

# BLUE BERET

## Sergeant Ian Ward remembered with new UN memorial



On the evening of Thursday 8 September 2016, members of UNFICYP gathered at the newly erected United Nations Protected Area (UNPA) memorial to Sergeant Ian Ward to dedicate and bless it. Members of the Australian Contingent formed an honour guard, while Inspector Daniel Edwards paid tribute to Sergeant Ward. Major Mike Holgate spoke about the vehicle and construction of the memorial and the Reverend Stephen McCaulay said the police prayer before blessing the memorial.

On 12 November 1974, Sergeant Ward died as a result of a land mine explosion whilst travelling in a Land Rover on a humanitarian mission for UNFICYP. Sergeant Ward was a member of the 11th Australian Police Contingent to Cyprus. Sergeant Ward was 25 years of age when he died, and had only been in Cyprus for five days.

Sergeant Ward received the Australian Police Overseas Service medal with Cyprus clasp and the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal. The Dag Hammarskjöld Medal is awarded by the United Nations to those of its members who are killed whilst performing duty. The new memorial consists of the remains of the vehicle Sergeant Ward was travelling at the time of his death. The task

for the recovery of this vehicle began on 21 September 2015 as part of the clearance of the Lefka-Aplici Crossing Area conducted by a team from Cambodia, and deployed through inter-mission collaboration with UNIFIL.

The clearance of the area allowed access to the vehicle so it could be removed from the minefield. The process required the construction of suitable equipment to lift the vehicle out of the danger area; this was accomplished in a unique manner, with the support of the Force Engineers, who also constructed the memorial, the MFR and with the assistance of Mr. Niels Petersen from Transport Section. They were able to lift this vehicle out of the minefield 42 years and a day after this tragic incident and bring it back to UNPA where the memorial now stands.

The memorial serves as a reminder, not only of the hidden dangers of mines, but of the sacrifice made by peacekeepers, in whichever uniform they wear, who volunteer to go and do the best they can in the service of peace.

Sergeant Ward died helping others, bravely and courageously. He is honoured and remembered as a beloved member of the Ward family, as well as a member of the broader UN and police family.



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