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NORTHERN STAR

Magazine for HQ JFC Brunssum – May 2014



- A Quick Sign of Solidarity
- Canadian Joint Operations Command has the watch
- Exercise VIKING-14: A Comprehensive Approach Exercise
- US Cemetery and Memorial - Margraten



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COMMAND GROUP CORNER

Story by Major General Vincenzo Santo



Major General Vincenzo Santo

Since I was assigned to JFC Brunssum I have dealt with challenges that have made my job exciting, every day. If challenges sometimes mean opportunities then, in Brunssum, there are many of them. One is the implementation of the “deployment concept”, a project that could be very simple if considered in a national context, and in this context, we exactly will understand the difference. Sometimes in NATO it does not work in that way. Sometimes we cope with misunderstandings. Is a “deployment concept” equal to a “deployable HQ concept”? No, it is not! The “deployment” implies that NATO as a whole takes care of the deployment since it retains, at higher level, important and critical capabilities and capacities. Like it or not.

The “deployable HQ” would mean that HQ would only need to take the flights and the ships procured at the strategic level but it does not need to apply for any

CIS assets or a single generator or a truck, or ask for a wonderful infantry company to fulfil force protection functions. In the former, the HQ is to shape and send requirements hoping they are welcome; in the latter, everything is at hand, in the hands of the Commander. The HQ is able, and more importantly, autonomously, to reach the place from where to fly out or to sail, sure that when it will be on the other side, it will be able to take care of itself, in all the aspects! So, NATO has decided that its Commands, at the operational level, could be deployed, but only in accordance with the “deployment concept”: they can be deployed but they are not actually “deployable” in the way I explained earlier.

Behind the words there is always a deeper meaning, a concept. We have to understand that and work accordingly. The same goes for the Joint Logistic Support Group (JLSG) which, in itself, is a structure that is an important part of the deployment concept. Nations have agreed on that and I expect they have

figured out what could lie behind agreed definitions! They have to win a taboo, handing over a piece of authority on their logistic units, and overcome old bad habits, that often leave the “support” units to be generated in a second tier effort. The JLSG is to be one of the first to deploy; its generation cannot be postponed. In fact, it must be understood that when we talk about JLSG, it implies a staff and some units, together! There cannot be a staff only.

Having said that, I want to stress that in my opinion it represents a most successful project; so far! But, another misunderstanding comes from the wording: unfortunately within the acronym we have an “L” that stands for Logistics: the JLSG can do more than pure Logistics. This time the word was wrong, since the essence of the concept in reality is much wider than logistics alone. It does not meet “*logica rerum*”. We can shape the functions we want the JLSG to carry out during an operation, in a wider way than only “pushing forward” third line supplies. In Afghanistan, for example, had we implemented the concept, a JLSG could have taken care of Donation, Demilitarisation, Disposal, Redeployment (D3R) activities and been the higher level authority, directly depending on COMISAF, for the NATO Air Points of Departure (airfields). So, I do believe we should refine the name to Joint Support Group (JSG), being Support more than Logistics. Again, if behind them there is a concept, words matter: *logica rerum*!

We, in Brunssum, are a good deal ahead in this JLSG story. Thanks to NATO Rapid Deployment Corps, Italy, (NRDC ITA) that, by the way, is our JLSG provider for NATO Response Force 2014 (NRF14), we have set up a joint training and preparation programme for NRF16. By the end of 2013, my Logistics team (J4) started this new important endeavour with great determination thanks to the passion of Colonel Ponchia - a “brand new logistician”, only few months earlier a member of our counter improvised explosive device section (J3 C-IED). Sometimes, “good sense” is an invaluable ingredient to success! In conclusion, I am sure we will be ready for Exercise Trident Juncture 2015, with which the JFCBS JLSG HQ will be validated for NRF 16; and it is no accident this will coincide with the established timeline (1 December 2015) for this headquarters to attain Full Operational Capability in the new NATO Command Structure.

Colophon

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About the Cover

AWACS flies surveillance missions over Romania and Poland

Artikel and Picture by Pao E-3A Component

The North Atlantic Council (NAC) decided on March 10, 2014, to employ NATO AWACS (Airborne Early Warning and Control Aircraft) surveillance aircraft over Poland and Romania.

"The NAC decision is a clear indication of the relevance of the E-3A Component in our times," said Col. René Moerland, Component deputy commander.

This employment increases the understanding of what is happening in the region, including in Ukraine, for NATO Allies. All AWACS surveillance flights will take place solely over Alliance territory and no flights will take place over Ukraine.

Operating solely from its main operating base, the Component will fly a line of tasking every day to Romania and a line of tasking every other day Poland. These surveillance missions will be shared with the E-3D Component, who will fly out of Waddington, United Kingdom. NATO AWACS is a high readiness force which can be employed at very short notice," Colonel Moerland said.

The first flight was conducted on March 14th to provide Air and Maritime Surveillance in order to enhance situational awareness of NATO Commands and to reassure NATO allies in the region. Colonel Moerland, participated as a tactical director on the first mission from the NATO Airbase Geilenkirchen.

"We all can be very proud of that achievement. Again the men and women of the E-3A component showed that they are ready to support NATO commanders on short notice with a robust and modern airborne surveillance and command and control capability whenever and wherever it is needed," had been his first remarks after landing with his crew.

With a future perspective he continued: "Now, the challenge is to sustain this achievement, while continuing the ISAF operation and the training program at the MOB. With the upcoming redeployment, the runway restoration and the ongoing Force Review, this is quite a task, but I am confident that - together - we will make it through these demanding times."

Due to the multi nationality of our employed aircrew the first "Surveillance Controller" in Romanian Airspace was a Romanian crew member, Master Sgt. Ruxandra Rafail. She said, "It is great to work in this multinational Component and especially in this case - to fly over my country and to protect it."

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Afghan National Army Soldiers Graduate Regional Corps Battle School

Story and photo by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska, Regional Command Southwest

More than 1,000 Afghan soldiers graduated from the Regional Corps Battle School at Camp Shorabak, Helmand province, Afghanistan, during a ceremony March 20.



The Afghan National Army 215th Corps color guard marches past the formation during Regional Corps Battle School graduation ceremony held at Camp Shorabak, Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

The training conducted at RCBS is Afghan-led, with Marines advising the Afghan instructors as needed. The Afghan instructors are hand-selected by the Marine advisors and then trained and mentored on how to be an instructor, including how to teach military occupational specialty skill sets to their soldiers.

"Just eight months ago, they were civilians and now they are teaching the future of the Afghan National Army," said Master Sgt. Chris Willenbecher, operations chief, RCBS. "It is inspiring to see them doing it on their own and doing it well with us pulled completely back. We'd only give them advice after the classes and during the breaks. They have actual skill sets and marksmanship training; they have weapons assigned and know how to battle sight zero them. This is the first time this has happened in a long time."

All the Afghan soldiers attended the Basic Warrior Training boot camp course prior to their MOS training. Following MOS training, many of them conducted a 'mortarmen' course, Military Operations in Urban Terrain training, a D-30 122 mm howitzer class, and conducted casualty

evacuations training with the ANA Mi-17 helicopters.

According to Willenbecher, some ANA soldiers throughout Helmand and Nimroz provinces lack marksmanship skills, don't know how to zero their weapon systems properly, or they are just grabbed and put behind a certain weapon system.

"Now there's a large group of trained men that have gone through courses, from machine gunners and mortarmen to cooks and vehicle mechanics, and they know their procedures well and will perform efficiently on the battlefield," said Willenbecher.

Sergeant Wahid with the 215th Corps at RCBS said the training they have received from the instructors has made them ready to defend their land.

"The training was good," said Wahid. "We've learned a lot of stuff here, especially from the advisors, now the soldiers are very professional and ready to do their job and get stationed wherever the 215th Corps wants to send them. We are all motivated and excited. We don't worry about the enemy. We are happy to serve our country, the training we have done over the past months has made us proficient. The soldiers have such positive

morale because this is our homeland, because this is our motherland. This is our country, we will provide security and shoulder-to-shoulder we will take care of our people."

This is the first time a graduation of this magnitude has been held, as well as the first time a large number of ANA soldiers have been assigned to an entire kandak, or battalion-sized element, prior to their graduation.

"The 6th Kandak was just formed a few days ago for the 4th Brigade, 215th Corps, and will be forward deployed in preparation for the upcoming elections," said Willenbecher. "This is the first time a kandak was taken directly from boot camp and given different MOS skill sets. This is a big deal, and the Afghans have led the whole process."

The 215th Corps is made up of four brigades. Within each brigade there are six kandaks; however, up to this point 4th Brigade has only had five. This newly formed kandak will eventually be attached to 4th Brigade.

Afghan National Army Sgt. Novikhil, a weapons instructor with 215th Corps, RCBS, said the 6th Kandak will be responsible for protecting the Afghan locals during the upcoming presidential elections.

"I'm really happy and glad for the students graduating today," said Novikhil. "We try our best to teach them everything we know. Most of these students are going to be part of the 6th Kandak. I feel confident that they are ready to serve and protect their country, and they are ready to protect the Afghan locals during the elections."

While many Afghan soldiers attend RCBS, there are still many who are unable to make it to Camp Shorabak for the training, so the ANA soldiers will be responsible for passing on their training and knowledge to their fellow soldiers when they return to their units.

"The instructors all work very hard trying to teach us all they know and we are very happy with them," said Sgt. Aman Allah, with the 215th Corps at RCBS. "All of us are very, very grateful. I am confident, I learned a lot over the past months and am now ready to not only serve my country, but when I go back to my unit, I will teach my fellow Afghan soldiers what I learned from RCBS."

“A Quick Sign of Solidarity”

Story by HQ AIRCOM Public Affairs Office

Together with Lithuanian Minister of National Defence, Mr. Juozas Olekas, and civilian and military representatives, Lieutenant General Joachim Wundrak, Commander of NATO's Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) at Uedem, Germany, visited the first Baltic Region Training Event (BRTE) this year on 1 April 2014. During this seventeenth sequel of the BRTE series, aircrews, controllers and civilian air traffic controller from the United States of America, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia as well as Partnership for Peace (PfP) members Sweden and Finland trained how to cooperate together in various scenarios.



Discussion against the backdrop of a NATO AWACS (from left to right) – Siauliai Base Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Vidmantas Raklevicius, Commander of the Lithuanian Air Force, Major General Edvardas Mazeikis, Commander of the US BAP Detachment, Lieutenant Colonel Lendy Renegar, CAOC Uedem Current Operations Director, Danish Colonel Lone Traehold and Commander of CAOC Uedem, German Lieutenant General Joachim Wundrak. Photo: CHristian Timmig HQ AIRCOM PAO

Due to the current developments in Ukraine, the BRTE was very much in the media focus; for this reason international journalists had a chance to see for themselves what was scheduled during the training event. They boarded a Lithuanian C-27J Spartan transport aircraft that took off from Siauliai Air Base, Lithuania, and simulated a loss of communications in Swedish air space. On the plane they witnessed how the aircraft was first intercepted and identified by a Swedish JAS-39 Gripen twoship, which escorted it to the airspace border with Lithuania and handed the Spartan over to two United States F-15C Eagles from NATO current Quick Reaction Alert (Intercept) detachment.

The Spartan aircraft was escorted by the flight of F-15Cs and safely landed at Siauliai AB where they joined the Swedish Gripen fighters for a static aircraft display. Both Minister Olekas and Lieutenant General Wundrak as well as representatives of the other participating nations were available to answer questions by the journalists. General Wundrak underlined that BRTE was a series of training events that had been planned primarily by NATO's Allied Air Command at Ramstein. Since 2008, three events per year have been held in each of the Baltic States which further develop air interoperability and train procedures to maintain the region's safe and secure skies.

“BRTE XVII does not take place against the backdrop of the present real-world situation; however, it is a welcome symbol because it fits right into the situation where NATO demonstrates and regularly trains its commitment to the Baltic States and also cooperates with our PfP partners Sweden and Finland,” said General Wundrak. “The augmentation of the United States detachment by six additional aircraft is certainly motivated by the Ukraine situation. I consider this to be a quick sign of Alliance solidarity in a defensive manner. Other NATO Allies have offered more assets for the Baltic Air Policing, and we will now need to see how we can coordinate these in order to sustain this clear presence and firm solidarity.”

NATO Operation OCEAN SHIELD

Story by Rubén Rodríguez Peña, Commander Spanish navy SNMG-2 Public Affairs Officer

Photo by Santiago Gil, Petty Officer 3rd Class Spanish navy, Staff Public Affairs Specialist SNMG-2

NATO has been contributing to the international counter piracy effort off the Horn of Africa since December 2008. Initially, NATO ships in Operation ALLIED PROVIDER escorted UN and World Food Programme Shipping. As an operational requirement, this protection was expanded to all merchant traffic in the Gulf of Aden under Operation ALLIED PROTECTOR.



HNLMS Evertsen as seen from ESPS Cristóbal Colón, SNMG-2 Flag Ship

Since August 2009, NATO warships and aircraft have been patrolling the waters off the Horn of Africa as part of Operation OCEAN SHIELD. Their mission remains to contribute to international efforts to counter maritime piracy but now they also participate in capacity building efforts with regional states.

Operation OCEAN SHIELD cooperates closely with other naval forces, including those of the EU and US, as well as independent actors operating against the threat of piracy in the region. Cooperation with the merchant community has been one of the most successful steps forward in the fight against piracy in the framework of a comprehensive approach to the problem.

Command and Control is exercised by the NATO military chain of command, with the Supreme Allied Commander Europe having delegated operational command to Maritime Command Headquarters, at Northwood, in the United Kingdom. Standing NATO Maritime Groups 1 and 2 alternate the command of the counter-

piracy operation every six months. In the first half of 2014, the Commander of Operation OCEAN SHIELD is Rear Admiral (ESP N) Eugenio Díaz del Río, Commander of Standing NATO Maritime Group 2, and Commander of Task Force 508.

Task Force 508 is a multinational force which also comprises Non-NATO units. NATO Allied Countries provide ships and maritime patrol aircraft to NATO Standing Maritime Groups which, in turn, assigns a number of ships to TF 508 on a rotational basis to carry out Operation OCEAN SHIELD. Currently the force is composed of the Spanish frigate ESPS CRISTÓBAL COLÓN (flagship); the Dutch frigate HNLMS EVERTSEN; the Italian destroyer ITS FRANCESCO MIMBELLI; and the Turkish frigate TCG GOKÇEADA.

In December 2013 and January this year two non-NATO ships took part in TF 508: the Ukrainian UPS HETMAN SAGAI DACHNYI and New Zealand's HNZMS TE MANA.

NATO naval forces operate off the Horn of

Africa, the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean up to the Strait of Hormuz – altogether an area greater than 2 million square miles or approximately the size of Western Europe.

NATO vessels conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions to verify the legitimate activity of shipping off the coast of Somalia. NATO ships also actively pursue suspected pirate vessels to prevent them from staging attacks. NATO boarding teams can board a suspect vessel to determine if pirates are on board and are empowered to use appropriate force to stop a pirate vessel or intervene in a hijacking. Any detained pirates are transferred as soon as possible to designated national law enforcement agencies.

The last hijacked vessel was in May 2012 whilst the last unsuccessful attack was in January 2014 when a group of eight suspected pirates was detained. These are good performance indicators for TF 508 and their counter-piracy partners.

Headquarters Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum - Visits and Activities

Prepared by Adjutant Edwin Tromp, photos by PAO JFCBS

Headquarters Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum major activities are depicted along five lines of effort within the Brunssum Campaign Plan. Each of these activities requires an ambitious level of attention and effort. Beside routine staff work we plan and conduct special activities in the form of visits and training, as well as, social events on a regular basis. We would like to provide you an overview of those activities by taking a quick look at a few selected events.

March 2014



Commander NATO Rapid Deployable Corps in Italy (NRDC-ITA) stopped by at Joint Force Command Brunssum

On March 24th Lieutenant General Giorgio Battisti, Commander NATO Rapid Deployable Corps in Italy

(NRDC-ITA) stopped by at Joint Force Command Brunssum for a short visit. Purpose of the Office Call with Air Marshal Graham Stacey, Deputy Commander JFCBS and the Working Lunch with Lieutenant General Richard G. Tieskens, Chief of Staff in Brunssum, was to get an update on the actual status of this Headquarters and to enhance the personal relationship between the military leaders. Lieutenant General Battisti ended his trip after a closing office call with Deputy Chief of Staff for Support, Major General Vincenzo Santo.



Commander JFC Brunssum Visits Estonia

General Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander JFC Brunssum, and several members of his staff visited Estonia from 24-26 March to highlight military coordination, training and

regional focus on the Baltic States and Northern Europe. The visit, planned several months ago as part of routine engagement in the region, also served to reassure Baltic Allies who have become concerned by Russia's recent actions to annex the Crimea region of the Ukraine.



Commander JFC Brunssum Visits Latvia

JFC Brunssum Commander, General Hans-Lothar Domröse, visited Riga, Latvia, to give a keynote address to a group of 200 students and faculty of the National

Defence College of Latvia, 25 March, as part of his visit to the Baltic States.



Commander JFC Brunssum Visits Lithuania

General Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander JFCBS, visited Vilnius, Lithuania on 27 March as part of a visit to the Baltic States and Poland to enhance cooperation and training in the region.



Polish Chief of Defence Staff Briefs General Domröse

JFC Brunssum Commander, General Hans-Lothar Domröse travelled to Poland 28 March following his visit to the Baltic States. A range

of defence issues were discussed including military cooperation, exercises and training, support to international operations and the Ukraine-Russia crisis



JFC Brunssum Hosts Allied Rapid Reaction Corps Staff Officers

JFC Brunssum hosted a group of Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) staff officers Wednesday 02 April 2014.

Discussions focused on mission roles and responsibilities, the Combined Joint Task Force deployability concept, the conduct of strategic communications and new media i.e. the incorporation of social media activities into daily business in both peacetime and mission scenarios.



JFC Brunssum Commander Delivers Keynote Address in Helsinki

General Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander JFC Brunssum, visited Helsinki, Finland, 3 April to give a keynote address to members

of the National Defence Course Association at Helsinki University. Topics covered ranged from current defence issues, the General's regional focus on Northern Europe, and the NATO-Finland partnership. Members of the association, which includes senior politicians, business leaders and military commanders, took the opportunity to ask the General questions about the Russia-Ukraine crisis, collective defence and the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.



50 JFC Brunssum Staff Participate in Exercise Viking 14 in Sweden

Under the leadership of Major General (USAF) Martinez 50 JFC Brunssum personnel are currently participating in the Swedish-led Interagency

exercise 'Viking 14'. The exercise is being conducted in Enköping, Sweden.



JFC Brunssum Commander & Deputy Commander Attend Exercise Viking 14 Distinguished Visitors Day

General Hans-Lothar Domröse (COM JFCBS) and Air Marshal Graham

Stacey (DCOM JFCBS) visited Exercise VIKING 14, in Enköping Sweden, Tuesday 08 April.



Lieutenant General Richard Tieskens Departs JFC Brunssum

Friday 11 April 2014,
Lieutenant General Richard Tieskens (Netherlands

Army) drew the curtain down on his highly successful 38 year military career. In a short but heartfelt ceremony Commander JFC Brunssum, General Hans-Lothar Domröse, supported by Headquarters senior leadership and staff, gathered at the Main Entrance to formally say goodbye to their Chief of Staff. On behalf of all present General Domröse thanked General Tieskens for his outstanding service and conveyed best wishes for his new post as Director of Real Estate Management, in the Dutch Ministry of Interior.

In a seamless transition of responsibilities Major General Michel Yakovleff (French Army) assumed the responsibilities of JFC Brunssum Chief of Staff.



Commander Netherlands Support Command (C-CDC) visits JFC Brunssum

The new Commander Netherlands Support Command (C-CDC), Drs. Leonard Kok MPA, visited JFC Brunssum and all

Netherlands military personnel based on the Brunssum site on 16 April. He was welcomed by Air Marshal Graham Stacey (Deputy Commander JFC Brunssum) Major General Hans van Griensven (Deputy Chief of Staff (Plans) JFC Brunssum). After being briefed on ISAF, the NRF and Host Nation Support provided by Netherlands CDC, he toured the Headquarters to meet with Dutch staff members.

A lunch followed by a visit to NCI Agency entities hosted at the Brunssum site completed Mr Kok's visit before he departed for Geilenkirchen Air Base.



Czech General Staff Course Visits JFC Brunssum

Thursday 10 April JFC Brunssum was pleased to host a visit of the Czech General Staff Course. In his welcoming remarks Commander JFC Brunssum, General Hans-

Lothar Domröse, outlined the role and responsibilities of his headquarters and concluded with questions. The General provided a unique insight to the evolution of the ISAF mission, the utility of the NATO Response Force, Regional Focus, NATO's future training and exercise approach, and the Ukraine/Russia crisis.

Following a light lunch the group travelled to NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen to continue their program.



New JFC Brunssum Chief of Staff Addresses His Personnel

Having assumed the duties of Chief of Staff JFC Brunssum at the end of last week Major General Michel Yakovleff (French Army) seized the opportunity to immediately address his workforce Monday 14 April.

Not an unknown quantity the General has already completed two years in the headquarters as the Deputy Chief of Staff (Plans) and is ideally placed for the broader challenge confronting him. In concise remarks he emphasized his

focus would be squarely on what needs to be done, and not the implementation of change purely for the sake of change.

Collaborative working, honest opinion and transparency will constitute the framework of his tenure. comprehensive overview of the JFCBS missions and roles, and were able to exchange with their guests on various topics.

May 2014

LANDCOM put one step forward towards Full Operational Capability with Loyal Bonus

Story by 1st Lieutenant Sercan Celik, PAO Allied Land Command



Allied Land Command (LANDCOM) has concluded Exercise LOYAL BONUS 2014 (LOBS14) Battle Staff Training (BST) successfully. The event took place between March 17 and 21 in HQ LANDCOM, Izmir, Turkey. BST is an integrated training event designed to maintain and improve the command's proficiency in mission-essential tasks comprised of responsibilities from several functional areas. LOBS is aimed at improving the internal work of LANDCOM as a Land Component Command (LCC) for a Major Joint Operation (MJO+). To synchronize activities and coordination between

the different functional areas, LANDCOM staff conducted a variety of boards, meetings and working groups during the BST.

Lieutenant General Frederick Ben Hodges, Commander of LANDCOM, presented his guidance to the LANDCOM staff on 14 March 2014 during Start of Exercise (STARTEX) briefings immediately prior to the BST.

Major General Uğur Tarçın, LANDCOM Chief of Staff, Officer Conducting the Exercise (OCE) for LOBS14, expressed that "LOBS has built a confident and cohesive LANDCOM Battle Staff with

a greater situational awareness and a shaped Common Operational Picture. LOBS effectively combined Individual training and Collective training. He asked staff to take previous BST's lessons learned into consideration. "

Brigadier General Wilhelm Grün, Deputy Chief of Staff Operations (DCOS Ops), who was also the Officer Directing the Exercise (ODE) stated: "During this battle staff training we were able to prove to ourselves that we are on the right track. We could fortify structures and procedures within our battle staff and, more importantly, take away lessons of where and how to adjust them for improvement. People became more comfortable with those structures, identifying their partners so as to enhance information flow as they went. We will invest our strongest efforts into the improvement of shortfalls in this field and be ready for our next big exercise in the LANCE series."

BG Grün summarized by saying: "We are much better today than we were last week. All exercise objectives were met, although in some cases only partially; however, the Battle Staff did a great job which is promising for the next steps on our "Stairway to Heaven".

JFC Naples Exercises for Certification for Mounting and Deploying

Story by Robert J. Leese, Captain USA Air Force, Public Affairs Officer JFC Naples

A small team from NATO Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples 'deployed' to Italian Air Base in Grazzanise, Italy on March 20th to test their equipment and procedures as part of the ongoing preparations for potential deployment as part of the NATO Response Force Headquarters (NRF HQ).

This formed the culmination of Exercise Naples Bonus 2014, a mounting and deployability exercise designed to test the new procedures for deploying the NRF HQ in response to an order from the North Atlantic Council, the primary political decision-making body for NATO. Naples Bonus 2014 is the first leg of JFC Naples NRF Certification process, which will train and assess JFC Naples Headquarters ability to command and control NRF 2015 in a complex environment.

Under the Command of Captain David Heley, UK Royal Navy, the 16 members of the Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) were equipped, prepared and deployed by the staff at JFC Naples as the spearhead of a simulated NRF HQ deployment.

Captain Heley explained, "This exercise has provided an opportunity to test our new procedures for mounting and deploying the headquarter personnel and allowed my team to get hands-on training with our kit which enables us to just drive out of the headquarters and be almost totally self-sustaining as we deploy to just about anywhere NATO needs us."

The two day OLRT deployment to Grazzanise Air Base allowed the team to fully test all their equipment,

from establishing secure satellite communications with JFC Headquarters Naples to familiarizing themselves with their equipment and the Land Rover vehicles. The team also had the opportunity to demonstrate much of their capability to the Commander of the NRF HQ, Canadian Lt. Gen. J.Vance.

Lt. Gen. Vance stated, "This is an opportunity for us to test the equipment, test the procedures for actual field deployment and also work through with the actual staff activities that would occur in terms of conducting the reconnaissance and liaison activities. It's the high readiness, quick response that NATO has available to it. Very sophisticated, very well equipped, very well manned, and kept at relatively short notices to move to respond to crises or whatever the alliance wishes to achieve."

Canadian Joint Operations Command has the watch

Story by LCdr Williams - CJOC

As CJOC's Canadian Forces Integrated Command Centre (CFICC) enters its second year as the CAF's 24/7 operational centre, it's important to let the CAF know if they have relevant operational/strategic information push it to CFICC. They will analyse and forward the information to those who need to know within the Senior CAF Leadership.



Canada's Chief of the Defence Staff General Tom Lawson visits CFICC

CFICC Beginning

CJOC Commander Lieutenant-General Stuart Beare's intent for CJOC was to anticipate future operations, prepare for contingencies, and then conduct those operations with efficiency and effectiveness.

CFICC has evolved and made strides as part of transformation and a key element was bringing the Command and Control elements of previous commands together "we (CJOC) have the watch".

Initially stood up as a blend of the strategic and operational watch floors from previous commands, CFICC has both integrated and evolved along with CJOC to be the focal point of information flow between the planners within CJOC to the Strategic Joint Staff (SJS), Joint Task Forces (JTF) around the country, Canadian Defence attachés around the world, and deployed forces around the globe.

CJOC comprises task forces and elements employed on operations; standing domestic Regional Joint Task Force Headquarters in Yellowknife, Victoria, Edmonton, Toronto, Montréal and Halifax; the Joint Operational Support Group, headquartered in Kingston with units across Canada; a worldwide network of liaison officers and command and control, intelligence,

and support nodes; and a headquarters in Ottawa. CJOC exercises operational control of the Joint Forces Air Component Command, Maritime Component Command, 1st Canadian Division Headquarters, and Special Operations Coordination Element.

CFICC's 24/7 watch comprises an integrated joint operational and strategic watch that acts as a conduit to facilitate information flow thereby enabling CJOC to conduct complex operations. CFICC is not only connected to deployed forces and other CAF operation centres, but is also connected to federal ops centres here at home and several allied operation centres abroad. CFICC is unique as it is capable of monitoring over 20 classified and unclassified systems in order to maintain situational awareness both at home and abroad.

Operation Level Information On Demand

"The key to CJOC's Operation Centre's effectiveness is the maintenance of a 72-hour Rolling Focus on world events and their impact and/or potential impact on CAF operations," says Commander Kristjan Monaghan, director of CFICC. "With 18 operations currently active around the world, CJOC's Operation Centre funnels information to SJS strategic level authorities and policy makers, CJOC operational planners, and

tactical level response teams around the country and in-theatre."

The Operation Centre's rolling focus means ensuring operational and intelligence information is delivered on target to the right people through a wide variety of classified and unclassified networks. This information is drawn from the past 24 hours to serve as a foundation, and then looks forward at the future 24-48 hours to create a comprehensive picture for the CJOC planners to use to anticipate, plan and execute ongoing and future operations.

Proving the Process

After the committed effort of the first year to bring its operational parameters into full maturity, CFICC was ready to play its part within CJOC to help make Op RENAISSANCE, the CAF's disaster response in the Philippines, a smooth and effective operation.

Utilizing the wide array of joint expertise on the Watch Floor, CFICC functioned in the central role of conducting mission briefs to the CJOC Command teams as a key component to the daily battle rhythm, processing DART SITREPs sent from in-theatre, and creating reporting products to SJS and CJOC staff. CFICC proved itself as the go-to contact point when information was either provided or required.

A Reputation for Having the Pulse on Operations

In the end, CFICC's goal is to not only be ready with the vital information needed and to provide that information on demand, but to be focused and analyze world events. CJOC's Operation Centre is constructed to have situational awareness and then to clarify information, connect civilian and military authorities with the tactical level teams, and ensure the proper operational information is processed and disseminated accurately, timely and securely. When incidents happen that directly impact or have the potential to involve the CAF, CFICC will ensure the information is organized, evaluated, and communicated to provide ordered timely information flow to the Senior leadership of the CAF

NATO Media Simulation Team Relies on Civilian Personnel to Deliver Effective Training

Story by Laura Loflin DuBois Media Producer and Trainer, Media Simulation Section, JWC



Eight years ago civilians Laura and Pete DuBois were hired to establish NATO's first organic media training and simulation section. Based at the Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway, their team has successfully cultivated NATO's media simulation capability into an internationally recognized centre of excellence.

The JWC media team is small but effective, with six permanent civilian members and two rotational military personnel. Team DuBois credits their four civilian multi-media technical experts as the secret to their success. "We originally had 4 military

technicians, but we found we needed a more specific skill set than the military could provide," said Pete DuBois. "It took some time, but we were able to convert those four positions to civilian posts, advertise them internationally, and select those key personnel most capable for our mission."

Since then the media simulation mission has grown in both size and substance. Originally focused on traditional television news (World News Today), the team has expanded to provide training audiences with practical on-camera media training, exercise news aggregation websites (NewsWeb) and social media simulations (Chatter and

FacePage).

Training to succeed in the information battlespace is an essential element in NATO's operational level exercises and mission rehearsals, and the JWC media team is on the forefront setting the standard for media simulation and training.

In a recent article published in the JWC's Three Swords Magazine, Laura DuBois discusses the evolution of NATO's media simulation capability to prepare NATO commanders and their staffs for today's operational environment.

Media Simulation for Today's Operational Environment

Story by Laura Loflin DuBois, Media Producer and Trainer, Media Simulation Section, JWC
Originally Published in JWC Three Swords News, Issue 25, Jul/Oct 2013



Winning in today's operational battle space requires a paradigm shift in the military mind-set. Media planning is not a stand-alone issue, but one that affects every other principle of war upon which a commander must rely. In warfare, particularly counterinsurgency operations, it is essential to evaluate the media implications of operational decision-making. Disciplined planning for possible contingencies must include media engagement, or the planning process is not complete.

in today's environment, NATO has to leverage the media early to ensure the story it wants told is already in the public's consciousness - before the enemy releases his version of the story. If NATO is consistently perceived to be reacting to news reports, it will appear to be losing the media battle, and along with it, its credibility, legitimacy and relevance. This is also a key element of NATO's counterinsurgency strategy, which requires proactively acknowledging mistakes and making them public before the adversary has the opportunity to spin the story to his advantage.

Media simulation and training

With this in mind, the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) committed considerable resources to developing its own organic media simulation and training capability. Envisioned in 2003, the capability was realized in 2006 when the JWC stood up its Media Simulation Section within the Joint Exercise Division.

The primary mission of the Section is to create and simulate the media environment for JWC exercises and mission rehearsals. Since 2006, the team has supported all JWC NATO Response Force (NRF) exercises and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) training events and has recently taken the lead for media simulation support for NATO's Crisis Management Exercises (CMX) at NATO HQ. Working closely with the content and scenario teams, the media team's goal is to simulate realistic environments that allow commanders and their staffs to train on media as weapon system, one that is both strategic and asymmetric.

Social media evolution

Just as the media environment has evolved in the last decade, so have the capabilities of the Media Simulation Section. Originally focused on traditional media, including television news and print media products, the team adapted its capabilities to match the evolving environment and embraced the game-changing prominence of new media. By creating tools including its media aggregation website, "NewsWeb" and

its social media simulations "FacePage" (FaceBook simulation), and "Chatter" (Twitter simulation), the JWC media team has been able to effectively simulate holistic media and information environments. "From our perspective, it is not possible to create a realistic media environment without also simulating social media. Chatter and FacePage are great tools that allow the training audiences to hone their social media skills, and they also give us a realistic medium to push strategic information to the training audiences for consumption and dissemination as necessary," said Pete DuBois, JWC Media Producer.

Social media implications

Social media can empower individuals to achieve strategic military and political effects, without bureaucratic oversight, to a nearly unlimited audience. This means the information power monopoly formerly enjoyed by the military no longer exists, as evidenced during the ISAF operation in Afghanistan when Richard Holbrooke asked "How can a man in a cave out-communicate the world's leading communications society?"

Insurgents have figured out how to leverage strategic outcomes with minimal technological infrastructure. By employing a videographer along with an improvised explosive device, they have transformed a military tactical weapon into a strategic information weapon. They understand it is not necessarily the action, but the effect that is so debilitating, and they are maximizing that effect with the use of media.

Advance warning system

Social media also serves as a strategic source of information for NATO. "Social media serves as an early warning indicator of major events that may surface in traditional out-lets later in the day," says Dr. Juergen Focke, ISAF Public Affairs Officer. "A recent ex-ample of this would be the Taliban's release of their most recent Eid message. The Taliban often pushes information out to both media and the general public by using Twitter and 'justpaste.it' in addition to their website. By monitoring the social media space we

were able to read Mullah Omar's message at the same time that journalists were and we were then prepared for the tone of the media response and also better positioned to answer questions about the statement from media."

Understanding the social media dynamic in theatre was essential for developing a realistic media environment for the recent UNIFIED ENDEAVOR 14-1/ISAF Training Event 13-2 conducted in Grafenwoehr, Germany. Based on theatre input, Chatter was launched as an open application, with users providing the noise inherent in social media, but with strategic accounts used to push scenario injects to the training audience as necessary. Ultimately, Chatter proved an effective and realistic tool that created the desired effects while at the same time replicating Twitter's advance warning capabilities.

Future of media simulation

The JWC Media Simulation Section was recently hailed as "NATO's Centre of Excellence for Media Training" by SACT, General Jean-Paul Paloméros. Providing NATO's only full-time professional media training capability across the Alliance, the Media Simulation Section is always looking for innovative ways to keep the section current and relevant.

As the environment evolves, and information becomes more powerful than bombs and bullets, it will be even more critical to simulate realistic media environments for NATO's operational and strategic level training. Whether through World News Today reports, web-based print media articles, social media simulations or on-camera media training, the JWC Media Simulation Section will continue to ensure NATO's war fighters are better prepared to take the fight onto the information battlefield.

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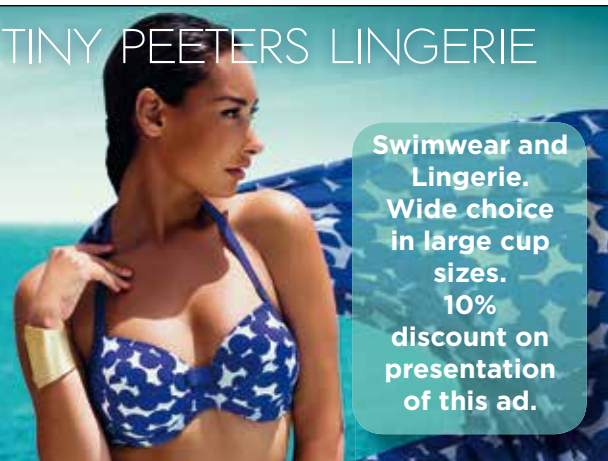


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EXERCISE VIKING 14: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH EXERCISE

Story and photos by Major Anthony Pfau, Public Affairs Office JFCBS.



JFCBS Members participating in Exercise Viking 14, under the lead off Major General Martinez, Deputy Chief of Staff Operations JFCBS

Exercise VIKING 14 was a training platform designed to prepare civilians, military and police together for deployment to a peace or crisis response mission area. It was the 7th in a series of major multifunctional civil-military exercises organised by Sweden over the past thirteen years. Viking is the largest recurring civil-military relations exercise in the world. Commencing Thursday 3rd of April 2014, a 50-strong party of Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFCBS) personnel participated in this two-

week exercise, in Enköping, Sweden. The Brunssum group was led by Major General (USA F) Martinez and Brigadier General (BUL A) Dyakov.

The lawyers discussed a range of topical issues to include the applicability of the law of armed conflict to cyber operations, targeting processes and lessons drawn from the recent Exercise Steadfast Jazz. It was not all work and no play – the lawyers managed to get together in the International Conference Centre where they enjoyed a social event.

Wg Cdr Allan Steele of JFC Legal Office was under no doubt that the conference had the desired effect: “This was about people; solidifying inter-personal relationships and debating issues of legal significance in a specialist forum to synchronize our thinking. Both ends were achieved through open discussion, facilitated by our excellent staff. This is fully in line with the goals set by the HQ’s Chief LEGAD, Colonel Nooijen, on his arrival at Brunssum. Events like these can only serve to make us more effective in advising our respective clients throughout the NRF community – in our case, that is our Commander.”



The conference was opened and closed by Deputy Commander Air Marshal Graham Stacey, who emphasized the vital importance of sound and proactive legal advice at all levels in the NATO force structure. Given the Legal Office’s desire to continue to make a positive difference in the NATO legal community, there is already talk of a follow up conference with the hope that this may become a regular feature of business in Brunssum.

JFC Brunssum Operational Capability Concept Evaluation & Feedback Team Conduct Advisory Visit to Finland.

Story by LTC Edin Fako and MAJ Tomas Bergman



The JFC Brunssum OCC E&F Team

The JFC Brunssum Operational Capability Concept Evaluation and Feedback (OCC E&F) Team has recently conducted an Advisory Visit (AV) in preparation for both the NATO Evaluation Level 1 (NEL1) and

NATO Evaluation Level 2 (NEL-2) that will be conducted in Finland in the period of 16-19 September 2014. The aim of the AV was to provide advice and support to the national Evaluation

Team as well as to verify all Exercise and Evaluation related documents prepared by the Exercise Director, LTC Timo Iltanen (FIN A), together with his team of planners.

The JFC Brunssum OCC E&F Team seized the opportunity to develop fruitful discussions on a range of issues and questions related to the exercise and checklists (that will be used during evaluation) in order to avoid any possible misinterpretations that might jeopardize the overall evaluation activity.

Further, JFCBS OCC E&F personnel provided all necessary briefings on evaluation procedures and methods, including grading and reporting procedures, which represents an important component to ensure a fruitful evaluation.

Finish Officers involved in the AV were very motivated and enthusiastic throughout - their very positive approach, keenness to learn and transparent demeanor auger well for the evaluation to come.



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OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY CONCEPT EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK PROGRAMME (OCC E&F)

Story by LTC Edin Fako, BiH A, Maj Tomas Bergman SWE A and LTC Frank Gillissen DEU A

Over the last two decades, NATO has developed many programmes of cooperation with Partner Countries. One of them is the Operational Capability Concept Evaluation and Feedback (OCC E&F) Programme which was endorsed by Heads of State and Governments (HOSG) at the Washington Summit in 1999. The aim of the OCC E&F Programme is to improve and evaluate the levels of interoperability and military capabilities of partner units in order to enhance the operational relationship between the Alliance and partners contributing to NATO-led operations.



NATO Evaluation in Austria



SELF Evaluation in Azerbaijan

OCC E&F is not a training programme, but it encompasses a broader process of evaluation and feedback of forces and units declared to the OCC Pool of Forces (PoF). Consequently, joining the OCC E&F Programme opens the door to a considerable training commitment for Partners.

OCC E&F is conducted at two levels through the exercises that mirror an international scenario providing the ability to facilitate all selected tasks. Level 1 is focused on interoperability while Level 2 concentrates on a Partner unit's military capability and mission accomplishment. Each of these levels is subdivided in a Self Evaluation (SEL) and a NATO Evaluation (NEL). The difference in between is that SELs are a national responsibility monitored by NATO whilst the Alliance plays a more prominent role in the NEL process.

Within Joint Force Command Brunssum dedicated OCC E&F Staff, represented both by Partnership Staff Element (PSE) and NATO Officers, provides advice, guidance, expertise and conduct programme activities to support Partners. These personnel have been trained and qualified in accordance with the OCC E&F Methodology.

JFCBS CONTRIBUTION TO THE OCC E&F PROGRAMME

Since 2013, HQ JFC Brunssum (JFCBS) has played an increasingly significant and active role in the OCC E&F Programme. Based on the SHAPE list of OCC E&F activities for 2013 (OCC E&F Conference, Salzburg 2012), SHAPE tasked JFCBS to support Partner Countries, for which JFCBS is responsible for, in activities related to the OCC E&F Programme. The request for support was in keeping with the SHAPE Partnership Programme Management and was included in the planned JFCBS Partner Cooperation Menu (PCM) list of activities.

JFCBS was tasked to run many different OCC E&F events in 2013, which required a great deal of effort, especially if we take into account that the JFCBS OCC E&F Team consisted of only three officers from the J9-Military Partnership Branch. Despite its few members, in 2013 the JFCBS OCC E&F Team was able to manage every scheduled OCC E&F activity including not only evaluations of different units from Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Finland and Kazakhstan but also Advisory Visits, Evaluator Training Courses and other working meetings through which our OCC E&F Team supported partner countries in the

preparation of exercise as well as the entire evaluation. The best example was probably the successful completion of the NATO OCC E&F evaluation process for several units of the Austrian Armed Forces that were deemed **COMBAT READY** and capable of supporting NATO, European Union and United Nations missions.

JFCBS CONTRIBUTION TO THE OCC E&F PROGRAMME IN 2014

This year the JFCBS OCC E&F Team continues to be responsible for OCC E&F activities. Based on the SHAPE list of OCC E&F activities for 2014 (OCC E&F Conference, Almaty 2013), JFCBS has been tasked to support Partner Countries in several OCC E&F activities which will be conducted this year. Accordingly, J9-MPB is working on the establishment of a more consistent pool of evaluators within JFCBS. This process will be continued in order to increase the number of OCC E&F certified evaluators available and ready to run ever more demanding OCC E&F activities.



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NEED FOR SPEED

Michael Keaton
Aaron Paul

124 min

1900



24 MAY 2014 SAT

MILLION DOLLAR ARM

Jon Hamm
Alan Arkin

--- min

1600



17 MAY 2014 SAT

MOMS' NIGHT OUT

Sarah Drew
Patricia Heaton

98 min

1600



24 MAY 2014 SAT

TRANSCENDENCE

Johnny Depp
Rebecca Hall

119 min

1900



17 MAY 2014 SAT

NEIGHBORS

Seth Rogen
Zac Efron

96 min

1900



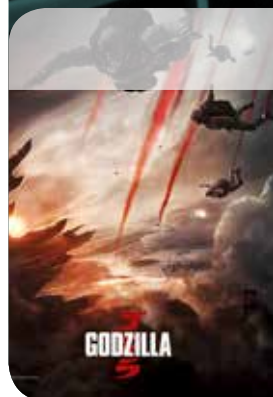
30 MAY 2014 FRI

BLENDED

Drew Barrymore
Adam Sandler

117 min

1900



23 MAY 2014 FRI

GODZILLA 2014

Aaron Taylor Johnson
Ken Watanabe

123 min

1900



31 MAY 2014 FRI

X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE
PAST

Hugh Jackman
James McAvoy

130 min

1900

Country: The Netherlands

Location: The Netherlands is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, consisting of twelve provinces in western Europe and three islands in the Caribbean. The European part of the Netherlands borders the North Sea to the north and west, Belgium to the south, and Germany to the east; and shares maritime borders with Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom. The Netherlands was one of the first countries in the world to have an elected parliament, and is governed as a parliamentary democracy organized as a unitary state. The capital city of the Netherlands, mandated by the constitution, is Amsterdam; however, the seat of government is located in The Hague. The Netherlands in its entirety is often referred to as "Holland", which in strict usage, refers only to North and South Holland, two of its provinces. The former usage is considered incorrect or informal, depending on the context, but is generally accepted when referring to the national football team. The Netherlands is a geographically low-lying country, with about 20% of its area and 21% of its population located below sea level, and 50% of its land lying less than one metre above sea level. This distinct feature contributes to the country's name: in Dutch (Nederland), English, and many other European languages, its name literally means "Low Land" or "Low Countries." Most of the areas below sea level are man-made, caused by centuries of extensive and poorly controlled peat extraction that lowered the surface by several metres. Even in flooded areas, peat extraction continued through turf dredging. Beginning in the late 16th century, land reclamation started and large polder areas are now preserved through elaborate drainage systems that include dikes, canals and pumping stations. Nearly 17% of the country's land area is reclaimed from the sea. Much of the Netherlands is formed by the estuary of three important European rivers, which together with their distributaries form the Rhine-Meuse-Scheldt delta. Most of the country is very flat, with the exception of foothills in the far southeast and several low hill ranges in the central parts.

Area:	Total: 41,543 km ²
Water:	18.41%
Coast line:	451 km
Population:	16,819,595 (Estimate 2014)
Capital:	Amsterdam
Head of State:	King Willem Alexander Claus George Ferdinand van Oranje Nassau
Economy:	GDP € 613 Billion (Estimate 2014)
Budget:	About € 600 Billion
Currency:	Euro (€)

Industries: agriculture-related industries, metal and engineering products, electronic machinery and equipment, chemicals, petroleum, construction, microelectronics, fishing

Agriculture: A highly mechanized agricultural sector employs 4% of the labor force but provides large surpluses for the food-processing industry and for exports. The Dutch rank third worldwide in value of agricultural exports, behind the United States and France, with exports earning \$55 billion annually. A significant portion of Dutch agricultural exports are derived from fresh-cut plants, flowers, and bulbs, with the Netherlands exporting two-thirds of the world's total.

The Netherlands also exports a quarter of all the world's tomatoes, and trade of one-third of the world's exports of chili's, tomatoes and cucumbers goes through the country. The Netherlands also exports one-fifteenth of the world's apples.

Export: The Netherlands is one of the world's 10 leading exporting countries.



When did you arrive in the Netherlands?

This is usually the first question of this article. Well, I arrived on the 25th of May 1961, on my father's 33rd birthday, in a town called Alkmaar (about 40 Km north of Amsterdam) which is famous for its cheese market. You really have to see it on Fridays.

In 1979 I joined the Navy in Den Helder, not far from my home town. At that time girls were not allowed to have a career in the Navy; nowadays, of course, it is considered to be normal. But attending the Academy and sailing, back then, was out of the question. So I started as a communications officer and soon after that I started my long career in military Information- and Communication Technology (ICT). The first ten years I worked on automating trainers for frigate and submarine teams; this was followed by a few years working as a system developer of administrative systems. Until 2010 I managed business analysis teams.

During a holiday in 2008 I fell in love with Africa and in 2010 my African career started when I joined the African Union/United Nations mission in Darfur (UNAMID) in Sudan. My job was in J5 in the UNAMID HQ in El Fasher. From 2011 to 2013 I worked as a Defence Attaché in the youngest nation of the world, South Sudan. Although life in South Sudan is very tough, especially for people at the grass roots and especially for women and children, I consider myself privileged that I could travel around in this beautiful part of the world. For these three years my family was not with me, but they sometimes joined me in my travels through Africa.

In September 2013, I arrived in Brunssum. My family is (again) not with me. My husband Theo, son Stijn and daughter Elsemiek with her boyfriend Jeff, live, study and work near Rotterdam, the port of Europe. But my in-laws live in Heerlen, so the Brunssum region is not unknown to me.

In Brunssum I work as the Deputy Political Adviser. I represent the POLAD, Mr. Maarten de Sitter, when he is not around; since he is often joining our Commander in his travels to allied HQ's, partner nations in the region etc.

We at the POLAD office, give political advice to our Commander along the three priorities: Afghanistan (ISAF), NATO Response Force (NRF) and Regional Focus. Since the (political) developments in the world are running very fast, you can imagine that we have a busy office. My speciality is, of course, Africa and I am the Gender focal point for our office.

I have a bachelor's degree in Psychology and I am currently considering finishing a master's degree in Psychology with a focus on culture in organisations. I am a team worker and in my opinion complicated problems are handled best by a diverse team. That is why I like working in a multi-cultural environment so much.

It can't be a secret anymore that travelling is the most fun thing I like to do, especially with my family. This summer we are going to the US.

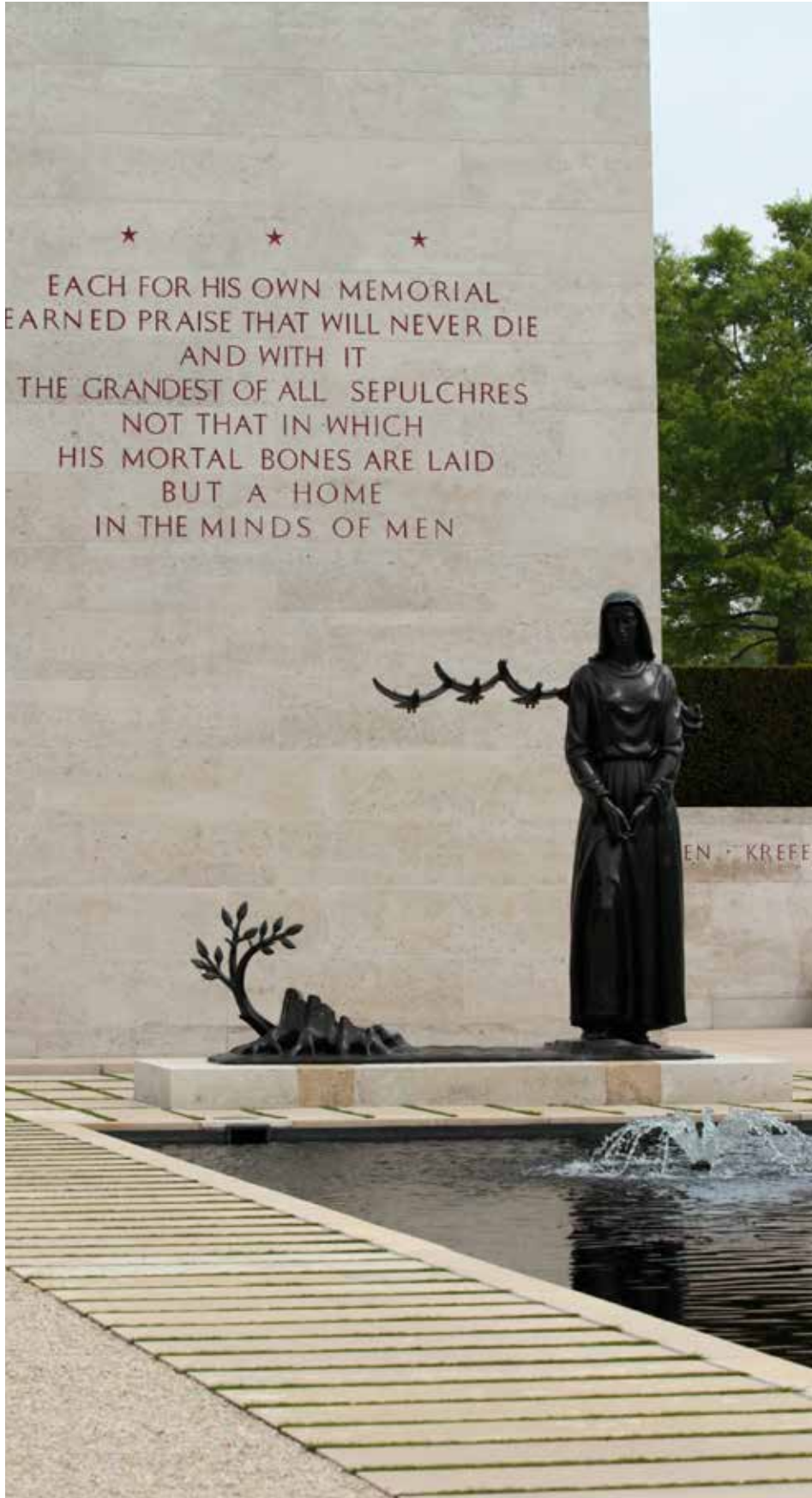
Did you know?

Story by Ed Frieser

Photos by Edwin Tromp PAO JFCBS

US Cemetery and Memorial - Margraten

Extensive Commemorations and Celebrations as 70 Years Liberation of South-Limburg, in September 2014, Draws Near.



Several Commemorations take place in the Netherlands in the month of May as the official national Memorial Day for the Netherlands is 4 May. But each year at the end of May a large Memorial Service takes place at Margraten Cemetery to commemorate the many thousands of US soldiers that died for our freedom. U.S. Memorial Day is held in Margraten on Sunday 25 May. Hence perhaps a location that is of interest to you. Let us explain the history and development of this beautifully maintained and peaceful place to you where 8,301 American soldiers came to rest.

History

This year, 70 years ago, D-Day on 6 June 1944, at Normandy in France, Europe's liberation from German Nazi occupation started. As a consequence South-Limburg was liberated in September 1944. On 12 September the American 30th Infantry Division, Old Hickory, had crossed the Belgian-Dutch border at Voeren. The first major Dutch city that was liberated was Maastricht on 14 September 1944. The town of Margraten was liberated by the US 30th Infantry Division on 23 September 1944. Although American and British Forces had crossed the borders of Limburg, on 18 September the Allied advance came to a standstill just north of Sittard. British troops liberated Venray in the north of Limburg on 17 October 1944. The northern and western part of the Netherlands still had to go through the terrible winter of 1944 / 1945, full of starvation; this is often referred to as the hunger-winter. The reason was the failed operation 'Market Garden' which set out to conquer the bridges

in the north at Arnhem across the River Rhine. As a consequence large portions of the Netherlands remained occupied. But Limburg already enjoyed regained freedom at the end of 1944

Cemetery for Ninth Army

The Ninth Army, made up of some 250,000 troops, was to carry out major attacks on the Rivers Ruhr and Rhine for the Allied Forces and start the advance on Berlin. It was expected that many soldiers would be killed. In October 1944 Captain Joseph Shomon of the 611th Graves Registration Company (GRC) visited the town hall of Margraten. The Captain had been ordered to look for a suitable plot of land for a cemetery for the Ninth Army. At first there were plans to construct a cemetery in Sittard or in Berg en Terblijt but in the end Margraten was chosen as a suitable location. Margraten is located 6 miles (10 km) east of Maastricht on the main highway, N278, to Aachen. Thirty hectares, the size of some fifty football fields, were turned into a cemetery.

Massive Casualties

The major attack of the Ninth Army between 16 November and 14 December caused 1133 casualties. During the

advance across the Ruhr and Rhine Rivers the Ninth Army suffered another 1358 GI's killed in the period between 25 March and 30 April 1945. The deceased soldiers were transferred to Margraten. By early May 1945, the cemetery counted 12,086 graves consisting of 8,886 Americans, 200 other Allied soldiers and 3,000 German soldiers. The German soldiers were later reburied at IJsselstijn in mid-Limburg. Most other Allied casualties were reburied at Nederweert War Cemetery (Commonwealth) and Amersfoort Cemetery. Following the assault on Wesel on 23 March 1944, the cemetery could no longer cope with the large number of corpses. At one point the number of dead soldiers counted 23,000. On 25 March 1945 the citizens of Margraten consequently were called upon to help dig graves. The citizens worked under extremely difficult weather conditions. Many adopted the graves to pay tribute to their liberators thus creating a special relationship with the inhabitants of this small town. On December 15, 1949 the Dutch military command officially handed over the cemetery to the American Battle Monuments Commission, which was put in charge of the architectural layout of the cemetery. It was only in 1960 that the cemetery became the place that it is now. On 7 July of that year, the cemetery

was officially opened. evening is called Prince's Night. On the eve of King's Day an awards ceremony is conducted where several thousand Dutch (and a small number of foreigners) receive a royal honour.

Memorial Service

This year the US Memorial Service will take place on Sunday 25 May. Perhaps you wish to also pay tribute and visit the ceremony. An impressive moment of the Memorial Service in May is always at the end of the ceremony when a flight of 4 US fighter aircraft and 4 Royal Netherlands F-16 fighter aircraft perform a missing man formation and roar over the assembled audience. Thus paying tribute to the thousands of soldiers giving the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

In September this year extensive liberation celebrations will also take place in Brunssum between 19-21 September. Keep an eye on the local publications for the programme including a tickertape parade, a memorial service, a static display of military hardware, musical performances.





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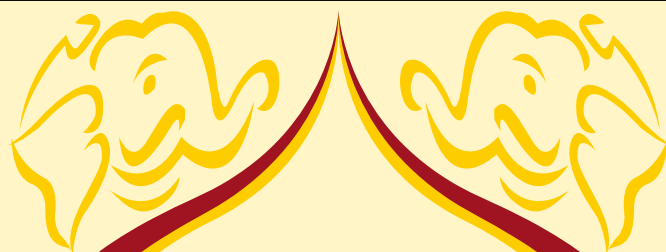
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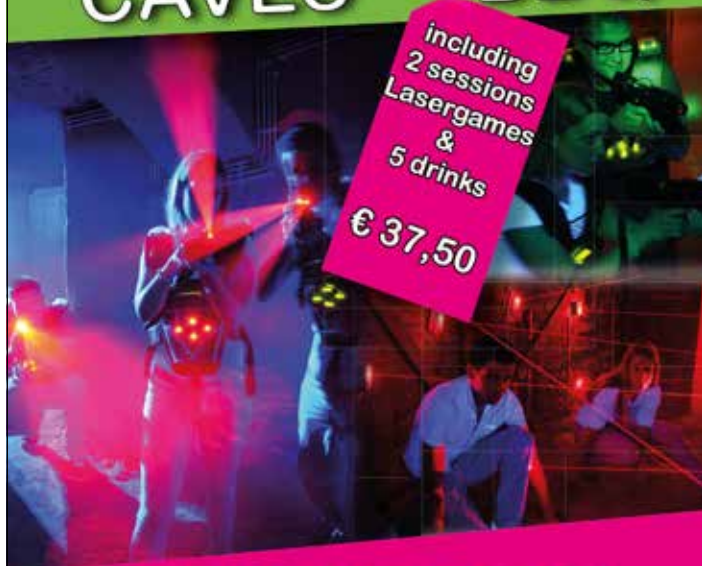
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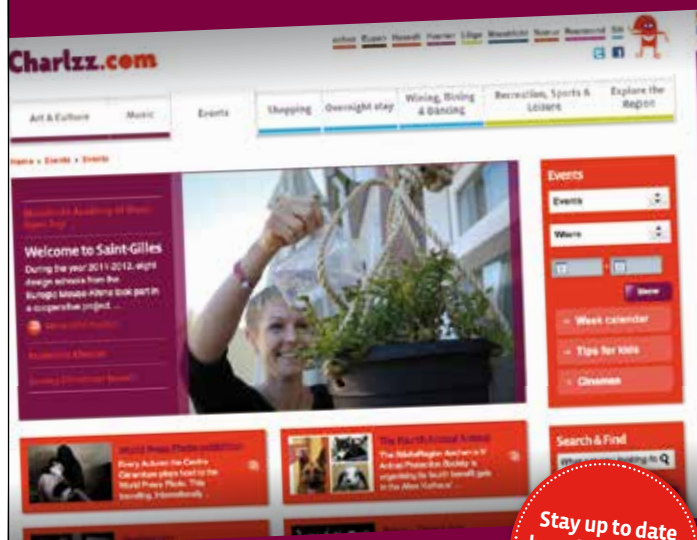
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Back To The Eighties.... Charity Night 2014

Story by Nathalie Lhermenier, photos by Edwin Tromp PAO JFCBS

Have you ever dreamt of a trip into the past? Back to those crazy eighties for example?



That was it on Friday 28 March 2014 at the International Conference Centre! The International Club Charity Committee was having its main event of the season: a huge and fun party « Charity Night » incorporating a « Back to the Eighties » theme and dress code.

The party had it all: amazing atmosphere, crazy costumes, delicious food and drinks from many different countries, terrific decorations, a gorgeous bar and so many funny attractions including : a giant Raffle, a Silent Auction and an exciting Casino, not to mention the great music provided by a highly skilled DJ with the band « Roundabout Forty ».

But the party was not just about having fun! All proceeds from the event – around 12000 Euros - will be donated to carefully selected charities.

The Charity Committee would like to thank all those who made this party such a resounding success. Special thanks go to raffle prize donors and

to Mr Will Rosie (All About Art) who designed such eye-catching posters and tickets.

The Charity Committee – part of the JFC HQ Brunssum International Club - is made up of volunteers from different countries. The Committee organises a number of fun and fund-raising events throughout the year such as the Craft Market (November), the Tour of Christmas Homes (December) and the sale of International Cookbooks. Everyone is invited to join and be part of these great adventures.

International Club Registration is open to all NATO ID cardholders. The aim of the Club is to promote friendship and mutual understanding. Activities and events (such as the monthly Coffee Morning gatherings, trips, etc.) are held throughout the year.

Contact Email : JFCBIC@yahoo.com
Facebook group for members : « JFC Brunssum International Club »

The 2013-2014 Selected Charities:

Honor Flight Network, US

“Opera SS. Medici Cosma e Damiano – Bitonto/Italy – Onlus”, Italy

Little Prince Hospice for Children, Poland

Progeria Family Circle EUROPE,

Sykehusbarn (Hospital Children), Norway

Angriff auf de Seele (Attack to the Soul), Germany

Vis De Joie, France

Once We Were Soldiers, United Kingdom

HAIMA CC, Czech Republic

Veterans Emergency Transition Services, Canada

Altı Nokta Korle Denegi (Six Dots Blind Association), Turkey

Estonian Paralympic Committee; S/K Meduus, Estonia Ontmoetingscentrum Limburgse Veteranen (OLV) ‘Het Eldershoes’, The Netherlands

International Club Upcoming Events:

Tuesday 13th May: Coffee Morning hosted by the Polish, Czech and French Delegations
• from 10.00 to 12.00 – at the ICC

Thursday 22nd May: Day trip to Leuven, Belgium

Tuesday 3rd June: Coffee Morning hosted by the UK Delegation
• from 10.00 to 12.00 – at the ICC – Charity cheques distributed



Corporal Neil Corless

London Marathon

Story by Corporal Neil Corless, NCIA section Brunssum

It's been two days since the London marathon and my legs still feel as though they're on fire! But what an amazing experience, the support was phenomenal and rather than a hard enduring run I felt I was starring in a carnival, excluding the last 7 excruciating miles that is. All throughout the route people are cheering you on, shouting your name, high fiving you, the people of London do themselves proud and I highly recommend it to anyone who has thought to enter. I even got to run with a former Ballon D'or winner Michael Owen for the last three miles who, incidentally, I beat by 50 seconds.

On submitting my ballot application and having a 1 in 7 chance of succeeding I was expecting to receive the rain jacket which is provided as substitute for the 6 in 7 chance of disappointment. You can imagine my excitement and anxiety when I found out I was drawn out the hat and I set myself an optimistic target of 3:30 hrs.

As this was in October last year, I was in no panic with my training plan and kept things

ticking over lightly with short 3-8 mile runs through the Heide and Schutters park. As the date drew nearer, I began feeling slightly more nervous about what I had entered myself into and started to increase the mileage every other week completing about 15 -20 mile runs four times before the main event. This led me to review my targeting time as to sustain an 8 minute per mile pace was beyond me and I felt a time of sub 4 hours more realistic.

Entering into the month of March I began tapering which is a geeky runner's term for decreasing your pace and distance in order to preserve the running legs. The main tip I received by other marathon runners 'save your racing legs for the race' which I must admit, proved extremely good advice.

As well as the self achievement factor, my thought was if you're to put your body through such an ordeal, do it for a good cause. It's easy to forget how lucky I am having two healthy young boys aged 2 ½ years and 7 months old and therefore decided to run for a charity called Children with Cancer.

Unfortunately there are people who aren't as lucky and not long after my eldest was born I read that the 6 month old daughter of friends of mine had been diagnosed with Leukemia. The anguish I felt for them and their daughter was overwhelming, especially with the emotions you feel when having your own child.

Hollie, who was the young girl in question, was admitted to hospital with 93% of cells in her bone marrow cancerous and after 9 days of intensive chemotherapy this percentage had dropped to 14%. Luckily two years on she is now on the road to recovery and that is due to organisations such as Children with Cancer acquiring the funding for research and developing cures.

The types of cancer affecting children are quite different from the cancers that affect adults. As we get older the changes that make a cell become cancerous take a long time to develop. There have to be a number of changes to the genes within a cell - these can happen by accident when the cell is dividing, or they can happen because the cell has been damaged by carcinogens. The damage is then passed on to 'daughter' cells when the cell divides.

The longer we live, the more time there is for these genetic mistakes to occur. Children - and especially infants - have had little time to acquire these mistakes and a genetic predisposition may either have been inherited or due to a genetic mutation that can occur when the child is in the womb.

Despite a wealth of research, much uncertainty remains over the causes of childhood cancers.

Research is complicated by the fact that there are many different factors which may cause cancer in children. Exposure to more than one of these factors is probably necessary - and probably at different stages of a child's life.

The relative rarity of childhood cancers further impedes research. And International collaborations are important as they increase the number of cancer cases available for study.

I must admit I had trepidation on running for a charity due to the extra pressure this added, many thoughts went through my head; what if I had to cancel through injury, what if I never finished, but speaking to all of you and reading the comments left on my JustGiving donation page, I believe it wouldn't have mattered.

A big THANK YOU goes out to all those who donated. You were all entered into a raffle drawn by the DCOM with prizes donated by myself and the B&S store. I also wish to thank Wg Cdr Allan Steele who organized a charity auction on my behalf, my father's local golf club (Dudley and Allerton members), and friends and family who supported me during all the training.

The charity support was fantastic, they provided a free massage, food and beer at the end meet up point and, listening to some of the stories as to why the charity was formed, reminded me once again of how lucky I am to have two healthy young boys.

On finishing with a time of 3:44:52 and with your help in raising just under €1000 I was one very tired but triumphant person. And as I sit here with a sun-burned face and legs melting the chair beneath me thinking will I do it again - HELL YEAH!!!



Experience „CHIAPAS – DIE Wasserbahn“

Prepared by PAO JFCBS

Phantasialand starts new season with a world sensation. In the new season 2014, guests of Phantasialand experience once again exciting adventures, fun, action and best entertainment. In the new season, a great and a world wide unique adventure is awaiting you: with the new attraction “Chiapas – DIE Wasserbahn” the guests experience an expedition full of fun and action!

The world’s most advanced log flume ride offers a breath taking ride, unique landscapes and loads of fun! Experience a full 6 minute adventure and the world’s steepest drop on a log flume ride. This is how “Chiapas – DIE Wasserbahn” sets new standards! The exclusively composed music will provide the perfect soundtrack for your expedition. With all this, “Chiapas – DIE Wasserbahn” creates a unique experience for all senses!

Double benefits

In this summer again, the guests can enjoy great attractions, an unforgettable adventure and remarkable fun - uniquely integrated in the themed areas of Phantasialand. Guest can go on a mouse hunt with **Maus au Chocolat!**

This attraction is a worldwide unique and interactive ride, for an extraordinary fun in 3D. At the **verrückte Hotel Tartüff** everything is topsy-turvy! Here, the world is being put upside down – a lot of fun for every age!

Great shows and unique attractions

Also the shows fill the guests with enthusiasm: magician Christian Farla enchants the audience with great illusions and surprises in the magic show **Sieben**. In the figure skating show **Relight my fire** the expert figure skater present a spectacular show full of passion, energy and gripping action with new choreographies. The dynamic and exciting show-production **Jump!** features stilt jumpers, tramp liners, BMX riders and break dancers. At the theatre for kids in Wuze Town the show **Hack & Buddl** promises fun for guest of all ages.

With the public favorites like **Black Mamba**, **Talocan**, **Winja’s Fear & Force**, **River Quest** or **Mystery Castle** you can experience thrill, action and adventure. Moreover, Phantasialand offers fun for the whole family. With **Wellenflug** you can go on an air journey at the Kaiserplatz. On **Wakobato**, an

adventure tour on the Mondsee is awaiting you and in **Würmling Express** you can discover the Wuzetal. In the mountains of Colorado you can ride with **Colorado Adventure** through the impressive mountain landscape.

Phantasialand

Address: Berggeiststraße 31-41, 50321 Brühl, Germany

Open: 1st April to 2nd November, daily from 09.00 to 18.00

Prices: Kids under 4 years free entrance, kids from 4 to 11 years € 22, teenagers and adults from 12 to 60 years € 45, adults over 60 years pay € 22. *Birth day boys and girls have free entrance on this day (on production of valid ID). The adventure tour offers kids an expedition throughout the Park. It is an ideal help for planning an exciting day at Phantasialand for parents and companions. You can find all information about family and kids attractions, shows, photo points with the six dragons and amazing free of admission offerings like the popular face-painting for children at a glance.*

website: www.phantasialand.de



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- For NATO ID card holders only
- The winners will be announced in the next edition of the Northern Star

Answer:

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Full name:

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Winners Royal Theater

The Northern Star congratulates the lucky winner of the last contest.

Tickets won by:

Huseyin Sahinli	OF-3 TURA
Jean-Marie Lhermenier	Division: Log
Monique Koetje	German Administration Office
Anaëlle Basle	French NSE
Uwe Meyer	BWSt

Restaurant Review



Taste of India

Reviewed by Barry Mellor

Dear Readers, sometime ago the Northern Star regularly included a Restaurant Review. The intent was to submit an objective assessment of a restaurant, state whether it was fine or family dining, provide its location/contact details, whether or not it was a speciality restaurant, include the price range of dishes offered, and generally provide a view of the dining experience. To maximize the catchment area our local readers were invited to contribute to this review process, sending articles and photographs to 'PAO for the Northern Star'. With this article this practice is rekindled; please feel free to contribute.

The Taste of India is a newly opened restaurant at the Tüddern shopping centre (3km north of Sittard) that brings authentic Indian food to the area. The menu is broad and, in some places, deliberately less spicy than might be expected in India as it has been slightly 'Europeanised' but the chef, especially flown in, is more than happy to match requirements.

Excellent food, original Indian beer, friendly service at a price that represents superb value for money (my wife and I had two main courses, two sweets and 3 beers for 34 Euros) the Taste of India will, I am sure, soon become a firm favorite for the curry lovers amongst us.

The building housing the restaurant is split into two halves. The front is a modern café or bistro called Grenzenlos. The café has a daily breakfast buffet from 0800 till noon. The back half of the building is the Taste of India.

Address:

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¹ the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

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