NEWSLETTER
EDITION 20 JUNE 2026

READ ABOUT IT IN MEMBERS SUBMISSIONS

HEADLINES

How time flies. The longest day is just around the corner, yet the weather seems determined not to reflect the traditional British summer — at least not where I live.

It has been a busy three months for the Committee, with members working hard to organise our annual Branch events. Winch to the Wall was a great success last year and is already fully booked for this year. The Bow Shackle Ball looks set for a record attendance, planning is well underway for the Overseas Trip in 2027, and thoughts are already turning to November as preparations begin for the Branch visit to the hometown of one of our fallen heroes.

As I write this Newsletter, I want to ask the membership for your thoughts. How often do you feel the Branch should publish a Newsletter? At present, it is issued quarterly (give or take), but we do sometimes struggle for content and rely heavily on Committee members to fill the pages.

We currently have 746 members yet trying to gather articles from more than a handful of you can feel like pulling hens' teeth. Most of our news ends up being reports from events that have already taken place. Ideally, we would love to include stories, experiences, and contributions from you — the readers. I can stand at a bar and listen to Recy Mechs tell stories for one evening and gather enough material to fill an encyclopaedia.

So, I put the question to you: Is quarterly too frequent? Would a six-monthly or even annual Newsletter be more appropriate? Your feedback would be greatly appreciated.

A polite reminder that the Branch has its own range of merchandise — hats, jumpers, polos, T-shirts, ties, plaques and more — all available online. Simply log in to the Branch website and visit the Shop section. You can view, order, and pay online, and your items will arrive within 7–10 days.

Recently, we were contacted by a non-member informing us that one of our members is currently in hospital. The Branch has sent a get-well card and is arranging a visit. If you become aware of a member who is unwell or in hospital, please let us know. We want to send our best wishes and, where appropriate, arrange a visit.

If you would be willing to visit a member when requested, simply reply to the email that delivered this Newsletter with a single word: YES.

Holiday season is now upon us. For those heading away, enjoy your break — and try not to take in too much of the television coverage at the moment, as there is an awful lot of "kiss-ball" dominating the screens. Normality will return soon enough when the Nations Internationals begin.

Stay safe,

BC

OBITUARIES – RECOVERY MECHANIC

Since the issuing of Newsletter Edition 19 in March 2026, the Branch has learned of the passing of two Veteran Recovery Mechanics.

RIP – Arte-et Marte

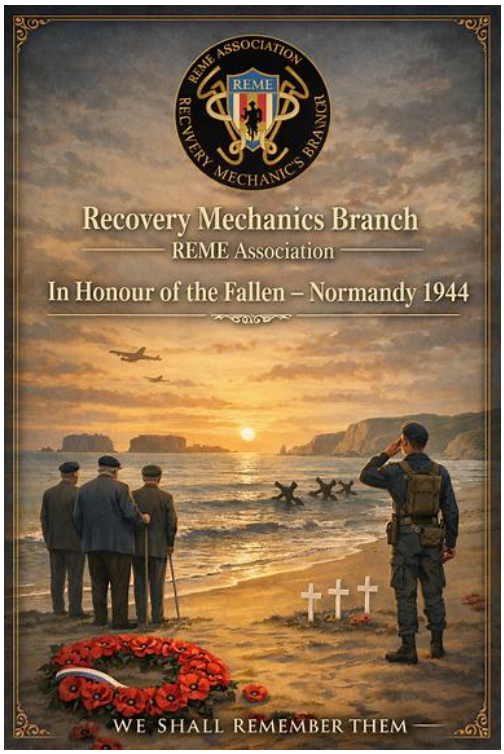
COMMITTEE NEWS

We have seen a couple of changes within the committee personnel recently with the addition of Gordon McAndrew, (volunteered, something we don't see very often) Gordon will take over the role of Secretary and some duties in connection with the Branch Welfare, the Secretary position has been vacant for some time, thank you Gordon, we are sure that you will make great contributions to the smooth running of the Branch – Welcome on board.

Another change is the handover/takeover of the Committee Serving Member. Michael Banfield is moving on to pastures new on promotion, congratulations Michael, and a big thank you for your time and contributions to the Branch during your time on the committee, we wish you all the very best in your appointment. Taking over from Michael as Serving Member is Sgt James (Batesy) Bates - welcome on board, we look forward to working with you and thank you for volunteering.

FORTH COMING EVENTS

Those of you who have registered and have paid a deposit will be aware of the forthcoming Bow Shackle Ball that will be held over the period of 25 – 27 September 2026. Just recently you will have received an email from the Branch Treasure updating you on payment and showing the menu choices for the event. If you have not already done so, could you please respond to the email, listing your choices from the menu. I can also inform you that, as of now, this year there will be record number attending.



After a review of the conditions attached to the Overseas Trip 2027 Normandy 28 - 31 May 2027 it is hoped that the new conditions laid out below can assist those who have already registered with your planning and attract more members to join in with this venture - you will not be disappointed.

"As the trip is so far away and life can change, a £150 non-refundable deposit is on reflection a lot to ask.

I have therefore had a chat with the guide and coach people. Jim our guide is happy to defer the deposit until December, which is good news!

So, to secure your place on the May 2027 trip, we are offering the revised following payment terms:

Deposit:

** An initial holding deposit of £25.00 per person is required to reserve a place. This is fully refundable until 30 Nov.*
** The remaining deposit balance of £125.00 per person must be paid in full by 30 November 2026. This is non-refundable, (used to book ferry tickets and Caen hotel).*
** The remaining costs payable in two stages*
** £214.00pp by 01 Feb and the final balance, £214.00pp by the 16th of April 2027*

This cost is based on 30 person's attending so if we can get 40+ the cost will reduce significantly. Those who would like to attend and not yet registered should pay the initial deposit using the bank details below - so only £25 per- person to pay until the end of November 2026.

Recy Mech Branch,
Sort code 30-99-50
Account number 84352668

It is hoped that the reviewing of the conditions can help members plan and we look forward to seeing you there.

Yet another event that will be upon us soon is the "Winch To The Wall", taking place at Lyneham on the 5th of September 2026. This event was first held last year; it was raised out of an idea put forward by the Branch President and proved to be so popular that it has now been pencilled in as an annual event. This year's event has already been sold out; however, we want to make you aware that such an event exists. It gives families the opportunity to visit and view the Recovery Mechanics Memorial Wall, not something that can be easily done by a family member as the Memorial Wall is inside the fence.

Whilst there are no places left for this year's tour, take note that it is an annual event, it also gives an opportunity for those who attend to visit the Corp Museum and reminisce amongst the Historic Vehicles held in the late **Roger Jones MBE** hanger.

BC

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- WO & SNCO Reunion Lyneham 3 – 4 July 2026
- Winch to the Wall will be held on 5 September 2026
- The Bow Shackle Ball and Annual General Meeting - 25 – 27 September 2026
- REME Memorial Day at the Arboretum will be held on 1 October 2026
- Remembrance Day Sunday 08 November 2026

OTHER DATES FOR THE DIARY

- Overseas Trip 2027 Normandy 28 - 31 May 2027

HAS ANYBODY SEEN…

This section of the Newsletter is included in each Edition. The idea being that membership who wish to attempt to contact Recovery Mechanics of yesteryear can appeal through the Newsletter for assistance. Just let us know through the pages of our Facebook Account or email the Branch **NEW** email address, hello@recymechbranch.co.uk State who you are trying to trace, and we will include it in the Newsletter and hopefully someone can help you in your search.

Surprisingly, this facility has yet to be used, whilst there have been a couple of requests for contacts on the Branch Facebook page, nothing yet through the Newsletter. The Branch has details of all members, and should you be looking for someone, we can help, for obvious reasons we cannot hand out details without prior permission of any individual you may be seeking to reunite with.

MEMBERSHIP SUBMISSIONS

After 85 years we are together again

Even though there was already motorization of the Dutch army before the Second World War, the origin of the Regiment Technical Troops (RTT) is contained in the Royal Dutch Brigade that was stationed in Congleton (UK) during the 2nd World War.

The History

In a letter from the then Dutch Minister of War to the Commander of the Dutch Brigade in Congleton, the units belonging to this Brigade are mentioned. One of those units was the "mobile repair workshop for automobiles and bicycles" The date of the letter in question (**20 March 1941**) is therefore regarded as the "date of birth" of the Regiment of Technical Troops.

This "Light Aid Detachment" was the first small independent recovery unit. Soon this was converted into a much heavier "Independent Workshop Detachment" that could carry out repairs and had special workshop cars. In the Netherlands, the Royal Dutch Brigade was able to take over a workshop of the Canadians in Eindhoven. This formed the basis of the current Technical Troops Regiment

The Regiment of Technical Troops has a regimental flag, which, in addition to the founding year 1941, also includes the colours that are identical to those of the British Technical Service (Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME), namely **blue, yellow and red**.

The task of the Technical Troops Regiment is to repair and maintain almost all ground-based equipment in the Army, Navy and Air Force, but also to maintain ammunition and clear explosives.

The first contact

Because this year it is 85 years ago that the Regiment was founded, the current regimental commander, Lieutenant Colonel Dion Dols, has put together a project team "85 years of RTT" under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Peter Voermans and WO2 Peter de Jong (Ret). The project team was tasked with giving substance to this anniversary year and also

making contact with REME Headquarters and the REME Association to celebrate this special anniversary together.

During the commemoration week in March, a small delegation from the REME was invited to come to the Netherlands to reflect on and give substance to the celebration of 85 years of RTT. The delegation participated in various activities in the context of this anniversary. For example, during Remembrance Day, the REME laid a wreath at the RTT-monument in Soesterberg. The next day, the group visited the RTT-museum, and an evening program was also organized in Arnhem.

Chris Zeil laying a wreath on behalf of the Branch

Bob Fullbrook on parade with the Branch Standard

In addition, the delegation participated in a battlefield tour in Oosterbeek, which focused on the historical events in the region during the Second World War. The guests were also present at the regimental sports day, the subsequent street food meal and party evening in Schaarsbergen.

The return visit to the REME in Lyneham was scheduled from 18-22 May. With a delegation of 24 people, we travelled to England. The as young as possible, soldiers, corporals, sergeants and officers from the RTT-units and some veterans we were warmly welcomed by WO1 Daniel Martin and Sgt Nathan Grey at the MOD Lyneham HQ REME. After the alloy, we went to dinner together in a local restaurant to get to know each other further.

Day of Remembrance

The first study day was dedicated to commemoration. We travelled to Staffordshire where we visited the military and civil war memorials in the memorial gardens of the Arboretum National Monument. On arrival we were welcomed by John Sibley, Ian Macdonald and Andrew Gray from the REME Association. After coffee we had an extensive tour of almost all the monuments from John and received a lot of information about them. It was very imposing, impressive and beautiful. At the remembrance of the REME we laid a wreath on behalf of the RTT and the RTT in memory of all fallen REME and RTT soldiers. After a late lunch we drove back to Lyneham.

The RTT Wreath

The RTT contingent at the Corps Memorial

For dinner we were invited by the Regimental Commander of the REME in the officers' mess. During the speeches, it was agreed that both units would make efforts, where possible, to intensify cooperation between the REME and the RTT. To reinforce this, a toast with the well-known "lubricating oil" could not be missed.

After dinner we moved to the bar of the officers' mess, where the first contacts were made with the other officers present. It was a pleasant end to the day.

Day of the present

The second study day is dedicated to the present and we visit the 8th Training Battalion REME. We will look at the training and instruction tools that the young soldiers must learn in preparation for their military deployment. Both Daniel and Nathan take us to their own "domain" Recovery Training Wing.

Because our participants were given study assignments by us, plenty of questions were asked during the tour. The assignments are very diverse, but ultimately all have the same goal: to gain insight into the historical relationship between the REME and the Dutch Technical Service. In addition, the differences and similarities in the field of training, organization and operational action are examined.

A summary of this study project will be presented later in the year to, among others, our Regimental Commander. Something we immediately notice is that the helicopter mechanic is also trained here and these mechanics are also covered by the REME. On the other hand, the EOD is not covered by the REME and that is the case with us. After we have seen the instruction halls of the welders, instruments, weapons, Emergency Repair (BDR), wheel and track mechanics and the vehicle inspection, we continue to the staff building. It is nice that in the corridors of the building a lot of attention is paid by means of photos to the various veterans who have had a high decoration or are commemorated. After a group photo at the monument, a BBQ is waiting for us. That evening we were invited to the non-commissioned officers' mess for a joint drink with the non-commissioned officers and invited officers. It was also fun again that evening.

Day of the past

The third and final study day is dedicated to the past. Today we visit the REME-museum and the workshop of the REME-museum. Here too we are shown around by an employee of the museum. Just like in our museum, volunteers work here as well. A very nice and well-appointed museum. The work hall was large and was completely full of old vehicles that were all waiting for a facelift. Very special was the fleet of the British Royal Family, which was also waiting for a restoration. Again, of course, many questions arose with regard to the study assignment.

After these tours, we were released around 1400 hours to further develop the assignment, to do something ourselves and to refuel the vehicles so that we can leave for the Netherlands on Friday at 08:00.

All in all, a very successful study week.

On behalf of all participants, I would like to thank a few people for the wonderful week that we all enjoyed. Everyone was "HAPPY"

First of all, both Regimental Commanders, Lieutenant Colonel Dion Dols and Colonel Ian Wallace, as well as the RSMs of both regiments. They made it possible for us to make these visits.

- But certainly, also our supervisors of this week, WO1 Daniel and Sgt Nathan, who took us with them and guided us all week.

- Thanks also to John Sibley, Ian MacDonald (photographer) and Andrew Gray for the tour of the NMA and for all the beautiful, and sometimes sad, stories at each monument.
- We would also like to thank the instruction staff of the 8th Training Battalion REME; They informed us extensively about their work and especially about their passion for it. We have gained a good insight into the training courses within the REME-regiment.
- We would also like to thank the staff of the REME Museum and Andrew Gray for all the explanations and information. We not only take a lot of knowledge back to the Netherlands, but also a lot of souvenirs from the museum shop.
- In addition, thanks to Bryan Cronie, who has done a lot of work behind the scenes to receive us. Unfortunately, we did not meet you due to circumstances, but we probably will in the future.

Hopefully this will have a consequence in the future, and we can see each other more often during mutual events. For me personally, that will be during Remembrance Week in London and for Dan and Nath it will be King's Day in the Netherlands.

RTT REFICERE, SEMPER ET UBIQUE
REME ARTE ET MARTE

WO2 (Ret) Peter de Jong
Dutch Technical Troops

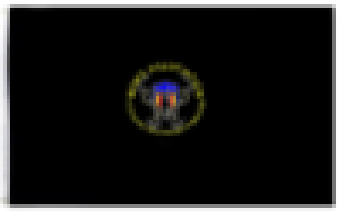
Branch Update

To keep the Branch up to date with how we are doing from a membership point of view, below you shall see the latest figures:

Total Membership: 744
Facebook Members: 690
REME Connect: 255

I believe that we are the largest Association Branch and from the records displayed within the REME Connect App, we certainly have the largest membership, "Recovery Mechanics leading from the rear again". Have you downloaded the REME Connect App yet and signed up, well worth doing, gives you a great platform for getting the latest Corp News and keeping in touch with friends.

Merchandise



All available on the Branch website

recymechbranch.co.uk

Check it out

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

Alcohol Awareness
4-AlphaArmy@gmail.com

03001236600
Talk to Frank

01482421525
Eating Disorder Support

08088010327
Men's Advice Line
Domestic Violence

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

03300940322
Gamblers Anonymous

Samaritans 116 123

Corps Welfare Warrant Officer
kelvin.redshaw823@mod.gov.uk
07821 655636

08088001677
Cruse Bereavement Support

0808 802 8080

01904882053
Army Welfare Service

REME Association
Recovery Mechanics Branch
hello@recymechbranch.co.uk

remeconnect.org
01249 894507

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

AND FINALLY

As a branch, we want to be able to help as many of our members who are in need as possible. I hope none of you ever need to use this information but if you do, we are ready and willing to help. So, what can we do for you?

Firstly, we are here to listen. We are all Recy Mechs, whether veteran or serving, regular or reservist, while we were serving, we have been through the same shit but just on different days, so we can understand some of the issues, some of the problems that we can all face on a day-to-day basis. However, there will be times when we just don't have an answer, but we can still be that friendly face, that shoulder to cry on, that port in a storm. And if we don't have an answer, we can probably put you in touch with someone who does.

Secondly, your branch has a small welfare fund, named after one of our own and who is sadly missed, Nigel Bisgrove. His family donated a sum of money to the branch after their fathers passing to be used for members welfare. We have kept this alive by introducing the Bisgrove Fund. Members who are in great need of immediate financial assistance can apply to the Bisgrove fund via the branch. We won't be able to help everyone, we know that. Our funds are limited but if we can help a few then that's a start.

Finally, we can signpost you to where the help you need is available. This is not always an easy path and members should understand that, as always there is a level of bureaucracy involved that maybe frustrating. So where do you begin if you need any type of help through the system. The following is from the REME Charity, and it outlines the process to take.

Step 1 *- Contact SSAFA on 0800 731 4880 or the RBL on 0808 802 8080*
Step 2 *- Where necessary, a caseworker will come to visit you and together you complete* ***Assessment Form A****. The caseworker will assess your need to get a full picture and advise you on a route forward. They will also contact the Corps to keep them in the picture.*
Step 3 *- Your caseworker will forward the completed* ***Form A*** *to the charity best positioned to support you. This may be the REME Charity but can also be your Local Authority, the ABF, RBL or one of the many organisations out there who deal with specific issues. Give as much detail as you can when completing the form.*
Step 4 *- When the REME Charity receives your* ***Form A****, we deal with it as quickly as we can. Our decision-making processes are swift and we promise, we won't keep you waiting long.*
Step 5 *- Once a grant has been approved, it will be paid to SSAFA and they will close the case.*

It does seem convoluted but it's the only way to ensure you get the help you need. Form A is not available as a download; it is only used by trained SSAFA caseworkers. If you encounter any problems during this process, please don't hesitate to contact the branch on hello@recymechbranch.co.uk or the Corps welfare team on welfare@remecharity.org for further support.

Cheers

John