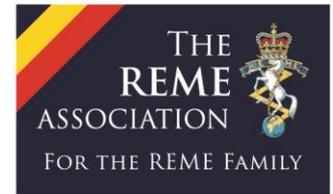




REME ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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NUMBER 19 – Apr 19

Membership Portal. Many thanks for your returns to Rachael and Hayley providing Branch and Group information. A bit of background. As most of you are aware Rachael has been working for a while on the REME Charity website getting it ready to launch a Members' Portal. Contained within that will be your information in the format she has requested. The aim is to provide a 'one stop shop' for all REME Charity information including REME Institution, Benevolence, Welfare, Craftsman, Sports/Adv Trg and of course REME Association. Once up and running an efficient 'signposting' system should ensue making it easy for any enquirer to find what they are looking for. Your patience and help is appreciated.

Annual Branch/Group Reports. One or two of you have enquired about Annual Reporting. Under The REME 75 Rules there is no requirement for Branches or Groups to provide an Annual Report to RHQ REME. If you wish to continue to do so may I suggest you turn this into a Craftsman Magazine submission. Katy, the Editor welcomes articles from REME Association Branches and Groups so please crack on with those. Thank you.

Membership Cards. Sincere thanks to those of you who responded with your thoughts and opinions on the merits or otherwise of a REME Association Membership Card. Some were ambivalent, one or two in favour but the clear majority of those responding was not to proceed. Another membership card was deemed unnecessary, in particular in view of the introduction of a veterans' ID Card later this year and the fact that under The REME 75 Rules we are all members by virtue of our service anyway. Therefore, we will not be providing a REME Association Membership Card and this decision was confirmed by the Association Executive Committee last month. Thank you to all who contributed.

REME Association Reunion 2019 and Annual Conference. The 2019 Reunion in Coventry is almost upon us over the weekend of 26 to 29 April 2019. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible there. As with last year, the Annual Conference of The REME Association will follow the Church Service on Sunday morning. I hope many of you can stay for that.

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

Royal British Legion Op BANNER 50 – 14 Aug 19. The RBL has announced plans to host a commemorative event on Wed 14 Aug 19 to mark the 50th anniversary of the UKAF deployment on operations in Northern Ireland – the longest continuous operation in British military history.

The event will be held at the National Memorial Arboretum, home of the Armed Forces Memorial. To be eligible to attend individuals must have been awarded the GSM(NI) or civilian equivalent. The RBL will run this event along similar lines to the November Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph and Hayley in RHQ REME will co-ordinate the Corps response. Those eligible who wish to attend please bid to Hayley at Hayley.bodman100@mod.gov.uk or call 01249 89 4524 by **Fri 7 Jun 19**. To give Hayley time to sift the bids and submit to RBL.

Lt Col (Retd) Stuart Cowen 🇬🇧 association@reme-rhq.org.uk 🇬🇧 07590 848766
RHQ REME

Normandy 75 and National D Day Commemoration. Our Corps Secretary Lt Col (Retd) Mike Tizard has secured 2 x tickets to the D Day 75 National Commemoration event at Portsmouth on Wed 5 Jun 19 for The REME Charity. He has offered these to The REME Association but we have to be quick. Mike must return the names of those attending by Wed 17 Apr 19 so you are all invited to bid for these places to me by **1200hrs Tue 16 Apr 19**. Sorry for the short notice but Mike only received word today Tue 9 Apr 19. A quickfire committee will form in RHQ REME on the afternoon of Tue 16th to decide who is going to represent The REME Charity at this prestigious event. Please spread the word amongst your branches and groups and get back to me with your bids pronto. Please include a couple of sentences as to why your individual(s) should be selected. It could be their contribution to the D Day operation, their service to the Corps and Association, whatever you feel is appropriate. Please bear in mind there is no reimbursement of travel costs available so you have to get to and from Portsmouth and it is not yet known if partners are permitted. Don't let that stop you bidding as we can ask questions later. Please get in quick. Thanks.

Furthermore, Adie Hunt and Joe Dixon-Haxby, from our Doncaster Branch have been approached by the Sheffield & District Branch of the Normandy Veterans to generate support and awareness of a parade at Hillsborough Park (TBC), Sheffield on Sat 15 Jun 19. The aim is to attract as many Normandy Veterans as may be generated from "York to Nottingham" from "Liverpool to Hull". WW2 participants are also welcome. Please pass details to me of anyone who wishes to attend or knows of a Normandy veteran that may be able to attend and I will pass the details onto Aidie and Joe.

CSgt Brian Wood MC. Many of you will know Gavin Wood a stalwart of SEME and Corps Football. Gavin's son Brian served with PWRR and during his career was posted to 6 Bn REME as one of the Infantry drivers too. Brian has written a deeply moving book titled 'Double Crossed – A Code of Honour – A Complete Betrayal'. He tells his story of service in Iraq, being awarded the MC alongside Johnson Beharry VC and his subsequent summons to the Al-Sweady Inquiry into alleged war crimes committed by British Soldiers. You will recall the lawyer Phil Shiner was eventually struck off. Rather than me provide a link just type 'Brian Wood MC' into your search engine for full details.

Professional Linkages. The Corps focal point for Professional Engineering Institutions (PEIs) is Lt Col (Retd) Dave White. Dave works here in Lyneham and is the Professional Registration Adviser (PRA) for serving REME personnel and exceptionally those within 2 years post discharge. Dave advises our officers and soldiers on their professional institution membership applications at all levels (Eng Tech, IEng and CEng) and has established strong links with the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and the Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS). The Society of Operational Engineers (SOE) has its own Military Committee but Dave can signpost the SOE as required. I am sure you will all understand that this fills his day but he is willing to advise all former members of the Corps on the merits and processes for PEI membership. The Corps has agreements with PEIs; the IMechE 'Specially authorised process' and IET 'Special registration agreement' but these, as previously mentioned, are intended for serving individuals. Please be aware that if you are not serving or within 2 years of discharge Dave can provide no more than a quick chat or an email exchange. His contact details are:

Lt Col (Retd) Dave White – 01249 894508 – david.white159@mod.gov.uk

Our aspiration is for a network of ambassadors and mentors and I am sure there are many professional engineers, who are able to act in a similar role to Dave for former members of the Corps. Provided an individual is already a PEI member, the PRA course is free, takes one day and Dave can advise the best way to obtain a place. Once registered as a PRA, an individual is then empowered by the PEI to help others through the membership process. In other words – act as a

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mentor. If you are able to or know someone who is able to perform this role for the REME Association please get in touch with Dave. Similarly, I am sure there are many former members of the Corps able to act as mentors for other professional institutions such as Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, Chartered Management Institute, etc. the list is endless. If you can help – please give Dave a call or email or let me know. I am delighted to say we already have 2 volunteers so far to help form this network, David Naylor and Chris Emmett have stepped forward – sincere thanks to both. The vision is for Dave White and Matt Chapman the raja in RHQ REME, to have a network of mentors throughout the UK and world if possible, they can call on to help our former servicemen and women with their careers in civilian life, in particular advice on Professional Institution memberships and applications. Please let me know if you or you know of others that may be able to help in a similar manner.

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>

Commonwealth Veterans – Visa Fees. The RBL is leading a campaign to abolish visa fees for Commonwealth Veterans once they leave the service. If you are or you know of anyone affected please see the link below.

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/campaign/commonwealth-visa-fees/>

Armed Forces Pensions. Sad news I am afraid, Samantha McConnell, the former RAF officer who successfully campaigned for a change in pension rules has died of cancer. With no partner, parents or siblings Samantha wanted her Armed Forces Pension to transfer to her children when she died but the current rules did not allow that. Following an intervention from the Defence Secretary, this rule was amended and in such circumstances that will now be permitted. Samantha had the comfort of seeing these rules amended before she sadly passed away.

Summary. That concludes the latest Newsletter. Please continue to 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 later this month.

Arte et Marte.

Lt Col (Retd) Stuart Cowen
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