The First Argentinian Medal Parade

The Blue Beret

March 1994

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 3
MARCH 1994

Published monthly by the Spokesman's Office of the United Nations Force in Cyprus, HC UNIFCYP, P.O. Box 1642, Nicosia, Cyprus.
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EDITORIAL

In most parts of the world, spring is the season of the rebirth of man and nature. The gentle awakening of nature in Cyprus starts with the arrival of the swallows.

In UNIFCYP, spring was marked by the arrival of the new Camp Command, a role which is of considerable importance to the Force. This Unit took over a number of the responsibilities once carried out by the UNIFCYP Support Regiment which left the Force on 15 December 1993. We heartily welcome the new Camp Command, and wish this first Unit a successful tour with UNIFCYP.

Another significant recent event was the first Argentinian Medal Parade, an event which brought a new flavour to this type of ceremony. Officers and NCOs of the First Argentinian Contingent to serve in Cyprus were decorated with the UN medal for keeping in a poignantly ceremonial which all of us will remember.

As it happens, the Argentinian Battalion has now come to the end of its six-month tour. This month, UNIFCYP bids farewell to the first Argentinian soldiers to serve in Cyprus, and wishes the incoming Battalion an equally successful tour.

Spring is the time of change - it may be that other great changes are in the air.

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WOULD YOU LIKE A MATE?

by Capt Mario Devincenzi

"Would you like a mate?" This is the very first question Argentinian soldiers ask every time someone visits Sector One's CPs, PB or wherever an Argentinian is dwelling.

Basically, "mate" is a brew, like tea or coffee, and contains a stimulant called "mateine", similar to caffeine. This traditional beverage is an Indian heritage and is taken not only in Argentina but also in Paraguay, Uruguay and southern Brazil. In other countries, it is used as part of a diuretic diet.

"Mate" keeps you awake and free from hunger whilst working or studying, but it is definitely not a drug. European immigrants have added sugar, orange peel, coffee, mint and other spices to smooth its strong, bitter flavour. It is served as a refreshment, either hot or cold, depending on the region.

Whatever the reason for their visit, Argentinians offer their guests this special brew as a sign of hospitality.

VISITORS TO SECTOR ONE

After a Christmas visit to UNPROFOR's Argentinean groups in Croazia, Monsenor Norberto E Martin, the Armed Forces' Bishop and Monsenor Mario L. de Leone, the Army's Chaplain, arrived in Cyprus.

They were received by the Commanding Officer Sector One, Lt Col Juan Durante, and ARGCON's Padre, Armando Sancho. During their visit, a chapel, relaunched by the Engineer Platoon, was inaugurated at Xeros Camp.

Pictured below are Monsenor Norberto Martin and Monsenor Mario de Leone at the Xeros Camp Chapel.

A visit to Skouroupolis early this year by the German Ambassador and his wife, HE Mr and Mrs von Roehnert (centre) with the CO ARGCON and his wife.

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE!

The United Nations library is a facility which is offered free to UN and entitled personnel, and can be found in the Community Centre, near the NAAFI and next to the school.

Not only does the library provide a good range of fiction, both hardbacks and paperbacks, but it also tries to cover all the subjects that you may be interested in. If you cannot find what you want on the shelves, then ask the friendly library staff who will do their best to get it quickly. Books can also be borrowed from the island-wide Command Library service, so there is a very large choice available.

The library staff are always pleased to receive book recommendations from users. The Assistant Librarian is Mrs Antia Vianepouliou, and you can speak to her on Nicosia 359317.

There are books for children as well as adults, a good selection of magazines (changed regularly), music cassettes, talking books and much more. We have a very good range of self-instruction language courses available (usually consisting of a book with cassettes) and we can quickly supply courses on Arabic, French, German, Greek, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and others besides these.

You can use the reservation service to obtain new books, or most other books that you find difficulty in locating while in Cyprus. Simply fill out a request card, which will be posted to you as soon as the book is received at the library.

The library is open during the following hours:

Summer (from 1st May):
Mon-Fri: 0900-1300 hrs
1600-1900 hrs
Winter (from 1st Oct):
Mon-Fri: 0900-1300 hrs
1500-1800 hrs

DONT BE SHY - JUST DO IT!

by Sgt P Conway

The only way to be sure is to CHALLENGE THEM! Ask them who they are! Ask them what they are doing! Ask them if they have authority! Ask them from whom! Don't be afraid, don't be shy - just do it! Whether they are civilian or military, it doesn't matter. Whether they are driving a civilian or other vehicle, it doesn't matter — if you are suspicious, then CHALLENGE.

If you are not happy with the answers given, report the incident to the Military Police on 359666. Remember, someone could be stealing your property. Hopefully, someone will CHALLENGE them.
50TH BIRTHDAY OF AUSCON'S FELDPOSTMEISTER

by WO2 Peter Stickler

There is many a birthday celebrated in AUSCON, but not often a 50th one - and very rarely a 50th birthday of a man so talented as the officer in charge of the Austrian Forces Post Office - read on.

The party, which took place on 12 January 1994, was a very special occasion. FPM Meislhuber impressed his friends and other guests not only with his classical repertoire on the violin, but also with his capability of turning his instrument into the hottest fiddle on the island when he played country 'n' western and Irish tunes! Then there was his act on the nail board, which might go to prove that sometimes, when you are half a century old, you could end up with the skin of an elephant - even if you don't look (or act) your age!

Worth mentioning was the superb birthday cake, styled as a stamp - only thicker.

By the way, the FPM is also a painter, and we all hope that we don't have to wait for his 100th birthday to see an exhibition of his work!

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THE FIRE FIGHTERS OF CAMP DUKE LEOPOLD V

by Maj H Reisinger

WO II Rack, 1/Cpl Eberhardt, 1/Cpl Minich, WO II Itzbauch, Sgtd Ziervogel, and Maj Steinhilf in front of their Headquarters.

Demonstrating their field capacity, the fire brigade saves a small fire to an early death.

The re-organized Quick Reaction Group of AUSCON's HQ Coy recently took on a new task. Having renovated their Headquarters' accommodation in Camp Duke Leopold V, they are now responsible for second line fire fighting. The firemen, therefore, form a fire crew that can carry out a number of operations, from the transport of water containers to the pumping of water.

Small but efficient, the pride and joy of Camp Duke Leopold and the HQ Coy Commander, they are allowed to utilise their water pumps, which are capable of pumping a small amount of water at a time.

WO II Rack, 1/Cpl Eberhardt, 1/Cpl Minich, WO II Itzbauch, Sgtd Ziervogel, and Maj Steinhilf in front of their Headquarters.

The Force Commander's Tactical Conference in Sector Four's highlands.

To the left: Lt Col R Malcolm, Cpl Supt T King, Lt Col Vlamings-Hansen, Lt Col A Rim, Cpl T Davis and Maj T Sharp.

Sitting, from the left: Maj Susan Matthews, Maj Col A Kloss, Maj Gen M Minshull, Brig R Lamme, Lt Col R Mujica and Lt Col S White.

Unigel

The Force Commander's Tactical Conference in Sector Four's highlands.

The higher echelons of UNFICYP. Standing, from the left: Lt Col R Malcolm, Cpl Supt T King, Lt Col Vlamings-Hansen, Lt Col A Rim, Cpl T Davis and Maj T Sharp.

Sitting, from the left: Maj Susan Matthews, Maj Col A Kloss, Maj Gen M Minshull, Brig R Lamme, Lt Col R Mujica and Lt Col S White.
THE IRISH ARE HERE IN STRENGTH

Command are the Force Catering Officer, the Force Health Inspector, the Garrison Sgt Major, the Force Photographer, the Welfare and Recreation Sergeant, the Duty Free Supplies Manager, the Work Services and Automatic Storeman, the Accommodation Stores Storeman and the Weapons and Ammunition Storeman.

There are, of course, many more important appointments held within the Unit which will be reported on in the near future.

Many members of the Camp Command are UN veterans, and although they regard their daunting tasks as a great challenge, they have once again set out to prove the versatility and adaptability of the Irish. As the Camp Commandant says, "In Ireland, people are our greatest resource. We do not find fault; we like to find a remedy."

We wish Camp Command all the best in the future, and we look forward to enjoying their company.
The Regiment has reached a mid tour point in a blur of time. Whilst memories of arriving and the struggle to learn the patch are still vivid, there exists a calm confidence which exudes at all levels. No longer is there a need to consult maps and charts as soldiers have grown accustomed to their surroundings and duties. In short, there is now little in the life of a soldier living on the line which causes concern. To expand the working knowledge throughout the Regiment, Squadrons are now conducting cross line tours at Troop/Squadron level, in order to allow soldiers living in the rural environment the opportunity to witness urban operations and vice-versa.

**Visits:** The Regiment hosted a number of influential guests during the month of February.

A number of our soldiers managed to secure hard fought prizes within UNIFICYP competitions. The Shooting Competition (see separate article) saw a modest victory in the Filling Plate Section. More prestigiously, Normandy’s team won outright the Military Skills Competition which, after four weeks’ concentrated training, proved to be a tremendous success, given the competition provided by Gectors One and Four.

Sport remains an important release for the gladiators in the Regiment. The football team played a hard game against ARGCON and sadly walked away defeated 3-4. On a brighter note, they did beat Barclays Bank convincingly with an 8-3 result. Future fixtures include the Israeli Embassy and first division teams from the northern and southern parts of the island, all of which is good solid experience for the players.

The skiers are due to compete in the Near Eastern Forces Skiing (NEFSK) competition and we await the results in anticipation.

Having settled down well into our tour in Cyprus, this represents the first opportunity for Normandy Squadron to formally introduce itself to the wider environment of UNIFICYP. Our arrival in Nicosia in early December was cushioned by a comprehensive and informative handover by 176 (Abu Klea) Battery RA, despite their own relatively recent move to the City. This handover was complemented by the truly kind and multi-national welcome we received within the UNIFICYP community, both from the Headquarters and the Contingents alongside us.

Normandy Squadron was formed this year out of two Tank Squadrons, and owes its name to the memory of its past distinguished service in Northern France in the Second World War. It stands alongside Burma Squadron as one of the two Line Squadrons. Numbering 108 officers and men, the Squadron is divided into a Headquarters Troop and two Line Troops, and contributes a further Troop to UNIFICYP’s Force Reserve. Our dispositions are reflected in our area of responsibility, which takes us along the line from, in the west, our Regimental boundary with the Argentinian Contingent to Wolsley Barracks in the east. We have immediately recognised this as an interesting area, offering the varied aspects of rural, suburban and urban peace-keeping.

Normandy Squadron pose for a photograph beside DP B-40

**The Force Commander with the OC during his first visit to Normandy Squadron. Lt Richard Rawlins looks on.**

**A moment’s “pause” atop Pyramid Hill after lunch.**

**The ARGCON and 2 RTR football teams after a hard game.**

Our new environment is an interesting one. Service in the cause of peace out here in Cyprus requires an entirely different show of force for any Tank Squadron in comparison to their performance elsewhere. The challenging political situation here, and the busy local one, combine to offer us a great deal of interesting work over our six-month tour of duty. This new role in the service of peace is being embraced at every level by our soldiers, some of whom have served on the island before.

It is with this outlook that we introduce ourselves to all those involved here in Cyprus, and we look forward to the remainder of our tour.
Here are two rather charming articles on the UNFICYP Shooting Competition, the first an artistic commentary by the organizing Press Officer of AUSTRICPOL, Pol Sgt Derek Gough.

by Capt JS Carlanne

At 080615 B Feb 94, the storm had moved up into the Kyrenia mountains. Rain-bloated clouds swung listlessly eastwards above the plains and on into a colourless dawn. A small group of soldiers rolled order of a military prize-giving ceremony. It was a day that lasted for eight hours, but which had begun eight weeks previously, like many such events with a committee meeting and a lot of coffee. During the course of this meeting it was decided that Sector Two would run the ranges on the day and provide the administrative base for the event. The various adjudicating bodies were to be drawn from across UNFICYP in the hope of providing a wholly neutral system of arbitration.

A victorious Sector Four team captain.

The high degree of preparation by the competing teams only began apparent on the day of the event. The competitors dealt admirably with often quite difficult conditions to demonstrate a high standard of shooting competence.

Sector One's rifle team gave a particularly good account of themselves with their FN rifles. AUSTRICPOL came a most commendable second in the Pistol competition. The day, however, went to the Sector Four team, winning every competition except the Falling Plate, which was taken from them in the final by Sector Two.

The UNFICYP Shooting Competition was a day made memorable by contrast. It was a day born into the wreckage of a storm that ended in the drilled UN MPs in action.

Yet despite their justifiable pride in their prowess, the high point for the competitors must have been the shared experience of a truly multi-national competition.

by Pol Sgt Derek Gough

On Tuesday 8 February, the UNFICYP Shooting Competition took place in the UN Protected Area, Nicosia region. The Australian Civilian Police entering a four-man team comprising Paul Spiers (coach), George Argenti, Dale Brown, Derek Gough and Wayne Pyke.

In Australia, Federal Police Officers are armed with .38 calibre revolvers, but in Cyprus, AUSTRICPOL members are unarmed: in consequence, the first problem our team had was to borrow some sidearms! Fortunately, the Military Police came to the rescue with the loan of some 9mm Browning automatics, which had once belonged to the Canadian Contingent. Grateful as we were, the age of these weapons soon gave cause for some concern, due to their inaccuracy and unreliability: however, the only other suitable alternative were boomersangs.

This "A" team pose with the coach. "Get off me foot, Brownie!"

Three of the team members had never even seen a 9mm Browning before, let alone fired one, but undaunted, stripping, cleaning and stoppages were soon organised by the team coach (who had once seen someone strip one), and was the only team member to have actually used one before (Vietnam 1969... was that really a quarter century ago?). However, the Aussie Police, always 'equal to the task', were soon stripping and cleaning their weapons as if they had been born with them. ("You've got a spring thing left over, George!... "Must be a spare one mate.")

Practice shoots were then held to familiarise members with the weapons and after a few days, individual scores in both 'snap' and 'deliberate' shoots were more than reasonable and expectations were high. However, constant "stoppages" due to weak magazine springs were quite a worry, especially in the timed shoots. Unfortunately, 2 RTT came to the rescue on the day of the competition, by loaning us some newer magazines, and that excuse sadly faded.

Date and George "make their day!"

AUSTRICPOL came a good second with our best shot, Dale Brown, equalling the individual top score in the whole competition. A superb effort, given that he had never fired a Browning before and the fact that the Australian soldier he tied with used a 'state of the art' GLOCK.

The coach pensively examines the targets, with George and Dale wondering why so many bullets were blanks...?

Of course, being able to boast that Aussie Coppers can outshoot all others in UNFICYP would have been nice, but the fact that we outshot the best that the British, the Argentinians, the Force Reserve and the Military Police could offer, and that we gave the Australians a real fright, was more than satisfying. And, didn't we let them know about it!
Our party arrived on the island on 8 December. We were welcomed by the RSM, who informed us how busy we were going to be, and that some of us would be out on the line that very evening… This was going to be a different kind of roller coaster ride! We soon learnt that the watch words for the next few weeks were “remain flexible”.

I am part of the Permanent Force Reserve, based at the site of the Nicosia International Airport which came under UNFICYP control during the 1974 events. Along with a section of Argentinian and Australian soldiers, we form, as the name suggests, a reserve force for the different sectors on the island. We provide mobile patrols for the areas where the sectors cannot fulfil the tasks themselves.

Initially, there was some apprehension about working alongside soldiers of different nationalities. However, after very little time, it was plain to see the enthusiasm amongst the Brits, the Argentinians and the Australians, and how keen everyone was to get on and about more often than the guys who have to man the line. It is a very beautiful island, and both sides offer their own unique culture and humour. I have also been lucky enough to see quite a lot of Cyprus, including a look from the air provided by the AAC.

Everyone seems to be approaching the job with a lot of enthusiasm now, and I look forward to the remainder of my tour in Cyprus. To sum it all up, putting on the blue beret certainly is an experience!

We are quite fortunate because by providing mobile patrols on the island, we are able to get out and about in the fresh air, which works very well, and I personally am enjoying the experience.

On Thursday 10 February 1994, the UN MP Element held its monthly training day. The idea was to hone some basic police and military skills, whilst being introduced to others.

The whole unit took part and the day started at UN Flight with a safety brief on action to be taken at the scene of a helicopter crash, together with fire fighting instructions using the different equipment available. This led on to a unit level fire fighting demonstration at the UN MP HQ by Sgt Chris Leeson.

A lecture was given by Sgt Conway on the taking of photographs at traffic accidents, and was followed by instruction on first aid by Cpl Eric Levesque. After a break for lunch, the MiL Skills team tackled the obstacle course, while the remainder of the unit met up at AUSTCIVPOL’s Offices and Sgts’ Mess and got thumped at volleyball (3-0) before retiring to the bar for a well earned drink.

It is rumoured that while all this was going on, the Special Investigation Section played Cluedo!
The UNFICYP Military Skills Competition took place on 22 February 1994, organised by Sector Four.