



BRANCH NEWSLETTER EDITION 12 APRIL 2024

HEADLINES

Welcome

Easter already, is it me or are the years getting shorter? Perhaps it's an age thing but time does seem to fly. We are into the fourth month of 2024, and I have to say that I'm enjoying turning over my branch calendar each month. You may remember me saying that this year we would be having a competition to select the best pictures for next year's calendar. Well, what we need you to do is dig through your old snaps and find that special one that typifies the trade, or a Recy camp, exercise, or tour. We need photos without faces wherever possible, however if you have a great snap with you and a bunch of mates that you think typifies the trade then sent it in, but make sure that everyone on the picture agrees for it to be in a calendar first. Once we receive it, we will presume that permission has been agreed to publish. Once you have found "the one (or the many)" send it to me at john@sibley61@gmail.com with a brief description, include date (ish), location, exercise/tour/recy camp name, names of anyone in the photo and any other information you think is relevant. If your picture is chosen for the 2025 Branch calendar you will receive a free copy and your name will appear in lights on the strip in Las Vegas, well not really but you will get a freebie. So, what are you waiting for, get digging.

Read on and enjoy.

Arte et Marte.

Cheers

John



OBITUARIES – RECOVERY MECHANIC

Since the last published Newsletter, we have received the sad news of the passing of 4 Veteran Recovery Mechanics and in most cases receiving the news too late to be able to aid the grieving families. We would dearly love to publish a eulogy for each Recovery Mechanic that has passed, but unfortunately it is never easy to get someone to step up and do the writing.

Going forward, where we have a volunteer who steps up and submits a eulogy it shall always be published under this heading within the Newsletter. Where no eulogy or information is forthcoming, we will again share the notice that we placed within the Branch Facebook page.

ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE
PASSING OF:

**"RICHARD (DICKY)
EDENBOROUGH"**

Our thoughts and prayers are with family members at this sad time.



Those we love don't go away.
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near.
So loved, so missed, so very dear.

REST IN PEACE – ARTE ET MARTE

On behalf of the

Recovery Mechanics Branch
REME Association

We wish to announce the passing of

Jack Riley

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this sad time



Those we Love don't go away.
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, Unheard, but always near.
So loved, So missed, So very dear.

REST IN PEACE – ARTE ET MARTE

On behalf of the

Recovery Mechanics Branch
REME Association

We wish to announce the passing of

Dez Tanczos

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this sad time



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Unseen, Unheard, but always near.
So loved, So missed, So very dear.

REST IN PEACE – ARTE ET MARTE

ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE
PASSING OF:

"PHIL SILK"

Our thoughts and prayers are with family members at this sad time.



Those we love don't go away.
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near.
So loved, so missed, so very dear.

REST IN PEACE – ARTE ET MARTE



COMMITTEE NEWS

The Branch Committee has seen a few changes since the last Newsletter was published. We have unfortunately, lost the Branch Membership Manager, Ian "Mac" MacDonald and we would like to thank Ian for all the hard work and effort he put into transforming the membership and taking it to levels we now experience, a membership of almost 650. Billy Simpson, the Branch Welfare Member, also unfortunately, had to step down, Billy was the first appointed Welfare Member within the Branch, and we pass a thank you to him for his efforts and hard work in setting the role up. We also say farewell to the permanent post of Events Coordinator, Mark O'Mahony, he has had to step back a little, but he is still involved with committee matters where he can and is still Chief Organiser of the Overseas Trip to the Somme later this year, thanks to Mark for retaining this commitment, a lot of work and effort to organise such a trip.

The various roles above will now be shared amongst the remaining committee members who are thanked for taking on the additional tasks jointly and giving additional time to ensure that the Branch Membership still get the same service.

The structure of the committee is now as follows:

President: John Sibley
Chairman: Bryan Cronie
Treasurer: Chris Zeil
Merchandise: Steve Robertshaw
Serving Coordinator: Joe Williams
Veteran & Reservist Coordinator: Stuart Martin
Overseas Trip Organiser; Mark O'Mahony.

FORTH COMING EVENTS

Overseas Trip – The Somme

After a very successful trip last year to Ypres another overseas venture is in the pipeline. An outline of the planned trip is given below. Should you happen to know anyone who travelled to Ypres last year you ask them about it, and how successful and enjoyable it was. With that said, why don't you consider joining this year's trip to the Somme, we are very sure that it will equally as good and enjoyable, so don't wait until all the places are taken, book your seat on the bus now by contacting Mark O'Mahony on the following email address:
events.rechmech@gmail.com.

The trip is planned for 13-15 September 2024 and is open to all members, including family and friends as guests.

The Somme

Guide: Mr Barry Kitchener BEM. Barry was our guide last year and done a superb job, he is a very knowledgeable, approachable, and experienced guide.



Itinerary

1. Dates: 13 – 15 September 2024.
2. Meet on the evening of 12th September 2024 at Ashford. It is suggested that all attending use the Travelodge at Fureka Leisure Park which has its own restaurant with lots of others nearby. All attending will have to make their own booking.
3. Day 1 13th September 2024
 - a) All drive to Ashford ARC where free secure parking has been arranged, a 5-minute drive away.
 - b) Depart ARC for the Eurotunnel at 0830.
 - c) Arras Memorial (and lunch)
 - d) Devonshire Trench
 - e) Hotel Ibis Albert



Arras Memorial



Devonshire Trench

4. Day 2 14th September 2024
 - a) Beaumont Hamel
 - b) Ulster Tower – it is intended to hold a Memorial Service here on the Saturday night, which will include the Branch Standard and group photographs.
 - c) Thiepval Memoria



Beaumont Hamel
(Newfoundlanders)



Ulster Tower



Thiepval Memorial

Day 3 15th September 2024

- a) Vimy Ridge or Flesquier & Deborah D51 (TBC)
- b) Calais and home to the Ashford ARC



Vimy Ridge



Deborah D51

Costs

All related costs, coach, Hotel Albert, group admissions etc. will not be confirmed until the numbers attending are known. Should there be enough to occupy all seats on the bus the total cost is expected to be in the region of £270 per head, this could vary if undersubscribed.

Should you wish to attend there will be a non-refundable deposit of £150 per head required at the time of booking.

Should you require any additional information or unsure about anything please do not hesitate to contact Mark O Mahony on either of the following: events.rechmech@gmail.com or mobile number 07717837230.

Note: Should you wish to attend and have history of family members KIA and laid to rest in the Somme Region, Barry, the guide has kindly offered to investigate the history of such, which personalises the trip to those concerned.

Bow Shackle Ball

The Branch Annual Ball will take place on Saturday 28th September 2024 at the below shown venue. This venue has been well checked out and they have given the Branch a good deal, a double room with breakfast £100 per night and a 3-course meal at £45 per head, a very good deal in a world of rising costs. We would of course like to see a maximum attendance and there are still a few places left, so come on folks, particularly those who have never attended a Bow Shackle Ball, come and join us, meet up with friends of old, enjoy the hotel facilities,(look it up), 3-course meal, raffle, auction and disco music, take a break, a weekend away. Interested, please contact the Branch Treasurer, Chris Zeil, direct, on the following email: treasurer.recymechbranch@gmail.com

Did you know that throughout all the regions of the UK that the highest percentage of the Branch Members are located within East and West Midlands, so the venue location should not present too many travel difficulties for those who reside within these regions?



RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH

BOW SHACKLE BALL

Friday 27th - Sunday 29th September 2024

staying at the **Best Western Plus Ullesthorpe Court Hotel & Golf Club, Frolesworth Road, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire, LE17 5BZ**

YOUR WEEKEND PACKAGE INCLUDES:

Bed & Breakfast. AGM Saturday morning. Gala Dinner Saturday Night 28th September 2024. Raffle. Auction.

2 Night Package Double Room	£290 per couple
1 Night Package Double Room	£190 per couple
2 Night Package Single Room	£225 per person
1 Night Package Single Room	£135 per person
3 Night Package Double Room for NMA 26 th	£390 per couple
3 Night Package Single Room for NMA 26 th	£315 per person

DEPOSIT: A non-refundable Deposit of £20 per person is required at the time of saying yes to attending the Bow Shackle Ball.

PAYMENT: Full Payment is due by 3rd August 2024, staged payments accepted before this date, contact us for more details.

Pay Direct into our Bank: Lloyds Bank, Recy Mech Branch, Sort Code: 30-99-50, Account Number: 84352668 Please use BSB24 as the payment reference.

Please note that the REME Memorial Day at National Memorial Arboretum is on the Thursday 26th September 2024 before the Bow Shackle Ball on the Saturday 28th September 2024. The NMA is local to the Hotel and member can take advantage of a 3 night package if they wish to attend the REME Memorial Day.

All enquiries email: Chris Zeil
treasurer.recymechbranch@gmail.com

OTHER DATES FOR THE DIARY

WO & SNCO Reunion Lyneham – 11 – 12 October 2024

REME Memorial Day at the National Memorial Arboretum – 26 September 2024.

HAS ANYBODY SEEN...

This facility is available for members should they wish to track down friends and colleagues of old, just send in the name of the person you wish to trace, and we shall do our best to help you track them down.





NEWSLETTER

RECOVERY MECHANIC BRANCH

REME ASSOCIATION



MEMBERSHIP SUBMISSIONS

News from a Dutch member - P (Peter) M.M. de Jong

A colleague told me that in the Netherlands you can adopt graves of soldiers who have died in wars, i.e. graves of veterans. I am very interested in archaeology and genealogy and was interested in doing this. In addition, I work as a volunteer at Waterloo Uncovered and the Dutch sister organization Recovery on The Battlefield, More on that later. I personally have been deployed 5 times, 4 times half a year to Bosnia (Busavaca, Novi Trafnik, Bugojno and Sarajevo) and once to Afghanistan (Kandahar Airfield)

Personally, I am a veteran of the Dutch Army and have served with the Dutch Regiment Technical Troops and am also a member of the REME Association, Recovery Mechanics Branch, it seemed quite logical and nice to me to look for graves of veterans of the REME in my area.

After a long search I found three graves in a cemetery in Tilburg about 20 km away from me. I only adopted a few weeks ago, so I know very little about these fellow veterans. I recently went to have a look and placed three crosses on the graves on behalf of the REME.

The fallen veterans I have adopted are:

Leslie David Budd



John Granelli



Roland Fee



I already know that Leslie David Budd and Roland Fee were killed during a bombing raid in the vicinity of Tilburg where they camped with 4 fellow soldiers before they were deployed in the Rhineland.

Now the next step is that I will find out who they are and what exactly happened to them, how and where exactly they died, which units they were in, what kind of work they done, where did they come from, maybe during D-Day via France, Belgium to Tilburg? Where did they live and maybe there are still relatives, that I can do something for. In short, a fun and rewarding job. If anyone has any tips in which archives I can search in the UK, I'd love to hear from you, my email address is shown at the at the end of this article.



Now let me introduce “Waterloo Uncovered”. 3 years ago, I met this organization. I have been to Waterloo twice with WU and have participated in the excavations there. During these excavations I also met veterans of the REME. For the past 2 years, there has also been a Dutch sister organization of WU in the Netherlands: Recovery on The Battlefield (ROTB)

Both organisations work together a lot in the Netherlands and Belgium. The goal of these foundations is to link veterans with PTSD to an archaeologist and conduct archaeological excavations together. I work in both these foundations as a veteran supporter (aid worker) for the Dutch veterans, whom I then intensively supervise during these activities. Next month we will be doing excavations in the Netherlands again together with WU and in July we will be in Waterloo for two weeks. Again, beautiful and rewarding work.



The photographs show some volunteers who participate in activities that I get involved with.

The Group photographs were taken in Waterloo by the professional photographer **Chris van Houts**.

Furthermore, I go to London every year during Remembrance week and stay in a hotel in London for 6 days together with a group of Dutch veterans.



On Friday we will lay a wreath at the Dutch Cemetery on Mill Hill, on Saturday we will go to the RAH and on Sunday we will walk in the parade through London. And of course, I visit various museums and monuments and the pubs together with my best friend. The photographs below show me in the Royal Albert Hall, me, paying my respect and me with my best friend relaxing and thinking “it is beer time”.



Greetings from the Netherlands
Peter de Jong
Email: ptrding@xs4all.nl



Respect for a Founder Member.

Mid last year a Branch Member was contacted by a Mr Peter Phillips who asked how he could find out about his late father's service history. Having pointed him in the right direction, Peter began researching in effort to trace his father's journey during the years he was in service. Peter had been very successful in obtaining documents detailing his father's career as a military man and shared the detail with Ian MacDonald, a Branch Member, giving Ian permission to use the detail to create an article for the Newsletter. Ronnie is shown in the adjacent image along with his wife and one of his sons.

Pte Ronald Phillips (Ronnie) first enlisted in October 1941 into the RAOC as Driver- General Duties. In January 1942 he attended a Recovery course at Arborfield and later in 1942 he was transferred into REME as a Recovery Mechanic. Ronnie, clearly a founding member of the Corp and he was also one of the very first Recovery Mechanics. Sadly, Ronnie passed away at the age of 41 in 1962.





The following two images show extracts, as recorded in early times, from some of Ronnies career path and journey throughout his military days:

Unit	Record of all casualties regarding promotions (acting, temporary, local or substantive), appointments, transfers, postings, attachments, &c., forfeiture of pay, wounds, accidents, admission to and discharge from Hospital, Casualty Clearing Stations, &c. Date of disembarkation and embarkation from a theatre of war (including furlough, &c.)
R. & B. A. F. V. + R. T. C.	Attached to this Centre from 28 th Amul Bde Ord Coy for Recovery Bn
R. & A. F. V. + R. T. C.	Attended Recovery house at this centre from 21 st 11/42 - 2 nd 12/42. Qualified - Good
do	CTBA to this Centre on 3.2.42 morning to 9th Support Coy. Ord. Coy.
9 th SUPP. Coy. Ord. Coy. 6 R. H. A.	Posted to 12 th 6 R. H. A. w/1st Posted to 4 Non. Div. Ord. Coy. w/1st 18.8.42.

10.11.42 No 26. d. 31 st 11/42	R. & A. F. V. + R. T. C.	Centre from 21 st 11/42 - 2 nd 12/42. Qualified - Good
10.11.42 No 26. d. 31 st 11/42	do	CTBA to this Centre on 3.2.42 morning to 9th Support Coy. Ord. Coy.
10.11.42 No 26. d. 31 st 11/42	9 th SUPP. Coy. Ord. Coy. 6 R. H. A.	Posted to 12 th 6 R. H. A. w/1st Posted to 4 Non. Div. Ord. Coy. w/1st 18.8.42.
10.11.42 No 26. d. 31 st 11/42	4 Non. Div.	Transferred to REME w/1st 10.10.42 in rear of DOR and remains on strength of this unit until 1st 12/42
10.11.42 No 26. d. 31 st 11/42	do	Proceeded to port of Embarkation Embarked
10.11.42 No 26. d. 31 st 11/42	do	Disembarked Theatre of War



Once again, we have learned of another Recovery Mechanic who was part of the initial foundation and birth of the trade, we all chose to follow. Information such as Ronnies is ever increasingly scarce and more difficult to find, we should treasure such details and history and for sure there may well be more out there that we should showcase. If you know of anyone, or any history of these legends of the early days of the Recy Mech please submit it, don't let it just slip away as something from the past, you never know, it may be museum material and such individuals, our foundation, should be recognised and certainly recorded. The necessary steps are being taken to ensure that Ronnies name is added to the Memorial Wall at Lyneham. Thank you to Peter Phillips for sharing this historic information with us all.

Information provided by Ian MacDonald

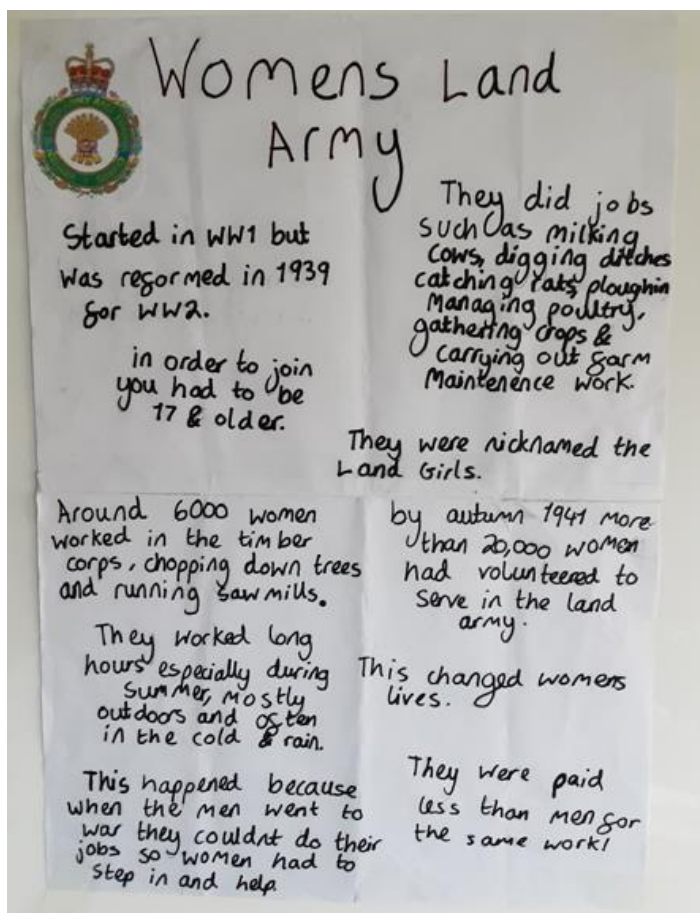
History & The Younger Generation.

Last year around 30 members of the Branch travelled to Ypres and visited quite a few of the beautifully maintained War Graves, I think for most, and those who had never visited such before it was a very sharp eye opener. Mostly all in attendance coming from a military background had their own thoughts on how hard and tough it must have been for those soldiers during the Great Wars, that was until reality hit home when you could see, read and be told some of the real details of what life was actually like for those great brave people, in most cases it probably painted a picture much more severe than the thoughts those in attendance had when left their homes to travel and make this visit.

During the visit much was heard in discussions about today's younger generation and whether history is still taught to the same levels today, particularly about what the brave women and men sacrificed during the wars so we could today have the freedom we experience. During the trip the question began to answer itself as we seen busloads of children doing exactly what we were doing, both UK and Continental children, not only visiting the War Graves but participating in the laying of wreaths at the Menin Gate Ceremony. In these modern times that we live in with the media everywhere, "stories" that are freely produced and openness of public opinion, there are many in the big world out there that think history (or selective items in history) should be no longer be remembered or celebrating. It was very comforting to see those buses of youngsters clearly making the statement "We Will Remember Them".

To prove just how young children of today are reminded about the sacrifices of the Wartime People I want to share this story with you. Imogen Taylor, shown in the photograph is 10 years old, she attends school in Ayr. At this young age the pupils in her class, individually, were given an assignment to do research on the "Land Army" and submit their findings. Imogen produced the following:

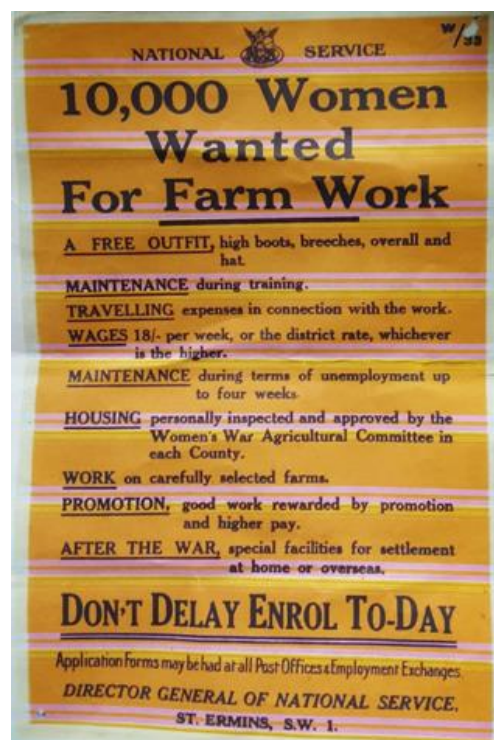




The uniform of the Land



Some of the documents that Imogen found during her research that assisted with her submission shown above.





This short story along with the supporting photographs of documents put together by Imogen clearly, just like the buses of youngsters at Ypres, goes some way to answering the question about “is history still taught in schools at the same levels today”? It appears that War History is healthy and still very much on the curriculum of schools and being delivered to the youngsters of today, as it should be.

The school in Ayr attended by Imogen has an everyday reminder of Wartime, the memorial image shown is located within the school grounds.

Now, about the content of the story, I just wonder, how many people sitting reading it have a little grin on their face and are saying “Well I never knew that”?





NEWSLETTER

RECOVERY MECHANIC BRANCH

REME ASSOCIATION



ANYONE REQUIRING ASSISTANCE – USEFUL CONTACTS

Assistance for the Branch Membership will always be close at hand, we are all in this together, and here to help. In the event of any member experiencing difficult times, they must not hesitate to contact the branch. If we as a group cannot assist with a situation, we certainly know where help may be available.



01302347866
Relate



08002606767
SSAFA Forces Line



08001381619
Combat Stress Military Helpline



TEXT 24/7
The Shout Text Service



08088084000
National Debtline



08009177650
Alcoholics Anonymous



03300940322
Gamblers Anonymous



08088010327
Men's Advice Line
Domestic Violence



01482421525
Eating Disorder Support



Alcohol Awareness
4-AlphaArmy@gmail.com



03001236600
Talk to Frank



08088001677
Cruse Bereavement Support



0808 802 8080



Samaritans 116 123



Royal Albert Hall

Service of Remembrance
(R Albert Hall)
festivalofremembrance.
seetickets.com
02070877929



01904882053
Army Welfare Service



remeconnect.org
01249 894507



REME Association Recovery Mechanic Branch
recymechbranch@gmail.com



WOY@REMECharity.org
association@remecharity.org
07590 848766





AND FINALLY

After a little piece of research looking back over the last couple of years at past events held by the Branch the highest percentage of membership to be present at any function is approximately 5.5%. One of our aims is to substantially increase this number and to enable this to happen we need your assistance. We totally understand that it is not always possible for people to get away when events are held and all the expense of travel, hotels etc, and particularly in current financial climate that the country finds itself in. Many will have greater priorities other than a Recy Mech event.

We, as a committee, would love to see you at one of the functions. You will have read earlier in the Newsletter about the two main events happening this year, a visit to the Battlefields around the area of the Somme and of course the annual Bow Shackle Ball, both occurring in the latter half of the year. If you can, consider attending one of these events, I can personally say that both events are worthwhile, enjoyable, brings back floods of memories from days gone by and hopefully also help those in need through the branch donations from the proceeds to deserving charities. Give it a go, you won't be disappointed.

We always struggle to encourage members to submit articles for the Newsletter, yet you can stand in a bar with a bunch of Recy Mechs who can easily tell stories all the way through till breakfast time, start thinking about it for the next Newsletter. Long time ago John Sibley offered to collate stories sent in by members to make a book or booklet so that our history will never be forgotten. We all have a skeleton in the cupboard of misdemeanours that occurred during our time in service, we would really love to try to preserve such moments. Those of you who have visited the Memorial Wall at Lyneham and seen all the names on there, just think how many stories went untold and shall never be heard, So, please do not be shy, lets leave the stories of yesteryear in a publication so that future generations of Recovery Mechanics can sit in a bar and talk about them until breakfast time. Also, please don't forget, John has requested old photographs with the view to producing next year's calendar, get them out and send them in now before you forget about them.

More recently Stu Martin has sent out the menu choices for the 3-course meal at the Bow Shackle Ball, those attending should fill these out as early as possible and certainly no later than 3 August 2024, the date they shall be submitted to the hotel, like the photographs for John, please do it now before it gets forgotten about.

Finally, we have had many new members over the last year, but how many have the unique tie, polo shirt, car sticker, hoodie, or other choices of merchandise available from Steve Robertshaw at merch.rmb@gmail.com?

Stay Safe

BC