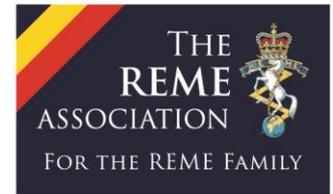




# REME ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Connect 🦿 Support 🦿 REMEMBER

NUMBER 16/18

Welcome to the new format – much more professional I hope you will agree!

**Membership Cards.** You may recall that a membership card for all members is on my list of things to do. This was discussed at the recent Project Steering Group chaired for the first time by our new Chairman and Colonel REME, Col Andy Rogers. It was noted that by the recent revision of our rules, we (and our partners) are all members of The REME Association by virtue of having worn the REME cap-badge. Consequently, was a membership card actually necessary? True, it gives a sense of belonging and many of us will carry our RBL cards with us along with I am sure many other cards of similar organisations of which we are members. I have to confess I am unsure and would appreciate your thoughts. I can see the argument both for and against. Yes, a membership card acknowledges our service in REME of which we are all rightly proud but the costs incurred would be largely nugatory as the card would serve no real purpose apart from a reflection of our service. Thoughts welcome.

**Jim Fox.** I went to visit Jim earlier this week to take him his Corps Christmas card and other gifts. Sadly, he can no longer live at home and has moved into a care home in Marlborough. He was on good form and appreciated the visit. Anyone within reach of Marlborough is welcome to visit and he would be delighted to see you particularly if you served with him. Please contact me for details.

**Cfn John Walker.** We are all extremely proud of Jim, our Olympic Gold Medallist, but not many of us will be aware that the Corps also has a Double Gold Medallist from The Rio Paralympic Games in 2016. Cfn John Walker was medically discharged from the Corps and went on to a successful engineering career in the offshore industry until he was injured again, this time severely. John never gave up and won double gold in Archery at Rio 2016 – with only one functioning arm and from his wheelchair. Amazing. His fantastic story will be told in Craftsman early next year. Look out for it.

**National Standard Bearer.** Sadly, the REME Association National Standard Bearer Glynn Winterbottom, has notified RHQ REME that he will stand down for 2019. We all thank Glynn sincerely for his fantastic service and wish him well. A volunteer is required to replace Glynn in this prestigious post. Please let me or Hayley know if you would like to be considered. Spread the word.

**Members' Portal.** Work with the IT contractor, Simon, continues and the Portal is now in the testing phase. We will keep you informed.

**Churchill Medal Award.** You may recall my note of the Churchill Medal Award, the Professional Engineering Institution annual award for an individual or a small team from the Armed Forces or MOD for achievement in engineering and technical advancement. I am afraid the Recovery Team from 6 CS Bn REME did not receive the prize this year which went to a nomination from the RAF. Better luck next year.

Lt Col (Retd) Stuart Cowen  
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**Veterans' ID Cards.** As mentioned in an earlier update all those leaving the service are now allowed to retain their ID Card (MOD Form 90). This will be modified by unit Admin Staff to disable the electronic chip and expiry date before an individual departs their unit and will serve as proof of service. The MOD has now gone further and invites all veterans to apply for a service leavers' ID card from next year 2019. The link is below which contains the notice but no details of how to apply just yet. As soon as I find out I will post the info in a future Newsletter. Good news.

<https://www.forces.net/news/veterans-be-formally-recognised-official-id-cards>

**TFL Veterans' Oyster Card.** On a similar note, I am grateful to General Philip Corp for reminding me of the Veterans' Oyster Card for travel in London. Whilst largely for those with a disability pension or similar the link below is well worth a look.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel/veterans-oyster-photocard#on-this-page-2>

**Armed Forces Pensions.** Dear to our heart! Anyone serving after 1975 is normally entitled to some form of Armed Forces Pension, provided minimum length of service is achieved. The minimum service usually depends upon the respective pension scheme into which the individual is enrolled. In some cases this minimum can be very low which is not widely known or publicised resulting in many millions of pounds lying unclaimed. Unsurprisingly, the Government will not come looking for an individual once they reach the qualifying age, usually 60 or 65 depending upon which scheme, the onus is on us all to claim. There are many former servicemen and women unaware they may be entitled as they think their relatively few years of service does not qualify. Wrong - it may well do so. To find out go to the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pensions-and-compensation-for-veterans>

**Forces Pension Society** For further pensions advice and enquiries there are many sources of advice and information available to Veterans. An example is The Forces Pension Society and many of you I am sure will be members (as I am). They do charge a membership fee but you may find it is money well spent. The Society home page is at the link below:

<https://forcespensionsociety.org/>

**RMAS Reunion.** Col (Retd) Hugh Sandars has asked for our help in tracking down anyone from his Sandhurst Intake 23 which passed out in 1959. He wants to set up a 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary bunfight. If you are or know of anyone from this Intake please ask them to get in touch with me and I will pass their details on to Hugh.

**REME Association Functions.** Over the past year or so many of you have let me know of your Association Annual Dinners and other functions where you would like to invite an appropriate member of the Corps to attend. Indeed, I have been delighted to attend one or two myself. Col Andy Rogers and ASM Paul Hembery the Corps ASM, welcome such invitations and given appropriate notice, promise to do their level best to ensure an appropriate officer or senior soldier attends where invited. This may be a rep from your nearest REME Battalion or an RHQ Rep. Should you wish to invite such a guest to your function please give me as much notice as possible and I will discuss your invitation with Col Andy and the Corps ASM. Thank you.

## KEEP IN TOUCH STAY INFORMED

**REME Association Reunion 2019.** The 2019 Reunion in Coventry over the weekend of 26 to 29 April 2019 is filling up fast. Please spread the word and book in with Shirley. Her details are at the link below:

<http://iowtours.com/reunionsevents/>

**Korea Veterans.** I have received the following message from Frank Travis. A bit short notice so please pass it on immediately to any Korea Veterans you are aware of that may wish to attend.

"Students and staff from Pusan University in Korea will be in Manchester to say "thank you" to former servicemen who served during the Korean War. The students are charged with looking after the graves and honouring the fallen, plus those who served to keep their country free.

They recognise that service and sacrifice led to a successful country with a quality of life a far cry from that of the early 1950s. The thank you ceremony will be held in Manchester around midday/early [afternoon on 7th January 2019](#). Veterans and those connected with them are invited to join us. Anyone who wishes to attend should contact:

Frank Travis

[07970 456329](tel:07970456329)

or

[franktravis26@gmail.com](mailto:franktravis26@gmail.com)

### Welsh Rates of Income Tax

If you live in Wales you are probably aware that new Welsh tax codes come into effect from next Tax Year (19/20), it is not expected that income tax rates will deviate from UK rates in this first year of operation but it is obviously something to keep on top of. Key information is contained in the links below.

<https://www.gov.uk/welsh-income-tax>

<https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/welsh-taxpayer-technical-guidance>

**IAM RoadSmart.** Don't forget the exciting initiative with The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM RoadSmart) which was featured in the June 2018 Craftsman magazine. All members of the REME Association can benefit from significant discounts - just visit:

[www.iamroadsmart.com/remeassn](http://www.iamroadsmart.com/remeassn)

**Summary.** You will have noted that my original updates largely kept you informed of progress with the REME Association Reform Project and hope you agree that such updates are no longer necessary. The project continues and will do so for a wee while yet but the time is right to evolve into a more informative 'Newsletter' type of journal. I will keep my ear to the ground within MOD circles and keep you all informed of items of interest within the Corps and the Veterans' community in general. Feedback welcome. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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