



REME ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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NUMBER 21 – July 19

BBC Wiltshire Breakfast Show. What an event and what a tremendous success. We are well and truly on the map for Wiltshire! I hope you had a chance to listen in and enjoyed what you heard – it was very moving to hear Jim Fox again I am sure you will agree. Check out BBC Sounds or Catch Up and search for BBC Wiltshire Breakfast Show with Ben Prater. I have been invited to join the list of regular Newspaper Reviewers on the show so will have the opportunity every 6 to 8 weeks or so to keep The REME Charity and REME Museum in the public eye.

REME Association Reunion 2020 and Annual Conference. Further to my note in the previous edition the Association Executive has decided to move the event for next year. Whilst the hotel this year provided what we needed we are going to try a different venue for 2020. In order to keep costs to the individual at a similar level this will require an increased grant from the REME Charity and I am delighted to say that this has been agreed. The venue is near Nottingham – check it out below:

<https://www.eastwood-hall.co.uk/>

Not bad eh? This is a fine example of how your voluntary contributions are helping as the Charity's Executive was very happy to agree to an increased grant in light of such contributions from our membership. Well done to all and if you have not yet sent me the form to make an annual voluntary charitable donation please give me a shout and I will send the forms.

REME Association Executive Regional Reps. Final call for volunteers. As I mentioned in the last edition, Bob Hambly of the SE and London region has had to stand down due to other commitments and Bob Hamilton of SW region has indicated he would like to stand down later this year. Both have given terrific service over the years and we thank them both for their outstanding contribution. We have volunteers for both regions so this is a final call if you wish to be considered alongside them otherwise their names will be put forward to the Executive Committee for confirmation in September. Your commitment as the Regional Rep is to act as the point of contact providing two-way communication to the members in your region, keep up to date with their activities and needs and most importantly, seek and represent their views at the Executive Committee which meets twice a year.

North Devon Branch. Mike Evans from our N Devon branch has asked me to point out a change of venue and the branch now convenes at Barnstaple Social Club, St George's Road, Barnstaple at 1930hrs on the second Tuesday of each month, barring August and October when there are no meetings. Not to be confused with Mike Evans of our Bristol Branch! If you are in that area please go along. Mike also requests a 'print version' of this newsletter. Details at Summary below.

Veterans' ID Cards. Still no firm news I am afraid. Here's the latest update.

<https://www.forces.net/military-life/veterans/uk-veteran-id-cards-all-gen-about-them>

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Once REME Always REME

REME Beer. Now that's grabbed your attention. Colonel Andy Rogers, Colonel REME, is delighted to let you all know that The REME Charity has recently agreed a partnership with a local brewery to create our very own REME beer! He continues: "We have recently agreed a partnership with a local brewery to create our very own REME beer! Mr Andrew McMorran owns the 'Crafty Brewery' and got in touch with me to discuss this business proposal. **The key factor is that Andrew is donating 10p from every litre sold to the REME Charity.** We have now served 'Silver Horse' beer (IPA) at our Spring Reception and at the REME tent at Twickenham, in May (where it sold out within 3 hours!) Silver Horse Lager to follow shortly.

Bottles are available to buy directly from the Crafty Brewery website: The MOD webmasters have blocked any link I can provide on this newsletter – killjoys – so please type into your search engine <https://www.craftybrewing.co.uk/online-store/REME-Silver-Horse-IPA-p139634039> Cheers!

Captain Hannah Graf REME. You may have seen former REME Captain Hannah Graf (nee Winterborne) in the news receiving her MBE at Buckingham Palace. Hannah recently retired from the Corps but managed to fit this in before she left regular service. She advises senior commanders and campaigns widely on LGBTQ+ issues. Congratulations Hannah.

<https://www.forces.net/news/former-transgender-army-officer-receives-mbe-ongoing-support-lgbtq-community>

REME Field Gun Crew. Many of you will have served with REME Aviation and be very familiar with the Annual Royal Navy Field Gun Competition. You may even have the missing fingers to prove it. Another fantastic performance from our team and the latest results are at the link below (I won't spoil the surprise)

<https://www.forces.net/news/history-made-years-collingwood-field-gun-competition>

Brian Wood MC. You may recall a previous edition when we highlighted Gavin Wood, a stalwart of SEME and Corps Football and his son Brian who served with PWRR? Delighted to announce that Brian's deeply moving book 'Double Crossed – A Code of Honour – A Complete Betrayal' is to be made into a film. Details at the link below.

<https://www.forces.net/military-life/veterans/brian-wood-mc-author-double-crossed-announces-movie-be-made>

INEOS Donation. You may be aware that Jim Ratcliffe, Britain's richest man has announced a £25.3million donation to the new national rehabilitation centre for servicemen/women. Jim's chemical, oil and fracking company INEOS is investing the cash in the construction of a new building at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC), north of Loughborough. INEOS receive lots of negative publicity so here's some good news.

Veterans UK Overseas. Of interest to any overseas Veterans. It is critical you keep Defence Business Services (DBS) updated with any change in your circumstances. Details at the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ensuring-the-right-payments-are-made-to-the-right-people>

Furthermore I am delighted to announce that Clark Adam, former REME and now an FCO officer has stepped forward as our 'Overseas Rep'. Clark is currently posted to Jamaica and moves shortly to Mexico City – not bad postings eh – and has links with 220 Embassies (or High Commissions) world-

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KEEP IN TOUCH STAY INFORMED

wide. He continues “our members living overseas may need a contact at their nearby mission, I can always put them in touch and as a British Passport holder/citizen, the Embassy is there to offer help if they have an issue. If you think I could be of use as an ‘Overseas representative’ happy to be of assistance”.

Many thanks Clark. If anyone wishes to get in touch with Clark please do so via me. If urgent – do seek consular advice immediately. Possibly a good idea to have Clark’s email address up your sleeve if you travel anywhere shall we say, ‘*unusual!*’

Armed Forces Pensions. You will recall I gave a warning order in the last edition concerning ‘transitional arrangements’ for public sector pension schemes and Firefighters and Judges had challenged these rulings in an ongoing court case that I was monitoring. For our Armed Forces, those born before 1 Apr 67 were not required to switch to AFPS15 and could remain on their old schemes of AFPS75 or AFPS05. It was recently announced that the Firefighters Union (FBU) has won the case brought to challenge these arrangements for their own schemes. The Court of Appeal’s judgement now stands and HM Government will have to compensate those firefighters and indeed judges affected. It is not yet known how this will affect the rest of the public sector. The terms of transitional arrangements were varied so it does not automatically result in all the new schemes introduced in 2015 will be similarly affected but it is possible and indeed likely. HM Government or the MOD have yet to release a statement and I am stood by to watch out for it. The FBU press release is at the link below.

<https://www.fbu.org.uk/news/2019/06/27/firefighters%E2%80%99-union-wins-landmark-pensions-case>

British Expeditionary Force. You may recall seeing the July 2018 Craftsman picturing REME founding member Hugh Bruce Powell celebrating his 101st birthday with the REME Cricket team during their tour of New Zealand. Hugh’s son Trevor has asked me to publicise his petition which aims to get some belated recognition for the few surviving members of the 1939/40 British Expeditionary Force to France. You will all be aware, many founding members of REME served with distinction in France in the 1939/40 BEF. The aim is to achieve as many signatures as possible by 27 Aug 19 and all information is at the link below. Trevor and indeed Hugh respectfully request you to consider supporting this petition. Thank you.

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/242090>

Summary. That concludes the latest Newsletter. You will notice I have attached a print version of the Newsletter as Mike Evans raised a very valid point that the ‘posh’ version takes up a lot of printer ink if it is to be printed for re-distribution and cascade. Fair point and thanks Mike. Keep your feedback coming and check out BBC Sounds or IPlayer for the BBC Wiltshire Breakfast Show. Give me a shout if you have trouble finding it. Have a great summer!

Arte et Marte.

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