

FOWLMERE AIRFIELD MUSEUM - Linda & Ian Bailey

Opening Times: Closed during Covid-19 but usually open to the public one Sunday a month between 10am - 4 pm. Please check for details.

Admission: Free entry but donations and sales always welcome to help with running costs.

Website: <https://fowlmereairfield.com/museum>

Email: fowlmereairfieldmuseum@gmail.com or phone 01763 208598

Travel Time: From Newmarket by car - approximately 30 minutes.

Parking: Free parking on site.

General Information: Located at Manor Farm in Fowlmere, SG8 7SH. Enthusiastically run by three men: David Izzard, Mark Donagain and Henry Sterecki. Manor Farm has 100 years of airfield history.

The airfield, affectionately known as “Hen Puddle” due to its wet conditions, was first built in 1918 for South East England's training purposes. There were Bedford hangers and canvas hangers plus pilots' quarters, used by the Royal Flying Corp Group 31 and the USSAF maintenance 195 Squadron.

During the 1920s the airfield was decommissioned and reverted to agricultural use. In the 1940s the airfield was reactivated and served as a Duxford satellite, just in time for the Battle of Britain. One of the squadrons was No 19 using Spitfire MK1s, which were fitted with troublesome cannon. They flew as part of Douglas Bader's Big Wing. Later many squadrons were stationed for short periods to train here with the Enemy Aircraft Testing Establishment. Finally it came under the USSAF, who trained fighter pilots here.

The Friendly Invasion of Fowlmere began in 1944 under the 339th Fighter Group who flew P-51 Mustangs. They flew as escorts on deep penetration flights into Germany and then attacks on enemy rail transport and airfields.

The 339th achieved a few “firsts”. They were the first to destroy 100 enemy aircraft by strafing in a single day; the first to test the new G suit; and the first to adopt the British gyroscope for the P-51 to aid accurate deflection shooting.

Between 1946 and 1958, after the Americans had left, the airfield was the Polish Resettlement Camp. Today it is the home of the Fowlmere Airfield Museum and Manor Farm.