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Memories: A Photo Feature

text and photos by Ed Storey

The following is a small selection of the photographs I took during my 12 months with UNPROFOR. In the Spring of 1993, WO Stebbings and myself were the first Terrain Analysis Team sent to UNPROFOR Headquarters, Zagreb, Croatia. We were actually the first Terrain Analysis Team in the Former Yugoslavia. We were the geographic experts for the mission and worked out of Zagreb. The nature of the job allowed us unlimited access to the complete UNPROFOR Theatre of Operations, which included: Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, parts of Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This meant that we got to travel around the country in order to experience first-hand the various geographic aspects of the Former Yugoslavia and to inform the different UN contingents as to what kinds of Terrain Analysis support they could request and expect to receive.

Driving around the Former Yugoslavia at the time posed its own inherent problems as many parts of Croatia and much of Bosnia was still locked in conflict. This meant that before setting out anywhere you always took your weapon, ammunition, rations, maps, radio, extra fuel, and any other essentials required for military operations.

Taking photographs was not encouraged, especially in non-UN controlled areas. Even photographing the terrain was enough to attract curious crowds of locals or possibly the local police. Photographs of destroyed towns and especially cultural or religious structures was forbidden as the different Warring Factions did not want the rest of the world to know just how little they regarded civilian property. The photos shown here highlight the people involved in Peacemaking rather than the destruction wrought by the warring factions.

Top right: WO Bob Stebbings and Sgt Ed Storey waiting at the baggage collection point at Sarajevo airport. We spent an entire day at the airport because heavy shelling in the city caused the suspension of all UN traffic. The "Maybe Airlines" sign refers to the scheduled UN flights to and from Sarajevo, "maybe they will arrive, or maybe they won't" July 1993. (Photo courtesy Bob Stebbings.)



Above: Sgt Ed Storey and a Croatian Police Officer near a French UN OP just west of the city of Sisak, UN Sector North, Croatia.



Top left: Danish troops in all of their field equipment arrive at UNPROFOR HQ. Note the uniforms consist of rain gear, Danish body armour, winter UN Caps, scarves and goggles with "private purchase" gloves. All of this kit is required as they are driving in open top Mercedes vehicles. February 1994.

Above: Nepalese troops manning a UN checkpoint on the road north of Okucani, UN Sector West, Croatia. October 1993.

Below left: UNCIVPOL RCMP Constable Chalmers poses for the camera at UNPROFOR HQ, Zagreb. Note the standard RCMP uniform is worn with the addition of a UN cap and brassard on the right sleeve. April 1994.

Below: French troops in the parking lot outside the Sarajevo Airport. All of the equipment is of French manufacture and design. The parking lot was protected by a 4 metre earthen berm, therefore snipers were not a problem. January 1994.

