



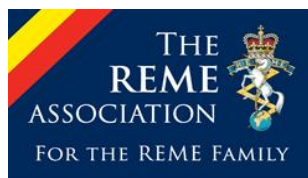
NEWSLETTER

RECOVERY MECHANIC BRANCH

REME ASSOCIATION



**NEWSLETTER
EDITION 21
September 2026**





HEADLINES

Hi all and welcome to the latest edition of the branch newsletter. The committee has been busy over the past few months getting ready for Winch to the Wall, the Bow Shackle Ball and our Normandy visit planned for May 27.

Winch to the Wall went ahead on the 5th September and was a great success. 29 members, including families of our lost comrades joined members of the committee and willing volunteers for a trip beyond the wire to visit the trades stunning memorial wall. There is more about this fantastic event later in the newsletter. But I have to mention a special thanks to all the volunteers who helped on the day for giving up their own time and at their own cost to make the event the success it was, I know, like me everyone who attended really appreciates the effort so well done and thank you, Bryan Cronie, Stuart Martin and James Bates from the committee and Ian Macdonald, our resident photographer. **Save the date – Winch to the Wall 2027 will take place on 4th September 2027.**

So, we are just a few days away from the extravaganza that is Bow Shackle Ball. This year we are expecting nearly 90 guests, a record so far. Hats off to Chris Zeil, the driving force behind BSB. If you have missed out on this year's ball, get in early for next years. **Save the date folks BSB 27 will be on the 2nd Oct 2027.**

And as if that wasn't enough, on the **28th to the 31May 2027** we are invading France (again). This time to visit the D-Day battlefields of Normandy. Again, there is more about this once in a lifetime trip later in the newsletter. Don't miss out and live with regret! There are still places left on this fabulous event so look out for the flyer on Facebook and further information later.

We are packing tons of great opportunities for our members to enjoy, don't miss out. If you can try and come along to some, if not all and continue to enjoy the camaraderie of our trade.

Cheers

John



OBITUARIES – RECOVERY MECHANIC

Sadly, since the issue of Edition 20 of the Newsletter we report the passing of 3 colleague's, 2 Veteran Recovery Mechanics and tragically a very young Serving Recovery "Finley" who died as result of an accident whilst on holiday in Bali, Indonesia.



ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF:

"Iain Hall"

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.



ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF:

"Finley John Perkins"

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.

The Branch still struggles to obtain detail of the passing of a Recovery Mechanic; we very much rely on the membership to notify the committee when they learn of the passing of a fellow Recovery Mechanic. Early notification allows the Branch to offer grieving families assistance should they desire and it also allows the Branch to pass on names of the deceased to the Recovery Training Wing (RTW) at Lyneham for inclusion on the Recovery Mechanic Memorial Wall. Likewise, the Branch still struggle to get anyone to write a eulogy. The term eulogy should not scare people away from putting pen to paper, it doesn't have to be about the lifeline, it could equally be a story from days gone by, something that you may recall about the individual when you were serving (as long as it is clean, inoffensive and you remember the circumstances in which you write it). Again, anyone willing to send in a eulogy or story should do so by using the **NEW** email address hello@recymechbranch.co.uk.



ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF:

"Fred Turner"

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.



COMMITTEE NEWS

The Branch Committee has not seen any changes since the last Newsletter, and they continue to work hard always looking for ways to make improvements within the Branch. It is only a matter of days now until the Bow Shackle Ball (BSB), a very busy time and another event that takes lots of dedication and time to organise, thanks to Chris Z who has very successfully organised the ball every year to be the great success that it is, there shall be a record attendance at it this year, if you have never attended, you should give it a go next year, the advert with date and all costings are within this Newsletter – be the first to register and contact Chris on the email address in the advert.

FORTH COMING EVENTS & DATES FOR THE DIARY

- 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 (Cenotaph)
- Remembrance Fallen Brother – 7/8 November Ellesmere Port, Cheshire.
- Branch Overseas Trip 2027 – 28 – 31 May 2027
- Winch To The Wall 2027 – 04 September 2027
- Bow Shackle Ball 2027 – 1 - 3 October 2027

EVENT DETAIL

The Branch Overseas Trip 2027 - A great opportunity to refresh your history knowledge, walk in the footsteps of heroes, experience the raw emotion of the Normandy War Graves, stand on the historic planks of Pegasus Bridge and honour the immense courage of the Allied Forces who changed the course of history.

All details of this venture are in the Flyer Pages below. The more that travel, cheaper the costs, so give it some thought, it would be great to see some new faces travelling and take the opportunity to visit all these historic and very moving places.



**RECOVERY MECHANIC
BRANCH**

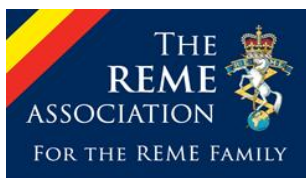
REME ASSOCIATION



Normandy - Where Courage Changed the World – 28-31 May 2027

Next May 2027, join us for a journey of remembrance to the battlefields of Normandy ground forever marked by courage, duty, and sacrifice.

Visit La Point Du Hoc where U.S. Army Rangers scaled sheer cliffs under relentless enemy fire. Their mission: destroy German artillery threatening the landings at Omaha Beach and Utah Beach.





Outnumbered, exposed, and fighting atop shattered cliffs, the Rangers held their ground against fierce counterattacks until relief arrived.

Stand on the sands of Omaha Beach, where American servicemen faced relentless fire and pressed forward with extraordinary resolve.

Walk the British sectors at Gold Beach, where discipline and determination broke through the Atlantic Wall.

Visit the site of the daring airborne assault Operation Deadstick and the action at Pegasus Bridge - secured in the opening moments of D-Day through skill, courage, and unwavering commitment to the mission.

Join us at the British Normandy Memorial for a moving act of remembrance and tribute.

Overlooking the historic Gold Beach, this powerful memorial bears the names of the 22,442 servicemen and women under British command who gave their lives on D-Day and during the Battle of Normandy.

Together, we will take part in a wreath-laying ceremony to honour their sacrifice, reflect on their courage, and ensure their legacy is never forgotten.

A moment of remembrance. A gesture of gratitude. A lasting tribute.

This is more than a tour.

It is a chance to reflect.

To remember comrades past and present.

To stand where ordinary men accomplished extraordinary things.

Join your fellow Recy Mechs in honouring service, sacrifice, and the enduring bond of those who wear-or have worn-the uniform.

28-31 May 2027 – Normandy Awaits.

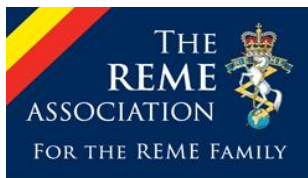
Please read on for a detailed tour itinerary and to book:

Meals: • B = Breakfast • L = Lunch • D = Dinner • PL = Packed Lunch

Thursday 27 May 2027 - Book your own room, check in and RV the night before departure at the Travelodge Portsmouth Copnor Rd, Hilsea, Portsmouth PO3 5HS. This an opportunity to relax before the departure, the tour begins on Friday morning.

Friday 28 May 2027

- Depart hotel for Portsmouth D-Day Museum.





- Depart museum for secure parking at 103Bn REME Army Reserve Centre (ARC) Portsmouth. (TBC)
- Pick up executive coach 33/49-seater, move to Ferry Port for TBC hrs ferry to Caen
- ETA Caen 2230hrs local, 2300hrs arrive Caen Ibis or Mercure Hotel

Saturday 29 May American D-Day (B, PL)

After breakfast we take a packed lunch with us and depart from our hotel at 08:30. Today we visit:

- La Pointe Due Hoc
- Lunch Omaha Beach Café
- Overlord Museum
- American Omaha Cemetery
- Return Caen hotel. Time to freshen up before dinner at your hotel or in the local area.



Sunday 30 May British D-Day (B, PL)

After breakfast we take a packed lunch with us and depart from our hotel at 08:30. Today we visit:

- Arromanches Mulberry Harbour
- Sword Beach
- Lunch Pegasus Bridge Café Gondree the 'Pegasus Bridge Café'
- Pegasus Bridge Assault and Museum
- Make our way back to our hotel where you can freshen up and have dinner at your hotel or in the local area.





Monday 31 May Act of Remembrance wreath-laying ceremony (B, PL)

After breakfast we take a packed lunch with us and depart from our hotel at 08:30.

Today we visit:

- The Winston Churchill Centre, dress Mufti and Medals.
- British Normandy Memorial Branch Wreath Laying Ceremony with Standard, group photos.



With our tour ended we depart and begin our return journey to Caen Ferry Port where you can change into something more comfortable. Caen ferry TBC hrs, ETA Portsmouth TBC hrs local. Coach drops off at 103Bn collect cars and depart for home.

Information and Booking

Package includes:

- Full Services of a Battlefield Historian/Guide inc. travel to & from Portsmouth
- Executive coach transport with driver
 - Pick up and drop off, secure parking at 103Bn (TBC)
 - Return ferry Portsmouth to Caen with meal included on outward and return journey
 - Three nights at a Caen city centre Ibis or Mercure hotel with b/fast, packed lunch if requested.
 - City taxes
 - Meals as per the itinerary
 - Museum entrance fees (Portsmouth D-Day £14.55 per head)
 - Full administration and booking service
 - 24 hours on call UK duty manager service throughout your tour (me 😊)

Not included:

- The first additional night at the Travelodge Portsmouth if required.
- Personal travel insurance; gratuities; drinks, lunch time meals, or packed lunch if requested, evening meals



Tour vehicle:

You will travel in an executive coach with professional driver which will be equipped with air conditioning, heating, WC and seat belts which adhere to current safety guidelines.

Battlefield Historian/Guide

Your Battlefield Historian/Guide is Ian who has been an active battlefield guide for more than 12 years and has conducted tours of all the major battlefields.

Eligibility

You are booking this with the Recovery Mechanics Branch who are responsible for all elements of the tour, which is exclusively for its members and their invited guests, be these family, relatives or friends on a first come basis.

Costs

- The cost is based on a **minimum** of 30 paying guests @ £578.00 per person.
- With a maximum of 49 paying guests' cost will reduce to £354.00 per person.

Booking payments and dates

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
 - £209.00pp by 01 Feb
 - the final balance £209.00pp by 16 April
- So only £25 per- person to pay until end Nov.

I hope that helps a little. Looking forwards to seeing you there.

Payments can be made by credit, debit card or bank transfer into the branch account.

Recy Mech Branch,

Sort code 30-99-50

Account number 84352668

Anyone interested please get in touch, it will be great to have you join u, the more the merrier, and cheaper!!

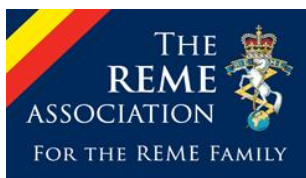
Arte et Marte

Event organiser

Mark O'Mahony

M: 07717837230

E: mark@knowriskuk.com





REME Association



RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH

BOW SHACKLE BALL

Friday 1st – Sunday 3rd October 2027

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

YOUR WEEKEND PACKAGE INCLUDES:

Bed & Breakfast. Friday evening get together i.e. pull up a sandbag and swing the light, reminisce with old friends and make new ones. AGM Saturday afternoon. Gala Dinner Saturday Night 2nd October 2027. Silent Raffle. Auction. Disco.

Gala Dinner.....£52.00 per Guest.

Standard Double Room...Double Occupancy £110.00 per night.

Standard Double Room...Single Occupancy £100.00 per night.

Please note we only have 24 Standard Doubles.

Executive Double Room...Double Occupancy £110.00 per night.

Executive Double Room...Single Occupancy £100.00 per night.

Please note we only have 14 available.

Standard Twin Room...Double Occupancy £110.00 per night.

Standard Twin Room...Single Occupancy £100.00 per night.

Please note we only have 4 available.

DEPOSIT: A non-refundable Deposit of £26 per person is required at the time of saying yes to attending the Bow Shackle Ball.

PAYMENT: Full Payment is due by 15th August 2027, staged payments accepted before this date, contact myself for more details.

Pay Direct into our Bank: Lloyds Bank, Recy Mech Branch, Sort Code: 30-99-50, Account Number: 84352668 Please use BSB27 as the payment reference.

All enquiries email: Chris Zell, treasurer.recymechbranch@gmail.com



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

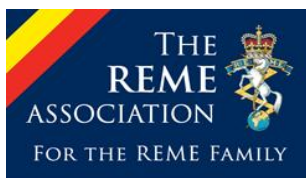
Batus 1982, ish



So, I was thinking we should put a short article in the newsletter each edition with a memorable job we were involved in. So have a go please, I was thinking of something like Stags Rat or perhaps the AEC towing Concorde. I'm sure we all have lots to put in here.

My submission -The ARV above is T48A (for the non tankies Tango=Tanks,4=DSqn,8=Fitter section and A the Sqn, ARV). The Regiment 4/7 RDG the location is the British Army Training Unit Suffield, Canada.

A dry lake out on the prairie:





I was parked a couple of miles away when I got the call tasking me to recover a 432 APC which had tried to drive through a dry lake! The lakes are on the map in blue, but the water had evaporated leaving soft mud under a dry crust. Well, it's nice and flat and the shortest way between A and B is a straight line which took the inexperienced commander straight into the middle of this lake before the 432 got stuck.

So, when I got there, He was farther than my full winch rope to get to so I decided to drive in myself to get him, as far as I could before I got the ARV bogged. You can see this in the photo above.

My plan was to get as close as possible, pull him out, get him to drive to the bank then use the 432 as an anchor so I could self-recover.

Just before I decided to drive into the lake, I had a very panicky Squadron Leader on the radio saying the battle group are heading your way and they are hard targeting anything they saw - my reply - I'd best get on with it then.

The upshot of it was I had a helicopter hovering above us to evacuate the crew if things didn't go well.

I'm happy to say everything worked and I got myself out just in time, it was a bit squeaky bum at one point, and we didn't have time to winch the rope in, just chucked it on the front and ran away.

So, lots of great memories of BATUS and lots of jobs done there, on another day I might mention a few adventures in the Sin Bin, but you will have to wait for that.

Submitted by Steve Robertshaw

WINCH TO THE WALL



RECOVERY MECHANICS MEMORIAL WALL





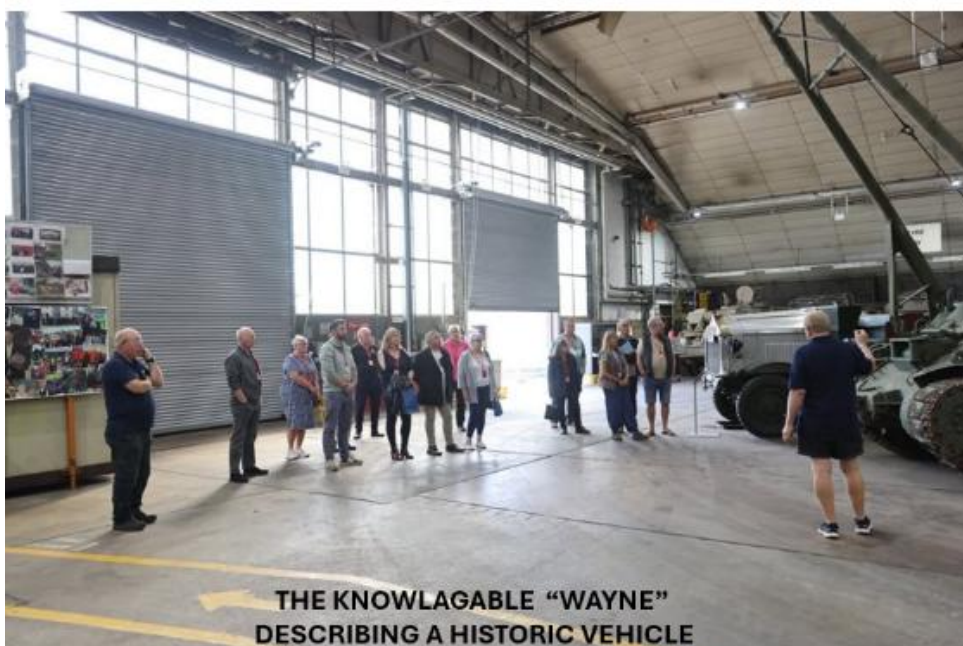
In Edition 19 of the Newsletter, we gave details of the event **Winch to the Wall**, this was held on Saturday 5 September after some very hard work, planning and organising by the Branch President. A reminder, the idea behind this event is that families can have the opportunity to visit the Recovery Mechanic Memorial Wall located inside the security fence at Lyneham, particularly families who have lost loved ones could see their husband/fathers/partners name plaque on the Memorial Wall. It also gives those attending the opportunity to visit the REME Museum and the late Roger Jones MBE, Historic Vehicles Hanger. This was the second year of organising the event and it was a sellout, so early warning, keep your eyes open on the Branch media channels for an announcement on the detail for **Winch To The Wall 3 2027**.

Format for the event is that those attending are split into two groups, with minibuses at the ready one group is transported to the late Roger Jones MBE hanger where a very knowledgeable guide walks the group around giving detail of the Historic Vehicles held within the hanger and answering any questions people may have. Meanwhile back inside the camp, the other group visit the Memorial Wall and the Recovery Training Wing under the escort of a guide who provides details of the various areas visited and of course take any questions the group might have. One of the main reasons for visiting the Recovery Training Wing is to view the 3 portraits displayed on the staircase of the 3 Recovery Mechanics who lost their lives in action. After 2 hours the groups switch over, the minibuses transfer the Historic Vehicles group to the Memorial Wall and Memorial Wall group to the Historical Vehicles.

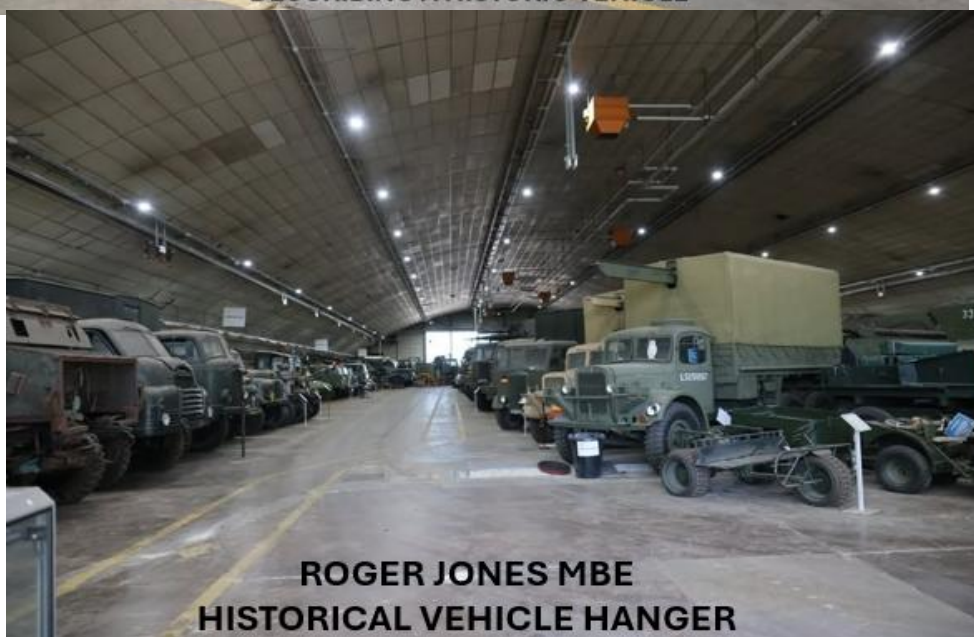
On completion of the visits both groups retire to the REME Museum Café where food and refreshments are readily available, all in attendance then have the opportunity to visit the REME Museum. Below are a few photographs taken at various locations throughout the visit.







**THE KNOWLAGABLE "WAYNE"
DESCRIBING A HISTORIC VEHICLE**



**ROGER JONES MBE
HISTORICAL VEHICLE HANGER**

As I am sure you all can imagine such an event takes lots of organising, another successful adventure for the Recy Mechs. A big thank you to those who gave up their time to make it happen, namely, John Sibley, (organiser) Stuart Martin (minibus driver) James Bates (Minibus driver), Ian McDonald (Photographer) Wayne and assistant (Historic Knowledge) ASM Dan Martin and the REME Museum for all their kind cooperation. I apologise in advance should I have forgotten anyone. See you all next year.

Submitted by Bryan Cronie



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



here for you 24/7
TEXT 24/7
The Shout Text Service



08088084000
National Debtline



Alcoholics Anonymous
Great Britain
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



01904882053
Army Welfare Service



Royal Albert Hall

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



remeconnect.org
01249 894507



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



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



REME Association Recovery Mechanics Branch
hello.recymechbranch@gmail.com





AND FINALLY

Remembrance Activities – Upcoming Branch Commitment

As members will have seen from the content of this Newsletter, we are now approaching one of the busiest periods in the Branch calendar, with the Bow Shackle Ball and Remembrance events fast approaching. Those with a keen eye will also have noticed a further entry within the “Dates for Your Diary”, “Remembrance of a Fallen Brother.”

Over the past two years, the Branch has travelled to Ilkeston (2024) and Whitby (2025) on Remembrance Sunday to pay our respects, alongside family members, to two of our fallen heroes — Kevin (Dinger) Bell and Andy Found. This year, the Branch will continue that commitment. Arrangements are underway for a visit to St. Lawrence Churchyard, Stoak, Cheshire and Little Sutton, Ellesmere on Remembrance Sunday, 8 December, where we will honour the third of our fallen heroes, Marc (Spud) Taylor, who was lost in action in Basra in 2004. Members who would like to attend this event should, by email, to hello@recymechbranch.co.uk, make it known.

Plans are still at an early stage, and full details will be published across the Branch’s usual media channels once confirmed. We encourage members to look out for these updates and, where possible, attend. A strong Branch presence would be a fitting tribute and a meaningful show of support to the family.

It has already been a remarkably busy year for the Branch, marked by new ventures and continued growth. One of the most notable developments has been the relationship established with our Dutch counterparts, which has seen them visit both the Arboretum and Lyneham, followed by a reciprocal visit from Branch members to the Netherlands. This is a welcome addition to the Branch calendar and one we hope will continue to develop.

Our established activities have also seen exceptional engagement. *Winch to the Wall* once again reached “fully booked” status, the *Bow Shackle Ball* is set to achieve its highest attendance figures to date, and early indications suggest that the Overseas Trip is heading in a similar direction, with strong interest already being shown.

While we are achieving great things — record association membership numbers, well-supported events, strong communication channels, and a growing sense of community there is still room for improvement. Despite membership approaching the 800-mark, attendance percentages remain relatively low. We fully appreciate that in the current climate, times are challenging and it can be difficult to stretch the pound to include social activities.

However, when circumstances allow, it would be wonderful to see more familiar faces at Branch events. These gatherings not only strengthen our community but also enable the Branch to support others through donations to worthwhile causes, something we are proud to continue. Till next time – Stay Safe

BC