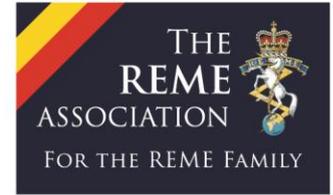




REME ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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NUMBER 17 – Feb 19

Membership Cards. Thanks for your feedback regarding membership cards. As a reminder, your views were sought as to the question 'was a REME Association Membership Card actually necessary'? I will keep the forum open until the next Association Executive Committee meeting in March 19 and let you all know the decision following that. Keep your feedback coming and I will ensure your views are included in the Committee meeting discussion. Thanks.

Branch/Group Info. Rachael and Haley are compiling useful info for inclusion on the REME Charity website. The aim is to provide info regarding branches, groups, trade reunions, unit reunions, pretty much anything relevant to REME Family business. Please provide: points of contact, appointment holders, locations, frequency of meetings, costs if any, FOE, any relevant info of use to someone looking to join in. From a security viewpoint Rachael will obviously be careful what is uploaded to a public site and her intent is to hold any personal or sensitive info behind the Members' Portal login. Phew! Please send all relevant info direct to them or to me and I will pass it on. **By Fri 15 Feb 19** if possible please.

National Standard Bearer. Delighted to say a volunteer REME Association National Standard Bearer has come forward to take over the post from Glynn Winterbottom. Malcolm Barnes from our Tyneside Branch is currently the RBL County Standard bearer for Northumberland as well as his own Consett and District branch. Welcome on board Malcolm and thanks for stepping forward.

REME Association Roadshows. Following the success of our 2018 Roadshows the intent is to do the same this year. Once again it will be Roadshow North and Roadshow South. Standby for dates. Should the Catterick and Tidworth venues be inconvenient for you it is possible for the Corps Secretary and I to visit your area separately. A viable visit would depend on dates and numbers attending. Please give me a shout with your ideas and requests.

REME Association Reunion 2019. The 2019 Reunion is returning to Coventry over the weekend of 26 to 29 April 2019 and still has vacancies. Please spread the word and book in with Shirley. Her details are at the link below. This is the major event on our calendar for 2019 and it would be fantastic to see many of you and your partners there.

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

REME Association Functions. A reminder of my call for a representative to attend your Association Annual Dinners and other functions where you would like to invite an appropriate member of the Corps. I promise to do my level best to ensure an appropriate officer or senior soldier attends where invited. 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 Colonel REME, Col Andy Rogers and the Corps ASM, Paul Hembery. Thank you.

Lt Col (Retd) Stuart Cowen
RHQ REME



association@reme-rhq.org.uk



07590 848766

REME Museum and DSEME Lyneham Visits. Delighted to see so many REME Association branches and groups booking in for a REME Museum tour and tour of DSEME facilities here in Lyneham. Wednesdays are good in order to ensure there is no disruption to training – yes the soldiers do still get Sports afternoons! Mates rates will apply. Give me a shout to book in.

New Year Honours List 2019. I am also delighted to report that four members of the Corps have received honours and two MSMs have been awarded: Col Paul Armstrong OBE, Capt Hannah Winterbourne MBE and Sgt Martin Hunt MBE received honours through the military division. A noteworthy addition was LCpl Connor Roe MBE who received the honour for his part in the Thai cave rescue in summer 2018. WO2 Stew Blakey, our Corps Welfare Warrant Officer and WO1 Chris Hepburn were awarded the MSM. Congratulations to all.

Challenger 1 Restoration. Lt Col Nick Berchem of KRH has been in touch. He is currently the UKLO at the French Cavalry School in Saumur, Loire Valley in France. It must be hell there but I expect he is coping. The Museum on site in Saumur has a Challenger 1 they obtained from Oman which is in pretty poor condition and they are seeking volunteers to help restore it to running order. Sounds like fun. If you are CR1 experienced, whether weapons, vehicles or electronics and fancy a trip to France let me know and I will put you in touch with Nick. He has no idea if expenses will be paid yet and is just seeking volunteers before he takes it to that stage.

Legal Services. A highly experienced solicitor and friend of the Corps, Richard Camidge has volunteered to seek legal assistance at discounted rates for REME Association members amongst his contacts. He has been very successful so far. I will keep you posted with details but the offer will be legal services such as: wills, powers of attorney, property, family issues etc. He has contacts throughout the UK and is working hard behind the scenes on our behalf. If you have any urgent needs – give me a shout. Otherwise, I will include full details and points of contact in my next newsletter. Richard is due to retire shortly and wanted to 'put something back' in particular to support veterans' charities. He heard about us from a family friend, a young officer at 1 CS Bn REME, and came forward directly to me. A fantastic offer and thank you Richard.

BBC Wiltshire Breakfast Show. 2019 marks the 30th Anniversary of BBC Wilts local radio. To celebrate, the Breakfast Show will be broadcasting from 30 different sites around the county during the year. I am delighted to say that The REME Museum has been selected as one of those sites and we will host the show on Thu 27 June 2019. Please come along if you live close enough and I would like to include a 'View from the Veterans' as part of the show so please let me know if you would like to be involved. It would mean an early start but I am sure we can all cope with that. Give me a shout for details.

D DAY 75 Commemorations. You will be aware of the many local events surrounding the commemorations of D Day 75 in June 2019. The National events have recently been announced in both Normandy and UK. The main UK event will be in Portsmouth on Wednesday 5 June 2019. Details at link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/d-day-75-events-to-mark-75th-anniversary-of-normandy-landings-announced>

Please let me know of any events you wish me to publicise on future editions.

KEEP IN TOUCH STAY INFORMED

Veterans UK. I am sure you are all aware that the Veterans UK website is available to us all and is a useful one stop shop for issues such as medals, armed forces compensation and pensions etc. Here's the link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk>

Veterans Strategy. The Government has published 'The Strategy for Veterans' which can be viewed at the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-our-veterans>

Veterans Welfare Service. The service operates in partnership with all three services, service charities, local service providers and statutory and non-statutory bodies to provide welfare services throughout life for all our veterans. If you know of any REME Association member in need of a helping hand go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service>

Armed Forces Pensions. The government has announced the % uplift rate to be used for AFPS pensions in payment from April 2019. The rate is based on CPI from September the previous year. Therefore, all AFPS pensions currently in payment will be raised by 2.4% wef April 2019.

Also announced was the removal of the preserved pension forecast service for veterans. Up until now all veterans who are entitled to a preserved pension at the age of 60 or 65, dependent upon their relevant scheme, could request a forecast by submitting an AFPS Form 14. This service will be suspended from February 2019 so get in quick if you require one. The form can be downloaded from the Veterans' Gateway.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/service-personnel-and-veterans-agency-spva-pensions-forms>

Summary. That concludes the latest Newsletter. I am keeping my ear to the ground within MOD circles and have included all I have picked up recently in this newsletter. There may of course be something I have missed so please pass on to me any snippets you pick up that are worthy of mention and I will include them in future editions. Keep your feedback coming and I hope to see as many of you as possible at the REME Association Reunion in April.

Arte et Marte.

