The Blue Beret
February 2002

Moving From Winter to Spring
Overcoming bumps on the road

Pyla is a mixed village in the Buffer Zone in the west of Cyprus, with around 1,500 inhabitants, including both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Some Cyprus observers see it as a model of what life on the island should be – people living together with no violence. However, life in Pyla is less than ideal much of the time. It experiences all of the normal village problems, and its Buffer Zone location stands as an additional complicating factor. In fact, what Pyla shows us is that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots can address problems and challenges effectively if they are both prepared to compromise in order to achieve a better goal.

The breakthrough on Pyla’s road safety project came through hard work and persistence, not only from the two parties, but also from the UN in its role as broker between the two. It required political goodwill for both sides to agree to modify demands they had pursued for over two years in order to make the project possible, and to trust the other to adhere to its part.

So what can the UN learn from this? That patience is vital in order to achieve successes, even in small ways, when playing our role as mediator and facilitator. Many things move slowly in Cyprus, and change can take time. Even more importantly, it is our job to remain impartial and objective at all times. It is the task of both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to meet together to engage in projects that can benefit both populations – by improving the physical infrastructure of the village, and through creating a better atmosphere of co-existence and co-operation.

In the early-mid-1990s, several projects were successfully completed, including renovation of the two village coffee shops. Other events in Pyla also affected the process. Over the next two years, a range of sensitive initiatives that could co-operatively address problems, measure progress, but UN personnel must be there to support and assistance in whatever form required.
Talks recess until 1 March

Following their 19 February meeting, the direct talks between the Greek Cypriot leader, H.E. Mr. Glafkos Clerides, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, H.E. Mr. Rauf Denktaş, went into a brief recess and will resume on 1 March. The recess is for the Moslem feast of Bayram but the 10-day break also allows the two leaders an opportunity for reflection.

Taking advantage of the break, the Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Cyprus, Mr. Álvaro de Soto, left Cyprus for New York on 20 February. He reported to Secretary-General Annan at United Nations Headquarters on 21 February and briefed members of the UN Security Council about the direct talks on 26 February.

When the talks resume on 1 March, there will be a change of format. Instead of meeting three times a week as had been customary, the two sides will meet twice weekly – on Tuesday afternoons and Friday mornings, unless otherwise agreed.

These new arrangements follow a review by the two leaders of the pace of their work to date. They decided it would be more effective to have longer meetings with more time in between, so as to concentrate efforts and allow more time for preparation.

Before the last meeting, Special Adviser de Soto called on the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides to think seriously about what they had discussed so far in the past few weeks, in the context of the direct talks, and try and address each other’s legitimate concerns and fears.

In a statement to the Cyprus News Agency, Mr. de Soto said: “It is my hope that in the month of March, following the opportunity for reflection afforded by the break on the occasion of the Bayram, the two sides will seriously ponder over what they have heard from the other side and see what they can do to address legitimate concerns and fears.”

Mr. de Soto expressed the hope that the two sides “will return with a renewed spirit of understanding and compromise as well as with a sense of urgency.”

The talks began on 16 January 2002 following the historic 4 December agreement between the two leaders that direct talks would start in mid-January. To date, there have been 14 meetings between the two sides, most lasting about 90 minutes. The sessions have been held in refurbished facilities adjacent to the old Nicosia international airport in the UNPA.

Moufflon Meanderings

There’s good news for Cyprus’s well-known wildlife symbol: 145 moufflons (a pale brown member of the sheep family) were counted in the most recent census of the animals, a total that is considerably higher than any previous count.

The census took place on 25 January 2002. Moufflons were counted between the Xeros river patrol track crossing near OP17 and in the vicinity of the Limmisitis River. The high number of animals seen was in part attributed to seasonal factors, including cooler than usual weather and an abundance of feed.

The moufflons were on the brink of extinction in the mid-1970s, and has been a protected species ever since. It is indigenous to Cyprus, having been recorded on the island since Neolithic times. The animals live from 15 to 20 years, with the males easily recognized through their distinctive horns, which are shaped like those of a ram.

Love Your Neighbours - QUIETLY!!!

A common problem for UN camps in the north is the fluctuating electricity supply. Camp General Stefank in Famagusta, Headquarters of Sector 4, is no exception. Power cuts can be a problem during the winter months, when the temperature rapidly decreases and a source of heat is a must. Central heating systems are not commonly used in Cyprus, so the solution is either gas heaters (which may bring health risks) or electrical heaters. The local electrical network is not able to cover the increased demand, so one of the two camp generators must be called on for back-up duty.

Unfortunately, running the generator not only provides the necessary extra power, it also raises the neighbourhood noise level. During working hours, power supply to the camp’s living quarters is cut off, reducing the camp’s power needs so the generator is not necessary. However, it must run during the rest of the day and night. The noise disturbs both camp inhabitants and local citizens. Their concerns have been conveyed to Sector 4’s civil affairs branch by the local authorities. The ideal solution would be to change the camp’s electrical transformer, but it is unclear who would cover the costs.

In the meantime, the camp has come up with a temporary solution: a noise abating wall. While it does not completely solve the problem, it does indeed reduce the noise level. The wall may not be the ideal solution, but we hope that it shows the goodwill of the camp inhabitants and their desire to get on well with their neighbours.

Damage Recovery

The weather in Cyprus is usually very calm and pleasant, but from time to time it shows its darker side and brings severe storms and heavy rainfall. The impact of some of the island’s recent climate extremes can be clearly seen on many buildings, installations and facilities.

Storms and strong winds at the turn of the year damaged a number of building roofs, observation towers and sentry boxes in Sector 4’s AOR. This means a challenge and, of course, a lot of hard work for the engineer platoon of HQ Company in Camp General Stefank.

Sometimes, damage to an observation tower or sentry box is so serious that repair is not possible and a new one must be constructed. The production time depends on its type, but usually lasts from five to ten days.

Along with unexpected emergency cases, the engineers have to deal with routine maintenance, so these days they are really busy. They only hope that the weather improves!
Gurkhas Weather
On-Island Arrival

Super Sharad has a confession to make. “It’s the weather,” he explains with a broad grin. “I think we brought it.”

Certainly, Cyprus’s rainy, snowy, windy weather in December and January was remarkably similar to that of Maidstone, England, the base from which the 13 members of 69 Gurkha Field Squadron, Queen’s Gurkha Engineers, deployed in early December. Here on the island, they’re attached to 32 Regiment RA, forming the Royal Engineer Detachment until the next unit rotation in June 2002.

For Super Sharad, it’s his first time in Cyprus, and he’s enjoying recent sunnier days. Aside from warmer temperatures, better weather means fewer emergency callouts for the detachment due to storm-damaged buildings and patrol tracks.

Detachment Commander Lt Benu agrees that the first few weeks of the rotation were particularly busy ones, as patrol tracks, minefield fencing, and heating systems took the brunt of the storm damage.

The Gurkha engineers have two key missions in Sector 2: maintaining minefield security, including perimeter fencing and signage, plus routine engineering maintenance. The detachment is also providing emergency callouts. “It’s about making things good for the line troops,” says Lt Benu. “We take that seriously.”

To carry out these duties, each soldier, trained as a combat engineer, is also a tradesman, including carpenters, joiners, electricians, plant operators, mechanics, bricklayers and concreters. It’s a lot of talent in a small group, and a valuable asset for the Regiment. Each of the soldiers has joined the Brigade of Gurkhas from their home in Nepal, signing on for a 15-year term of service. “It’s very honourable to be accepted into the Gurkhas,” says Lt Benu, for whom this tour is his second in Cyprus. Although the soldiers agree that they miss their families and their country, they are drawn to the Gurkha relationship with the British Army, which dates to the early 1800s. Serving with the Brigade is often a family tradition stretching back three or four generations, with the soldiers having earned a worldwide reputation for their skill, integrity, honesty and loyalty.

Fitness is also a point of pride. Personnel from the Gurkha Detachment have recently won two on-island long-distance races and have a great chance of letting your partner know what you feel for her”, he said. Now, that’s more like it. At least it sounded like love and romance, not mystery, intrigue, or bizarre. “I’ve always been one to go with what feels right.”

The Catholic church has a long tradition of helping those in need. “In general, men in the army are very unromantic,” you’re telling me. No, I’m not quite sure how I’d go about it. I pressed on with my quest for loving enlightenment until I met a Canadian man and woman. I rushed over and asked them how they felt about the day. “Way too commercialized,” he said sternly. “You don’t have any meaning,” he added. “I like Valentine’s Day and I love the chocolate.” Yeah, well, so do I, but that means nothing to me. Doesn’t seem similar, surrounded by so many unromantic people.

Maybe our Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot colleagues can save the day. “It’s honestly a waste of money, but obviously very good for the flower shops. I will admit, that if I had someone close to me, then I would buy a card.”

“My romantic feelings do not run very high and low for a hint of romantic feeling, I even questioned some fellow Nordics (we are known to be “cool” on the subject of emotions, that is).”

“Of course I will give my wife flowers – If I remember it”, said one gallant male. His wife, asked separately, said: “I expect flowers. The day should be celebrated in some delicate way – I’m thinking champagne, chocolate, salmon.”

To tie the bow on our official and very unsentimental survey on Valentine’s Day in UNFICYP, I must admit that things could do with a little brightening up. Although 14 February is a day of love and romance, there’s also the question of what to do with all the flowers that are left unsold after Valentine’s Day. I think we should think of ways to use these flowers in a creative way, perhaps turning them into decorations or even incorporating them into meals.

TheHistroy of Valentine’s Day

The origins of Valentine’s Day – and its patron saint – is shrouded in mystery. But we do know that February has long been a month of love and romance. In St. Valentine’s Day, we celebrate love, life, and the natural world around us.

The Bee Beret decided, just for fun, to conduct a survey on behalf of the UNFICYP poll, to find out how Valentine’s Day is perceived by a representative sample of our many cultures and nationalities. In fact, we wanted to see if Valentine’s Day activities come across as more romantic than others, and to see if there are any effects of living on the Island of Love!

In my capacity as self-appointed pollster and agent of love, I went straight to the Argentinians, in the hope that some hot Latin rhetoric might warm me up. But so long as matters of love and behold – Valentine’s Day is not even celebrated in Argentina. “It’s not a big day in our country, but if YOU want to send me some chocolate, I would definitely enjoy it…”

NOT what I expected to hear and I hurried on, hoping to link up with an American woman who might be able to set the record straight about the Latin reputation for romance. However, the “senorita” I encountered agreed that the day is not important. This did not stop her from letting it be known that she did “expect to receive flowers – from someone anyone”. I hope she gets them, but probably should look for the Latin quarter!

My next research “date” was with the Hungarians. Again, my queries met with indifference when I asked if they had a meaningful relationship with St. Valentine’s Day. “Who cares?” was the male response. The female reaction was similar. “I married, so the day doesn’t mean anything to me, but I’m sure that it seems a lot more important to the young”. Hmmm, not a very romantic people, either.

Just as I was starting to get a bit depressed about all this, I came across an obliging Irish soldier. “It’s a great tradition to actually have a partner and it’s a great chance of letting your partner know what you feel for her”, he said. Now, that’s more like it. At least it sounded like love and romance, not mystery, intrigue, or bizarre. “I’ve always been one to go with what feels right.”

According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first “Valentine” greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that he wrote a love letter to his wife, which he visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter, which he signed: “From your Valentine,” an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the legend is murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and – most importantly – romantic man.

The St. Valentine’s Day Massacre (to all those of you who don’t believe in the romance of the day): One of the more notorious gangster killings took place in 1929 in Chicago, the incident is generally ascribed to the Al Capone mob, although it was never proved.

Recognising Exemplary Service

BRITCON recognised the exemplary efforts of two individuals with an award presentation on the UNPA, held on 24 January by the Commander British Forces Air Vice Marshal T.W. Rimmer CB OBE MA FRAeS RAF.

Margaret Smith, of the Women’s Royal Voluntary Service, was awarded the Commander British Forces Commendation for her support to the British Contingent of the United Nations Rondament Battle during their six-month tours of duty in Cyprus.

Although Margaret’s job is not new, she has shown a commitment to the welfare of the service personnel deployed in Cyprus. The WVS has provided food, clothes, and other essential supplies to the soldiers stationed in the area.

Warrant Officer Class Two Anthony Stidman, of the 1st Battalion, Royal Anglian, a core of potential soldiers, currently serving with BRITCON, was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, recognising 15 years’ exemplary service. WOII King has served in the UK, Germany, Cyprus, Belize, Canada, USA, South Africa, and Northern Ireland.
The Nightmares of Child Soldiers

By Ifshamed A. Kamara, aged 18, Sierra Leone

February 12, 2002 could be a good day for children around the world. On that day, an international treaty will come into force that bans the use of child soldiers. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict addresses an issue that has been growing and is currently estimated to be more than 300,000 children under 18 used as combatants, camp bedfellows, sex workers, and laborers. As children are sold in 30 armed conflicts worldwide. Using children as soldiers is one of the worst forms of brutalisation – and it is practised in every corner of the global force; in this treaty will be a valuable tool for exercising pressure on states and rebel groups that exploit this particularly cynical exploitation of children.

It is in countries where the conflicts are the most protracted and the most intractable that children are in the greatest danger. Thousands of children, often abducted at gunpoint and forced to join refugee camps, risking beatings or death if they attempt to escape, are used as combatants or times not only victims but also perpetrators. And once childhood is snatched, lost, or stolen, they are cut off from their normal development, education and opportunities. As a result of this, many children require psycho-social rehabilitation, education and opportunities within their communities.

Looking at the many reasons why young people end up in armed groups. Some are coerced or induced. Some are abducted. Some join because economic and social systems around them have collapsed. Still others join for ideological reasons, because they have been manipulated by religious or political forces. Root causes of war, such as poverty, repression and evacuation crises take their toll on children as well. Children become susceptible and vulnerable to being induced to bear arms before they can make decisions for themselves. But, as of February 12, 2002, governments of 191 countries that endorse the UN Convention to the protection of the rights of the child and other regional organisations, such as the European Union and other regional organisations, to religious leaders, civil society organisations and other groups, are helping to bring all of their influence to bear on the protection of war-affected children. Give this treaty the force and support it deserves by mobilising pressure by armed groups. Children simply have no place in war.

The writer is the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

Olympics in the Service of Children

By Olara A. Onuva

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UNCIVPOL: The Guard Changes – the Mission Remains Constant

UNCIVPOL recently bid a fond farewell to former Commander Fred Donovan and his wife Anne, as the couple turned their thoughts towards home in Australia at the end of Commander Donovan’s one-year tour with UNCIVPOL in Cyprus. Both Fred and Anne will be greatly missed. Their charm, humour and camaraderie gained them the respect and friendship of many during their tour on the island.

With Fred’s departure, former Deputy Commander Chief Superintendent Liam Quinn becomes UNCIVPOL’s new Commander. We also welcome a new Deputy Commander, Commander Bob Heggie (Command of UNCIVPOL alternates every six months between Ireland’s Garda Siochana and the Australian Police Force.)

Although personnel may change, UNCIVPOL’s commitment to its mission here on the island is unwavering, with a focus on contributing to the maintenance and restoration of law and order, and on supporting the military force and Civil Affairs Branch in contributing to a just and lasting solution to the Cyprus problem.

Fred and Anne will be greatly missed

UNCIVPOL in Cyprus has 35 personnel, all civilian. The police officers assigned to serve with the UN on a loan basis by Ireland and Australia. UNCIVPOL is not a police service, and does not administer the law or have powers of arrest over UNFICYP personnel or the local population. (The Force Military Police Unit has policing responsibility for UNFICYP personnel.)

UNCIVPOL is responsible for civil order within the Buffer Zone, which includes the resolution of disputes between civilians from both sides; monitoring and crowd control during demonstrations; and escorting civilian officials into the Buffer Zone when required.

New UNCIVPOL Commander

Chief Superintendent Liam Quinn was commissioned as an officer in the Irish Police Department in 1986. Prior to deployment to UNFICYP, he held a number of command positions, and is currently on secondment from his post as the Commander of the Limerick Police Division.

This is his second UN mission; in 1996, he commanded the Irish Contingent, which was then based in Sector 4, receiving the Force Commander’s commendation for his contribution to humanitarian projects and inter-community relations in the village of Pyla.

He is accompanied by his wife Angela, and Lewis, the youngest of their four sons.

Ch. Supt. Quinn (left) with Comd. Heggie

A Fond Farewell

Mid-February sees a changing of the guard at UNCIVPOL in Pyla, as members of the Irish and Australian contingents return home to make way for new personnel. Those that know them will miss them, and the next group will surely have a hard act to follow.

Departing members include Supt. Michael McAuley, who will be remembered for his renditions of Irish folk songs; Declan Horan, that great compromise rules player; Dean Crowe, our diplomatic deputy; and Rod Isles, the world’s greatest romantic.

Also leaving Sector 4 are Barry Walsh, who will be sad to leave the cockroaches of Dherinia; John Lewis, who reported to have said that he had such a relaxing time in Athienou he’s looking forward to getting back to work, and John “the pirate” McGonigle, whose integration with the locals often left people wondering if he was a local himself.

Of course, we will also miss our colleagues in Nicosa: Mick “the waltz” Galvin and his scrappy self (scary, meaning not always in a good mood, especially in the morning); Mick “the commando” Callan; Frank “Jameston” Kenmick; Dave “the body” Shaddy; Dave “the quiet man” Moore; Hamish “globe-trotter” Smith; Shona “party princess” Bryant; and let’s not forget the Colgate Kid himself, Christian Thomas.

Sector 1 Band Heats Up The International Bar

By Capt. P. Petrocelli

The cold night of Thursday 24 January was almost beginning when the first few chords of the Sector 1 Band, directed by WO1 Zuccarini, began to warm the International Bar in the UNPA. Before long, audience members - who included Argentinians, British, Slovaks, Hungarians, Irish and others - were enjoying typical Argentinian music such as the tango “El Cholo”, “Cumparsita”, “Adios Muchachos” and folk music like “Kim 11” and some popular music called “cumbias”.

These traditional tunes were followed by the sounds of “When the Saints Go Marching In” and “Pomp and Circumstance”, and the evening ended with “Avenida las Camellas”, a classic Argentinian military march. It was a marvellous night, with the music bringing us together as a family. Everyone is more than welcome to attend and enjoy future performances of this excellent band.

Via Crucis Along the Buffer Zone, Sector 1

By Lt. Gutiérrez

On 26 January 2002, Sector 1 Chaplain Castellanos’ Via Crucis began at 09:30 hrs after a Bell 212 lift to OP-11, and continued until 16:00 hrs. The next day, he left at 09:00 hrs following the mass service.

Raining necessitated a stop by the Xeros River to clean the mud from his bike, before he continued on to Brown Camp at 18:00 hrs. The last day began at 09:00 hrs, reaching the UNPA by 11:30 hrs and thus finishing his journey by San Barnabas Chapel.

Remembering the Battle of San Lorenzo

By 2/Lt. Ignacio Perez, Rovere

On 3 February, ARGCON commemorated the 189th anniversary of the Battle of San Lorenzo, fought and won by Argentinian troops under the command of cavalry General José de San Martín during the Independence War.

This battle represented a baptism of fire for the Granaderos a Caballos Regiment, which would be very successful during the 19th century and is now the Presidential Escort Regiment. General San Martin, who is today remembered by UNFICYP as a Skouriotissia Camp in Sector 1 carries his name, did his military studies in Spain, fought against Napoleon’s troops, and returned to the land of his birth to improve the army with his knowledge, in order to obtain his dream: independence.

Interestingly, the Battle of San Lorenzo also inspired an historical march that is played by many countries, including the United Kingdom, Germany and France. The Germans obtained it because Kaiser Wilhelm II gave the march “Old Camarades” to the Argentinian government at the time of independence. Argentina, in return, gave the Germans the San Lorenzo march, which is also well-known in Britain where it is often played in ceremonies at Buckingham Palace.
Your Guide to the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus

The cultural heritage of Cyprus boasts an array of prominent figures ranging from Alexander the Great, Anthony and Cleopatra to Richard the Lionheart. Cyprus was settled in the Stone Age, some 9,000 years ago, and many areas still bear witness to the march of history across its coasts and mountains. The Blue Beret is happy to present an updated version of its popular Cultural Heritage series. Coming issues will feature visits to archaeological and historic sites throughout the island. To launch the series, we’re featuring a handy description of the island’s key time periods — think of it as a road map to the cultural heritage of the island. Keep it handy as a reference as we continue the series, and our tour of the island.

The Early Years – 9,000-3,900 BC
Stone Age: Neolithic settlements at Khirokitia, Troulli, Erini, Kantou, Kalavassos, Sotira, Lembra, Petra tou Limniti and Ledra (Nicosia).

The Bronze and Copper Age – 3,900-1,650 BC
The discovery of rich copper reserves made the island an important trading centre for the Near East and the Aegean. Large settlement of Phoenicians at Ayia Paraskevi (Nicosia). Kissonerga, Pano Arodes, Episkopi, Sotira, Kalavassos, Palaia Paphos and Kiti.

The Late Bronze and Iron Age – 2,500-1,050 BC
Arrival of the Mycenaean Greeks and Achaeans. City Kingdoms were established throughout Cyprus at Kythrea, Idalio (Dhali), Kourio, Golgi (Athienou), Salamis, Kyrenia, Lapithos, Paphos, etc.

The Cypro-Geometric Period – 1,050-750 BC
Phoenician traders settled at Kiton and Amathus. Art: geometric shaped pottery. Establishment of Greek Cyriot Kingdom at Salamis. Important monuments of this period: royal tombs at Salamis.

The Cypro-Archaic Period – 750-450 BC
The island’s strategic position, together with its natural wealth of copper and timber, attracted a number of invaders. Cyprus was conquered successively by the: Assyrians (673-669 BC) Egyptians (560-545 BC) Persians (545-332 BC) Birth of Stasinos, the Cyriot epic poet. The Athenian statesman Solon visited Cyprus and the city of Soli was named after him.

The Classical Period – 475-320 BC
Attempts by Athenians to liberate Cyprus from the Persians. Great Cyriot kings: Evagoras of Salamis and Onesilos managed to unite the Cyriots. Alexander the Great freed the island from the Persians (333) and Cyprus became part of his empire.

The Hellenistic Period – 320-30 BC
Antigonus of Asia Minor and Ptolemy of Egypt fought over Cyprus with Ptolemy finally winning. Paphos became the capital of Cyprus. Tombs of the Kings and the Kourio amphitheatre are examples of cultural activities. Philosopher: Zenon of Kition.

The Roman Period – 30 BC-330 AD
Cyprus becomes part of the Roman Empire. Anthony presented Cyprus to Cleopatra. Disastrous earthquakes at Kourio. Visit by Apostles Paul and Barnabas. Spread of Christianity. The Jewish revolt resulted in the destruction of Salamis.

The Byzantine Period – 330-1191 AD
When Rome fell, Cyprus became part of the Byzantine Empire with its capital in Constantinople. Empress Helena visited Cyprus. Fondation of Stavrovouni Monastery. Autonomy of Archbishop of Cyprus. Arab invasion of the island. Death of Larnaca of Umum-Haram (Tekke at Salt Lake). Cyprus was turned into a Byzantine stronghold, and the great castles of St. Hilarion, Buffavento and Kantara were built.

Richard I of England and the Crusaders – 1191-1192 AD
Cyprus falls into the hands of Richard the Lionheart during the 3rd Crusade. King Richard marries Berengaria of Navarre in Limassol. Cyprus sold to the Order of the Knights Templar. Transfer of sovereignty to Guy de Lusignan.

The Frankish Period – 1192-1489 AD
Introduction of the feudal system. Gothic influence e.g. Ayia Sofia (Nicosia), Ayia Nikolaos (Famagusta) and Bellapais Abbey. Walls of Nicosia and Famagusta built. From 1374-1464, Famagusta ruled by the Genoese Republic. The last Lusignan queen, Catherine Cornaro, coerced into giving up her throne to the Republic of Venice.

The Venetian Rule – 1499-1570/1 AD
Cyprus mainly used as a military port. Improvement of defences, including the Castle of Kyrenia and the walls of Nicosia.

The Ottoman Rule – 1570/1-1878 AD
The Ottoman Empire successfully gained control of the island. Limited autonomy granted to the Orthodox Church. Conversion of a number of cathedrals into mosques (Ayia Sofia and Ayios Nikolaos). Some fortifications work at Paphos and Larnaca.

The British Administration – 1878-1960 AD
Following the Turkish-Russian war and the signing of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, Britain assumed the administration of Cyprus. In 1914, island declared a British possession, following Turkey’s alliance with Germany in WWI. In March 1925, Cyprus declared a Crown colony and remained as such until 16 August 1960.

The Independence of Cyprus – 1960 AD
Cyprus gained independence from the British under the London-Zurich agreement between Britain, Greece, Turkey, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.
Winter Ball at the Navarino

The UNPA Officers’ Club held their Winter Ball at the Navarino Wine Lodge on Friday 25 January 2002, and it was by all accounts a thoroughly enjoyable evening. More than 160 party-goers attended, all looking very posh in the specified “Glamorous Gear”. Diners were initially entertained by a magician who performed for each table. However, it was the cabaret dancers from O.T.T. Productions who stole the show with their great routines.

A charity raffle was also held, and the star prize of a holiday package to Jordan donated by Chronos Travel was won by the lucky Force Engineer, Maj.

Jeno Ladosci (above with Penny of Chronos Travel). The superb SUNSET Roadshow Disco provided the music, and revellers danced away well into the early hours.

A big thank you should go to Angela Milne, who organised so many raffle prizes, and Mona de Weever for the balloon decorations.

CELL PHONES
The number of cellular phones in the world will exceed the number of fixed lines within months, said the International Telecommunications Union. (AP)

Caption Competition

Here again you can see we’ve printed several entries for the last caption competition. But we need more entrants - the same people keep winning (and no prizes for guessing who)... The shot below should give you some ideas – send in your captions and win a bottle of wine!

- Village people try comeback in the Arctic.
- Freeze!
- Yeti again - the abominable snowmen.
- Make my snow day!
- The four reindeer men of the Apocalypse.
- But where are the snowballs...?
- Which one’s the snowman?

Captions to be submitted to the Public Information Office by: 18 March 2002

Cyprus Rugby Union Cup Final

After arriving in December last year, the rugby players from 32 Regiment RA were keen to join UNFICYP’s Unicorns rugby team. Their impact was noticeable and after several cancellations, the team breezed through the quarter and semi-finals played in the New Year. This meant that this year’s Cyprus rugby union final was a clash between the Unicorns and the Episkopi Eagles at the stadium, Akrotiri.

From the first kick, the pace was fast and furious. Both sides played hard to gain early dominance. The Unicorns opened the game looking the stronger, taking everything to the Eagles, but nobody was going to give. However, the speed, long throws and confidence shown by the Eagles began to take its toll. The Unicorns refused to lie down and produced some cohesive, patient play.

Sadly, the Unicorns failed to recover from the pressure applied by the Eagles, and at the final whistle, the score was 52-7 to the Episkopi Eagles. Force Commander Lt. Gen. J.H. Hwang was there to present the trophy – a magnificent gesture from one who has been the Unicorns’ biggest fan since arriving on the island.

Volleyball Match in Famagusta

The sport hall at the Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta set the scene on 7 February for a friendly volleyball match between the 4 Regt TCSF and Sector 4. Both teams brought their supporters, including the two commanding officers, with slight over-manning from the 4 Regt side.

When the game started, it was clear that not only the TCSF players but also their supporters had prepared well for the event, showing synchronized and powerful encouragement for their colleagues. The Sector 4 players tried hard, changing tactics during the match, but this time it was not enough against their rivals. The TCSF players won all three sets, leaving the unpopular zero on the Sector 4 score list. However, the Sector 4 players did not give up and promised to mobilize their strength during a future reprisal match.

Bench Press Competition

On 19 January, the strong men of Sector 4 met in Camp General Stefanik in Famagusta to demonstrate their physical strength in a bench press competition. Female powerlifting ace and European Championships participant Cpl. Magdolna Petroczky also attended as referee. The main organiser of the competition, powerlifting fanatic WO III Stefan Hudec, prepared four disciplines for all who dared take part. The cheering spectators encouraged the competitors to reach the limits of their physical and also psychological powers.

The winner in the bench press with the maximum weight in the over-80kg category was SSGt. Bartolomej Kiss from SLOVCON, who also won the maximum number of bench presses with the 50-kg weight. His best attempt, also the overall best, was 147.3 kg. The other two disciplines (bench press in the category to 80 kg and maximum bench press with own weight) were an easy job for Sgt. Zsolt Mohár from HUNCON. In exhibition, WO Hudec, whose personal best bench press is almost 200 kg, pressed 150 kg three times – great training motivation for future competitions!

Soccer Match Challenge

HQ BRITCON, with additional support from high-profile players of UN HQ Staff, played host to Sector 2 on Thursday, 7 February, with Sector 2 winning 8 to 2. Looking at the score, you would say that it was one-sided. Quite the contrary: this was a good soccer game played with some great skill and in a very sporting manner by both teams.

The visitors took the lead after 20 minutes, continued to put the home team under pressure, and by half-time were completely in control. This was a very good performance from the visitors and showed they were a team that gelled together. Congratulations to both teams for a sporting game of football.