

The Blue Beret

Volume 36 - July 2000

**New CM arrives
Fighting the Fire at Lefka
Pilgrimage to Kokkina**



Published monthly by the Public Information Office of the United Nations Force in Cyprus, HQ UNFICYP, PO Box 21642, Nicosia, Cyprus

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Articles of general interest are invited from all members of the Force. Photographs, together with captions, should accompany the articles.

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editorial

This month we welcome our new Chief of Mission, Zbigniew Wlosowicz, seen on the front cover being greeted by an MFR honour guard at UNFICYP HQ. There are also new faces in Sector 2 and some recent arrivals in Sector 1 and the MFR.

Visitors to UNFICYP have included the Austrian Defence Minister and Special Advisor Alvaro de Soto, who came to the island as part of the preparations for the next phase of negotiations in Geneva.

This is the season when fire becomes a major hazard. Cyprus has already suffered extensive fire damage and those of us working in the buffer zone need to be particularly alert. A tiny spark can become a raging inferno in no time at all - as we discovered on 13 June.

Also in this issue: new technology links Nicosia with New York; UNFICYP supports visits to Kokkina and Apostolos Andreas (and saves a life in the process); a British team cycle and run the length of the buffer zone, and the UN Flight pays tribute to its star team member - the Hughes 500.

Note: sharp-eyed readers will note that this issue is marked July not June. This is because UNFICYP is a forward-looking, optimistic organisation and we thought it made sense to date The Blue Beret with the month in which it appears and is read instead of the month that has just passed.

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Front Cover: Honour Guard for New CM

Austrian peacekeeping

By Capt Andreas Scherer



Looking across the buffer zone to Varosha - the tourist area of Famagusta which has been sealed off since 1974

At the end of May, Austria's Federal Minister for Defence Herbert Scheibner visited the soldiers of AUSCON serving as peace-keepers within UNFICYP.

His programme included meetings with his Cypriot counterpart, Hasikos, with Foreign Minister Kassoulides, with Austrian soldiers in the headquarters and within the Mobile Force Reserve, as well as with civilian and military representatives from UNFICYP.

After a helicopter flight across the buffer zone, he arrived at Camp Duke Leopold V in Famagusta, where the command and the HQ company of the Austrian-Hungarian-Slovenian Battalion (UNAHSB) are located.

Two companies monitor the buffer zone between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot ceasefire lines as well as Varosha, the now dilapidated former hotel area in Famagusta which has been sealed off since 1974. The first company is Hungarian; the second is made up of Austrians, reinforced by a Slovenian Platoon.

After a line tour of Varosha and a tour of the Austrian company's area of responsibility in the buffer zone, the minister sat down to dinner and chat with some 100 soldiers from all contingents and ranks within UNAHSB.

Blue Beret: Austrian soldiers have been serving with the UN in Cyprus since 1964. How long will Austria continue to participate in this mission?

Scheibner: I hope that soon Austrian soldiers will not need to serve here because I, like everyone else, hope that a political solution can be found. However, it is clear - and my discussions here have reinforced this view - that the Austrian Federal Army is doing an excellent job here and that this is widely appreciated.

We are carrying out a general survey of our engagement in missions abroad so that we can fulfil our promise to participate in some difficult missions in the future within the framework of the European Union. We may even have to withdraw from some, as we are currently participating in 17 different missions worldwide. Nevertheless, I believe that the chances that AUSCON stays in Cyprus are very good - if it is felt the mission is still necessary.

Blue Beret: Why does Austria send soldiers on missions abroad? Can we afford to?

Scheibner: It is not a question of "Can we afford it?" but one of "Do we want to afford it?" I believe that missions abroad are

extremely important for Austria in general. First, because Austrian soldiers are good ambassadors for us and second because they contribute to peace and safety in regions which are also of interest and importance for us at home. We must understand that every conflict in or near Europe has an impact - even if it is indirect - on Austria. Therefore every soldier who secures peace outside of Austria is also a guarantor for the safety of Austria.

Blue Beret: Can Austria manage to keep up the quality and quantity of its missions abroad with a professional army if it abolishes the conscription system?

Scheibner: We have to look at whether or not we can find enough volunteers of the right calibre. We have to be sure that we have people who are willing to go abroad, and that we can send them quickly if this becomes necessary. This means we have to make sure we prepare personnel well in advance. A working group is already focusing on establishing general conditions for achieving this.

Blue Beret: Will it also be a condition that Austrian soldiers go abroad voluntarily?

Scheibner: The voluntary aspect is a principle now and will still be a principle in future. But we will try to get registrations done earlier to improve our system so we know who can be sent and where they can go - if this becomes necessary. That way, people will have more time for training and a better chance to train in advance. It also means that we can respond to requests more rapidly because we have ready-prepared personnel.

Blue Beret: Can women volunteer for missions abroad?

Scheibner: Of course they can. We already have a female captain serving as a medical doctor here in Cyprus.

Sector 4 News



A month in the MFR

By 1/Lt Luis Fernando Polo

After only one month on the island, the newly arrived Argentinian personnel of the MFR have already realised the importance of belonging to such a unit, both personally and professionally.

We have already learned many new things. Of course, we all go through training prior to our tour, but it is only when we arrive and spend time with personnel from other countries and begin to learn about their customs, traditions and ways of working that we really begin to appreciate what a unit like the MFR is all about.

In only 30 days, we in the APC Platoon have already taken part in activities such as:

- Crowd control training (thanks to Lt Roelen and SSgt Dorst)
- Fire picket training (thanks to Paul the fireman)
- Patrols to the three sectors (thank you Sectors 1, 2, and 4 - now we think we know our way around)
- Reces of Dhekelia, Akrotiri and Episkopi
- Exercises with the APC Tactica in the buffer zone (along the patrol tracks in the UNPA and

Sector 2)

- Visit of the Argentine Chief of the Army Staff, Gen Brinzoni (no thanks to BSM Kerrigan who has us out lined up in the sun for hours on end waiting to provide honour guards to VIPs)
- Crowd control exercises for the local reserve of the Sector 4.

Our greatest challenge at present is to get the Tactica 4 into operation.

The MFR's doors are always open - so drop in for tea, coffee, or maté.



The Tactica 4 on standby



BABEWATCH

One of the more attractive tasks of the MFR during the summer tour is lifeguard duty at the UNPA swimming pool, which opened on 21 April.

Earlier in the month, a multi-national team of 13 Austrian, Dutch and Hungarian soldiers went on a week-long lifeguarding course in the British Base of Ayios Nicolaos.

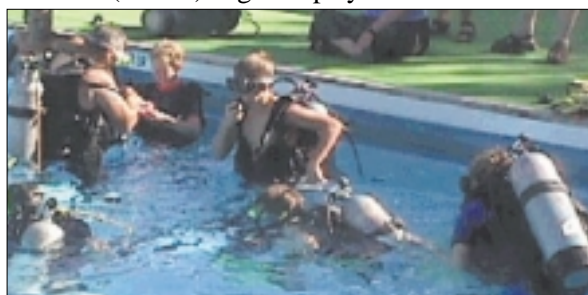
Inspired by instructors Ann and Sam, they worked very hard but admitted they enjoyed the course.

The Dolphin swimming pool is now carefully watched over by 13 qualified lifeguards who look forward to seeing as many members of UNFICYP (and their families) there as possible.

Music for all the family

This year's BRITCON charity concert took place on 13 June at the UNPA swimming pool. It started off with activities organised for the younger family members, including pony rides, a look over the MFR Tacticas and the UNFICYP fire engine, as well as try dives in the pool.

At 6:00 pm, the Lowland Band of the Scottish Division (KOSB) began to play music and entertain-



ment for the children, including excerpts from Walt Disney movies and others. It continued later with a second session, this time for more grown up tastes.

The evening finished off with a disco, which was heard over most of the UNPA.

Video link



On the final day of the Field Service Staff Council Union (FSSC) meeting held in Nicosia early in June, the President of the Field Service Staff Union (FSSU) requested that a video conference be arranged with New York. So on 7 June, the UNFICYP telephone ex-change was configured for ISDN service and cable connections to the HQ UNFICYP briefing room were speedily arranged by ESS staff to link Nicosia with New York.



Nicosia

The video conference was presided over by Mrs Rafiah Salim, Assistant Secretary-General of the Office of the Human Resource Management (OHRM), assisted by other management representatives from OHRM at the UN HQ end, whilst FSSC staff representatives, UNFICYP local and international staff were at this end. A briefing was given to the FSSC and UNFICYP staff on the ongoing reform process in the organisation, followed by a question and answer session.

Overall, the conference lasted approximately two hours and brought up many queries which had lain dormant for a while. UNFICYP staff hope that this new line of communication will remain open and that such issues now be resolved.

FC General Rana visits Sector 4

By Capt Andreas Scherer

General Victory Rana, UNFICYP's Force Commander, recently paid an official visit to Sector 4 to inspect the soldiers of the Austrian-Hungarian-Slovenian Battalion (UNAHSB).

After a "Social Sunday" with the Commanding Officer of Sector 4, Lt Col Kienberger, he and his delegation from the Headquarters were given detailed briefings and taken on a tour of Sector 4's area of responsibility. Two days were spent at Camp Duke Leopold V in Famagusta and at the two Company Command Posts in Dherinia and Athienou. He also visited all Platoon Command Posts, Observation Posts and Patrol Bases. All members of the inspection team were informed about the tasks of the peacekeepers in the south-east portion of the buffer zone, especially where potential problems could arise.

Sector 4 were very pleased to have had the chance to host the Force Commander on his visit. When the helicopter with General Rana took off



The FC visits Camp Berger

from OP 91, we felt assured that he now knows exactly what the duties of Sector 4 are and that he can count on us any time.

The Handymen

Luckily for a widowed mother-of-two living in Nisou, members of the Mobile Force Reserve responded to a plea from Alkionides Charity and gave up some of their precious spare time to refurbish her house. Some of the paint and other materials were

donated by a local company and subsidised by the charity.

Just before the really hot weather set in, the roof was re-insulated, all bedrooms were repainted, taps were repaired and, with the help of the Finnish engineers, a worktop was replaced.

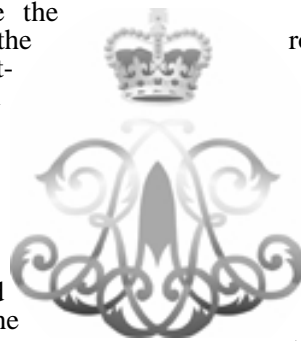


Ready, Steady, Go

Before leaving London for Nicosia, 16 Regiment RA spent a month training for the six month United Nations Roulement Regiment tour. A difficult part of the pre-deployment tasking was to arrange the orbat. Approximately two-thirds of the Regiment have deployed, with one battery remaining at our base in Woolwich, southeast London, to carry on vital Rapier Field Standard C training.

Those who came to Cyprus started in-barracks training on 24 March. The Dutch Contingent carried out their own in-barracks training, but travelled over to the United Kingdom for the Commander's cadre, the United Nations Training Advisory Team (UNTAT) week, and finally for the Commanding Officer's final exercise.

For the British, training was at battery and regimental level and covered a vast array of topics. All personnel deploying to Cyprus were required to pass their annual personal weapons test (APWT) so the training included daily sessions on weapon handling.



**16 Regiment
Royal Artillery**

Understanding the rules of engagement is critical on any United Nations operational tour. With this in mind, scenarios were created to teach and reinforce understanding of these rules.

A knowledge of Cyprus history and the role of the United Nations enables soldiers to understand their specific role whilst deployed. It also enables them to deal with incidents in the appropriate manner. So history lessons and tests were held.

Negotiation is a key element of UN life in Cyprus - at all levels. To practise this skill, soldiers were placed in scenarios where they had to negotiate in order to find a solution. Incidents such as stone throwing, verbal abuse, over-manning of observation posts, construction of installations, and cocking and pointing of weapons were used as examples.

Other subjects included first aid, external relations, mine awareness, recognition of opposing forces' weapons, and personal fitness.

After completing the training, and taking a week's leave, the Regiment set off with its Dutch colleagues for the Nicosia region of the UN buffer zone.

IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

By Cpl Bev Bevan

We arrived in Nicosia in the early hours of the morning of 1 June and made our way to Maple House, the run-down shopping mall that was to be our home for the next six months.

The first sound we heard was some loud aggressive barking coming from the Ops Room. A huge dog bolted towards us.

Daf has been living at Maple House since 1998 when he was adopted and named by 19 Regt RA, who had found him along with his brother Rocky who was

adopted by Ortona troop.

Daf got his name because even as a puppy, he was big and dopey. We quickly learned that Daf has three main dislikes.

First of all, although he's a vast, tough-looking kind of guy, he doesn't really like the dark. We found this out when we were tasked to pick him up in the vehicle from our OP - we discovered him hiding under the table near the only light.

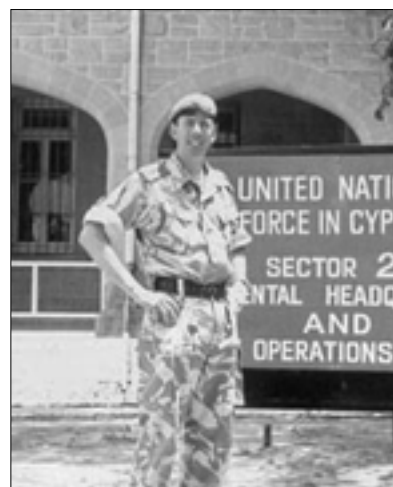
Second, he is abominably sexist and racist.

Third, he's a good friend to everyone in the troop, but he isn't too good with strangers of any kind. So, if you plan to visit



us, you might be well advised to ask the question most regular guests have learned: "Is Daf locked up?"

New CO Sector 2 - Lt Col Paul Lane



Born in 1957 into a family of gunner officers, Lt Col Paul Lane studied psychology at Bristol University and was commissioned in 1980.

His first posting was to Osnabrück, Germany. In 1984, he moved to 29 Commando Regiment, and later in the 1980s did the Army's technical staff course. He subsequently took command of 79 (Kirkee) Commando Battery during an operational tour with 42 Commando RM in Northern Ireland, before taking the Battery on exercises around the UK, and to Canada, Cyprus, Portugal and Norway with 3

Commando Brigade. He then took up a weapons staff appointment and returned to the technical staff college as a member of the directing staff with specific responsibility for Surface-to-Air Guided Weapons.

Lt Col Lane assumed command of the London-based 16 Regiment, Royal Artillery in March 1998 and has taken the Regiment on operations to Northern Ireland, the USA and the Outer Hebrides (north of Scotland).

He and his wife Sarah have three children. He says he enjoys orienteering, mountaineering, and riding.

Royal Artillery: Background Notes

16th Regiment Royal Artillery has been based in Woolwich, southeast London since 1995 when it moved back from Dortmund, Germany.

The Regiment is equipped with Rapier Field Standard C (FSC), the world's most advanced short-range air defence system. It was reformed in 1947 as part of the post-war organisation of the Royal Artillery, and was equipped first with the 3.7" heavy anti-aircraft gun and then with the Bofors 40/70 gun. In 1967, the Regiment began converting to the Rapier system and in 1997 brought Rapier FSC into service.

16th Regiment Royal Artillery was last in Cyprus in autumn 1956, when it was deployed to defend the airfields being used for the Suez operation. Guns remained deployed until 9 December 1956 and an anti-aircraft stand-down was ordered on 22 December 1956. The Regiment remained here and trained for an internal security role before returning to the United Kingdom on 10 October 1957.

The Regiment also saw active service in the Borneo Campaign in the mid '60s. It has also been based in the United Kingdom and Germany.

Since 1992, the Batteries of the Regiment have been 11 (Sphinx) Battery, 32 (Minden) Battery, 30 Battery (Rogers's Company) and 14 (Cole's Kop) Battery.

32 (Minden) Battery is responsible for Sector Two East. Formed in 1756, the honour title "Minden" commemorates the famous victory of 1 August 1759 during the Seven



Years War with France.

14 (Cole's Kop) Battery provide a platoon of 29 soldiers for the Mobile Force Reserve (MFR). The Battery was awarded the honour title 'Cole's Kop' during the Boer War, when they deployed a 15-pound gun on the summit of Cole's Kop mountain and ambushed the enemy at first light.

11 (Sphinx) HQ Battery is based in Wolseley Barracks and provides personnel for administrative, medical, transport, and quartermaster duties. In 1755, the Battery was formed as No. 2 Company Bombay Artillery, Bombay, India. Their honour title was awarded in 1801 to commemorate service in an expedition against the French. The Sphinx was given as a mark of personal distinction to all those who took part in the expedition and the Sphinx emblem was worn in the cockade of the hat.

In addition to the Regiment's normal Batteries, the Sector 2 Forces include 11 Armoured Air Defence Battery of the Netherlands Army, which is responsible for Sector Two West. Part of 41 Mechanised Brigade, they are equipped with Stinger, a shoulder launched air defence system, and Cheetah, an armoured, self-propelled air defence system. They have 100 personnel serving in Cyprus.

The Regiment also combines many individuals from associated Corps into a large family of 550 with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Workshop being the largest contingent. The Royal Signals, the Royal Army Chaplain's Department, the Royal Logistic Corps, the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Adjutant General's Corps and the Army Physical Training Corps also play an important role in the functioning of the Regiment.

Also attached to the Regiment is a Royal Engineer detachment from 20 Field Squadron, which is part of 36 Engineer Regiment. The detachment is 13 strong and consists of electricians, painters, plumbers, carpenters, plant operators and mine-awareness advisers.

And left in Woolwich: 30 Battery (Rogers's Company). From early service in the West Indies the Battery, renamed Rogers's Company after its then Battery Commander, won its major honour title in repulsing the Imperial Guard at Waterloo on 18 June 1815.

Medical Test

By Capt Fran Recchia

Capt Jeremy Carter started work as the Sector 2 doctor on 7 June. On 11 June he saved his first Cypriot life: a pilgrim who was returning from an UNFICYP-facilitated visit to Apostolos Andreas.

65-year-old Mr Iosif Elia collapsed in the buffer zone just outside the Ledra Palace Hotel. He was holding onto his chest and had stopped breathing. Within seconds, Jeremy Carter and his team were at his side.

"He was unresponsive and breathing had stopped. There were no obvious signs of cardiac output," explained the doctor. The medical team administered one cycle of cardio pulmonary resuscitation and constant oxygen and the patient began to breathe again unaided.

The UN ambulance then rushed him to hospital, where he made a full recovery.



Capt Carter later visited Mr Elia in the Nicosia General Hospital where he found his patient doing well. "I would like to thank the doctor and his team very much for literally saving my life", said Mr Elia. "They were really at the right place at the right time."

FIGHTING THE FIRE AT LEFKA

By Maj Chris Wilkes

The week starting 12 June was an unusually hot one for the time of year, and fires swept across the island. Greece, Israel, and the UK came to Cyprus' aid - and the UN did what it could too.

On 13 June at 1340 hours, UN 18 (C Coy, Sector 1), situated above the Lefka Road, spotted a fire burning just north of the buffer zone in the fields next to the Lefka/Nicosia road. Sector 1's JOC immediately alerted fire brigades north and south of the buffer zone and contacted liaison officers from both opposing forces.

But there was a slight breeze from the northeast and the fire quickly took hold and spread south into the buffer zone, where minefields made it difficult to fight the fire. There was a constant danger that the heat from the fire might explode the mines, so fire teams had to be escorted into the buffer zone from both sides by UN patrols.

Personnel from Sector 1 did their best to get the blaze under control, as did Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, and the Turkish Forces. But the fire quickly spread up the sides of the valley and out of the buffer zone. HQ UNFICYP was notified of the threat to UN 18 and a UN Flight Hughes 500 was deployed to the area to observe the progress of the fire. A second UN helicopter was put on standby to evacuate the OP, should it become necessary.

It was tough terrain to work in. OP 18 is in a mountainous part of the buffer zone, and access is limited, so the fire fighters concentrated on creating firebreaks to halt the flames. South of the buffer zone, National Guard and Greek Cypriot fire fighters tried to block the fire's advance. Early on in the afternoon, they asked the British Bases to send up two RAF 84 Sqn Wessex helicopters with Rain Maker buckets. Ops Branch HQ UNFICYP gained clearance from the Turkish Forces so the helicopters could cross the buffer zone into the north to fill their buckets from the sea in Morphou Bay. UN Flight provided refuelling facilities for the RAF Wessex at the UNPA.

FIRE FACTS AND FIGURES

UNFICYP Fire Department records show that in 1999, there were 67 fires in the buffer zone.

Out of these, 58 were grass fires, while nine fell into the electrical/domestic category. There were another six false alarms.

The damage cost UNFICYP



By 2000 hours, the fire had been brought under control and the Wessex were released, while Greek Cypriot fire fighters continued to damp down the last flames. At least one National Guard position was destroyed in the blaze and flames advanced to within five metres of UN 18 which is manned by six members of the Argentinian contingent.

The fire destroyed forestry and scrub over an area of three by four kilometres. Sadly, one Greek Cypriot firefighter was taken to hospital with severe burns. Fortunately, no UN personnel were injured or UN property damaged during the incident.

But the story could have been very different. This was a potentially disastrous fire and it serves as a timely warning of the dangers that the long dry Cyprus summer brings - as do the other 50 or so that broke out across the island that week. Fires are a common event and are usually caused by carelessness or negligence.

approximately US\$10,000. Nine people were injured.

During 1999, the UN HQ Fire Department has trained 367 personnel, military, police and civilian, and serviced a total of 1,640 different types of fire extinguisher.

REMEMBER: FIRE WILL TRAVEL AT THE SPEED OF WIND!



It's a long way from Famagusta to Kokkina, but on 18 May, 312 Turkish Cypriot students made the trip to commemorate the 13 students who died in Kokkina in 1964. They travelled in a convoy of 15 buses, accompanied by an ambulance. When they reached the buffer zone, they were escorted by UNCIVPOL and the Sector Civil Affairs Teams of Sector 1, who made arrangements for them to pass through the buffer zone and into the south.

For us, the Argentinians helping to ensure that the visit went smoothly, it was great to see the convoy drive through the villages of Kato Pyrgos and Agios Theodoros and watch the Greek Cypriot residents and the young Turkish Cypriots wave at each other in such a friendly manner.

When the convoy arrived at the cemetery where the Kokkina students are buried, there was a ceremony led by the "Erenkoy" Company Commander.

Pilgrimage to Kokkina

By 1/Lt Maximiliano Vega



The convoy on the way to the cemetery which overlooks the Morphou Bay

The visitors observed a minute of silence and said prayers in memory of the dead.

COMBINED FORCES CELEBRATE

By Major Roberto Agustn Dambrosi and 1/Lt Maximiliano Vega

Until May 1810, Argentina was under the direct rule of the Spanish monarch. However when Napoleon Bonaparte crowned his brother, Jose Bonaparte, King of

orated the 190th anniversary of Army Day in San Martín Camp.

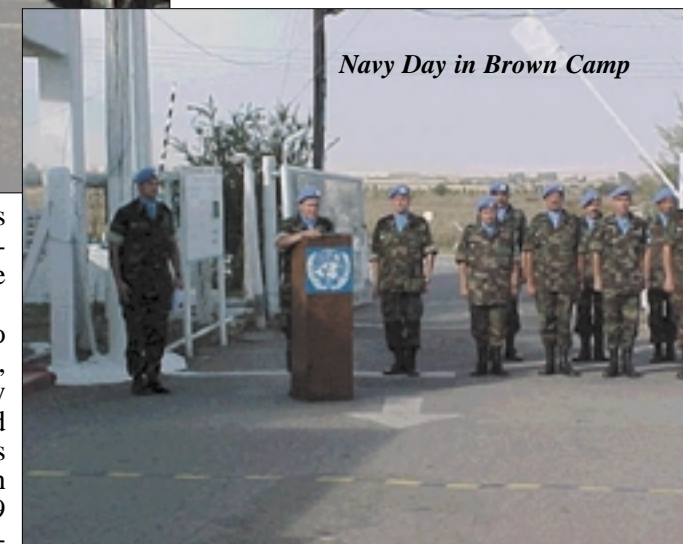
Argentina is a cosmopolitan society: one of its most famous admirals, Guillermo Brown, was an Irishman. ARGON's Brown Camp commemorates this man who played an important role in the Argentinian war of independence, and provided the location for this year's Navy Day celebrations on 17 May. Brown Camp (aka the Box Factory) is home to the members of the Argentine Navy Marine Corps who serve in Charlie Coy: 109 Marines celebrated Navy Day in Cyprus this year.



Army Day in San Martín Camp

Spain, the inhabitants of Buenos Aires refused to recognise the new king's authority. Civilians, military, and members of the church all resolved to replace the viceroy.

The first national government came into existence on 25 May 1810. Four days later, the government established a national army to defend and consolidate the security and freedom of the new state. ARGCON has named its camps after military heroes such as Gen San Martín and Gen Roca, and on 29 May, the Argentinian Task Force commem-



Navy Day in Brown Camp

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

In the first four months of this year, 101 traffic accidents were reported to the FMPU. Some of these involved vehicles being completely written off and a few resulted in injuries. Every accident caused by a UN driver involves UNFICYP money being spent on repairs and consequently less money available for other things.

All of us can do something about this problem. The key is defensive driving. This means anticipating problems and holding back from potentially dangerous situations.

The three main causes of accidents in UNFICYP result from simple, but expensive and potentially dangerous, carelessness:

- Reversing in car parks
- Running into the back of another vehicle in traffic
- Hitting another vehicle when turning right at a junction

This all points to the fact that drivers don't seem

to be paying enough attention to what they're doing. Remember, as a driver you are in charge of what can be a deadly weapon - a momentary lapse of concentration could be all it takes for you to cause an accident and maybe kill a pedestrian.

For further advice, call the Master Driver on Ext 4451 or the MP Station Nicosia on Ext 4666.



What happens if you speed on the patrol track....

NEW POLICE CAR FOR MPs

The Force Military Police recently received a new town patrol car from Chief Support Services. The car is destined for the Dherinia Detachment, and is seen here being formally handed over to Dherinia Detachment Commander WO11 Peter Ham by the FPM, Major Richard Moore,

outside the military police headquarters in the UNPA.

The car will principally be used to patrol the narrow and congested streets of Aiya Napa and Protaras during the summer months and should be much more effective and easier to use than a large and cumbersome twin-cab truck.



DRINKING AND DRIVING A DEADLY COMBINATION

Drinking alcohol and then driving a car is a definite no-no.

Remember that a few drinks at a day-time BBQ are just as likely to reduce your competence to drive as at a party in the evening. Also remember that being behind the wheel of a UN vehicle doesn't magically shake off the effects of alcohol.

Quite apart from the risk to other road users, drinking and driving could cost you your job. Anyone caught driving whilst under the influence of alcohol will be immediately repatriated by your contingent commander. Subsequent police reports to your respective national military authorities could result in dismissal from your service and a ban from driving.

Plan ahead. If you're going out and want to drink, take a duty driver or a taxi. If a group of you go out, one of you must be the designated driver.

Remember: one drink/drive accident is enough. One single stupid act could easily result in you having to live the rest of your life in the knowledge that you killed or injured someone because

alcohol had impaired your judgement.

Don't drink and drive.



Is that my career I see flashing before my eyes?

WE LOVE OUR HUGHES 500 By 1/Lt Adrian Ferrari

UNFICYP's Hughes MD 500 McDonald Douglas is a one-engine, multipurpose helicopter. Designed to carry around 750kg, it's very versatile and can be used for a number of purposes such as observation, search and rescue operations, to carry internal/ external cargoes, for medevac and case-vac, to transport personnel and for tactical flights.

The Hughes team at UN Flight consists of: WOIII Dario Garbarini, SSgt Hugo Montero, SSgt Carlos Palacios, Sgt Pedro Jaimes, Inspector "Black Shark" WOIII Luis Bustos and test pilot 1/Lt Adrian Ferrari.

Dario Garbarini has been working with this machine for 18 years. He spent last summer fire fighting in the south of Argentina and is clearly quite a fan of the helicopter.

"The Hughes can cope with difficult operations at high altitudes and in high temperatures. It is very good for rescuing people in mountain ranges. And it can be used in a lot of different configurations. Here, for example, it is good to be able to transport people without doors as this improves visibility and makes flying more comfortable when it is hot. Shaking is minimal, which is good when people need to take photos."

Hugo Montero describes the Hughes 500 as a



A pendulum flight testing the commands with 1/Lt Ferrari in the driving seat



SSgt Montero, SSgt Palacios, WOII Garbarini, Sgt Jaimes and WOIII Bustos

"simple and great helicopter". He adds that the Flight is "a team" and that the Hughes is the team's baby.

Inspections are a regular feature of the UN Flight workplan. Luis Bustos supervises every main inspection item by item with the other technicians, examining frame, blades, articulation, engine and commands, to make sure that the aircraft follows the requirements of the Federal Aviation Authority.

Santiago Martin explains that because it is easy to maintain, it is a very popular machine in both military and civilian fields.

After everything is ready, test pilot Adrian Ferrari takes the helicopter up to check for problems such as abnormal vibrations. This happens when the main rotor blades are not properly balanced, and means that the team has to go back to synchronise all the blades. It is important to minimise all kinds of vibration to prolong the life of every component of the helicopter. He tests the engine too, checking a host of elements and putting it through different take-offs and landings and high-degree turns.

Finally, with the baby working 100%, the team can take a rest and watch its beloved helicopter flying through the Cyprus sky in search of peace.

A FLAVOUR OF NEPAL

On 14 June, the sounds and smells of the Himalayan region of Nepal filled the corridors of the International Officers' Club on the UNPA. The occasion was the fortnightly meeting of the International Wives' Club, who were being treated to a presentation on the culture and history of Nepal by the Force

Commander's wife, Padma Rana.

More than 45 UNFICYP wives and their guests turned up. Highlights included traditional Nepali folk dancing by Pooja and Mandir Rana, a selection of Nepalese cuisine and the modelling of a traditional Nepali bridal sari by Nayla Moore.



Padma Rana

COP SUN-FLOWER

By Capt Andreas Scherer

What do you do when something happens in a mixed populated village?

The deserted village of Petrophani, located close to Athienou, was the scenario for the exercise which took place on 6 June, designed to train UNFICYP troops for such an occasion. A forward command post was erected by Sector 4's Ops Branch for the purpose of setting up a COP Coy and reserve elements, made up by soldiers from 1st and 2nd Coy and reinforced by UNCIVPOL and the MFR.

Their common task was to prevent the outbreak of riots inside and unauthorised entry into the village. They also had to prepare for reinforcement by Force Reserve Elements, who arrived with three Tacticas. Therefore, checkpoints



Something like the real thing

were set up on all access roads and several additional road blocks were constructed and manned. Proper medical treatment and evacuation of injured soldiers and "demonstrators" were also part of the exercise objectives, and training took place with support of the helicopters from UN Flight.

During the day, a number of incidents had to be dealt with

in an escalating scenario. All those involved, including highly motivated "demonstrators", gave of their best.

Following the exercise, a debriefing took place where the umpires, command post personnel and military leaders discussed lessons learned. The most important lesson: that this sort of training is both necessary and motivating.

Sector 4: A drugs free zone

By Capt Andreas Scherer

A four-legged visitor was on the island at the end of May. Bambou, a dog trained in drug-sniffing, arrived to check a random selection of offices and accommodation in Sector 4. The positive result: no drugs were found

"Comrade Bambou" belongs to the Austrian Armed Forces Dog Squad, which is equipped with at about 100 Rottweilers and shepherd dogs. They are mainly used for safeguarding purposes at important military installations like warehouses. But with the other specialists for the detection of drugs and explosives Bambou is a V.I.D. there - a very important dog.

The visit was part of a pilot project for measures against drug abuse. Therefore, the Chief of the Austrian Armed Forces Dog Squad, Lt Col Lacchini, came himself in the



"Comrade Bambou" drug sniffing in Sector 4's accommodation, together with his prominent dog handler, Lt Col Lacchini, the Chief of the Austrian Armed Forces Dog Squad

role of a high-ranking dog handler to have a close look with Bambou. Drugs are a serious threat in modern times, but they fortunately proved to be no problem among the peacekeepers of Sector 4.



Hello. I am Corporal first class Laura Potma from Heegh in Friesland, an area in the north of the Netherlands, famous for its water sports facilities. Water is something I'm going to miss during my tour with Bengal Troop, just west from the United Nations Protected Area. As far as I can see (and that's quite a distance) there's none around. Admittedly, there is a river only a few hundred metres from my Observation Post. But it's a dry riverbed, that only gets water in it for a few weeks a year. It shows up now because it's full of green plants and trees. Otherwise, the area looks golden. The farmers will soon harvest the wheat. After that, I'm told, it will all be brown.

This is being written on my first day and I can already tell you the landscape is more beautiful than I expected. I like to be outside and am very interested in natural history. In the future, after I have visited Australia and New Zealand, I hope to work with the World Wide Fund for Nature. To

achieve that aim, I am studying ecology and the environment, and soon I have to do an exam on fauna management. It requires some self discipline to study regularly while serving on the line, but I think I can cope with it.

In the meantime, I practise my tower brief in English and study the terrain.

From my tower, Observation Post 45, I can see the Kyrenia mountain range in the north, a sandstone hill with a Turkish Observation Post in the east, and lots of plots of arable land, farmed by the local population. My colleagues and I have to check regularly to see they're carrying their farming permits. I am told that Bengal area is known for its many fires, when the farmers clear their land after the harvest. We have to help fight the fires when things get out of hand.

So far, there haven't been

any incidents, apart from over-manning when I do a patrol. Could this have something to do with the fact that I'm female?

It's way over 30° already, and summer hasn't got started yet. I try to drink some seven litres of water a day to avoid getting dehydrated. Maybe that counts as a kind of water sport?





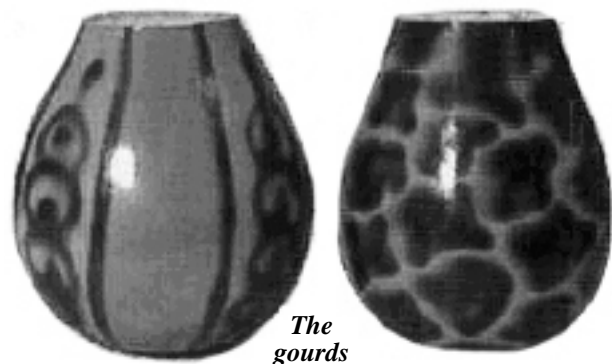
IS YERBA MATE THE DRINK OF THE GODS?

Beneath the rainforest canopy in South America, the Guarani Indians have been drinking the steeped juice of the leaves of the wild yerba tree-bush for centuries. Here in Cyprus, take a trip out to Sector 1, or up to the Flight, and you'll see South American colleagues sipping Yerba Maté.

Why are they so keen on it? Because it's good for you.

The leaves offer numerous health benefits: increased immune system strength, improved digestion, stress reduction and stimulation of mental processes. They're used in popular medicine and employed in commercial herbal preparations as a stimulant to the central nervous system, a diuretic, and an anti-rheumatic.

Yerba Maté (literally, the "Maté Herb") has won many admirers in wide-ranging parts of the world, but especially in South America. Enthusiasts say that it's a natural stimulant, devoid of side effects and toxicity, an invigorator of the mind and body, a natural source of nutrition and a health promoter par excellence.



The gourds

Maté is a tea-like beverage consumed mainly in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and southern Brazil. The scientific name (*Ilex paraguarensis*) was given to it by the French naturalist and botanist, Auguste de Saint Hilaire in 1822.

Today, over 30,000 tons of Yerba Mate is produced yearly for consumption in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. It is common to see men and women walking around in shopping malls and on beaches carrying their Maté gourds and thermos flasks of hot water. They drink it everywhere - on walks, at sporting events, picnics, student parties.

Yerba Maté gets its name from the traditional cup (the Maté) used to drink it. This vessel, originally a dried and decorated gourd, can be made out of almost anything these days. In South America, where Maté was introduced to the world, the drink is still sipped from the Maté cup using a metal or wooden decorative straw and filter called a bombilla.

But the modern Maté drinker can drink it in any number of ways. It can be brewed like normal loose-leaf tea and filtered before pouring into a cup. It can be made into an iced tea to drink on a hot summer day. It can be made like coffee, in a standard automatic coffee maker (make sure you use a large amount of the herb). And, if you have a Maté cup and a bombilla (or an Argentinian friend who can lend you one), you can go traditional.



The bombillas

NEW 2/IC, SECTOR 1



Major Jorge Alberto Cisternas was born on 12 January 1958 in Curuzú Cuatiá, province of Corrientes, Argentina.

He joined the Argentinian Army in 1977 at the National Military College, and graduated four years later as a 2/Lt. Early on in his career, he took different courses, training in paratrooper and commando skills for example. He then rose to

become a captain and did the Staff Officer's course. His first peacekeeping experience was with UNIKOM in 1991.

In 1996 he was promoted to the rank of Major and now he is serving in the Army General Staff.

Major Cisternas is married to María Carolina del Valle, and they have five children, Lucas (11), Jorge (8), Candelaria (6), Micaela (4) and Soledad (2).

Exercise Buffer Zone

By Lt Richard Hoy

It was quite an undertaking for a small team of 1 Staffords to cross the entire buffer zone by cycling and running in under 24 hours - but we did it.

The day began at 0440 hrs. We were lying on the floor of a room in UN 09, the OP at the far western point in the buffer zone. There were five of us: Capt Bayliss and Pte Sweete, who had volunteered to join me in this exercise, along with Cpl Nicholls, our logistics man, and Cpl Watson, who provided driving support and also medical backup.

Freewheeling down the first patrol track was a piece of cake, but even the support vehicle struggled to get up the first ascent. Freewheeling down the second hill was not so easy when you are desperately holding onto handlebars and tentatively squeezing the brakes so as not to lose control. With sweat stinging your eyes, trying to choose the best path is not easy. And getting your breath back is out of the question as fear grips you as you take another wide sweeping corner, hoping that you have judged it correctly, otherwise you could find yourself tumbling down the sheer drop that forms one side of the track. But we passed through Sector 1 without incident, completing the 55 miles in around seven hours.

At 1:00 pm, we still faced 22 hours on foot and 60 more miles cycling. Our legs felt like lead, but we made it to Bengal where we freshened up and changed. It took four hours to shuffle through Sector 2 on foot, so when we started again with bikes at the beginning of Sector's AOR, we seemed to fly along, especially since the wind was in our favour.

A combination of two crashes, fatigue and pressure on the calves finally took their toll on Sweete's legs. Although he took a rest and tried to rejoin us in Sector 4, the back of his heels were covered in blood from deep blisters, so he elected to travel the rest of the journey in the support vehicle.



As the light began to fade, the track in front of us looked quite surreal and we tried to stay in the headlights of the support vehicle. Shadows caused by the car lights being hidden by the bumps and dips in the road meant we never knew what we were going to be riding into. But the climb up past Pyla afforded us wonderful views of the coast shimmering in the remaining light. As we hit the SBA link road, we had a short discussion as to whether we had to include it, as it was not part of the BZ. We decided to go ahead, since this way, we could say we crossed the entire island in a day.

As we neared the end of the exercise, it seemed hard to accept that even though we were approaching the coast, we were still going uphill - or maybe it just felt that way after so many miles in the saddle. We finally reached the gates of UN 146 17 hours, 43 minutes after we started. A bottle of bubbly was produced to celebrate the occasion.

A number of people gave us a lot of support for this event. We would like to thank personnel at all the OPs we stopped at for their hospitality and encouragement, Col Wakelin, DA of the British High Commission, and everyone from HQ UNFICYP who liaised to insure everyone who needed to be was made aware of the exercise; also Col Potter for giving us permission to pass through the SBA on bikes, as well as Micromania and T-Shirt Designs next to LPH for sponsoring us for the event. Many thanks to them all for making this mission impossible possible.

EPISKOPI INVITATIONAL RUGBY SEVEN A SIDE CHAMPIONSHIP

By 1/Lt Maximiliano Vega

We Argentinians feel pretty pleased with ourselves for making it through to the semi-finals of the rugby seven-a-side championship at the British Sovereign Base Area in Episkopi 17-19 May. Opponents included teams from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and New Zealand.

The matches were well supported - entire families turned up to watch the event in a variety of multi-coloured T-shirts, which gave quite a party atmosphere.

We hadn't had long to train, but it was a great experience to take part, and we certainly didn't disgrace ourselves.

Entre los días 17, 18 y 19 del mes de mayo se llevó a cabo un torneo de rugby seven, realizado en la base soberana británica de EPISKOPI. El personal de la Fuerza de Tareas Argentina fue invitado a participar del mismo, en el cual participaron 23 equipos, de diferentes nacionalidades, como ser ingleses, galeses, escoceses, irlandeses y neozelandeses. El campo se pobló de camisetas multicolores y el bullicio de aquellos que animaban a su equipo, notándose la concurrencia de muchas familias dándole un marco de fiesta al evento.

Para los argentinos el balance fue muy positivo, cerrando el torneo



dentro en un clima de caballerosidad y camaradería. Cabe destacar que pese al poco tiempo de preparación del equipo argentino, el rendimiento del mismo fue óptimo, lográndose llegar a la instancia semifinal de la ronda de perdedores.

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24 HOURS A DAY,
THE BEATING HEART OF THE FORCE**

