

# The Blue Beret

July 2002



A Helping Hand



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**PARIS BECKONS**

The fifth round of the direct talks has wrapped up in Nicosia with an announced pause "for evaluation, reflection and rest". The talks will resume on 27 August. However, the Secretary-General has invited Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash to meet with him in Paris on 6 September "to take stock and see if a course can be charted for the way ahead". Both have accepted.

Explaining the reason for the invitation, Special Adviser de Soto said it was obvious to all "that progress is not what it should be and this is a problem that needs to be analyzed and solved". He pointed out, "doubts have grown about the possibility that the two leaders have of reaching the goal of a comprehensive settlement, in a reasonable time limit, and with the methods they are using at present".

Back at the beginning of July, the fourth round of the talks wrapped up amidst expressions of concern at the lack of progress and hopes that the parties would show greater political will and an increased spirit of compromise in intensifying their efforts for a settlement.

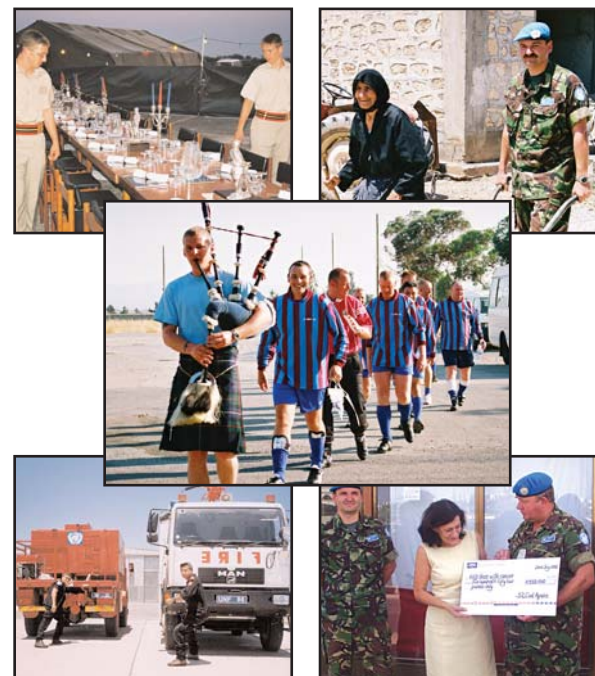
The Secretary-General will stop over in Paris in order to meet with the two leaders while en route back to New York from the Sustainable Development Summit in Johannesburg. This comes at a very busy time in his schedule since the General Assembly opens in New York the following week. It is yet another indication of the importance he invests in the ongoing effort to arrive at a Cyprus settlement.

**Editorial**

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**Front Cover:  
A Helping Hand**



**World Population Day -  
"Reducing Poverty, Improving Reproductive Health"**

To mark World Population Day on 11 July, the Secretary-General issued this special message:

The theme of this year's World Population Day, "Reducing Poverty, Improving Reproductive Health," focuses on the role of family planning, safe motherhood and the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the global fight against the squalor and despair that plague so many members of the human family.

Eight years ago, at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, the nations of the world committed themselves to the goal of providing universal access to reproductive health services by the year of 2015 as part of a larger package aimed at empowering women, promoting gender equality, slowing and eventually stabilizing population growth, and fostering sustainable development.

Since then, improved levels of schooling, higher survival rates of children, and better access to reproductive health services including voluntary family planning have helped to advance the Cairo agenda. Birth rates are dropping faster than expected in several large developing countries, and global population growth is slowing.

This virtuous circle in turn makes further progress possible. When individuals and couples are given a real choice, many decide to have smaller, healthier families and invest more in each child's future. And

because there are fewer dependents to support, the downturn in fertility translates into potential economic growth within a generation. East Asia took advantage of this demographic bonus in the 1980s. Other regions where poverty is widespread, such as sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, could enjoy the same benefits by putting in place economic and social policies that call for greater investments in health and education.

Even though global population growth is slowing, there will still be a billion more people in the developing world by 2015. And the most rapid growth is occurring in the world's least developed countries, where the population is expected to rise over the next 50 years from 658 million to 1.8 billion. Already, these countries are least able to provide basic services and are among the most severely challenged by hunger, HIV/AIDS, water scarcity and environmental degradation.

On this World Population Day, let us recognise reproductive health as one of the key tools in the wider battle against poverty. And let us resolve to mobilize the resources and the political will to work for reproductive health as a means to building a healthier, stronger, more prosperous human family.

**You're Invited.....**

*By Charlotte Mortensen*

I love to get invitations... to anything, anywhere, from anyone. But have you ever noticed just how differently invitations are phrased?

Yes, here I go again with the various language differences we all experience every day working in UNFICYP. I have touched upon this subject before in *The Blue Beret*, but my latest invitation (and on a personal note, I could do with a few more....!) made me realize that I haven't even come close to covering all the areas in which there is apparent misunderstanding. This is because many of us do not have English as our first language - although it has come to my attention that even some of the English native speakers don't really understand each other either.

On the invitation I mentioned above, someone had printed in the lower right-hand corner: "Planters". When I read it, the first vision that flashed through my mind was that of roasted peanuts (hmm, peanuts being served at a cocktail party - how fancy!). Then I realized that I would probably be the only one who knows that canned peanuts in America are called "Planters Peanuts".....

So, I thought about it a bit more, and after about two full seconds, I gave up and started my journey around the office to ask my more mature and experienced colleagues. And do you know - no one had a clue, but it wasn't for lack of guessing. "Dress green like a plant", "shorts", "something with short sleeves or is it long sleeves?" or maybe "it's a sit-down party where you will be planted at the tables" - **no one knew!** (It turns out that the phrase goes back to the colonial

days where the planters - tea and coffee farmers, for example - took a more relaxed approach to formal occasions and introduced the "no jacket" rule - just long-sleeved shirt and tie [and trousers]!)

And this is not the first time where I have been puzzled by dress code directions on an invitation. Shortly after joining UNFICYP last year, I received an invitation with the specification: best day dress (military), suit (civilian) - so you can guess my surprise when I realized that military men go to parties in DRESSES?! (Imagine my disappointment when I saw them all in military jackets and trousers.)

And another killer is: "Casual". Does anyone realize just how much bother this "freedom of choice" is? The men get all confused, not exactly knowing whether they should even be in uniform, or should they go very casual and just wear shorts. And think of the poor ladies - a nice long summer dress, shorts (no way!), or are T-shirts OK??

I've been to parties here where I've seen a huge difference in what women and men thought they were supposed to wear. One woman once came to an evening party in a beautiful black velvet, fall-off-the-shoulder dress, with her hair up high and glittering diamond earrings, whereas most of the others had taken on an entirely more relaxed approach, one even coming in jeans! We all know how out of place and stupid we feel when we don't fall in with the crowd, so what a relief it would be if invitations could be less formal and more descriptive? Or just more standardized.

And on that note, let me invite any of you who have experienced language barriers or language "what is this all about while in UNFICYP" to feel free to come around and give me a few examples - **jackets optional!!!**



# Don't Play With The Elements

## BASIC FIRE PREVENTION



- avoiding the use of hoses
- showering instead of taking baths
- never using a running tap when you can use a full basin instead
- using washing machines and dish-washers sparingly with only full loads, since both use vast amounts of water
- when washing the car, just clean windows, windscreens and lights - and again, do not use a hose

As well as being dry, Cyprus at the height of summer is obviously a very hot place. Fire is a serious risk. For soldiers stationed within the buffer zone, the biggest risk lies in the large tracts of dry grass and vegetation, which at this time of year is highly combustible.

The UNFICYP fire crew, led by Senior Fire Officer Paul Nadeem Qadir, fights an average of 70 to 80 serious fires every year. Fires start remarkably easily and take hold quickly, and so every effort should be made to pre-empt them wherever possible. Massive bush fires are a regular feature of summertime Cyprus. For instance, one fire on 11<sup>th</sup> June last blazed for over three hours and requiring a concerted effort by UN and local fire-fighters, as well as military and civilian assistance, to control.

Bush fires not only spread rapidly and are highly destructive - they are extremely hard to predict, and liable to encircle places they cannot burn through. While thus far, the available fire services have proved more than capable of containing fires as they arise, effective preventive measures are preferable. To this end UNFICYP welcomes any requests or inquiries concerning fire safety and prevention. Fire prevention and fire safety demonstrations are staged regularly, most recently for the UN Youth Club.

UNFICYP Fire Crew has just replaced its old UNF 95 fire engine, originally converted from a civilian ambulance, with a new white fire engine equipped for all likely disasters. Armed with a professional Godiva pump, the new engine, UNF 96, means UNFICYP Fire Crew's experienced professionals can deal with any emergency or rescue operation at top safety levels.

*Children undergoing a basic fire fighting course*



Although the importance of water preservation is a worldwide preoccupation, it is especially so in Cyprus, which has suffered severe periods of drought over the past few years. A fairly dry country, almost all of the island's rain falls in the winter months. Lately, there has been rather less precipitation than would be desirable.

Even with the modern dam systems - which have increased water storage capacity by more than 40 times in the last 40 years - the fact remains that this island of

*UNFICYP soldiers fighting a fire in the buffer zone*



over 9,000 square kilometres has only 10 square kilometres of standing water. This means supplies are often short, hence the ongoing campaign to save water.

Water conservation is a fairly simple business involving common sense and cooperation by everyone with access to the system. The rule is not to waste water in any way. This is best done by:

- making sure taps are turned off (a tap dripping once every second wastes three gallons of water every day)
- using waste water from the kitchen or the bath when watering the garden (do keep in mind, though, that water poured on the garden in the noontime heat is likely to evaporate before it can do the plants any good)

Dry grass and vegetation are the biggest single fire hazard in UNFICYP at this time. You can help prevent fires by following these simple rules:

### DON'T...

- Throw away glass materials, lit cigarettes or matches
- Smoke in areas other than those designated for smoking
- Use plastic bins in smoking areas, even alongside ashtrays
- Park your vehicle near grass or vegetation
- Leave your vehicle engine running
- Have barbecues, except in designated locations
- Leave your barbecue unattended or burning (use water or sand to damp the fire)
- Burn any confidential material (for all burning of sensitive material contact UNFICYP Fire HQ EXT 4453/4 UNPA)
- Start your patrol without at least four fire beaters in your patrol vehicle (also check your 500/700 grams dry powder fire extinguisher and medical kit)

And, when helping to fight a fire in the buffer zone, DON'T:

- Use water if electricity poles are involved in the fire (especially near UNFICYP Ops; use fire beaters or green tree branches)
- Risk your life to fight a fire; safety always comes first
- Fight fires alone; always attack the fire in groups
- Fight open-air fires up or down wind; always attack from a crosswind direction
- Forget when fighting fires that mines are present in the buffer zone
- Spread fire with your boots; wash them as you leave the area

*And, above all, remember the fire/emergency telephone number: 22-86-4777 (for radio callsigns, check with the Senior Fire Officer)*



*Out with the old - in with the new*

# The Cultural Heritage of Cyprus: Part IV

## Salamis - City Kingdom and Capital

*In our fourth article describing the cultural heritage sites of Cyprus, we visit Salamis, one of the richest archaeological sites on the island. It's also one of the most visually rewarding, with its Roman columns, baths and restored theatre. The site's history stretches back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC, with the city playing a leading role for centuries as a major trading centre and as the island's capital.*

*Today, its ruins - located about nine km north of Famagusta - are spread over a large forested area, and include a major necropolis from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, plus numerous structures from the later Roman and Byzantine periods, including a gymnasium, stadium, theatre, agora and basilicas.*

*This cutaway section shows how the Romans heated the bathing areas*



*Columns surrounding the athletes' exercise ground*



Salamis owes much of its historical prominence to its location on the northeast coast of Cyprus, where, backed by the fertile Mesaoria Plain, it was close to major eastern Mediterranean trading centres. The city's rather mythological beginnings centre on Tefkros (also known as Teucer), the son of King Telamon of the Greek island of Salamis. Banished from Salamis for failing to protect his half-brother, Ajax, in the Trojan War, Tefkros is said to have come to Cyprus around 1180 BC, establishing a settlement and giving it the name of his island home. His arrival would have reinforced the Mycenaean culture (the late Bronze Age civilization in Greece that Homer described in his poems), which Greek merchants had already brought to the island.

It is perhaps more certain that in the wake of the 1075 BC earthquake that led to the abandonment of nearby Enkomi, Salamis developed as one of the great city-kingdoms and trading centres of Cyprus. Its prosperity in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC is reflected in the Royal Tombs necropolis, where archaeologists have found grave goods that demonstrate the Mycenaean belief in the afterlife. In doing so, the artefacts also confirmed Homer's description, centuries earlier, of late Bronze Age funeral rites, which survived here in Cyprus for centuries after the Mycenaean culture faded.

After a period of Assyrian and Egyptian rule, of Persian domination and of the empire of Alexander the Great, Cyprus passed into the hands of the Ptolemies (the Greco-Egyptian dynasty) in 294 BC. The Ptolemies abolished the island's city-kingdoms, and appointed a viceroy who governed the island from Salamis, until Pafos became the island's capital in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.

Many of the ruins that can be seen today date from the Roman period, which began after Rome annexed the island in 58 BC, and from the Byzantine period, which began in 330 AD and saw Salamis once again become the island's capital.

Unfortunately, earthquakes in 332 AD and 342 AD devastated the city: tidal waves blanketed the entire area with sand, and although it was rebuilt on a smaller scale as Constantia, the city was finally abandoned after Arab raids in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. After that, it effectively became a quarry for local builders: many medieval buildings in Famagusta still carry stones from ancient Salamis.

### What You'll See Today

#### The Gymnasium and Theatre

The most visually appealing of the ruins of Salamis are located close to the site's main entrance. Here, the gymnasium dates back to Roman times. Stone columns originally surrounded an athletes' exercise ground (or palaestra), which was bordered on its eastern side with a series of swimming pools, baths and sweating rooms. Scraps of the frescoes and mosaics that would have decorated the various rooms still exist, depicting mythological figures, and marble statues can be seen in one of the gymnasium's swimming pools.

The marble Corinthian columns that surround the exercise ground today were actually brought from the neighbouring theatre, located about 100 metres south of

the gymnasium. The theatre was built at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and was the centre of cultural life in Salamis. A few of the original seats, carved from white limestone, can still be seen. It is the largest theatre so far found in Cyprus, with a capacity for some 15,000 spectators.

#### The Agora, Cistern and Temple of Zeus

A road leads away from the theatre, southwest through the forest that now covers Salamis. If you look at the undergrowth, you'll see countless pieces of rubble from what was once the city: ruins of a modest Roman villa lie along the road, as does the large early Christian basilica of St. Epiphany, built between 386 and 403 AD.

Southwest of the basilica, a large stone cistern built into a hill would have stored water that was brought to Salamis by aqueduct. South of the cistern lies the agora (or market place), along with the foundations of the Temple of Zeus, a Roman temple likely built on the foundations of a Hellenistic temple. Although partially excavated, the agora and temple only hint at the area's former grandeur: much likely remains, underground... and as yet undiscovered.

#### Kampanopetra Basilica and Ancient Harbour

The road that runs from the theatre to the cistern passes through a crossroads just south of the Roman villa. To the east lies the Kampanopetra basilica, built in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, overlooking the Mediterranean. One of the rooms to the rear of the basilica still shows a beautiful mosaic, perhaps the best Salamis offers, constructed in light and dark triangles. A ramble down to the Mediterranean reveals lines of man-made stone in the clear water: the remains of the breakwater that protected the ancient port.

#### The Royal Tombs

Located inland and west of the main Salamis archaeological complex, the nine Royal Tombs are centuries earlier than the Roman ruins, dating from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. They tell us a great deal about how Salamis - and its older Mycenaean culture - buried its dead. Most of the tombs are cut into the earth, with a downward sloping road approaching the tomb from the east. Corridors lined with ashlar (finely cut) stone blocks lead to an anteroom and finally a burial chamber roofed with a huge stone, or monolith. Since the Mycenaean believed in life after death, they included grave goods such as pottery and weapons in the tombs.

Ritual sacrifices played a role in the funeral proceedings: on the approaches to several tombs, archaeologists have uncovered (and left on display) the skeletons of the horses that would have pulled the chariot that bore the deceased to his final resting place. The dead man's spear, shield and sword would have been buried next to the chariot.

Although called "royal", the tombs were likely used by the settlement's wealthy and nobles. Commoners were buried with rather less fanfare nearby in what's called the "cellarca". A small museum at the entrance to the site provides a good overview of the funeral rites and construction of the tombs.



*A fresco which can be seen in the ruins of the baths (gymnasium area)*



*The best of the Salamis mosaics*



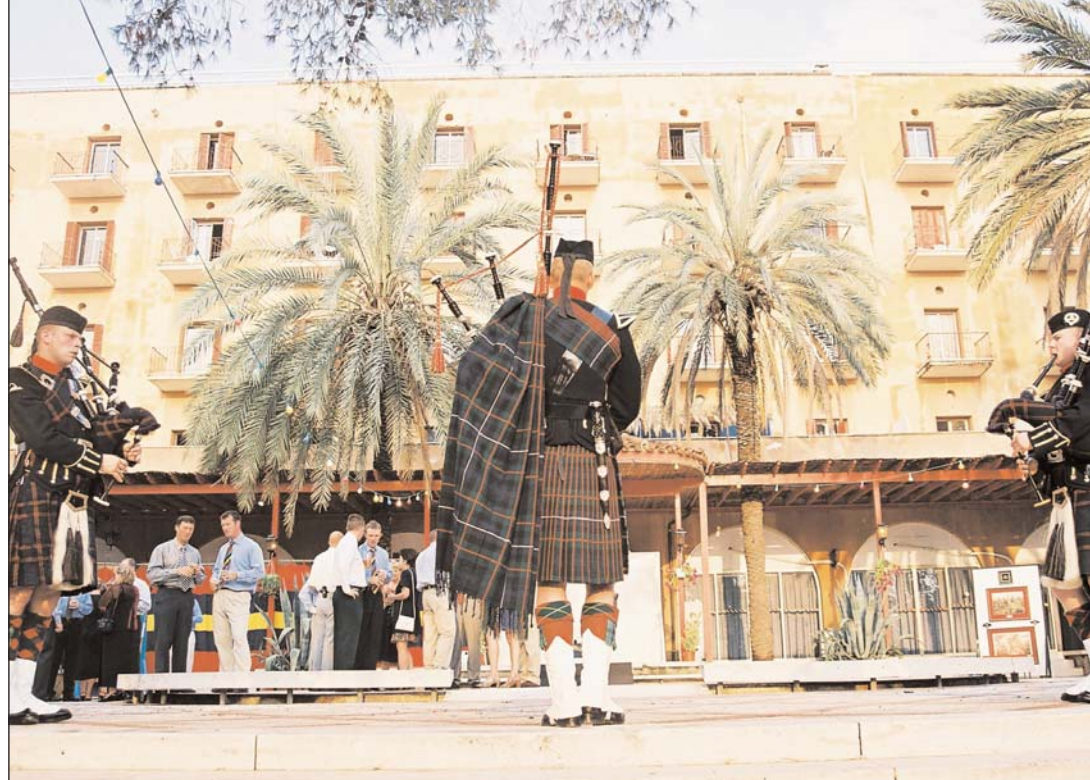
## Cocktails Survive Downpour

By Capt. G. Pugh

The social event of the month was on 12 July when a cocktail party hosted by Sector 2 took place at the Ledra Palace Hotel. It was a little touch-and-go an hour or so before the event, when the skies opened and sent a torrent of rain pouring down onto Nicosia, but thankfully, it lasted only a short while.

This wasn't going to prevent a night of socialising and entertainment from going ahead. Visitors began arriving at 6.30 pm and were hosted by the Officers and Warrant Officers of 16 Regiment RA.

With a plentiful supply of drink and food being passed around, it was time for the entertainment to start. Firstly the Gurkha Engineers performed a Khukuri dance for the guests. The next piece of entertainment surprised the hosts and guests alike. Capt. Merv Stubbins and seven members of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess performed three



numbers as Morris Dancers. The costumes were superb and the movements were faultless. The "troupe" had only been practicing for three days, having been coached by Mr. Tony Poulter from England, who also played the accompanying "squeeze box" music. The performances were excellent and ensured the evening was a great success.

## Dinner in the Buffer Zone

By Capt. G. Pugh



The sun was fading in the sky and the breeze had lifted to cool the air. A pleasant evening was in store for 16 Regt RA and its distinguished guests at UN OP 46. The Buffer Zone Dinner, as it was to be called, took place during the Force Commander's inspection of Sector 2 on 3 July.

The evening began with the Force Commander and Commanding Officer arriving to the bagpipes of Tpr. Kelly. Then Maj. Rob Ware, OC Sector 2 West, gave a ground brief to the diners, followed by an attempt at a humorous grace by Capt. Gary Pugh.

We sat down to begin our starter as the sun disappeared behind the hills. Master Chef WO2 Dave Barrow and his chefs planned and executed a fantastic meal under field cooking conditions. The sound of the bagpipes throughout the evening made the event all the more stylish. Guests and hosts thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

## The Long North Wind Patrol

By Maj. O. Cromwell

Once every two weeks, the Sector Two Civil Affairs Team (S2CAT) is involved in organising the distribution of humanitarian aid to the Maronite communities in the north. These ageing population groups are to be found in the villages of Asomatos, Karpasha, and Kormakiti.

Delivery of these supplies is by a convoy, normally consisting of three trucks manned by volunteers from

Sector 2 (usually off-duty soldiers), an UNCIVPOL car with an UNCIVPOL officer and an interpreter from the Civil Affairs Branch, and two members of S2CAT in their trusty, but non air-conditioned Landrover, Discovery.

The aid consists of basic essential foods, medicines, water and gas. The Maronites welcome the patrol as their essential lifeline connecting them to the Civil Affairs Branch.



## Delete Irish Bridge, Insert Rorke's Drift

As of 10.00 am on 3 June, the troop house known as Irish Bridge ceased to exist as UN 58 Sector Two West. It was replaced by Rorke's Drift, an all-singing, all-dancing, purpose-built troop house.

The Rorke's Drift project has taken many years and a lot of hard work to bring to fruition. Territorial Army engineers linked up with the last rotation to do the bulk of the work, and the current Gurkha Royal Engineers' Detachment have done much to make our move into the location possible. The house comfortably accommodates all 18 soldiers under one roof. This is a big improvement from the split location of Irish Bridge and Orchard House and greatly facilitates command and control.

We took over what was effectively an empty shell, and in a rapid six-day turn around, we kitted the house out with enough furniture to comfortably accommodate the soldiers arriving on the main body flights. The soldiers worked incredibly hard in 40 degrees of heat, getting to grips most importantly with the operational situation, and subsequently with the weeds and rubble. The ensuing two-week period up to the first inspection saw a massive change in the real estate surrounding the house - from a building site to a garden complete with barbeque and Hawaiian bar!



Rorke's Drift troop members

Teething problems are still very much the order of the day and work continues to go on around us. We are currently renovating a derelict building next door so that we can have a gym on site. Additional projects focus on landscaping the front and back gardens so that we can enjoy them.



Maj. Cromwell presenting the cheque to Raziye Kocaismail

## Fund Raising Activities in Sector 2

Sector 2 recently donated the sum of £552 and a supply of clothes and shoes to the Cancer Patients' Support Association in north Cyprus. A group, led by Maj. Ollie Cromwell of Sector 2 Civil Affairs, made the presentation to the Chairperson, Ms. Raziye Kocaismail.

Maj. Cromwell spoke a little about his unit, and said that Sector

2 would continue to carry out various activities aimed at raising funds for charities on both sides of the island. In her thanks, Raziye said the monies raised by UNFICYP would help the Association to continue extending support to cancer sufferers.

A cheque will be presented to the Makarios Hospital, Larnaca in the near future.

## The Queen's Jubilee Medal Parade

By LCpl. Dewan Rai

We had been working almost a month in Cyprus with 16 Regt RA on OP TOSCA and we were getting to know each other very well. Work was intense but equally enjoyable, only interrupted by the inspections that had to be undertaken for UNFICYP. Three members of the RE Det, which is under 11 (Sphinx) Battery, were selected to receive the Queen's Jubilee Medal. These were presented by the Force Commander outside our accommodation at the Ledra Palace Hotel.

LCpls Sushil, Dewan and Birendra, the three youngest and all very recently promoted, were those chosen to represent The Queen's Gurkha Engineers on this prestigious occasion. An air of expectation was apparent on the parade as the General made his way along the line, chatting to each individual before finally shaking hands and presenting the Queen's Jubilee Medal.

It was a very proud moment for us, and something that will stay in our memories forever.



The Force Commander presenting LCpl. Dewan Rai with his medal

# New Faces around HQ UNFICYP

## 2i/c UNCIVPOL

The new 2i/c UNCIVPOL is Chief Superintendent Basil Walsh who comes from County Mayo in the west of Ireland.

Ch. Supt. Walsh has spent all his police service in Dublin. He has 38 years of service to his name with an Garda Siochana, and has spent 20 years working with the C.I.D. For the last 12 years, he has been attached to the Counter Terrorism Unit, serving for the last four years as head of the C.T.U.

Ch. Supt. Walsh's duties have included the investigation of all subversive crime in the 26 counties, and he was responsible for the protection of all visiting dignitaries and V.I.P.s, including the visit to Ireland by President Bill Clinton and Prince Charles.

Ch. Supt. Walsh and his team have also been credited with saving scores of lives by anti-terror organisations in America, Britain and Northern Ireland.

He is married to Maureen, and they have two



daughters, Niamh and Deirdre.

Ch. Supt. Walsh replaces Supt. Bob Heggie, who now takes over the post of Commander UNCIVPOL from Ch. Supt. Liam Quinn.

## MA to the FC

The post of Military Assistant to the Force Commander, a rotating post between Britain and Ireland, has now been filled by Maj. Simon Powell.

Maj. Powell enlisted in the British Army as a private and was first posted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion The Parachute Regiment. He was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in 1992 and posted to Germany where he served as a Command Post Officer and as a Forward Observation Officer in 40 Regt RA. In 1995, Maj. Powell was posted to 7<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in the UK as a Battery Captain. In 1997, he transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corps as a Medical Support Officer.

Maj. Powell has spent two and a half years in Northern Ireland, and has also completed two tours of Bosnia.



He is married to Rachael, and they have three children, Charlotte, Elliot and Trinity.

Maj. Powell takes over from Comdt. Gerry Moore, who has returned to Ireland after 19 months with UNFICYP.

## Caption Competition



- *The long arm of the law*
- *Flatfoot uplift*
- *One blue bottle, sitting on the wall...*
- *Don't worry, I'm coming*
- *Please don't jump...*

Captions to be submitted to the Public Information Office by:

*22 August 2002*



# THE NINTH HOLE

*By Cpl. Gopal Rai*

Working with the 16 Regt RA for the first time is an experience. While slowly adapting to their lifestyle and work ethic, we came across an organized competition where each troop and department was given a hole from the crazy golf course to renovate and improve. Fortunately for us we were given the hole with the largest area, which meant we could use our imagination to the full.

We observed the area and planned what we were going to do. Finally, we came up with the idea of decorating the area using a Nepalese cultural theme with the additional extra of our regimental colours. With lots of skill and hard work from the boys, we managed to build a model of a typical Nepalese village and some famous landmarks, all set in the surroundings

of beautiful mountains. To give more impact, we decorated the remaining area with patterns of white and grey stones. The main part of the course was painted in red and blue and emblazoned with The Queen's Gurkha Engineer insignia on it. As a finishing touch, the Nepalese flag was stood proud in the ninth hole.

On 2 July, the CO of 16 Regt RA visited the golf course and after a look at all the different golf holes, he announced the winner of the competition. It appeared that all our hard work had paid off as we were awarded the first place. The rest of the Regiment had seen our work prior to the announcement of the results, and they were generous with their praise for our handiwork. This was a far greater prize than coming first.



*The Force Commander taking a short at the hole decorated by the Gurkhas*

## THE BIG MATCH

*(Your Commentator is SSgt. J. Catton)*

Friday 5 July - "The Big Match". The game eagerly awaited with more hype than Brazil v Germany. Yes! The challenge Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess BRITCON v the Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess 16 Regt Royal Artillery. The Regimental Gladiators meet to get changed, the dressing room awash with anticipation and expectation, only broken by the joviality of Sgt "where are my boots, shin pads, bucket and sponge" Berry.

Finally changed, the team are piped onto the field of dreams by Gnr. O Grady. BRITCON trembled at the spectacle. A brief warm up and the match is underway. First blood goes to the Regt. Coxy, to the flying winger Greg Dingle. A precision cross and Chucky Berry bundles it in from two inches. Can the advantage be pressed home? Yes, a headed clearance finds the flying winger. This time the recipient is the RSM, who guides the cross into the net to double the advantage.

The game moves on. Jim Catton looks up, sees the keeper off his line, and launches the ball skywards. Shouts of derision: "Pass it, don't just hoof it...", one bounce "what a goal", three nil. The advantage well and truly pressed home.

Yet there was more! Again the dancing feet of the RSM proved the lethal weapon. Picking the ball up in midfield the predator moved forward to unleash a stunning 25-yard shot into the back of the net. Then disaster - a dodgy penalty! "Is this Old Trafford?", screamed the crowd. Up stepped BRITCON's finest; could Marky "The Cat" Spencer save the day? No need, the ball sailed over the bar. Half time; 16 RA lead 4-0.



Sven wasn't happy; on came Tel "Desert Head" Gaunt, Dave "The Terminator" Aiton and Phil "Drag Back" Yee. To no avail; the lead could not be extended. This, despite the efforts of Twinkle Toes Yee dancing down the line, Sid "You must be joking I am not offside again" Fuller and Dave "Is this Judo" Aiton.

Then disaster. Spanner is beaten from 22 metres; a rocket of a shot crashes into the net, BRITCON have scored. Stung into action, 16 RA pressed forward. The score remained - the final whistle and it's victory by four goals to one.

The Gladiators of 16 RA retired to the BRITCON Mess the victors and vanquished to be wine and dined. What a BBQ! Chucky "six burgers" Berry and Dave "I've broken a chair" Whitter are testimony to the great feast laid on by our hosts. Once more, young O'Grady piped for his supper. Never has the Flower of Scotland been clapped and cheered by so many Englishmen.

Sport

