

BGen William “Bill” Brewer, OMM, CD

Military Career

BGen (retired) William Brewer, OMM, CD, was a lifelong leader in the Canadian Armed Forces and a driving force behind the continued evolution and professionalization of the Corps of Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCEME). His distinguished military career spanned more than three decades and was marked by key command roles, strategic leadership, and enduring contributions to both the operational effectiveness and institutional legacy of the Corps.

Born on 8 November 1948, Bill Brewer joined the Canadian Armed Forces at age 16 and went on to attend both the Collège Militaire Royal de St-Jean and the Royal Military College (RMC) in Kingston, graduating in 1970. His early training and education placed him on a trajectory toward technical excellence and leadership. Over the course of his service, he held numerous critical positions across Canada and abroad, including Base Technical Services Officer at CFB Lahr, Commanding Officer of 4 Service Battalion, and Commandant of the Canadian Forces School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (CFSEME).

Following his time at CFSEME, he moved into increasingly senior roles at National Defence Headquarters. As Project Manager of the M113 Armoured Personnel Carrier, he was instrumental in managing one of Canada’s most critical fleet assets. He later served as Director Combat Mobility Engineering and Maintenance (DCMEM), and then as Director General of Land Equipment Program Management (DGLEPM). In that role, he became the senior equipment manager for all Land Technical equipment in the Canadian Army and a key member of Army Council.

BGen Brewer retired from the Canadian Armed Forces in 2002 with a reputation for integrity, innovation, and commitment to the Corps. That same year, he transitioned into the private sector as Vice President of Business Development at DEW Engineering and Development, where he continued to support Canadian defence capabilities until 2012.

RCEME Corps Leadership and Esprit de Corps

Throughout his post-military life, BGen Brewer remained a dedicated servant of the RCEME community. In 2016, he was appointed Colonel Commandant of the Corps of RCEME, a role he held for five years. During his tenure, he played a transformative role in uniting the various Corps Associations and legacy funds into a single, nationally representative RCEME Guild. He was instrumental in shaping the Guild Constitution, promoting inclusivity and recognition across ranks and generations. His leadership led to the creation of a Lifetime Membership category, ensuring that the service and contributions of all RCEME veterans would be formally acknowledged.

His influence extended beyond governance. BGen Brewer was a founding member and first Vice-Chair of the RCEME Foundation, where he worked to support education, heritage, and

esprit de corps. He also served as Vice-Chair of the RCEME Museum, helping to preserve and present the Corps' legacy for future generations. His work on Corps identity was foundational to ensuring RCEME's values and traditions were upheld across time.

He was also a leader in the establishment of the RMC Athlete Wall of Honour at his alma mater and remained involved in a wide range of professional, philanthropic, and veterans' initiatives throughout his life.

Awards and Recognition

- Officer of the Order of Military Merit (1995)
- Knight of the Order of St. George (2015)

These honours reflect not only his exemplary military service but also his enduring contributions to the well-being of CAF members, veterans, and their families.

Legacy and Reflections

BGen Brewer was widely respected across the military community for his professional accomplishments and personal integrity. He passed away in 2022, leaving behind a legacy of institutional leadership, technical excellence, and selfless service to both Corps and country.

In support of his nomination as a Leader and Trailblazer, MGen (Ret'd) Nic Eldaoud offered the following:

"I am honoured to contribute to the nomination of BGen (ret'd) William 'Bill' Brewer for the Leader and Trailblazer Award in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to further the unity of The Corps of RCEME. Bill's extraordinary contribution toward transforming the RCEME Guild to become a beacon of unity and pride within the Corps, his advocacy for RCEME veterans, and his commitment to preserving the heritage of the Corps exemplifies the spirit of a true visionary RCEME leader.

His tenure as Colonel Commandant (Col-Cmdt) of The Corps of RCEME from 2016 to 2021 was marked by significant growth and outreach within the extended RCEME family. Bill's personal leadership was instrumental in the creation of the current construct of the RCEME Guild which allowed for the first time in almost 75 years of history, the convergence and fusion of all Corps Associations and Funds under one united regime. Furthermore, his visionary initiative to create a lifetime membership category within the RCEME Guild for members who served with distinction in past conflicts has ensured that their sacrifices and contributions continue to be recognized and honoured.

Bill has effectively united the RCEME grand family, addressing and overcoming the barriers of miscommunication that historically separated serving and retired associations of Officers and Non-commissioned Members alike. His ability to bring people together to establish common goals has been a vital force in fostering today's sense of Corps community among both serving and retired RCEME members."