



Friends of the New Forest Airfields

Registered charity 1063648

Patron: **The Lady Montagu of Beaulieu**

<http://fonfasite.wordpress.com/>

Location references for the Memorial are:

Map OS reference **SZ 208 987** Post Code **BH23 8EB**

Museum & Education Centre Post Code: **BH23 8HE**

FONFA Members' Newsletter – April 2021

Dear FONFA Member,

Welcome to the second FONFA Newsletter of 2021. The Trustee Board is presently meeting monthly, to review progress of the Pandemic and to prepare for the re-opening of the Heritage Centre. Although nothing is certain, at present, we are confident that the majority of our active museum volunteers will have had two doses of a Covid-19 vaccine, by the middle of May, and so we are planning to commence Open Days two weeks later.

We will initially restart Open Days as per our previous 2019/2020 planned schedule, that is around a First and Third Sunday of every month pattern, adding Thursdays, during the holiday months of July and August. The dates are as follows:

| Month | Sundays | Thursdays |
|-------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| May | 30 th | |
| June | 13 th | 27 th |
| July | 11 th | 25 th |
| Aug | 1 st | 29 th |
| | 15 th | 5 th 12 th |
| | 29 th Annual Service Date | 19 th 26 th |
| Sept | 12 th | 26 th |
| Oct | 10 th | 24 th |

(N.B. Armed Forces Day Sat 26th June)

This year, because of the uncertainty surrounding government restrictions, due to the pandemic, the Board decided to postpone the Annual Service from June until the late August Bank Holiday weekend. This is both because of the potential for continued 'social distancing', which would prevent the usual number of people attending inside the enclosure, and because of the need for advanced notice for officials attending.

There will be a need for volunteers to carry out a general internal clean up, before we open. This will be on a Saturday in mid-May, most probably 22nd May, and will be announced by e-mail to you all. All volunteer Members will be welcome, with your own mask or face covering, dusters and cleaning cloths.

The UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced that museums and libraries across England can reopen from 17th May. Published Government restrictions allow groups of up to six people to meet indoors from 17th May, so volunteers will be split into two or three groups, in the Centre, to cover different areas, as appropriate.

Some large museums have opened from April 12th but the small size of our building made this problematic. A further relaxation of restrictions is planned from June 21st.

As we have the prospect of a short season, this year, effectively from June to October, the question of whether we can provide a schedule of more frequent Open Days has been raised. We now have ten active trained Fire Wardens, who can operate in pairs, so we could manage more frequent Open Days, with additional FONFA Member volunteers. If we could open every Sunday, this would be a strong boost to our profile and availability.

In order to open from 10 am to 4 pm, **we need four volunteers to operate the Centre smoothly**, from 0930 hrs to 1630 hrs, two of whom must be trained Fire Wardens. Two are needed at the reception desk, one (at least) in the tea room and one to carry out frequent cleaning of the interactive display screens, with disinfectant, while restrictions are required. Face Shields will be provided. **If you are able to cover a half day (10am-1pm, or 1pm – 4 pm), even only 2 or 3 times this year, that would be a great help**

The Trustee Board Members would like to know of any Members who will volunteer, either to make tea and coffee, or welcome visitors. Please let the Board know via the e-mail fonfa2010@gmail.com.



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We have been most fortunate to have secured an additional 'Restart Grant' from the New Forest District Council, under their 'Covid-19 support for the leisure industry' scheme. This is an immense boost to our reopening and will help to support FONFA through this year. It will provide funds for advertising our Centre more widely, before the reopening and during the summer months.

We have taken the opportunity to advertise through the tourist maps made by the WeDesignMaps organisation, who distribute tourist maps, with 'Things to do/places to see' information to hotels, B&Bs, camp sites, entertainment venues and other tourist information outlets, in Christchurch, Bournemouth and Poole. They distribute 25,000 plus maps annually, in both the Christchurch and Bournemouth/Poole areas (50,000 plus in total). In addition, they will post our details (photographs and a text description) on their website, free for a year.

If face coverings are still required by the UK Government when we reopen the Centre, we will ask visitors to wear their own face coverings on entering the Centre and throughout their visit. We will place tables outside the tea room, in all but inclement weather.

In the meantime, stay safe and healthy; enjoy and tell your friends about our organisation and our website. If you know of any organisation or school which would like a PowerPoint presentation on our WWII topic list (see the website for details), we can provide this via Zoom.

If you have a contribution for the website that you think would be appreciated by a wider audience, please let us know. If any Members have an idea for income generation and are willing to spend time to work on them, please let the Board know, via fonfa2010@gmail.com.

Henry Goodall, Chair of Trustees. April 2021