aircraft has been cancelled. Visiting aircraft can go to the Lethbridge aerodrome to the East of Avalon and catch a bus to get to the airshow.

Given that Covid effectively cancelled the previous RAAF Centenary celebrations at Avalon this will no doubt have a big RAAF presence.

As the AHSA plans to be at Avalon over the Friday, Saturday and Sunday 3-5 March we are seeking a few members to be present at our tent to talk to visiting members and to handle possible membership enquiries. If you would like to volunteer some of your time please contact our Membership person or me as President. We will have some free tickets for entry on a roster basis.

Membership. On the subject of membership we have lost a few members over the last year due to causes other than the Covid Virus. I for one find that disappointing. We will miss their friendship and contact and their input to recording the history of aviation history. As a result of the loss of those members we are keen to expand membership and that means getting new members. What we are seeking are new members who have an interest in Australian aviation history be it civil or military. Australia has a fantastic aviation history that needs to be recorded, for this at present and for others in future years.

I ask that members promote our society to any person who has an interest in Australian aviation history.

Publications. The AHSA Inc. puts out two publications, our journal, *Aviation Heritage* and the newsletter *Outlook*. Each publication comes out four times a year. Neil Follett is the editor of the journal and Derek Buckmaster, our Vice President, is the editor of *Outlook*. I do thank both Neil and Derek for the work that they put in to produce those publications. Both publications contribute to the recording of aviation history here in Australia. That is the aim of the AHSA. Our journal is the oldest publication to record the history of aviation, civil and military, in Australia. That was started in 1959. We have now gone on to have the availability of having digital access to those previous journals. Great for members as well as researchers.

This then brings me to ask that members and others consider writing an article for one of those publications. Each and every member can contribute in some way. Full and researched article on some



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aspect of Australian aviation history or for the newsletter small fill items that again flesh out recent happenings in the history of Australian aviation.

Promotion of AHSA. Over the last year Dion Makowski has been active leading our Membership Growth Sub-Committee, with promotion of the AHSA by way of running adverts in the publication *The Aviation Historian*, a periodic worldwide publication, and contacting other groups to promote the AHSA. The response has not been what we would like so it is a case of wait and see a bit longer.

Collaboration. We have enjoyed renewed contact and engagement with the RAAF History and Heritage Group via committee member, GPCAPT David Fredericks. This has led to an on-going collaboration with bi-monthly presentations at our Melbourne meetings. I am of the view that contact with the group has been good for both parties.

Patrons. We welcome AIRCDRE John Meier as a new patron of the AHSA. John has had a long and distinguished career in the RAAF and is an excellent person to be our new patron. John represents the military side of the patronship. We are still seeking a patron to represent the civil side of aviation.

CASA and registrations. It seems that only a few years ago there were only about 1,500 aircraft on the civil register. That number has swollen to the extent that available registrations have run out and CASA had to think of a new way to give aircraft registrations. That has come to light in recent months with the first of the new 'type' of registration being VH-8RP and VH-X90. Both are helicopters.

Branches. While the AHSA Inc is a nationally-active body, as members will be aware we have active AHSA groups in New South Wales and Queensland as well as a Tasmanian group not formally associated with the AHSA. The history of the AHSA is what brought about this collection of chapters. In the formative days of the AHSA it was one body but events brought about the formation of the NSW body and in more recent years the Queensland body. It would be nice to have just one AHSA body and while that may happen in the future it is not going to happen tomorrow.

In the meantime I commend all members of the AHSA regardless of which state they are in to contribute to the recording of the aviation history of Australia, both civil and military. I am of the view that *Aviation Heritage*, our journal, is the best and longest lasting medium to use for that recording of aviation history.

The annual AHSA BBQ is to be held at the Moorabbin Air Museum on 11 December, a Sunday. I invite all members to attend and have the opportunity to chat and mingle over a sausage and drink, non-alcoholic. Entry to the museum is free to AHSA members. Past years BBQ's have been well attended and enjoyed. This year should be the same. Bring your wife or partner. They are most welcome.

David Prossor

President