



BERLIN BRATS NEWSLETTER

C/O LAURA COATS-THORNTON, 741 POE STREET, AZLE, TX 76020

BERLIN BRATS REUNIFIED!!

While east and west Berlin experienced the excitement of reunification in November 1989, half a world away another Berlin group was preparing to reunify. Ray Holmes, coordinator of the BAHS All-Class Reunion 1990, began the task of notifying all his Berlin alumnae contacts of the upcoming reunion planned to be held in Georgia. He sent out flyers and began making arrangements with the hotel and caterers.

After months of planning, thirty alumni met in the Georgia mountains for the reunion. It was a wonderful, intimate time of seeing familiar faces and re-establishing old bonds. While we definitely enjoyed our shopping and partying, most of us also missed seeing friends we had anticipated seeing. Where were they, we asked ourselves? Our first reunion in 1986 had over two hundred alumni in attendance. What happened to everyone else?

The answer was that we had lost contact with our other Berlin alumnae. We were saddened, but not hopeless. We decided to hold the next reunion in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area to enable as many former students as possible the opportunity to attend the next reunion. We also realized that in order to

maintain contact, we were going to have to get organized to begin locating former students. We decided to begin mailing a newsletter twice yearly and to take dues in order to facilitate that endeavor.

The first step was to contact the national alumnae groups, OSCAR and Overseas Brats. These two organizations have been instrumental in helping overseas alumnae groups for several years. OSCAR is the Overseas School Combined Alumni Registry created by David C. Thatcher, Jr. (P.O. Box 7763, Washington, DC 20044—for those who want to know more!) OSCAR provides help via a computer data base for mailing lists and directories. Overseas Brats publishes a newsletter, helps in networking and organizing, and generally promotes the cause of military brats. (I will forward a pamphlet about Overseas Brats later.)

Then, we had to define our group's goals. That seemed easy enough—find our folks! An account was opened to fund the newsletter. We decided to put half the dues into a permanent fund (in the "donor's" name) for the next reunion. Then began the process of contacting every person we could who had attended Berlin American High School to let

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BERLIN TODAY

November 1989. The world turns its eyes towards Berlin. Pictures of rejoicing, laughing, crying Berliners rivet people around the world. On the evening of November the ninth, the borders between the eastern and western sectors of the city are opened. People flood through the opened border crossings by the thousands. In Berlin "der Bar ist los". With the tearing down of the Wall, the discussions began over whether Berlin would once again become the capital of Germany and the seat of government. President Richard von Weizsacker advocated a quick decision in favour of Berlin: "This is the place for the responsible political leadership of Germany." On 20 September 1990 both of the German parliaments agreed in the Unification Treaty that "the capital of Germany is Berlin." It was also decided that the 23 districts of Berlin make up the Land Berlin as a constituent state.

The difficulties facing Berliners in their efforts to make Berlin grow together should not be overlooked. The origin of the special status of the one-time capital of the German Reich was World War II. In the years 1944 - 45, the allied powers divided up Germany into four occupational zones. The capital of Berlin was made an exception. It was not assigned to any of the four zones, but was considered to be a special territory which was jointly occupied by the victorious powers and turned into the seat of the Allied Military Authority. The Control Council was to be responsible for the administration of all of Germany. Berlin itself

was administered by an Allied Headquarters.

More than forty-five years have gone by since the end of the war. Berliners have lived almost half a century in a divided city. Any changes in the international political climate constantly affected the everyday life of Berlin's citizens over this period. During the Berlin Blockade, the Soviet Union cut off all land and water access to the city, alleging "technical problems". The Western Allies reacted with the Berlin Airlift, the greatest air-transport operation in history. In 1958 the Soviet Union demanded that the Western powers leave the city within six months (the Khrushchev Ultimatum), but the Allies stayed in spite of the threats. The Communists responded by surrounding the city with the Wall, completed August thirteenth, 1961.

The Quadripartite Agreement of September third, 1971, brought a considerable improvement in Berlin's situation as part of the relaxation in relations between East and West. It recognized that "the links between the western sectors of Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany will be maintained and developed." Thanks to the treaties, West Berliners were allowed to visit the eastern sector of the city as well as the GDR. However the special status the city had for decades remained: West Berlin was part of the territory governed by the German Basic Law, but was not permitted to be governed by the West German government. East Berlin, on the other

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hand, was the capital of the GDR, although technically only a sector of the city of Berlin.

Since the opening of the borders in 1989, the Allies have given up objections to the direct election of Berlin deputies to the Federal Parliament as well as objections to giving the Berlin deputies in the Bundestag and Bundesrat full voting rights. Elections to an all-Berlin parliament took place on 2 December 1990, the same day as German national elections. A joint regional committee for the entire territory of Berlin, composed of persons proportionally appointed by the Berlin Senate and the East Berlin "Magistrat", governmental representatives from east and west as well as experts from different fields of expertise was created. The Senate and Magistrat have been jointly meeting in Red City Hall since June 1990 every 14 days.

Berlin, and its suburbs, is now home to over five million persons of various nationalities. It is demographically the youngest of the German cities. The city which has been divided for so long must now "grow together". In no other place in Germany are the differences between living conditions in the communist states and the free states more clearly seen. Comparisons are made every day - at work, in the apartment buildings, in the stores. The city officials will have the important tasks of improving transportation routes, creating livable housing, and training a new generation of German workmen, while at the same time creating a "humane" city.

Berliners anticipate creating a bridge between East and West. They view themselves as "the bridge of partnership of Europe's metropolis". They believe the "new peaceful European order which is evolving assigns Berlin a place in the middle of Europe, and a new way of thinking

about capitals will be associated with Berlin." Perhaps Berlin, once the Cold War symbol of the struggle for freedom, will become the symbol of the struggle for unity.

"Berlin Brats Reunified" cont..
them know we were "organized".

Our first newsletter went out in August. It was sent to every viable lead we had. Between August and December, we mailed out approximately sixty post cards to our "maybe" list of contacts. The response has been GREAT! For every person contacted we gain contact with approximately three others. The letters have been supportive and interested. We mailed out the roster in November. By December, the roster was outdated! We now are in contact with alumni from 1950 to 1986!

So, what's next?! We need to begin the next phase of networking. This will entail help from volunteers, some who have already volunteered. We need our volunteers to begin to try to contact alumni in their areas to let them know we've organized and we will have a reunion in 1996. We will be encouraging area "mini-reunions" and will (hopefully) pass along reports of the results.

JUNIOR OLYMPIC HOPEFUL...

Berlin Brat's Child

Son of Darlene Carpenter-Porter

Class of '71

BAHS '67 - '70

Ryan Porter placed third with his team in the Hershey Pennsylvania's National Final Track Meet held in August, 1991. Ryan was one of 480 chosen from 500,000 participants throughout the US. He will continue competing throughout this spring (after he recovers from chicken pox) to qualify for the National Junior Olympics.

FINDING LOST FRIENDS

How many times have you wondered about an old friend, but didn't know how to go about finding them? For our group, this is probably the most oft asked question: "I'd like to help find friends, but I don't know how?" Where to begin?

First of all, follow up on rag-tag details you may remember about that person. Perhaps your parents maintained contact with other parents of Berlin Brats. Maybe you remember which college your friend planned to attend, or you remember that they came from Peoria, Illinois. Perhaps the last time you wrote one another your friend had joined the military, peace corps, US Forest Service, etc. Perhaps your sister or brother ran around with and maintained contact with a Berlin Brat. Now that you have that little detail of information in your memory bank you can take the next step—finding your friend.

There are many locator services for finding military and government employees. The main resources are listed below.

Air Force
AFSHRC-HOR
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112

AF Worldwide Locator
Air Force Manpower & Personnel Ctr.
Randolph AFB, TX 78150

Army Reserve Component Personnel & Admin. Ctr.
9700 Page Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63132

Coast Guard Commandant (G-CC)
2100 Second St., SW
Washington, DC 20370
(will forward with SASE)

Marines
Reference Section
M. Corp Historical Center
Bldg. 58, Washington Navy Yard
Washington, DC 20374

Navywide Locator
NMPC-036CC
Washington, DC 20370

Veterans' Administration
Office of Veterans' Affairs
Washington, DC 20420
(will forward with SASE)

If you remember which area of the US your friend was from (You may have had your memory refreshed when you looked through your old yearbook and discovered their home town listed along with their graduation picture.), you may then attempt to track them down in the area. I suggest calling telephone information for a listing in "the area". This is especially helpful in large metropolitan areas. If your friend's telephone is unlisted, but you know which city the person was listed in, you may try contacting the postmaster for a "last known address" form. This will cost you about \$2, but may be worth the effort.

Another resource which anyone can use is your public library. There you can look through Lovejoy's College Guide and then contact the college alumni office. You can also look through Who's Who. I'm SURE there are a few Berlin Brats in there! Then there is the Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Directory of Names. I don't think I need to explain about that one.

Many of us belong to companies and organizations which publish newsletters on a regular basis. Perhaps you could promote your involvement in your overseas alumni group, which in turn might promote both you and Berlin Brats. This usually creates a network of people who were military brats, but didn't necessarily attend the same overseas school. Be sure to let them know about Overseas Brats and OSCAR so they can get in touch with their alumni group.

The most expensive route I know about is to hire

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a private detective. There are a couple of detective agencies which specialize in finding old friends. Here's their addresses, in case some of you are interested in going that route.

Finders of Lost Friends
P.O. Box 916009
Logwood, FL 32791

Jerry McLaurin
111 Danube St.
Gulfport, MS 39501

After you've found your friend, send them any information about Berlin Brats you can. Write to us, if you can. Then be sure and call them back in a week. GOOD HUNTING!

A word to the wise about finding old friends: Please, remember that your old buddy and pal may not be as excited about getting reacquainted as you are. Their reasons may vary—bad health to bad memories. Please, don't let this discourage you about trying again. Maybe another friendship will develop with someone you were only vaguely aware of when you lived in Berlin.

NOTICE!!
DUE TO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES, AN
UPDATED ROSTER WILL BE AVAILABLE
AT A LATER DATE. - LAURA

THE BOOK CHILDREN OF THE COLD WAR HAS BEEN RETITLED:

OVERSEAS BRATS...Children of the Cold War

The story of the Military and Civilian Dependents in America's schools Overseas since WWII.

As some of you know from previous correspondence, Mr. Bruce Jones and Ms. Merle Metcalf have been collaborating on a book which will highlight OUR experiences as overseas dependents. They have been soliciting responses from the various Overseas Alumni groups for the past two years. At present they have 100 respondents, of that number only TWO are from Berlin Brats!

They have refocused their efforts and would like to hear from any of you on the following topics:

- * History of our high school
- * Experiences while in school
- * Culture shock
- * Touring experiences
- * Crises events and experiences (both personal and historical, ie. the Berlin Airlift.)
- * Our wild side (no names used)
- * Going home to the USA
- * Going back to Berlin

If you have something you would like to contribute, you may write Mr. Jones, 1425 5th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916)444-8613 or Ms. Metcalf, 203 Horizon Ave., Mountain View, CA 94043 (415)966-1619

Reunions Unlimited of Colorado, in conjunction with Overseas Brats of San Antonio, is planning a "Grand Reunion" in 1993 in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. This reunion will include all classes of all overseas high school who have "signed on" to participate.

Reunions Unlimited will also aid the groups trying to locate old classmates. This sounds like a wonderful opportunity for some of the "older" alumni to get to see one another. If you think you would be interested, please, contact Berlin Brats Association for more information.

IN MEMORY OF...

JAMES "OAKIE" WHEELER

BAHS Graduate 1969

October 25, 1949 to March 6, 1991

Oakie was diagnosed with liver cancer in July of '90. He did very well with his chemotherapy treatments. He would go straight from his chemo treatments to play 18 rounds of golf—his consuming interest.

No one would have known he was sick until February of 1991. He was hospitalized three weeks before his death in March. Only death could have kept Oakie from the reunion in Georgia in 1991. Bill and I were also kept from the reunion because of our loss.

I hope to see everyone at the 1996 Reunion in Texas!

--Debbie Wheeler-Hogan

Editor's Note: After leaving Berlin, "Oakie" came to Texas to attend Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. He stayed in Lubbock and worked for the rail road. He leaves his wife and one daughter, along with his brother, Bill, and sister, Debbie.

TIM HEAD

Deceased 1990

MARIE CLARY-COX

BAHS '66-'68

Class of '71

deceased January 17, 1991

After leaving Berlin, Marie traveled with her family to Shawnee, Oklahoma, where her father retired. In 1971 she attended the University of Tulsa, where she attained her degree in 1974. She worked in the banking industry for several years, eventually becoming a loan officer. She became ill, but continued to work until her death in a Pittsburg Hospital. She leaves two sons and 2 sisters.

FROM THE EDITOR...

Dear Friends,

I have the delightful responsibility of reading the excited letters from "Brats" who despaired of ever seeing one another again. I've also had the joy of sharing the excitement of contacting old friends. I can't tell you what satisfaction that gives me. After all, that's the goal and purpose of the Berlin Brats Association. The letters have arrived daily, practically, since January! Isn't that great!?

Along with the joy has come some sadness: reliving the not-so-fun aspects of being a military brat; learning of the death of former classmates; learning of the loss of loved ones or the loss of good health. This requires sensitivity and diplomacy on my part which is a "new-found" role. It also places me in the position of questioning whether this information should be passed along to the alums on the newsletter list.

This brings me to the subject of protecting individual privacy. (Which is where I was heading in the first place!) For the most part, I'm sure the information you send me is information you intend for me to pass along (i.e. name, address, years of attendance, present employment.) Some information, though, is rather sensitive. When you pass it along to me, please, don't assume I will tell your friends about your recent loss, etc., unless you ask me to let them know.

I do believe, however, that I should be told about the deaths of alumnae. (Many other overseas alumni groups regularly publish the names of deceased "Killed in the line of duty".) Otherwise, the family will still receive letters from old friends of their deceased loved ones which places them in the awkward position of replying to someone they might never have met. I also believe this information should be passed along to our group. If you do not want the group to know, please let me know.

The roster seemed to really excite everyone. Seeing old friend's names can be a wonderful experience. I took a chance that everyone would want their names to be listed and mailed to the group. Techni-

cally, though, this violates the person's privacy. Just in case there is anyone out there who would prefer that their address not be made public on the roster, let me know.

One of the goals of the newsletter is to use it as a forum of information about members. Examples of stories of interest about former alumnae range from stories about interesting happenings while you were in Berlin to interesting happenings after you left. (not--"I finished school, bought a house and a car, and worked myself to death." AWWW, YOUKNOW!!) I think a lot of us would like to hear any stories about return trips to Berlin and the impressions it left on the traveler, or interesting facts about your life after Berlin..

The next newsletter will be out in September. If you have any articles you think would be of interest to the group, you may forward them to the **Berlin Brats, 744 Poe St., Azle, TX 76020.**

Update (3/92): As you have guessed, the newsletter ran late on publication. I will spare you the details, but let it suffice to say Murphy's Law was at work. The printer went out in the middle of printing...blah, blah, blah! I am inserting a few things in addition to the newsletter: a roster update and Berlin Brats Purposes and Goals, and for you first contacts, an information sheet.

Hey AYAers of the mid-60's!

**Remember Mrs. Anderson?
(the AYA "MOM")**

She would LOVE to hear from you!

Contact Berlin Brats and we'll forward the address to you.



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