

The Famous First

Digging out wells in search of bodies, monitoring border check points and observing searches by local police at road blocks were just some of the duties undertaken by Australia's first police peacekeepers – the Famous First.

Australia was involved in its first police peacekeeping mission in 1964 when a contingent of 40 police were sent to Cyprus as part of the United Nation's first international police peacekeeping force on the island.

Forty-three years later, in October 2007, the United Nations Police Association of Australia (UPAA) brought surviving members of the first contingent back together for a reunion in Sydney to mark the 60th anniversary of Australia's role in peacekeeping operations around the world.

Chairman of the New South Wales branch of the UPAA Patrick Medway, said that it was an important event to organise and the dinner on 23 October was one of the highlights.

"The dinner went exceptionally well," Mr Medway said. "There were 220 people at the event including ten original members of the Famous First who enjoyed recollecting their time in Cyprus."

To commemorate the event, the AFP Museum produced a souvenir booklet about this historic contingent which gives a humble account of peacekeeping in Cyprus. Curator Chris Cranston explained photographs were gathered from the Museum's collection and from members

of the Famous First to assist in creating this special booklet.

"Not long after their arrival, members of AUSTCIVPOL assisted with the search for Major Ted Macy and his driver who had gone missing in June and believed murdered. The arduous work of digging out wells was carried out in the summer heat while looking for his body and other evidence." extract from *Famous First The Original Australian Police Peacekeeping Contingent Cyprus 1964*

Top left: Cover of booklet produced by the AFP Museum. Top right: Newspaper clipping. Right: Ian Hardy arriving in Nicosia. Middle: First contingent on parade. Bottom: First Australian Police Contingent members at the dinner.

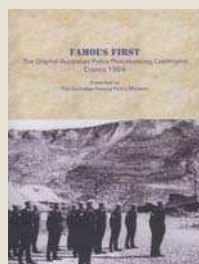


Photo courtesy of Patrick Medway

Photos courtesy of the AFP Museum