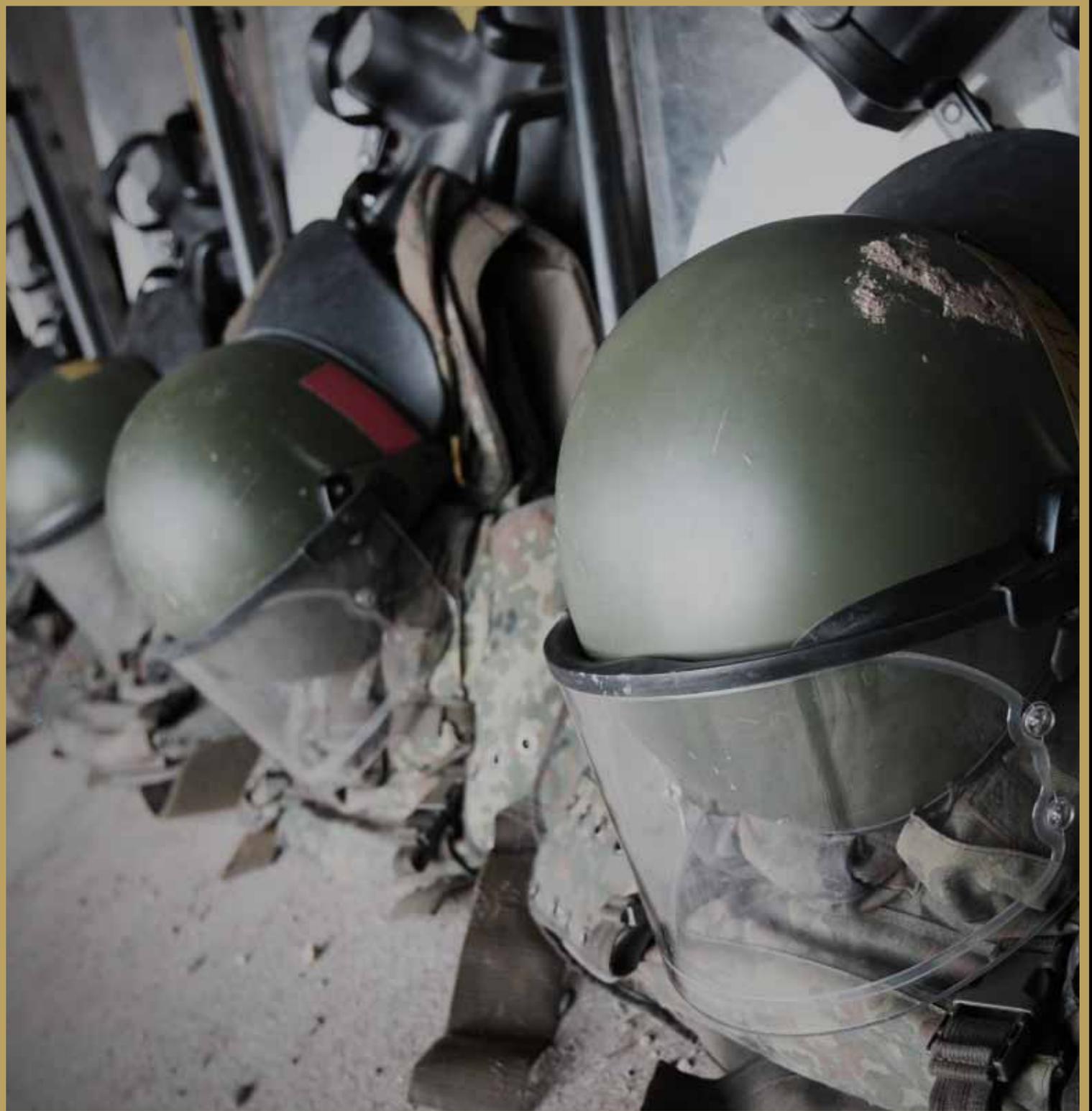




KFOR CHRONICLE



HYSTERICAL PANDEMONIUM
- KOSOVO -
“LAND OF THE BLACKBIRDS”

PHOTOCONTEST
- KFOR CHRONICLE -
“BATTLE OF PICTURES”

TEN YEARS AGO
- FROM THE ARCHIVES -
FINNISH RECCE PLATOON

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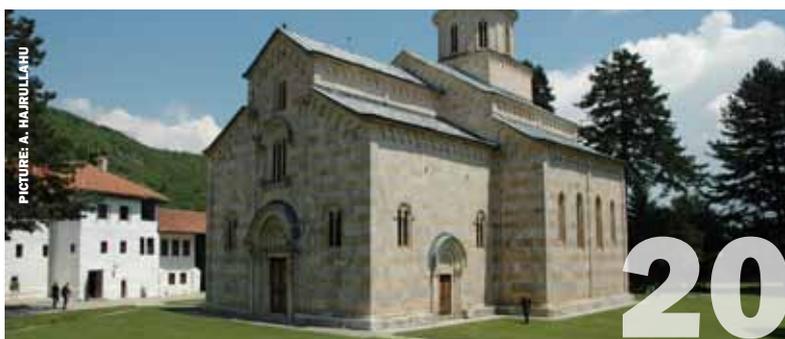
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DECANI

Over the last 12 years the impact of what KFOR has accomplished is undeniable. Building upon the achievements of our predecessors who carried out their duties with due diligence, it is my distinct pleasure to congratulate each of the 6,150 members of today's KFOR, for the patient determination and unwavering manner you have faced recent situations thrown up by the challenges of new and changing circumstances.

Committed to success, you have demonstrated a clear dedication to creating a safe and secure environment with unconditional freedom of movement for all. In displaying common-sense, sincerity, and sensitivity your success has not been happenstance rather hard-earned, both resulting from, and reflecting favorably upon, your professionalism. By so doing KFOR has exhibited the abilities of its 29 nations' members, 21 NATO and 8 non-NATO, to co-operate effectively towards a unified objective with appropriate, restrained and impartial behavior.

I appreciate greatly the opportunity to serve alongside each of you, and thank you for your hard work, the cumulative effect from each individual, making up a significant whole sending the strong signal that KFOR will not be deterred from its worthwhile mission. The enabling of the improvement of the conditions for the development of a peaceful, just and democratic society throughout all of Kosovo is crucially important in its evolving progress.

This is a busy time for KFOR because it is a significant moment for Kosovo, one of many important steps undertaken to-date in its on-going advancement towards democratic, political, economic and social development. KFOR by assisting in building towards such success, growth and prosperity for all in Kosovo is doing so, together as one. ■



COS HQ KFOR Brigadier General Rex Spittler



PICTURE: T. JAKOBS



TOGETHER AS ONE



PICTURES: T. JAKOBS, T. KORDEL AND CAMERA COMBAT TEAM



A long-running dispute in northern Kosovo sparked violence in July and September. The local population in that area reject Kosovo's 2008 secession from Serbia and want to stop Kosovo's authorities from setting up customs checks.



FACING THE BARRICADES



STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: T. JAKOBS AND T. KORDEL

10 YEARS AGO

FINNISH RECCE PLATOON

From 8th October 2001, the French Motor Battalion based in Camp Belvedere in Mitrovica has the pleasure to have the Finnish SISU

Company among their guests. This Company, commanded by Infantry Captain Jussi Annala, is in reality a

tactical unit made out of reservists and a few active duty personnel that volunteered to this unit. Regardless the moral –which is high among the troops- Cap. Annala can consider himself as a lucky guy keeping in mind the one-year in-place experience of most of his subordinates.

The mission of this unit has been so far to reinforce the different Multi National Brigades at a certain time and they have basically supported all of them. Right now, they are working within the French MNB to run their assigned Areas of Responsibility (AORs) –numbers 9, 10 and 13 in Mitrovica City for the curious readers- with their own equipment and personnel. No operations are held along with the French units in form of mixed Observation Points (OPs) or patrols. They work in stand-alone mode but with the necessary coordination at HQ level. Still this is their first time in a big city environment. Their daily tasks include OPs, and both foot and vehicle patrols. Vehicle patrols are handled with ei-

ther regular 4x4 cars or Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) that you can mainly find in the main street that runs from the “Bridge of

Discord” all the way south parallel to the river up to the southern boundaries of the city. This street is full of life and is very crowded mainly with youngsters going back and forth to the University or the High School.

FROM THE ARCHIVES is a new series when an article from the KFOR CHRONICLE corresponding to the same month 10 years ago is selected from the PAO Office Archives and presented in order to gain an appreciation of the passage of time in the development of the KFOR mission.

Engineer Captain Sami Jaakkola, Deputy Commander SISU Company, took us to an OP set at the roof of an eleven-story building (some 200 hundred steps!!) from where we could actually have a bird view of the whole city. They basically use binoculars during the day and thermal binoculars during the night to watch everything that moves in the city. This OP runs in a 24-hour basis with 3 teams of 3-4 men every 8 hours.

The total manpower is 123 men distributed according to their tasks. Some 20-30% are on duty. Another 30% are ready to deploy. Still another 30% are resting and the 10% left is actually assigned to liaison-coordination duties with the HQ Staff or work in logistics. Their assigned vehicles are 10 APCs, 7 trucks and 12 soft cars. But they will be released from this tem-

porary task that will last until 4th November 2001, when they will probably be moved to Camp Ville in the City of Lipljan/Lipjan, house of the Finnish Battalion, to take care of the Elections Day supporting their mother Unit as the Delta Company they are. It's very soon yet to tell what mission is next”, says Captain Annala but definitely whatever their mission is they will do it with guts. That is what SISU means in Finnish (apart from the trademark name of the APC's constructor).



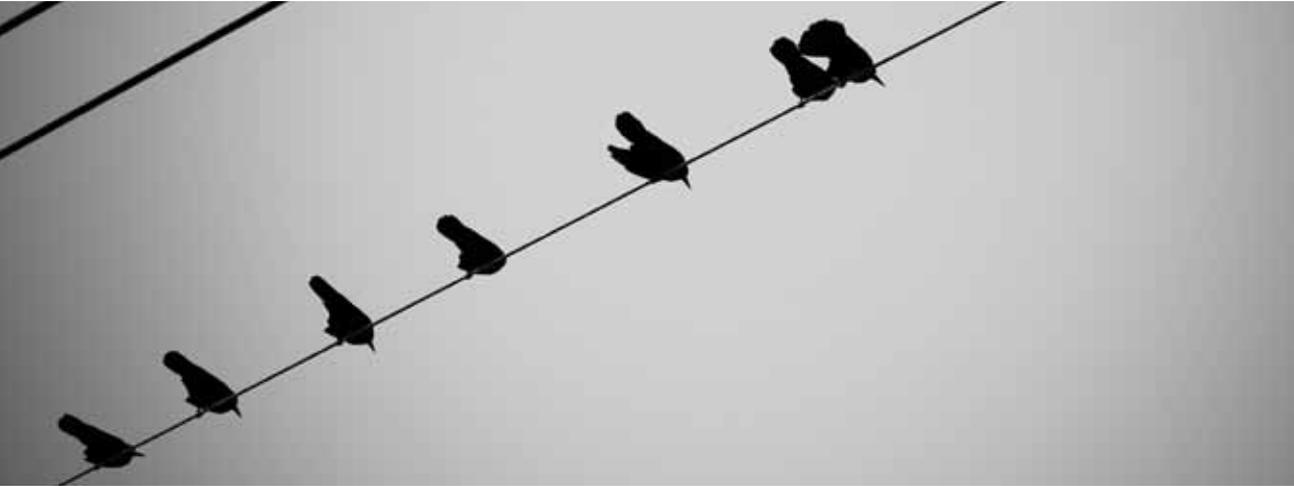
A recent very well organized exercise in Kosovo Force Headquarters (HQ KFOR) saw the US National Support Element (USNSE), the Headquarters Support Group (HQHSG), Film City Guard Company and other KFOR Fire and Medical Emergency Units conduct a suspicious package drill. Knowing how to react will save time and this ultimately could save lives. The principal aim of the undertaking was the conduct of a proper procedural response to the discovery of the presence of a suspicious package, in this scenario in the US NSE Mail Room. Once identified and the alert initiated, the building and those immediately adjacent were evacuated. Any would be passers-by were prevented from entering the evacuated area and the quarantined scene was handed over to the appropriate authorities. The chronological timeline of events and incidents presented thereafter purposely challenged the highly-motivated participants, presenting realistic problem-solving situations, requiring them to respond to the highest levels. In the event the exercise went very well; training objectives were met; and having been granted an opportunity to play their part in the coordinated proceedings, lessons were learned by those exercised. This was very much a case of together as one. ■



STORY: D. HARVEY

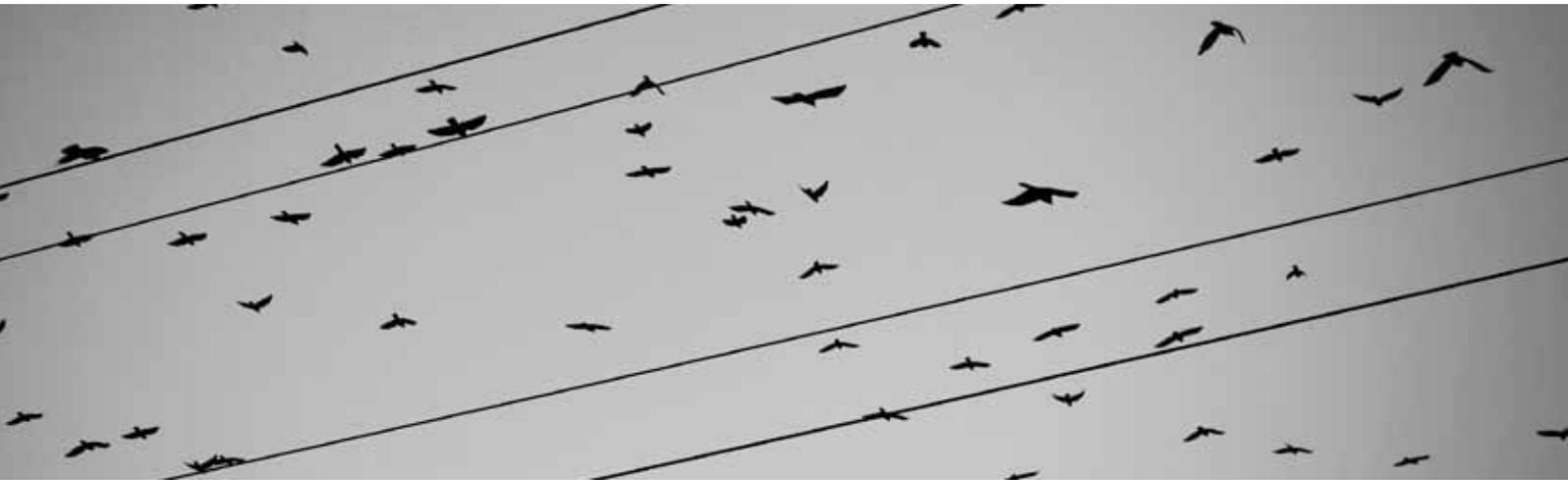
PICTURES: A. HAJRULLAHU

BLACKBIRDS



STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: F. REICHENBACH



Kosovo is directly translatable into “the land of blackbirds”. Standing in KFOR’s HQ in Film City overlooking the capital Pristina in the late afternoon it is not difficult to understand why. Because with the arrival of dusk come the blackbirds, thousands and thousands of them. Gathering slowly at first, then ever-increasingly, until a rippling sea of blackbirds almost menacingly manifest into an incoherent infinite flock, swirling, swooping, and spiraling haphazardly in disorganized, almost deranged, aerial antics. Without direction, literally thousands of blackbirds dramatically dance and dart across the skyline, first one way, then the next, each appearing not to know which way is best but not wanting to be left behind either. The sight of their frenzied flight is hugely impressive, surpassed only by the accompanying ear-splitting shrillness of their cacophonous cackle. Altogether their high-pitched screeching is ear-piercingly sharp and their penetrating cries a mix of

sudden, rapid-fire raucousness. Equally unsettling as their sight and sound is their surprising near-silence when they momentarily settle, en-masse, on trees, roof-tops or telephone wires. You can’t but wonder what they’re wondering as they stare, a kind of



on you. Then just as suddenly as they settled they’re off again, exuberantly circling and dipping in a dizzy giddy frantic frenzied madness and mayhem before finally coming to roost amongst the trees for the evening. The hysterical pandemonium to be performed all over again in the morning as they fly off for the day, only to return to repeat their ever-recurring pantomime. ■

knowing stare, down at you and if perchance you must move from one building to another you can easily feel very much as if somehow you are running the gauntlet as thousands of blackbirds peer down

Strictly speaking, the Blackbirds you see in Kosovo are Crows, Rooks and Jackdaws.

„**BATTLE OF** **P** **KFOR CHRONICLE** **PHO**

- DO YOU HAVE PHOTOS WITH SPECIAL ATMOSPHERE?
- DO YOU HAVE AN EYE FOR THINGS,
THAT OTHERS DON'T SEE?

THEN PROCEED!

IMAGES FROM TROOPS INVOLVED IN
KFOR MISSION ACTIVITIES, HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS,
LEISURE PURSUITS AND SIGHTSEEING EXPEDITIONS
ARE WELCOME.

THE WINNERS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE
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INCLUDE THE DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH, PHOTOGRAPHER'S NAME AND
A SHORT CAPTION.

PICTURES

PHOTOCONTEST



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T
ID

REMEMBRANCE DAY



PICTURE: Ouleph Museums, Reference No. M968.354.1.2x

LIEUTENANT COLONEL
JOHN ALEXANDER McCRAE



PICTURE: This is photograph No. Q 1 from the Imperial War Museum collection No. 1900-02.



PICTURE: Australian War Memorial under the ID Number: E01220

- 1) A ration party of the Royal Irish Rifles in a communication trench during the Battle of the Somme. The date is believed to be 1 July 1916, the first day on the Somme.
- 2) Soldiers of an Australian 4th Division field artillery brigade on a duckboard track passing through Chateau Wood, near Hooze in the Ypres salient, 29 October 1917.

In Flanders F

In Flanders fields the poppies
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place; and
The larks, still bravely singing,
Scarce heard amid the guns!

We are the Dead. Short of
We lived, felt dawn, saw
Loved, and were loved, and
In Flanders fields

Take up our quarrel with
To you from failing hands
The torch; be yours to hold
If ye break faith with us
We shall not sleep, though
In Flanders fields

Punch
Dec 8. 1915

Fields

poppies blow
on row,
and in the sky
going, fly
below.

days ago
sunset glow,
and now we lie
do.

the foe:
as we throw
it high.
who die
poppies grow

John McCrae



PICTURE: A. HAJRULLAHU

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies
grow
In Flanders fields.*

of the end of World War 1. Ceremonies across the continent commemorated those who lost their lives in two world wars, subsequent conflicts, and the on-going sacrifices of European service personnel to protect the freedoms that we enjoy today. In KFOR too this solemn occasion was appropriately observed by the re-dedication of the UK Memorial in Kosovo at KFOR HQ Film City. Wreaths were laid by HMA Ian Cliff (on behalf of the British people), Minister KSF Agim Ceku (on behalf of Kosovo), Lieutenant General Sylejman Selimi (on behalf of the KSF), Lieutenant General Erhard Drews (on behalf of KFOR), Lieutenant Colonel Luc Ovellet (on behalf of Canada and the senior British officer in Pristina Colonel Kevin Oliver.

Millions of people across Europe observed a minute's silence on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month 2011 to remember those killed in conflicts past and present on Armistice Day, the 93rd anniversary

STORY: D. HARVEY

TRAIN AS YOU FIGHT, FIGHT AS YOU TRAIN!



Thorough preparation, tough rehearsals, testing scenarios, and realistic exercises are all part of on-going training throughout KFOR currently, be it multinational MEDEVAC Response Exercise at Camp Novo Selo coordinated by the Multinational Battle Group East in close collaboration with the French National Support Element, or Crowd Control simulation with the KTM. ■

STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: ARCHIVE



MOTORWAY ROUTE 7



The largest infrastructure project in Kosovo's history, the Route 7 Motorway Construction Programme has successfully commenced with the completion and opening of the first 38 kilometers of motorway, south of Prizren. Eventually it is planned that the motorway project will serve the entire country and so provide a quick and efficient link both internally and to neighboring countries. The contract for the first section of motorway was awarded in April 2010, with construction getting underway a month later. Officially opened during November 2011 it has already seen traffic on it during recent weeks. 18 months of continuous construction witnessed excavation, filling, concreting, asphaltting, guardrailing and fencing requirements necessitating 1,500 workers to begin with, rising to a peak of some 3,800 employees with over 70% being local workers. Construction involved the

completion of 11 bridges, totaling 1.5 kilometers. Bechtel-Enka the construction company has a strong record in the region, successfully delivering major projects, including motorways in Albania, Croatia, Turkey and currently also in Romania. The project is estimated to have cost 800 Million euro to-date. ■



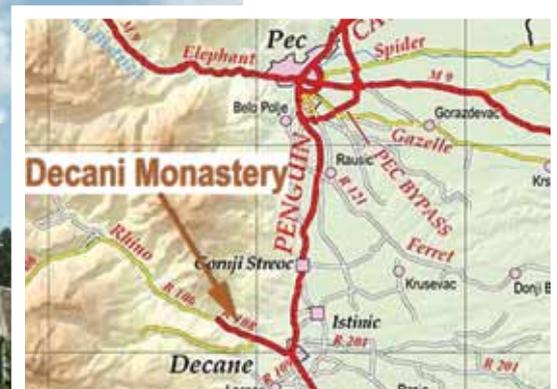
STORY: D. HARVEY

PICTURES: F. REICHENBACH, A. HAJRULLAHU AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

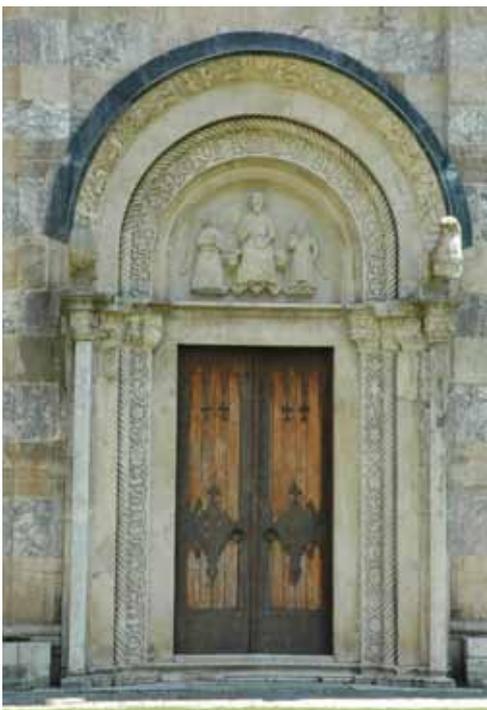
DECANI MONASTERY

Already declared a Monument of Culture of Exceptional Importance in 1990, being long famed for its many and well preserved frescos, nearly a decade and a half later in 2004 as “one of the most valued examples of the so-called Paleologan renaissance in Byzantine painting” and as “a valuable record of life in the 14th century”, the irreplaceable Decani Monastery was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Its construction commenced in 1327, was completed some eight years later. The wall paintings for which it is now so famous however continued until 1350. Located at the foot of the Accursed mountains south of Peja/Pec in western Kosovo, this large Romanesque and early Gothic style structure, built from crimson and tan colored blocks of onyx, a semi-precious stone like marble, is differentiated by its striking design, set in a cobble-stoned

courtyard surrounded by chestnut groves. Surviving in an unchanged state of exceptional preservation, the extraordinary frescos incorporating thousands of individual figures illustrate many religious themes and remarkably may be viewed today almost as when first seen in the mid-1300s. Of exceptional beauty, huge artistic and architectural significance, historical and heritage importance, this magnificent monument is monument to the haven of sanctuary it has been throughout the many turbulent years of its existence. Today, the monastery’s continued care is overseen by a 30-strong community of monks who are steadfastly maintaining the monastic traditions of the past. ■



STORY AND PICTURES: A. HAJRULLAHU



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ADVICE **STAY HEALTHY**

The wintery cold will shortly be upon us and that means influenza season is upon us. Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. The symptoms will include fever, chill, cough, sore throat, runny of stuffed nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, and a feeling of tiredness. To aid in the prevention of the spread of flu, get vaccinated and to stop the spread of germs, cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze. Norovirus infection causes outbreaks of gastroenteritis; the signs are the acute onset of nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps and diarrhea. If you are sick with these types of symptoms, seek medical attention and limit contact with others. Eating sensibly and staying active can help enormously in the fight against the challenges that winter presents. Nutrition and physical fitness is vital to good health, disease prevention and essential for healthy growth and development. Eat fruits, vegetables, grains and proteins. For important health benefits take regular exercise, adults require at least two hours and thirty minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity weekly with muscle strengthening activities on two or more days a week that work out all major muscle groups, (legs, hips, back, abs, chest, shoulders and arms). Whether exercising or not, it is important to drink plenty of liquids, at least 3 liters daily, any combination of tea, water, coffee, etc. Finally, whatever the weather and whatever the season, remember smoking seriously harms you and others around you. ■



STORY: Dr. TRIFTERER

PICTURES: F. REICHENBACH

PEACEKEEPER



Name: Patrick O'Driscoll
Rank: OR-9
Nationality: Irish
Unit in KFOR: HQ KFOR HSG

Enlisting in the Irish Defence Forces in Cork City Ireland, 38 years ago in October 1973, KFOR HQ Film City HSG Sergeant Major Patrick “Paudge” O’Driscoll will, in early 2012, finish his military service which saw him complete an astonishing 23 overseas tours of duty. Lebanon, Cyprus, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chad, and Liberia have all been peacekeeping mission areas in which he has served, often more than once. This is a unique record within the Irish Defence Forces, one which he himself naturally is quietly satisfied with, however an achievement his military colleagues are hugely proud of. A “Gunner” his Home Unit is the 1st Field Artillery Regiment in Collins Barracks Cork, his many and very varied postings both at home and particularly overseas have granted him an enormous breadth of experience and no end of satisfaction, to put it simply, he has loved life in the

military. A career which as he says himself gave him a second family of lifelong friends not only within the Irish Defence Forces but also from many armies around the world.” You make friendships like no other occupation in the world can offer you, the camaraderie is second to none, something very real and very special”. He is quick however to point out that family support, particularly that of his wife, three daughters and three grandchildren has been crucial in underpinning and sustaining his overseas service and a comfort always throughout his entire military career, as he put it, “ for the position of a soldier’s wife, no ordinary woman need apply!” Interested in all sports and activities he has participated and competed in orienteering, mountaineering, motor cycling, and hurling. Unquestionably however his main and sustained lifelong interest has been soldiering as it has afforded him the opportunity

to help people, “I have always tried to help people whenever I could and this is something I would say to anyone in a position of authority anywhere, what’s it all for if you can’t help people while you’re at it “. In a curious coincidence, one not untypical of life in the military, he has shared his first, and now last, overseas tour of duty with KFOR HQ Film City HSG Commander Colonel John Hamill, and three others in between also. On retirement, he has this to say, “that’s life and that’s the Army way, I have no regrets”.

