



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 – March 2021

Dear FONFA Member,

Welcome to the first FONFA Newsletter of 2021. We have delayed sending this out to Members because of the fluid and uncertain situation regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. At the time of writing, whether the Lockdown will end in May is still unknown and may not be known until the middle or end of April.

As advised in the November Newsletter, we have been progressing with the Heritage Centre security and preparations for re-opening this summer, all being well. We hope that this will be at the end of May, over the Bank Holiday weekend. The Board is meeting monthly at present, via Zoom, to coordinate events this summer.

The three new Roller Doors have been installed and are now a significant deterrent to prevent unauthorised entry. A new post box has been installed to receive mail, next to the rear access door, which will be the main point of entry for volunteers opening up on Open Days, operated by two keys. A photo of the rear door appears below.



There will be a need for volunteers to carry out a general internal clean up, before we open; this will be in early-mid May, probably a Saturday, date TBA. All volunteer Members will be welcome.

As we have the prospect of a short season, this year, 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.

Ideally, four people are needed to run the Centre smoothly, and the 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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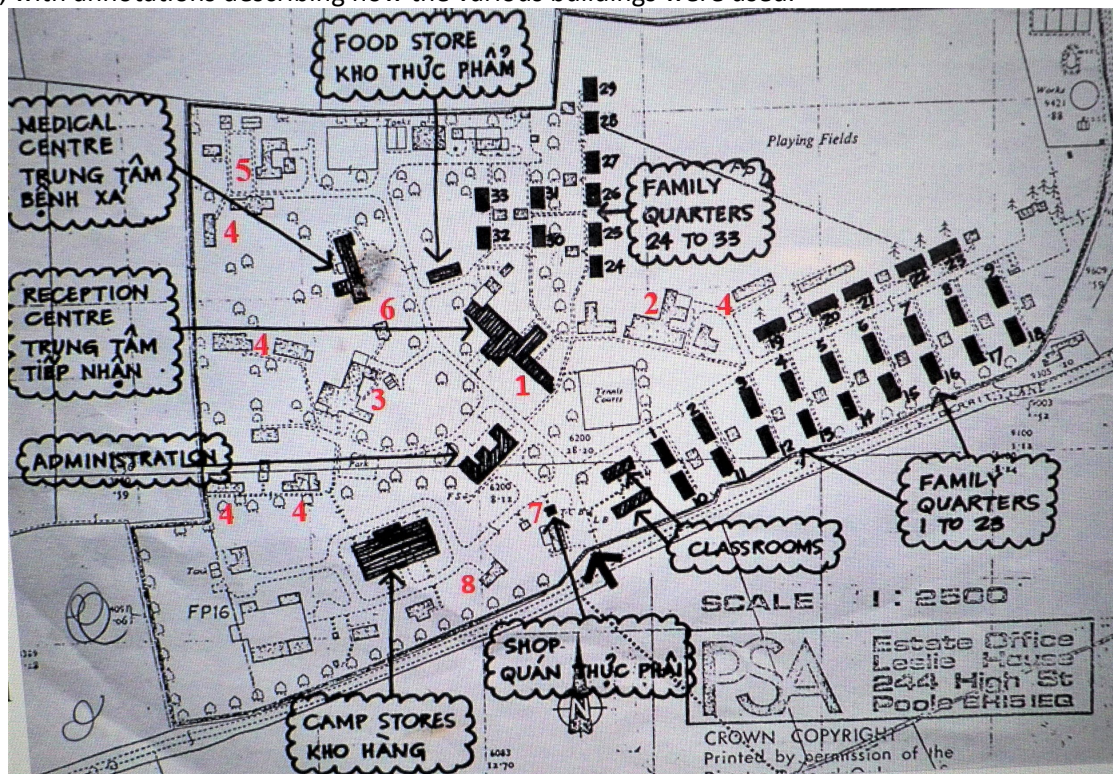
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We have secured grants from the New Forest District Council, under their 'Covid-19 support for the leisure industry' scheme. These will help to support FONFA through this year and provide funds for advertising our Centre more widely, when we re-open the Heritage Centre.

We have been approached recently by a group, who are associated with the Vietnamese Refugee 'Boat People', who occupied the Sopley Camp in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Some of this group worked in the Camp at that time. They wish to put up a plaque, on the wall of our Centre, being the only remaining building present at that time, commemorating the events and the people who stayed here, before they moved on to more permanent jobs and accommodation, around the country. The RAF Camp at Ford, in West Sussex, was the other camp used for this purpose, at that time.

Martin Baily has agreed to the plaque being installed and we await further developments. If and when the plaque is ready, we will advise Members of any arrangements being planned. Below is a map of the Camp, during that occupation, with annotations describing how the various buildings were used.



In the meantime, stay safe and healthy; enjoy and tell your friends about our organisation and our website. 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.

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Henry Goodall, Chair of Trustees. March 2021