ARGENTINA'S CONTINGENT ARRIVES IN CYPRUS

The Force Commander welcomes Commander ARGCON, Lt Col J Durante, to Headquarters UNICYP. After the departure of the Canadians from UNIFCYP, HQ UN New York sought a replacement unit from member states. Argentina agreed to provide a Battalion of approximately 850 all ranks. A reception party paid a short visit to UNIFCYP during August, and on 25 September, the first 73 members of ARGCON arrived, followed by 150 men on 6 October and the remainder on 16 October. Sector One, as they will be called, have taken over the western part of the Buffer Zone from 176 Battery, 39 Regt, which was previously the responsibility of the Danish Contingent. Their Battalion Headquarters is located at Skouniotissa. The Commanding Officer is Lt Col Juan Manuel Durante. This Battalion is a composite unit with Officers, NCOs and men drawn from the Army, Air Force and Navy. All of them are professional soldiers. The Argentinean Armoured Forces are currently participating in peace-keeping missions in different parts of the world with Military Observers in the Middle East, Central America, Angola, Western Sahara and Cambodia. It also has a Battalion in Croatia and an Engineer Platoon in Kuwait with UNIKOM.

The Chief of Staff welcomes Lt Col J Durante and members of the Advance Party to Cyprus.

AUSCON REMEMBERS 14 AUGUST 1974

The 14 August is a day on which the members of the Austrian Contingent pay a yearly tribute to their fallen comrades. During the 1974 troubles, four members of AUSCON were travelling in their Landrover on their way to Gosh, a Turkish Cypriot village on the old Larnaca-Nicosia Road. When fighting resumed between the opposing forces, the patrol was recalled to the Austrian HQ and on their way back, they heard Turkish high flying reconnaissance aircraft overhead, followed by low flying fighter jets. The four men abandoned their Landrover and ran for cover. Lt Izy, Sgt Deconbe and Cpl Isaak found shelter under a tree, and L/Cpl Satterlacker managed to take cover under a large rock. Flattening himself to the ground, L/Cpl Satterlacker heard an explosion behind him, followed by bursting napalm which missed him by inches and several gun shots. L/Cpl Satterlacker turned back and discovered that his three comrades had been killed in the attack. Every year, a Service takes place at the memorial in Gosh, which is placed just a few feet away from where Lt Izy, Sgt Deconbe and Cpl Isaak lost their lives in the service of peace.

The Blue Beret

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Front Cover
Commander ARGCON
by WO2 Phil Cadman

EDITORIAL

In this edition of the Blue Beret, we are happy to welcome the new Argentine Contingent to UNICYP. It is, however, with regret that this month we see the departure of Support Regiment. After nearly 17 years of devoted service to the Force, UNICYP will undoubtedly feel their loss.

It is noticeable in this issue also that a sizeable portion of the magazine has been devoted to the women in UNIFCYP, both military and police. This is our way of recognising the contribution women have and continue to make to the Force.

As with the change in seasons, the changes within UNIFCYP will bring new situations and conditions. Every change creates opportunities, and UNIFCYP as a whole should endeavour to carry on the important task entrusted to them by the world community.

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Farewell to Kidcon

By Maj J Ingham

One of the most popular facilities for families based in the UNPA has been the Nicosia Youth Club, colloquially known as "Kidcon". The Club has operated from its excellent base in St Michael's School for a number of years, latterly under the capable direction of WO2 (SOMS) Harry Lomas, the Master Chef in Support Regiment. In its heyday the Club has had as many as 130 active members - and almost as many happy UN families!

Sadly, as the BRITECON drawdown and departure of other contingents have taken hold, the members have dwindled over the past year. However, the enthusiasm of those youngsters remaining has never diminished, which is testimony to the leadership of Harry Lomas and his hard working team of volunteer helpers. Circumstances have dictated the recent closure of the Club, but no-one should think that the final demise was a quiet affair - far from it.

Ord Sup Det Fire Visit for the Junior Fire Fighting Course - July 1993

The programme itself may have been based on previous successes, there were two unknown factors introduced from outside. Each year, the BFC Youth Service employs a number of SVs (Summer Season Volunteers) from the UK who provide full-time continuity and leadership for the youngsters during the working day. This year, the Nicosia Club was fortunate to have the services of Caroline Jackson, an enthusiastic Lancashire lass from Blackpool, and Terri Monaghan, an experienced youth worker already on island.

The final thrash in the Club before it closed its doors at the end of an era was a BBQ and disco - and what an all singing and dancing affair it turned out to be. Altogether it was a memorable night, and a tribute to both the enthusiasm of the organisers and the amazing energy of the youngsters present.

And so to Troodos. The culmination of every summer's programme is the series of adventure camps run by the BFC Youth Service. This year, the venue was the Troodos mountains where a full programme of activities ran from pre-breakfast to the end of the night. With such a variety of age groups and activities it is difficult to mention the full range of fun. Suffice it to say that with 22 shooting, archery, rock climbing, mountain biking, swimming, arts and crafts, and a circus workshop, there was more than enough to occupy even the most demanding. Add to all this a full evening quiz games, bingo, discos and a new games workshop and readers will realize just how much of a strain was placed on the administration. That things ran (fairly) smoothly, and everyone had plenty of excellent food, was once again tribute to the many helpers and professional staff, headed by Billy Brockes, the Youth Service Officer. Well done all, you deserve an accolade.

The entire programme throughout the holidays was a resounding success and a fitting end to the Nicosia Youth Club. When Harry Lomas and his volunteer helpers closed the Club doors for the last time, no doubt they looked inside the happy memories of all those who were members of Kidcon over the years. From them, and the grateful parents too, we can only offer a huge vote of thanks for a job very well done.

In 1977, the Sqn’s role was formalized under the wing of the then newly formed Support Regiment. It has been in this form that the remainder of the Sqn’s time has been spent with UNFICYP.

During its 28 years, the Sqn has driven some 65 types of vehicle ranging from the AEC 10 tonner, known to all as “the knocker”, to a VW hearses. At one time it was reputed to hold a total of 45 staff cars - nearly one for every two men - in addition to all its other task vehicles.

A common factor throughout the years has been the collection of sewage by the famous “UGGIE” wagons. A number of notable incidents have occurred which have led at times to the UGGIE drivers living alone and outside. Nobody volunteers to help these luckless souls when they break down - and can you blame them?

The Sqn has adapted its vehicles in many ways; none more ingenious than on 16 March 1987 when Dvrs Townsend and Jones saw smoke rising from the Frangiorgio Hotel in Nicosia. Without regard for their own safety, they manoeuvred their vehicle up to the hotel to facilitate the escape of civilians trapped inside.

No article on the Tpt Sqn would be complete without mention of those who over the years have suffered serious injuries and the families of the people who have died providing a service towards peace with the UN in Cyprus. As the Sqn stood down from its operational role on 15 October, it was these people who were at the forefront of our minds.
56 (OLPHERTS) HEADQUARTERS BATTERY
ROYAL ARTILLERY

by Capt Hilary Long

56 (Olpherts) Headquarters Battery is the most varied sub unit in 39 Regiment Royal Artillery on account of the wide mix of cap badges, trades and tasks, brought together under one command. The departments and branches in 56 Battery work side by side to support the Line Batteries and to provide the command and control for Sector Two's operations and liaison with Headquarters UNIFICYSP. The Battery also supplies men for the Sector's Force Reserve platoon. It is commanded by Major Mark Wentworth, who is also the Operations Officer for Sector Two.

56 Battery has its origins in India as 5th Company 3rd Battalion Bengal Artillery, formed on 2 June 1786. The honour title 'Olphts' was given to the Battery on 19 October 1966 in commemoration of Captain Olpherts, who commanded the Battery during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. During the first Relief of Lucknow, Captain Olpherts, or 'Half Fire Jack' as he was known, won the Victoria Cross for conspicuous gallantry. He charged the enemy on horseback and captured two rebel guns which were pouring fire onto the flanks of the advancing forces.

Sgt Michael Craddock, one of the climbing instructors, demonstrates a perfect pose.

The Battery, over the course of its history, has served in many wars, campaigns and locations. For the latest of these, the tour with UNIFICYSP, the Battery deployed with 97 men and women. If one speaks to a soldier in 56 Battery he may be called Gunner, Private, Driver, or Craftsman as there are many attached personnel from other Corps. These are the Adjutant General's Corps, the Royal Logistic Corps (Catering) and (Supply), the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Royal Signals and the Army Physical Training Corps.

Whilst in Cyprus, 39 Regiment's Headquarters Battery operates from several locations. Wolseley Barracks and the Ledra Palace Hotel are home to the Regimental Headquarters and the Operations Branch, including the Humanitarian Team. St David's Camp is the Logistic Element's base, or more familiarly, the Quartermaster's Department. The Battery also includes the Adventure Training Team who are based in Dhekelia.

ST DAVID'S CAMP - SECTOR TWO

by Maj Iain MacPherson

How sweet it all must have seemed approximately 24 months ago when St David's Camp was the home of the Welsh Gunners. Again it is the home of Gunners, but much water has passed under the bridge in the meantime.

Yet another chapter in the long history of St David's Camp is in the making. It has been home to refugees, hospital patients, cavalry, infantry and armoured units and gunners. Now it is home to the logistic hub of Sector Two.

Up to the arrival of ARGCON, much appreciated support was provided to the Kokkinia enclave in the extreme west, down through Xeros (and what was the DANCOR area), embracing Skouriotissa, the Box Factory and into Nicosia City (via the Ledra Palace Hotel/Wolseley Barracks complex) including the various Line Houses, OPs and patrols (many of which are of CANCON origin).

In the meantime, Sector "West" has been reshaped into Sector One under ARGCON and Sector Two under BRITCON - the Logistic Liaison Officers have risen to the challenge and taken part in the making of yet more history.

The Operations Branch is open all day for IMREPS, FIREEPS, STREPS, SHOTREPS, SEAREPS and radio checks. Roger Out.
**AUSCON SPORTS’ CLUB SUMMER FAIR**

On Saturday 21 August 1993, AUSCON held its traditional AUSCON Sports’ Club (ASC) Summer Fair.

Intensive preparations were made for many of the ASC’s activities, with special attractions such as the football wall, the tennis skills’ challenge, a darts stall, a bicycle trial, an airgun shooting range and many more. Visitors were able to test their skills and talent and compete for three prizes at each stall.

In addition to the competitions for the more “sporty” types, everybody had a chance to win at the big raffle in the evening, with top prizes ranging from an air ticket to a mountain bike. At 8.30 p.m., the grand draw took place and the lucky winner was WO2 Schöngruber from AUSCON’s Humanitarian Branch who was presented with the first prize, donated by an Austrian travel agent. However, since the ticket was Vienna-Larnaca-Vienna, WO Schöngruber is now considering who the lucky person to spend a holiday in Cyprus will be!

The profit netted during the evening will be used for the acquisition of new sports equipment for the Club.

Mr Paul Kavanagh and his advisers on a tour through Camp Duke Leopold V.

Although a few came well prepared (look at Maj Feltner (right) who seems to have purchased raffle tickets for the whole of 1 Coy!).

The Chief of Staff kicks off.

Sgt Kerschberger, mastering the challenge of the bicycle trial.

A single ticket won the first prize!

Sector Four’s DCO, Lt Col Wolfgang Wildberger, President of the ASC, pulls away on his cigar as he is honoured by...

The Opa Branch boys, who perform the highlight of the evening, a satirical version of the song “Lilly Marlene”.

SoO, Maj Pöcher, during his fourth briefing of the day....

The band, playing for goulash and a beer in Athienou.

**A RECORD NUMBER OF VISITORS TO AUSCON**

by WO2 Peter Stickler

Either the Tyrol has been flooded with German tourists and visiting Cyprus was a convenient method of getting out of their way, or (as a lot of people suspect) the 30-odd Tyroleans in Sector Four requested some auxiliaries from back home. For those of you unfamiliar with Austria, the “Tyrol” is one of the smallest provinces in the west of Austria, famous for its mountains.

If the party must have been the recce troop! One week later, the descendants of Andreas Hofer invaded Camp Izy. (Andreas Hofer was one of the more famous Tyroleans who played a large part in the French resistance, and every Tyrolean likes the idea of being one of his descendants!) We are now talking about a group of 50 odd visitors, members of the “Kameradschaftsbund”, an Austrian organisation of retired servicemen. Their arrival coincided with the arrival of approximately 35 members of the Innsbruck-Saga brass band, complete with traditional costume.

Fieldpostmaster Meischuber, to the right of the counter, introduces his office to the visitors.

WO1 Baumgartner, AUSCON’s HAM radio operator, explains to LH Partl how he keeps in touch with Innsbruck, the capital of the Tyrol.

With such a crowd, five different groups were given briefings, alternating with a shuttle service to OPT A-20. This gave them a first-hand impression of the soldiers’ living conditions, with goulash from the field kitchen, draught beer and the band playing tunes fresh from the Tyrolean mountains. Camp Izy thus provided an atmosphere not unlike that of Austria, which made the whole event something to be remembered, not only by AUSCON, but - we hope - by the visitors as well.

And 92 visitors from one and the same province within one week must be a record!
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THE HUMANITARIAN TEAM, SECTOR TWO

by Sgt Paul Judd

The Sector Two Humanitarian Team is made up of seven members. Capt Geordie Oder is the Senior Humanitarian Officer and is in overall charge of both the humanitarian and economic matters in the Reg's area. One of his major tasks is the Long Northwind Patrol to Kormakiti. This is a convoy that delivers food and humanitarian aid every fortnight to the Maronite communities and Greek Cypriots who live in the North.

Up until the handover to ARGCON, the area had been vast, stretching from Kokkinia to Nicosia. From Kokkinia to Skouriotissa, Capt Sigmund Uray, UNMO, and S/Sgt Mick Wheatbread dealt with any problems that occurred. The main task in this area was to monitor and repair the water pipes that run across the Buffer Zone.

Skouriotissa to B-28 was under the watchful eye of WO2 Jim Rickets, the Farming Warrant Officer and Sgt Paul Judd, who in the main looked after the problems of the local farming community.

Finally, the area of the City of Nicosia was monitored by Capt Thomas Starling, UNMO, and S/Sgt Ade Scarborough, with a variety of tasks from arranging bi-communal meetings to teaching engineers to fix a broken sewage pipe.

Part of the farming side of the job involved attending village meetings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. These gave the farmers an opportunity to speak about their problems and to obtain various types of passes and permits as required. The meetings, however, would not have been such a success if it were not for the local village interpreters who turned up every week.

As a way of saying thank you to the interpreters, a barbecue was held at St David's Church to which they, the muktar from each village and some of the local farmers were invited. It was a great success and enjoyed by all.

The rural area has now been handed on to the Argentinian Humanitarian Team, and the team from 39 Regiment will now focus on the new Sector Two area in Nicosia and the surrounding countryside in the Buffer Zone.

THE CRAFTYMAN'S ARMS

by Lt Colin McClean

The history of the Craftyman's Arms is steeped in mystery. The earliest reference found to date being an article in Blue Beret magazine dated 7 August 1968. I quote: "Besides working and playing hard, social life is not too bad either. The REME have their own club called the Craftyman's Arms, run by themselves. The profit made from her sales is used to present each soldier at the end of his tour with a pewter tankard, engraved with his name and UN badge, as a memento of his happy, hardworking tour at UNFICYP Workshop REME."

In time, the tankard has been replaced by an UNFICYP Workshop plaque and the method of presentation now involves a ceremony of screeched readings and ritual cleansing in ice cold water. It is a shame that the "Crafties" closes at the end of October, although it is hoped that much of the collected memorabilia from the tankards will find homes in similar REME establishments around the world.

AUSCON GOES INTERNATIONAL

With the restructuring of UNFICYP, the Austrian Contingent has taken over part of the area once under the administration of the Canadian Sector. To assist in their mission, Sector Four (as the Austrian Sector is now called) has been allocated the services of two Hungarian and two Irish Officers who will act as United Nations Military Observers (UNMOs) in their area of operation.

The two Hungarian UNMOs are Maj Ughy, who is Commander HUNCON, and Maj Udvardy. Back in Hungary, Maj Ughy holds the post of Chief Operations Officer of the General Staff, and Maj Udvardy is an instructor at the Staff College for NBC Affairs. For both of them, Cyprus is a very new experience but, being the professionals they are, they have no problems adapting to the UN environment.

From Ireland, we have Capt Liam O'Carroll, who has spent the last five years as Operations Officer on the border between Northern and Southern Ireland, and who has previously served with UNFIL in Lebanon. Capt Philip Cotter, Adjutant at the Irish Military College, found life in Athienou different to his previous posting in UNFIL, but nevertheless, his experience in the Middle East will undoubtedly help AUSCON in the future.

The initial period of intensive training was too brief for all of these officers to brush up their rudimentary knowledge of the German tongue in time to deal with the Austrian duty officers. The UNMOs now work in two internationally manned teams involving main liaison and resupply tasks to the Karpas area.

Sector Four speaks for the whole of UNFICYP when welcoming the UNMOs to this mission, and wishes them an enjoyable and worthwhile tour.

UNFICYP MILITARY POLICE ELEMENT REVIEW OF THE LAST TEN MONTHS

The past ten months have seen a number of considerable changes affecting the Military Police contribution to UNFICYP. Due to the withdrawal of the Canadians, Danes, Finns and more recently the Swedes, the unit has gone from a Company of 56 personnel to an Element of 23 subject to the arrival of six Argentinian MPs and the return of four Canadian MPs. This manpower reduction has necessitated the closure of our outlying detachments at Xeros, Famagusta and Larnaka. Our limited manpower resources are now consolidated within the UNPA, which enables us to maintain proactive policing of these areas with daily long range patrols.

As we approach the end of the island's main tourist season, 1 November sees the end of the permanent manning of the Ayia Napa Detachment. This four-man section of MPs has enjoyed an excellent relationship with the local CYPOL and establishment owners since the detachment opened in April this year. The spin-off from this, together with the greatly enhanced assistance from our 'Red Cap' RMP colleagues from SBA Dhekelia who have been forming joint UN MP/RMP patrols, has seen fewer incidents involving UNFICYP personnel compared with previous years. Although the Detachment building which is situated around the main town will not be permanently manned, it is planned to dispatch UN MP patrols to Ayia Napa from Nicosia at weekends over the winter months.

The withdrawal of the last Finnish MP (WOJ Jukka Valling), the last Swedish MP (Capt Stefan Nocksten) and (who was thought to be) the last Canadian MP (Sgt Gary Lalonde)
POLICEMEN - IN THE SERVICE OF PEACE

by Ronald Krantz and Derek Gough

POLICE INSPECTOR

POLICE SERGEANT LENA BENGTSSON

POLICE SERGEANT ANN-JULIE LINDBLAD

POLICE SERGEANT MELITA ZIELONKO

POLICE STATION SERGEANT ANNE DELLACA

POLICE SERGEANT SHARON McTAVISH

POLICE INSPECTOR ANN LINDBERG

POLICE SERGEANT MARIANNE PALSSON

SWEDISH CIVILIAN POLICE

AUSTRIAN CIVILIAN POLICE

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"March on the Ladies" is a cry not often heard, but on this occasion, it is fitting. So much is written about the men of UNFICYP in the Blue Beret that it is time to focus on the women who come to redress the balance, or at least, that is what I’ve been told by the ladies.

In numerical terms, the percentage of ladies in the British Army is about 3%. Support Regiment, however, has a somewhat higher ratio - for which we count ourselves fortunate. A quick run through the array of jobs carried out by our girls shows their many talents.

Centre is Sgt Marion Gillies QARANC. Marion is a registered general nurse and a familiar figure as she goes about her duty as the practice manager. Her wide ranging job includes the smooth running of the practice administration as well as the care of medical supplies, liaison with Sector medical teams and coordination of support from island-wide medical establishments. In her limited spare time, Marion is working towards a University Diploma Course with a view to becoming a social worker in the future.

Angela

Heading our contingent of ladies is Col Angela Curran RAMC, who is the recently arrived Chief Medical Officer for UNFICYP. Angela has been an Army Doctor for 19 years, during which time she has served in Cyprus, Berlin and SHAPE (Brussels) in addition to spending 12 years at the Guards Depot, Hereford. When not working to keep us all in peak trim, Angela divides her leisure time between bird watching, animal conservation and an interest in ballet and art.

Donna

No account of life in a unit can ignore the fact that an army marches on its stomach - and no group marches on its stomach more than the WOS' and Sgt's Mess! It is here, behind the scenes, that we find Sgt Donna Grosevonder NLC. She has the demanding task of keeping the Mess well fed and happy. Her job is as busy as the Mess itself, for in addition to the daily catering needs, there is a succession of social functions to test her culinary abilities, as well as keeping the accounts up to scratch. Surprisingly, Donna still finds time to keep herself trim by running, cycling, swimming and doing aerobics.

Regiment's headquarters is Cpl Jayne Hurrell AGC. The busy pace of a clerk's life here keeps her on her toes. Jayne's duties are mainly clerical, but we do know that she has been searching the unit computer records to find "Mr Right". Before joining the army, Jayne had thoughts of joining the Police Force, so if you are under 6' tall, don't apply! Not content with this quest, Jayne keeps an eye on her curves by working out regularly at "Perfect Bodies" gym. What more can we say?

Vanessa

Next door again is the British Forces Post Office, from where all British mail starts its journey around the globe. In here, our two ladies are Ptes Vanessa Bowes and Donna Cockerill. Although these two actually live in Dhekelia, they spend their working days with

Next door to the RHO, we find the cheerful face of Cpl Sara Crampton who beavers away on all our behalfs in the Unit Admin Office.

Richardson who works a 24 hr shift to maintain the essential communications for the Ops Centre staff. Here can be a hectic day's work. Both of our signalers include weight training and sunbathing amongst their interests. Carole also collects model dragons, but really we think that just an excuse to seek out a handsome St George!

Carole

From one form of communication to another. Two more of our ladies work in 644 (UNFICYP) Sig Tp. LCpl Carole Lambert mans (sorry about the pun) a shift with the COMM CEN at Blue Beret Camp where she is responsible for processing signal traffic and facsimile documents. This calls for a practised eye and accuracy - a responsible job if ever there was one. Nearby in the nerve centre of all UNFICYP operations, the JOC, we find Cpl Helen Richardson who works a 24 hr shift to maintain the essential communications for the Ops Centre staff. Here can be a hectic day's work. Both of our signalers include weight training and sunbathing amongst their interests. Carole also collects model dragons, but really we think that just an excuse to seek out a handsome St George!

Kathleen

Finally in our trip around the unit we arrive at the hangar of 66 (UNFICYP) Tpt Sqn to find Cpl Kathleen Keenan. Kathleen is a Section Commander, whose prime responsibility is to provide vehicles and drivers for the humanitarian relief of the Greek Cypriots in Northern Cyprus. These operations are carried out in conjunction with the Greek army and, at times, calls for the divergent skills of the diplomat and the professional soldier. It's demanding work but highly satisfying, and the results symbolise something that is good in UNFICYP's continuing efforts on the island.

Helen

UNFICYP. Their day starts at 6:00 am with the collection of other (male!) post office staff, followed by the mail from the Dhekelia Post Office. Our two intrepid drivers then make the journey to Nicosia. At the end of the day it is back to Dhekelia and the chance to relax until tomorrow. Donna enjoys letter writing (surprise, surprise), and the night life at Ayia Napa. Vanessa also likes letter writing (is it mandatory for posties?) and the booming night life of Napa, but justifies the excess by "beasting myself in the gym". Beasting or no, we could not live without the mail girls.
SUPPORT REGIMENT
MEDAL / DISBANDMENT PARADE

The sun goes down on Support Regiment