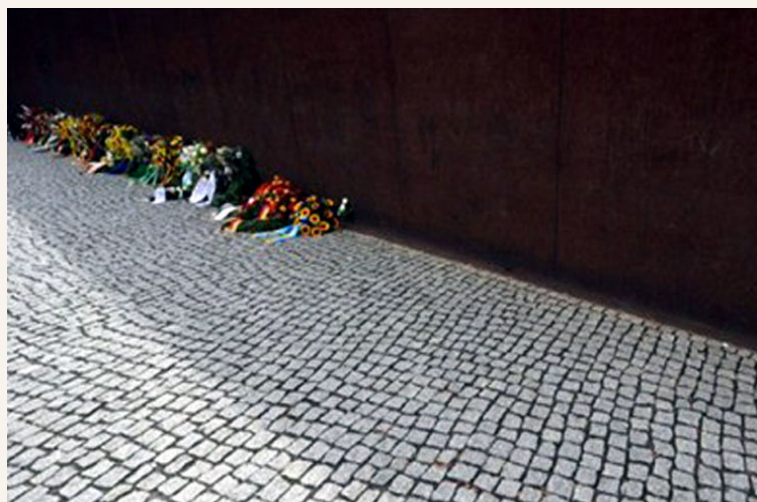




Wreaths laid down in front of a preserved segment of the Berlin Wall near the memorial site at Bernauer Strasse in Berlin on August 13, 2011 in Berlin. Berlin marks the 50th anniversary of the construction of the Berlin Wall on Saturday. AFP

50th Anniversary of the Berlin Wall



Berlin marks 50th Wall anniversary with minute of silence

Agence France-Presse

9:15 pm | Saturday, August 13th, 2011

BERLIN—Berlin on Saturday marked the 50th anniversary of the day the Berlin Wall started to go up with a memorial service and a minute of silence in memory of those who died trying to flee to the West. German President Christian Wulff, Chancellor Angela Merkel, who grew up in the East, and Berlin mayor Klaus Wowereit attended a nationally televised commemoration followed by a ecumenical church service at a chapel built where the Wall stood for 28 years. Flags flew at half mast on the Reichstag (parliament) and church bells tolled at noon as Germans were called to observe a minute of silence in remembrance of the 136 people who are known to have died in Berlin between 1961 and 1989 while trying to cross the Wall. Overall figures of those killed while attempting to flee from East to West Germany stand at between 600 and 700.

“No one knows the true figure,” Wulff told those attending the commemoration in Berlin’s Bernauer Strasse, the scene of many escape attempts which today houses a memorial visited by half a million people every year.

“We bow our heads in remembrance of all who died at the Wall and of the hundreds who died on the inner German border,” he said.

“The dead and wounded, the hundreds of thousands who were imprisoned and politically harassed aren’t the only victims of this Wall. “Millions were also forced to renounce the lives they wanted to live,” he added. **“The Wall was part of a dictatorial system, an unjust state,”** Wowereit said for his part.

“It illustrated the bankruptcy of a system people wanted out of.

“The Wall is now history, but it must not be forgotten.

“It is our responsibility to keep its memory alive and pass it on to future generations ...

so that such injustices never repeat themselves,” he added.

At noon, Berlin’s buses and trains stopped for three minutes while local radio stations interrupted their programs.

The commemorations began overnight at a chapel on the former death strip with a more than seven-hour-long reading of the names and stories of those killed seeking freedom.

These included Ida Siekmann, 58, the first known Berlin Wall victim who fell to her death when jumping to the West from the third story of a building on August 22, 1961.

And Chris Gueffroy, 20, the last victim, shot dead on February 6, 1989 — nine months before the Wall fell — while trying to swim across a canal.

The Wall was born in the early hours of Sunday August 13, 1961, a day chosen by East German authorities as that most likely to catch people by surprise as they enjoyed a summer day off.

In a secret operation code-named “Rose”, tens of thousands of East German soldiers and factory militiamen were called out to cut off the Soviet-occupied eastern sector from the western part of the city, occupied by US, British and French forces since the end of World War II.

The Wall, known in the East as the “anti-fascist protection Wall”, was set up to stop the exodus of East Germans who found it easy to cross into West Berlin and then fly on to the West rather than attempt to cross the inter-German border farther afield. In 1961, more than 2.5 million of East Germany’s 19 million inhabitants had already voted with their feet by going West and, with up to 3,000 leaving every day, communist authorities feared the mass flight would bleed the state dry.

Soldiers blocked off the streets, cut off rail links, and began building a wall of barbed wire and cemented paving stones which over the years, in Berlin, grew in height and complexity over 155 kilometers (96 miles).

Today much of the Wall has disappeared with only small portions, totalling about three kilometers, remaining. Sections still standing, where numerous wreaths were laid on Saturday, are now being restored and listed for historical preservation.

For days, German newspapers and television channels have been marking the upcoming anniversary with interviews of people who tried to cross the Wall and programs and documentaries about its history.

50th Anniversary of Berlin Wall

(PHOTOS) By IBTimes Staff Reporter

Aug 12, 2011 01:34 AM EDT

These photos are combination shots showing the Wall on the left in 1989.

while the photos opposite on page 3 are in the same area in August 2011.

from **International Business Times**

These Additional Links also have photos of the building of the Wall in August 1961.

John Freeman

SPIEGEL ONLINE is a great journalistic source for daily information about Berlin and/or Germany. If you haven't discovered it yet, there's even an English version:

<http://www.spiegel.de/flash/flash-26685.html>

The 50th Anniversary of the Building of the Berlin Wall - SPIEGEL ONLINE - News

www.spiegel.de

Daily news, analysis and opinion from Europe's leading newsmagazine and Germany's top news Web site.

The above site is Great! click on the places shown on the map and see before the Wall and / after the Wall photos of that area.

NPR site:

Remembering The Berlin Wall, 50 Years On
by NPR STAFF

<http://www.npr.org/2011/08/11/139561087/remembering-the-berlin-wall-50-years-on?>



People posing at the Berlin Wall at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin in this June 6, 1989 file image Source: REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch



Tourists posing in front of the Berlin Wall at the Brandenburg gate in Berlin in June 6, 1989. Source: REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch



East and West German citizens celebrating as they climb the Berlin Wall at the Brandenburg gate November 9, 1989. Source: REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch



A general view of Ebertstrasse and the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, August 3, 2011. Source: REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch



A general view of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, August 3, 2011. Source: REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch



A general view of the Brandenburg Gate July 22, 2009. Source: REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch

EAST GERMANY | 15.06.2011
 Berlin starts commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Berlin Wall

an article from Deutsche Welle in June

Pay attention to the words of
 German Finance Minister
 Wolfgang Schäuble
 and
 Interior Minister
 Peter Friedrich

On June 15th, 1961,
 Walter Ulbricht famously said, 'No one
 has the intention of building a wall'

Wednesday June 15. 2011, marked the
 anniversary of an infamous press
 conference by Walter Ulbricht,
 the leader of communist East Germany.
 On June 15, 1961, he told reporters in
 East Berlin,

"No one has the intention
 of building a wall."

His words came to symbolize
 the transparent lies and deception of the
 German Democratic Republic (GDR).

In a ceremony in Berlin marking the day
 Ulbricht's statement was made, German
 Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble
 said, **"It's not without reason that the
 credibility of politicians is a constant
 topic of discussion for us today."**

Schäuble was joined by
 Interior Minister Peter Friedrich,
 who added that the most important
 lesson to be learned from the GDR and
 the Berlin Wall was that
**"a state that considers itself more
 important than its citizens
 is a danger to freedom."**



These BW Photos were taken by my dad Ray Yarbrough in 1962.
I wanted to include some of the earlier photos of the Cold War.

Toni (Yarbrough) Combs '71

Below are some stories, Facebook entries, from Berlin Brats who were there when the Wall was built in 1961.

Bill Short '78 Facebook posting of9:19am Aug 13
My family moved from Pittsburgh to Berlin in June 1961.
On August 13, 1961, my father and our next door neighbor Mr. Morasco (Mike, Tony, Steve, Joe and Mary Morasco's father) went down to where some of the Wall was being built. There, lying on the ground, was the barbed wire that was being used to create a temporary barrier. Some of it was still in its packaging. Imagine their shock when they looked down and saw that the packaging read "Pittsburgh Steel." I'm sure no one knew why the wire had been ordered or how it was going to be used. My family moved away twenty years later during the summer of '81. I've been back several times and my sister Molly now lives in Berlin. It still amazes me that most of us lived there at a time when we were surrounded by the Wall.



Bailey Rebecca Facebook posting of10:28am Aug 13

As a nine year old, I didn't wake up to the news of "the Wall" and understand the politics but certainly sensed the tension of the following days. I was told we wouldn't see our landlady's sweet gardener who was visiting his family at what turned out to be an inopportune time. My family arrived in Berlin a couple of months earlier and this new, strange place was getting stranger by the minute. But like most brats, I loved the times spent in Berlin.

We were there 1961-1964 and again returned in 1969--my senior year.

My parents did a great job of guaranteeing "normal" (is a brat family normal?) childhood activities but with an added dose of history most kids don't get. Returned last year for a visit with my sister, Peggy, and was blown away at the memories that flooded me as we walked down old streets.

Berlin Brat

Becky Yarbrough Bailey '69

Jim Branson '64 Facebook posting ofAugust 13

It's really hard for me to fathom that 50 years ago today on a Sunday afternoon, I was sitting in a ticket booth at a Volksfest in Berlin, Germany trying to figure out why there weren't as many people coming through the gate as there were the day before. The reality hit me and all of us who were there at that time when our father's came home in their battle gear a little later.



The Bridge that American spy plane pilot Francis Gary Powers was exchanged for Russian spy Colonel Rudolph Abel.



SMSGT Ray O. Yarbrough
**Thank You to our moms/dads
for their service to our country.**

Deborah Clark '74 Facebook posting ofAugust 13
Fifty years ago today, in a matter of just 5 hours, a Wall was built that divided a city in two; separating families for many years. To my Berlin Brat friends, we remember the Wall, and although it was a painful time for many, it was the reason our parents served in Berlin, and I had the honor of going to school with you in the great city of Berlin, creating a lifetime of great memories.



Russian Patrol Boat on the Wannsee

1,600 Visitors at "our" Berlin Wall

On July 23rd and August 13th (the 50th Anniversary of the Wall being erected) more than 1,600 visitors flocked to Wichita, Kansas' Museum of World Treasures (MoWT) to visit a section of the Berlin Wall.

This section of the Berlin Wall was purchased by the Berlin Brats Alumni Association, donated to the American Overseas Schools Historical Society (AOSHS) in August 2005, who in turned loaned (via contract) to the MoWT.

July 23rd was, "B98 Listener Appreciation Day," in Wichita when about 1,000 visitors went through the museum as part of a local radio station's promotional program. Then on August 13th, the MoWT hosted a Guest Appreciation Day and more than 600 visitors came to see a section of the largest man-made object in the museum.

Coincidentally August 13th was the 6th anniversary of AOSHS' formal loan of the Berlin Wall to the MoWT.

*Submitted by: Joe Condrill, Overseas Brats President
who resides in Wichita and volunteers at the Museum*

It is so great to see the beautification of Berlin today. Every year John Freeman '71 takes his students (John is a photo/journalism professor at the Univ of FL) to Berlin and keeps us current. Thank you John.



Taylorstrasse in the early 60's.



John Freeman '71
Posted on Facebook

For those of you curious about housing near the Outpost, some buildings have gone upscale like mine at Taylorstrasse 10. They've added a fifth floor and glass elevator on the front exterior. (Picture is from May 2010.) But across from BAHS, those buildings are empty and fenced off, awaiting major renovation. Sorry, Gary Carpenter '72.



2012 REUNION

July 5- 8, 2012

Fairview Park Marriott

Falls Church, VA

(a bedroom community of Washington, DC)

Come join us at our next ALL CLASSES – ALL YEARS REUNION!

RSVP LIST

Has been started on the website....over 160 names already.....

get your Name added by emailing us at:

webBrat@BerlinBrats.org

Include Full Name to include (maiden) and Class Year!

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Our special discounted rate of \$95 per night is available 3 days before and 3 days after the Reunion.

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**REUNION ITINERARY AND REGISTRATION FORM WILL BE
PUBLISHED IN JANUARY 2012!**

Come early and see your Nation's Fireworks!

OR

Stay late and visit all the Smithsonians and your our Nation's Memorials!



A person walks across the plaque and a line of bricks that show where the Berlin Wall used to stand at the Berlin Wall Memorial site in Bernauer Strasse, August 9, 2011.

Source: REUTERS/Thomas Peter

Contact Information:

BRATCON radio
can be found at:

BRATCON.com

“LIVE” internet radio show
for and about Brats.

Catch it:

Thursdays at 4pm ET/7pm PT

Interactive show, call in at:
866-472-5788

Upcoming Events:

1 October 2011

Oktoberfest - 2nd Annual
Charlotte, NC

Visit our website
for the “Flyer” and the
“RSVP List.”

Hosted by Deb (Brians) Clark ‘74.

20-23 October 2011

25th - Silver Anniversary
Overseas Brats

All Schools - All Years
Crowne Plaza Hotel
3 Appletree Square
Bloomington, MN

Hosted by OVERSEAS
BRATS

American Overseas School Historical Society

Contact: Tina Calo, President
email: tcalo@aoshs.org
Website: www.aoshs.org

Overseas Brats

Joe Condrill, President
Email: joeosbpres@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.overseasbrats.com

Berlin Brats Alumni Association

41630 N. Rolling Green Way
Anthem, AZ 85086
623•764•1105 tele
BerlinBrats@gmail.com
WebBrat@BerlinBrats.org
www.berlinbrats.org

Newsletter Brat:

traecombs@gmail.com

Early 60's Site

By invitation only
Contact: Jim Branson '64
jbranson01@hotmail.com
for an invite

Find us on Facebook:

“Berlin Brats Alumni Association”
(a Fan Page for information)

“Berlin American High School (BAHS)”
(an Open Group chat page)