

CANDOER News



A quarterly Newsletter dedicated to Communicators AND Others Enjoying Retirement

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Welcome to the latest issue of the newsletter dedicated to the **CANDOERS** (Communicators **AND** Others **E**njoying **R**etirement). This newsletter will be distributed quarterly. New issues will be posted on the Web for viewing on or about, January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15.

The **CANDOER** Web site and newsletter may be viewed by going to the following URI: www.candoer.org

The success of this newsletter depends on you. I need contributors. Do you have an interesting article, a nostalgia item, or a real life story you would like to share with others? If you do, send it to me at the following e-mail address:

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The PDF file and Microsoft Word document will allow you to download and print the newsletter exactly as if I had printed it and mailed it to you.

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**The happiest of people don't necessarily
Have the best of everything; they just
make the most of everything they have.**

Cat's Corner

The picture used at the top of page 1 is of the Department of State building in 1865.

I am now going to get up on my soap box and start a lecture.

Those of you who are long-time readers of the CANDOER News will remember the stories written for the "News" by my high school friend, Herb Walden. He wrote many humorous stories of growing up in our home town of Waterford in northwestern Pennsylvania.

As I told you last quarter, Herb and his mother were found dead in their double-wide trailer. Their deaths were a tragedy not only because of how they died but also in the fact they had no will, or if they had one no one knew where it was (It was not registered at the court house).

I do not know what the laws are in the state where you live, but in PA if you die without a will and they are unable to locate a spouse or immediate survivor the State takes possession of your body and your property. They cremate you and bury you in a paupers' grave, along with many other 'unknowns' and then sell your assets to pay for the burial.

Had Herb lived and his mother died or the other way around it would not have been a problem. All it would have taken is a will by either Herb or his mother. Because of the lack of a will, I spent several hours of research and telephone calls before I found a living relative who would take responsibility for their burial.

In many states you do not have to go to a lawyer and have an expensive, formal will written. You can write or type up a will in your own words, have it witnessed and notarized, and file it at the court house. Those last six words are the key, 'file it at the court house.'

Please, please, make up a will and get it filed. **DO NOT PUT IT OFF.** No one promises you tomorrow. Do not put your survivors through the unhappy task of trying to guess what your wishes were to liquidate your assets. Make up your will today! Your family will go through enough anguish without having to also go through a lot of court procedures to liquidate your assets.

The one-lines in this issue were received from several people over the past month or so.

**I Believe ... That sometimes the people
you expect to kick you when you're
down will be the ones to help you get
back up.**

The Cyprus Emergency through the eyes of an American

By Charles Christian

I arrived in Cyprus in the summer heat of July 1956, after only three months in post at Istanbul, to be a roving clerical worker in the Middle East, employed to handle classified documents. I was based at the Radio Relay Facility (RRF) that was located on the outskirts of Nicosia.

Back in those days we used the Morse code radio and teletype to relay signals to their destinations. Where we had military forces stationed overseas, we operated from our Department of Defense facilities, but in Cyprus we leased ground from the British for our own State Department secure RRF.

We had built a large and complex site filled with equipment for our operations at the center. Not far away we had several acres for the antennae for our receivers. The transmitters were a few miles away, maintained by a small team and guarded by some US Marines, dressed in civilian clothes. All messages received and transmitted were handled at our 'R' site.

Under normal circumstances, Cyprus would have been considered a plush posting, but 1956 was far from normal because EOKA was battling the British authorities for enosis - union with Greece - while the two resident

communities of Greek and Turkish Cypriots took every opportunity to fight each other.

Often the EOKA shooters and bombers were teenagers, who acted in the false belief that if caught they would probably not fare as badly as an adult terrorist.

Because these young men found it difficult to differentiate Americans from Britons, we were often caught in harm's way. On one occasion, some US service wives were wounded in a bombing. But the worst incident took place on 16 June 1956, just a few weeks before I arrived, when some consular staff broke the rules and entered the walled city, which was strictly out of bounds because of the high incidence of hit-and-run attacks by EOKA's Nicosia 'execution' squads that were taking place

But the walled city was full of temptations and they were hard to ignore. It had the best restaurants, bars and scores of attractive women for single Americans to date. One particular restaurant was much favored. It was a Hungarian place, which curiously was called *Little Soho*

On the evening of 16 June, a small group employed at the US Consulate and elsewhere decided to eat dinner at the Little Soho. Around 21.00, a bomb, thrown by two teenagers, exploded just as the four Americans were about to start their meal. The blast killed the US Vice-Consul and seriously injured the other three.

Author's Note: The dead American was William Boeteler, the young CIA station chief in Nicosia. He was EOKA's first American victim. The others worked at the secret US telecommunications center just outside the capital at Yerolakkos, one of several Anglo-American signals intelligence-gathering sites in Cyprus.

In his last letter home, Boeteler had written: Most every night EOKA drops a bomb on the front porch of some Englishman's home, making a big noise and not much else. Through it all, the British cling grimly to their social traditions; the Queen's birthday was celebrated the other night in all due pomp and splendor, in as heavily guarded a location as you could imagine. The invitations for the affair carried

a little note requesting everyone to check their personal weapons at the door. So far, as an American, I'm a man nobody hates, which can't be said by anybody else - except other Americans.

Troops from the Royal Warwickshire's Luna Park platoon were 200 yards away when they heard the blast and arrived on the scene almost immediately. By a remarkable coincidence, the regiment's Major Fraymouth was with a Forces Broadcasting Service reporter recording a feature called Night Patrol.

For Grivas, this was serious tactical mistake as Greece was trying hard to get the United States to support his campaign for enosis or as EOKA's propaganda put it, 'self-determination'. In Makarios's absence, the acting Ethnarch, the Bishop of Kitium, was forced to apologize. He issued a statement expressing "the deepest pain of the Greek Cypriot people at the death of a member of a friendly allied nation, who was an unfortunate victim of the tragedy, which the Greek Cypriot people had always been trying, and were still trying, to end."

A few days later, Grivas, managed to distribute another of his pamphlets. He called the incident 'a tragic mistake' and continued: On Saturday the American Vice Consul was killed as a result of a bomb explosion, and other American citizens were injured. We know very well that British propaganda is trying to exploit this sad incident, maintaining that the attack was premeditated. We state categorically that it was a tragic mistake. No Greek bears hatred for the American people, whose liberal feelings must, we feel sure, place the majority of them on our side in the righteous struggle. We are deeply grieved at the death of the American diplomat. We advise foreigners living in Cyprus, for their own safety, not to frequent English places of entertainment, since it is not always possible to distinguish them from the English enemies. - EOKA, The Leader, Dighenis.

The danger grew day by day. Being single, I lived in the Crown, a popular small hotel in the suburbs, but I often heard the

sound of gunfire and exploding bombs in central Nicosia.

Several British officers were in the hotel as well. They took it in shifts to mount roadblocks where they checked Cypriots heading to or leaving the capital. They all carried revolvers on a lanyard.

Things became so bad that many of us thought something should be done to prevent any more harm to Americans. We appealed to the Governor, Field Marshall Sir John Harding, to be allowed to fly the American flag on our cars, but our request was turned down for reasons I never learned.

So, what could we do to stop becoming an EOKA target? Of course, necessity is the mother of invention and a Radio Tech. came up with a great idea: to dress as stereotypical Americans. Using our mail order catalogues from home, we bought scores of Stetsons and loud Hawaiian shirts. No mistaking us now for Brits.

I also bought a 1947 MG sports car for \$400 and sold it for \$400 before I left Cyprus. I used it every day to drive from my post to our hotel for lunch and, I confess, I enjoyed taking corners at speed - until I was stopped by a British police sergeant and three Turkish auxiliaries, all pointing their weapons at me. They had thought I could have been a terrorist either racing away from the scene of a crime or about to commit a hostile act. I was read the riot act, apologized and promised to behave more cautiously in future.

Then, not long afterwards, I took my car for a long overdue service to a garage that was located on the perimeter road. While I waited there for two Turk friends from Cable and Wireless Ltd. to pick me up for a day's outing in the Troodos Mountains, I heard a series of shots just down the block.

As I was one of those young and foolish types who think they are invincible, I went out in the road just in time to see two young men in gray topcoats running away from an intersection. I jumped in my car and drove down to the spot. The place was suddenly deserted. All the locals had disappeared to avoid being rounded up as

terrorist suspects, and I could see why. There, in the ditch between the road and the walled city's moat, was a British police officer, lying next to his Lambretta motor scooter. He was face down, with his hat off but still wearing his glasses. In a daze, I decided that I was nuts to be there.

My friends who were going to pick me up at the garage noticed me stopped in the road and drove slowly up, sensing something was wrong. I had at that moment snapped a corroded battery cable and one of my friends lifted the hood and placed the cable back in place to start the car.

I drove back to the garage and we left the area in their car.

I did not report anything to the authorities as I was forbidden to do so by my Government. Americans had been told never to get involved.

Some British soldiers had formed a small rock and roll band. As a tribute to Bill Haley, they called themselves the Kykko Komets and played once on a Saturday night at the American Club in Nicosia. This was a large house that we had rented for the purpose of providing a safe place to eat, drink, dance, and enjoy some entertainment.

Our meetings with the British were usually very convivial, but there was an occasion when friendly rivalry in a Nicosia nightclub came to blows. Someone from our Middle East Regional Radio Relay station at Yerolakkos got drunk and began punching a British major and injured him badly. Needless to say, our RRF man was shipped back to the States in disgrace. Hopefully he was shot at dawn.

Author's Note: Conviviality was not always the order of the day. When George Hill, a Petty Officer 2nd Class in the US Navy was serving in Cyprus in 1958, he recalls: "A couple of our Navy guys were walking along the sidewalk and a couple of paratroops - red berets - came along and smashed our guys in the face. They ended up with a few cuts and bumps and bandages. Our commanding officer went to the British commander and he lined up the Paras and our guys walked up and down the lines and finally identified the culprits. The Paras were

a tough bunch.” They were not shipped home, but sent to Jordan where there was another crisis requiring their attention. The US Navy got their own back, however, by taking on the RAF at basketball. “We played them about twice a week and beat them every time. They were good sports about it,” says Hill.

We all knew trouble was brewing in 1956 after the nationalization of the Suez Canal by Egypt's President Nasser. Nicosia and its surroundings soon became a large military camp as more British forces arrived. The airport was packed with RAF Canberra bombers and their crews filled the Crown hotel where I lived. One night we had all been drinking Keo Brandy Sours, mixed to a unique recipe by Theo, the bar man, but the next morning, expecting to be faced by a mob of hungry flyers at breakfast, I found they had left at dawn. It was 30 October 1956 and *Operation Musketeer* had begun.

Twice in the following few days the air raid sirens went off with an 'all clear' sounded within no time at all. We were told the RAF had driven off Syrian Air Force jets on a heading to Cyprus.

In Cyprus, life went on much as usual, with EOKA continuing to be active.

Eventually my tour was up, and, in August 1957, I was posted to Khartoum in Sudan. What happened there is a story for another day.

I Believe ... That even when you think you have no more to give, when someone cries out to you – you will find the strength to help.

Foreign Service Beginnings

By Judy Chidester

I've so enjoyed reading others' accounts of their beginning in the Foreign "Circus" I thought I'd chime in.

I graduated from Baldwin High School in Pittsburgh, PA in 1956. I immediately went to work for Alcoa Aluminum as a stenographer. After about a year I was laid off and had a three-month hiatus as I looked

for another job – this time with Eljer Plumbing, again as a stenographer.

While I was in Junior High School I'd done some research on various "different" employments. At that time I read a book about the Foreign Service which informed that three languages and a working knowledge of each of those countries was a requirement.

About the time I began working at Eljer (I was about 18) the Foreign Service Recruiters came to town. There was a lot of publicity and even a bit on the TV. I carefully read everything and found that one couldn't go overseas until they were eighteen – and of course, everyone knew THAT was too late to start a career!

Move on three years and the month after I turned 21 the recruiters came back to town. The publicity was much smaller but my mother pointed it out to me.

Down I went to apply. I found that I met the qualifications for clerk, stenographer, secretary and cryptographer. I didn't WANT to be a clerk, stenographer or secretary so I applied as a cryptographer. Then I went home and looked it up in the dictionary. Since I'd been working on an electric typewriter for four years, passing the typing test on an old manual was a bit of a problem. Nevertheless, they sent me to Washington – where I was given ANOTHER typing test. Then I began training. A week or so later I heard Mel Roane on the telephone saying, "I don't care what she did on your test, she's doing fine up here!" While I never heard anything further! I've always blessed that man for that.

Because of the Presidential election we were held up quite awhile in D.C. During that time I met many interesting folk from several classes who were heading out for their first assignments, Bill Weatherford, Phil Hendrix, Jim Fiorani, Joe Gaffey, and Jim Steeves among them. Most of them moved out more quickly because of their military experience. I also talked to people coming back from overseas. One person in particular, Pat Bevaqua, returning from Amman, Jordan, really impressed me with her experiences. I'd had one interview with

Elsie Crim, telling her I thought I might like Australia – and her telling me it would be much too boring. After talking to Pat I saw Elsie again and mentioned Amman and she opined I seemed like a real "Mid East" kinda girl. And Amman was my first assignment. And she was right. The Middle East has always been my favorite area.

I felt really lucky to have found this job which permitted moving around and changing your life, provided learning opportunities, and provided good job security and benefits. I was always the "Pollyanna" but I can say truthfully that I did always love my job and enjoyed meeting all the different peoples and experiencing different cultures.

I always knew that when I retired I wanted to be in a desert area and Las Cruces, NM has provided that so retirement has been exciting, too.

See you next quarter!