

# **Fleet Air Arm Association Newsletter**

## **Autum 2025 Issue**



## Note from the editor

Hello and welcome to the latest issue of the revised Fleet Air Arm association newsletter.

It has been a strange summer, with plants not knowing what to do with the dry conditions. But the leaves have definitely turned now and there is a nip in the air and Christmas is just around the corner.

So have any of you been in touch with old shipmates and recommended the Fleet Air Arm Association as a great place to join, new members are always welcome.

I hope you enjoyed the last edition of the newsletter, and that this issue is also of interest to you.

**Please let me know if there is anything that you would like to see featured in future copy, and I will see what I can find out and include. I thought maybe some reminiscences of your favourite postings might be a good place to start – so please do get in touch.**

Any time you want to get in touch with me please email me direct on [editor.faaa.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:editor.faaa.newsletter@gmail.com) or leave me a message on the Fleet Air Arm Association website at [www.faaa.org.uk](http://www.faaa.org.uk)

Cutoff date for entries into the Spring 2026 edition is 30 April 2026 if you can please email me any inclusions [editor.faaa.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:editor.faaa.newsletter@gmail.com)

Regards

Jan Smith

FAAA newsletter editor

# Association Officers

**Patron:**

**Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns KCB.  
CBE. ADC**



**President:**

**Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham CBE**



**Vice Presidents:**

**Fred Wadley, Ben Worship, Peter  
Murray**

**Chairman:**

**Dave Smith**

**Vice Chairman:**

**Treasurer:**

**Alan Key**

**Secretary:**

**Jim Moulson MBE**

**Standard Bearer:**

**Mick Wyatt**

# Branches

## Daedalus

This is the HQ branch , for those who do not have or don't want to join their local branch.

Membership Secretary: Mick Wyatt

[Daedalus.sec@btinternet.com](mailto:Daedalus.sec@btinternet.com)

## Current Regional Branches

### Bristol and District

Branch Secretary: Ronald Sandry

[ronniekenway@gmail.com](mailto:ronniekenway@gmail.com)

### Kent

Branch Secretary: Mike Foote

[m.j.foote@btinternet.com](mailto:m.j.foote@btinternet.com)

### Solent

Branch Secretary: David Whymark

[Whymark1@gmail.com](mailto:Whymark1@gmail.com)

### South Downs

Branch Secretary: Carole Sharpe

[vergcarben2@outlook.com](mailto:vergcarben2@outlook.com)

### Weymouth / Portland

Branch Secretary: Ian Tate

[faaa.wpsecretary@outlook.com](mailto:faaa.wpsecretary@outlook.com)

## List of accoutrements on sale from the Treasurer

[Alan.key899@gmail.com](mailto:Alan.key899@gmail.com)

Tel: 02392598000

Item	Cost inc P&P £
Silk Blazer Badge	19.00
Ties	12.25
Beret Badges – Gold Wire	16.50
Baseball Caps	12.50
Lapel Badges	2.50
Life Lapel Badges	1.75
Plastic Medal Holder – Standard Medal Size	5.00
Plastic Medal Holders – Miniatures	3.50
Car Stickers	1.00
Cummerbund	26.00



# Branch updates

## South Downs Branch

The branch meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from January to September with the exception of June, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in October to December. The meetings take place from 11.30 to 13.00 at The Castle Inn Hotel, Bramber, West Sussex. The meetings generally start with coffee, apologies, updates and business (stories, funny tales, news) then a speaker. Some members stay on for a bite to eat.

The AGM etc take place at the January meeting – it is a great time and place for ideas etc to be discussed and to wish the new year in with a toast!

## Summer Outing to Amberley Chalk Museum and Miniature Steam Show



The group photo is in front of the “Hi-Voltage” building. Later on the tour of the exhibition we were reminded of school days and playing with Van de Graaf machines and stand up hair!

The trip was a great success and much appreciated by all that attended.

Octobers Meeting was a Trafalgar lunch. This was held at their usual venue Castle Inn, Bramber. The guest speaker was Adrian Bell, CEO of blind veterans. His experience of many years as a Royal Navy Welfare Officer showed out, by his personal introduction to each and every one of our branch assembled. A reasonably healthy 16 in number were present. Adrian Bell, previous to working in the Charity Sector which also currently includes the role of CEO of Blind Veterans UK, had the great privilege and ability to command no less than three Royal Naval Warships. Touching upon some of his Naval experiences in terms of ‘Modern History’, Adrian



included mention of a briefing held by General (*U.S. Army*) Tommy Franks in 2003 on the Invasion of Iraq. In typical American flamboyant style, the First Strategy Meeting was held in a theatre and opened with an excerpt from the film 'Gladiator'. Evidently General Franks criticised the action because; "It took too long and no supporting aviation!"

Returning to the celebration of Trafalgar and its relevance (even today) because of Nelson's understanding and perception of how much certain battles impact not just on one's country but has Global implications too. It is important to acknowledge what Trafalgar – and certainly Nelson the man – meant to the Navy and the country. In one sense it was the culmination of a personal feud between Nelson and Napoleon Bonaparte. The superb tactical and strategic victories achieved at the Battle of Copenhagen, the Battle of the Nile and finally, Trafalgar. It is fair to say Nelson, besides being a great Leader and Naval Tactician, had the gift of seeing 'The Bigger Picture', both operationally and the International objectives – especially those of Trade and political importance. Adrian Bell further drew comparisons with the Battle of Jutland, just over a hundred years later, between the Royal Navy's Grand Fleet and the German High Seas Fleet, the last ever Battleship versus Battleship fleet action.

Though the Branch was unable to correctly identify the Russian Baltic base in Kronstadt, that was the target of the Royal Navy with some Air Support, in its attack of 1919, we were, however, able to assist Adrian in remembering the French Admiral Darlan, in the action at Mers-el-Kebir, Algeria; a difficult decision was made to sink potential Allied/French ships to prevent their capture by the Germans, in 1940.

A most informative and thoroughly enjoyable talk was concluded by Adrian donating a bottle of excellent Port to the Branch: this had an unknown future as it disappeared for 'safekeeping' with our Chairman, Stuart. Time will tell...

A final Toast was made by Adrian Bell, repeating a revised version of the Immortal Memory of Admiral Lord Nelson but also including the Captains and Men under Nelson's Command who also fell at the Battle of Trafalgar – as originally crafted by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Farewells were made with a promise to return next month, for our Taranto Anniversary.

### **Upcoming events**

November is Taranto lunch Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>.

Decembers meeting is the Christmas Social and a raffle for our charity of the year.

January 2026 – AGM and Speaker

July 2026 – summer Outing.

## Weymouth and Portland Branch

The branch meet at Weymouth & Melcombe Regis Working Men's Club, Mitchell Street, Weymouth on 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month at 19:30.

The Branch now has 145 members - 130 Full Members and 15 Associate Members. The Committee and Branch Members organise and participate in an active ceremonial and social programme throughout the year.

For those not on the coaches to Twickenham, a Branch Member, Jim Uncles, organised a Big Screen viewing of the annual Royal Navy v Army Rugby match at Weymouth Working Men's Club on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 80 members and guests attended to enjoy the game, the pasties and several beverages.

The Branch Secretary and local RNA members attended the Portland VE Day Service on 8<sup>th</sup> May.



The Standard Bearer and Secretary attended a commemorative service and plaque unveiling in honour of a RCAF Wellington Bomber LN443 which crashed on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1944 in rural Dorset at Hazelbury Bryan in which all the crew unfortunately lost their lives. Several relatives of the airmen attended the service from Canada.





Members attended the US Memorial Service at the American Memorial, Weymouth on 26<sup>th</sup> May and the D-Day Memorial Service at the American Memorial in Victoria Gardens, Portland on 6<sup>th</sup> June.



Two teams of Branch skittlers took part in the annual Charity Skittles tournament hosted by Dorchester RNA in June and lost again, victors this year were the event sponsors Drumgrange Ltd.

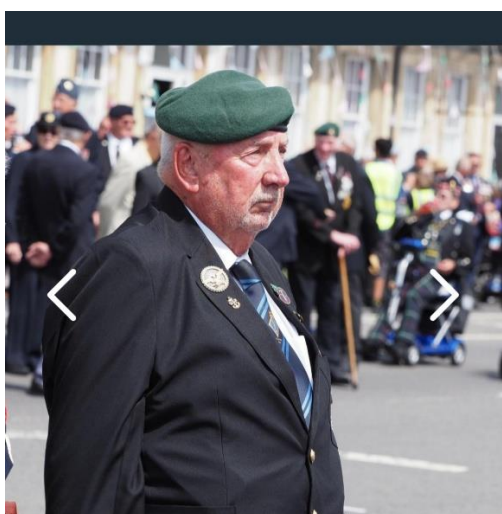


The Branch Secretary attended the Falklands Liberation Day parade and Service at Old Portsmouth on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June laying a wreath on behalf of the FAA Association at the Falklands Memorial.





Weymouth & Portland Armed Forces Day parade on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June was well attended by the Branch as usual.





The Branch held a Black Tot Day to celebrate the demise of the rum ration on August 1<sup>st</sup> at our usual branch meeting. Over 60 members attended with about 10 who had drawn the tot up to 31<sup>st</sup> July 1970. A local rum producer from Lyme Regis sponsored the event with several bottles of their 'Black Venn' rum. The raffle and auction on the evening raised £500 towards our annual branch charity fund.



Members attended the VJ Day Service at the Weymouth War Memorial, a wreath was laid in remembrance of the FAA & RN crews of the Pacific Fleet who lost their lives in the latter stages of WWII. A wreath was also laid by an Associate Member who lost her uncle in Burma in 1945.



Members attended the Merchant Navy Day Services held at Weymouth and Portland on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September.



The annual ramble was held on 6<sup>th</sup> September with members following a route from Portland, solving the challenging questions on route and finally finishing at the Belvedere Pub in Weymouth for a well earned buffet and drinks.







The Branch Standard was paraded at the Naval Associations Biennial Parade in Whitehall in September.



The annual service of remembrance for the 29 crew who lost their lives during the HMS Illustrious pinnacle disaster of 17<sup>th</sup> October 1948 was held at the Memorial Stone at Portland Marina on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October. It was well attended by relatives, the Illustrious Association, our Association and the RNA's of Portland and Dorchester.





The Standard Bearer, Ted Edwards with support from Branch Members has attended a number of events, with the Standard being paraded at:

Several Funerals

US Memorial Day, Weymouth in May

D-Day Anniversary, Portland in June

Armed Forces Weekend, Weymouth in June

VJ Day Service, Weymouth in August

Merchant Navy Day, Weymouth in September

RNA Biennial, London in September

HMS Illustrious Disaster Memorial, Portland in October

Remembrance Sunday, Weymouth in November

### **The monthly Breakfast Club**

Initiated by our Vice Chairman Paul D'Arcy this continues to attract members for a social breakfast at various venues around the local area, usually held the second week of the month but on different days to give branch members a chance to attend. These remain well supported with 20 to 30 members regularly turning out to catch up and spin a few yarns. We can recommend the following venues in and around Weymouth:

Palm House Café, Weymouth

Pavillion Piano Bar, Weymouth

Thompsons Café, Lynch Lane Garden Centre, Weymouth

Veteran's Hub, Wyke Regis

The Dorset Kitchen, Gould's Garden Centre, Littlemoor

Lookout Café, Bowleaze Cove, Weymouth

## British Army v. Royal Navy American Football

The second interservice American Football match was held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October at Tilsley Park in Abingdon. The game was well attended by supporters and families, unfortunately, the Army won with a final score of 27 – 8. Several of our members enjoyed the game, Ted Edwards who used to coach the Weymouth American Football Team, Pony Moore and his son. This picture is of the RN Team – How many in a team!!!!

The interservice game has a long way to go to be as popular as the Army v. Navy Rugby.



### Future Events:

Horse Racing - Wincanton Racecourse - October

Christmas Social – Weymouth – December

National Memorial Arboretum Visit (TBC) – March 2026

### Charity Events

Several events in the local area have been supported by branch members

**The David Ellis Charity** – Nick Harper (Charity Chairman) - 50Km Couch Walk, our Social Secretary Mark Bradbury (Charity Trustee) on the left joined Nick for the last 32Km.





The David Ellis Charity was recently presented with two awards at the English Veterans Awards for their work with veterans and their families running free fitness classes, first aid courses, mini-medics at schools, volunteering at local events and fund raisers.

They were awarded:

A Silver for The Veterans Group of The Year Award.

A Bronze for The Health and Wellbeing Award.



### **Bowra Foundation Charity Walk Weymouth**

One of our branch members Dave Buckley, his son Sam, who recently suffered a major stroke, and family organised a walk to raise funds and awareness of the Bowra Foundation who are helping Sam in his recovery. Dave pushed Sam in his wheelchair from Weymouth Pavilion to the Oasis Café at Bowleaze around 2.2 miles. Around fifty people including Mark Bowra the founder of the Bowra foundation and other FAA Association members joined the family and the Step-by-Step Challenge walkers who were covering 92 miles of the South West Coast path.



## Ride To The Wall (RTTW)

Two members, Ian Tate & Steve Kershaw, attended the annual RTTW on 4<sup>th</sup> October. Riding up to Tewkesbury on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October for an overnight stop before joining the group of around 500 riders at M5 Strensham Services, one of the twelve designated start points for the group ride to the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA). Around 5000 Motorcycles, Trikes, Scooters, one Tut Tut and a Quadbike braved Storm Amy over the weekend, unfortunately some of the riders coming from the north west and northern areas pulled out or reverted to cars as the winds were too strong for safe riding.

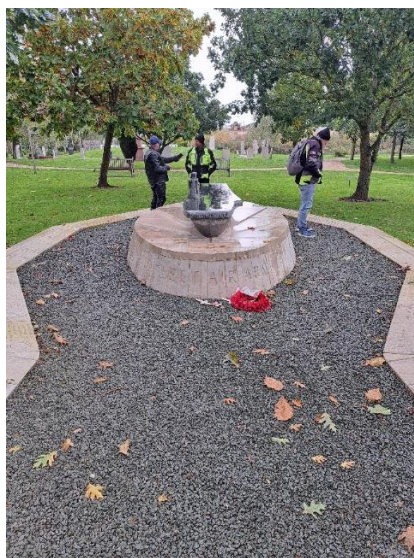
The RTTW Charity was set up some 18 years ago for military, ex-military, families and civilian personnel to pay their respects to the 16,000 military personnel who have lost their lives and whose names are carved on 'The Wall' since the end of WWII. The charity has raised some £1.83million for the NMA since it was established, around £173,000 was raised last year. There were around 10,000 people visiting the site and attending the Act of Remembrance Service on the Saturday undeterred by the inclement weather.







Image by Ben Gordon Photography © RTTW 2025





## Weymouth - Nothe Fort – ‘Standing with Giants’ – Falklands Tribute



## Remembrance Day 9<sup>th</sup> November

Members were present at Remembrance Day Memorial Services at Westminster, Weymouth, Wyke Regis, Portland, Buckingham and Brisbane Australia.







## **Bristol Branch**

Branch meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in the month at 12ish the venue is under review – so please contact the branch for more information.

The branch secretary Ronald Sandry, has not yet recovered from his stroke and is having continued difficulty with speech and hearing. There has not been a branch meeting for months following the chairman having a heart attack. Despite this they are hoping to attend the funeral of Ray Reeves who crossed the bar on October the 11<sup>th</sup> with the branch standard, and to attend the Patchway Remembrance Service on 16<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Solent Branch**

The Solent Branch meets on the last Thursday of the month at 20:30 in the Lee-on-the-Solent Community Centre, where we enjoy a couple of beers and on numerous occasions, throughout the year, a tot time on completion.

No update from Solent Branch for this edition of the newsletter

## **Kent Branch**

The branch meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month at 1100hrs in the RNA Club 9 Church Hill, Ramsgate CT11 8RA.

May was a busy time for our Branch, after the excitement of the Army v Navy rugby on the 3<sup>rd</sup> which was won by Navy, the Chairman and Secretary attended the Reunion and AGM in Southampton 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>.

The following weekend our Vice Chairman and Secretary made the trip to Lee-on-Solent for the Tag's Remembrance Service 17<sup>th</sup> /18<sup>th</sup>.

The month finished in Ramsgate Royal Harbour for the 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Operation Dynamo 16<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> with HRH Prince Michael of Kent. The Little Ships and their crews from all parts of UK and Abroad, A parade lead by the RM Band and a fly past by various aircraft including a Swordfish from Navy Wings..

The main event for June was Armed Forces Day on the 28<sup>th</sup>, another month and another Parade, it was said at the Ramsgate RNA Club after by veterans "we never marched this much when we served". With the Bar, Buffet and Entertainment it all made for a good time with friends.

October 11<sup>th</sup> members enjoyed a pub lunch, partly subsidised by Branch Funds and our Christmas Lunch is booked for 6<sup>th</sup> December, rig Christmas jumpers.

We have between all that our monthly meetings at Ramsgate RNA on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month, 1030hrs for 1100hrs with the Loyal Toast to start the meeting.

## **Yorkshire Branch**

Have laid up their standard and dissolved as a branch, any remaining members will be transferred to Daedalus Branch.

If there is no branch in your area, and you would like to set one up, please get in touch and we can give help and guidance on how to go about this. It would be really great if we had more members, but remember if you are not near a local branch you can still join the Daedalus Branch.

# **An Interview with**

## **Fleet Air Arm Association President**

### **Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham CBE**

Q. Why did you choose the Royal Navy over the other Armed Forces?

*I didn't as such as I knew very little about the UK Armed Forces.*

Q. When and how did you join the navy and what made you join the FAA?

*I joined in 1977 from finishing school in Ireland. I was pondering whether to go to university to study either medicine or engineering or to not attend university and seek training as a commercial pilot. However, it transpired that commercial airlines were not recruiting at that time and a school friend who had joined the RN insisted that I should try up fly with the Navy. He gave me the application form and, mainly to appease him, I completed it. Unexpectedly, within weeks I was invited to an interview at the Admiralty Interview Board, so I attended out of curiosity. Even more unexpectedly and much to my parents' shock and dismay a telegram soon arrived inviting me to join Dartmouth 6 weeks later in January 1977. Not my best planning moments!*

Q. Where was your favourite Royal Navy posting and why?

*It is difficult to say as many brought special moments. However, my posting as a Lynx Flight Commander in a Frigate was probably my favourite. The ship has a very strong team spirit and a somewhat 'unorthodox' approach. We had a great deployment to the Gulf and Indian Ocean for the Tanker War and were invited to undertake many unforeseen and very challenging tasks, including operating 3 Lynx off a Type 22 Frigate for a protracted period. All of these tasks were completed successfully, if again, not always in an orthodox fashion!*

Q. Looking back on your Royal Navy career, what are your special memories?

*I would have to say that bringing a ship back to the UK after a long challenging deployment brought very special feelings of satisfaction in that we had all returned safely having achieved much and enjoyed it. However, the most striking recollection is the result of a major inquiry into military aviation in which the FAA came out very strongly. Although this probably should not have surprised us, it was stark to see an external authority reach that conclusion. Many of the things that we had taken for granted were in fact best practice and the FAA safely delivered aviation output far more efficiently than many others. We really did routinely undertake difficult maritime tasks around the world more efficiently and as safely as anybody else.*



Q. As a young person – was there any other careers that you thought of doing, Footballer, Rock star etc?

*Nothing so exciting! I had thought that I would be either a doctor or a civil engineer.*

Q. Do you find that having a family network at home, gave you a lot of support in life, both in your Royal Navy career and beyond?

*Absolutely, my wife Sally was WRNS and understood the Navy which made sustaining a happy family life much easier. Similarly, my parents, who knew nothing about the Navy, were fascinated and I think that this network of interest and support is instrumental in sustaining a professional focus.*

Q. What is your proudest moment in life so far?

*I was very proud to be Head of the FAA, but probably equally proud at my daughter's wedding.*

Q. When did you become President of the Fleet Air Arm Association?

*A long time ago , it was 2011.*

Q. Why did you agree to be President of the association and what benefit so you think it has in modern society?

*I knew several members of the Committee at the time and was familiar with the good work that the FAAA did across the FAA community. I do think that such associations do much to sustain our ethos even into the modern military structures. The youngsters see that the life that they are leading builds strong bonds and comradeships that last for life. Equally, non-serving people see the special relationships that are formed in the military and all of this is hugely supportive of recruiting new generations.*

Q. Anything else you would like to say to the readers of this newsletter?

*Only thank you for all that you do to sustain the ethos of the Fleet Air Arm we all enjoyed and congratulations on your individual part in forging the reputation that we enjoy for excellence in the field of maritime aviation.*

# Celebrations and Congratulations

I would like to take the time to celebrate a special gentlemen who reached his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this year.

Although not a member of the Fleet Air Arm Association, he did serve in the Fleet Air Arm and I think it was fitting that a card was sent on behalf of the association members to wish him congratulations on this monumental achievement.

**John Lansom** - known to everyone as Jack – was born in Manchester on November 8<sup>th</sup> 1925.

After leaving school at 14 he worked at a builders merchants and at the age of 17 started helping with the war effort when he joined a shadow aircraft component factory in Manchester assisting with the assembly of aircraft components.

On achieving top marks in his Forces entrance exam at the end of 1943 he chose the Royal Navy and more specifically the Fleet Air Arm, perhaps influenced by his previous experience with aircraft component assembly.



After approximately 12 months of training across various disciplines he finally embarked the troop carrier Athlone Castle which set sail from Liverpool and crossed the Atlantic in convoy to eventually reach the Panama Canal and onward to Australia.

He disembarked in Sydney early in 1945 and was transferred to the Mobile Operational Airbase (M.O.A.B) at Bankstown Sydney, where as an Air Mechanic Engines (A.M.(E)) he assisted with the assembly, repair and servicing of fighter aircraft, principally the Firefly.



Like his compatriots he took up digs with a local family and continued at the MOAB throughout 1945 as the wars in Europe and the Far East came to an end.

His ultimate destination HMS Implacable arrived in Sydney in March 1946 for a refit having successfully fighting the Japanese the previous year. Jack joined the ship and it briefly sailed locally and supported the Australian Naval fighter pilots training programme for carriers until it set sail for England in May 1946.

Jack became a 'Plane 'Captain' responsible for supervising a team to carry out daily inspections on aircraft airframes, engines and electrics.

HMS Implacable sailed back to England via Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and through the Suez Canal arriving in England in June 1946. The ship briefly went on to a fly flying tour up to Norway and back and Jack was finally demobbed in the autumn of 1946.

Jack returned to work and had an unbroken period of employment in Manchester working as a skilled technician, working with commercial plate glass until his retirement in 1990. He married his wife Joan in 1949. He has one son David, three grandchildren and two great grandchildren and still lives independently in Manchester, having only recently stopped driving his own car. He has been a widower for nearly 40 years and retains a great interest in gardening, football and cooking. He is a great credit to his generation.



Then

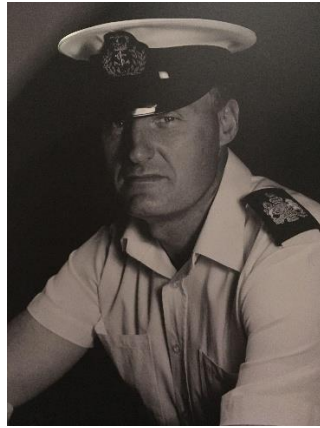


Now – at 100!

# Crossed the bar

We celebrate the lives of those who have Crossed the bar in the last 6 months

## **Nigel Edward Malcolm WO(Air Electrical Mechanic) BEM**



**Nigel Edward Malcolm BEM crossed the bar on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025.**

Born in 1954 he joined the Royal Navy in 1971. Over more than 30 years of distinguished service he worked on Wasp, Wessex, and Sea King helicopters, serving with pride across the Fleet Air Arm, Small Ships Flights and as a Junglie before retiring as a Warrant Officer in 2004.

He later continued his service with the Ministry of Defence, supporting both the Sea King and Merlin teams. Nigel was an exceptional athlete. He excelled at squash, long-distance running, and ran Field Gun, and carried his passion for sport into rugby, where he played, coached, and refereed at regional level.

He is survived by his beloved wife Julie, herself a veteran, together with their sons Andrew and Chris and their families.

Nigel will be remembered not only as the perfect Warrant Officer, professional, reliable, with an unflinching moral compass, but also as a true shipmate, friend, and loyal Fleet Air Arm Association member. He will be greatly missed. Fair winds and following seas, Nigel. Rest easy, shipmate.



## **Michael (Mick) Warnes POAEA(M)**

**26 January 1945 - 28th September 2025**



Served January 1962 to May 1985  
HMS Eagle, Hermes and Bulwark,  
800, 845 and 846 Squadrons  
1969 Field Gun crew

## **T M (Terry) Lowden AL LSFX866981**

**1st June 1931 - "Crossed the Bar" 12th October 2025**



**Terry served from 1948 through to 1956 on the following Air Stations and  
Squadrons**



**1949 - Ariel, Gamecock, Peregrine**  
**1951 - Daedalus, Blackcap**  
**1953 - Seahawk, 849 Squadron**  
**1954 - Falcon, 849 Squadron**  
**1955 - Seahawk, 849 Squadron**  
**1956 - Daedalus**

**Terry held the following positions in the association**

**1997 - 1999 National Standard Bearer**  
**1998 - 2020 National Committee Member**  
**1998 - 2020 Hanworth Branch Secretary**

## **Roy Thomas Colbeck CA SE1(A/C) LF927463**

**3rd August 1936 - "Cross the Bar" 26th October 2025**

Roy served from 1953 - 1976 at the following Shore establishments, Ships or Squadrons

1953/54 - Daedalus, Gamecock, Illustrious	1960/61 Heron
1954/55 - Siskin, Goldcrest	1961/62 - Seahawk
1955 - Ark Royal	1962/64 - Ariel
1956 - Daedalus 705, Seahawk	1962/63 - Protector
1957 - Eagle	1964 - Ariel
1957/58 - Daedalus 701	1965 - Fulmar
1958 - Victorious	1968 - Bulwark
1958/59 - Heron	1971/73 - Fulmar, Daedalus
1959 - Falcon	1973/74 - Royal Arthur
	1974/76 - Daedalus

## **Raymond (Ray) Reeves NAM 1 (E) LFX812732**

**23rd October 1927 - "Crossed the Bar" 11th October 2025**

Ray enlisted in 1946. Initial training was undertaken at HMS Royal Arthur at Corsham followed by Merlin engine course at Warrington. Once qualified he was posted to St Merry and Culdrose with 790 NAS who were operating Mosquito aircraft. Whilst at Culdrose he played the euphonium in the station band. Ray was discharged in 1949 and went onto work Bristol Aircraft Corporation in the design

department working on both the Britannia and Concorde on the latter of which he designed the jigsaw for the engine bay doors



**Terence (Terry) Bullingham AEA(L) D058003Y**

**21<sup>st</sup> October 1944 - “Crossed the bar” 10 November 2025**

Terry passed away peacefully with his wife Maria by his side.

Terry first joined the navy in 1960. In May 1982, whilst serving on HMS Antrim, during the Falklands conflict, as a Chief Petty Officer, he was hit by a cannon shell from an attacking Mirage Jet, he was severely wounded and lost his sight.

In 1982 he was referred to Blind Veterans UK (formerly St Dunstan's) where he received free support, including rehabilitation and training at their Brighton centre. Terry became an inspiration to others by becoming a speaker for Blind Veterans UK and gave talks to groups about his experiences.



He was a branch member of South Downs .

Terry's Funeral will take place on Wednesday 3rd December 1430 at Woodvale  
Crematorium, Lewes Road, Brighton BN2 3QB

The wake will be at the Smugglers Rest, South Coast Road, Telscombe Cliffs,  
Peacehaven BN10 7BE

If you want to notify us of any members who have crossed the bar please inform  
Mick Wyatt the Membership Secretary – [memsecfaaa@btinternet.com](mailto:memsecfaaa@btinternet.com) or 01582  
608828

Obituaries for all former FAA personnel will be accepted to be placed in this  
newsletter and on the website. Please email the editor or leave a message on the  
website.

## Recent Events

### HMS Daedalus Commemorative Stone Dedication

HMS Sultan was honoured to participate in the unveiling of a commemorative stone in June at Solent Airport marking the rich legacy of HMS Daedalus as a Royal Naval Air Station (1939 – 1996).

Their commanding Officer, Captain Mark Hamilton, represented Sultan alongside Commander Megan Ashton, highlighting the direct connection between their establishments.



Captain Hamilton said “ It’s a privilege to represent HMS Sultan at this important commemoration. The legacy of HMS Daedalus lives on through the engineering training we deliver today at Sultan. The dedication and innovative spirit shown by those who served here during World War II and beyond continues to inspire our current generation of engineers and technicians.”





The ceremony featured displays from Navy Wings Charity, including the world's oldest airworthy Swordfish – a fitting tribute to the station that launched 435 sorties on D-Day and played crucial roles in operations against the Italian fleet at Taranto and the German battleship Bismark. HMS Sultan is proud to continue the tradition of naval aviation engineering excellence that began at Daedalus.



Photos by Leading Photographer Baz Swainsbury.

## Divisions July 2025 HMS Sultan

On 25<sup>th</sup> July 2025, David Smith, Jim Moulson and I attended divisions at HMS Sultan, to celebrate the Engineer's Passing Out Parade, where the Guest of Honour being Vice Admiral Paul Marshall CBE. The newest naval engineers and technicians had completed their world-class training and were ready to join the fleet as the 'beating hear of operational capability', maintaining , repairing and operating Royal navy ships, submarines and aircraft across the globe. The day started with a presentation of awards.

### **TAGA Medal**

Telegraphist Air Gunners (TAGS) operated in FAA aircraft from 1922 – 1950, providing communications by morse code and manning the rear gun. 3000 TAGS were trained in the branches 28 year life span, 495 were lost through enemy action and / or flying accidents, with 69 becoming Prisoners of War. Most TAGS served for the period of WW2, before returning to their civilian occupations in 1945/1946. 1947 saw the first gathering of the TAGS out of which the Telegraphist and Air Gunners Association was born. The TAGA trophy has been used to recognise the best AE in

initial air engineering training since 1988. The winner of the TAGA Medal for the academic year 2024 – 2025 is AET Fletcher Powe.



Jim Moulson presented the TAGA Medal to AET Fletcher Powe who had a final average mark of 97%.

#### **FAA association Dr Rotman Plate**

This award is given to the individual from both the Mechanical and Avionic Trade that has received the highest overall grade during LAET QC. The aim of the FAA Association is to assist members in matters relating to welfare. To maintain a close relationship with the service and to inform the public of the past traditions and present function of the Fleet Air Arm. The winner of the Dr Rotman Plate for the academic year 2024-2025 in the Mechanical trade is LAET(M) Thomas Shelton, and for the Avionic trade, the winner is LAET(AV) Harry Wyld.



Dave Smith presented the Dr Rotman Plate for the Mechanical Trade, to LAET(M) Thomas Shelton who had a final mark of 95.5%





Dave Smith presented the Dr Rotman Plate for the Avionic trade, to LAET(AV) Harry Wyld who had a final mark of 97.2%

The day continued with a wonderful display on the parade ground and presentations for long service and good conduct.

## **FNF meeting 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025**

Vice President of the association Peter Murry and Standard Bearer Mick Wyatt attended the FNF meeting at Yeovilton. The meeting was held in Navy Wins offices. The purpose of their trip was to hand over custody of the Hanworth Branch Standard to Navy wings.

The standard was handed over to Commodore (Rtd) Jock Alexander Chief Executive of Navy Wings. Jock was pleased to take custody of the standard and it will be displayed in the Navy Wings Hanger.



# Rhodri Leyshon Memorial Match

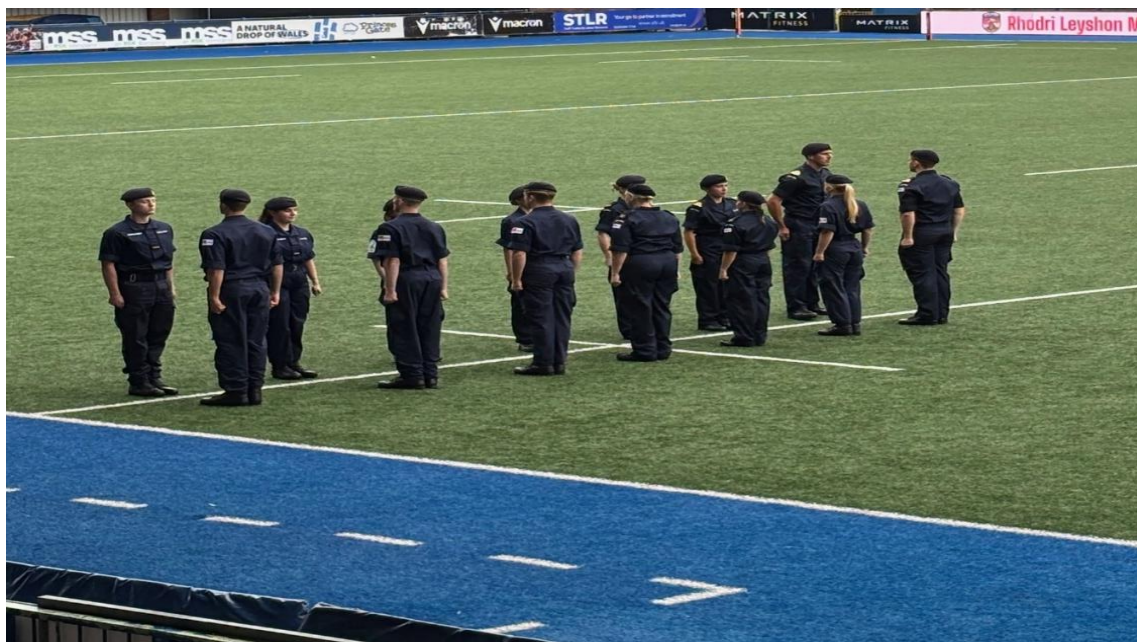


Lieutenant Rhodri Leyshon Royal Navy Commando Helicopter Force pilot, aged 31 died on September 4<sup>th</sup> 2024, when his Merlin Mk4 helicopter crashed into the English Channel during a training exercise off the coast of Dorset. A highly capable pilot and instructor, he was well regarded by his colleagues and superiors who described him as a “shining light”. His death prompted widespread tributes from the Royal Navy, his family and the public.

He was a keen rugby player for Cowbridge RFC as well as Wales URNU and Cardiff Met University. A team formed of serving military personnel as well as veterans with personal links to Rhod from his decade long career played against his former club Cowbridge at Cardiff Arms Park on 30 August 2025. This charity match was raising money for the Welsh Air Ambulance. A donation to help the match take place was given by the FAAA, after the AGM in May.

I was lucky enough to attend this event in Cardiff at the home of Welsh rugby. The weather could have been kinder, after the summer heatwave, we had a day of heavy rain showers and gusty wind.

The evening started with a guard of honour forming up to welcome both teams out of the tunnel.



The teams were inspected by the local Mayor and other VIPs escorted by Commanding officer of HMS Cambria.





As this was happening there was a fly past by 2 Royal Navy Helicopters, that came in low and slow above the ground, and brought a tear to the most hardened veterans eyes.



Lt Cdr Will Murry (the captain of Rhod's XV ) laid out the No. 7 Jersey on the ground between the two teams and the number was "Retired". A minutes silence was held, after which the match balls were delivered by Rhod's girlfriend and his



sister. The Welsh National Anthem was then played, before the “Retired Match Shirt” was collected and passed to VIP Lord Lieu and delivered to Rhods family.

The match kicked off and was very evenly fought. At halftime it was one unconverted try a piece. The second half saw Cowbridge pull ahead and the final whistle blew with the score at Cowbridge 17 Rhods XV 12.

The match was well attended, and followed by a bar-b-q and music. It was In all a very enjoyable occasion despite the weather. It was also a record breaking match, as it raised the most money at a rugby event in Wales Air Ambulance History, beating the previous record set at Wales V England Six Nations Fixture, £6000 was raised for this worthwhile cause.

## **Naval Associations Biennial Parade The Cenotaph London.**

This parade was held on 14 September. The service was conducted by Deputy Chaplain of the Fleet Reverence Stephen Ashley-Emery KHC DpThs BD

The reviewing officer was Rear Admiral Anthony Rimmington.

The Band was the Band of His majesty's Royal Marines Plymouth.

The parade formed up around the Cenotaph, just before 11am. There was a welcome address from the Royal Naval Association National President Vice Admiral Duncan Potts CB.

It was attended by some of the members of our association and was enjoyed by all who saw it.

Photos kindly supplied by Royal Naval Association













# National Service of Remembrance 9<sup>th</sup> November 2025

The parade sees 10,000 veterans and eligible participants march past the cenotaph annually in a National Act of Remembrance, led by HM The King. The parade forms up in columns initially on Horse Guards Parade before moving through Horse Guards Arch to form on Whitehall in time for the King to arrive at the Cenotaph.

The march past parades down Whitehall, passing the Cenotaph, before turning right on Great George Street and right again on Horse Guards Road where the salute is taken by a member of the Royal Family. All columns are then reformed on Horse Guards Parade, following which the National Anthem is played, and the parade is dismissed.

This parade provides the nation with a physical reminder of all those who have served and sacrificed, with British and Commonwealth soldiers, sailors, airmen and women represented, together with members of the emergency services and civilians, ensuring that no-one is forgotten.

The Fleet Air Arm Association was represented this year with 19 of its members attending the march.



Once the parade had been dismissed they made their way to the Fleet Air Arm Memorial on embankment, and were met with family and other members, to hold a wreath laying ceremony at the memorial.

The ceremony was well attended, and there were a few 'tots of rum' taken with shipmates that they hadn't seen for a while and in memory of those who have 'crossed the bar'.







## Upcoming Events / Dates for the diary.

A date and time For the AGM has yet to be agreed, so check out the website or your local branch for more information in the new year.

The annual reunion dinner is also still in the planning stages, more information to follow as soon as possible.

### May 2026

The Fleet Air Arm TAGA Memorial Service is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of May each year. So put the date in your diary for next year.

The TAGA event has been organised for many years by Val Sayer, widow of Les Sayer MBE DSM (1915 – 2008). Les was awarded the MBE for service to the Telegraphist Aircraft Gunner Association – a group set up to help the surviving TAGs. Since his passing Val carried on his good work and still maintains contact with surviving TAGs and their families.

Her knowledge of the Association and enthusiasm for ensuring the TAGs are forever remembered is admirable. She also organises the informal Saturday evening buffet at the Lee on Solent golf club and Sir Julian Lewis and Lady Fiona attend.

## Other items you may be interested in

### HM Armed Forces Veterans Card

The card is a recognition of your service, and having one can help you maintain a link with your service identity.

It will help you access the many services, concessions and offers that organisations make available to veterans.

From 2025 it will also act as proof of identity for voting in UK elections.

If you have left the service since 2019, you should have received one when leaving. For everyone that left before that date you can apply online at [Apply for an HM Armed Forces Veteran Card - GOV.UK](#) or if you are unable to apply online you can contact the Veterans UK Helpline details shown below. They'll send you a form that you can return by post. The form is available in English or Welsh.

Veterans UK Helpline

[veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk](mailto:veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0808 1914 218

Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm

## **New scheme to help service personnel transition to jobs in boarding schools**

The UK's largest boarding school network has launched a new scheme to help service personnel work in the sector.

The BSA (Boarding Schools' Association), which has more than 400 UK independent and state member schools, has launched ASPIRE (Accredited Service Personnel into Residential Education).

ASPIRE offers a training and induction pathway for serving or former service personnel to explore roles in boarding. Through the scheme, applicants will receive a range of benefits, including:

- Interview to assess suitability to work in boarding
- Online training: introduction to boarding in 2025
- A day's training on boarding schools, roles, regulations and safeguarding (next running on November 27, 2025)
- An induction visit to a BSA member school
- CV and application support
- Promotion of candidacy to BSA member schools
- Affiliate membership of the BSA's Accredited Boarding Practitioner scheme
- Affiliate membership of BSA's sister association for boarding staff, TIOB (The Institute of Boarding)
- An accreditation certificate.

Commenting on ASPIRE, Dale Wilkins, BSA's Executive Director for Accredited Training, said: "While traditionally roles in boarding have been held by teachers, there is increasing recognition of the many relevant skills, attributes and experience service personnel offer.

"Boarding schools can be a very attractive second career for service personnel, from working in boarding houses to helping with sport, the Duke of Edinburgh Award or cadets, or indeed other roles.

"We believe our new ASPIRE scheme can offer an offer a pathway between talented candidates and schools looking for new boarding talent."

Alex Foreman, Principal, Duke of York Royal Military School, said: "Supporting ex-service personnel into boarding roles is a win-win. Students will benefit enormously from the resilience and life experience of participants, who will in turn embark upon a fulfilling career mentoring and nurturing young people."

The ASPIRE programme is currently available at an introductory price of £750.

An Individual Resettlement Training Costs (IRTC) grant of up to £534 may be available to those who have served within the last two years and completed six years of full-time service (or less if medically discharged or made redundant). For more information and to register, visit [boarding.org.uk/aspire](https://boarding.org.uk/aspire)

# **Welfare**

## **Fleet Air Arm Association Welfare Fund**

The welfare fund is administered by four officers serving on the National Committee. Branch secretaries have the full welfare policy guidelines and claims procedure. Any qualifying member requiring assistance from the fund should contact their Branch 'Almoner' or Branch Secretary. Contact will be in full confidence.

## **Help for Heroes**

Offer a wide range of support, whether you're having money troubles, or need support with housing or applying for benefits. You might just need a listening ear, and they can provide that too.

Look at their website at [www.helpforheroes.org.uk](http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk)

## **The Veterans Charity**

They can provide support to veterans who find themselves battling hardship and the distress it causes. Despite being a small charity, they operate nationally throughout the UK including Northern Ireland. They are able to assist with essentials such as food shopping, utilities support, clothing and footwear, household items and single appliances, smartphones/tablets and calling credit/data. They are available to anyone who has served within UK Armed Forces and can verify their service. They have formed a partnership with The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust to deliver immediate needs support where it is needed.

Contact them at [www.veteranscharity.org.uk/sprtreq](http://www.veteranscharity.org.uk/sprtreq)

## **SSAFA**

SSAFA support forces through the transition process to joining civvy street. They also provide welfare services to the family members of the Armed Forces community, and give physical and emotional support to older veterans. They can give advice, social care and housing for the Armed Forces. They also support serving personnel, their families and veterans with anything relating to disability and also help with mental wellbeing on coping with bereavement, injury and other forms of stress.

Call them on 08002606767



## **Royal British Legion**

The Royal British Legion is there to help members of the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force, veterans and their families. They support serving and ex-serving personnel all year round, every day of the week.

Call on 0808 8028080 or email [info@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:info@britishlegion.org.uk)

## **The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust**

They assist thousands of people who are serving or have served as warrant officers and below in The Royal Navy & Royal Marines, and their dependants, who find themselves in need or distress. Their aim is to help them enjoy a reasonable quality of life mainly by providing wide ranging financial assistance. They also care for older people in their own care homes and almshouses.

Email them on [help@rmbt.org.uk](mailto:help@rmbt.org.uk) or call on 02392 690112

## **Royal Naval Association**

The Royal Naval Association is the biggest collective group of Royal naval veterans and serving personnel, with over 270 branches in the UK and overseas. The association provides those with a link to the Royal Navy access to a life-long community of like-minded and supportive individuals. The community provides companionship, resilience, comradeship and unity to anyone and everyone with a Naval story, supporting them through life's highs and lows.

Check out their website to join [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

## **Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust**

This exists to provide worldwide advice and financial relief in cases of necessity or distress among its members and their dependants. They can also make grants for the education of members.

Email them on [gransadmin@wrnsbt.org.uk](mailto:gransadmin@wrnsbt.org.uk)

## And Finally

The Fleet Air Arm association is looking for a new National Standard Bearer. If you have always through you would like to do this or want to know more about the role and duties, please contact a member of the national committee shown on page 3 of this newsletter.

A wordsearch for you to have a go at.

Can you find these words in the grid below.

CHRISTMAS	SULTAN	NAVAL	VESSEL
CULDROSE	SHIP	OSPREY	SEAHAWK
HERON	HOLLY	LANTERN	TURKEY
YEOVILTON	IVY	RUM	LOYAL

S	H	I	P	A	H	O	L	L	Y	C
U	B	V	C	D	E	W	A	A	E	H
L	O	Y	A	L	H	V	N	X	O	R
T	F	Z	R	C	E	U	T	Q	V	I
A	G	P	T	U	R	K	E	Y	I	S
N	A	V	A	L	O	Y	R	R	L	T
H	J	E	N	D	N	M	N	F	T	M
I	O	S	P	R	E	Y	L	T	O	A
R	K	S	N	O	B	P	H	S	N	S
U	J	E	M	S	E	A	H	A	W	K
M	K	L	O	E	C	K	F	P	T	N

Answers next time.

### Some words of wisdom!

One kind word can warm three winter months.

No winter lasts forever, no spring skips its turn.

What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness.

It is not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.

May you never be too grown up to search the skies on Christmas Eve

What is Christmas? It is the tenderness of the past, courage for the present, and hope for the future.