

THE Blue Beret

December 1992



Season's
Greetings

Frohe
Weihnachten

Nollaig Fè
Mhaise Dhìbh

Hyvä
Joulua

Gloedelig
Jul

God Jul

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE FORCE COMMANDER



Christmas is a happy season, with a strong family tradition. A time of year when thoughts turn to home and loved ones. A time in which we celebrate the birth of Christ by remembering, sharing, and giving to others.

It is the nature of a soldier's life that frequently he has to be apart from his family and friends because duty calls. The duty which requires many of us in UNFICYP to be away from homes and families this Christmas is a noble and

worthwhile one. It is truly a giving duty, since it contributes the gift of peace to so many other homes.

In thanking you all for your wholehearted contribution to peace in Cyprus, I would wish you to know that your gift is recognized and appreciated.

I wish you all a Happy and a Holy Christmas, and a Peaceful New Year.

Maj Gen Michael Minehane



The MPIO staff, pictured above (guess who's who?), wish all members of UNFICYP a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous 1993.

WINNERS OF THE UNFICYP CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION



Pictured above with the Force Commander is the winner of the UNFICYP Christmas Card Competition, Sgt EP Smith from Sector Three, and Mrs Miriam Taylor, the organiser of the competition.

Far left is the runner up, Mrs Breda Sheehan and left is the winner of the children's section, Master Lee Speak.

Congratulations go to the winners, and many thanks to everyone who participated in this competition.

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The Blue Beret is the house journal of the United Nations Force in Cyprus and as such, is intended to provide a source of information on current events within the Force, on UN matters of general interest and on local tourist advice.

Articles of general interest are invited from all members of the Force. Photographs together with captions should accompany the articles. This is an official publication prepared under the direction of the Force Commander. The views expressed are, however, those of the author concerned and do not necessarily conform with official policy.

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Front Cover
Season's Greetings
from UNFICYP
by S/Sgt Kev Capon

The Blue Beret



EDITORIAL

As in all UN missions, each Contingent has its own customs and quota of national holidays. In fact, with its individual brand of good humour and enthusiasm, each nation strives to retain a special identity that marks it as being different. For this and a variety of other reasons, there are few occasions when contingents share a common celebration of a festival.

However, for the eight national contingents represented in the military and police elements of UNFICYP, the twenty nationalities represented amongst the international staff and the locally employed civilians, there is unanimity in the recognition of the Christmas season. This consensus is achieved despite the different national emphasis on a range of celebrations such as Krampus, Santa Lucia, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and the Epiphany.

Central to the enjoyment of these seasonal festivities is the common thread of an aspiration for peace and goodwill to one's fellow man. In effect, it is the time of year when we are at our most charitable best!

Even if this idealism gets somewhat tarnished outside the festive season, let us persist with that aspiration and in so doing, enjoy the spirit of Christmas for what it is - a unique time of the year for comradeship, bonhomie and charity.

CONTENTS

Christmas Message from the FC/Winner of the UNFICYP Christmas Card Competition	2
Editorial/Contents	3
AUSTCIVPOL News	4
News from Sector One	5
UN MP Coy News	6
Ex Pandora's Box/The Unknown Quantity	7
UNFICYP Military Skills Competition/UNFICYP Skill at Arms Competition/UNAB/SBA Liaison	8
News from Sector Four	9
News from the Scout Car Squadron	10
Sector Three News	11/12
Finland's Peace Keepers	13
SWEDCIVPOL's News	14
The Carinthian Plebiscite Day/The End of an Era	15
CANCON assume command of B-47	16

VISIT TO UNFICYP BY AUSTRALIAN SENATOR



Senator Patricia Giles with (from left to right) Supt Ken Hunt, Sgt Jayne Chandler and Cmdr Harry Bryant.

Western Australian Senator, Patricia Giles, visited AUSTCIVPOL during October. She took time off from attending a Health and Environment Conference in Nicosia, hosted by the Republic of Cyprus. Senator Giles currently represents Australia at the United Nations in New York and has a special interest in health matters and women's issues.

The Senator was given a tour of the AUSTCIVPOL offices and discussed the Contingent's role with Commander Harry Bryant and other police.



RACE FEVER - THE MAGIC OF THE MELBOURNE CUP

With nearly 100,000 racegoers at the track and an estimated world-wide television audience of 350 million, who could blame AUSTCIVPOL for celebrating the 130th running of the Melbourne Cup horse race?

Melbourne, the capital of Australia's smallest mainland state, hosted the first Melbourne Cup in 1861. That year, virtually all of Melbourne's population travelled to the local racecourse to witness the beginning of what is now Australia's greatest race. The people of Melbourne immediately adopted the Cup as a day of great celebration and a tradition was born.

Although an official holiday only in Melbourne, the rest of Australia stops to listen or watch the race. Work places throughout the country organise "sweepstakes" and the local bookmakers usually rake in a fortune from "mug punters" - those who bet once a year - and only on the Cup.

Once again, AUSTCIVPOL hosted their version of the Melbourne Cup. Guests were invited to participate in sweepstakes and "have a flutter" on some of the local races while later that evening, punters were introduced to the "joys" of a traditional Australian game of two-up. Aply conducted by the Australian Federal Police Liaison Officer to the Middle East, Superintendent Tim Egan, the game proved very popular once the rules had been explained.

The day ended on a high note when the Canadian band "5 Hour Notice" played rock 'n' roll for the enjoyment of those left at the AUSTCIVPOL Mess.

Congratulations to those who won the raffles. Force Photographer Kev Capon won the Aussie Army slouch hat, while CANCON's Gerry Billard walked off with the Akubra hat.



"5 Hour Notice"
The Band rocking at the "Cup".

THE AUSTRALIAN CIVILIAN POLICE CONTINGENT
WISHES ALL MEMBERS OF UNFICYP
A BEAUT CHRISTMAS AND A BONZA NEW YEAR!!

ASSISTANCE OF A MATERIAL BOARD AT THE FINAL END OF TOUR

by Col CCS Sørensen

The Danish Government's decision to withdraw DANCON from UNFICYP after some 28 years of service in Cyprus raised a number of questions which needed to be solved within a relatively short period. Different logistical and administrative procedures within the Danish Defence Forces and the United Nations, combined with the special background of UNFICYP, resulted in a decision within the Army Operational Command, Denmark to present additional support to DANCON in order to tie up their mission here in UNFICYP.

Consequently, a Material Board was formed which included members with qualifications and experience in UN administration, equipment evaluation and Danish Defence administration.

After a preparatory period in Denmark adjusting accounting, documentation, etc, the Material Board spent from 28 October to 7 November in Cyprus to complete the task. A survey, classification and evaluation took place and, based on these findings, it was decided whether the equipment was of any interest to Denmark or whether it was to be handed over to UNFICYP or scrapped. The result was presented to the CAO, UNFICYP for final discussion and agreement.

The Board had a difficult and very time-consuming task, but the results were undoubtedly fruitful. With



Signing of the final agreement: the CAO, Ms Susan Matthew and the Chairman of the Board, Col CCS Sørensen

the long background of the Danish Contingent in UNFICYP, it was extremely important that the final closing down of DANCON 57 should be completed with no outstanding matters left behind.

The Material Board visited all Danish OPs and camps with consultations taking place at HQ UNFICYP. Members of the Board found nothing but help and willingness from everyone concerned in reaching their final conclusions. They left Cyprus wishing UNFICYP personnel all the best in their future mission.

THE HISTORY OF KOKKINA

by F Borup, OS/NK - Kokkina

About 30 minutes' drive from Limnitis, where C Coy is located, you will find one of the Company's platoons, the Kokkina Rifle Platoon, situated in the small but beautiful enclave of Kokkina.

This territory has, over the last 20 years, had many problems following the difficult days in early 1964. The Irish Contingent originally built the camp in Kokkina, which was subsequently taken over by DANCON in 1970. Over the years, further incidents occurred in this area, but UNFICYP maintained its perimeter and created a small Buffer Zone which encircles about six square kilometres.



Pte FB Nielsen, Cpl S Eriksen, Pte MH Johansen
and Pte H Lybeck, the OP Team from D-03.



Pte S Kristensen at the entrance
to the Kokkina Camp

At present there are 25 soldiers living together in this camp. Every second week, the soldiers on the OPs rotate, and a new four-man team is sent up. In addition, two men are sent from the recce group on a daily patrol of the area.

Situated as it is, Kokkina is a very pleasant place and it has certainly provided a great deal of experience for all those who have served there. This location has now been incorporated into the British Sector.



10TH ANNUAL TERRY FOX RUN

For the annual Terry Fox Run, over 600 participated in a 6 or 10 Km run, walk or cycle in support of cancer research.

Participants from UNFICYP, the SBAs, the Secretariat, locally employed civilians, as well as school children from the local area, hit the streets at 0800 hrs for an enjoyable tour of the UNPA. Some impressive 10 km times were clocked, the fastest being David Wright at 31.49! Male runners-up were Leo Schrottenbach and Minas Votsis. The fastest lady was Andrie Photiou at 44.38, followed by Cathy VonDrasek and Maureen Hutchinson. In the male 6 km event, Brian Ross took it, with Yesper Hoffman and Valentin Rosenwirth on his tail. Carrie Rodomar and Dorothy Ennis finished in a dead heat in the ladies event. A special 2500m competition for the Akaki Gymnasium was won by 14-year-old Achilleos Achilleas.



The Sig Sqn

Special mention is made of WO1 Walsh, Force Engineer's office, who appropriated a baby and pram and came in first. Also, thanks to the Signal Squadron who pushed around their "contraption", flat tyre and all.

As well as an excellent day of physical fitness, the Terry Fox Run was a resounding financial success. Money continues to trickle in, but at last count the fund sits at CY£3,000 (\$7,450 Cdn).



UNFICYP MILITARY POLICE COMPANY MEDAL PARADE: 8 OCTOBER 1992



The Force Commander inspecting the parade

The UNFICYP Military Police Company paraded at the Nicosia International Airport to receive their UNFICYP Medal/Number. The Company Chief Warrant Officer, CWO Lloyd Church, marched the Company on parade by Contingent and this format allowed each nation - Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom - to demonstrate their national drill, parade commands, etc. Capt M Wallin, Deputy Officer Commanding, handed the parade over to Maj EW Boone, Force Provost Marshal and Officer Commanding. Thereafter, the Salute was taken by the Force Commander, Maj Gen MF Minehane, who also presented medals/numerals to unit personnel on behalf of the Secretary

General. Cpl Chambers, BRITCON MP, was then presented his Gulf Medal by the Force Commander.



Cpl Chambers receiving his Gulf Medal by the Force Commander



Participants get ready at the start of the run



EX PANDORA'S BOX

by Maj Vince Hazlewood

This exercise called for the Force Reserve to be deployed and for Support Regiment to constitute an ad hoc company drawn from all quarters. As the only infanterier, it was suggested that the 2ic, Maj Vince Hazlewood, might like to be Company Commander of this motley crew - an offer he could not refuse!

Exercise day dawned: the troops collected weapons and deployed to their well recced and briefed locations and commenced clearance patrols with others guarding key points.

Throughout the day, activity was simulated to exercise all the elements involved. Later the Force



Casualties being moved from the scene of the fuel dump



The FC visits Sp Regt Ops Room and is briefed by Lt Col Ian Stevens: Capt Steve Marshall, the Ops Officer, is in the background.

Commander visited Sp Regt HQ/B Coy HQ.

Following major "casualties" amusingly inflicted by the directing staff, the exercise concluded once they had been passed through the casualty evacuation system organised by Lt Col Skipworth, the Senior Medical Officer.

Were lessons learnt? Was it worthwhile? Was it successful? Did we win? Only the staff know! It did, however, give a motley collection of our soldiers an opportunity to get out from behind their desks/stores/vehicles/radios/cookers/kennels and remind them that they were indeed soldiers.



THE UNKNOWN QUANTITY



by WO2 Shaw

One of the unseen departments of Sector Two, and needless to say, one which is taken for granted, is the Ration Store. The Store is manned by the Master Chef of Sector Two, WO2 (SQMS) PS Shaw ACC and Sgt P Bowles RA, who are both members of 5th Regiment RA. The Store is located in St David's Camp and is responsible for all procurement and supply of food for the 13 kitchens in Sector Two.

The food is purchased from Ration Coy and Central Catering in Dhekelia, and also from three civilian contractors in Nicosia. All food is then delivered to St David's Camp by 1 Sqn RCT.



WO2 (SQMS) Shaw looks on as L/Cpl Dillon prepares some meat before delivery to the line.



Sgt Bowles checks rations before they are delivered to the line OPs

Three days a week, Sgt Bowles starts work before the early shift arrives in the kitchen to meet the contractors with their deliveries. The hardest worker in the store is the CATPAC computer system which carries all accounts along with stock inventory control, purchases and menu planning.

Every week over 1 ton of potatoes, 1200 kilos of fruit and vegetables, 900 kilos of meat, 1,700 litres of milk, 400 loaves of bread and approximately 2 tons of groceries arrive at the store. The food is then broken down into smaller quantities and packed into insulated containers, before starting its journey down the line to all the OPs.



UNFICYP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION 1992/2

by Maj Vince Hazlewood

In what may be the last Military Skills Competition in its present form, and certainly the last for the Danes in Sector One, we saw one of the closest and most fiercely contested competitions for a long time.

It was evident from the start that all three Danish teams had prepared well, as had the Austrians from Sector Four, whilst Support Regiment were as always the "dark horses".

At the end of Phase One, the Sector 4A team was ahead. Then the diverse aspects of Phase 2 shook up the order as Sector 4A slipped and Sectors 1C and 1B consolidated their positions.

However, eventually the competition was to be decided on the assault course. 4A first off put in a good time of 5 mins 24 seconds to set a target for the rest. 4B and 4C both came in under 5 minutes. But it was 1C who put in an excellent time of 4 mins 55 secs. This no doubt led to the downfall of Sp Regt A team who, fired up as they were, managed to incur equipment penalties at the low wire crawl. This cost them dearly and allowed them to be overhauled by teams from Sector 1, one of which was the eventual overall winning team.



The winning team - Sector 1C

Once again, this competition, the toughest in UNFICYP's training calendar, managed to actively involve the partisan spectators and supporters from all Sectors, all of whom agree that the teams/participants were well prepared and gave very competitive performances throughout.

UNFICYP SKILL AT ARMS COMPETITION: 1992/2

The Skill at Arms Competition took place on 14 October 1992. Team scores were generally down on the March 92 competition with the exception of the very good pistol team score of SWEDCIVPOL. In the Falling Plates Competition, the favourites - Sector 4A - were beaten in a closely reshot final by Sp Regt A.

However, the overall winners were Sector Four, with Sector One the runners up.



UNFICYP SAA Winners - Sector Four

UNAB / SBA LIAISON

At the beginning of October, a meeting between Col Watts, the Garrison Commander in Dhekelia, Lt Col Silk, the CO of 1 WFR and Lt Col Hossinger, the CO of Sector Four took place. The purpose of the meeting was to facilitate discussion on co-operation, liaison and social contact between Sector Four and its close neighbours. The meeting ended with a lunch in the Officers' Mess.



(Left to right): Col Watts, Lt Col Silk and Lt Col Hossinger



THE SCHOBERSTOANER VISIT UNAB

by Capt F Wanka



FC inspecting the troops

In late October, an Austrian Trachtenkapelle (a band playing folklore music and dressed in traditional costume) called the "Schoberstoaner" from Upper Austria arrived at Camp Duke Leopold V to take part in the AUSCON Medal Parade.

The Schoberstoaner had a busy week. On Monday, an Austrian Dance was arranged in Nicosia where many people enjoyed the sound of original Austrian music. The Force Commander's wife, Mrs Maura Minehane, attended and tried her hand at conducting the band.

At the Medal Parade itself, the Schoberstoaner played throughout the whole ceremony. After the inspection of the parade by the Force Commander and the address of the Deputy Chief of Staff/Contingent Commander, Col P Resch, UN medals were presented to the soldiers by the FC, COS and DCOS.

After the ceremony, which took place in the Athienou Stadium, all guests were invited to Camp Izay, where an excellent buffet had been prepared. During the meal, the Schoberstoaner again provided the entertainment.

That evening, the Schoberstoaner bade farewell to UNAB with a parade and concert in Famagusta.



The crew of cooks



Waiting for the presentation of medals



The FC's wife, Mrs Maura Minehane, conducting the band

VISIT OF DEPUTY DEFENCE ATTACHÉ TO UNAB



Maj Scott Dorney paid a special visit to Sector Four. Mr Dorney is the Deputy US Defence Attaché. After a briefing by the SOO, Maj Hatzenbichler, he was taken on a line tour.

NEWS FROM THE SCOUT CAR SQUADRON

by Capt C Hedley

Competitions galore became the theme of the month, as intensive preparations and training began for the Military Shooting and Skills Competitions. Range time became a premium as the shooting team, under the auspices of Lt Watson, honed their skills. Training times were reduced and basic military skills were vastly improved as training entered its final throes. The team was finally whittled down to five men and a reserve.

On the day there was something to celebrate as Sgt Douglas won the best rifle shot and received his cup from the Chief of Staff.

Meanwhile, in the Skills event, the Squadron was out early to line the route to cheer the team on which also included LCpl Puttock, Tpr Clarke and Tpr Stokes. Hopes were high for a place, and in a fluctuating day they performed exceptionally well in the military skills aspects but struggled on the fitness events.

With the nights drawing in and the shortest day fast approaching, Christmas beckons as the focus of a busy period. The mood reflects the Squadron as we become non-operational and preparations get under way for the closing down of Prince William Camp. The disbandment of a Squadron is never a happy time, as it involves long hours carrying out maintenance and mundane tasks. But Christmas promises to provide a welcome break from the hard work although it is unlikely that many of the Squadron will actually still be on the island. All the same, one thing is guaranteed - that the men of the cavalry will enjoy Christmas in the true traditions of the English.



Sgt Saunders grenade throwing



FSC TROOP AT CAMP IZAY

5th Troop, 16th/5th The Queen's Royal Lancers have just completed a tour with AUSCON. The troop, commanded by Lt Richard Pownall, have enjoyed their brief stay and were particularly struck with the enthusiastic welcome and the warmth shown to them by their Austrian hosts.

The camp, set in the pretty village of Athienou, involves the charm of Austria with an efficient system of control and message relay that calls reveille with a stirring tune. The troop was also grateful for being able to sample Austrian home cooking, which made them feel that the camp was in fact a little Austria, rather than an outpost of the UN.



From left to right: Sgt Naven overseeing Tpr Mansell and Tpr Stokes tinkering with the engine at Camp Izay

REGIMENTAL POLICE SECTION OF 1 RCHA

by MCpl John Watson

Welcome to the Military Police/Regimental Police Section, OPs Bty, 1 RCHA. Let me first introduce our Section: Sgt Wayne Cathcart, MCpl John Watson, Cpl Derrick Brown, Bdr Dwayne Murphy, Bdr Ross Tourout, Gnr Joe Laba and Gnr Brian Morrissey.

Our Section was established in June 92, when the latter four members above were attached from 3 RCHA to the CFB Shilo Military Police Section for training and Cpl Brown was detached from 1 MP Platoon, Calgary, Alberta to augment our staff. Each RP was assigned to a duty shift and received training in all aspects of military police tasking. As MPs, we had to learn about the role of the Artillery Regiment and where we fit within it.

Our duties include security checks, both in the Wolseley/Ledra Complex and at BBC, accompanying members of the UNFICYP Military Police Company when requested or required to do so.



From the left: Sgt Cathcart, Cpl Brown, Bdr Tourout, Gnr Laba, Gnr Morrissey, Bdr Murphy and MCpl Watson

Our main task is supporting 1 RCHA throughout Sector Three. We also maintain a Detention Center which functions in accordance with all Canadian rules and regulations.

SECTOR THREE VERY POPULAR WITH MEDIA

by Capt J Fortoloczky

The month of October proved to be another busy one for Sector Three with continuous visits by a variety of representatives from press, TV and radio.

The largest group was from Western Canada, namely journalists from the provinces of Alberta and Manitoba. They were here to interview members of the Regiment who are augmentees from militia regiments and batteries as part of 1 RCHA. The reporters were: Mrs G Taylor (Irricana Rocky), Mr G Nesbitt (Shoal Lake Star), Mr D Boychuk (Shoal Lake Star), Mr B Schwanke (Reston Recorder), Mr J Hawkins (Gazette Reporter), Mr C Valin (Sunny South News) and Ms A Francoeur (Tofield Mercury).

The reporters were briefed on what the job here entails and the special problems of City and Rural Batteries. A lot of time was spent in Rural Bty, which is commanded by a Militia Officer, Maj S Steinke, and interviewing the 114 other militia personnel in



Lt BA Purcell discusses problems along the Buffer Zone with journalist Pam O' Toole of BBC International.

CANCON. The reporters also visited the UNFICYP Military Skills Competition.

German Network television sent a crew on 16 October to cover a story on Cyprus and peace-keeping. The writer, Christian Berger, cameraman Reiner Kitz and soundman Oliver Betkerk work on the television station "Deutsche Welle". They were especially interested in how the soldiers on the line live.

On 20 October, Stern Magazine sent a journalist, Jergen Petschull, and a photographer, Jay Ullal, to write a story on the UN's "Blue Helmets". While in the Buffer Zone they interviewed many soldiers and took photos. We look forward to seeing the two page photo of us in Stern.

Finally on 23 October, the BBC sent journalist Pam O' Toole and cameraman Martin Bleach to cover Cyprus as regards the recent talks in New York and the reduction of personnel within UNFICYP.



From the left: Dennis Boychuk, Bruce Schwanke, Gladys Taylor, John Hawkins, Greg Nesbitt and Anne Francoeur (Colleen Valin is seated).

1 RCHA REGIMENT BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

by Capt J Fortoloczky

20 October marked the 121st anniversary of the founding of the 1st Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery. It was under the authority of Militia General Order of 20 October 1871 that A and B Batteries were formed at Kingston and Quebec Cities respectively. Later in 1887, C Battery was formed at Victoria, British Columbia. The Regiment formally took the name of 1 RCHA on 1 January 1941, and it is the oldest regular force unit of the Canadian Armed Forces.

To honour this special occasion, the Regiment took a rare holiday and went over to Sunday routine. The morning was kicked off with a cake cutting ceremony, hosted by LCol MD Capstick and RSM WW Noseworthy. Following that, the much touted Regimental Ball Hockey Tournament was held, played on the tennis court at the Ledra Palace. The winning team was Operations Battery A Team, captained by MBdr DR Sembalerus.

The day's activities were followed by a Regimental Guest Night at the Officers' Mess, Wolseley Barracks. All guests were Gunner Officers from UNFICYP and the United States Embassy. Special guests were Brigadier RM Lambe and Major S Dorney, Assistant Army Attaché. A good night was had by all, and it will remain a memorable birthday for all members of the Regiment.



LCol MD Capstick (complete with sword!!) and RSM WW Noseworthy prepare to cut the Regimental Birthday Cake in front of the eager ball hockey teams.



Sgt G Turriff smiles while battling with a mountain of work requests.

LIFE AT FREZENBERG HOUSE

by Lt B Purcell



"A cook's job is never done", as Cpl GE Logan has discovered.

Frezenberg Troop is located on the eastern edge of 1 RCHA City Battery's area in the old walled city of Nicosia. It borders the area controlled by Rural Battery to the east. Frezenberg is home to 29 soldiers, one cook and the Troop Officer, and is self sufficient as regards day-to-day living requirements.

The Troop at Frezenberg man three Observation Posts (OPs) on a 24 hr/7 day a week basis and, as necessary four other OPs while ensuring the Buffer Zone is patrolled routinely.

When we aren't manning the line we are either working out in the modest gym, playing ping pong or watching movies. An interesting part of Frezenberg is Duffy's tavern, high atop the crystal gondola on the roof of the palatial Frezenberg House. From there, one can enjoy the sights and sounds of Nicosia.



MAINTENANCE TROOP, CANCON

by Sgt G Turriff

Since our arrival in Cyprus we have hardly stopped! So far, Maintenance Troop has processed over 860 work requests and over 80 "1020D" work orders. Contrary to popular belief, only a small proportion of work goes out on local contract, mostly body work and major assemblies covered under warranties.

Maint Tp consists of 21 all ranks employed in the eight sections.

In addition, there is a further two man maintenance section employed in Camp Liri to look after all first line repair to Rural Bty vehicles and generators.



FINLAND'S PEACE KEEPERS

by WO2 J JÄRVENPÄÄ



Finland has participated in UN peace-keeping operations since 1956 when a Company was sent to UNEF I to supervise the armistice between Egypt and Israel. From 1964 until 1977, Finland provided a Battalion in a peace-keeping role with UNFICYP. Since 1977, there has been a Finnish Headquarters element serving in Nicosia. Following the Yom Kippur War in 1973, Finland sent a Battalion to participate in UNEF II in the Suez until 1979. The Battalion was then transferred to the Golan Heights to form part of UNDOF. Since 1982, Finland has provided a second Battalion to serve with UNIFIL in South Lebanon. Finland also provided a Battalion for peace-keeping operations in Namibia with UNTAG between 1989 and 1990. With the outbreak of hostilities in the Balkans, Finland provided a Battalion to serve with UNPROFOR in April 1992.

On an observer basis, Finland also provides personnel to monitor the troubles in Middle East Kashmir and Somalia.

As a neutral country, Finland has always been interested in peace-keeping activities and, as such, Finns - men and women alike - have always volunteered for UN service. To date, more than 28,000 Finns have served in UN peace-keeping operations and this year, 10,000 have applied for overseas service.

The Finnish peace-keeping force is comprised strictly of volunteers who have completed national service training, with more than 90% of them being reservists. The average age for male and female peace-keepers is 25 and 31 respectively. About 85% have some form of vocational training with about 10%

having either a college or university degree. On volunteering for peace-keeping service, approximately 90% are in full-time employment with about 5% being school leavers.

The first Finnish Contingent (FINCON) arrived in Cyprus on 23 April 1964 and consisted of 1,007 men. FINCON was stationed in the Nicosia and Kyrenia districts.

After July 1974, FINCON assumed responsibility for the former Sector Three comprising the Blue Beret Camp, the UNFICYP Headquarters area and the western outskirts of Nicosia (including Nicosia Airport and St David's Camp, which the Finns turned over to BRITCON in October 1975). The Maple Leaf Camp of today was then known as Finneagles Camp. The Canadians took it over in October 1977.

The Finnish Battalion (then 220 men strong) left Cyprus at the end of October 1977 without replacement. On the withdrawal of the Finns, a partial redeployment of the Force resulted in the British and Canadian battalions taking over responsibility for the former Finnish Sector. Some 10,000 Finns have served with UNFICYP since April 1964.

Today, Finland continues to be represented in UNFICYP by two Officers and five Senior Non-Commissioned Officers who fill positions on the staff of HQ UNFICYP and the UN MP Coy. It has also provided a Force Commander, namely Lt Gen AE Martola, who served between May 1966 and December 1969.



A wreath laying ceremony taken on 6 December 1992 - Finnish National Day.



SWEDCIVPOL'S CHRISTMAS WISH

by Sgt Per Jystrand



The Reporter, Per Jystrand under pressure!!

It isn't easy to be an ambitious writer for the "Blue Beret" magazine, however I intended to write something about Swedish Christmas celebrations. Within SWEDCIVPOL are three very nice ladies - Lena Frylemo, Ywonne Larsson and Marianna Pålsson whom I am sure that everyone would like to see dressed up as "Santa Lucia", a feast which is celebrated each year on 13 December.

It all went wrong. I asked the girls to dress up so that I could take some photos, but they all refused. However, I was lucky - Insp Ramäng, SWEDCIVPOL's Pyla Mukthar, offered his services - (see below)...

Ywonne and Lena are going to Sweden for the Christmas period. They have been in Cyprus for over seven months, and they are dreaming of a White Christmas in Karlstad and Stockholm with their families.



A view of Camp Flamingo, SWEDCIVPOL from the sea.

Marianne will spend her Christmas in Cyprus. Perhaps she will be on duty at SWEDCIVPOL's station in Pyla, but this she does not mind because she thinks life has become too commercial in Sweden. Marianne is looking forward to celebrating Christmas in a different way here in Cyprus.

In this festive season, an idea recently occurred to me. Camp Flamingo has 24 windows facing towards the sea (see above). Children in Sweden always have an Advent Calendar with 24 windows. They open one window every day from 1 to 24 December, with the last being opened on Christmas Eve. In some calendars there is candy behind the windows. Suddenly I saw Camp Flamingo as an Advent Calendar. I don't know what I am going to see behind the windows during December, but one thing I know for sure - behind the last window is our bar, Amalia! Strange, isn't it??

SWEDCIVPOL wish you all a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year. You are always welcome to visit us in window 24 of our Advent Calendar.



Lena Grylemo, Marianne Pålsson, Bengt Ramäng, St Claus Egou and Ywonne Larsson.

THE UNPA FIRE SERVICE

By Capt J Robson

The UNPA Fire Service is provided by members of the Ordnance Detachment UNFICYP Sp Regt. The UNPA Fire Officer is Capt JG Robson and he is ably assisted by Mr Michael Hadjigeorghiou, the Sub Fire Officer and Mr Theo Stylianou, the Leading Fireman. The responsibilities of the Fire Service include attending all fires within the UNPA and those directly threatening the UNPA.

Since 1 May 1992, the Fire Service has attended 17 fires. Fire prevention and the training of the silent hours military fire picquet is also the responsibility of the Fire Service, and this training takes place every Monday morning. A recent additional responsibility has been the running of Fire Familiarisation Courses for personnel of UNFICYP.



Dvr Howarth (RCT) watched by Sub Fire Officer, Michael Georgiou.

AN AUSTRIAN REGIONAL COMMEMORATION "THE CARINTHIAN PLEBISCITE DAY"

by 1/Lt H Sackl

On 10 October, the commemoration of the Carinthian Plebiscite of 1920 took place in Duke Leopold V Camp. The celebration included a mixed chorus "Stahlklang". The Governor of the province sent to Carinthian soldiers on UN service a traditional meal called "Jaus'n" which consists mainly of bacon, Liptauer cheese and of course some Schnaps.

This festival dates back to the end of the 1914-1918 War when opposing interests claimed the disputed territory of South Carinthia. Carinthia is a province of Austria with a mixed German/Slovenian speaking population.

Following the ideas of US President Wilson, who was at that time involved with the Paris Peace Conference, a plebiscite was instituted to resolve the issue. This was bitterly contested under strong pressure from Yugoslavia. However, through the resourcefulness and courage of the Carinthians, it was possible to counteract this action by keeping the people informed of political events through various



The "Stahlklang" chorus.

means.

On 10 October 1920, the Southern Carinthian population in the occupied area voted to stay in the newly established state of Austria.

THE END OF AN ERA

by Sgt JE Banta

organised as 254 (UNFICYP) Signal Squadron.

From the beginning, a strong Canadian presence has been a highlight of these two units. With some variation through the years, this contribution has consisted of a Signal Officer, from eight to twelve Rad Ops and from two to four linemen.

Perhaps most gratifying and valuable was the cross-pollination that took place. Soldiers from different armies, sharing a common language (sort of),

but coming from considerably diverse cultural backgrounds, probably learned more about each others' countries in six months of working together than they could have in years of classroom study. A new understanding, a new respect, was gained by all individuals involved in the partnership, which also has a social dimension.

As with most things, however, this unique association between British and Canadian communicators, bound together under the sky blue flag of the United Nations, has come to an end. On 17 December 1992, the last group of Canadians to serve with 254 (UNFICYP) Signal Squadron will be on their way home. After 28 years, the book is about to be closed on a colourful chapter in the history of Canadian Signals.

To our British Comrades-in-Arm we say, "farewell, good luck, and may the day come again soon when we find ourselves working and playing together - In the Service of Peace".



Radio Troop flag is lowered for the last time.

When the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was first formed in 1964, the need for reliable radio and line communications at the Force Headquarters level was apparent. Accordingly, 644 Sig Troop, a unit of the Royal Corps of Signals, was formed. In 1976, it was re-



Radio Troop marches off parade for the last time - November 1992.



CANCON ASSUME COMMAND OF B-47



Maj Slinger (right) handing over to Maj Howard