

Towards an Aviation University?

Within a year National Aviation Themepark Aviodrome at Lelystad Airport will open its doors. It will accommodate the collection of the now obsolete Aviodome museum at Schiphol Airport expanded with a hangar for operational historic aircraft, a congress centre and an Aviation Knowledge Centre which will be set up in a replica of the Schiphol Airport station building AD 1928.

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Aviation Knowledge Centre

The business plan describes the AKC as “an institute with accompanying infrastructure which provides depot, management and interpretation of data and which promotes transfer of information about the past, the present and the future of aviation, to guarantee long term conservation of national cultural heritage and to support and stimulate knowledge transfer about aviation.” Quite a mouthful. Daily practise will be:

- accommodation of documentary heritage and contemporary aviation information;
- well-structured opening up of the collection;
- production of “content” and stimulation of knowledge transfer, and
- development of (educational) information.

The core of the AKC will be the collections of the Aviodome, the Fokker Heritage Trust and the Dutch Library for Aviation:

- over 21.000 titles;
- volumes of over a 1000 aviation magazines;
- over 800 linear metres of archives;
- 5000 plus aircraft manuals;
- over 420.000 photos, and
- hundreds of hours film and video.

The transfer to Lelystad will be used to integrate the various collections. New depots and integral management must result in a public domain.

Cultural Heritage

The collection represents huge cultural value. It’s a primary duty for the Aviodrome to provide accommodation that meets the requirements for conserving archives. The facilities must also be suitable to bring aviation under broad public attention and to give the visitors the possibility to study.

The collection will be housed in a utility building next to “Schiphol 1928”. A large area is still available to host other collections. The records will be accessible via a “navigation centre” in the departure hall where the public will be given directions how to use the archives. The catalogues are supported by a search engine, linked to the Aviodrome Website. So the AKC will also be accessible via Internet.

Information for the general public

In addition to the conservational tasks, the AKC has the ambition to arouse public interest in aviation (history) and to stimulate the discussion about aviation. This will be done by putting aviation in a clear and correct perspective by way of regular publications, expositions in the Aviodrome, the development of educational services and the organization of lectures and seminars. These activities will be executed in narrow co-operation with other Aviodrome-modules and the National (and if possible international) aviation sector. We already reached close co-operation with the Netherlands Aviation Platform, the National Aviation and Space Labora-

tory, Regional Training Centre Amsterdam, Customs service and the Royal “Marechaussee” (military police). Within 5 years we want to build a worldwide network based on our collection and our targets. We want as many individuals, companies and institutes to participate as possible. We established a board of advisors representing various sectors of aviation. The board advises us about the conservation of the collection, it contributes to the public discussion about aviation themes and stimulates new initiatives en developments.

Co-operation

The building costs and the development of infra structure (approx. €3 million) do not relate to the direct yields of the collection. Therefore the Aviodrome is searching financial support for this project. We hope to reach the situation where – in exchange for structural financial or material donations of the participants – high quality services can be provided to everybody, especially the youths.

A guaranteed availability of information and active knowledge transfer should contribute to the Dutch aviation industry and educational institutes. Service to and participation by these parties will affirm the role of the AKC and contribute to the conservation of our national cultural heritage. I hope that not only the members of Aerius will find their way towards our data collection, which in my opinion will provide a good basis for general aviation knowledge. The AKC hopes to benefit from future contributions in speech and writing from as many students as possible. So please send us copies of your aviation articles, thesis and dissertations to support and enrich our national aviation collection! We will try to provide you, the students, with a stimulating and inspiring environment in which you will be able to find as many information you want, and meet your fellow students from all over The Netherlands, and, in the future, possible the whole world. It sounds like a dream, but where would we have been without the dreams that have already become true?