

**FLEET AIR ARM MEMORIAL SERVICE (EXTAGS)
LEE ON SOLENT – MAY 21st 2023**

The TAGs Association have held a Memorial Service on the third Sunday in May since 1953 when the Duchess of Kent unveiled the Fleet Air Arm Memorial at Lee on Solent.

Since 2013 when the TAGS Association dissolved, the Service has been organised by the Fleet Air Arm Association, and the TAGS Association donated sufficient funds to our Association to continue the Service for three years. Since our Association has taken full responsibility for this Service.

This year on the Saturday evening at Lee on Solent golf club there were eleven of us including Sir Julian and Lady Lewis. Bert Churchill 99 year old TAG and his son were with us.

On the Sunday we had lunch at the golf club with 27 in attendance including Arnold Thompson's daughter, son and daughter in law. Also attending were Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns and Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham, our Association Patron and President respectively. We had four serving personnel from HMS Sultan, an Instructor Lt Murray Jones, Sub Lt Philmore, CPO Houston and LAET Barry. The Rev Nigel Beardsley RN Chaplain also attended.

Following lunch we went to St Faith's Church for the Memorial Service where wreaths were laid at the altar and The Rev Beardsley participated in the service. The local brass band played throughout the service with an excellent Last Post and Reveille. Mick Wyatt our National Standard Bearer and the Solent Branch Standard Bearer were there. Following the service most people walked down to the Memorial to relay the wreaths with a short service.

We are committed as an Association to continue this Service/Parade into the future as is Sir Adrian and Tom. We need to somehow raise its profile and get other Associations involved. We believe it is a very important event and to my knowledge it is the only Fleet Air Arm memorial service.

The event is jointly organised by our Association and Valerie Sayer who is the widow of TAG Les Sayer who was President of the TAGS Association. Next years' Service will be held on Sunday 19th May 2024 and will take place at St Faith's Church, Lee on Solent.

On Saturday 18th May there will be a buffet supper served at Lee on Solent Golf Club. On the Sunday there will be a lunch at Lee on Solent Golf Club, following which the Service will take place at St Faith's Church. Anyone is welcome to join us.

Peter Murray
FAAA Committee Member