

# THE ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION

PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

Brompton Barracks CHATHAM, Kent ME4 4UG

President: Lt General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE  
Chief Royal Engineer

Chairman: Major General J D Moore- Bick CBE DL

Controller: Lieutenant Colonel J R McLennan Medway (01634) 822982

Deputy Controller: Lieutenant Colonel N A Jordan Medway (01634) 822407

See Distribution 05 July 2009

## HQ CIRCULAR NO 133

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### **ITEM 1 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009**

1. Details of the Association's Annual General Meeting, to be held on Saturday 10th October 2009 commencing at 1600 hrs, were published in HQ Circular 132, Item 2. A copy of the Draft Agenda, subject to Council approval, is enclosed. Branch Secretaries were sent copies of the Annual Report & Financial Statements in May; they are reminded that Branch AGM delegates are required to have sight of this document.
2. Branches are reminded that attendance is in accordance with Rules of the Association paragraphs 11.13 to 11.15 and the notification of the Branch Delegate (Rule 11.16) must reach HQ REA by 10 September 2009. The proforma to be used for notifying HQ and for claiming travelling expenses is enclosed.
3. Only members of Council and those nominated as Branch Delegates are eligible to claim expenses to attend the AGM.

### **ITEM 2 – ANNUAL DINNER 2009**

4. The Annual Dinner of the Association will take place at the Victory Services Club on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2009, following the AGM. Reception will be at 1800 hours for 1830 hours with the bar opening at 1730 hours.

5. As in previous years, member's partners are most welcome. Dress for gentlemen will be lounge suits or blazer and flannels with Corps tie; ladies should dress accordingly. Branches are encouraged to bring their Standard with them.

6. The Menu will be:

Traditional Smoked Salmon with Lemon & Capers served with Dressed Leafs

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Chicken Supreme with Wild Mushrooms & Tarragon Veloute

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Italian Tiramisu

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Traditional English Cheeseboard with Apple,  
Celery, Grapes & Savoury Biscuit Selection

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LBV Decanted Port

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Coffee and Mints

7. The cost of a ticket will be £18.00 and applications must be received at HQ by 24 September 2009. A proforma to enable branches to book tickets is enclosed and where necessary, branches should also state their preferred seating arrangements. Special dietary requirements should be notified at the time of booking.

8. Cancellation of tickets is acceptable at any time, but a refund of the cost of the ticket will only be made to cancellations received by 24 September 2009, thereafter the meal has to be paid for.

9. Late applications for tickets will only be accepted to fill cancellations, in which case the cost of the ticket will be refunded for the original booking.

### **ITEM 3 – SAPPER SUNDAY**

10. SAPPER SUNDAY will take place on Sunday 11 October 2009 at The Royal Hospital Chelsea. This is the day after the REA AGM and Annual Dinner and a good turnout from REA Members in London and from around the country is expected. A curry lunch will be provided. Members are encouraged to attend this event, meet the RE In-Pensioners and swap stories over a few pints and a curry. Branches are requested to give this event the very widest publicity. Those wishing to attend are requested to advise the Deputy Controller ASP so that catering numbers can be determined.

### **ITEM 4 – BADGE OF MERIT NOMINATIONS**

11. Nomination Forms, REA Form 10, for the Award of the Badge of Merit 2010 are available from HQ REA on request. Only the official REA Form 10, Revised Jan 01, is to be used. Branches requiring a digital Form 10 (MS Word format) are to request them from the Deputy Controller by sending an Email to the following address:

**njordan@reahq.org.uk**

There are conditions attached to the use of the electronic form; these will be sent with the digital Form 10.

12. Nominating officers are advised to read, and comply with, the "Guide for Recommending Officers" which will be forwarded with the Form 10.
13. Nomination Forms, fully completed at Branch and Group level, are to reach HQ REA by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009.
14. **Nominations arriving late or not on the prescribed form, will not be processed.**
15. Early application for a Nomination Form is advised. This will ensure that ample time is available for writing the recommendation and for obtaining the Group Director's Comments.
16. Branches are reminded that only in exceptional circumstances may a Branch nominate more than ONE member for the award in any one year.

#### **ITEM 5 – FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE**

17. The Field of Remembrance opening ceremony will be held at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at approximately 1100 hours when a short service will take place. A senior member of the Royal Household is expected to attend and conduct a review of the plots.
18. The Corps Plot is number 57, which is located close to the West Gate.
19. Members of the Association who wish to attend the opening ceremony should assemble at the rear of the Corps Plot by 1100 hours at the latest.
20. As with previous years, the Central London Branch will take responsibility for laying out the Corps Plot.

#### **ITEM 6 - GROUP AND BRANCH OFFICIALS CONTACT LIST 2009**

21. The Group and Branch Officials Contact List 2009 is enclosed. The logistics of maintaining an up-to-date contact list across the whole of the REA are considerable; branches are therefore advised that HQ REA is unable to promulgate amendments to the list. Up-to-date address details of Group and Branch officials can be found on the REA website.
22. Because the Contact List is compiled from branch returns, it is only as up-to-date as the information provided by branches. Some branches will note that their details are out of date or incomplete; this is because the Form 4 for 2009 was not returned by them as requested. Subject to branch returns being received as requested, it is hoped that the next Contact List will be published with the HQ Circular in July 2010.

#### **ITEM 7 – CLAIMS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

##### General

23. All claims submitted to HQ REA for payment by individuals, branches or groups must be supported by the appropriate receipts. Payment will not be made if claims are not supported by receipts.

24. Three Motor Mileage Allowance Rates are available; they are:

- a. Public Transport Rate = 25 pence per mile
- b. 1<sup>st</sup> Passenger = 2 pence per mile
- c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Passenger = 1 pence per mile

25. When travelling by rail, maximum use must be made of advance booking discounts available from the national train operating companies. All REA events are publicised well in advance and provide ample opportunity to purchase discounted fares. HQ REA will scrutinise all claims and receipts to ensure compliance with this instruction.

26. Secretaries at Group and Branch level are requested to ensure that those submitting claims are aware of the instructions provided in this Circular. All claims must be carefully scrutinised by a Group or Branch Official and authorised only if they comply with these instructions. Claimants must also read and comply with any notes contained on the claim form. Failure to do so may result in the claim form being returned to the authorising official without payment.

27. Persons claiming Motor Mileage Allowance should ensure that their motor insurance provides adequate cover for the trip for which they are claiming. The HQ REA Insurance policy provides cover only for Third Party Public Liability and for loss or damage to the Branch Standard or accoutrements.

#### Standard Bearers

28. Branch Standard Bearers may now claim travel expenses from HQ REA for all National Events attended during the year. Motor Mileage Allowance is allowable for Standard Bearers using their own car to attend a National Event. National Events are notified in the HQ Circular each year in advance. In addition to claiming for National Events, Branch Standard Bearers taking part in the National Standard Bearers Competition may also claim travel and reasonable accommodation expenses for the night prior to the event.

29. Standard Bearers attending events on behalf of a branch or group should submit a claim for travel expenses to the branch treasurer for his further action. Unless prior authority has been given by HQ REA, branch claims for attending funerals, memorial services or other similar events are unlikely to be met.

#### Group Activities

30. Branch members attending Group Functions where travel expenses are refundable should request a refund from their Group Secretary. Groups should use their REA Welfare grant for this purpose and, if necessary, devise a suitable claim form.

#### **ITEM 8 – FROMELLES WAR DEAD**

31. For some months now work has been in progress in northern France to recover the remains of up to 400 Australian and British soldiers who died in the Battle of Fromelles in

July 1916. The remains currently lie in a number of newly-discovered mass graves at Pheasant Wood, in the village of Fromelles, where they had been buried by the Germans after the battle.

32. The recovery will be overseen by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and progress can be followed through the new Remembering Fromelles website [www.cwgc.org/fromelles](http://www.cwgc.org/fromelles).

33. Members of the public who believe they may be related to British soldiers buried at Fromelles can check the list of names on the website [www.cwgc.org/fromelles](http://www.cwgc.org/fromelles) or contact Historic Casualty Casework, Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre, Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, Imjin Barracks, Gloucester GL3 1HW . Telephone: 01452 712612 extension 6303 or 7330.

#### **ITEM 9 – MILITARY ANECDOTES**

34. Mr Kevin Humphreys is currently compiling a book of military anecdotes and is seeking suitable stories for inclusion in it. Upon completion it is hoped that the book will be published and all proceeds derived from its sale will be donated to the Combat Stress charity. For further details see the attached letter from Kevin Humphreys.

#### **ITEM 10 – A CENTURY OF FATHERHOOD – TV DOCUMENTARY**

35. The award winning TV company Testimony Films is making the first ever series charting **A Century of Fatherhood** in Britain over the past 100 years – to be shown on BBC TV next year.


36. They are particularly interested in exploring the effects the Second World War had on family life in Britain – particularly with regards to dads – and want to talk to veterans who left young families behind when they went off to fight. They would also like to hear from the children of war veterans, to find out how they coped in dad's absence, and what life was like for them when he came home.

37. A press release from Testimony Films is enclosed with this Circular. It provides more details of their programme and their contact details if you wish to contribute.

#### **ITEM 11 – HEROES RETURN 2 – THE BIG LOTTERY FUND**

38. The Big Lottery Fund has announced the opening of a new multi-million pound commemorative funding scheme for veterans, spouses, widows and carers wishing to mark overseas anniversaries throughout 2009 and 2010. Financial assistance can be given to fund visits to Second World War battlefields, cemeteries and other significant places across the world. For further information call the Heroes Return 2 Helpline 0845 0000121. Applications must be made by 31 January 2011.

39. Poppy Travel, the Travel Arm of the Royal British Legion has experienced consultants who can advise on the scheme and help with booking arrangements. Tel. 01622 716729 or 01622 716182.



N JORDAN  
Lt Col  
Deputy Controller

Enclosures:

1. Draft AGM Agenda
2. REA Form 5 – Notification of Attendance of a Branch Delegate to AGM
3. REA Form 6 – Annual Dinner Booking Form
4. REA Contact List 2009
5. Military Anecdotes Letter
6. Testimony Films Press Release

Distribution:

REA Council Members  
Management Committee Members  
Group Secretaries  
Deputy Group Directors  
Branch Secretaries

## Military Dads wanted for BBC TV series on Fatherhood

The BBC is making a new TV series, looking at the way **fatherhood** has changed during the course of the last century. We want to talk to veterans of the Army, Navy or RAF who were, or were about to become, dads when they fought in the Second World War.

Although as a dad in the forces you had a duty to King and Country, it must have been incredibly difficult to leave your sons and daughters, or your pregnant wife behind when you went off to train and fight. How did you cope with that moment, knowing that you might never see your family again? And what was it like seeing them when you came home on leave?

And while you were away, whether at home or abroad, were you able to contact your family? Did the thought that you were fighting for their freedom keep you going, or did you have to try to forget all about them?

For those taken prisoner in the early part of the war, it must have been particularly hard – whether you were held in Germany or the Far East. Were you able to communicate with your family? And what happened when you were released?

For all dads in the military, homecoming must have been a joyous occasion. What was it like to see your family again? Did your children remember you? Was it hard to settle back into family life? Or were you one of those who faced the agony of receiving a ‘Dear John’ letter before the war ended?

We’d also love to hear from the children whose dad went off to fight – so if you’re in your sixties or seventies now, perhaps that’s a memory you have?

Whatever your story, please write to Pete Vance or Hazel Fearnley, Testimony Films, 12 Great George Street, Bristol, BS1 5RS; email [pete.vance@testimonyfilms.com](mailto:pete.vance@testimonyfilms.com) or telephone 0117 9258589

Royal Engineers Association  
Brompton Barracks  
Chatham  
Kent  
ME4 4UG

Kevin Humphreys  
3 Golden Oak Dell  
Stannington  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S6 6FN

Dear Sir.

Date: 13th, April 2009

Ref: Military Anecdotes.

I am the very proud father of two sons currently serving with HM forces and whilst I have not served personally I have done so vicariously and am aware of the effects of combat stress upon both service personnel and their families. I wish therefore to contribute towards the cause of treating such individuals by raising funds for a charity dealing with combat stress. To achieve this aim I am currently compiling a book of military anecdotes and I am seeking your assistance in gathering suitable stories for inclusion in the proposed book. Upon completion it is hoped that it will be published and all proceeds derived from its sale will be donated to the above charity.

The stories/anecdotes may be from any part of service life; the only requirement is that they are humorous. All contributors published will receive full accreditation within the book through an alphabetical list of contributor's names, ranks and regiments.

I would be grateful if you would kindly extend an invitation to members of your service, regiment, association, colleagues and associates who may wish to contribute to this project to submit their stories/anecdotes to me at the following points of contact:

Kevin Humphreys  
3 Golden Oak Dell  
Stannington  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S6 6FN

E mail: [khumphr@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:khumphr@westminster.gov.uk)

I am sure you will agree that this would make a great read and is for a most worthy cause so if you wish to contribute please do, and I look forward, hopefully, to receive stories/anecdotes from you and or your colleagues in the near future.

Yours sincerely



Kevin Humphreys