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*New: If you have any events that you would like to be included in the Sport/Conference/Reunion categories, please email them to the Editor with details as shown.
Foreword by: Commanding Officer 1 Close Support Battalion REME

Lieutenant Colonel Phil Prosser REME

The Adaptable Force (AF) is a relatively new concept. The original design has evolved and we have now found our new role, in honesty given global events our role has found us. Our main focus in 1 REME has been continuous training (Kenya, Spain, UK, Germany), Defence Engagement (Nigeria) and operations (Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia). As our role has evolved and matured, I have been really enthused by the number of operational deployments that are now available to our junior leaders in the AF.

This article is a great example. Originally deployed in an engineering role, Lieutenant Nevin-Maguire moved quickly to fill a key advisor role in the Joint Coalition Coordination Centre (JCCC), a Joint Iraqi, Kurdish and Coalition 3* HQs. A true reflection on how the AF is breeding and inspiring a new generation of leaders with agility of mind based on a solid foundation of operational experience.

It is entirely coherent with the vision that REME’s future leaders will need to provide operational commanders freedom of manoeuvre, through reliable engineering advice based on our unparalleled knowledge of the battle space. This type of experience will ensure we enhance our reputation, capability and will ensure our people enjoy the journey too.

From Engineering Mentor to Operational Advisor – Not Bad for a Subbie!

By Lieutenant Nevin-Maguire

I volunteered for the post as Acting Captain, OIC Weapons Maintenance Training Team. This team consisted of an Artificer SSgt, an Artisan Sgt, two LCpl and two Cfn force generated from across 1(UK) Div. We deployed to train the Peshmerga on fault finding, repair and maintenance of the variety of weapons they have as well as the weapons they are being gifted by the coalition as part of Op INHERENT RESOLVE and the plan was that we would take over from the previous team, headed up by my 1 REME colleague Captain Aaron Ritchie.

Upon arrival in Theatre the plan changed as the situation in theatre developed. The CO had to reallocate manpower and I was reassigned to the Joint Coalition Coordination Centre (JCCC), a Joint Iraqi, Kurdish and Coalition 3* HQ responsible for the facilitation and coordination of the fight against Daesh. Originally this post had been filled by the Build Partner Capacity (Kurdistan) CO but due to his other commitments he was unable to devote the time needed to it.

The Coalition presence in the JCCC was a US Colonel, a US Lt and two Interpreters and they had been in post for six weeks. A UK Lt Col was due to arrive in theatre in November 2015. The Iraqi presence was a 3* Iraqi Army general and his staff which consisted of four Brigadiers, a Colonel, two Captains and a small guard force. The Kurdish contribution was a 3* General and two Major Generals.

One of the key US activities in Iraq is the Advise and Assist teams. These are small teams of US officers and soldiers who are inserted into the key Iraqi Brigade, Division and formation HQs as well as government departments that provide planning advice and operational assistance to the HQs and provide key links between them. This enables the Coalition to accurately track the battle and maintain situational awareness throughout Iraq; by fostering these key relationships, the coalition can best decide where they can add appropriate value to the fight against Daesh.

The JCCC mission is:

JCCC facilitates collaboration and coordination between
Kurdish Regional Government, Government of Iraq and
Coalition forces to enable the defeat of Daesh and establish the conditions for increased stability in Iraq.

Due to the human terrain in Iraq, the JCCC would act as the coordination centre between all the different state and non-state actors concerned in future operations. The two main parties were the Iraqi Military and the Kurdish Military but we also dealt with the Turks the Shia Militias, the Sunni Militias, both governments, the Coalition, various civilian stake holders and certain humanitarian agencies. It was complex and the various agendas and ambitions meant that compromise trumped victory and progress was deliberate and slow.

The JCCC planned and executed a number of operations during my time with them. These included: the relocation of an Operations Command Centre, which was to be the tactical HQ that would plan and run the tactical battle against Daesh; executing the operational plan to seize and control an MSR, effectively isolating two main Daesh strongholds; and planning the encirclement of one of Iraq’s main cities. When I arrived in Theatre in October 2015 the Operation to seize the MSR was underway and the operation was complete by November 2015.

Part of this plan was to establish a camp near the Forward Line of Own Troops (FLOT) in order to minimise the time it would take for the Brigades to begin offensive action and therefore keep the element of surprise. It was built approx eight km from the FLOT and approx nine km from the Forward Line of Own Troops (FLET). This meant that it was within Indirect Fire (IDF) range of the 120mm rockets that Daesh were known to possess. From when the camp was occupied it came under regular IDF attack with 10+ Iraqi KIA and 20+ WIA, it was also subject to repeated Suicide Bomber Improvised Explosive Device (SB-IED) attack. To help prevent this, the US marines deployed an artillery battery to the camp, known as Firebase Bell, in order to provide counter battery fire to support the upcoming offensive action. Sadly, while completing the camp there was an inaccurate IDF onto the firebase resulting in the death of a US Marine Staff Sergeant.

Offensive operations began in April 2016 with the Iraqi army moving across the FLOT. I left theatre in mid-April while this operation was ongoing but from what I saw it proved to be hugely interesting as the JCCC was involved in everything from the political / operational level, down to the sub-tactical. It was fascinating working with host nation forces and seeing how and why they made their decisions. In particular, the different tempos at which we work to complete offensive actions. As a culture, the Arabs have a more relaxed approach to timings, working under the proviso that things will happen when it is time for them to happen and no sooner.

The biggest takeaway I have from the deployment is, as T E Lawrence said, ‘Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war and you are to help them, not to win it for them.’ This perfectly sums up the attitude that I believe all UK military forces should have when working in the region. The Iraqis are an extremely welcoming, generous and engaging people that have a laid back approach to almost all things. This can be frustrating to the high tempo, non-stop approach of Western Armies, but the Iraqis must defeat Daesh themselves in order to build lasting stability in the region, and although the coalition help is sometimes essential this is an Iraqi problem and must have an Iraqi solution. Anyone who says otherwise lacks a fundamental understanding of the dynamics in the region.

This deployment was a perfect example of the opportunities available to members of the Adaptable Force. Small teams of deployed people providing ‘niche-capability’ training as well as advise and assist functions to host nation forces.
Captured in cold, wet, dark Wales

The threat was real – 3am, webbing, rifle and cam cream – not your average MATTs week filled with death by PowerPoint.

With £800 of Amazon vouchers to fight for, competition was fierce. 25 tactical miles took their toll. Eight MATTs based stands lurked in the desolate Sennybridge Training area. Rumour quickly spread that a Hunter Force comprised of Terminator, Chuck Norris and a dozen of the grumpiest QMs on mobility scooters were out to bag and tag anyone caught using roads and tracks.

Teams were issued with a mountain of safety kit and then watched the SERE DVD, enhancing the rumours of doom. A final ‘last supper’ was enjoyed before an early start.

At 3am, with the cattle-grid marking the entrance to Sennybridge, the first team set off. With a simple scenario of making their way back to base completing various tasks along the way, the chase was on.

WO1 (RSM) King oversaw the kit check, always going to be a toughie. After navigating for three hours, teams had to present themselves and their kit for inspection. By only a third of their three-hour limit, ‘The Quartermasters’ easily won this bit. Cpl ‘Paper Clip Commando’ Adams managed to talk his way around his bulging pouches, filled with Haribo, by getting a chit issued from the Med Centre to allow him to take them to ‘maintain his blood sugar levels and morale.’

Less than an hour after departure, ‘The Sabre Monkeys’ (HCR LAD) were captured in open ground by the Hunter Force, resulting in a 500 point deduction. Part of the battle picture and brief was to move tactically and evade capture; however, this was clearly forgotten at that pivotal moment.

'This is my rifle, this is my gun’ – weapon recognition Teams had to recognise and name muddled up pictures of different weapon systems, as well as identify parts of a rifle that had been removed before attempting to strip and assemble an SA80 using only one hand.

Scribe: Cfn Fay Chivers

ANVIL

SSgt ‘Taff’ Selby and Sgt Chris Costigan impressed, by turning what could have been a monotonous weapon-handling lesson, into a fun, challenging and improvised game.

Bluebell
The CO visits the Cant Cook Wont Cook Stand and cracks out an omelette

‘Can’t cook, won’t cook’
The troops loving a break from their ration packs

Can’t cook won’t cook – Stand 2.
Sgt ‘Chief Chips’ Faulkner and LCpl ‘Oven Chips’ King were faultless, with what seemed like the whole of the cookhouse being transported to the middle of Sennybridge training area.

The objectives of the stand were to let each team member cook their own ham & cheese omelette and pancake for dessert. ‘Some would give Sodexo a run for their money, some wouldn’t’, said Sgt Faulkner after the event.

The 4th Emergency Service – Stand 3.
The dreaded broken down Land Rover. WO1 (ASM) Dunn and Cpl Sean Cook placed equipment around the area that team members had to find in order to complete the task.

Part two was vehicle recognition, where team members had to individually identify 12 different vehicles. ASM Dunn demonstrated his experience (and age?) here, adding vehicles from throughout his career which some of the junior soldiers hadn’t ever seen and are now in museums.
The Purge – Stand 4.
After donning CBRN suits and beginning to patrol, the inevitable ‘GAS, GAS, GAS!’ happened. Teams had nine seconds to fit respirators. They were then led into the CBRN chamber, another first on the exercise area, where they performed the decontamination drills, emergency canister change and the two-man sniff test that qualified them for MATT 4.

Gun Run – Stand 5.
PTIs LCpl Marcus Hirst and LCpl Martin Burkhill (the Muscle Benders) took each team on a mile-timed run finishing at the firing point, where SSgt Ghosh, Cpl Evans and Cpl Pun took over to give a safety brief. Ten precious rounds were issued to fire at a static target in the standing unsupported position. The run times and shoot scores were combined for the team’s final scores on that stand for the main competition and the winning team were also awarded the Craftsman Murray Memorial Trophy.
Fool’s Gold – Stand 6.
A tactical Vehicle Check Point where teams were met by a suspicious car being driven by an equally shifty Cfn Leech. Vehicle and body searches were carried out, Cfn Leech used the opportunity to be extremely vocal and only partially cooperative which tested teams further during their MATT 9 assessment.

Oh Matron! – Stand 7.
BCDT skills were tested in the aftermath of an RPG attack with multiple casualties to control and assess. Teams carried out a CASEVAC to get the casualties to the HLS point whilst continually reporting the situation to zero. Success meant not only completion of the stand but a pass in MATT 3.

No Comms, No Bombs – Stand 8.
Teams were briefed that during a previous attack, Bowman radios had been stripped down and purged to prevent loss of intelligence. The team’s aim was then to put the radios back together and send out a message using old school BATCO. Not many of the sections had even heard of BATCO before so that in itself was a challenge, while also improving their Bowman skills and voice procedure.
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- REME Special Registration Agreement (SRA)

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*Free text line, no charges apply.

www.theiet.org/armed-forces

*Visit www.theiet.org/armed-forces to see if you meet the SRA criteria.
The Aftermath

Dixie’s Corner was the final destination. From there it was a hot shower and well-earned BBQ plus of course the much anticipated prize giving. Although Cfn ‘Rupert’ Bruton was slightly late after confusing his Northings and Eastings taking his section on a seven kilometre detour.

Sgt Louise Bradie was highly congratulated at the BBQ; she managed to pull together the whole exercise in less than six weeks. The RSM was impressed there were no major injuries or loss of equipment and all objectives had been met.

Without the Quartermaster and his team the whole exercise would have never succeeded. Working to the typical moving goalposts and last minute changes they managed to give a sterling service as always.

Who was going to win the big £800. Despite coming last, The Brecon Beavers were given a special mention for their ‘good attitude throughout’ and their positivity despite, one of their team members, LCpl Marc Duncan, saying ‘throughout my seven years in the Army, this was by far the hardest exercise I have ever done’. He has now volunteered to attend the Cambrian Patrol competition next year.

The winners were the Yogi Bears from 14 Armd Coy after a close fought battle. The Quartermasters from the Bn QM Dept won the March and Shoot and Cpl ‘Walter Mitty’ White and his team won the best Directing Staff Stand.

Leave is in the air

Straight after food at 0700hrs on day four, the troops began the long journey back to Tidworth Camp. Knowing they were going back to one full day of work and then Summer leave! Weapon cleaning and closedown happened quickly and the battalion departed with stiff legs, good memories and a sense of achievement for a well-earned break.

RESULTS

Main Competition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Yogie Bears (6 REME, 14 Armd)</td>
<td>9,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Tony the Pony (6 REME, 13 Fd, V&amp;G)</td>
<td>8,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Hofmeister Bears (6 REME, 14 Armd)</td>
<td>8,813</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

March & Shoot – The Craftsman Murray Memorial Trophy

The winners of the March and Shoot won the Cfn Murray Memorial Trophy.

Best DS Stand

– Oh Matron! (BCDT)

The winners of the best DS stand won £25 worth of Amazon vouchers each.

The prize for the best stand was awarded to Cpl ‘Walter Mitty’ White and LCpl Lewis Cottam (despite initially setting up 800 metres from where he should have) because the Commanding Officer felt they did well despite being Junior Ranks when the rest of the stand IC’s were SNCO’s.

Cpl James Considine, LCpl Ben Whatling, LCpl Khim Pun, Cfn Jasmina Bixley were also awarded vouchers for being assistant DS on the stand.
On 23 April 2016, fresh from BATUS Winter Repair, I found myself sitting in an office in Manchester surrounded by a group of people I had never met. The room was quiet, with the odd whisper breaking the silence as we waited to receive our first brief for this year’s Quadrennial Joint Services Expedition. The aim was to complete the Dhaulagiri Circuit, during which our trek team would support a number of medical research projects conducted by the Defence Medical Service and Leeds Beckett University.

The Dhaulagiri Circuit is a Himalayan classic and is regarded as Nepal’s most remote and strenuous trek. The route stretches over 100km with its highest point at 5,400m (17,716ft). Successful completion of the circuit was not guaranteed and in time the trek would live up to its treacherous reputation. A little under a year ago, I’d read about the expedition on the Army Mountaineering Association (AMA) website. After sending off an email to register my interest, I joined a 14-person team drawn from all three services and across the ranks, from Craftsman to Lieutenant Colonel.
We finally arrived in Kathmandu on 24 April, after a 16 hour journey from Manchester. Stepping off the plane I was immediately struck by the dramatic orange lighting as the sunset pierced through the thick haze that enveloped the city.

The following day we had the opportunity to do some sightseeing and sample the distinctly different culture of Nepal. We visited a number of historical sites throughout the city including Patan – a part of Kathmandu renowned for its rich cultural heritage and we saw first-hand the extensive damage caused by the 2015 earthquake. We left Kathmandu the next day and almost 24 hours later we had reached the start point of the Dhaulagiri Circuit in a small village called Dharbang. At midday on 27 April, we set off from Dharbang on foot, a welcome change from being on a cramped bus.

Over the course of the next few days the team trekked through dense jungle, along cascading glacial rivers and across steep cliff edge trails all whilst trying to deal with the hot and humid climate. We passed through a number of small remote villages, which gave us plenty of time to socialise with the locals, who in classic Nepali tradition welcomed us with open arms.

On 2 May we arrived at the Italian Base Camp; the first of three medical research camps. The camp was at 3,500 metres and the air was noticeably thinner, meaning breathing was more laboured than normal. It was a restless night for most and in the morning, several members of the team were suffering from mild headaches, the first clear indicator of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS).

Luckily for us we had just arrived at a camp full of medical professionals! That day we underwent our first batch of medical testing which included taking scans of our spleens and for a couple of lucky individuals a PFA. We set off on an acclimatisation walk later that morning, ascending a nearby spur to 4,000 metres and then slowly returning down to camp – this is a proven method of preventing AMS and known in mountaineering as ‘climb high-sleep low.’
The next day I woke feeling well rested and ready for the day ahead. Immediately after leaving camp we descended down a steep section of rock onto a glacier and for the first time on the expedition we had to don our climbing helmets as there was a high risk of rock fall in the area. On the several occasions that cries of, ‘Rocks!’ echoed up the valley the effects of the increasing altitude on our bodies seemed to disappear as we scurried out of the way with lightning speed. It was a long day and after covering around 10 km of rough terrain, we had reached our stopover camp. The Japanese Base Camp sat at 4,100m and was not as well established as the Italian Camp. It could have been argued that our porters had just picked a random spot on the glacier, nevertheless we all settled into our routine of hydrate, eat and rest.

News reached us that night of the other trek teams and their progress; several people had been air evacuated from Dhaulagiri Base Camp due to severe altitude sickness. This was obviously of concern to us as the next day we would be arriving there ourselves and some of the members of our team were still suffering from a mild form of the condition.
The following morning, we were treated to a fantastic breakfast of omelette and roti bread, which for a brief moment, took our minds off the fatigue that we were all starting to suffer from. After a quick briefing about the day ahead, we set off. It was an eerily quiet morning; a thick misty blanket surrounded us as we navigated our way a further 10km up the glacier.

Five hours later the first striking yellow tent peered through the snow, then slowly the scale of Dhaulagiri Base Camp came into view. It was an impressive array of different mountaineering teams and cultures, the sounds of cutlery clanging from the different mess tents and the smell of hot food filled the air.

Day 13 of the expedition was to again focus on rest and medical testing, the whole team had made it to Dhaulagiri Base Camp and with only four days left on the mountain we were all starting to feel really positive about completing it together. The sunshine was splitting the sky that morning and the heat was almost unbearable at times, even though we were at 4,750m. After lunch our Mountain Leader, WO2 (ASM) Antony McPhillips took us through some winter mountaineering skills such as using crampons and ice axe techniques, it was an enjoyable experience and hopefully one I’ll be able to utilise in the future. The next day we would be heading over French Pass and into Hidden Valley, the thought left many of the team feeling apprehensive. This feeling was greatly aided by the sounds of nearby avalanches crashing down the slopes around us as we slept that night.
The following morning we tentatively made our way towards Hidden Valley, almost immediately we passed through an old camp where three climbers had been killed by an avalanche a few years earlier. Their ruined tents still partially buried in the snow was a morbid reminder of the environment that we were in.

It was a gruelling day and as we approached French Pass, the team was spread out over a considerable distance. Every step was followed by a few deep gasps as my lungs and legs were screaming at me to stop. Much to my relief the cairn that marked the top of French Pass slowly came into view, but with little time to enjoy it due to the poor weather we continued to Hidden Valley. We spent the next day at Hidden Valley enjoying the luxuries of a shower tent, and with the last batch of medical testing completed it was time to relax and enjoy the beauty that surrounded us.

On 9 May we made our last ascent up to Dhampus Pass at 5,260m and it was there that we were treated to the most spectacular view of the trek, The Annapurna Massif. Towering up through the clouds, it was breath-taking to look at and it was a sight that I will remember forever! From here we made our way down the mountain spending one last night at a place known as Yak Karkha, then finally on to Marpha.
Arriving in Marpha signified the end of the expedition; all 14 of us had completed the Dhaulagiri Circuit and accomplished our goal. We spent our last few days in Nepal travelling by road back to Kathmandu, soaking up the amazing culture and Nepali hospitality along the way. This was an incredible life experience that has had a profound effect on me and has given me memories that I will never forget. I was a complete novice in mountaineering going into this Expedition and I have gained valuable skills and experience that will aid me in future events.

It would not have been possible to participate in this fantastic, once in a lifetime expedition without my membership with the Army Mountaineering Association (AMA) and the incredible support from my company.
Each year, prior to going on summer leave, 1 YORKS LAD organises and facilitates a Junior Ranks Leadership Day, this year was no different, organised and led by Chief Instructor Sgt ‘Paddy’ Crowe. Being the green machine he is, he was determined to make soldiers get wet through natural causes or by crying.

The day consisted of five key areas; PT, Command Tasks, Group Discussions, Essay Writing, Tiffy Dilemma; all preceded by breakfast 0500 hrs then on parade outside of the LAD at 0600 hrs for inspection and kit check. At 0620 hrs, it was all hands to the burdens in the form of a log, four Land Rover tyres and four 15 kg power bags that lay in wait for what was about to happen.

Setting off at a hare-like pace was a good idea to start with, but the junior ranks had no idea how much ground they would have to cover. Four kilometres in, three of which were uphill, OC LAD appeared from out of the ‘flora and fauna’ with information to wipe any remaining smiles from faces.

Two more burdens were added to the mix, in the form of two field guns. This is the point at which the hares pace reduced to a tortoise pace in order to maintain forward movement cross country. For the next two kilometres, the junior ranks shuffled and leap frogged all burdens to an RV point given by SSgt ‘Tiff Shackles’ Clements. The pace and morale began to increase slightly as the end was in sight. The only good thing about the RV was that Cpl ‘Shakey’ Wheeliker was waiting with duty wheels to relieve the burdens, but not the feet. However, this made the last four kilometres run in slightly easier.

After a quick admin session to take on water and a change parade into overalls for the Command Tasks, the junior ranks were divided into four syndicates of personnel they do not normally work alongside. Now feeling physically tired, it was time to slow the pace a little and allow each individual their chance to shine, whilst leading the rest of their syndicate during the six command tasks. Despite the odds being against them, there was a lot of grit, determination and team work to complete the tasks – probably because a free Army lunch was promised.

Following the physical exertion of the morning, a hot shower and clean clothing was required so they changed into suits. Quickly, they sat down in the LAD conference room, expecting to be served a Seniors Ranks lunch, but this turned out to be an Army issue ‘death’ bag. Feeling fuelled and hydrated, it was straight into the mentally tiring part of the day. First were the Group Discussions, which allowed the syndicates a chance to express their feelings and concerns on matters in both a civilian and military context. This was followed by an introduction to Essay Writing, which proved tricky for some. Undeterred though, they attacked the Tiffy Dilemma with enthusiasm and the smell of a BBQ filling their nostrils. There was a lot of head scratching and deep breathing from those for whom this was their first look at such a challenge. Many varied and unusual ideas came to light, also some very good and plausible plans. This part in the day allowed the DS to observe how and with what reasoning the
junior ranks think and apply themselves outside of their normal routine. A questions and answers session on an individual level followed, either with the OC or ASM.

After all the physical and mental sweating was over and the syndicates had been de-briefed by their respective observer mentors, OC LAD gave a final closing address to 1 YORkS LAD before declaring the BBQ open.

Corps Festival of Sport Day – Rugby 7’s Plate Winners

Scribe: SSgt Seduadua

The REME Corps Festival of Sport 2016 was hosted by Defence College of Technical Training Lyneham 23-24 June. It is an opportunity to show case and recruit up and coming talents for Corps level sport, whilst at the same time raising unit profile.

Captain Ross Catchpole, OC 1 YORKS LAD, decided this was not an opportunity to be missed and preparation started weeks before ‘kick off.’ With the battalion being the current Army Champions at 15 a side, the Rugby 7’s team were determined not to return empty handed.

Led by Cpl Titchard-Jones, we defeated 3 RHA Wksp in the opening match to face 4 Armd CS Bn REME in the second; two comfortable wins meant that morale was high and a much needed confidence boost was had by the rugby virgins amongst us (footballers). A hard fought match against 8 Trg Bn REME, one of the favourites, saw us proceeding to the elimination stages as plate finalists. Elimination from the Cup competition did not dampen morale, considering it was a battalion team we were up against as an LAD. If anything, this made us even more determined to do the job and come away with some silverware. The Plate final was against RTR LAD in the blistering afternoon sun. It was much a test of fitness and sheer determination as oppose to skills at this stage of the competition, as most of us were starting to feel the strain from previous games.

After our final warm up session, we entered the field with heads held high and our eye on the prize. Some brilliant individual efforts from Captain Catchpole, Cpl Titchard-Jones and Cfn Nash caused chaos with RTR’s defensive line, resulting in a comfortable score line earlier on in the game. Coupled with this, a strong captaincy by Cpl TJ and good sportsmanship from the rest of the team ensured game discipline was maintained throughout; this been a major deciding factor in Rugby 7’s. A good day was had by all and, a big well done to our team captain Cpl TJ and thank you to all our supporters on the day.
On Monday 4 July, thirty two apprentices from across the North East of England, South Yorkshire and Wales joined soldiers from 102 Battalion REME in Warcop Camp, Cumbria for the start of Exercise Engineering Challenge. The course follows up on previous successful initiatives conducted by ‘The Northern Craftsmen’ but specifically targeted apprentices from industry across our regions. The apprentices came in groups of four representing, Nissan, Caterpillar, Komatsu, BAE, Reliance Precision, Unipres and TTE, an apprenticeship provider. This excellent representation of NE industry was only possible through the battalion’s continuing engineering engagement, which now forms a key part in the battalion’s recruiting direction.

The first two days of the course were run from Warcop Camp in Cumbria and was the perfect location to conduct the military phase of the challenge. Using Moorhouse Farm as a forward operating base, the apprentices, under direction of their mentors made up of Company RSUSOs and RRMT, were presented with a challenging and ambitious scenario. They were a forward unit tasked with recovering a vital piece of military equipment that had been airdropped behind enemy lines. Over 48 hours the candidates navigated around Warcop Training Area, where they faced multiple obstacles including the assault course, which written into the scenario became part of the hostile terrain. Working in two man teams and armed with paint ball guns they fought their way through enemy positions dug into a wood before finally arriving at the drop point for the missing equipment. Needless to say, recovering it from the back of a vehicle that had become lodged against an earth wall meant that some basic recovery skills and further physical effort were required.

At the end of each day, the candidates continued to be challenged. Major Phil Cush, the Battalion 2IC presented the groups with a series of Tiffy challenges, introducing radio controlled models and meccano as tools for the task.

From Wednesday until Thursday evening, the teams then set to work on the equipment that they had recovered earlier in the week – the ever-faithful Quadzilla buggy! Having spent Wednesday morning being introduced to military vehicles including, Wolfhound, Fox, Scout and WIMIK, the apprentices set about understanding military vehicle specifications and understanding weapon systems.
modifying the Quadzilla buggy recovered the day before into an armoured, weaponized reconnaissance vehicle with some pretty demanding specifications. The vehicle had to be able to travel 300 km without refuelling, it needed to carry two men and three days’ supply of rations and ammunition, afford protection to the crew and have a weapon mounted capable of affording 180 degree or greater rotation.

Supported by PSIs and members of the Battalion’s Training Team, the four groups came up with some innovative design ideas and by Thursday afternoon, four very different looking solutions were rolled out as the groups worked on their presentations for the finale to the week’s exercise.

On Friday, the apprentices returned to Megiddo Lines Catterick to present their Quadzilla Military Variants to their peers, mentors and representatives from their civilian companies. Everyone who attended the presentations was astounded by the confidence, attention to detail and sound engineering principles shown by all the apprentices. Each delivery was met with loud applause and at the end of each Q & A session, the employers stepped out to express their thanks to the battalion for running the event and to acknowledge the value that the apprentices had received from attending the course.

The Tuesday immediately following the course, four of the apprentices attended 186 Coy as recruits, with several others expressing interest in following suit. It is too early to evaluate the recruiting potential of the course, but the early indicators are that it contains the right ingredients for success. Word is already spreading about the value of the course and it is our intention to deliver two Engineering Challenges yearly as we further develop our links with industry.
This year’s Force Troops Command Operational Shooting Competition (FTC OSC) was held at Pirbright ranges at the end of April. FTC OSC is a number of competitions rolled into one: there is the FTC inter-unit competition; an inter-corps competition (REME, RE, R Sigs RLC and AGC) and a series of intra-corps competitions including REME’s own inter-unit competition. FTC OSC is therefore one of the largest operational shooting competitions run by the British Army with over 500 firers for the Regular competition and 350 for the Reservist competition. One of the main aims of FTC OSC is to select the teams that will go through to the Defence Operational Shooting Competition (Defosc) held in June and where individual firers can compete for the prestigious Army 100 badges for the Regulars and Army 50 badges for the Reserves.

In preparation for FTC OSC, the REME Operational Shooting Committee had arranged a Team Captains course the previous September and a two-week marksmanship course held just prior to the competition in order to sharpen up REME firers. It promised to be an exciting competition against the other Corps and to decide on the best REME major and minor units and the best individual firers. All eight Regular battalions entered teams plus six LADs/Wksps and all six Reserve battalions – so a great turnout by the Corps.

It was an extremely enjoyable week and weekend with teams competing in various operational assessments involving QRF deployment shoots, moving targets shoots, urban contact shoots, and pistol and rifle CQM assessments not to mention the comedy snap (watch that fence Cfn Skinner, 4 Bn!) and the falling plate competition.

At the end of the week’s competition, there were 18 team places available for Defosc from the entire Regular competition of 59 teams, and REME gained six of those team places with REME Reserves gaining five team places. In the overall competition, Sgt Prabeen Gurung (7 Bn REME) achieved an excellent 4th place in the Regular competition whilst Capt Mark O’Mahony (104 Bn REME) achieved a highly impressive 1st place in the Reserves competition. 104 Bn REME was the highest scoring team in the reserves competition.

The internal REME competition was fierce this year with the distribution of silver being evenly spread and all units winning something. There were a number of individual honours both for Regular and Reservist competitors. Presenting the prizes for the REME competition were: Lt Gen Andrew Figgures (Master General REME); Maj Gen (Retd) Philip Corp; Col Dan Scott ADC (Col REME) and Col Mike
Pendlington (Chairman REME Rifle Association). It was a great moment for the firers to have a three star general and a two star general presenting the prizes. The following units and personnel were recognised for honours:

- Major unit champions – 3 Bn REME
- Major unit runners up – 4 Bn REME
- Minor Unit champions – 74 Bty (Battle Axe) Coy
- Minor Unit Runners Up – 26 Eng LAD
- Top Shot – Rifle & Skill at Arms Champion – Sgt Prabeen Gurung – 7 Bn REME
- Runner up – Cfn Booth – 2 Bn REME
- Reservist Unit Champions – 104 Bn REME
- Reservist Unit Champions – 103 Bn REME
- Top Shot – Rifle & Skill at Arms Champion – Capt Mark O’Mahony – 104 Bn REME
- Runner Up – Cpl Deville – 103 Bn REME

These are exciting times for REME shooting, the scores and the teams’ performances so far this season has been outstanding and it promises to be a thrilling competition at Defosc when REME firers step onto that firing point. Art et Marte!

QUESTIONS OR QUERIES

**Regular Firers**
If you have any questions or queries contact WO2 Roberts – REME Shooting
- T: 101 Bn REME 94555 8173
- E: 101REME-BnHQ-TrgWO@mod.uk

**Reservist Firers**
If you have any questions or queries contact Captain O’Mahony
Reservist REME Shooting
- T: 104 Bn REME 01604 635760 x101
- E: 104REME-118-Watchkeeper@mod.uk
The newly rebranded 7 Aviation Support Battalion (7 Avn Sp Bn) REME has been victorious at the 2016 Navy Field Gun competition held annually at HMS Collingwood. This year’s record-breaking crew is the first fielded by 7 Avn Sp Bn to be 100% REME with no input from Navy exchange posts or attached arms to the battalion.

The competition represents the relief of the British garrison town of Ladysmith in 1899 during the Boer War. The beleaguered garrison sent an urgent message requesting Naval field guns to be despatched from HMS Powerful, moored 100 miles away in Durban, to repel the advancing Boers. After the siege of Ladysmith was finally lifted on 28 February 1900, Queen Victoria sent a telegram: ‘Pray express to the Naval Brigade my deep appreciation of the valuable services they have rendered with their guns.’ This action captured the imagination of the Royal Navy and in 1907 the Field Gun Competition was first run.

This latest victory, (previous wins in 2005 and 2014), saw the crew achieve record training times unofficially beating the World Record held by HMS Heron and formally breaking the fastest qualifying aggregate time record and fastest single competition run bringing home a vast booty of Royal Navy silver including the much coveted Brickwoods Trophy!

WO2 (AQMS) Paul Hembery, a seasoned No 1 Trainer and retired wheel number, ably trained this year’s crew. In order to field the 18 strong crew, a squad of a minimum 30 are required, all volunteers giving up their before work and lunch times to undertake a savage physical beat up of six weeks delivered by RAPTI ex Field Gunners. This is followed by a further six weeks of gun training developing the technical side of the competition, sharpening skills and building track fitness.

Speed, courage, commitment, discipline and respect all underpin
Standby...Drill. The crew burst off the line in the final.

This incredible sport demanding the very best of the crews selected to run and represent each of the 23 cross service establishments competing. These qualities are echoed in the ethos of the battalion, underpinning its existence and outputs.

Having finished training at Wattisham on a high having performed a demonstration run in record time the 7 Avn Sp Bn REME crew arrived at HMS Collingwood in excellent spirits. Drawing on the competitive atmosphere amongst rival crews the 7 Avn Sp Bn REME crew continued to hone the drill and build confidence.

The competition is run over two days with six crews in each heat. On Friday 3 June, the 7 Avn Sp Bn REME crew romped home, well ahead of rivals taking a convincing lead in the aggregate times. This performance continued throughout the remaining three heats with the battalion placed first into the main final.

With the plate finals having run, confidence and focus was at an all-time high as the crew formed up for the final in front of a record crowd. The battalion crew tore out and back in a blur of REME colour and branding crossing the finish line first only to have a the potential victory put on hold as WO2 (AQMS) Paul Hembery was marched away by the two Royal navy judges to ‘discuss’ a potential penalty. A ten minute wait with crew captain SSgt Chris Murphy holding the crew together saw every emotion on the faces of the 18 runners finally replaced by elation with news that WO2 (AQMS) Paul ‘I’m not having that!!’ Hembery had discredited the judge’s decision.

Marching onto the HMS Collingwood parade square to the Royal Marines band ahead of the other 22 crews is a feeling that will stay with the 2016 crew long after the aches and pains of the competition have healed.

Looking forward the crew will be competing at the Birmingham Military Tattoo in December and back for the 2017 Royal Navy and Royal Marines Field Gun Competition to defend the title.

VII Aviation – Nothing is Impossible.

Shell sprinter LCpl Jake Warren delivering shells to the gun crew

WO2 Paul Hembery marching the crew home post a victorious heat run
By Lt Col (Retd) John Edwards OBE

The third Sunday in July in the Corps Calendar is always, usually, REME’s Regimental Sunday at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. So, on 17 July 2016, a few Corps veterans assemble under the colonnade and under the watchful eye of Corps ASM, WO1 (CASM) Rich Bateman. Ten minutes later and after a briefing from CASM, all were on parade. The In-Pensioners and REME Association members were joined on parade by the 1st Northern Ireland Bn Army Cadets. The reviewing officers were the Royal Hospital Adjutant, Col (Late RA) Simon Bate OBE and Col REME, Col Dan Scott, ADC.

We then marched off parade and into Chapel for the service, which was made a tad more interesting with a christening and coincidently the baby was christened ‘Lara’, the same name as Col REME’s wife. After the service, we then ‘retired’ to the In-Pensioners’ Club for food, drink and entertaining conversation. The stories told by the In-Pensioners were interesting and enthralling.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY – next year’s Regt Sun will be on 16 July 2017 and if you are thinking of attending please let REME RHQ know. Remember, I did say, ‘It’s usually the third Sunday in July,’ so check the Corps Calendar 2017 because dates can and do change.
WO1 (CASM) Rich Bateman, invites the Royal Hospital Adjutant, Col Simone Bate OBE, to inspect the REME contingent (REME In pensioners and Association Members)

Parade over – March-Off

Former REME Association Standard Bearer and Arborfield Branch member, Mr Ken Wilmott holds court under the Colonnade with Mrs Rosemary Edwards, Mrs Lara Scott and Ms Tammy Baker (Ken’s granddaughter) looking on. If the reader looks carefully then you might just be able to see the Princess Marina brooch on Lara’s dress.

Young, old and older on parade

REME contingent on parade
Planning a type three expedition can be a challenging task, especially when the weather is out of your control. Eighteen members from 2 CS Bn REME, planned to canoe 120 km down the River Dordogne from Vayrac to Beynac in the south of France on 4 June 2016. Due to floods, the river was too dangerous; so the dates were pushed back to 18 June 2016. Thirty six hours prior to departure we were informed the conditions of the river had not changed. Thankfully, the River Loire was safe to paddle, against the clock; eight months’ worth of planning, needed to be done in 36 hours, new campsites booked and clearance given. We were off! After a long drive we arrived at Blois, France; base camp for Loire Kayak, tents were set up in record time and everyone was man-down, catching up on some much needed sleep.

Safety lessons complete, we set off on our first leg. This leg was a warm up so everyone could learn the basics of canoeing, teamwork was put to the test as there was a lot of manoeuvring required. They say you should not canoe with your partner, this theory was proved true and some people ended up going round in circles. Once everyone picked up the basics, we were off in a straight line. After a good days paddle we arrived at base camp to be met with a feast, prepared by the admin team.

Day three mainly consisted of rescues; this is the most amusing day for any instructor, first was rescuing each other after a capsize, this is where you see who your real friends are. Once everyone was happy with the basic rescue, it was time to step it up and conduct an all in rescue, this proved challenging; with people ending up on different banks, after conducting PACESDO on the re-group, we continued down the river. Not sure if it was the hot weather conditions at 34 degrees or high morale, but everyone turned into pirates, capsizing each other the rest of the way.

With everyone waking up with aches and pains, we set off with high morale. The fact England were playing football that night added a little incentive to make everyone paddle faster down the river. As everyone now had a good understanding of the basics, more advanced techniques were introduced, allowing everyone to paddle more proficient.
Amboise offered some beautiful scenery, so before we set off canoeing we took some happy snaps with Leonardo Da Vinci and The Royal Chateau of Amboise. King Francis I invited Leonardo Da Vinci to The Royal Chateau as a guest in 1515; this is where Leonardo Da Vinci lived and worked. It is assumed that Leonardo Da Vinci is buried in the Chapel here. Feeling cultured, it was now time to get wet, throwlines were at the ready as we completed life saving techniques. During our lunch break, we played some games and did a bit of gunwale bobbing. This is where you stand on the gunwale of the boat and try to move the boat. The remainder of the journey saw more pirates operating in our area.

having a Gunwale bob race

Having taught all the lessons, it was time to have a play on some challenging water. After being briefed only dead fish go with the flow and you need to paddle hard through white water, it was time to attempt a weir. The first pair, Ptes Franks and Steptoe gave a perfect demonstration on how NOT to do it; they ended up getting breached. This allowed everyone successfully shot the weir. After a great day on the river things got better, when the admin team had managed to find a fabulous campsite, with all the mod cons.

Cpl Wykes demonstrating a canoe recovery, thanks to Ptes Franks and Steptoe

With only 19km left of our journey, morale took a dip as the end was in sight and the epic drive home was dawning on us. However, once on the river and paddling again, all sadness was forgotten. Like the last day of school, the last day on the exped was no different – it was games day. Whilst paddling down the river we played a variety of games such as Grand Old Duke of York and changed places and boats, these games mainly involved standing up and moving around the boat and trusting your partner; there were lots swimmers.

149km completed in seven days, an impressive paddle. The aim of the exped was to gain the Open Canoe Foundation Star 2 (O2F); all 12 students successfully met the standard and were awarded their O2F certificate. I would like to thank the admin team for the amazing job they did in supporting the exped. Also I would like to say a special thanks to Cpl Thomas who was meant to write this article and congratulate him on his promotion!
**WAY OF THE ROSES**

**Cycling Challenge**

SSgt M Shepley 102 Bn REME

**Concept**
On the morning of 12 May 2016, five members of the 102 Bn REME cycling team, consisting of Major Denton, WO1 Light, WO2 Fraser, WO2 Tomlinson and SSgt Shepley, departed on one of the UK’s toughest single day cycle challenges. The challenge was to cycle the 171 miles official, ‘Way of the Roses’ coast to coast route from Morecambe in Lancashire to Bridlington in North Yorkshire, in under 12 hours. The ride passes through the historic towns and cities of Lancaster, Settle, Pateley Bridge, Ripon and York taking in the dramatic scenery of the Pennines and Yorkshire Dales en route.

**Training and Preparation**
The build-up training for this epic ride consisted of two main training rides. The first of which was a 60 miler with 5k+ worth of ascents, designed to practice cycling drills and promote team cohesion. The second ride followed the route of the Ripon 100 mile sportive, encompassing the more famous ascents on the Yorkshire Dales of Greenhow, Buttertubs and Grinton, and culminating in 10k worth of ascents climbed. Both rides were completed without any issues and demonstrated the readiness of the team to attempt the ‘Way of The Roses.’

The day before the event the team moved to a pre-arranged no-frills bed and breakfast at the start of the course on the sun swept sea front at Morecambe. Venturing out that evening for the classic high carb, pre-race large mixed grill with extra onion rings washed down with iron-packed pints of Guinness, the team was now ready for the challenge.

With WO2 ‘Eddie’ Fraser adopting the position of Team Captain and organising, booking and arranging the entire event flawlessly, the lead up to the ride began with the professional approach expected of Team Sky. The only suspected ‘flaw’ was the booking of a double bed between WO2 Fraser and SSgt ‘Chicken Legs’ Shepley. This mistake was met with mixed emotions from them with the Rec Mech retiring with a large grin on his face!

**The Way of the Roses**
A full English breakfast was provided by the B&B and scoffed down at 0500hrs, ensuring that energy levels would be well stocked for the first part of the ride. Then last minute bike prep and a team photo by the Eric Morecambe statue followed before the team set off, ably supported throughout by SSgt McCreight and Cfn Worthington who provided the mechanical and administrative support during the challenge. After 30 miles, the team had left Lancashire behind and entered into the hilly stage of the ride, ascending hills of up to 1200ft with the cobbled hill out of Settle being a particular challenge. However, the discipline, grit and determination proved invaluable at this stage of the ride as we battled against a ferocious headwind and the steep long ascents.

At the 80-mile point, the last of the ascents in the Yorkshire Dales were complete and the team welcomed a short food stop in Ripon. The team stocked themselves up on a healthy, energy packed meal of Gregg’s doughnuts and strong coffee during a relaxing 30-minute rest in the middle of Ripon market.

The next 40 miles between Ripon and York consisted of flat, well-maintained roads with a slight tail wind, which allowed the chain gang to clock up an average speed of 23 mph quite comfortably. Once York had been conquered, the final big climb of the ride was attacked, with a height of 600ft; WO2 Tomlinson led the team to the top of the climb with ease despite once again having a headwind to contend with. With all the major climbs now completed and a distance of 140 miles covered, the end was in sight. The team pushed on despite the dramatic drop in temperature, however, there was no stopping us at this point and we finally arrived at our destination at Bridlington sea front before night fall and with the support team cheering us in – job done!

**Epilogue**
With only one small mechanical hitch during the ride and one single puncture, the team had completed ‘The Way of The Roses’ challenge with a traveling time of just over 11 hours and 28 minutes – a phenomenal effort by all who participated and certainly ticked a box in their bucket lists! The event ran like clockwork, which is testament to the planning and organisation skills of the Team Captain. All that remained was to celebrate by means of a greasy kebab (protein) and a sleepy drive back to camp (exhaustion)!
On 11 June 2016, after six weeks of intensive training, 18 members of Normandy Company, 8 Training Battalion REME took part in the Cateran Yomp, a 36 mile hike through rural Perthshire, Scotland raising money for the Army Benevolent Fund.

The team made the epic 10 hour drive to arrive on Friday evening in time to set up their luxurious accommodation for the weekend (tents), listen to the mandatory safety brief and have dinner, a ‘pasta party’ with about 500 other people taking up the challenge that weekend. We then divided into three teams; two doing the silver distance of 36 miles and one doing the bronze distance of 22 miles. Each team had a support crew of two Craftsmen who gave up their weekend to not only complete the mammoth task of driving to the event and back, but to support each team during the challenge. They were at every checkpoint providing drinks, snacks and towards the end, much needed morale.

Aside from the near constant rain, the terrain was incredibly tough being a combination of rocky hills and boggy valleys. The weather was almost perfect for this kind of endurance event; cloudy and some drizzle kept the teams at a comfortable temperature. We had been warned on previous events that heat stroke was the biggest danger to participants, but thankfully did not turn out to be an issue this time round.

There were regular checkpoints and rest stops along the route, manned by volunteers, who provided all the walkers with food and drinks, an absolute lifesaver particularly when the miles were clocking up. Unfortunately, the marshals only had a nodding acquaintance with the truth when asked how much further we had to go but otherwise did an absolutely fantastic job and were completely selfless in the help they gave the walkers. At the end, there was another set of strangely willing volunteers who took the time to look after the feet and aches of the participants.

Although at times morale on these hills fell and people became down spirited, we pulled together as team and helped each other through. Every member of the team completed the challenge with pride.

Lt West adds: To put this event into perspective, Phase 2 trainees come to MOD Lyneham having attempted a six mile AFT at Phase 1 establishments. To go from this level of fitness to the stamina required of an endurance event of this kind means a lot of hard work. Training has to go on outside of the daily routine at DSEME and the trainees leant it wholeheartedly to the brilliant beat up program that was constructed by our enthusiastic PTI, Cpl Pearce. By the end of it, they had all finished in the top 30/218 competing in the silver distance, which is an incredible feat taking into account their start state.

Personally, The Cateran Yomp is by far the best organised, welcoming and equipped endurance event I have entered and I would thoroughly recommend it to commanders as a test of fitness and teamwork in an isolated, yet controlled, environment.

OIC: Lt West   Scribe: Cfn Gray

Cateran Yomp 2016

Trying to keep morale high
It was early o’clock at Sheffield Ice Arena and many members of the Corps from various units had congregated to take part in the annual Tri-Service ice hockey tournament; a four day competition where teams compete at Corps and Service level.

A record number of ice hockey teams from across all three services entered the event this year. The Army entered six teams, two of them REME; the REME Stallions and the Combat Service Support (CSS) team, the latter being formed purely for this competition.

As expected the players got involved with ice hockey through various avenues, some having played since childhood, many were introduced after joining the forces, others while serving in BATUS, Canada.

Each team played three games a day in a ‘round-robin’ format which required early starts and late finishes, luckily accommodation had been sourced at the local Reserve Centre, thanks to 37 Signal Regt.

CSS opened up the contest against Combat Support (predominantly a RE team). As expected Sgts Ads Tallett and Phil Mattox worked together to bond this new team together, allowing it to reach its potential and although CSS were not victorious they played a solid game requiring their opponent to really dig deep for the win.

The next fixture on the list saw The Stallions face-off against RAF Cosford. The Stallions had full control of the game as soon as the puck hit the ice; there was no doubt that not only were The Stallions a formed and well drilled team but were also open to accept new team members eg yours truly! The game finished a convincing win for The Stallions (8-0) with credit for goals and assists going to Cpls Al Gray and Lee ‘Freddie’ Cupples to name a couple. Apologies to those I have missed out.

Over the remainder of the qualifying games, The Stallions really demonstrated their true worth; the other teams were obviously and rightly worried! The goal and assist tally really crept up. In addition to the earlier mentioned heroes, WO2 Ian Witney and Cfn Matt Ward-Howell joined the hall of fame.

CSS continued to grow as a team as the tournament progressed. Although unfortunately unable to secure a win, they did not give in easily to any of their opponents. Special mention must be made to Cfn Caroline Cohen, CSS Goaltender, not once did her chin drop even when others may have given up.

On the flip side, The Stallions were having a more successful tournament. Prior to the semi-finals The Stallions had lost one game out of six, when the Army All Stars had conquered 4-1. In response, The Stallions were overwhelming their opponents with scores of 8-0 and 6-1. The goals for and against tally was definitely in The Stallions’ favour.

Our heroes sent The Royals Engineers home after semi-final, having secured a 4-2 win against them. This result identified that the two teams vying for the title were The REME Stallions and The Army All Stars, ironically the only team to have been victorious against The Stallions during the competition.

Friday morning was a more relaxed morning than had been allowed over the last few days, a leisurely trip to the ice arena followed by a meeting in the changing room where there was a chilled, happy atmosphere with the obvious serious prep talk.

We hit the ice for a warm up, the game started and then BAM! The butterflies kicked in! The nerves vanished as quickly as they had appeared as soon as I had made the first save. The forward and defencemen were playing an outstanding game but as it is with ice hockey The All Stars managed to go 2-0 up. ‘Oh no!’ I was thinking, ‘this better not be a repeat of our earlier meeting.’ Almost as fast as we went 2-0 down, the score was 4-2 for The Stallions and there was still ten minutes to play.

As the end of the game neared, the All Stars got another goal to make it 4-3 then as the match entered the final minute, all hell broke out. I couldn’t work out how 85% of the game had been played in

Celebrations as the final whistle went
The presentation ceremony was good to REME, members of our Corps skated away with:

- Tri Service Champions – The REME Stallions
- Best Tournament Defenceman – Cfn ‘Harry’ Hatfield
- Best Defenceman (Army team) – Cfn ‘Harry’ Hatfield
- CSS Most Valued Player – Cpl Kenny Kay
- Stallions Most Valued Player – Cpl Lee ‘Freddie’ Cupples
- Most Improved Player – WO2 (AQMS) Chas Lawson
- Tournament Sportsmanlike Award – Cpl Al Gray

The REME Stallions are always keen to welcome new players to the fold. If you are the budding Wayne Gretzky call either Sgt Ash Witts on ☎️: 94321 3371 or Cpl Dave Potter on ☎️: 95481 4542 for details. A selection of ice hockey equipment is available for loan.

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Corps Football attend the REME Sports’ Association Annual Dinner

By Lt Col (Retd) John Edwards OBE

The Annual REME Sports’ Association Dinner was held at the Princess Marina’s Officers’ Mess, Lyneham on 23 June 2016 and the Corps footballing fraternity were well represented to witness and support, a well deserving Maj Ian Dawson receive a Lifetime Achievement Award from Lt Gen Paul Jaques CBE, President of the Sports’ Association.

The Annual Dinner is a fitting end to the Corps’ Festival Sport, and for football it was the ‘Corps 6s’.

The tournament was organised by SSgt ‘Robbo’ Robinson and it was good for 8 Trg Bn REME because the ‘A’ Team won the Kennedy Cup by beating 3 Regt RLC Wksp REME on penalties, after the game ended 1-1, and the ‘B’ Team won the plate by beating 14 Regt RA LAD REME, 2-1. This does great credit to the coaching staff at Lyneham, Sgt Pete Dyde for the firsts and for the seconds, Mr Gary Ward, who was ably assisted by old REME Arborfield stalwarts and I do mean old, Mr Danny McIvor and Mr John Worrall. Sgt Pete Shaw would have been there had he not been on holiday – he will claim that he was on tour to New York with the Corps Football Team and he will then happily tell you about the goal he scored.

No doubt, there will be an article in The Craftsman so we can read all about it.
EXERCISE

Supreme Glacier 2016

REME Winter Sports Development Race Camp 6 November – 9 December 2016 Exercise Supreme Glacier 2016 (Ex SG16) is the annual REME Alpine, Snowboard and Telemark development race camp held again in Stubai in Austria.

The breakdown of the exercise in weeks is detailed below. The Admin Instr has been released to the Corps; additionally it can be found on 102 Log Bde, ES Branch, Moss page. http://cui1-uk.diif.r.mil.uk/r/536/ES1/default.aspx

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex Supreme Glacier</th>
<th>2016 Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 0</td>
<td>Instructor development week (Instructors Only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Instruction and development for: Novice, and Intermediate Alpine and Snowboard. Advanced subject to demand for training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Instruction and development for: Beginners and Intermediate Alpine and Snowboard. Advanced subject to demand for training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Instruction and development for: Beginners and Intermediate on Alpine and Snowboard. Advanced subject to demand for training. Telemark will be for all levels from Novice to Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Instruction and development for: Beginners and Intermediate on Alpine and Snowboard. Advanced subject to demand for training. Telemark will be for all levels from Novice to Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Telemark training will be in week three and four only. Please note that the exercise week finishes at approx 1400hrs each Friday and registration for the following week is between 1000hrs and 1300hrs each Sunday. Unit representatives/individuals requiring further information or advice on administration, equipment or training should contact the following:

| EX OIC | Capt J McHugh | 102LOGX-1XXCSS-ES-OPS-SO3@mod.uk | Mil: 94452 3250 |
| Ex SG AO | Mrs Caroline Butler | 102LOGX-1XXCSS-ESCOORD@mod.uk | Mil: 94452 3296 |
| Alpine | Sgt M Doyle | 3REME-20Armd-tsmSgt@mod.uk | Mil: 94879 3742 |
| Telemark | Capt L Condron | 2REME-7CS-2IC@mod.uk | Mil: 95151 6325 |
| Snowboarding | SSgt Chris Jacks | 4REME-BHQ-ESOps-JAMESMgr@mod.uk | Mil: 94342 3165 |

466 craftsmaneditor@reme-rhq.org.uk
As the war in Europe finished he obtained leave which enabled him to visit his home in the newly liberated Guernsey, Channel Islands. This was to be his first home visit since he left, as a schoolboy, in June 1940 just prior to the German Occupation. However, the war was still not over for him, as he then embarked for the Far East ending up in India, some time after the Japanese surrender. This was followed by six months service in Palestine before demobilisation in autumn 1946 when he returned to his home in Guernsey. He settled there, eventually becoming a bank manager, and enjoyed a very happy life with Doreen who he married in 1951. On retirement, he was elected a Jurat of the Royal Court of Guernsey.

Known as 'Jim' by family and friends, Stanley enlisted in Duke of Cornwall’s Light Infantry on 29th January 1942. After infantry training he was sent to a technical college in West London to study Radar, known then as 'Radio Location.' After training he was employed as a radio mechanic on tanks. He joined 33 Armoured Brigade in the preparation for the invasion of Normandy and at 21 years old, landed on 'Juno' beach on D + 7. After fierce fighting in the battle for Caen, the Brigade went on the Le Havre, and then through Belgium to Holland. When the Germans launched their Ardennes offensive, the Brigade moved back down to take part in that battle. After that offensive, they moved back through Belgium to Holland in preparation for the spring attack across the Rhine. At that time their Sherman tanks were replaced by Buffalo amphibious tracked vehicles, brand-new from factories in USA, but supplied without radios. Then, the six or seven radio mechanics set to work installing these very necessary radios, working day and night and, of course, outdoors and still in wintry conditions!

Jim receiving the award of Chevalier de la Legion d’Honneur from Mme. Odile Blanchette, the French Consular Official in Guernsey, on behalf of the President of France. Also present was Sir Richard Collas, Bailiff of Guernsey, acting as deputy to His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor

**Stanley Walter John Jehan**

**Awarded ‘French ‘Legion d’Honneur’**

By Col (Retd) M J Crabbe, Corps Historian
From Colin Lovell – REME from 1962 – 1977

A piece of my military history has turned up in the guise of a poem written by LCpl (Eddie) Horne REME. In 1965, I was put on a Military Training Course II to I at Arborfield Depot (hut 13) and Eddie Horne turned out to be the ‘comic’ of the course, towards the end of the six week period, Eddie came up with this poem.

‘A Short Report on a Military Training Certificate Course Grade II to I’
Written by LCpl Horne E

From Workshops and from LAD
We flock to do our MTC
With hair so long and feeling low
To Arborfield we must go
They wake us up at half past six
And in our small packs they put bricks
The Muster Parades I cannot bear
Its “clean your boots” and “cut your hair”
Your boots may shine, your brasses gleam
But still the CSM will scream
Of all the Cpl’s on the course
I’ll tell you now, but under force
First John McConville I can see
Once an RSM was he
Lofty Sales then does appear
He has verbal dia**hoea
Bob Merry’s in the highest grade
His old man swiped a training aid
Colin Lovell’s life is hard
He always seems to be on guard
McNee is stamping near the door
His foot has gone right through the floor
When Dick Blanchard begins to shout
Half the ruddy camp turn out
Harry Brown had quite a scare
His teeth fell out while on the square
Everybody get ‘em down
Chippy’s on his nightly rounds
Old Ginge Niblock loves to shout
Joe Powell, is he Sinatra’s brother?
If you don’t like the first you can do the other
Jack Crow has never done PT
And never bends his flipping knee
Cpl Prentice be my guest
At criticising he’s the best
He’s tall and fair and full of pluck
Who is it? Why it’s Lofty Luck
Is this Audie Murphy here?
No! It’s Ray Doughty full of beer
If Lofty Milne you love to scorn
He’ll wake you up on Sunday morn
All praise to Eddie Horne I sing
It’s me who wrote this bl**dy thing
That’s all the Cpls in our squad
And now instructors – OH MY GOD!!
One Sgt grows as he walks past
For on his foot is a plaster cast
Our Cpl is so wild and gay
He’ll laugh but fail you anyway
The Sgt tall and debonair
Seems to turn up everywhere
Old soldiers they will never fade
Nor Carioch and his sick parade
Well that’s the lot, it is the end
But if you are ever feeling free
Go and try your MTC
The End

Ps- PSI’s in last paragraph are as follows:
One Sgt grows as he walks past – Sgt Neary
One Cpl is so wild and gay – Cpl La Velle
The Sgt tall and debonair – Sgt Watson
Old soldiers will never fade – Sgt Garioch

Where are these good people now? Retired I expect, but it was nice to walk down memory lane again.

Letter to the Editor
Good Deed – Was This You?
By SSgt Fennell

I was foolish enough to go to the cash point this morning but leave the £50 in the machine. However as I was driving away a young Craftsman waved me down to give me my money back. I never got his name and I want to find him to give him my thanks. Is there any way I can put this story in the magazine to track him down? It was in Tidworth on 31st Aug. You can print my contact details aswell. I’m currently at RRF in Tidworth, W Coy fitters.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
Don’t forget to let us know if you would like to try to get in touch with long lost friends

Service Records Of Deceased Service Personnel

The MOD is the custodian of the records of service of service personnel and Home Guard records until they are opened to general public access at the National Archives. Subject to the payment of an administration fee of £30 per record and provision of a death certificate (except where death was in service), certain information can be provided from the records of service personnel on request under the publication scheme. All information contained in the Home Guard records will normally be provided in full. The scheme allows for information in these records to be exempt from the general provisions of the Freedom of Information Act by virtue of section 21(1) of the Act (information accessible to an applicant by other means).

For more information visit: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/requests-for-personal-data-and-service-records
COL REME HANDOVER/TAKEOVER
Colonel Dan Scott ADC handed over the reins as Colonel REME to Colonel Clare Phillips ADC on 19 September 2016 after three and a half busy years at the pinnacle of the Corps.

KEEP WARM THIS WINTER

With winter fast approaching, the REME Shop has you covered. Why not treat yourself to one of with the fantastic range of warm jumpers, jackets, blankets or body warmers and wear the Corps colours with pride. The beautiful 100 % wool jumpers have been a real hit this year with the varied colour range and embroidery options available, that are nearly always made to order.
### Corps Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2016</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>October</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Corps Sergeants' Mess Autumn Ladies' Dinner Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Corps Anniversary Commemoration</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Corps Officers' Mess QMs' Dinner</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>RAJA CV and Networking Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Corps Trustees' Meeting</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Corps Council Meeting</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Corps Autumn Dinner</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>REME Pers Ops WG</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Corps Conference (All Ranks)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29-30</td>
<td>Reserves Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>November</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Corps Anniversary Commemoration</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Corps Officers' Mess QMs' Dinner</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Corps Officers' Mess QMs' Dinner</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Corps Finance Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>December</strong></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Corps Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Corps Officers' Mess Dinner Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>REME Colonels' Command Board</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>ES Executive Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Reserve Management Board</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>February</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Corps Fund Investment Committee</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Corps Ladies' Dinner Night</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>March</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Colonels' Commandant Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Corps Finance Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Corps Sergeants' Mess Spring Dinner</td>
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<td><strong>April</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>REME Colonels' Command Board</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>ES Executive Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reserve Management Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Corps Trustees' Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Corps Spring Guest Night</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Corps Council Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>May</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>REME Young Officers' Club Dinner</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>REME Institution &amp; HQ Officers' Mess AGMs</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Corps Sergeants' Mess Dinner Night</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>REME Association Memorial Day at NMA</td>
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<td><strong>June</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Colonel in Chief's Birthday</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Corps Sport Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>REME Institution Beating Retreat and Cocktail Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>REME Association Reunion</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>REME Corps Weekend</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Armed Forces Day</td>
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<td><strong>July</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>REME All Ranks Commando Reunion</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>REME Commando Officers' Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Corps Regimental Sunday at RHC</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Retired Officers' Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>August</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Corps Funds Investment Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>Reserves Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Corps Officers' Mess Dinner Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>REME Colonels' Command Board</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>ES Executive Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Museum Policy Committee Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Senior Officers' Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Corps Finance Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2016</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Corps Sergeants' Mess Autumn Ladies' Dinner Night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sports

#### REME Basketball Team
Various dates
Wessex Local League Season 2016/17
WO2 (AQMS) Benn Wathey
benn.wathey568@mod.uk or
mathew.cooper565@mod.uk

#### Badminton Championships
5-7 October 2016
Maj Stuart Bass 94261 3143
Capt Lloyd Morgan 95481 4107
DSEME-8REME BHQ RCMO@mod.uk

#### Orienteering Championships 2016
20 October 2016
Maj Tony Grainger 94630-3451
anthony.grainger382@mod.uk

#### REME Squash Championships
1-3 November 2016
WO2 Mat Price
matthew.price674@mod.uk Mil: 94342 4841

#### REME Boxing Championships
24 November 2016
Capt Gordy Bromidge Boxing Officer 94879 3126
Capt Siddall neil.siddall494@mod.uk
WO2 (CSM) Robinson 3 REME-20Armd-CSM
SSgt Dave Rose 94731 5839 5RA-WKSP-93BFS-ART
SSgt (SSI) Yates 3REME-RAPTCI@mod.uk

#### Swimming and Water Polo
Training camp 21-29 November 2016
Inter-Unit Championships 23 November 2016
WO2 (AQMS) Parsons simon.parsons319@mod.uk

### Conferences

#### Reunions

3RHA – Past and Present Members Association
If you have served, or are serving, in 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery, in whatever rank or cap badge, the Past and Present Members Association would like to keep you informed of current and future events. Please complete the online members registration form at: http://www.3rhappma.com/members/ and we will send you updates of activity within the regiment.
Leaving the Army?

We want your experience to help grow the REME Reserves

- Make the most of your skills and enjoy serving on your terms
- Earn daily pay, £1742 (tax free) training bounty and £10,000 ex-regular bonus
- Continue to benefit from service sports/AT, membership and discount schemes

106 Bn REME - Scotland and Northern Ireland
106 BHQ - Glasgow
E-mail: 106REME-BHQ-ROSO@mod.uk
Tel: 01355 225499

102 Bn REME - North East England
102 BHQ - Newton Aycliffe
E-mail: 102REME-BHQ-ROSO@mod.uk
Tel: 01325 375012

104 Bn REME - Midlands and East Anglia
104 BHQ - Northampton
E-mail: 104REME-BHQ-ROSO@mod.uk
Tel: 01604 692040

101 Bn REME - North West England and North Wales
101 BHQ - Wrexham
E-mail: 101REME-HQ-ROSO@mod.uk
Tel: 01978 316155

105 Bn REME - South West England and South Wales
105 BHQ - Bristol
E-mail: 105REME-Recruiting@mod.uk
Tel: 01179 863571 ext 8281

103 Bn REME - South East England
103 BHQ - Crawley
E-mail: 103REME-BHQ-ROSO@mod.uk
Tel: 01293 586426

ABN 75/15 instructs all service leavers to do a ‘Reserve Familiarisation Visit’ as part of resettlement - this means an expenses paid trip home to visit your local REME reserves unit. Speak to your RCMO for details.
Introduction

My predecessor but one, Col (Retd) Mike Sibbons, produced a fascinating series of articles ‘From the Archives’ which I am still using for some of my research. Having ditched history in favour of geography for my ‘O’ levels in 1963, surprisingly, I am finding our archive absolutely intriguing and compelling. I thought I had a fair idea of the formation of REME but this role has given me the opportunity to look at original documents as well as the published works such as Craftsman of the Army. Mike Sibbons wrote some excellent articles in his ‘From the Archives’ series, especially ‘Before REME’ and ‘The Birth of REME’ but, with the 75th anniversary coming up next year I thought you might be interested in a ‘month by month’ account of the build up to 1 October 1942.

Before 1 October 1941

The question of maintenance of the Army’s equipment had been the subject of various studies and committees in the inter war period. Just to remind you, the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RAOC), were responsible for ‘depth’ maintenance of equipment and formed an Engineering branch. The Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) was responsible for maintenance of their owned mechanical transport equipment. Also, the Royal Engineers (RE) and Royal Signals (R Signals) maintained their own equipment. First line repair of all other equipment was the responsibility of the RAOC. The RAOC and RASC (which later became the Royal Corps of Transport (RCT)), were later subsumed into the Royal Logistic Corps (RLC).

The RAOC had three branches of tradesman – the Stores, Artillery Artificer and Armourer Branches, the latter two referred to collectively as the Workshop Branch. Their officers were called Ordnance Maintenance Engineers (OME) and tended to be qualified engineers on joining but they did not enjoy ‘combat’ status. A Directorate of Ordnance Engineering Services was formed on 21 March 1940 headed up by Maj Gen A R Valon. In February 1940, the War Office appointed Maj (Later Maj Gen) M J H Bruce, an ex regular RASC officer who had become Chief Maintenance Engineer of the London Passenger Transport Board Road Services and Lt Col (later Maj Gen) R H Lewis, who was serving in the Royal Tank Regiment, to carry out an investigation ‘Repair in the Army’ written in the context of BEF experience of operational readiness for the Spring of 1940. They recommended that repair should be by replacement of defective assemblies in the field and that the base workshops of RE, RASC and RAOC should be more closely integrated.

After 1 October 1941

Early in 1941, the Minister of Labour appointed the ‘Committee on Skilled Men in the Services’, which was chaired by Sir William Beveridge, to report on the use to which skilled men were being put. His committee made two reports; which were published in August 1941 and February 1942. One of the recommendations was ‘There should be established in the Army a Corps of Mechanical Engineers’

Before the report was published, the Army instructed a committee which had been set up to report on War Office organisation to address the recommendations. The committee comprised Sir Robert Sinclair of the Imperial Tobacco Company, at that time Director General of Army Requirements, Major General R M Weeks of the glass firm Pilkington and Mr G W Dunkley of the Iraq Petroleum Company. They reported in February 1942 that mechanical repair services, covering the whole of the Army’s equipment, should be transferred from The RE, RASC and RAOC to a single Corps. This was essentially Phase 1 and they recommended a close study of the results with a view to early implementation of Phase 2, where all technical maintenance personnel, apart from some Royal Engineers, would transfer.

In the interim, we have some very interesting, and sometimes very detailed correspondence about such things as the cap badge, motto and organisation.

The People Who Made it Happen

It is incredible to me that, in the middle of one of the gravest crises the nation faced, with a German invasion imminent and UK involved in war in the
Middle and Far East, these men had the vision, foresight and energy to set about this mammoth task in less than a year. In subsequent articles I would like to take you through the month by month events and key figures. The hub of this remarkable story was Golden Cross House in Duccannon Street London. The Street runs between the Strand, just opposite Charing Cross Station, and Trafalgar Square. For those older readers it was the location of one of the famous Lyons Corner Houses, which first appeared in 1909 and remained until 1977.

On the outbreak of the Second World War, Brig Eric Bertram Rowcroft was in command of the RASC Training Battalion. On 10 May 1942, he was appointed Director of Mechanical Engineering (DME) to form REME in the rank of Major General. By the end of the war it would comprise 78000 men. We have his handwritten notes on the task ahead and his ‘First 9 months plan’ – May 42 to Jan 43, ‘Second 9 months plan’ – Feb to Oct 43 and ‘Third 9 months plan’ – 1 Nov 43 to 31 July 1944.

Maj Gen Rowcroft came from a military family. He was one of the sons of Col George Francis Rowcroft DSO, who was Col of the Ludhians Sikh Regiment and on his retirement, retrained as a surgeon and went back to be Surgeon Maj of the Indian Army. He died in 1953 aged 91 and is buried in India. His Great Grandfather was Lt Gen Francis Rawdon Rowcroft CB serving in the Indian Army at the time of the Indian Mutiny and his Great Great grandfather, Thomas Rowcroft, was a member of the Fatten Makers Company and a freeman of the City of London. He raised a troop of cavalry in the Peninsular War and became its Commanding Officer. He was later appointed as the first consul to the new state of Peru and was accidentally shot and killed by one of Simon Bolivar’s sentries in 1824.

As DME, Maj Gen Rowcroft gave a lecture in October 1943 on testing and developing of equipment for beach landings by REME. He mentioned his pride in the confidence placed in REME by the Army Council. The Assistant Chief of the Imperial General Staff was in the audience and his response was;

“It’s not so much a matter of confidence, old boy, as the idea that, if the wading fails and leads to the helpless slaughter of our army on the beaches, we can turn to the one man responsible and hang him.”

As a link to the present, we know he took off from ‘Calne’/now the REME training base at former RAF Lyneham, on 31 December 1944 for visits to India and Australia returning 11 March 1945. For his efforts during the Second World War he was appointed a Companion of the Order of Bath (CB) in 1944, and in 1946 on his retirement from the Army, he became a Knight of the Order of the British Empire (KBE). However, his involvement in REME continued until 1956, serving in the capacity of Colonel Commandant. He died on 27 December 1963 (aged 72) at Lyme Regis, Dorset.

International Events in October 1941

Russia

1 Oct: The Moscow Conference ended. The United States agreed to supply the Soviets with $1 billion worth of arms and equipment. The next day the Battle of Moscow began. Adolf Hitler issued a message to the German troops on the Eastern Front declaring, ‘Today begins the last great, decisive battle of this year.’

3 Oct: Hitler made a public speech at the Berlin Sportpalast, his first since the German invasion of the Soviet Union began. Hitler declared that Russia was ‘to a great extent’ already destroyed and that Germany had the capability to ‘beat all possible enemies’ no matter ‘how many billions they are going to spend,’ a remark that appeared to be directed at the United States.

8 Oct: U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent Stalin a short message stating that he was ‘confident that ways will be found to provide the material and supplies necessary to fight Hitler on all fronts, including your own. I want particularly to take this occasion to express my great confidence that your armies will ultimately prevail over Hitler and to assure you of our great determination to be of every possible material assistance.’

15 Oct: Most of the Soviet government evacuated Moscow, although Stalin remained in the capital.

19 Oct: Joseph Stalin proclaimed a state of siege in the capital and issued an Order of the Day that ‘Moscow will be defended to the last.

31 Oct: The Siege of Sevastopol began.

USA Support to UK

9 Oct: President Roosevelt asked Congress for immediate authority to arm American merchant ships. ‘We will not let Hitler prescribe the waters of the world which our ships may travel,’ the president said. ‘The American flag is not going to be driven from the seas either by his submarines, his airplanes or his threats.

11 Oct: President Roosevelt wrote to Winston Churchill requesting a gentleman’s agreement to share information on atomic research. Churchill would write back in December accepting the request.

17 Oct: Kearny incident: the American destroyer USS Kearny, dispatched to defend Allied convoy SC 48 from a German wolfpack, was hit by a torpedo from the German submarine U-568. On Navy Day 27 Oct, President Roosevelt made an address referring to the Kearny incident declaring that ‘America has been attacked. I say that we do not propose to take this lying down. Our determination not to take it lying down has been expressed in the orders to the American Navy to shoot on sight. Those orders stand.’ The president also said, ‘When we have helped to end the curse of Hitlerism we shall help to establish a new peace which will give to decent people everywhere a better chance to live and prosper in security and in freedom and in faith. Each day that passes we are producing and providing more and more arms for the men who are fighting on actual battle-fronts. That is our primary task.’

25 Oct: President Roosevelt released a formal statement condemning reprisal executions carried out by the Nazis in occupied Europe. ‘The practice of executing scores of innocent hostages in reprisal for isolated attacks on Germans in countries temporarily under the Nazi heel revolts a world already inured to suffering brutality,’ the statement read.

Charles Lindbergh spoke to 20,000 people at an America First rally in Madison Square Garden. Lindbergh accused President Roosevelt of using ‘dictatorship and subterfuge’ to draw the United States into the war.

Other events

10 Oct: Walther von Reichenau promulgated the Severity Order, paving the way for the mass murder of Jews.
16 Oct: The Jewish population of Lubny and neighbouring towns were ordered to report for relocation. The 1,900 Jews who obeyed the order were taken to an antitank trench outside the town and shot.

Riga Ghetto was established.

The three-day Odessa massacre took place with some 25,000 to 34,000 Jews and 15,000 Romani murdered.

The Kaunas massacre of Lithuanian Jews took place. 2,007 men, 2,920 women and 4,273 children were murdered by the SS in a single day.

27 French hostages were shot outside Châteaubriant in reprisal for the killing of a German soldier in Nantes two days previously.

Tokyo conducted its first practice blackout.

Palestinian leader Amin al-Husseini arrived in Rome for talks with Fascist leaders.

Italian Defence Chief Ugo Cavallero ordered that plans be completed for the occupation of Malta and that special units be trained to participate in the operation.

24 German submarines were commissioned.

Allied Losses

While escorting Allied convoy HX 156 in the North Atlantic, the American destroyer USS Reiben James was sunk by the German submarine U-552 with the loss of 115 of 159 crew.

The Royal Air Force bombed the German naval supply base at Ålesund, Norway.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary oil tanker Darkdale was torpedoed and sunk at Jamestown, Saint Helena by the German submarine U-68.

The British cargo ship Darkdale was torpedoed and damaged off Bardia by German submarine U-79. The Darkdale would be towed and beached at Alexandria and be used as an anti-aircraft platform for the rest of the war.

The British destroyer HMS Broadwater escorting convoy SC 48 was sunk south of Iceland by the German submarine U-101.

The British corvette HMS Gladios was lost while escorting convoy SC 48. The cause of its loss is unknown.

The British cargo ship Thistlecorm was bombed and sunk in the Red Sea off Ras Muhammad by the Luftwaffe.

Allied Successes

The Royal Air Force bombed the German naval supply base at Ålesund, Norway.

German submarine U-204 was depth charged and sunk by British warships in the Strait of Gibraltar.

The first Canadian built Fort ship, the Fort St. James, launched for use by Britain.

The German submarine U-111 was sunk southwest of Tenerife.

Peter was born on 20 August 1960, grew up playing with steam engines and developed a real enthusiasm for mechanics and engineering, fuelled by his father, Bill, himself an engineer. His passion for engineering continued as a teenager where Peter successfully restored two vintage delivery tricycles, rallying them across Cambridge. He attended the National College for Agricultural Engineering in Bedford where he met his wife Kathy, opting to take her out to lunch on one of the tricycles, as their first date.

Peter joined MAFF as a Mechanisation Officer advising farmers on their machinery needs, in 1981, later developing his interest in Horticultural engineering, being the horticultural engineer to Kew gardens, amongst others and running his own consultancy in the early 2000. Peter joined the Engineering Science Department (ESD) at SEME Bordon in 2005. He constantly found ways of making difficult concepts easier for the students to understand. He also had a real ability to make laborious subjects increasingly fun for the entire range of students that came through SEME; no doubt to his passion and enthusiasm for engineering. Peter was a true mentor and was always available to offer help and assistance to students and colleagues alike. He was always making training aids for colleagues as well as prototypes for many engineering projects that have been conducted over the decades; a bottle of Port as thanks was always welcome. It is clear that the engineering skills of students, developed over years, is down to Peters enthusiasm.

Peter was not just focused on ESD, his expertise was also sought after by the Metalsmith and Blacksmith departments as well as the Museum, which was always forthcoming. In recognition of his work in support of Artificer Projects, Peter was awarded a Commandants Commendation in December 2011.

Peter fully embraced the transition to MOD Lyneham and continued in the same vein as he had in Bordon until his unexpected death on the 23 April 2016. Peter will be truly missed by his colleagues, all those that have had the pleasure of meeting him, as well as those students who have been lucky enough to be taught by him.

Peters love of steam, engineering and mechanics continues to this day, with his passion being shared by his wife Kathy and children Elizabeth and Simon, all helping him in his dream of building a 3 inch scale Fowler showman’s model. This along with a three-inch scale Gallopers living van completes the entire fairground. The family will continue to rally and show the variety of engines built by Peter, so if you see them at a show, please make a point of saying hello.
29 June 2016 was the 40th Anniversary of course 76b2 forming up at the Army Apprentices College Arborfield, the first of the “Seven week wonders.” To mark the occasion a small group of those illustrious apprentices met in Reading and then spent the day on a pilgrimage to reminisce and recall those glorious days as REME Apprentices. Of the 64 apprentices who joined that day in 1976, just eight were able to attend.

After making contact through the AAColl 76b2 Facebook page, I was inspired to organise a small get together to mark what I believe to be a very significant day in our lives. I am still serving on an FTRS contract after commissioning into the RAMC. Others who attended included Tim Ridge, Ian Buchan and Dave (Spuggy) Sparrow all of whom completed Artificer training and a full 22-year career with Dave commissioning and transferring to the Australian Army. Andy Nunn, Mike Horsman and Rob Keane, (who bought a blazer and Corps Tie especially for the occasion!), brought the total to seven. Finally, Lt Col Mike Tizard, now the Chairman of the AOBA and who achieved the highest rank of the intake, was able to catch up in time for dinner. Others, who were sadly unable to attend, sent messages of support, including Mike Preston, John Rye, Gary Harding, Steve Myers, Fred Ellingford, Rob Cooley, Mike(Hector) Heathcote, Andy Gollop and Andy Langwith.

It was a very special day, some of us had not seen each other since marching off the square on our Passing Out Parade 38 years previously.

Arborfield as it was in 1976 has sadly gone now. The first port of call was for a spiritual pint in The Bramshill Hunt, The Brams of many a celebratory pint for apprentices and REME soldiers throughout their careers. As you may expect from any group of more senior veterans, there was much sentimental and light hearted debate, speculation and banter. As we toured the building site, which now covers where once stood the wooden college ‘Spiders,’ we all had our own ideas about what was here or there. We recalled figures such as Hank Mansell Grenadier Guards CSM B Company…. (the best!!) and RSM Meredith Irish Guards and Sparky, the A Coy CSM, whose name escaped us. We did broadly managed to agree in the end but I’m still not sure the cookhouse was where they all said it was! We then progressed, as we used to do all those years ago, up the road to Arborfield Cross. Sadly the British Legion, (or Leg Ion as we apprentices used to refer to it), was closed and the Swan is now a restaurant so no nostalgic pints could be had there. That left The Bull where the group stopped for dinner and where Mike Tizard caught up. After dinner, we made our way back to our hotel in Reading and continued Guinness processing well into the early hours.

So a fantastic reunion, with sadly too many unable to attend, marked 40 years to the day that we became REME Apprentices. The Army Apprentices College Arborfield has given every soldier who passed through it an excellent start in life and we are lucky enough to have been a part of that great story. We had the best of trade training, the best soldiering training…and Guardsmen teaching us drill too so we weren’t too shabby at that either by the time we passed out. Those basic, wooden 20-man rooms, with red linoleum floors and brass everywhere that needed daily cleaning, coupled with the odd bed-block or two are things all youngsters should be exposed to! It taught us to be self-reliant and resourceful; it taught us to be good soldiers and good tradesmen, Arte et Marte. It set all of us up for full military careers or success in civilian life. For me there is no doubt that The Army Apprentice College Arborfield set me on a course for life. I’m immensely proud to have been a REME Arborfield Apprentice and immensely proud to have met and served with all the people I have served with in my career. And finally I was proud to have had the chance to catch up with at least a few of those excellent fellows, who will remain friends for life no matter where in the world we are, and who I joined the Army with on 29 June 1976.
Orienteering Championships 2016

The event will take place on Thursday 20 October 2016, following a standard Wednesday MLS event, which can be used for training.

Details, including the entry from, have been cascaded down the Chain of Command but direct contact with the event organiser, Maj Tony Grainger is welcome and encouraged.

The championships will be used to identify novices for development and runners for the Inter-Corps Championships in November 2016.

For further details contact Maj Tony Grainger
☎: 94630-3451
✉: anthony.grainger382@mod.uk

REME Squash Championships
1-3 November 2016
Aldershot Sports Leisure Centre

Events include:
- Major unit and Minor Unit competition
- Main individual Open/Plate competition
- Female Competition
- Age range competitions (U25, 25-35, O35 & O40)
This is open to all serving Regular, Reserves and FTRS personnel

For further details and entry forms can be gained from:
WO2 Mat Price
☎: DII/F: matthew.price674@mod.uk
✉: Mil: 94342 4841

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IMECHE.ORG/ARMEDFORCES

Improving the world through engineering
The following soldiers have been awarded the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
LCpl, P. J. BARROWS, REME, 25225021
Sgt, D. B. HERRING, REME, 25104259
Sgt, M. A. NOY, REME, 24536158
Cpl, C. D. SANDS, REME, 25219683
LCpl, C. L. SMITH, REME, 25224253

9 August 2016
REGULAR ARMY

Commands and Staff
Brigadier B. W. O. RUSSELL MBE 514878 retires 2 August 2016
Colonel M. P. ASTON DSO MC 550579 retires 3 August 2016
Colonel A. MACLEOD 523887 retires 31 July 2016
Colonel J. K. MAHAN 543483 retires 1 August 2016

ARMY RESERVE
Mr John GREAVES is appointed Honorary Colonel 102 Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Army Reserve 1 July 2016 in succession to Colonel J. R. M. HACKETT CBE 487498 tenure expired

16 August 2016
REGULAR ARMY
Lieutenant General Sir Andrew GREGORY KBE CB 514007 retires 16 August 2016
Colonel J. HOWARD 539810 retires 15 August 2016

ARMY RESERVE
Colonel J. A. B. KINLOCH TD VR 522176 retires 29 February 2016

23 August 2016
REGULAR ARMY
Brigadier R. T. H. JONES CBE 528413 assumes the appointment of Deputy Commander Strategy and Sustainment Combined Joint Task Force Kuwait 21 August 2016 and is granted the substantive rank of Major General with seniority of the same date
Brigadier D. B. WARNE 518205 retires 19 July 2016
Colonel J. S. ETHERINGTON 539563 retires 23 August 2016
Colonel B. F. TARGETT 531097 retires 19 August 2016

Regular Commissions (Late Entry)
Major J. D. SIBLEY 563049 retires 15 June 2016
Major I. S. DAWSON 563041 retires 1 July 2016

The following soldiers have been awarded the 3rd Clasp to the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
SSgt, M. BROGDEN, REME, 25132222
Cpl, S. W. DAVISON, REME, 25087325

30 August 2016
The following soldiers have been awarded the 3rd Clasp to the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
Sgt, M. BROCQDEN, REME, 24827875
Sgt, L. M. McGUNIGLE, REME, 24452321
WO2, A. A. JOHNSON, REME, 24452340

Extracts from the London Gazette

2 August 2016
REGULAR ARMY

Promotions
The undermentioned Captains to be Majors 31 July 2016 with seniority 31 July 2016

Regular Commissions
R. M. ASHTON 25174502
D. COULDRIDGE 565246
H. R. MORSE 25197716
J. P. SEWELL 25197747
S. C. THOMPSON 30011002
J. G. TUCKER 565382

Regular Commissions (Late Entry)
A. DEVINE 24781296
A. J. DOWN 24809921
M. GREEN 24885193
S. J. JONES 25034400
R. A. LACKENBY 24725448
P. G. REYNOLDS 25005970
A. D. SHELLARD 24725017

Intermediate Regular Commissions
M. J. CASEY D998448C
A. M. DOUGLAS-EVANS W1047969
C. W. FISHER 25095517
S. J. L. FRIEND W1048807
S. S. GOOHA 554287
P. C. HOCKLEY 25197691
P. J. ISITT 25237949
M. A. JEFFREY 565759
G. LOGIE 25154751
E. G. MCCANN 25092728
S. D. NEL 25172300
S. PHEONIX 25154761
J. R. SCHENK 25220806
I. THOMAS 25132654
S. R. WOODS 25166166
C. J. WOODS W1055652

Intermediate Regular Commissions (Late Entry)
P. CULLEN 24781187
S. P. GOOSE 24870446
N. D. GOULD 24779544
P. J. HAIG 25004422
S. G. HUGHES 25022307
S. G. J. KELLY 24797971
P. REYNOLDS 24826696
G. J. SMITH 24725723
J. C. SUGRUE 24725668
R. J. VALLANCE 24829433
D. WARD 24678638

The following officers have been awarded the 1st Clasp to the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
Maj, P. P. BRADLEY, REME, 494274

The following officers have been awarded the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
Lt Col, E. TESSEM-COTTON, REME, 537156

The following soldiers have been awarded the 2nd Clasp to the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
Sgt, C. K. TEALE, REME, 24929240

The following soldiers have been awarded the 1st Clasp to the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
Sgt, M. W. ARNOPP, REME, 25132222
Cpl, S. W. DAVISON, REME, 25087325

The following officers have been awarded the Clasp to the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal
Maj, P. R. BLOOMFIELD, REME, 24763381

The following personnel have been awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal
Sgt, K. D. BENSON, REME, 25135266
Sgt, I. J. BROWN, REME, 25112726
Sgt, S. P. CAIRNEY, REME, 25134214
Sgt, J. S. DUNSTAN, REME, 25134392
Sgt, M. L. KELLY, REME, 25134392
Sgt, R. B. MURPHY, REME, 25134392
Sgt, M. L. KELLY, REME, 25134392
Sgt, J. S. ETHERINGTON 539563 retires 23 August 2016
Colonel B. F. TARGETT 531097 retires 19 August 2016

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Cpl, S. W. DAVISON, REME, 25087325
The following soldiers have been awarded the 2nd Clasp to the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
Cpl, G. L. HAZELBY, REME, 24597360
Sgt, M. H. GLYN, REME, 24580869
SSgt, D. M. BIRCH, REME, 24930281
Cpl, P. J. BOWEN, REME, 24964107
SSgt, D. M. BIRCH, REME, 24930281
Cpl, R. J. FITCHETT, REME, 24929868

The following soldiers have been awarded the 1st Clasp to the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
Sgt, W. SMYTH, REME, 24670436
WO2, N. C. FILMER, REME, 24714373
Cpl, R. T. GRIFFITHS, REME, 24916615
Cpl, A. J. B. MARTIN, REME, 25093775
Cpl, D. J. MARTIN, REME, 25079877
WO2, W. M. O’ROURKE, REME, 24234224

The following soldiers have been awarded the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal
LCpl, J. A. WILBOURNE, REME, 25230296
Cpl, M. J. LLOYD, REME, 25224367
Cpl, D. C. PASCALL, REME, 25228047
Cpl, P. W. WHITTLE, REME, 24581519
LCpl, D. J. MADGWICK, REME, 25170506

6 September 2016
REGULAR ARMY

Commands and Staff
Colonel A. C. HASSELL 533990 retires 6 September 2016
Colonel R. PEACOCK 514873 retires 3 September 2016
Colonel A. J. SHEPHERD 514835 retires 3 September 2016
Colonel D. F. VENN 514087 retires 3 September 2016

CRUST – Mrs Dorothy Crust, wife of long serving Potteries Association branch member Capt (Retd) Bert Crust REME, died Sun- day 21 August, peacefully, aged 84.

The Trustees of the REME Benevolent Fund acknowledge with sincere thanks the donations received during the month of August 2016. They also wish to acknowledge the regular subscriptions received from the Officers and Soldiers in the Corps and retired members of the REME Institution:

Donations
Virgin Money Giving ................................. 476.77
Jonathan Revely – REME Riders .................. 100
In memory of Cpl Colin Langridge ................. 50
C Nobbs .................................................. 30
Donation ............................................... 20
Payroll Giving ........................................ 14.44
Robert Davies ........................................ 10

Grants Made
Since 1 January 2016, the Executive Committee has authorised 256 grants totalling £114,879.49, which is an average grant of £448.75

If you would like to see how your money is spent we welcome one or two observers at the Benevolent Fund meetings. The meetings are held midweek, approximately every three weeks, if you would like to observe a meeting please contact the Ben Fund Secretary on Tel Mil: 95481 4527 Civ: 01249 894527 in the first instance.

Anyone wishing to leave a legacy to the REME Benevolent Fund, which is exempt from inheritance tax, can add a codicil to their will. Our registered charity number is 246967

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