

I am sure some of you will recognize my name, and in many cases we may have had communication and discussions, or even collaborated, in the past. Some of you may already be aware of the AHRC by following this Facebook page.

The Aviation History Research Centre was formed as a shared research entity to enable individuals and organisations to create, maintain and share an archive of documents and photographs for the purposes of preservation, research and publication. Over my 40+ years of writing books and articles, I have collected an extensive archive of material, and for some time there has been discussion around creating a network of aviation 'historians, museums, enthusiasts, and families of veterans' who can support each other in the important work of collecting, archiving, preserving, and publishing aviation history.

As a Trustee of Veterans Central @ West Raynham SHQ I have been involved in establishing an AHRC archive and research library at that location, where the physical and database resources can be accessed. This is still work in progress, but the photo here shows the library in late December 2023. In addition to the books, the database includes all the AHRC material (around 400,000 records)

Along with Mark Every, a research colleague from RAF Marham and part of the AHRC team, we are trying to put together a contact database of the 'go to' people / sources for as many aspects of military aviation as we can. For example, where do you go if you are interested in finding out more about 39 Squadron? The contact database would point you at Ken Delve, the historian for 39 Squadron. It might be that for 102 Squadron the place to find information is the website run by Chris Harper at <http://www.102ceylonsquadron.co.uk>. The same would be true for aircraft, so again Ken Delve and John Sheehan would be the contacts for the Canberra. What about a particular airfield or campaign? Interested in Marine Craft and ASR? Try <http://www.asrmcs-club.com/>

We are very fortunate in aviation history to have a wealth of individuals and groups who dedicate large amounts of time to researching their specific area of interest, and by doing so become 'knowledgeable' (many of us don't like the word expert!) on their subject. But it can be trickier to find out who they are and how to contact them.

The AHRC Network is designed to provide a framework for such contact and collaboration. So, if you are interested in becoming part of the network it would be great to hear from you. There is no obligation to actually do anything unless you want to, and your details will not be shared with anyone without your agreement (on a case by case basis). Members of the Network will be provided with a copy of the database, including subjects, names, websites, Facebook pages, but minus actual contact details such as email or phone number.

Please feel free to share this with anyone you think would be interested in becoming a member of the Network.

Regards

Ken

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