



April 2021

# Month of the Military Child

Spring has Sprung!!



April is the month designated for recognizing "Military Kids" and it's Spring! Purple Up! (wear purple) on April 14th (this year) in support of active-duty kids and ourselves! Above, our favorite city is featured by Greg Mattson '77 when he visited the Wittenbergplatz U-Bahnhof flower shop on his first trip back in '08. The Wittenbergplatz U-Bahnhof was opened on March 11, 1902 and designated a protected monument.

## 1962 German-American Volksfest Memory

Previewing the second Volksfest. The Teen Club got all the proceeds of the entrance fees (50 pfennigs per person) and became the wealthiest Teen Club in Europe. They had to give the organization any unused money each year - thus the live bands on Saturdays and many freebies during the week. What a great place to be a teenager!  
*By: Jim Palmer '64 (in Berlin '62-'63)*



*Notice the Teen Club through the center opening and the Coles Sport Center above the right opening.*

*By: Fred Simpson '64*



Ah, the good old days! Remember the near riot that broke out when they tried to declare you (Horst Breuer '64) the winner over the final German couple? The crowd was throwing those potted plants you see lining the stage front in this picture! As I recall the first prize was some old beat up car but quite a score in those days. The Officials interceded and the German couple was awarded the car for political correctness. You and your partner received an equivalent cash settlement (\$200 I think) and peace was restored!

BTW, who was your partner? Is that Sue Taylor? Jan Burke?

*By: Fred Simpson '64*

The thread continued on Facebook:

**Lee M. Angel '64** - I was cheated

**Fred Simpson '64** - Me too! Was amazed to actually be dancing on a stage in front of all those people!

**Horst Breuer '64** - Damn if I can remember who she was but I know she did not go to our school. She was 18.

One of her parents I think was a diplomat.

Fred where did u get that picture ???

**Fred Simpson** - From the Berlin Brats website. They have online copies of all the old yearbooks. Lifted that picture out of the 1963 yearbook.



In Memory of.....

## COACH BYRON E. SMITH

September 20, 1933-January 01, 2021

Berlin High School ('69-'77) and Wiesbaden High School ('83-'92), died on January 1, 2021. He was 87 years old.

Originally from Bellingham, Washington, Coach enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1950 and served aboard the troop transport U.S.S. Noble where he was a signalman and LST driver. He was involved in U.S. Army and Marine amphibious landing operations on the Korean peninsula during the Korean War. Following his discharge from the Navy, Coach attended Western Washington State College where he earned a teaching degree. Following several teaching assignments in Washington, he entered the Department of Defense Dependent School system where he and his family lived in Newfoundland, Japan, the Azores, and Germany. An Industrial Arts teacher and Coach, he was a very successful basketball, football, and track coach.



During his tenure at BAHS, Coach led the Berlin Cubs basketball team to 7 consecutive conference championships. Later, as the head football and basketball coach at Wiesbaden High School, Coach led the Wiesbaden Warriors to several football and basketball conference championships. When he retired from teaching in 1992 Coach was one of the winningest basketball coaches in DoDDS history. First retiring to Ft. Walton Beach, Florida, Coach and Margaret Smith moved to Villa Rica, Georgia in 2005 where they have lived until his death.

After Coach Byron Smith passed on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, Mr. & Mrs. Ron & Glenna Harrison (Ron was active duty AF in Berlin but served as an asst coach under Coach for the '71-'72 school year and Glenna was FAC at BAHS from '70-'72) started a Memorial Fund for Coach with AOSHS (the American Overseas Schools Historical Society) to place a tile or paver on the Memorial Wall in his name and recognizing his years at BAHS. The Berlin Brats then took up the cause to insure the goal was met. We're happy to announce that an 8" X 8" Granite Tile has been ordered for Coach and excess funds will be allocated to the Dr. Thomas Drysdale Scholarship Fund – which annually awards at least 2 - \$1,500 scholarships to active-duty Brats at small overseas high schools. This year the schools selected to apply are Alconbury High School & Lakenheath High School in England and EJ King HS in Sasebo, Japan. Previous awardees were from Ansbach, Germany; Hohenfels, Germany; Guam; Vicenza, Italy; Daegu in Korea; Ramey in Puerto Rico; and Antilles again in Puerto Rico.

### *Thank You to contributors:*

Ron & Glenna Harrison – FAC

Dan Sinnard '71

Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72

Jim Wright '72

Gary Robinson '74

Kim Jones '75

Kevin Lindroth '75

Ken Moseley '75

Randy Smith '75

Lezlie (Smith) Hartsough '75

BJ Jordan '76

Sean O'Day '76

Michael Rosinus '76

Keith Smith '76

Michael Givler '77

**CLASS OF '72 ZOOM REUNION - FEBRUARY 27, 2021***12 Participants**9 pictured here...**12 pictured here....**(Class of '72 had 38 grads)*

Following the Classes of '75, '80 & '85 the Class of '72 held a "zoom reunion" on Saturday, Feb 27<sup>th</sup> for 2 hours. (12 Pictured top right - L to R: Jose (Mercer) Eccles, Jeri (Polansky) Glass, Mark Durant, Harry Smith, Susan (Black) Sill, Glenn Goltz, Cheryl (Dawson) Voight, Diana (Green) Kempton, William "Bill" Roche, Pat (Martel) Little, Jim Wright and Marie Bauer). Ralph Ryan, Sylvia (Greeney) Morris, Bernie Beausoleil, Joyce (Clark) Mallon & Mike Hoover – where were you? You were supposed to join us!!!

**From Diana (Green) Kempton '72:** So great to see those who left before graduation, too, or left and returned. When I woke up Sunday morning, I was recalling things I'd forgotten about times in Berlin and BAHS. Talking with everyone must make our brains deep-dive and retrieve memories from our teen years. Of course, at this age, it's nice when my brain deep-dives enough to remember where I laid the house keys and phone.

**From Harry Smith '72:**

It was somewhat surreal to see us nearly 50 years after our final high school year. But it was joyful and encouraging!

Thanks for pulling it together. 🙌 Hopefully, next time (whenever that would be) we'll have even more present. Thanks for the pictures and email addresses.

**From Cheryl (Dawson) Voight '72:**

I wholeheartedly agree with Harry! It was great to see everyone-those I knew while I was there and those I didn't. With Berlin in common, I felt like I knew everyone on the call! Looking forward to our next get together, whether on Zoom or in person!



# BRAT GET-TOGETHERS

**Mini BAHS get together - West Palm Beach, Florida. Feb 27th**



Richard Jernigan '79 and wife Mary dropped in on Laura (Colangelo) Morris '79 and hubby Andy.



Richard and Mary

Laura and Andy

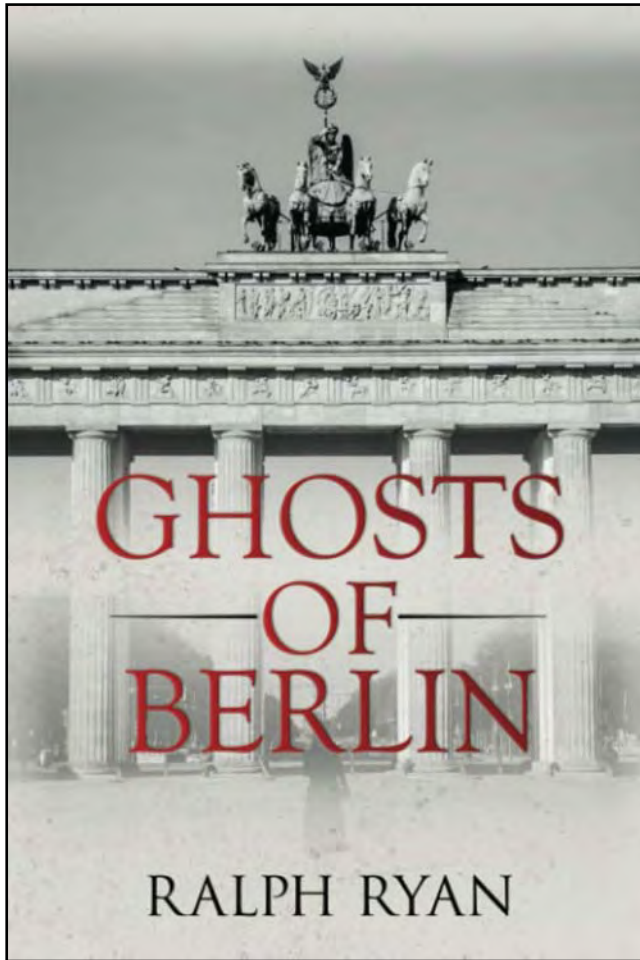
Next time: get in the pic together you Four!!!!



Mark Britton '84 (left)  
rings in the New Year  
with the Eichner's in  
Tucson, AZ  
Mr. Eichner-FAC '82-  
'94 and wife Betsy.

## NEW BERLIN BRAT BOOK!

By: Ralph Ryan '72 ('68-'72)



In 1971, after five years training as a covert CIA agent, Mark Dillon returns to Berlin. Not for a Cold War government mission—he's there hoping to search the war-torn streets of East Germany for Russian General Mstislav, who raped his mother during WWII. Will Mark be able to achieve his personal missions and rid himself of his ghosts?

Available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

Sylvia (Greeney) Morris '72: I loved his first book. This should be fantastic!

Tracy(Fitton) Rieper '90: Oh that looks good. Will have to Google.

Peter Stein '80: I ordered my copy yesterday. Looking forward to it, thanks.

Lisa (Begue) Carey '85: I've got one, too!

Teresa Ann (Griffin) Naquin '85: Count me in!

Marie Bauer '72: I've ordered the book, can't wait to read it.

Mark Phillips '76: He was my next door neighbor on Buchsweiler Strasse (early 70s). On the way to me from Amazon

Mary (Rears) Strine '77: Das ist TOLL!

Rocky Martinez '89: wow

Gary Carpenter '72: I have inside info...it's better than good!

Sylvia (Greeney) Morris '72: I'm too old for friggin all-nighters, but I couldn't put it down. Thanks loads.

Cheryl Dawson-Voight '72: Just ordered a copy for my husband.

Kendra (Payne) Morgan '80: Ordering one today.

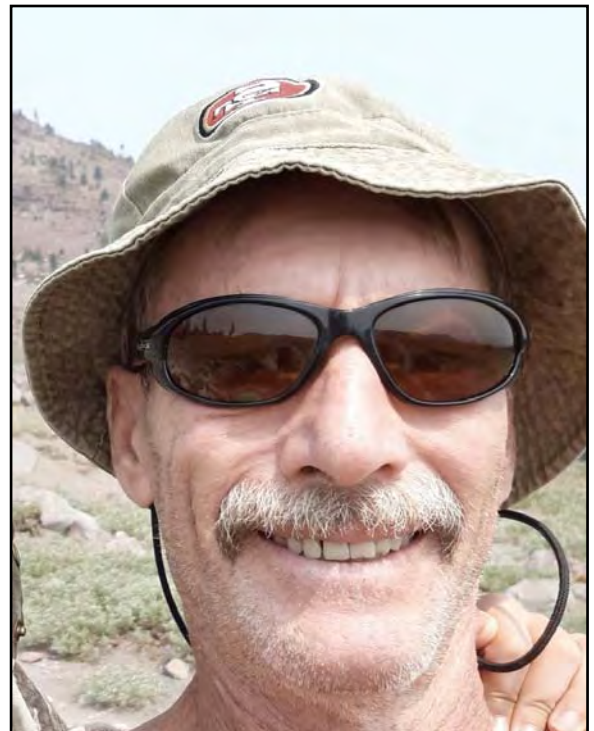
Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72: Mine arrived yesterday!!! Starting tonight!!!

Lola (Cervantes) Fisher '81: Going to order NOW!!

Here's Ralph's Senior Year pic: (1972) and present day:



!





## Brats find out they live in the same neighborhood for 18 years!

"So we've both lived in this neighborhood for almost 18 years and we didn't find out until a few years ago after talking several times while walking our dogs that we were both Berlin Brats - Gregory Davis class of 1974 and me class of 1980! Greg sold his house and is moving to his retirement home. He and his precious dog Sophie (German Shepherd) will be deeply missed in our neighborhood. Safe travels my friend!

*By: Kendra (Payne) Morgan '80*



Joe Morasco '75 visiting a neighborhood  
German restaurant in his new retirement

location, Myrtle Beach.

Notice the signage!!!!

## Welcome to Berlin

In 1964, shortly after I completed my junior year in Heidelberg, my father received his dream assignment, Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (G2) on the Allied Staff Berlin. We would be relocating before the start of the school year for a change. His new position precluded any ground based travel through communist Germany for him and with my mother's aversion to driving on long trips, meant that I would chauffeur the rest of the family all of the way to Berlin. He flew to Berlin ahead of us and secured family housing in a ranch style house on Reichshofer Strasse in a development that I watched under construction in 1956.

The trip north was along the autobahn to the Helmstedt-Marienborn border crossing. We stopped for lunch at a British NAAFI (Navy Army Air Force Institutes) canteen for lunch, the first of my many forays into their facilities. (Remember their serviceman's bar in the British sector?) After clearing the checkpoints into East Germany we had a somewhat boring drive until we reached the outskirts of Berlin. We had to process through the Soviet checkpoint and as I approached, the Russian soldier, who didn't look much older than I was, but carrying an impressive submachine gun, directed us into a parking spot opposite the clearance facility. As I got out of the car to complete the formalities, I swear his jaw hit the pavement as he gaped at my appearance. He mistakenly thought our green car was an official vehicle, so when I got out wearing my teenage uniform of the day, madras shorts, a Gant button-down shirt and Bass Weejun penny loafers without socks, he was flabbergasted!

## Graduation at Gun Point

As the end of the 1965 school year and graduation approached, some of the parents got together and planned a party for graduation night to corral the graduating class and keep us from doing anything overly stupid. It was held at the US Army lakeside resort on the Wannsee. At the start of the evening we all went aboard an excursion boat for a nighttime tour of the lake. I didn't learn until twenty years later that the Army had arranged for a military police patrol boat with mounted machine gun to trail us just out of sight. There had been credible intelligence that the Soviets might use the occasion for a provocation. However, the threat never materialized.



You are invited on Tuesday evening 8 June 1965 to an After-Graduation boat trip on the Wannsee and supper and dancing at the Wannsee Supper Club until 4 AM.

Buses depart from the Sports Center after Graduation and return to the Sports Center at 2 AM and 4 AM.

Stag or couple	RSVP by 27 May
Dress:	Phone: 819-6017
Girls - informal	before 5
Boys - coat & tie	After 5: 76-3349
Guitars welcome	76-2857

I noticed that our BBAA Scrapbook page had the invitation for the party after graduation in 1965.

*Memories of an interesting childhood.*

*Don Conner '65*





## GERMANY: First Country to Use DST (...little know facts)

### Daylight Saving Time History in Germany

**Germany first observed Daylight Saving Time in 1916.**

**Germany has observed DST for 55 years between 1916 and 2021.**

**Previous time with no Daylight Saving Time was 1979.**

Although a small town in Canada had experimented with seasonal clock changes as early as 1908, Germany was the first country to use nationwide DST. On April 30, 1916, at the height of World War I, the German Empire turned its clocks forward for the 1st time. Many European countries followed suit just weeks later.

The measure was abolished after the war, only to be re-introduced during World War II. From 1940 to 1942, Germany observed year-round DST.

After World War II, parts of Germany controlled by the Soviet Union followed *doppelte Sommerzeit*, double DST, advancing their clocks by 2 hours instead of 1. The rationale was to synchronize German clocks with the local time in Moscow.

DST was discontinued in 1950. In 1980, following an initiative by East Germany, the country re-introduced the measure. Though controversial, DST has been used in Germany ever since.

Since Switzerland did not introduce DST until 1981, the German exclave of Büsingen, which is situated within Swiss territory, did not observe DST together with the rest of Germany in 1980.

**WE RESET MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup> – GERMANY DOES MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup>**



## My communist family

**BY JOHN RICEBURG** Originally published in issue #126, April 2014 in the "Ex-Berliner" paper.



**Jakob Grotewohl on what it means to be the great-grandson of the GDR's first prime minister.**

PHOTO BY MICHAL ANDRYSIAK



I still get invited to banquets at the North Korean Embassy.

"I'm basically a cousin of Kim Jong-un." Not many people, not even Dennis Rodman, can claim such a close relationship to the young dictator of North Korea. But Jakob Grotewohl, a 30-year-old rapper, actor and self-described "eternal student" from Berlin, is almost family. Jakob met Jong-un's forebear,

Kim Il-Sung, at a state dinner in Pyongyang in 1992. "Your grandfather is dead," the octogenarian leader said to the then eight-year-old boy, "so now I am your grandfather." He remembers the founder of the Democratic People's Republic as a "very friendly man".

Jakob is the great-grandson of Otto Grotewohl, the man who served as prime minister of the GDR from 1949 until his death in 1964. "It's not clear why he joined the SED (the East German ruling socialist party)," says Jakob, who's read up on his great grandfather via biographies and official documents. After the War, Otto Grotewohl, an SPD politician, led a small minority of his party into a forced union with the Communists to form the SED.

"He was originally opposed to uniting with the Communists but a few months later carried it out." Grotewohl's enemies say he was blackmailed by the Soviets, but there has never been any evidence for the accusation. He was known as a rather lusterless functionary, previously an insurer. From what Jakob can gather, Grotewohl was uncomfortable with the hard line but complied with General Secretary Walter Ulbricht and the SED's real leaders as a "diplomatic scaredy cat".

Long before Otto, the Grotewohls were a socialist family: even Jakob's great-great-grandmother wasn't baptized by her atheist parents. "I'm a fifth-generation socialist," explains the broad-shouldered, charismatic Berliner. His grandfather, Hans Grotewohl, was sent by the East German government to rebuild the war torn town of Hamhŭng, North Korea, so his father was born in Pyongyang. After the Wall came down, Jakob's father was invited by the Kims to get medical treatment – that's how he met the 'Eternal President'. He still gets invited to banquets at the North Korean Embassy.



Jakob has put some distance between himself and his family history. He uses English in his rap duo Da Flexiblez, whose video for "Hektik" has gotten some play on MTV; while living in Michigan for a year, he was obsessed with getting rid of his German accent. But like it or not, his last name makes him East German royalty, and he concedes it can occasionally be of use.

Once, he and his friends were returning from a performance in Poland, in a van vibrating with rap music and reeking of marijuana. Shortly before they reached the border, they realized they might have a problem. But the border agent, probably a former East German soldier, looked at his passport and asked: "Related to *the* Grotewohl?" When Jakob nodded, they were waved past with no further questions.

### *All the DoDDs "B" schools in Europe!*

<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Blue &amp; Gold  Bearcats</p> <p>Bad Kreuznach High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Blue &amp; Gold  Barons</p> <p>Bamburg American High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Blue &amp; White  Barons</p> <p>Bitburg American High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Black &amp; Gold  Blackhawks</p> <p>Bremen American High School</p>
<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Maroon &amp; Gold  Buccaneers</p> <p>Baumholder American High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Maroon &amp; White  Cubs/Bears</p> <p>Berlin American High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Red &amp; White  Crusaders</p> <p>Bonn American High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Black &amp; Gold  Blackhawks</p> <p>Bremerhaven American High School</p>
<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Red &amp; White  Centurions</p> <p>Bendisi American High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Red/White/Blue  Blue Devils</p> <p>Burtonwood High School</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "B" is for</p> <p>Blue &amp; White  Brigands</p> <p>Brussels American School</p>	

### Caribbean schools:

 <p>*Not an official logo.</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "A" is for</p> <p>Black &amp; White  Pirates</p> <p>Antillies High School (Aka Antillies Consolidated School) (Fort Buchanan) Puerto Rico</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "C" is for</p> <p>Red &amp; White  Bulldogs</p> <p>Balboa High School (The Red Machine) Panama</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "C" is for</p> <p>Red/Black &amp; Orange  Tigers</p> <p>Crisotbal High School Panama</p>
<p>Military Brat Primer "FA" is for</p> <p>Black &amp; Gold  Apaches</p> <p>Fort Allen High School (AKA Camp Losey School) Puerto Rico</p>			
<p>Military Brat Primer "K" is for</p> <p>Gold &amp; Black  Islanders</p> <p>Roger B. Chafee High School (AKA Kindley High School) Bermuda</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "R" is for</p> <p>Green &amp; White  Bombers</p> <p>Ramsey High School Puerto Rico</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "R" is for</p> <p>Black &amp; Gold  Panthers</p> <p>Roosevelt Roads High School (Roosy Roads) Puerto Rico</p>	<p>Military Brat Primer "S" is for</p> <p>Green &amp; Gold  Pirates</p> <p>William T. Sampson High School (Guantanamo Bay) Cuba (GITMO)</p>

## Remember Flyers??

Do you remember that the German kids would beg us to let them ride our sleds because...  
WE ALL HAD "FLEXIBLE FLYERS?"

*German Sled (death trap)*



*Flexible Flyers*



Or maybe you just had a piece of  
"Cardboard?"

Remember "sled hill" in the  
Grunewald....or the hill between 2 of  
our buildings on Flanaganstrasse?





## The Chilling Echo of Checkpoint Charlie!

**Papers, please: the story behind the 'Checkpoint Barkly' sign**

By [John Bailey](#), July 7, 2020

The new take: West Footscray is in Melbourne, Australia

The sign appeared at the border overnight a few days ago. WARNING, it read. YOU ARE LEAVING THE COVID-FREE SECTOR. For residents of Footscray and West Footscray, Checkpoint Barkly was real. The sign, however, was not. It was the work of an anonymous artist who had wanted to visit a friend in the inner west just after many of the area's postcodes had been declared no-go zones.

"I realized that I needed a map to find out exactly where I was and wasn't allowed to visit. And that if I ignored the line, or got it wrong, I'd be dependent on luck and the goodwill of the police to not get arrested, maybe jailed," the artist (who wants to remain anonymous) told *The Age*.

The Checkpoint Barkly sign:

The sign hit a nerve, echoing across social media feeds of many in the west and eventually becoming international news. This week the artist made available a limited number of replicas of the sign via a friend's website. They sold \$1700 worth in two days, with proceeds going to people suffering under lockdown measures.



Barkly Street is the main thoroughfare of West

Footscray, while Checkpoint Charlie was the notorious border post between East and West Berlin. The artist said the divide between Berlin's halves was a "line on a map" before it became a physical wall. "The sign I copied stood at the exit of democratic West Berlin; once you passed it, you'd be under the control of the Stasi secret police."

Checkpoint Barkly marked the boundary that cut West Footscray residents off from their supermarket. "Footscray's not 'COVID-free', of course, but the way the government acted you'd think that it was," says the artist. "I've heard there's a typo in the Russian. I'm pretty happy with that. I don't speak Russian, French, or German, and the online translator kept on trying to translate 'COVID-Free' as 'COVID at no charge'."

Selling the work for profit was never a thought, the artist says. "I'm as securely employed as anyone is these days."

But the same day the sign went up, 3000 people in nearby public housing were locked down. Money raised from the sale of the sign's replicas is going to charities buying and delivering goods to the towers. Fellow artist Liz Crash is hosting the sale on her website [lizcrash.com](http://lizcrash.com). She says transparency about the money is essential, "because a lot of the money that's been raised doesn't seem to be making its way to the people in the nine towers".



The sign's artist hopes proceeds will provide more practical assistance: "Money for lost incomes, for the extra costs of getting locked up at no notice, for mobile phones to stay in touch, for Netflix subscriptions and books and hobby supplies. For 3000 people, selling signs alone isn't going to cover all that but I'm not alone." In the meantime, an unknown agent has sliced the original sign into cryptic illegibility - an ironic echo of the eventual fate of the Berlin Wall.

*The 'Checkpoint Barkly' sign in West Footscray has been sliced into illegibility.*

## **“Art” interesting facts about the Brandenburg Gate**

### **Did you know.....**

*The Brandenburg gate is an 18th-century neoclassical triumphal arch in Berlin and one of the best-known landmarks of Germany.*



It is built on the site of a former city gate that marked the start of the road from Berlin to the town of Brandenburg an der Havel. It was commissioned by King Frederick William II of Prussia as a sign of peace. Built according to the plans of Carl Gotthard Langhans from 1788 to 1791, the Brandenburg Gate is modeled on the Propylaeum of Athens' Acropolis. Langhan built the monument to stand 26 meters (85 feet) high and 65 meters (213 feet) wide, with 12 Doric columns, six to each side measuring 15 meters (49 feet) in height.

The gate has five passages. The central and widest one was reserved for the royals; the adjacent passages were for use of the aristocracy while ordinary citizens were only allowed to use the outer two. The gate is decorated with reliefs and sculptures designed by Gottfried Schadow, the majority of them based on the exploits of Heracles.

The classical sandstone work is one of the masterpieces of this era and is the only surviving one of 18 previous city portals. The Quadriga, a sculpture representing the Goddess of Victory, by Johann Gottfried Schadow which can be spotted from a long distance was erected on the Gate in 1793. The statue remained in place for just over a decade, before falling into the clutches of Napoleon Bonaparte and his Grand Army. After occupying Berlin that fall and triumphantly marching beneath the arches of the Gate, Napoleon ordered the Quadriga dismantled and shipped back to Paris.

After Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Waterloo, the Quadriga was triumphantly taken back to Berlin, and was turned into a symbol of victory: an iron cross and eagle were added to the laurel wreath. At the same time, the square near the gate was renamed Pariser Platz after the French capital Paris in honor of the anti-Napoleon Allies' occupation of Paris in 1814.



When the Nazis ascended to power, they used the gate as a party symbol. The entire structure was heavily damaged during World War II, and in 1957–58 it was restored, with the Quadriga recast from the original molds.

From 1961 to 1989 the Brandenburg Gate came to symbolize divided Germany, as the Berlin Wall shut off access to the gate for both East and West Germans. The gate was reopened on December 22, 1989, in the course of the reunification of East and West Berlin, when West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl walked through it to meet East German Prime Minister Hans Modrow.



The Brandenburg Gate is flanked by two small buildings, Haus Liebermann and Haus Sommer, which were built in the late 1990s by architect Josef Paul Kleihues to replace the pavilions that were destroyed during World War II. On 21 December 2000, the Brandenburg Gate was privately refurbished at a cost of six million Euros.

On 3 October 2002, the 12th anniversary of German reunification, the Brandenburg Gate was once again opened following an extensive refurbishment. Brandenburg Gate became the main venue for the 20th-anniversary celebrations of the fall of the Berlin Wall or “Festival of Freedom” on the evening of 9 November 2009.



***And again on 9 November 2014 when the “Berlin Brats” went back for the 25<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebrations!***

The Berlin Festival of Lights is an event that occurs annually in October. For one or two weeks, well-known sights like Brandenburg Gate, Fernsehturm, Berlin Cathedral, or Berlin Victory Column are scenes of illumination and Light art.

The Brandenburg Gate is now again closed to vehicle traffic, and much of Pariser Platz has been turned into a cobblestone pedestrian zone. The gate, along with the broad avenue “Straße des 17. Juni” to the west is also one of the large public areas in Berlin where over a million people can gather to watch stage shows or party together, watch major sports events shown on huge screens, or see fireworks at midnight on New Year’s Eve.

## EXCELLENT NEWS!

Col Halvorsen a/k/a Candy Bomber  
January 2, 2021

We're excited to Halvorsen (100 yrs old) and is on his way to COVID-19. He says that shape to do the two-fitness test yet, but will the spring. He continues family members, and is great grandchildren snow here in Utah. for your prayers and



announce that Col. has beaten the odds, recovery from he isn't quite in mile run for the see what happens in to convalesce with enjoying watching his playing soccer in the Thank you everyone faith on Col's behalf.

## AIRLIFT MASK!

British Airlift ground crew – William “Bill Evans” at 92 – picture taken at month end Dec 2020, modeling the mask his daughter Jane had made for him. As the UK goes into a pretty secure second lockdown we can report that Mr. Evans is doing just fine as well.



We first reported on Mr. Evans in our January 2020 issue, page 12 as the British Airlift Association retired its standard and their organization that month due to declining numbers and health – but were welcomed by the U.S. Vets into theirs.

Listen to Bill's veteran interviews at:  
<https://www.legasee.org.uk/veteran/bill-evans/>  
(Legasee is the Veteran's Video Archive)

## BUSMVA UPDATES

(Berlin U.S. Military Veterans Association – our parent’s association)

### BERLIN BRIGADE PLAQUE IS NOW FULLY FUNDED!

The BUSMVA (the Berlin U.S. Military Veterans Association) has undertaken the preservation of preserving the Legacy of “Berlin Brigade” at several notable locations.

#### ‘BERLIN BRIGADE DEFENDERS OF FREEDOM’

Berlin, Germany

1945-1994

Army of Occupation

Berlin Airlift

Standoff at Checkpoint Charlie

Cold War

Operation Provide Comfort II

Operation Able Sentry

#### The Berlin Brigade Plaque:



Has been produced and is enroute to the new National Museum of the Army at Ft. Belvoir, VA. Installation will take place in the next few weeks.

Remember it is “FREE” to have your parent listed on the service registry at the Museum. <http://armyhistory.org/the-registries/>

#### Other locations that have a plaque are:

Allied Museum – (former Outpost Theatre) Berlin, Germany

McNair Barracks – (former) Berlin, Germany

U.S. Army Infantry Museum, Ft. Benning, Georgia

Ft. Jackson, S.C.

and soon the new Army Museum as mentioned above.

BUSMVA is asking for other suggestions of other places that would be appropriate to memorialize their history. If you (or your serving parent) have ideas – let us know! We’re happy to pass them along.

#### **Reunion Info:**

- 2020 - Reunion location Billings, MT (Western U.S.) **CANCELED DUE TO COVID-19.**
- 2021 - Reunion location New Orleans, LA (Midwestern U.S.) **POSTPONED TO 2022 DUE TO COVID.**
- 2022 - Reunion location New Orleans, LA (Midwestern U.S.) Date (confirmed) July 17-23, 2022.
- 2023 - Reunion location Berlin, Germany. Dates and venue TBA.

Updated their logo to:





## U.S. ARMY – BRICK PROGRAM



You can still purchase a Brick to honor your serving parent. Cost is \$250 for a 4" X 8" brick or \$500 for an 8" X 8" one. Commemorative bricks line the "Path of Remembrance" at the Museum.

Order online at: <https://frsengraving.com/armymuseum/#/>

The new NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE U.S. ARMY – HAD AN OFFICIAL OPENING DATE OF JUNE 4, 2020. This was DELAYED DUE TO COVID – they opened on Veteran's Day....but closed again on Dec 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 again due to Covid.

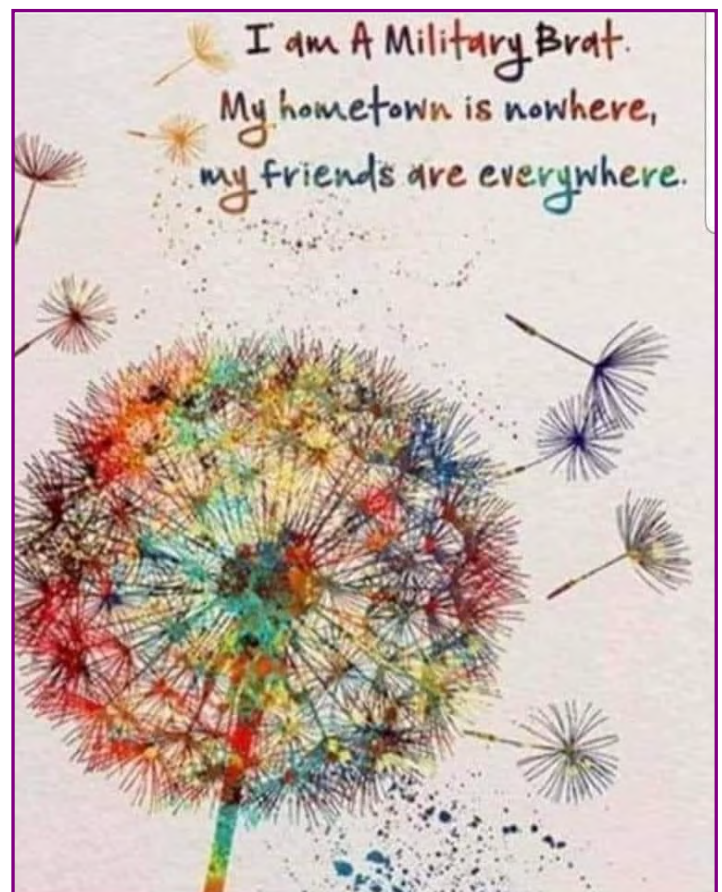


### Class of '75

#### Graduates 75 with 6 sets of Twins!!!!

The: Duffys, Kleins, Lindroths, Orbocks, Paaschs and Shorts.

How's that even possible?



## This Austin-Healey Sprite escaped East Germany—twice

Brendan McAleer - 12 August 2020

It was an off-hand question, but one loaded with fear and tension. As the East German border guard flipped through Norbert Konrad's passport, he asked, "Isn't this the same type of car one man used to get through the barriers?" Konrad answered that he didn't know. But he was lying. A little Austin-Healey Sprite had already slipped past the Iron Curtain once. A Sprite would do so again.

On 13 August 1961, troops and workers of the communist German Democratic Republic (GDR) started to tear up roads and raise barbed-wire fences, closing the border between East and West Berlin. The first concrete pieces were placed four days later, the first blocks in the wall that would come to embody the simmering divisions between the western world and the Soviet Bloc.

The Berlin Wall was eighty-seven miles long. Together with the main structure, a secondary fence enclosed a no man's land in between, and the entire structure was heavily guarded by troops with orders to shoot to kill. The GDR scattered Stasi secret police agents among these troops to ensure every man followed orders. "Don't hesitate to use your weapon even when border breaches happen with women and children," a declassified document reads.

Nevertheless, people desperate to flee the grip of East Germany still tried to escape. At least 140 people were killed at the wall itself, and over a thousand across the internal German border. Some yearned for a better life in the West. Some hoped to avoid conscription. Others were trying to fulfill a forbidden love.

As an Austrian citizen, young engineer Hans Meixner was able to cross between the two Berlins at the infamous Checkpoint Charlie. He was working as a lathe operator in West Berlin, but could travel back and forth across the border on a tourist visa. At a student dance in East Berlin, he had met and, eventually, fallen in love with Margarete Thureau.



Checkpoint Charlie, circa 1963 Flickr/Roger Wollstadt

The couple got engaged and applied through the official channels for permission for Margarete to move to Austria. The GDR police told Margarete that it would be far better for the pair to settle in East Germany. Permission to cross the border would not be forthcoming, so Meixner began plotting to get her out. People had used cars to escape East Germany before, hiding under false floorboards, clinging to the underside of a car or, in one memorable case, stowed away inside

the engine compartment of a modified [BMW Isetta](#). However, the GDR border guards usually searched cars thoroughly, and the chance of discovery and capture were too high.

Meixner had another problem. He didn't have to smuggle just one person out of East Germany; he had to extract Mrs. Thureau, Margarete's mother. He needed a car that could carry two concealed passengers and, somehow, sneak through a barrier designed—and ruthlessly guarded—to keep people from escaping.

*Right - Heinz Meixner with his fiancée and her mother Frau Thureau, show how they arranged themselves in his Austin-Healey Sprite to drive through the Berlin Wall, Germany, circa 1965. Getty Images/Express Newspapers/Staff*



Cont. next page



Happily, he had spotted a flaw in the East German checkpoint. The lifting barrier between the two Germanies wasn't entirely solid—it had a gap beneath it. Crossing to East Berlin on his scooter, he pretended to stall right next to the barrier and surreptitiously measured that gap while appearing to fiddle with the engine. The gap was 37.5 inches high.

Enter the Austin-Healey Sprite. Introduced in 1959 as a low-cost sports car small enough to be stuffed into a bike shed, the first Sprite is one of the most cheerful-looking cars ever made. The second-generation "square-body" car was much more conventional in appearance, but it was still tiny. It stood 48.25 inches high with the roof up—or, with the windshield removed, 35.5 inches high. Two inches to spare.

Meixner found a Sprite at a rental car agency and crossed into East Berlin. On May 17, 1963, just after midnight, he helped his fiancée and future mother-in-law cram themselves into, respectively, the parcel shelf and trunk of the Sprite, removed its windshield, and headed for the border. As added insurance, he tucked some bricks into the rear of the trunk to stop any bullets that the border guards might send their way.

The guard who checked his passport was immediately suspicious. Why was Meixner driving with no roof on such a chilly day? He was waved over to the customs point for a full search.

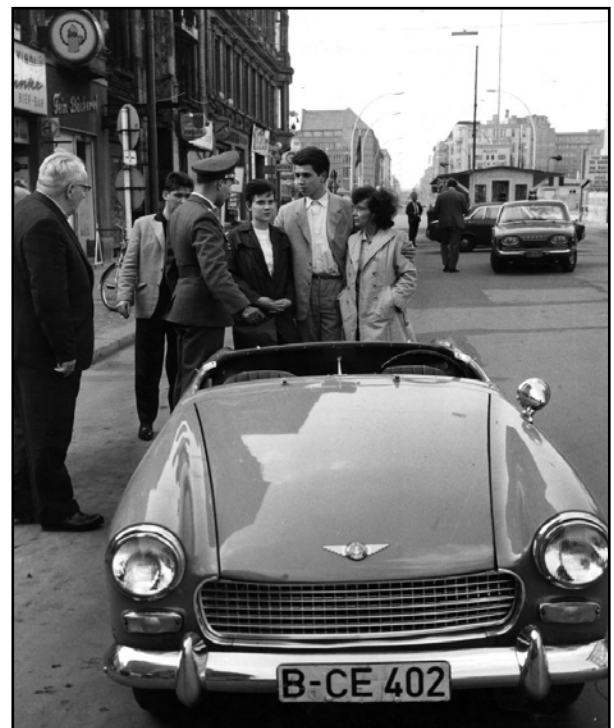
*This is how Heinz Meixner drove his Sprite car, with the windscreen cut so that it would be low enough to run under frontier posts in Berlin, Germany, circa 1961. Getty Images/Express/Stringer*



Instead, Meixner drove slowly onwards, then gunned the engine, twisting the Sprite through the slalom barricades, and then went full throttle, straight on towards the barrier. The guards, caught by surprise, simply gaped after him as he rocketed past. He ducked down, and the little car limbo'd right under the barricade to freedom.

On the Western side, Meixner locked up the brakes and left a 96-foot skid mark. The West Berlin police were surprised but impressed, and news of the escape spread quickly.

*Heinz Meixner, with two ladies, is greeted at Checkpoint Charlie by West German police, circa 1961. Getty Images/Express/Stringer*



Two months later, an Argentinean named Norbert Konrad found himself in a similar predicament. He'd heard about Meixner's escape so he, too, rented an Austin-Healey Sprite and headed East to help his fiancée escape. Konrad didn't know it at the time, but the Healey he was driving wasn't just the same *type* of car; it was the *exact same Sprite* that Meixner had rented. Konrad's slightly different plan involved loosening the windshield, but keeping it on until the last minute so as not to raise suspicion. The plan worked a second time, and Konrad opened the trunk in West Germany to let his fiancée Helga Werner clamber out.

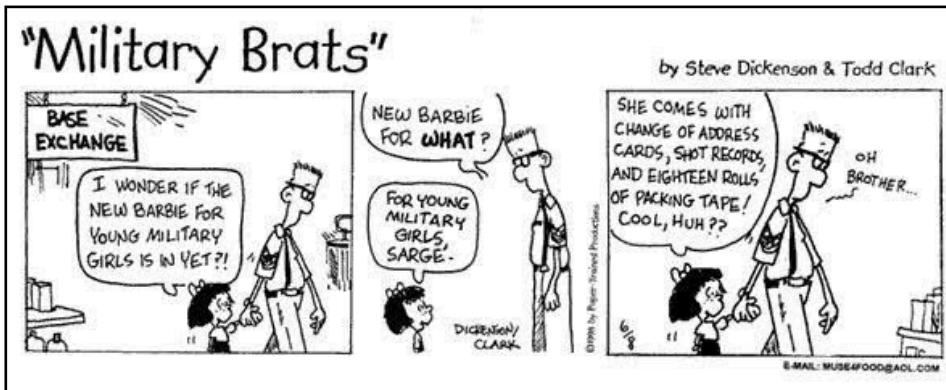
"The car stopped and I cringed with fear," she said, according to the *Toledo Blade*. "Then the trunk opened. Norbert looked at me and said, 'Chubby, we arrived.'"

There would be no more beneath-the-barrier escapes for the Austin or for any other car. Steel bars were welded beneath the barrier, sewing the loophole up tightly. However, for two young German couples, this fix simply closed the barn door after the horse had bolted. The best rental car that ever was had already done its duty—twice.



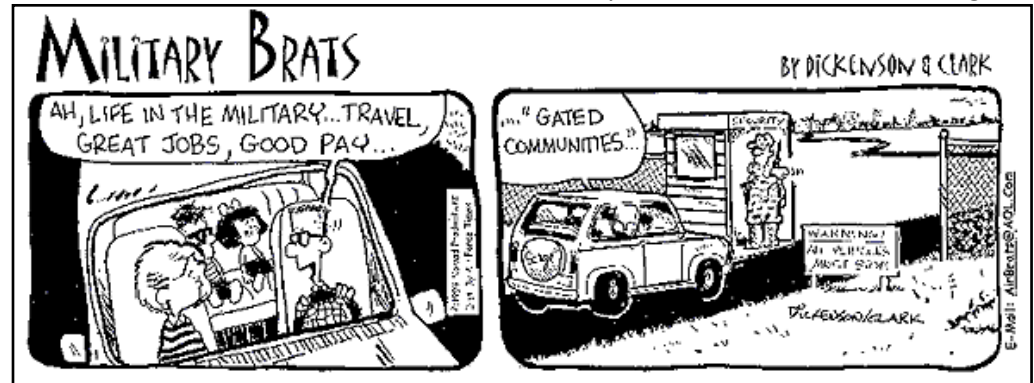
## Steve Dickenson

The Navy Brat, who along with Todd Clark create "Military Brats" the cartoons for the Air Force Times:



Steve Dickenson was born in a military family and moved a lot from base to base as a kid. He went into the Navy himself, and after that he embarked on a career as a graphic designer and comic artist, studying at the University of Florida. He made his debut in 1984, with the strip 'Beside Manor', which was syndicated by Medical Features Syndicate. He was a contributing

writer on Hank Ketcham's comic 'Dennis the Menace'. He created the newspaper comic strips 'Dillon' (Tribune Media Services), 'Tar Pit' (King Features, 1993-1994) and 'Nest Heads' (Copley News Service). He has been working extensively with Todd Clark since 1994, and together they created 'Military Brats' for the



Air Force Times, and the syndicated comic strips 'My Brother's Keeper', 'Lola' and 'Retro Geek' for Tribune Media Services. 'Lola' is an independent woman in her late 70s, who was based on Dickenson's aunt. Clark and Dickenson created 'Lola' in 1999, and cooperated until 2008, with Dickenson doing the Sundays. !



## "I Still Have A Suitcase in Berlin"

Immortalized in Lyrics

**Quick Description:** Probably the most famous song about Berlin

**Long Description:** Do you remember President Reagan's speech at the Berlin Wall in 1987? It became most famous for his address to the Soviet leader, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!", but earlier in the speech, Mr. Reagan also quoted one of the most famous songs ever written about the German Capital:



*"Perhaps the composer Paul Lincke understood something about American presidents? You see, like so many presidents before me, I come here today because wherever I go, whatever I do: Ich hab noch einen Koffer in Berlin."*

**Musician:** Marlene Dietrich

**Name of Song:**  
Ich Hab Noch  
Einen Koffer in  
Berlin



Well, Mr. Reagan's speech writer got the author wrong; the song was written by Ralph Maria Siegel, but nevertheless, the song *I still have a suitcase in Berlin* (Ich hab' noch einen Koffer in Berlin), has been one of the most famous songs about Berlin and the great Marlene Dietrich produced an English language version of it in the 1950s.



### Relevant Verse:

"I still have a suitcase in Berlin That's why I have to go there sometime soon. The joys of days gone by Are all still in my little suitcase. I still have a suitcase in Berlin It stays there, too, and that makes sense. In this way it's worth a trip, because whenever I'm homesick, then I go back."

*Berlin Suitcase (Christmas ornament) Courtesy of Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72*



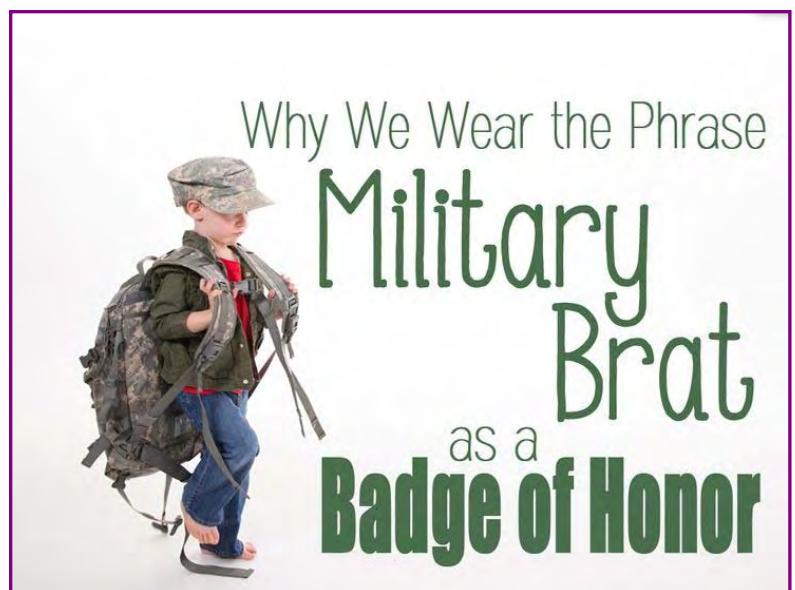
## Throwback picture:

Girl Scouts camping badges  
from Linda Storer '79 ('69-'72 in Berlin)

"I believe Camp Grunewald was a day camp.  
Camp Lachenwald was a 2 week camp in Giessen.  
Both awesome. I enjoy camping today and [believe it or not] still have my great sleeping bag purchased in  
the place beside the Class VI store across from the Brigade."



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND BE  
MILITARY KID  
STRONG**







The Berlin Brats once again find ourselves looking for a new "Newsletter Brat." David Spiech '83 stepped up to the plate a year ago when Kimberly Keravouri '85 had to step down. Now a year later David finds himself in the same situation with family and work and has to step aside.

Carl Fenstermacher '73 stepped in - in a pinch to get this issue of the Newsletter out the door. He is currently our "Web Brat" - so we need someone who can fill the position more permanently.

If you're a Brat who has experience in "layout" and an "eye for detail" contact us for more information on volunteering for this position with the Alumni Association. You do not need to be a "writer" nor the collector of articles/stories & pictures. That is all provided each quarter for the issue. Email: [BerlinBrats@gmail.com](mailto:BerlinBrats@gmail.com) **We look forward to hearing from YOU!**

For those that attended Thomas A. Roberts (TAR) Elementary School **OR** TAR when it was also the High School from 1953-1965  
....the **Thomas A. Roberts Elementary School – Berlin, Germany** Facebook page is really taken off.  
You may want to pay a visit!

## Upcoming Events

### 2021 Regionals:

Early May  
Melbourne, FL  
Stay tuned for details

**OSB Gathering**  
**San Antonio, TX**  
**Oct 28-31st, 2021**  
[www.overseasbrats.com](http://www.overseasbrats.com)

### **Next Reunion** **TBD at a later date**

Evaluating Large Group  
Authorizations per  
COVID restrictions  
nationwide

## Contact Information



### **Berlin Brats Alumni Association**

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website: [www.berlinbrats.org](http://www.berlinbrats.org)



Find us on Facebook @

**"Berlin Brats Alumni Association"**  
(the official fan page site)

**"Berlin American High School (BAHS)"**  
(an open group chat page)

Newsletter Brat: Carl Fenstermacher '73

### **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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