



# Berlin Brats Alumni Association Newsletter

January 2020

Volume 16, Issue 1

It's 2020!  
Our Reunion year is finally here!

## SEATTLE BOUND

June 4th-7th, 2020  
followed by an  
**Alaskan Cruise**

June 7th-14th, 2020

JOIN US!



Berlin  
Brats 2020  
Seattle, WA



Some of the fun things we'll be doing in Seattle: the skyline and famous Space Needle, Pike's Place farmer's market; the Chihuly Glass Garden; the Bavarian-themed town of Leavenworth, WA; and a cruise through the Army-engineered Ballard Locks.



## In turn-about, Berlin joins Frankfurt's mini-Reunion



*Top left: Carl, Mike Doane '67 and Gaye (Smith) Doane '67 (Frankfurt), Jeri, and another Frankfurt alum. Top right: Carl, Patty (Frankfurt) and Richard Kidwell (spouse) in Cave Creek, AZ. Center: Jeri and Gaye have a long history together.*



Circa 1999....Breckenridge, CO: Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72 is planning her 1st Berlin Reunion in Breckenridge. A few months pass, and she gets a call from Gaye (Smith) Doane '67 of Frankfurt (living in Colorado Springs) asking if Frankfurt might join us at the same reunion venue, Beaver Run Resort, as the Frankfurt Eagles ('67-'73 chapter) had an issue with their Denver hotel. The immediate answer being yes, a

Brat friendship was instantly formed!

If you were at that Reunion, you may remember we did a little school competition on the back lawn/ski area of Beaver Run. We held the "Olympic Games" between the two school rivals. Olympic torches were paraded onto the field where the Bratwurst Sling and a Fooseball table were planted (relocated from BR's pub), just to name a few of the competitive

arenas. Instead of medals, the 'award' was that whichever school lost overall had to learn the fight song of the other school, leave their own banquet, visit the other school's banquet, and sing their song to those in attendance.

Sadly, BERLIN lost! Friday night, Frankfurt typed up their fight song and slid the words under our hotel room doors. We had all day to practice and learn the words....but most Berliners....were not....shall we say, enthused. Yet, later that night at least 10-15 of us Berlin Brats honored our bet and entered the Frankfurt banquet room and dance floor....painful as it was!!!! Thankfully, since it was 1999, there is no video footage of this rather pitiful endeavor!!!!

Twenty years later, in January, 2020, Frankfurt invited Jeri and Carl Fenstermacher '73 to crash the Frankfurt mini-reunion in Phoenix, near where they live!



*Bottom photos: The Frankfurt Eagles ('67-'73 chapter) were in town to attend the Fab Four concert in Mesa, AZ. Jeri and Carl, the Berlin Brats, are hidden in the back row (we didn't want the Bears to dominate the Eagles!).*



## THE FOUR Bs AT WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Bitburg Barons and Berlin Bears in the Phoenix area came together at the "Wreath Across America" ceremony and wreath-laying at the Arizona Veterans Cemetery on December 14th. The wreath-laying was

held nation-wide at all veterans cemeteries. Wreaths were laid at any gravesite to honor those who lost their lives for the nation.



# Powered flight: Honoring anniversaries of

by Deb (Brians) Clark '74

On December 15th, my husband and I traveled five hours from Charlotte, NC, to Manteo (in the Outer Banks) to experience the annual Candy Drop, a re-enactment of the famous Candy Drop during 1948-1949, started by Col. Gail S. Halvorsen, *aka* The Candy Bomber, during the Berlin Airlift.

The weather was perfect... sunny skies, little wind, and 58 degrees. As we drove up to the Manteo airport, we noticed a few cars (we arrived two hours before the scheduled Drop), but spotted the C-54 aircraft, *The Spirit of Freedom*, parked on the tarmac. The Manteo airport, for those of you who've not seen it, reminds me of the airport in the old TV series "Wings" - small and quaint. When we opened the door and walked into the lobby area, I was taken aback, as the first person I saw was Col. Halvorsen, smiling as always, greeting people and signing autographs! I had no idea there would be a "meet and greet" with the Colonel. I had heard most of his family members would be traveling with him on this trip



Deb (right) with Marilyn (Halvorsen) Sorenson '73 and the lime green BAHS

yearbooks with me, and had the famous lime green yearbook from 1973 in my purse. I walked up to Marilyn, introduced myself, and we spoke for a few minutes. She remembered the yearbook, and her husband asked if he could take a photo of Marilyn's yearbook picture. Her husband, Ace, then took a photo of us, and with me holding the yearbook.

After speaking to Marilyn, my husband and I got in the line to meet Col. H, and I asked him to sign the 1973 yearbook above Marilyn's photo. After he signed the book, he looked at the picture a few moments, and laughed, and said, "Why that sure IS her!" My husband presented the Colo-



Deb (Brians) Clark '74 and her husband with Colonel Gail S. 'Hal' Halvorsen

nel with a Berlin ball cap. Both of us thanked him for his efforts during the Airlift, and it was such an honor for me to thank him on behalf of my Berlin family members, who, to this day, speak fondly of "Uncle Wiggly Wings," his crew, and the allies, for flying food into Berlin to keep them from starving. The first planes of the Airlift, *aka* Operation Vittles, took off on June 26, 1948, which happened to be my mom's 13th birthday, and ended September 30, 1949.

Think about this for a minute: for 15 months, the Allied forces (mostly U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army Transport Command, and British Royal Air Force) crews landed every 3 minutes, 24-hrs/day at Templehof Airport, delivering much-needed supplies to the Berliners, to include food, fuel, and machinery. The C-47s and C-54s together flew over 92 million miles in the process, and delivered collectively 2,334,374 tons, nearly two-thirds of which was coal, on 278,228 flights to Berlin. My mom's family lived in the Lankwitz area of Berlin, and although my mom and her cousins were not actual recipients of any of the famous candy parachutes dropped by Col. Halvorsen and his crew, they did benefit greatly from the efforts during the Airlift and their survival actually depended on it.

After thanking the Colonel, Michael and I walked out on the tarmac and took a few photos of *The Spirit of Freedom* (SOF), a C-54 "flying museum," dedicated to preserving the memory of the heroic efforts of the Airlift, and is the aircraft used every December in Manteo to re-enact the Candy Drop. I waved to its pilot, Tim Chopp, who was



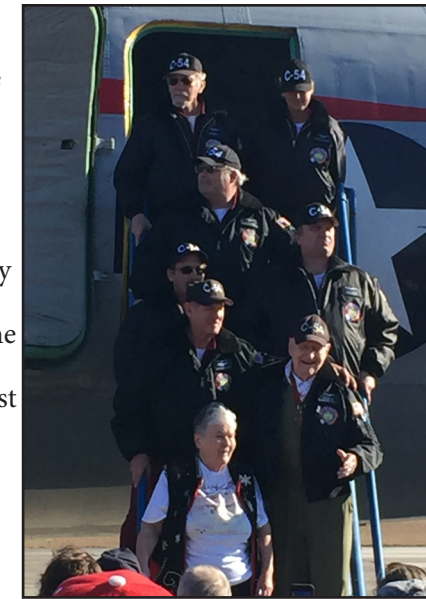
busy giving a tour and discussing details of the Airlift. I made my way onboard, toured the machine for the 3rd time (I've visited the SOF in Concord, NC, Monroe, NC, and now Manteo, NC), and always see something new! I chat-

# First Flight and Berlin Airlift

ted a bit with Eddie Ide, one of the SOF crew members, who gave a discussion on the Airlift and the SOF at a BAHS regional last November in Monroe. Then it was time to exit the plane, as the Candy Drop was about to begin.

I told Tim later that I got a big lump in my throat as the SOF was taking off. I have only ever seen the aircraft on the ground, and never in the air. It was very moving to watch her propellers start (with a bit of smoke and a backfire!). She took off and landed beautifully! And, Tim said this year's Candy Drop, his 21st one, was the most successful. I asked him why, and he said, "Because we hit the target!" Translation: they dropped the candy in ideal conditions so that it landed exactly where the kids were waiting on the ground. My husband took a video of the Drop and shared it with the crew, and we also shared it with the Halvorsens. We figured they would want to see what it looked like from the ground, capturing the joy of the people who caught the candy parachutes. It was amazing to me to see folks from all nationalities at this Drop, and I found myself smiling when I overheard a mother quizzing her son on why they were here, and why the Candy Drop was so important. As we left the airport after the Drop, those "few" cars we saw earlier in the parking lot, to our delight, had become a sea of cars, some of which had to park in the overflow area!

So, how did we find out about a luncheon being held in honor of Col. Halvorsen on Tuesday, December 17th, sponsored by the First Flight Society in Kitty Hawk? Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72, Berlin Brats Alumni Association Director, heard from Stan Miller, who is founder and President of the 435th OMS Enroute Maintenance Reunion Group, Rhein Main, who also hosts the Rhein Main Veterans Reunion Group, of which our own Tina Calo TAR FAC '70-'71 is a member (small world!). Tina suggested Stan reach out to Jeri to let her know about several events honoring Col. Halvorsen in the Manteo/Kitty Hawk area 12/15-17. Stan contacted Jeri to see if she had anyone in the area who might be interested in attending. Jeri emailed me, and initially I thought, "Oh, my! It's so close to Christmas, and we've got



Karin Edmonds, who witnesses the Berlin Airlift as a child, with the SOF crew.

so much going on....not sure we can spare that many days away from home." That thought, however, came and went quickly when I realized I had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to thank a man personally for what he did for my family and for the city of Berlin, where I was born. As it turns out, Stan is the man to know, as somehow he managed to organize a dinner with Karin Edmonds, resident of Manteo, who was a Berlin Airlift witness as a child and also coordinates the annual Candy Drop at the Manteo airport each December. Karin knows Col. Halvorsen well, and at Monday night's dinner, we were joined by Tim Chopp and his SOF crew, Col. Halvorsen and four of his children with their spouses, and Stan Miller and members of his Rhein Main group. We shared a table with Mike Halvorsen '80 and his wife, Colleen, and Denise Halvorsen Williams and her husband, David. Although Marilyn was sitting at another table with her husband and her older brother and his wife, she did pop over a few times to our table to chat. Another "small world" moment: found out Mike and Colleen Halvorsen live in Concord, NC, about 30 minutes from Charlotte! Michael and I enjoyed dinner with the Halvorsen family and felt we were dining with old friends. We made it an early evening as the next day's events started early!

On the morning of Tuesday, December 17th, a full schedule once again started for the Colonel. (I told Marilyn I don't know how he does it, attending so many events, and she said, "I can hardly keep up with him!"). At 9 a.m., many of us gathered at the Wright Brothers National Memorial, to celebrate the 116th anniversary of the Wright brothers' first powered flight, and also to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. In addition to NC political representatives, there were also members of the British and German military present, as well as relatives of the Wright Brothers. One family member, Paul Wright Jameson, the great-great nephew of the Wright brothers (his great grandfather being Wilbur and Orville's older brother, Lorin Wright), gave a great speech about the Wright brothers' struggles and, of course, their ultimate successes in flying. It was sad to hear that Wilbur died in 1912 of typhoid fever, just nine years after their



The portrait now at the Wright Brothers National Memorial.



*Con't from previous page*

December 17, 1903, first flight. Orville died in 1948, which was long enough to sometimes curse their invention, seeing as how aircraft were used during WWII for destruction and “caused wars.” But, in the very year Orville died, the Allied Forces used aircraft to save lives, which would have made Orville very proud.

As part of the First Flight festivities this year, Col Halvorsen was honored for his role in the Airlift and was inducted into the Paul E. Garber First Flight Shrine. This Shrine, according to the First Flight Society, is “for those who have made an outstanding accomplishment in manned flight and are generally recognized nationally and internationally for their achievements and contributions to aviation.” His portrait was unveiled at the First Flight Society luncheon Michael and I later attended at noon. At 3 p.m., the portrait was transferred to the Wright Brothers National Memorial Visitor's Center, where it now hangs on display.

In reflecting on my time spent at the events honoring the Colonel, the one thing that stood out the most for me is this: Col. Halvorsen, his crew, along with the Allied Forces, were given a job to do, and they did it exceptionally well, in full military precision, and can be extremely proud of their accomplishments. But what is Col. Gail S. “Hal” Halvorsen most famous for around the globe? A single act of kindness and compassion, which was not part of his job, but was and is a large part of his nature. The famous Candy Drop over Berlin/Templehof started when the Colonel shared two sticks of Doublemint gum with a group of children at the fence along the airport and watched as they shared the gum amongst themselves. The children mentioned that they could live on few rations, but they could not live without freedom. Words spoken by children! It touched the Colonel deeply, and he later collected rations of candy from fellow crew members (which later became larger donations), made parachutes, and dropped the candy-filled parachutes to the children. The children, in their wisdom, knowing the planes took off and landed a lot, asked the Colonel how they could know when he would be dropping the candy? The Colonel said he would wiggle his wings on



Above: Colonel Halvorsen with Doublemint gum as a reminder of what started the original candy drop. Above and below: the luncheon after the First Flight ceremony.



loads with the candy, and “Uncle Wiggly Wings,” with this kind gesture, became world-famous in his efforts to save the lives of two million Berliners. But, to the man who “was born smiling” (per Col. Halvorsen’s mom, as told to me by his daughter, Denise), he just wanted to bring joy to the little children of Berlin. (Reminder: After the Berlin Airlift ‘48-‘49, the Colonel returned to Berlin as the Tempelhof Base Commander from ‘70-‘74 ....with his kids: Marilyn ‘73 and Bob ‘75 @BAHS; Mike ‘80 @TAR; Denise worked at the Tempelhof PanAm ticket counter.)

## Berlin Brigade plaque to be on the Path of Remembrance

BUSMVA (Berlin U.S. Military Veteran's Association – our parent's organization) has just voted to place a Berlin Brigade plaque along the Path of Remembrance at the National Museum of the U.S. Army – currently finalizing construction and scheduled to open in 2020 at Ft. Belvoir, VA (a burb of Washington, DC).

This will memorialize Berlin Brigade's legacy for generations of visitors born long after the Brigade's deactivation.

Presently, the Association has a plaque at the Allied Museum (the former Outpost Theater) in Berlin (see photo at right).

Visit their website @: <https://www.berlinveterans.com/>  
Facebook: BUSMVA

### DEDICATED TO THE PEOPLE OF BERLIN

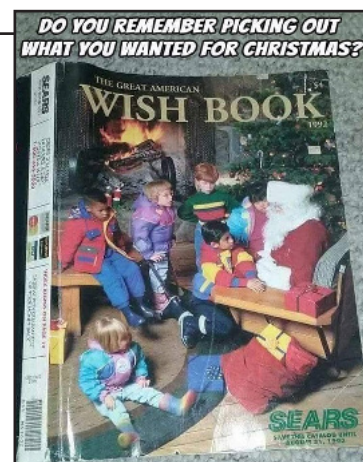
WHO ENDURED THE PAIN OF WAR, GAINED HOPE THROUGH THE AIR-LIFT, AND EXPERIENCED THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL-CULMINATING IN THEIR NEW-FOUND FREEDOM WITH REUNIFICATION OF EAST/WEST BERLIN.

### AND

TO THE ELITE MILITARY FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES, GREAT BRITAIN, AND FRANCE IN BERLIN 1945-1994 WHO STOOD TALL AND MADE IT POSSIBLE.

PRESENTED BY THE  
BERLIN

U.S. MILITARY VETERANS' ASSOCIATION  
28 JUNE 1998



Left: Remember how we had to order things before the internet? The Sears catalog was one of the first mail-order options, back in the 1800s, and provided lots of Christmas dreams for overseas Brats through the late 1900s! Below left: Trip down memory lane ... Christmas in Berlin. Linda (Ehrlich) Packard '70 (also class contact) at age 15, Christmas of '67. “It was a white Christmas on Flanaganstraße. I lived in the building directly beside the Outpost Theater.” Recognize the base housing? Military-issued furniture???? Center left: Ice skating in the Europa Center, 1960.



Throw back photos

Bottom photos: The ‘Moby Dick’ excursion/restaurant boat, built in 1972, still conducts passengers on trips up and down the Havel river and across Lake Tegel in Berlin.

Far right photos: Remember them? Chimney sweeps across the rooftops of Berlin. Chimney sweeps are still a mandatory ‘utility’ cost in Germany.



# BRAT GET-TOGETHERS

## Good Yule in Berlin



Tim Snow '85 and his girlfriend Amy re-visited Berlin, December 2019. Above: Tim and Amy enjoying the city's Christmas decorations. Left: Now, what '80s Brat wouldn't recognize this 'old haunt'? Left and above right: Connecting with more than old haunts, Tim met up with Ralph DeGruy '85 as well, and they enjoyed the libations of the season.

## Happy birth-day!!

Art Benson FAC '72-'92 celebrates his 86th birthday, December 28, 2019, in Petaluma, CA! Son Alan and daughter-in-law Edie sent him this VW bus bed sheet set from Germany.



## AZ cooking

On December 28th, Mark Britton '84 dropped in on Robin Murphy '84, the Chef at Starfire Resort, Scottsdale, AZ! Mark's in blue, with Robin next to him. Kelly (Waymire) Murphy's daughter, Britany (next to Robin) also works at Starfire! Per Robin: "Guess who stopped by to help plate up! Loved seeing you, Mark!!!" Per Mark: "Guest Chef! It was so fun! No one parties like a culinary crew!"



## Celebrate good friends

Three good friends got together to celebrate Pat (Martel) Little's birthday in December, 2019 (someplace warm enough to wear t-shirts). Left to right: Renata (Kowalski) Goodloe, Part (Martel) Little, and Nancy Liepmann -- all '72ers!



# BRAT GET-TOGETHERS

## Winter in FL with friends

Gary Robinson '74 and Wally Roberts '73 link up in Tampa for lunch on December 1st.



## S e e k i n g a l u m



Mel De Vilbiss '71 meets up with Brian Kilmeade (of Fox and Family) at a book signing -- delivering a letter from BBAA to request Fox News military Brat Harris Faulkner to speak at our Reunion this June.

# Three degrees of separation: the Wall and Berlin connect everywhere

by Thomas Hartwell  
Marietta Daily Journal

Thirty years after the fall of the militarized wall that for decades split German families and communities in two, Dorte Schmieta, 51, stood before a Berlin Wall art piece created by Kennesaw State University students and painted in red letters the phrase, “*Ich war dabei*” or “I was there!”

On November 6, 2019, KSU’s School of Government and International Affairs



marked the approaching 30th anniversary of the Nov. 9, 1989, collapse of the Berlin Wall with a commemorative ceremony.

Following Germany’s defeat in WWII, the capital city of Berlin was partitioned in 1945 among Allied Powers France, the United Kingdom, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. In 1948, the Soviets closed all land and water routes into the city, forcing Western Allies to air drop food and supplies into the western portion of Berlin. In 1961, East German troops constructed the Berlin Wall, which stood up to 12 feet tall and stretched for 27 miles as part of nearly 100 miles of barriers that separated democratic West Germany from other areas of the Soviet-controlled East German state.

Schmieta, who attended KSU’s event, grew up in The German Democratic Republic, or East Germany, and was 21 when the Wall came down amid pro-democracy protests in Berlin nearly 30 years later. Schmieta moved to the U.S. at age 29.

“Suddenly we could do whatever we wanted. I mean, it was very, very different for us. For the longest time we were always doing what we were told, and we were taught to just go along (with everything) and shut up,” the Marietta resident said. “I never felt that oppressed until we realized what we were missing.”

Schmieta said she grew up sheltered from much of the politics surrounding the division of her home country, but she still felt the oppression of her mostly state-controlled life. Both mothers and fathers had to work to make enough money to support their families, spies kept an eye on everyone down to schoolchildren, and

often supplies were scarce, she said.

“Sometimes you would go to the grocery store, and there was one piece of meat left on a Friday afternoon. My mom would buy half of the piece of meat so the person behind her would get the other piece,” Schmieta said.

She recalled that as a teenager she’d been questioned for more than an hour by the *Stasi*, the official state security service of the German Democratic Republic, when she received a letter from her Italian pen pal she’d

met at a summer camp as a teenager. If schoolchildren revealed that they’d picked up a West German TV station and watched cartoons, like Bugs Bunny, their parents would be punished, she said.

So when the Wall came down, Schmieta, then a kindergarten teacher in East Germany, said it was a shock to learn on Nov. 9, 1989, that a day after East Germany had been behind the Iron Curtain, suddenly, it wasn’t anymore.

Speaking directly to students who wouldn’t have been born yet when the wall came down, KSU President Pamela Whitten said

she’d lived in a town near Frankfurt in West Germany in 1987, when Cold War tensions were still high.

Whitten described traveling to the eastern side of the Wall as a “time warp.”

“It was like going back to the 1950s,” she said.

The university president described her limited travel between the two halves of the country, the guard towers on the top of the Berlin Wall, the rationed food portions and the bullet holes in buildings that remained from WWII combat.

As early fall approached in 1989, Whitten said she remembered seeing Russian soldiers walking down the highway in West Germany, a rather strange sight for the time. That, she

said, was the first of massive change in the region.

“Some other things happened, and then, boom, it almost felt like overnight, the Wall came down,” she said, recalling her visit to the Wall that weekend, where she found that the guard towers, formerly filled with

## Where were you when the Wall fell?

by Rose (Hanson) Neel ‘84  
November 9, 2019

30 years ago today I was a substitute teacher for DoDDS in Heidelberg Germany. That summer of ‘89, I was a summer camp counselor in Berlin with Kim Berg and had gotten my own East Pass to go shopping in East Berlin that summer. Kim and I also met with a young East German soldier, Stephan Hoffman, that summer who was writing to me in college under an alias. Kim, Rita, and I had met him when we were shopping at Alexander Platz in the summer ‘88.

In August of ‘89, he was planning his escape and enlisted our help to get his money (soon to be worthless) out of the country. He escaped on 10 October by going on ‘vacation’ on a bus tour through Czech to Hungary, swam across the Danube into Austria. He got on a train from Austria to Mannheim and stayed with me and my parents for three weeks until we found his uncle, who gave him money for a little basement apartment in Eppelheim (Heidelberg). He had just moved in and was looking for work in November ‘89.

On November 9th, I was watching the news on AFN in my parents’ house when they announced that at midnight the borders out of Berlin would be open. Dumbfounded, I called Kim (Berg) Kozel (living in Steglitz) to tell her, but she was out to dinner with Samuel Sakorafis, who was visiting her and Duane Kozel (Sam was living in Heidelberg). Most people had no idea for hours. I called Rita Hanson in London (she was on a student exchange). I was crying and so excited.

machine-gun-wielding soldiers, had been abandoned and their windows broken. “We just walked over into Eastern bloc countries.”

Fast-forward to 2019, Whitten said, and there is little left to show the fraught history in the formerly divided country. What is most stunning, said the KSU president, is not that the country divided in the first place, but

how West Germany welcomed the East back.

“West Germany said, ‘These are our brothers and sisters, and even though we are absorbing tens of millions of people and a crashed economy, we are going to spend a lot of money and go into great debt ourselves ... to bring East Germany into the lifestyle to

I told Stephan the next day and he refused to believe it. He was convinced it was propaganda! I told him we do have propaganda in the West, but this story was probably true.

I couldn’t wait to get back to Berlin. I got a job as a youth sports director in April of ‘90 and spent the whole summer living in Berlin and having a blast. I met Carsten Scharnberg, my roommate and good friend. That summer, Kim, Reed, Carsten and I had a blast going into the old forbidden areas and crossing Freedom Bridge into Potsdam. It was amazing. I bought a VW bug convertible and we buzzed around Berlin until I moved away to start a permanent job at the Heidelberg Youth Services. From 1980-1985 I lived in Berlin as a brat and it was a blast, but the summers of ‘89 and ‘90 were electrifying. The city was on fire. Full disclosure. Summer of ‘84 and ‘85 were pretty cool, too!!



have one, unified Germany that lives at the same level,” Whitten said, adding that in a relatively short time, they accomplished that goal.

Whitten and others spoke at KSU’s Legacy Gazebo near the social sciences building and just steps from a piece of the wall that stood as one of the most divisive symbols of the

Cold War.

Chuck Clay, former Cobb County commissioner and state legislator, donated the monument. He is the grandson of Gen. Lucius D. Clay, who orchestrated the year of supply drops into West Berlin known as the Berlin Airlift (1948-1949).

Gen. Clay, a Marietta native, was assigned by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as military governor in Germany from 1945-49 and as U.S. ambassador to Berlin by President John F. Kennedy in 1961.

Chuck Clay told the crowd of KSU students and staff that during his grandfather’s service in Germany, the general refused to abandon the citizens of Berlin and organized a series of high-profile challenges that exposed the Soviets as the true oppressors of the East German people.

Most notable, Chuck Clay said, was the August 1961 tank standoff at Checkpoint Charlie, the most well-known Berlin Wall border crossing.

“His point was that the Russians had said, ‘This is a German operation. East Germany is an independent stand-alone nation. We don’t tell them what to do. They don’t tell us what to do. They built the Wall. It’s their problem, not ours,’” said Chuck Clay, who also works at KSU as an adjunct professor of political science. “(Gen. Clay) said, ‘OK, let’s ... send a half dozen tanks up to the line at Checkpoint Charlie. Let’s see who responds.’ Guess who responded? There were no Germans. It was Russians.”

Chuck Clay said it’s paramount that the international community not forget times of reunification after bitter division throughout history because they represent decisive moments when, in the face of conflict, Western powers “stood tall” for what they knew was right.

Even more important is that the Wall crumbled after peaceful protests and political pressure, not war, though an estimated 262 people died at the Wall, said Heike Fuller, German consul general in Atlanta. Fuller, who was raised in West Germany, said reunification of Germany seemed “unthinkable” when she was growing up. But, she said, citizens of East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, were the ones who physically toppled the Wall, showing not only Germans had a stake in the ousting of the communist government.

“It is still almost a miracle that no blood was shed. In 1989, a peaceful revolution turned Germany into the happiest nation of the world,” she said. “A collapse of this nature required the active participation of individuals, and this active participation was

the essential factor. Some left, some fled, and others were speaking up, as I said. All of these people contributed considerably to the destabilization of the system.”

And of course, Fuller said, Germans will never forget the Americans’ support, from the Berlin Airlift to the Marshall Plan, which helped to rebuild Western European economies after WWII.

She urged Americans never to forget the appreciation German people feel for the U.S. and said she hoped to never again see a wall that so bitterly divides a nation and its families erected again.

“The fall of the Berlin Wall is a very important symbol of German-American friendship and cooperation. We look forward to expanding our precious bonds of friendship for the future,” she said. “On behalf of many, many Germans, please let me say ‘*Dankeschön, America.*’”



**Top left:** Dorte Schmieta painting on a replica Wall segment at KSU. **Bottom left:** The Wall segment donated to KSU by Chuck Clay, Gen Lucius Clay’s grandson. **Above:** Chuck Clay speaking at the KSU event. **Bottom:** Kerwin Swint, Director of the KSU School of Govt and Intl Affairs, Chuck Clay, Heike Fuller, German Consul General in Atlanta, and Pamela Whitten, KSU President. Photos by Thomas Hartwell.



## WITH HONOR

### British Berlin Airlift Association closes; vets welcomed as US members

The Berlin Airlift in 1948-49 was one of the opening events in the decades-long Cold War that dominated international relations, military actions, and many lives throughout the latter half of the 20th century. Those of us who served and lived in Berlin during those decades carry with us an innate awareness of what was involved in that balancing of power because Berlin, a city divided within a country divided, was on the leading edge of that war and we lived in the shadow of the dividing Wall, literally and figuratively.

We were always aware of the looming presence all around us, even before the physical Wall was built, even as children, even as we did our jobs, went to school, enjoyed our families and friends. And later, as we played on or near the Wall, sprayed images on it, traded gum or chocolate for East German guard paraphernalia, ... and heard tale after tale of someone killed trying to escape. And we were always aware of our precarious situation, an oasis alone in the midst of enemy land.

Every time we rode on the Duty Train and endured the engine change while facing guards or drove through one of the rigid, timed corridors to the West, or sat in our cars during inspections at one of the checkpoints into the East, we were reminded not only that we were surrounded, but of the events that led to and resulted from the heroic efforts of the Berlin Airlift. Events that not only helped the people of Berlin survive the blockade and brought

treats and a little bit of light into the lives of deprived children, but that also echoed for decades by demonstrating that the young arena of flight could overcome obstacles to render aid, and through negotiated routes for people and supplies to leave and enter the city, safely, by rail, auto, and air, even when the Wall was

eventually built.

Because those pilots, air crews, and ground crews showed that a blockade would not prevail, would not starve out the people, deter US and British grit, kill our spirit, and even more, would not quench our decency and compassion for others, even former enemies, events across the world stage were significantly altered.

This past year, 2019, marked both the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift and the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Wall; an event at the beginning of the Cold War and an event at the ending of it. We celebrate both of these events as triumphs in the effort to resist and overcome a tyranny that threatened the world.

But this past year also marked another ending event from the Cold War era, one we don't celebrate: the last meeting of the British Berlin Airlift Association as it retired its standard and closed down on January 25, 2020, due to declining numbers and health.

The brave and dedicated men and women who were young adults when they so vigorously took part in all the facets of the Airlift operations and made it such a resounding success that it echoed for decades, are in their elder years now. Many are in their 90s, a few in their 100s. Many have left us already, and others are in declining health. There are only a few left in Britain and a few in the US. While we see this decline, and the closing of the British association, with sorrow, and with nostalgia about the end of an era that was such an integral part of our lives, we also never cease to think of these people with pride, with honor, and a deep, abiding respect. We Berlin Brats, who collectively lived through all the different stages of the Cold War as it played out in Berlin, know more than most the importance of what these stalwart and compassionate people did for so many during that critical year.

And we are delighted that the decency, comradery, and care that so marked the individual efforts of the Airlift, and made it such an emotionally resonant experience for the people of Berlin, is still strong, still present. There is nothing that could better represent the spirit of the Airlift than welcoming the members of the British association as honorary life members of the American one. We will not forget any of you, British or American.

*Good Morning.*

*My name is Jane Cowling and I am the daughter (Brat!) of Bill Evans. My Dad served in the RAF during 48/49 and was ground crew on the Berlin Airlift. He is 91 now and still going strong. He has been a big part of the British Berlin Airlift Association and has attended many events in England and in Germany, in Berlin, Templehof and Fasberg.*

*Sadly, yesterday saw the last ever meet of the BBA Association and the RAF standard was decommissioned and hung in St Clement Danes, the RAF church in London. It was truly an emotional day. Eddie Ide, maybe known to you guys, an American enthusiast of the Airlift, came over to talk to the group after and made the veterans lifelong members of the US Airlift Association. So I guess as Dad's daughter, that makes me an honorary brat?!*

*I'm emailing you today as I would really like to keep a connection alive between the UK vets and yourselves. I'm hoping you feel the same and that I hear from you soon.*



Photos courtesy of Jane Cowling. Clockwise from bottom left: the standard being presented in St Clement Danes, the RAF church in London; her father's certificate of welcome into BAVA; Eddie Ide with Bill Evans; and the group, including the son and daughter of Air Commodore Rex Waite.



## WITH HONOR

### Airlift memorial erected in Wichita

Veterans gathered in Wichita in September unveiled a memorial to the Berlin Airlift, considered the first conflict of the Cold War.

Some of the pilots who flew those missions to offer aid were stationed at McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita. "It was a wonderful experience to help somebody who was in desperate need, to bring a load of 30,000 pounds of flour and see their eyes open up as they came through the door to unload it," said Air Force veteran Colonel Gail S. Halvorsen.

The Berlin Airlift Veterans Association (BAVA),

*Ladies and Gentlemen.*

*I have received word that the remaining members of the British Berlin Airlift Veterans Association will hold a closure gathering on Saturday January 25th. It will be held at St Clement Danes, the RAF Church in London. Attendance of the remaining members with mobility is expected to be in a low number. Over the years I have had the pleasure of communicating with some of their members, so my attendance will be a personal thing and I will also be representing the BAVA.*

*As you're aware, the Commonwealth airmen and the RAF were as serious about the airlift as our soldiers and airmen. Their cooperation with General Clay and General Tunner became the backbone of the flights to save the city. Eighteen of the total fatalities were British military. These gentle-men and -women are as proud as our own BAVA members even though they say the same thing, 'I was just doing my job.' Their 87606 airlift flights were over 30% of the total flights into Berlin. Their reverse airlift took over 130,000 children, older folks, and hospital patients to West Germany to escape the hardships of the blockade. It will be an under-publicized, quiet event without fanfare, filled with pride and memories, but a sad day for all Berlin Airlift Veterans.*

*Eddie Ide.*

*Director of Public Information  
Berlin Airlift Veterans Assn*



## BRAT GET-TOGETHERS

### Send-off to Germany



How's this for a send-off?!?! Kelly (Murphy) Waymire '82 departed for her dreamed-of -- now a reality -- posting to Germany in November and Berlin Brats gals gave her a rousing farewell. "Eating dinner at a German restaurant with these fabulous ladies! Berliners are the best!" -- Kelly. Above, left to right: Jennie (Felker) Curtis '82, Sylvia Alexander '84, Kelly, Kate (Murphy) Scrivener '88, and Rose (Hanson) Neel '84 at the Old House Cosmopolitan in Alexandria, VA. The man in the photo at left is Sylvia's man, Ray Larson.

### Reliving the riverboat days

During the 2017 Reunion in New Orleans, our very own modern-day pirates met up for their own mini-reunion on the great Mississippi. Good thing they're friends; no paces at dawn involved. From left to right: Lance Srp '88, Don Geimer '88, Brian Cooper '88, Ken Magee '88 (back row), Christopher Haddock '88, Mike Flores '88 (back row), Mike Haddock '89 (back row, white hat), and Sean Berlin '88.



### Augusta, GA

'84 Rules! Mark Britton and Michelle Abbott had a great time welcoming the new year in Augusta on January 12th, 2020.

### Keep on polishin'!

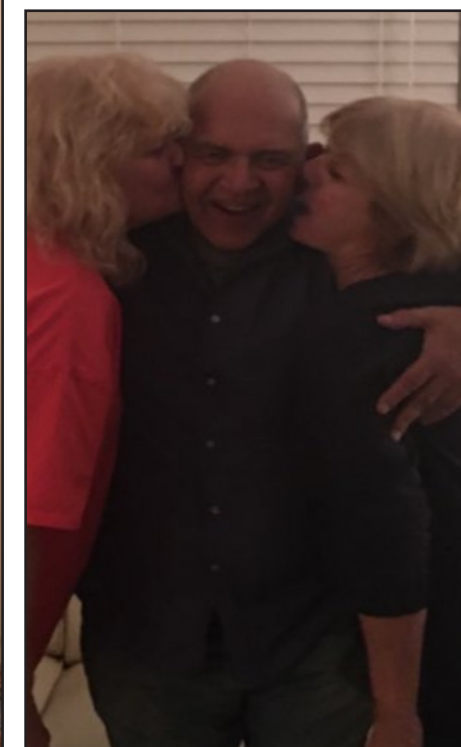
In 1971's yearbook, *Junior Superlatives*, "Best Apple Polishers" were Pat (Martel) Little and Richard Black (left photo). The two recreated the photo in 2002 at the Las Vegas regional (center photo), and again, 18 (or 49, from '71) years later, during a visit in January 2020 in Florida!



## BRAT GET-TOGETHERS

### Washing ashore in Florida

Richard Black '72 visits Florida and links up with Pat (Martel) Little '72 and Renate (Kowalski) Goodloe '72 in Melbourne, on January 9th. In one of those three-degrees-of-Brat-separation things, after years of living in the DC metro area, Renate has now retired to Melbourne, just a few streets away from Pat! The three friends had some laughs looking at old yearbook photos and goofing around. The world is a small place when you're a Brat!



# Finding Berlin

## Newsuem in D.C. is closing!!!

The Newseum in Washington DC is closing in two days [the end of December, 2019], and my wife and I were fortunate to be able to get there for the first time yesterday [December 27th]. I don't know what will happen to the section of the Berlin Wall and the guard tower that is prominently displayed there. I'm hoping that they find another public place to display it.

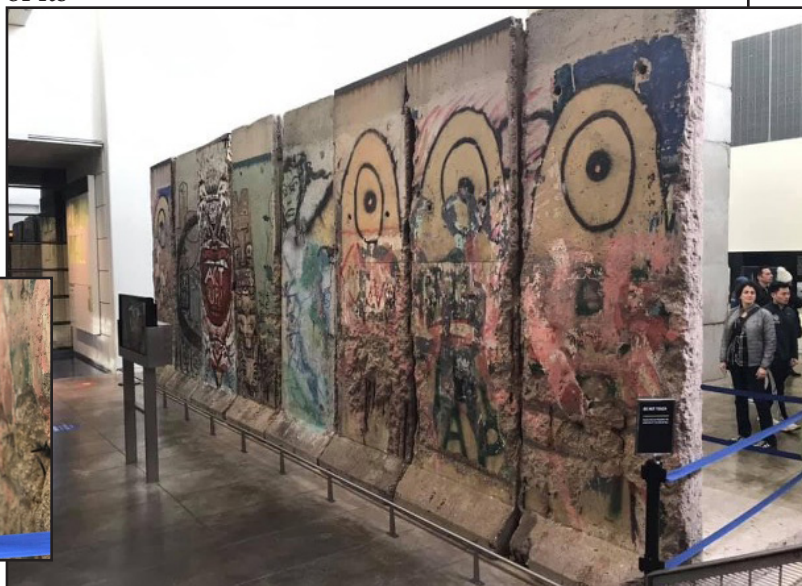
—John Roetry '84

Website says: All of the artifacts and exhibits in the Newseum will remain on public display through the end of the year. In early 2020, once the Newseum closes, deinstallation of its exhibits will begin and artifacts

will be moved to a state-of-the-art support center where they will be housed and maintained. The collection will continue to circulate for outgoing loans, educational programs, public events, digital initiatives and more.



Liese Hutchison '83 and her bear at the Gendarmenmarkt in Berlin, December 5, 2019.



Above: Eight Berlin Wall sections in the Newseum. Some of the sections were outside for years in the Rosslyn area of DC before the Newseum was created. The Newseum does not allow them to be touched, but has a small segment of the Wall set aside for touching (left). John is touching the western side. Above left: John standing in front of the ubiquitous Checkpoint Charlie sign. Far left: The Newseum has one of the unforgettable looming East German guard towers.



## Army Warfare Center dedicates building to General Lucius Clay

by Dr. Troy Sacquety, USASOC History Office, January 11, 2019

In the aftermath of World War II, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote, "Gen. [Lucius D.] Clay is one of the ablest officers the Army has produced, particularly in the keenness of his intellect, his profound understanding of organization, and the zeal with which he applies himself to every task. While his work has not brought him actual battle command experience, I believe that his work as the American administrator in Germany will come to be recognized, when that work is fully understood, as one of the outstanding contributions to our country." Gen. Omar N. Bradley in turn described him as a "brilliant administrator."

On January 11, 2019, Gen. Clay received another honor: the Special Warfare Education Group, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, dedicated its headquarters building in his memory.

Born April 23, 1897, Marietta, Georgia, Clay graduated from the United States Military Academy (West Point), June 1918 and received a commission as a 2nd lieutenant of engineers. Promotions were slow between the wars; he did not become a major until April 15, 1940. However, the onset of World War II brought Clay escalating positions of responsibility. In 1941, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and colonel, and in 1942 to brigadier general and major general.

During the war, he primarily served stateside in a number of administrative positions centered on engineering and logistics, and as the director of Material, Army Service Forces. Maj. Gen. Clay deployed overseas in October 1944 to the European Theater of Operations to command the Normandy Base Section. He used his organizational skills to speed up the unloading of supplies through the newly-captured French port of Cherbourg. He then returned stateside to help shift combat units from Europe to the Pacific.

Clay returned to Europe, April 18, 1945, to begin his civil affairs/military government service. Promoted to lieutenant general, he was appointed as deputy Military Governor, Germany, to transition U.S. combat forces to occupation duties. Five months later, Lt.

Gen. Clay became the commanding



general of the Office of Military Government for Germany. In this position, he oversaw denazification, reconstruction, and governance.

Clay was promoted to four-star general, March 17, 1947, to serve as commanding general, U.S. Army Forces (European Theater) and Military Governor of Germany. During his tenure, Gen. Clay solved his greatest challenge: the Soviet Blockade of Berlin, which was imposed in June 1948. Gen. Clay triggered the Berlin Airlift, which served the city residents during the harsh winter of 1948-1949.

Clay retired May 31, 1949, with more than 30 years of service. Having been awarded three Distinguished Service Medals and the Legion of Merit, he received a ticker tape parade in New York City. After military retirement, he served as ambassador in West Germany from 1961-1962. He passed away April 16, 1978, at the age of 80. He is buried at the West Point cemetery. Clay left a lasting legacy of administrative competence and true professionalism.

Present at the dedication were: Dr. Lucius D. Clay III, General Clay's grandson and former Special Forces Officer; Col (Ret) Vern Pike, from the BUSMA organization. Vern was a 1 Lt. in Berlin who personally interacted

with then-Ambassador Clay; and Col. Olaf Manhenke, the German Army liaison to the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

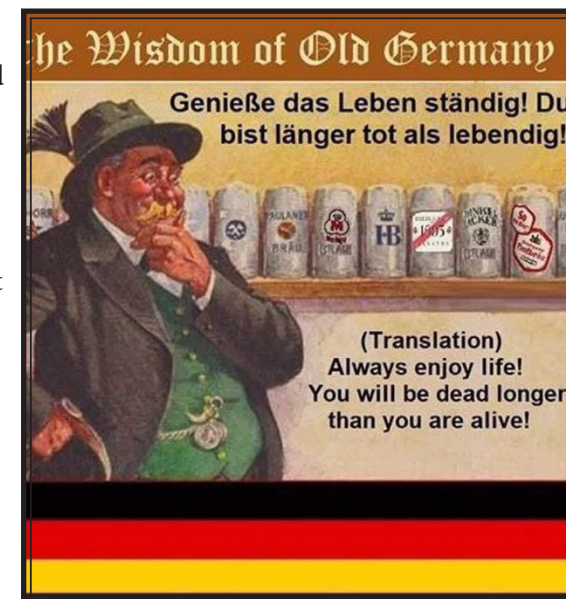
After naming General Clay "the Airlift Guy," Col. Manhenke went on to describe what Gen. Clay still means to Germany.

"This year, we will celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. This is the story of "candy bombers" that defended the freedom of West Berlin and laid the foundation for the transatlantic friendship and thereby for a reunited Germany.

As Germany's newly appointed deputy governor, Gen. Clay took little time to secure the permission of President Harry S. Truman to airlift supplies into the city at a feverish pace. Clay declared, "They can't drive us out short of war."

Gen. Clay directed some 277,800 flights, carrying 2.3 million tons of food and fuel to West Berlin. On May 12, 1949, after nearly a year, the Soviets loosened their stubborn clutch on West Berlin. Clay was declared a hero in West Germany ....Berliners renamed the "Kronprinzenallee" the street in front of the former U.S. Headquarters in Berlin, into "Clayallee."

Later, as President Kennedy's Ambassador to Germany from '61-'62, he orchestrated the U.S. response to the building of the Wall and maintaining open access by the Allies to Berlin.



## BRAT GET-TOGETHER

### Serendipity

General Richard Clarke '80, as U.S. SOCOM Commander, visited RAF Mildenhall (England) – home of the 352nd SOW Air Commandos, where Colonel Michelle Estes '90 is the 352nd Special Operations Maintenance Group Commander.

Richard did not know that Michelle was a Berlin Brat. Michelle said, "When I told him that we went to the same high school in Berlin just about a decade apart, he was taken aback a little, and then we started to talk about what our dads' jobs were. His was the IG and mine was the Templehof ATC. We both agreed that we needed to get a picture together to send to the Newsletter.

"Later, on the flightline, he said that he wished his wife, who is also a Berlin Brat, could meet me but she was elsewhere on base with our spouses group. We took this pic together in front of the CV-22 and he asked what class I belonged to. When I told him class of '90, he said he was the class of '80. Since it was the day following 11 Sept, I brought up Kip Taylor and we started to talk about his ultimate sacrifice, sharing the story with my fellow comrades.

"Then it was time for him to continue his tour of the 352d Special Operations Wing, so I escorted him to the next briefing point. He is an extremely humble and down-to-earth leader. It was an honor to finally meet him. Very proud day for me. Berlin Brats!"

*Berlin Brat to Berlin Brat!!!! (With these 2 and a few other high-ranking officers .....we can safely say Berlin Brats are running the U.S. military right now!!!)*



*Michelle and Richard, BAHS alumni ten years apart, standing in front of a CV-22 aircraft used for Special Operations.*

## Brat Director of Operations for Geospatial Intel

In January 2019, Major General Charles H. Cleveland '85, U.S. Army, PCS'd from his duties as the Vice Director for Intelligence, Joint Staff, the Pentagon, where he assisted the Director for Intelligence in leading a team providing crisis and current intelligence in support of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Combatant Commands, and the office of the Secretary of Defense. He assumed new duties as the Director of Operations at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), in which he oversees execution of the NGA mission across the intelligence community and DoD. He coordinates daily GEOINT operations within NGA, prioritizing assets to oversee crisis management, deployment of personnel, and capabilities.

Charlie was commissioned in 1989 as a Military Intelligence Officer after graduat-

ing from Furman University. Since then, he has served in a variety of conventional and special operations units, including the 82nd Airborne Division, the 75th Ranger Regiment, the U.S. Army Office of Military Support, and the Joint Special Operations Command. He commanded as a Captain, a Major, a Lieutenant Colonel, and a Colonel and held staff positions in both tactical and strategic assignments. Prior to assuming his Joint Staff duties, he served as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Communications, for Operation Resolute Support in Kabul, Afghanistan. Having deployed on multiple operational tours, Charlie's awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal and the Ranger Tab. He is married and has two children.



## Cold War kid: Two tours as Berlin Brat were the chance of a lifetime

by Rebecca Kidder '91

"Have a good day, Love," my mom said as she squeezed my hand and smiled. I grabbed my backpack and ran out the door and down Biebersteig, our street, toward the bus stop. It felt like any other morning in Berlin, Germany. As the school bus came into view, I realized the situation was serious.

My parents told my three siblings and me that there would be a "training exercise" starting, but even at 13, I knew it was not an exercise. Two armed American jeeps—one in front and one behind—and two rifle-carrying U.S. soldiers on each bus would escort all DoD students to and from school in the spring of 1986. I climbed the steps, smiled at the soldiers in the front seats and walked to the back of the bus. "This is weird," I said to a friend.

The armed school bus convoys were instituted in the wake of the deadly terrorist attack on the La Belle Discotheque in West Berlin. Two U.S. soldiers and a Turkish woman were killed and about 230 injured when a bomb blast shook the nightclub packed with American troops and civilians.

The U.S. military immediately took measures to secure their sector. Barbed wire fences were erected and guards were posted around TAR and BAHS, which I attended. Bomb threats were an almost daily occurrence at school for weeks and Berlin was on high alert. I don't remember feeling scared or vulnerable because I didn't understand the gravity of what happened. I felt safe, almost invincible at times, because of my surroundings. As an Army brat, I was used to seeing jeeps, armed soldiers and guard shack.

It's funny how different a child's perception can be.

While there were obvious worries and concerns living abroad—specifically in West Berlin during the Cold War—there were so many benefits to living there. My father's career as an Army officer took our family around the world and back, but none of our stops were as memorable as our two tours in Germany.

It was truly an opportunity of a lifetime. We lived in a magical city steeped in history with cobblestone streets and historic buildings. On both tours, we lived in the quaint Zehlendorf District in the suburb of Dahlem. On our second tour, we were assigned a requisitioned home, a four-bedroom villa that we were told was once the home of Adolf Hitler's secretary. The villa was on a quiet, tree-lined street and the basement had a wine cellar, bomb shelter and a door leading to an underground tunnel which may have served as an escape route in years past.

Just blocks from our house was the entrance to the Grunewald, a 7,400-acre forest that used to be a royal hunting reserve. My sisters, brother and I would often ride our bikes through the Grunewald during the summer and buy popsicles from street

vendors.

While living in Berlin the first time, we traveled around Europe and experienced the customs and cultures of neighboring nations. Although we had chances to enjoy our surroundings, we still lived in a foreign city divided by warring ideologies and an infamous wall. Every American family lived off-post without security and I asked my mom how she felt back then.

"Of course, it was hard to put my babies on a bus after the threats we had received," she said. "But at least I knew you were safe on the bus and at school. I worried most when you were at the park or when we went to a friend's house. ... I always felt most vulnerable in our car because it was so obviously American."

In addition to the terrorist threats, we were constantly reminded that we lived in the shadow of the Iron Curtain. We lived in Berlin when our neighbor, Army Maj. Arthur Nicholson, a military intelligence officer, was shot and left to die in East Germany by a Soviet sentry. My parents frequently witnessed strange men in business suits digging through our trash. What they were looking for I'll never know.

Our second tour in Berlin was immediately after German reunification, from 1990 to 1992. Although the Cold War was in its waning days, there were still threats and we were the victims of our own terrorist incident. Three shots were fired through the kitchen window of our home while my dad was deployed to Northern Iraq. My mom was alone with three children—I was away at college in Munich—but she kept the house running smoothly. It was difficult being so far away because I was worried about my family's safety.

Troops and their families make sacrifices every day and those living abroad are no exception. Like most, we lived far from loved ones, relinquished the typical hometown experience and dealt with the fear and uncertainty that comes with deployments.

My dad missed out on some important moments in our lives and we all missed our extended family back in the States, but his job also helped create some incredible memories for us. There were so many unique experiences afforded by living overseas—experiences we would have missed out on if the Army hadn't sent us to Germany.

What I learned in my history class, I could see for myself by stepping outside the classroom. Or I could talk to family friends who would elaborate on their city's history.

We forged a lifelong bond with Berliners who met my parents at a partnership event. Our family attended events with our French and British allies and two of my closest friends from school were children of Middle Eastern diplomats. We built friendships with people from all walks of life and our adventure as a family broadened our worldview.

Living abroad shaped my life in many ways, but growing up as a military brat was even more impactful. I'm accepting of others because I've been exposed to a diverse group of people and their cultures, struggles and beliefs. Moving from one post to the next every few years was difficult, but I learned to be adaptable, independent and comfortable with new surroundings.

I'm a proud member of a fraternity of courageous, resilient Americans who graciously embrace the challenges of growing up in the military.



*Top right: Rebecca Kidder. Photo credit USO, Joseph Andrew Lee. Above: U.S. military jeeps escort DoD students to school in 1986. Photo courtesy Rebecca Kidder.*

# Deutschlandhalle goes down

For those who haven't been back to Berlin in recent years, you may be surprised to find that a large landmark, the Deutschlandhalle, was demolished in 2011.

The Deutschlandhalle was an arena located in the Westend neighbourhood of Berlin. It was inaugurated on 29 November 1935 by Adolf Hitler. The building was granted landmark status in 1995. Built primarily for the 1936 Summer Olympics, the Deutschlandhalle could hold 8,764 people. The Olympic boxing, weightlifting, and wrestling competitions took place here. On 19 February 1938, test pilot Hanna Reitsch demonstrated the first indoor flight in the arena with a Focke-Wulf Fw 61 helicopter.

Heavily damaged by air raids in 1943, the Deutschlandhalle was rebuilt after World War II and from 1957, served as a multi-purpose arena and sports venue, in the last years primarily for ice hockey, but also for indoor soccer and again for boxing. The arena hosted the 1980 FIBA European Champions Cup final between Maccabi Elite Tel Aviv and Real Madrid, in which Madrid won 89–85, the 1995 FIBA Korać Cup finals in which local Alba Berlin won the trophy and the 1995 World Amateur Boxing Championships. The building was also used for musical events: as part

of her À travers l'Europe Tour in 1959, Dalida had a sold-out concert in front of audience of 9,500. Ella Fitzgerald performed here in 1960; the concert was recorded as Ella in Berlin. On 4 September 1970, it was the site of Jimi Hendrix's penultimate performance.

After the 1990 German reunification, the Deutschlandhalle lost its position as Berlin's primary arena, replaced by the newly erected Velodrom, Max-Schmeling-Halle and Mercedes-Benz Arena. After the building had to be closed for repairs several times, the Berlin Senate in May 2008 decided to demolish it. Demolition took place on 3 December 2011 with the explosive destruction of the roof.



# 11 reasons why winter in Berlin is better than you think



Winter in a big city can be uncomfortable, but not so in Berlin: That's because there's still a lot to see here! And we have put together the 11 best winter tips for you.

## Tip 1: Museums

It's finally time to explore the Berlin museum landscape at your own pace. There are so many exciting exhibitions in museums and galleries that you are sure to find the right one for you. Whether arts and crafts, painting, communication, photography, natural history or computer games – the choice really is endless. The absolute highlight is of course Museum Island, where a visit to one of the five museums is always worthwhile.



## Tip 2: Winter sports

Perhaps (but only perhaps) contrary to expectations, Berlin also offers a wide range of winter sports activities for sports enthusiasts: from ice skating to curling and tobogganing, there are many possibilities. Our tip: tobogganing on the Teufelsberg hill. Of course, it's possible just to watch too: how about the Eisbären Berlin ice hockey team, the Alba Berlin basketball team, the Füchse Berlin handball team or the Berlin Recycling Volleys volleyball team?

## Tip 3: Wellness

Things are calmer and more relaxed at the wellness centres: in one of the beautiful spas, in relaxed sauna worlds, in salt caves, on sauna floats, on roof terraces or in thermal baths. In combination with Spirit Yoga, you can float

weightlessly in salt water, watch the interplay of light and listen to gentle underwater music. Here everything is at your disposal.

## Tip 4: Shows & musicals

Berlin is really well-placed in this respect. A wide-ranging programme in the legendary Admiralspalast, musical classics in the traditional Theater des Westens, spectacular shows in the Friedrichstadt-Palast, fascinating and constantly changing variety shows in the CHAMÄLEON Theater and the Wintergarten. The special locations such as Bar jeder Vernunft and Tipi am Kanzleramt, as well as so many other unique stages, also boast an inspiring programme.

## Tip 5: Winter walks through the quiet city parks

In winter you will have most of the parks to yourself (almost) – so relaxing walks are doubly worth it. Tiergarten, Natur-Park Schöneberger Südgelände or Volkspark Friedrichshain – it doesn't matter which one. Just make sure you get up off the couch sometime.

## Tip 6: Cafés and tea rooms

And after the long walk, there's nothing better than going to one of Berlin's cozy cafés. Here you can get delicious cakes and tarts as well as a hot cup of coffee, tea or hot chocolate.

## Tip 7: Cinemas and the Berlinale

Just the right time of year for a trip to the cinema. In the evening you can stop off and unwind in the city's large and small cinemas. Or wait for the big event in February when the glamorous Berlinale will be returning to Berlin. And no matter how cold it is, stars and the world of Hollywood will get together on the red carpet and delight the countless fans patiently waiting for hours to take a selfie with their idol. Be part of the biggest public film festival in the world!

## Tip 8: Events

And the first few weeks of the new year see a whole range of further top-class events: the Six Days of Berlin, Berlin Fashion Week, and International Green Week will all take place in January. In the last month of winter, be inspired by the ISTAF Indoor 2020, the biggest athletics meeting, and of course the Berlinale for all film fans. And in March, cycling enthusiasts can rejoice once again, because Germany has been awarded the contract by the Union Cycliste Internationale for the

Track Cycling World Championships 2020 and what venue would be better suited than the Velodrom? Last but not least, Berlin once again welcomes the world to ITB – the world's largest travel exhibition. The weather isn't a factor, so get out there!

## Tip 9: Eat out and eat! Berlin



Good food can be had at any time, but in winter it is particularly enjoyable. That's why we recommend Berlin's exciting and delicious foodie scene and trying out new dishes and restaurants. At the end of February, you can sample the culinary delights of more than 70 chefs at the gourmet festival "eat! Berlin," who have been awarded 60 Michelin stars between them.

## Tip 10: Out of the neighbourhood

Use the winter to get out of your neighbourhood and visit lesser-known places in Berlin. Be it Köpenick's old town or the Kolkviertel in Spandau – Berlin offers you plenty of opportunities for winter days out in the neighbourhoods.

## Tip 11: Botanical Garden with a tropical feeling

You have until 5 January to embark on a magical journey through the glow of lights in the Botanical Garden. Let yourself be inspired by the atmospheric ambience. And there, those who really can't stand the cold any longer can also savour the tropical feeling in winter as the Botanical Garden allows you to escape the gloomy weather for a moment and dream ahead to summer.



# Beloved Berlin currywurst stand delivers a bite of history: Since 1930, Konnopke's, the iconic sausage business, has been a landmark



The Konnopke family have sold sausages under a Berlin subway overpass for nearly nine decades. The business has become almost as iconic in the city as Marlene Dietrich, pictured on the mural to the left. Photos by Lena Mucha for The New York Times.

by Christopher F. Schuetze  
New York Times

The night the Berlin Wall fell, 30 years ago in November, Waltraud Ziervogel's husband, Kurt, came home with the news and urged his wife to join him in the joyous celebrations and a stroll through West Berlin, suddenly accessible to them for the first time in nearly three decades.

"I said, 'Are you crazy?' and I went to bed because I had the early shift," said Ms. Ziervogel.

It may have been lost on her just then, but the world changed that night. When she pulled up the metal blinds of her sausage snack business at 4:30 a.m., the usually busy corner — just 400 yards from the wall — was even busier.

"It was like a big party. Everyone was up and happy and partying, and many wanted to buy a sausage — but I wasn't allowed to take West

upscale kitchen stores and vegan restaurants.

Like many other citizens of East Germany who found themselves facing the challenges of a capitalist system with little preparation, Ms. Ziervogel, who was 53 when the Wall fell, was forced to adapt. But unlike most, she was already a successful businesswoman responsible for more than a dozen employees when the Wall fell.

Still, the transition was hard. Her supply chain collapsed overnight, there were new taxes and new city regulations, and the changing tastes of her clientele. When the city rebuilt the subway viaduct that towers over the stand in 2010, officials tried to get her to change locations permanently. She resisted.

"I like to call it the golden West," Ms. Ziervogel said sarcastically during an interview in her garden, where in the early years she grew tomatoes for ketchup that was unavailable in the communist state.

After a long fight with city officials, she managed to get permission to rebuild her stand completely in 2010 and reopened it early the next year. In the entire neighborhood, only a handful of retail businesses have survived the last three decades.

As the international lineup of hungry customers on most days (Konnopke's is closed on Sunday) can attest, Ms. Ziervogel has not only survived but thrived.

Although it is hard to tell now, Prenzlauer Berg was a

money," she said.

Three decades, tens of thousands of pork sausages and boatloads of curry-flavored ketchup later, Konnopke's, the sausage stand under a subway overpass in the heart of Prenzlauer Berg that started its life in 1930 is still there, a monument to a working-class Berlin that has been all but

priced out of existence — the all-night bars replaced by banks,

working-class district home to communists even before World War II. In the 1970s and '80s, as the often war-damaged housing stock became increas-

ingly decrepit and people moved away, the neighborhood became virtually the only place in East Germany where bohemian, gay and party scenes could take hold. Many leaders of the 1989 peaceful revolution lived there.

"Even East Berlin, which was such an overly controlled, horrible space, did allow these little pockets of tolerance," said Alexandra Richie, an Oxford-trained historian who has written a history of Berlin.

Konnopke's, which sits on a 50-foot median at the intersection of three major roads, remains the heart of the neighborhood. Celebrities, politicians and tourists regularly make the pilgrimage there. On its round birthdays (next year it will be its 90th), the company throws big street parties that are attended by local dignitaries, neighbors and longtime customers.

Before the wall fell, the stand's 4:30 a.m. opening was timed to catch not early risers, but late-night revelers coming from the Schoppenstube, the iconic East Berlin gay bar.

"It was an exception — most of the rest of East Berlin had a curfew," said Harald Hauswald, a street photographer who lived close to Konnopke's in the 1980s and knew the neighborhood well.

But the staff had to work quickly. Before long, another bar, the Lolott, whose clientele was prone to fighting, would close, and they had to make sure the two very different crowds would not meet.

"We didn't want anyone to get attacked," said Heike Bucholz, 52, who has been working at Konnopke's since 1984.

"When I hear someone call me Waltraud, I know it's one of my old night customers," said Ms. Ziervogel.

When Max Konnopke, Ms. Ziervogel's father, started the business in 1930, he struggled at first. But one day he decided to load up his mobile kitchen into a trailer and haul it behind his motorcycle nearly 300 miles to Nuremberg, where he heard that the Nazi party was holding a big meeting.

As described in an official history published by Ms. Ziervogel and her daughter, Dagmar Konnopke (who took her mother's maiden name after a divorce), her father was mistrustful of the Nazis, but the Nuremberg rally proved a boon for his business, giving him the means to expand.

Ms. Ziervogel married her husband, Kurt, who is now deceased, in 1957. They had two children: Dagmar, now 53, and Mario, now 56.

Ms. Ziervogel formally took over in Prenzlauer Berg in 1976 (a second outlet in Weissensee was given to her brother and later sold), when her

in 1983 and 2010). In the shot, a young boy looks up at the store in front of him as his mother faces away from the camera.

"At least once a week, we have someone telling us: 'I'm that little boy,'" Ms. Konnopke said.

Even now, Ms. Ziervogel is not done fighting. Starting this month, the city of Berlin decreed that she would have to remove four picnic tables because they were occupying space on a public walkway.

"Where will my customers sit?" said Ms. Ziervogel, who is certain that once the good weather comes around Konnopke's will suffer a drop in revenue because of the missing seating.

Ms. Ziervogel predicted that the city tabloids would raise a storm about the missing benches, pressuring the city bureaucracy into reversing itself.

It would not be the first time. In 2012, the tabloids went wild over a fight between Ms. Ziervogel and her son, Mario, over naming rights for

a currywurst business he opened just half a mile from the original site. The tabloids titled the affair the "Currywurst War."

After six decades on her feet, Ms. Ziervogel prefers worrying about the books and the laws, leaving the day-to-day grind of running the business to her daughter.

"We have the fire brigade down the street, so we get those big fire truck sirens blasting by us at least eight times a day," Ms. Konnopke said. "And then the subways right overhead, the trams, the traffic and the heat. It is physically exhausting."



Waltraud Ziervogel, left, and her daughter, Dagmar Konnopke. Ms. Ziervogel, who took over the business from her father, refers sarcastically to the "golden West" when asked about life since fall of the Berlin Wall.

father retired. He died at 84, three years before the wall fell.

But the biggest challenge came in 1990 with the reunification of East and West Germany. Not just because of a new set of suppliers, taxes and rules, but because a new universe of customers expected a different set of offerings.

Konnopke's started selling French fries. The currywurst, which used to be served with a bun and a hot mug of broth, is now cut up and served on a paper plate. (A tiny plastic fork is provided.)

Wedding parties can now reserve tables in a roofed-over pavilion, which was opened in 2011, after the last major renovation, and seats 35. "I put out tablecloths and little bouquets," said Ms. Ziervogel.

And there are now vegan currywursts.

"Frau Ziervogel fought like a bull to keep this place," said Dieter Kohl, a regular customer from before the fall of the wall, who on a recent autumn day shared a currywurst meal with his wife. Mr. Kohl left the neighborhood years ago but still makes the occasional trek to Konnopke's.

He's not the only longtime Berliner who keeps coming back.

On the outside wall of the gold-colored-metal shop hangs a black-and-white postcard picture featuring a much smaller stand in the 1960s (before two rebuilds,



Diners eating in front of the sausage kiosk.



Sliced currywurst and French fries with cups of warm broth at Konnopke's.

## McCurrywurst coming to McDonald's in Germany!!!

Of course! What took them so long?

They've been doing Bier for years ... so why not a Bier and Currywurst?!?!?

Liz Dane '75 caught this ad/announcement via a train trip while in Germany in December 2019.



## Berlin a-blaze with lights

This is one highlight that I would never miss. The two light festivals "Berlin leuchtet" and "Festival of Lights" transform the city into a sea of lights and conjure up magical moments. I love the illuminated sights and the amazed people standing before them, wanting to capture everything on their mobile phones. Whether it's cold and rainy or – as is often the case in Berlin – an evening blessed with mild autumn weather – you should not miss these impressive illuminations. October-January, all over the city.

### Upcoming Events

#### 2020 Regionals

TBD

Save the date:

Sept 26th, Wichita, KS

#### OSB Gathering 2020

San Diego, CA

Oct 22-25, 2020

hosted by Overseas Brats  
[www.overseasbrats.com](http://www.overseasbrats.com)

#### REUNION

June 4-7, 2020



Seattle

Hotel link and registration package can be found on our website at [BerlinBrats.org](http://BerlinBrats.org)

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Find us on Facebook@

"Berlin Brats Alumni Association"

(the official fan page site)

"Berlin American High School (BAHS)"

(an open group chat page)



follow us on Twitter  
@BerlinBrats

Newsletter Brat: Kimberly Keravuori '85

#### Early '60s Site

By invitation only

Contact Jim Branson '64

[jbranson01@hotmail.com](mailto:jbranson01@hotmail.com)

for an invite

#### American Overseas School Historical Society

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