

The Blue Beret

February 2002



Moving From
Winter to Spring



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

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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 without 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 reach agreement to achieve progress, but UN personnel must be there to offer initiative, support and assistance in whatever form required.

Editorial

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Front and Back Covers:
Changing Seasons

Pyla – Not Just Another "Bump" in the Road

January saw the beginning of a UN-sponsored process in Cyprus that carries many hopes for the future. The culmination of years of preparations and delicate negotiations, the commencement of a road safety project within the mixed Buffer Zone village of Pyla was a breakthrough that some thought would never come, but which all have welcomed with fanfare and expectations of more ahead.

This unique project will construct road safety measures in front of the two village schools. The UN has long encouraged the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot authorities of this village to work together to engage in projects that could 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- to mid-1990s, several projects were successfully completed, including renovation of the two village coffee shops. However, no further joint undertakings had been possible since 1997, as the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot village administrations had been unable to agree on how to proceed with project work.

It was danger to village children that brought the administrations back to the table. A serious problem with traffic speed became very apparent in 1999, when cars, trucks and scooters were seen roaring past the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot primary schools

every day at a speed that could have threatened the lives of the youngsters walking to or from class. UNFICYP convened several meetings to discuss ways in which they could address this problem, through the construction of road humps ("sleeping policemen" or "speed bumps" for some countries), crossings and other measures.

Over the next two years, a range of sensitive questions arose, ranging from authority over the roadways, through to funding issues, employment of labour, direction of the project and languages used in plans. Other events in Pyla also affected the process. With each setback, UNFICYP continued dialogue with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot mukhtars (mayors) in order to try and find scope for negotiation.

UNDP/UNOPS greatly assisted the discussions by granting funding for the project, to be undertaken by a joint team of local Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot workers, under two foremen. Ingenuity and persistence were required on all sides, and were provided to

overcome problems. When a question arose about the origin of electricity to power the flashing lights, the solution was found – the lights would use solar power, which was available to both sides and under the authority of neither!

The work will be completed in Pyla by the end of February 2002. UNFICYP's warm congratulations are extended to both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot village leaders, and thanks are conveyed to UNDP/UNOPS for its general financial assistance. Discussions are now underway concerning other joint initiatives that could co-operatively benefit all of Pyla's citizens.

Driving may be slowing down in Pyla – but with ongoing will and commitment, progress appears to be moving fast!



Talks recess until 1 March

Following their 19 February meeting, the direct talks between the Greek Cypriot leader, H.E. Mr. Glafcos Clerides, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, H.E. Mr. Rauf Denktash, 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. Alvaro 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 to 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.

Mouflon Meanderings

There's good news for Cyprus's well-known wildlife symbol: 145 moufflon (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. Moufflon were counted between the Xeros river patrol track crossing near OP17 and in the vicinity of the Limnitis 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 moufflon was 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 Stefanik 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 Stefanik.

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

Shapper 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, departed 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 Spr. 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 in the troop houses and 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 and 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



Members of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers, including Spr. Sharad (right, kneeling) and LCpl. Rudra (right, standing), pose with their traditional kukri, or curved knife

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. The Detachment is also enjoying the opportunity for adventure training, including a much-appreciated day out on the slopes of Mount Olympus.

"It's a small island, but there's a lot to explore," says LCpl. Rudra, who is also on his second tour here. He notes that Cyprus's location makes it an ideal place for travel to countries like Egypt. The unit also enjoys discovering Mediterranean culture and food, such as the delicious meze.

As for the weather this month, they say it's now very similar to that of Nepal – making them feel right at home!

Stop in the Name of Love Just How Important is Valentine's Day?

By Charlotte Mortensen

The Blue Beret decided, just for fun, to conduct a small 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 some nationalities 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 romance might warm me up. But lo 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 find a South 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 she probably shouldn't expect any from 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 gentler but similar: "I'm married, so the day doesn't mean anything to me, but I'm sure that it seems a lot more important to the young". Hmm, 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 time to actually have a partner and it's a great chance to let your partner know what you feel for her", he said. Now, that's more like it. At least it sounded like love and romance. Premature, I'm afraid, as he confused being helpful with being truthful by saying: "In general, men in the army are very unromantic". You're telling me?

Not ready to give up that easily, 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 commercialised – it takes away from the real meaning", he said sternly. Hmm, that should kill the romance then. The woman, looking a bit more "dreamy" and "starry-eyed" said: "I like Valentine's Day and I love the chocolate". Yeah well, so do I, but does that mean I'll be getting any? Doesn't seem likely, 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, though, that if I had someone close to me, then why not?" said one (male) colleague knowingly (perhaps longingly). "It's better not to love than to be loved at all – saves you a lot of trouble". In similar melancholic vein, a young, attractive, single woman said: "I actually think the day is a bit sad; it just reminds me of the fact that I have no-one to celebrate it with". Go figure!

In searching 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 unscientific survey on Valentine's Day in UNFICYP, I must admit that things could do with a little brightening up. Although 14 February will be long gone and over when you read this, it's NOT TOO LATE for that special someone you live with, you work with, you love. Showing someone you appreciate them is the true spirit of Valentine. So how about going out right now and getting some flowers, chocolates, even a card, and giving them to someone whose day you want to brighten?

Have a well-deserved wonderful day!

The History 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 romance. St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition.

The Catholic church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred. One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men – his crop of potential soldiers. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered him put to death. Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured.

According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first "Valentine" greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that Valentine fell in love with a young girl, who 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 Valentine 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. Seven members of the "Bugs" Moran gang were machine-gunned against a garage wall by rival gang members posing as police officers. The massacre was 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 24 January by the Commander British Forces Air Vice Marshall 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 Roulement Battalion during their six-month tours of duty in Cyprus.

Although Margaret's job is not easily defined, she has monitored and enhanced the welfare of approximately 400 British and Dutch troops, showing selfless commitment to the continued welfare of the soldiers.

Warrant Officer Class Two Anthony David King, 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 Olara A. Otunnu

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. That treaty is the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

The problem of child soldiers is immense and has been growing: there are currently estimated to be more than 300,000 children under 18 used as combatants, camp labourers, sex slaves, and runners in more than 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 globe. Once in force, this treaty will be a valuable tool for exerting pressure on states and rebel movements that engage in 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 from schools or refugee camps, risking beatings or death if they attempt to escape, become at times not only victims but also perpetrators. And once childhood is snatched from them, they are cut off from their normal development, education and human relationships. Devastated by suffering and hardened against the suffering of others, these children require psycho-social rehabilitation, education and economic opportunities within their communities.

There are 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 devastated economies take their toll on children as well as adults. 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 and rebel groups that condone the use of children will face the consequences from the international community.

As the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, I have talked with many child soldiers in many different parts of the world. These children have recounted to me the committing of atrocities, of being forced to kill their

friends as proof of loyalty to their captors. Their nightmares never leave them, but they dream of returning to normal life. The treaty will help them achieve that dream. Not only does it outlaw the use of child soldiers, but it urges signatories to allocate the necessary resources for their rehabilitation and reintegration. It is not enough to demand that a child disarm; we must break the cycle of violence. A former child soldier must be given education, training and psycho-social treatment. It is in the interest of the international community to commit far greater resources to this goal. A society cannot make the transition to stability unless its children – its very future – are given hope, dignity and respect.

But how can we ensure that the provisions of this treaty are translated into reality on the ground? Because most state and non-state abusers of children seek legitimacy in the eyes of the world. Those that are engaged in struggles for political power know that their future status depends in part on broad acceptance by the international community. They are often interested in the potential of future financial assistance. And, in this age of global interdependence and communication, even the remotest armed groups know that the glare of scrutiny and condemnation is not far away. With better monitoring and reporting on the conduct of armed groups, we can ensure that no child is left behind with fighting forces.

February 12 will be one of those magical days when the international community will acquire the tools for the protection of the world's children. The basket of the carrots of financial aid and legitimacy, together with the new stick of this protocol and world opprobrium, mean that it is within our grasp to eradicate the use of

child soldiers for the first time in history. This treaty was negotiated for more than six years by the entire international community and was adopted by consensus. Now we must seize the moment. I am calling on all parties and organisations, from the United Nations Security Council to the European Union and other regional organisations, to religious leaders, civil society groups and governments 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 monitoring compliance 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



By Ishamel A. Kamara, aged 18, Sierra Leone

Olympics in the Service of Children

By Kofi Annan

Nane and I are thrilled to be here [in Salt Lake City]. What could be better than attending one's first Olympics? I guess it must be attending one's first Olympics and winning one's first Olympic medal. But for those of us who are not in that league, the next best thing is having the privilege of meeting sports stars who are putting their talent in the service of children in need.

Personally, I can neither figure-skate, nor ski moguls, nor drive a luge, so in that sense my credentials in this gathering are rather modest. But I am someone who benefited in my youth – and still does benefit – from the wonderfully formative experience of sport; and who believes in every child's right to that experience – the right to play. That is why I am so happy to be with all of you today.

Olympic Aid is an initiative in the true spirit of the Olympic Movement: it is athlete-driven; it is voluntary; and it is clear in its goals – in this case, to increase the use of sport as a tool for development, health and peace. It is also in the true spirit of the United Nations: if there is one guiding motto that our Organisation must work under in the 21st century, it is to put people at the centre of everything we do.

Over the past few years, there has been a growing understanding of the role sports can play in changing peoples lives for the better – and those of young people in particular. We have seen examples of how sport can build self-esteem, leadership skills, community spirit, and bridges across ethnic or communal divides. We have seen how it can channel energies away from aggression or self-destruction, and into learning and self-motivation.

The International Olympic Committee has done some pioneering work in this field. Working together with the United Nations and several of its specialised agencies – such as the World Health Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation – the IOC has demonstrated that sport can play a role in improving the lives of not only individuals, but whole communities.

I am convinced that the time is right to build on that understanding: to encourage governments, development agencies and communities to think how sport can be included more systematically in plans to help children – particularly those who live in the midst of poverty, disease or conflict. That is why, last year, I appointed Adolf Ogi – the former president of Switzerland and a fine sportsman in his own right – as my Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace.

And that is why the work of Olympic Aid is so important. It is led by some of those who have made it to that most exclusive athletic club – the Olympians. These champions have chosen to use their position to help children who have never seen a ski slope or a basketball court. Some of them have never even seen a basketball.

The topics you will explore today remind us that the right to play belongs to everyone. And that by the same token, development, health and peace are not “spectator sports”. They require commitment and engagement by individuals, communities as well as governments.

I join Olympic Aid in encouraging you and others to examine the role of sport in social mobilisation for immunisation and against disease; in combating drug abuse and tobacco use; in preventing HIV/AIDS and removing the stigma surrounding those living with the virus.

I hope you will urge policy-makers to consider the relatively simple and inexpensive tonic of sport as a means to alleviate the trauma and suffering of refugees, and others

suffering from armed conflict; how it can contribute to peace-building, reconciliation and healing in post-conflict societies.

And I hope you will look at new ways to integrate sport in efforts to promote a sense of community; to encourage respect for the environment; to support formal and informal education and help individuals find their place in society – especially young women and girls. On that point, it is heartening indeed to know that so many of your volunteers in the field are young women. The objectives you are working towards reflect the major preoccupations of people everywhere.

They made up the agenda of the Millennium Summit – the biggest gathering of world leaders the world has seen, held at the United Nations in September 2000.

They formed the basis of the Millennium Declaration adopted on that occasion – a landmark document for the 21st century which gives us a blueprint for action to achieve freedom from fear, freedom from want, and protection of our resources.

They are included in the Convention on the Rights of the Child – the most widely and rapidly ratified human rights treaty in history, which specifically spells out the right of every child to play.

And they are topics that will be addressed when the United Nations General Assembly holds a Special Session on Children in May. The Session will agree on a plan of action that must spur the international community to take the steps needed to realise the rights of every child. It will bring together leaders from government and non-governmental organisations, as well as children and adolescents, in a model of wide participation and partnership. I do hope your voices will be heard there.

In short, my friends, the Olympic movement and the United Nations share the same fundamental goals: to ensure that every child should have the best possible start in life; that every child should receive a good-quality basic education; and that every child should have the opportunities to develop his or her full potential and contribute to his or her society in meaningful ways.

I know Olympic Aid is already doing some wonderful work on the ground to help meet those goals. I was struck by a comment from Bet, a young woman working as one of Olympic Aid's volunteer coaches in Angola – a country whose children have seen more war, displacement, poverty and disease than any of us will in a lifetime.

Bet coached young people in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons. Already after the first day of play in the Viana refugee camp, Bet wrote in her field notes [and I quote]: “I noticed a new air of confidence about them today as they walked around the camp. They are beginning to feel special – and like they are a part of something special.” I would suggest that once you have achieved that, you have already won half the battle.

The challenge before us now is to make every child feel part of something special. To encourage policy planners to think creatively about how they can use sport as a tool in their policies. To build partnerships among governments, civil society and the private sector to ensure the widest and most effective use possible of that tool.

For your part in that endeavour, I extend my sincere gratitude. And I am grateful that you have given this Olympic rookie such a moving and memorable experience to take back from his first Games. Thank you very much – and let the children play.



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 Síochána 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 police officers assigned to serve with the UN on a loan basis by Ireland and Australia. UNCIVPOL is not a domestic 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 1996/97, he commanded the Irish Contingent, which was then based in Sector 4, receiving the Force Commander's commendation for his contribution to bi-communal 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 Dherynia; John Lewis, who was 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 Nicosia: Mick "the wall" Galvin and his scorpy self (scorpy, meaning not always in a good mood, especially in the morning); Mick "the commando" Callan; Frank "Jameson" Kenniffick; Dave "the body" Sheedy; 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 Zucchini, 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", "Adiós Muchachos" and folk music like "Km 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 de las Camelias", 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.

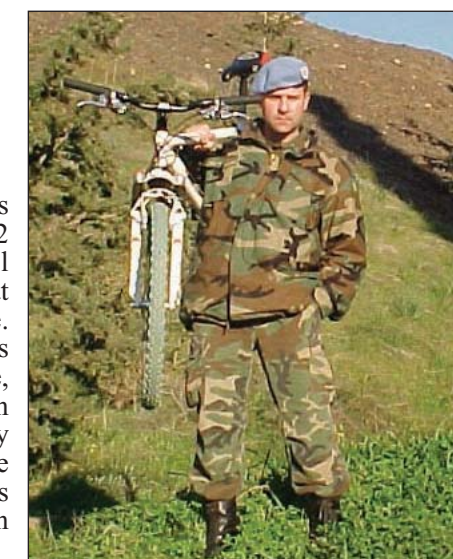


Vía Crucis Along the Buffer Zone, Sector 1

By Lt. Gutiérrez

On 26 January 2002, Sector 1 Chaplain Eduardo Castellanos began a bicycle Vía Crucis along Buffer Zone Sector 1 OP/PBs between Kokkina and the UNPA. Along the way, he stopped in each of the 15 OP/PBs for a mass service and prayers with the peacekeepers. Together, they prayed for peace and the cessation of conflicts in countries such as Cyprus, Iraq and Afghanistan, and also for the soldiers' relatives in mainland Argentina.

Chaplain Castellanos' Vía 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. Rain 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 Martín, who is today remembered by UNFICYP because Skouriotissa 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 wellknown 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, Erimi, Kantou, Kalavassos, Sotira, Lemba, 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).

Kisonerga, Pano Arodes, Episkopi, Sotira, Kalavassos, Palea Paphos and Kitium.



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 Kition and Amathus.

Art: geometric shaped pottery.

Establishment of Greek Cypriot Kingdom at Salamis.

Important monuments of this period: royal tombs at Salamis.



The Cypro-Achaic 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 Stassinos, the Cypriot 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 Cypriot kings: Evagoras of Salamis and Onesilos managed to unite the Cypriots.

Alexander the Great freed the island from the Persians (333) and Cyprus became part of his empire.



The Hellenistic Period – 320-30 BC

Antigonos 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 Kitium.

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 in Larnaca of Umm-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 Nicolaos (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 – 1489-1570/1 AD

Cyprus mainly used as a military post.

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 Nicolaos).

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 Ladocsi (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 super 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



- 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, punishing 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 magnanimous 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 Petrőczy 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-80-kg 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 147.5 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 Molnár 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!

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.

Soccer Match Challenge



