

The Fourth is now back in Germany, in the cold winter having handed over Sector Two of the United Nations Peace Line in Cyprus to 15/19 King's Hussars. A relatively painless experience, the Regiment withdrew in three packets in a gradual handover to the new Peace Keepers, who were keen to get on with the job in hand. Before leaving, two set forth to raise money for charity. The pentathlon team of six, which included Sergeant Alan Woods and Lieutenant Andy Willis, the troop leader, set out along the southern coast of exotic Cyprus. The prospect of building up the sun tan was soon dashed by the arrival of a freak rain storm, which appeared to move with the team as they progressed a round the island. Despite heavy seas and strong winds the canoeing and swimming were successfully completed. The team's progress on land was less arduous, although parts of the cycling tested the moral fibre of all. The grand finale successfully abseiling down the Cape Greco rock face, champagne and chocolates intact, earned some £600 towards a walking aid for a disabled child.

On reflection the Regiment's second tour with the United Nations forces in Cyprus within two years has been a testament to the flexibility and adaptability of the soldiers of both this Regiment and those from the other Arms that are increasingly called upon to perform challenging and unusual tasks throughout the world at, often, short notice. For The Fourth, this tour in Cyprus was a success in a time of both political change on the island and 'Options for Change' at home.

We were again tested on our return to Germany. The Fourth quickly reorganised as a Type 47 regiment due to equipment and manning imperatives. The new Type 47 is broken down into three sabre squadrons of fifteen tanks, each squadron divided up into a three-tank headquarters and four three-tank troops. Regimental Headquarters is now bolstered with a second tank for the Second-in-Command, with the balance of ten tanks from our old Type 57 organisation being held as dedicated training vehicles by A Squadron.

B, C and D form the three sabre squadrons, with A in the training role and 6 in support. As a result many changes have had to be made in the way of reorganised tactics and retrained personnel. Training Squadron is now a dedicated sub-unit with responsibility for all trade training, internal courses, continuation training and even inter-squadron sports! The advantages of having an organic dedicated training organisation such as this are manifest and already many burdens have been lifted from the new squadrons' shoulders. Co-ordinated and control, too, is easier with a G2/G3 officer in Regimental Headquarters, who liaises between A Squadron and those external agencies required to help with validation and trade training. With such a closely integrated training structure the Regiment can ensure that the flexibility, adaptability and competence of our soldiers is maximised as August 1993 approaches.

For the rest of the Regiment, life goes on in a very similar manner to previous years and it is reassuring to view a familiar programme for the coming season that is both full and challenging. Despite many fears over the future of field exercises in Germany, we find ourselves still deploying to local training areas in the Osnabruck - Achmer area in the Spring, together with ranges at Bergen-Hohne. June will see squadrons on Soltau for three weeks as a build-up to Canada. Exercise MEDICINE MAN 6, which will be our second visit there in as many years. All this preparation is to be carried out with our re-built tank fleet, regenerated by the heroes of the Technical Quartermaster's department and the Light Aid Detachment in rear party. When we left for Cyprus, 30 tanks were fully fit and equipped, in itself a small miracle considering the debilitated state of our vehicles through the depredations resulting from the needs of Operation GRANBY. On our return, however, we found the remainder, bar one, able to fight and motor and much credit is due to the rear party. In the face of manpower shortages and a dearth of spares, they managed to get enough vehicles battleworthy and ready to reform as a Type 47 regiment.