



Berlin Brats Alumni Association Newsletter

July 2021

Volume 17, Issue 3



It all started with some Cheerleaders. Three of them, Sandi (Hoosack) Trader '70, Cindy (Lee) Brewer '68 and Debbie (Hoosack) Jones '72 came up with the crazy idea that "Berlin American High School (BAHS)" could have a REUNION, not at their school – but stateside – just like our domestic counterparts. From a yellow legal pad of approximately two hundred names/ addresses (way before Gmail & Facebook) they planned our 1st ever! An astounding 198 attended that summer of 1986.

JULY 19, 1986!!!!
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA



Reunion Committee
Cindy Lee, Sandi Hoosack & Debbie Hoosack

**BERLIN BRATS
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
CELEBRATES
IT'S 35TH
ANNIVERSARY
THIS MONTH-
THIS YEAR!**

REUNIONS THRU THE YEARS!

1986 – Virginia Beach, VA
1987 – Greenbelt, MD
1991 – Helen, GA
1996 – Dallas, TX
1999 - Breckenridge, CO
2001 – Homecoming/
AOSHS/Wichita, KS
2003 – Asheville, NC
2006 – BERLIN, GERMANY
2009 – Scottsdale/PHX, AZ
2012 - Falls Church,
VA/Washington, DC
2014 – BERLIN, GERMANY
2017 – New Orleans
2020 – Covid cancellation

In 1997 we started holding "regionals" in-between reunion years:

Covington, KY; San Antonio, Dallas, Plano, New Braunfels, Austin, Grapevine, Flower Mound, Houston, & Fredericksburg, TX; Phoenix, Glendale, & Anthem, AZ; Orlando, Melbourne, Vero Bch, Tampa & Daytona Bch, FL; Las Vegas; Colorado Springs; Woodbridge, D.C., Alexandria, & Newport News, VA; Torrance, CA; Seattle; Atlanta, San Francisco; and Charlotte, NC!



*Above: is the Memory Book published after the Reunion. The whole book can be viewed on our website: on the REUNIONS page.
Were you there when it all started???*

Yes. We were the "Cubs" in the early days!

15 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

27-30 July 2006

We took our REUNION back to BERLIN!

To date it's still the largest REUNION we've ever held with 401 attendees to include
28 of our teachers!



Fittingly, we called it "HOMECOMING 2006"

Our Reunion Logo incorporated the red and white City Flag of Berlin with the Berlin Bear.



A 4-day post Reunion trip to Prague was added to the itinerary and 110 of us on 2-55 passenger commercial buses carried on.

50th Graduation Anniversary, Class of '71

WOW – now we're not only remembering years past or decades past, but even half a century past! On June 7, fifty years to the day of our graduation in 1971, twelve of us "met" on Zoom. Our get-together spanned nearly 6,000 miles and 9 time zones (here's a tip of the hat to all that technology makes possible these days).

We remembered classmates who are no longer with us, reminisced about what some of our fathers were involved with during the Cold War, about living in Berlin, graduation day and more. It was great fun. Meeting with old friends and sharing memories sure melts the years away. John Freeman later wrote and reminded me that he had played Bob Dylan's song "The Times They Are A-Changin'" on the guitar at graduation, accompanied by MaryAnne Stanislaw. I've spoken with MaryAnne since, and she recalled that they also played "Mr. Tambourine Man" with Sarah and Libby Snyder joining them. These are neat memory films.

We learned something, too. Kerry mentioned that he applied for and received his old Stasi file from his time in Berlin. Yup – seems they also spied on us kids back then. The East German Ministry for State Security kept records from 1950 to 1990 and, if interested, it is possible to request access to one's own file via the website <https://www.stasi-unterlagen-archiv.de/en/>.

Our next Class of '71 Zoom reunion is already noted in our calendars. It is scheduled to be one year from the last, on June 7, 2022.

An important issue for us was not being understood by others after leaving Berlin. Barbara's words convey this feeling clearly:

I try to explain to people about the spectacular, intriguing, fascinating and life-changing experience that I had living in Berlin (...) but they obviously can't really understand. But all of you can and know what I'm talking about – that is so wonderful.

Yes, it sure is wonderful. And it is thanks to the Berlin Brats organization that we have a platform for this exchange.

June 2021 / Katrin (Lindroth) Planz



Pictured L to R: Laura (Coats) Satterfield with hubby Craig Satterfield, Katrin (Lindroth) Planz, Sam McCuskey, Karen (Hansen) O' Neill, Toni (Yarbrough) Combs, John Freeman, Bob Wyman, Mel De Vilbiss, Barbara (Hermes) Hannegan, John Robinson, Tom Baughman and Kerry Gray. Kerry, not pictured, joined us with audio from the bottom right tile spot. Regrets and greetings to all were received from Shirley Parker, MaryAnne Stanislaw, Dan Sinnard and Jim Stottle.

Continues next page

Early '70 classes were rather small....but from their class the Salutatorian-Katrin, the Valedictorian-Toni and Class song (Mr. Tambourine Man) performer- John Freeman made the Zoom!

FACULTY

Mr. David Twohy Principal

Christine Allano
Aberla Balow
Anna Beams
Judith Belt
Jessene Bickart
Charles Blum
Mary DeYoung
Melvart Dingler
Howard Douglas
Eva Dundas
Ronald Engbrecht
Wayne Fenstermacher
Joseph Ferguson
Werner Goldschmidt
Janice Hamlin
Glenn Haulson
Adam Hildmbrand
Karin Hatzel
Charles Haller
Edward Inoga
Inge Isenoff

Beba Kilpatrick
Ava Leeper
Allan Leonard
William Lecher
Peter Lucas
Kermit Long
Robert McGowan
Dorothy Miller
Louis Moreno
William Moser
Leona Odgaard
George Pepoy
Margot Pielich
Donald Pieleba
Mary Relecki
James Rice
Dr. Erko Schinner
Byron Smith
Philip Sullivan
Heinz Voigt
May Wavernek
Carol White

**TWENTY - FOURTH
BERLIN
AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL
COMMENCEMENT**



June 7, 1971
BERLIN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL
2000 Hours
BERLIN, GERMANY

SENIOR CLASS ADVISOR

Judith B. Belt

CLASS OF 1971

Thomas Edward Baughman
* Pamela Marie Billingsley
Jill Ann Brady
Herbert Frederick Blau, Jr.
Thomas Gary Brown
Michael D'Andrea
Thomas Richard Everett
James Leland Folk
John G. Freeman
Rosa L. Freeman
Gouven Giallat
Kerry Gray
Daniel F. Guano
Enlie Elliott Hamilton
Dick Harris
Ronald G. Holt
Ken David Howard
Cynthia Aldine Jennings
Belinda Lee Kory
Pamela Jay Kinning
Florence Anne Lee
* Katrin Ann Lindroth
* Patricia Anna Maryland
Sam R. McCuskey III
Melonie Anna McGarry

Jeri Lynn McPherson
Marie Teresa Medel
Ronald Stephen Mercer
Susan A. Munala
Edgar K. Peabody
William Patric Plans
Ronald Lee Rathnow
Steve Alan Reister
Marvin Claude Rissinger
Parcel S. Shirod
Renee E. Shipley
Daniel Lamar Sinaard
Elizabeth Evelyn Snyder
Sarah Jane Snyder
Gabrielle Ursula Spence
Maryanne Stanislaw
John W. Stanley
L. James Statile
Linda Jane Thorpe
* Rhonda Jane Whittington
Rhonda Wilcox
John C. Wilson
Steven B. Winkler
Toni Rae Yarbrough

* Members, National Honor Society

PROGRAM

PRELUDE High School Band
Mr. Wayne Fenstermacher, Director
PROCESSIONAL High School Band
SALUTATORIAN Katrin Ann Lindroth
SONG John Freeman, Jim Folk, Maryanne Stanislaw,
Elizabeth Snyder, Cynthia Jennings
Mr. Tambourine Man — by Bob Dylan
VALEDICTORIAN Toni Rae Yarbrough
SONG John Freeman, Maryanne Stanislaw
The Times They are A-Changin'
APOLOGIA Mr. David W. Twohy
Principal
PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS Mrs. Marylou Rogers
Templehof Officers' Wives Club
Mr. David W. Twohy
American Women's Club of Berlin
Lt. Col. R. S. McGarry
Portrait-Teachers' Association
Miss Mary A. Rakucki
National Honor Society
TSGT Thomas R. Harrison
Air Force Sergeants Association
PRESENTATION OF CLASS OF 1971 Mr. David W. Twohy
Principal
PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMAS The Honorable David Klein
American Minister, Berlin
BENEDICTION Lt. Col. Capistran J. Hass
Deputy Brigade Chaplain
RECESSIONAL High School Band

A reception for the graduates will be held in Student Union
immediately after the ceremony. Everyone is invited to attend.

Melbourne Florida Regional May 3, 2021 Frigate's Bar & Grill - 18 in Attendance



Attendees:

Sylvia (Greeney) Morris '72 and husband Allen
 Renate (Kowalski) Goodloe '72 and husband Pete
 Nancy Liepmann '72
 Pat (Martel) Little '72 and husband Roger
 Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72 and Brat guest Deb Winchester
 Mark Owen '76 and wife JoAnn
 Carl Samples '76 and wife Moe
 Laura (Colangelo) Morris '79 and husband Andy
 Richie Arnold '85
 Lisa (Glisson) Gould '85 and husband Bruce

Followed by:

Post regional Pat (Martel) Little '72 hosted a '72 gals Brunch.

L to R: Renate, Nancy, Pat and Sylvia



AS THE OLYMPICS ARE THIS MONTH IN TOYKO.....

HERE'S A LITTLE BACKDROP ON OLYMPIAN: **WILMA RUDOLPH**

Wilma Rudolph – the famous U.S. black Olympian died in 1994 from brain cancer. BAHS closed in 1994 when Berlin Brigade departed. BAHS was turned over to the German government and was eventually renamed in her honor: “Wilma Rudolph Oberschule”.

Wilma changed the Game read her story:

Ryan Young-Writer March 10, 2021

Wilma Rudolph was never supposed to walk again. Less than a decade later, she became the first American woman to win three gold medals in a single Olympics. (AP)



Wilma Rudolph had all of the odds stacked against her from the very beginning. Yet after overcoming polio, the scarlet fever, double pneumonia and relearning to walk, Rudolph won three gold medals at the 1960 Olympics in Rome, making her the first American woman to accomplish that feat.

‘Doctors told me I would never walk again’. Rudolph was born in St. Bethlehem, Tennessee, in 1940, though she was born prematurely and weighed just 4.5 pounds.

Growing up roughly 50 miles outside of Nashville in a family with 21 other siblings, things were tough — she was the 20th of 22 total children from her dad’s two

marriages. She was stuck in bed for most of her early years.

Before she turned 12, Rudolph battled the scarlet fever, double pneumonia, polio, whooping cough, the measles and chicken pox. She even lost the use of her left leg and needed bulky metal leg braces when she was 6 years old. Doctors told her and her mother that she likely would never walk again. Her siblings — thankfully, there were plenty — were in charge of making sure she didn’t take the braces off.

“I spent most of my time trying to figure out how to get them off,” she told ESPN. “But when you come from a large, wonderful family, there’s always a way to achieve your goals.”

Finally, after miraculously learning to walk again, Rudolph started playing sports with her siblings. She joined the basketball team at Burt High School, an all-Black school in Clarksville, and set a then-state record by dropping 49 points in a single game, per ESPN.

Naturally, that caught people’s attention — including Tennessee State track coach Ed Temple, who started inviting Rudolph to his practices while she was still in high school. Her speed was simply unmatched.

“I don’t know why I run so fast,” she said, via ESPN. “I just run.”

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DC 80's Gathering June 6, 2021



From front left going clockwise:

Malissa (Murray) Ladd '85, daughter Hailey Ladd, husband Greg Ladd
 Steve McDonald '84
 Rose (Hanson) Neel '84
 spouse-Jill Felker
 spouse-Allison (Broker) Cleveland
 Kate (Murphy) Scrivener '88
 spouse-Christine Muhart
 spouse-Frank Scrivener
 Tim Felker '83
 Charlie Cleveland '85
 Keith Muhart '85
 Lee (Muhart) Perez '86
 Leigh (Love) Roper '85
 Seana Muhart '87 (sitting back table), guest - John Conlon
 Jennie (Felker) Curtis '82 - attended but not pictured.



**'80s Get-Together
 hosted by
 Keith Muhart '85**

June 24th: Early '60's Brat couples (have a mini) visiting a couple wineries & having dinner in Santa Rosa, CA.

Winery tasting at Carol Shelton Winery: Mike Jiru '63 & wife Gail (Rybaltowski) Karppinen '63; Maggie (Ellithorpe) MacPherson '63 & hubby Don, and Mike Cleveland '61 & wife Liz.



Hobnobbing with the owner: Don, Maggie, Gail, winery owner: Carol Shelton, Mike J., Mike C. and Liz.



CONGRATULATIONS!!

Lt.Gen (R) Mike Ferriter '75 being inducted into the RANGER HALL OF FAME!



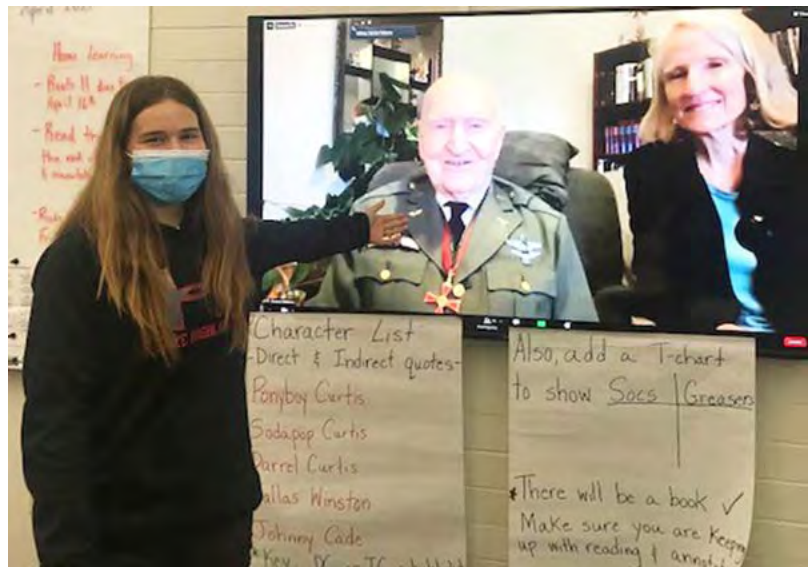
The 2021 Ranger Hall of Fame Ceremony is scheduled for July 21 at 1:30 p.m., at McGinnis-Wickham Hall, Fort Benning, Georgia.

Mike, (Gen. Ferriter) was our Host & Guide as the CEO/President of the new National Veterans Memorial & Museum in Columbus, OH at our September 2019 "regional." Pics can be found on our website.....on the Reunions/regional page.

The COL, a/k/a Candy Bomber visits with Lake Highland Preparatory School – April 15, 2021



During Middle School Unity yesterday, students met the Candy Bomber, Colonel Gail Halvorsen, and his daughter Denise via Zoom. At 100 years old, he proudly shared his experiences of the Berlin Airlift and his candy drops to the children, along with how to spread kindness to others.



Melissa (Ledbetter) Gibson '83 teaches at this school....sadly she didn't make this picture.

Continues next page

This school is run by a retired rear admiral. Mrs. Ledbetter (Melissa's '83 and Theresa's '80) Mom donated her collection from the Iranian hostages incident to this school. The Ledbetters collected autographs from the hostages while their unit did the debriefings back in the day. The collection resides in the admiral's office for the children to view and learn.

The Colonel is looking good –
post his January Covid bout.
We're happy to see him back
on the circuit!!!!



Submitted by Theresa Ledbetter '80

Brat poem

By: Bill "Toby" West '61

Congratulations to Toby West for being recognized by the National Veterans Museum for his poem written in April for the month of the Military child.

"Once
where I was young
in 1958
and looking for eagerness
all around Berlin
I'll show a friend
how to crack his knuckles
He was someone I knew
part of the military brew
and if I could
still would
wait for his arrival Wannsee way
lying in the grass
watching the frolic
with chuckles of youth
and friends for the ages."

Brats drop in on each other..... "The Mark Britton" Page

(boy he gets around)

Always love a surprise visit from a fellow Berliner! Mark J. Britton '84 stopped by during one of his many adventures on the road, hoping for a longer stay next time!



*Apr 26th, Malissa (Murray) Ladd '85
Melbourne, FL*



Berliners invade Michigan. States sexiness is improved instantly. Film at 2300. June 13, 2021



Mark Britton '84 links up with Tiffany (Clayton) Chupp – TAR Brat, sister of Stacey (Clayton) McFarland '88



Mark Britton '84 and Kim (Rejzek) O'Conner '86

Brat Connections

Look who showed their colors at "SCHNITZEL TOUR" in Fredericksburg, VA – June 19th

(ie: regionals for all schools-all years across the country)

hosted by: Heidelberg Brat, Michael Cannon....

Berliner: Warren Knarr '77



Two Bears (Cubs actually) join the Heidelberg group for Schnitzel night in Plano, TX Saturday, April 10th

Laura (Coats) Satterfield '71
2nd from left and Ruchia
"Roo" (Eargle) Moran '73 in
black tee 3rd from right.

Roo is actually a
double dipper having
attended BAHS &
Heidelberg.

Brat Connections

Rob Ahrens '87 & Steve Kinzie '87 have invaded Waikiki with Chris Marvin '89.
July 1, 2021



Berliners-in-training with their instructors



Brat Connections

Karen Kattar and Karen Martin, '75ers, have a spontaneous link up!
May 9th, 2021

"Some things never change.... like the easy friendship between high school classmates who haven't seen each other since graduation back in 1975. Forty-five years later, Karen Martin surprised BAHS classmate, Karen Kattar, while traveling through the Southwest. It was a fantastic visit down memory lane for both. Looking forward to more reunions in the future!"
Karen Kattar



"Our time as American high schoolers in mid-70s, walled city of West Berlin, Germany was rich and unique. Great to reminisce with a fellow classmate and friend from that chapter in our lives, and to trade memories as well as share our life's journey since. Very special indeed!"
Karen Martin



July 8, 2021

Bierwerks, Woodland Park ♥ Berlin American High Brats!!
Lydia (Gadarian) Orlando '76, MaryAnn (Cunha) Glover '76....
Oh and Jennifer (Gadarian) Firing is a JFK Brat '87

MILITARY LIFE REPORTS:

20 important facts about military brats (backed up by research)

Blake Stilwell February 19, 2021

Military children (aka “Brats”) are a distinct sociological subculture and have been recognized as such for many decades. Children in military families obviously face a lot of challenges their civilian counterparts will never experience. This is not to say that one child is better than another, and while the challenges are important to realize, the resiliency of these children is just as important. Here are some facts and figures about modern military children and who they are likely to grow up to be.



1. The term “Military Brat” is not intended as derogatory and isn’t just a slang term – Military brat is widely used by researchers and sociologists and was adopted by the military brat community.

2. Since 9/11, more than two million military children have had a parent deployed at least once.

3. Military families relocate 10 times more often than civilian families — on average, every 2 or 3 years.

4. When a parent is stationed without his family, the children of the military member experience the same emotions as children of divorced parents.

5. Children of active duty personnel often mirror the values, ideals, and attitudes of their parents more closely than children of civilians.

6. A high percentage of military children find difficulty connecting with people or places, but very often do form strong connections with bases and military culture.



7. Military children have more emotional struggles when compared with national examples. These struggles increase when the military parent deploys. Military children can also experience higher levels of anxiety, depression and withdrawal.



8. Research has consistently shown military children to be more disciplined than civilian peers.

9. The perception that the country supports the wars their parents deploy to fight has a positive effect on the mental health of military children.

10. Military children are usually under constant pressure to conform to what military culture expects; sometimes this is perceived as being more mature, even if its only their outward behavior.

11. Strict discipline can have the opposite effect: children in military families may behave well beyond what is normally acceptable. Some develop psychological problems due to the intense stress of always being on their best behavior.

12. The bonds connecting military communities are normally considered stronger than the differences of race. Military children grow up in a setting that actively condemns racist comments. The result is a culture of anti-racism.

13. In studies, eighty percent of military children claim that they can relate to anyone, regardless of differences such as race, ethnicity, religion, or nationality.

14. Because military brats are constantly making new friends to replace the ones that they have lost, they are often more outgoing and independent.

15. On the other hand, the experience of being a constant stranger can lead them to feel estranged everywhere, even if later in life they settle down in one place.



16. A typical military school can experience up to 50 percent turnover every year.

17. Grown military children are very monogamous. When they marry, it is generally for life; over two-thirds over age 40 are married to their first spouse.

18. Military children have lower delinquency rates, higher achievement scores, and higher median IQs than civilian children.

19. Military children are more likely to have a college degree and are more likely to have an advanced degree.

20. Over 80 percent of children raised in military families now speak at least one language other than English, and 14 percent speak three or more.

A Little bit of this and a little bit of that...



There is an unspeakable connection and bond that exists the moment a military brat meets another brat.

There's no need for explanations or justifications- it's magical. They just get it. And boy does it feel like home.

-- A military Brat

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/MILITARYBRATMEMES/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/militarybratmemes/)
imgflip.com



DID YOU KNOW?

THAT WE HAVE A NEW PAGE ON OUR WEBSITE....TELLING YOU WHAT PAGES ON THE SITE HAVE BEEN UPDATED OR SOMETHING NEW ADDED? CHECK IT OUR REGULARLY FOR THE LATEST!
(upper right column of the home page)

Somebody's dog gets into the act....



Temple, who also served as the Olympic women's track coach, helped Rudolph qualify for the team for the 1956 Games in Melbourne, Australia. At just 16 years old, she competed with the 4x100-meter relay team that year and won a bronze medal.

It wasn't until four years later that Rudolph made history, and international fame, in Rome. She won three gold medals at those Olympics in Italy in the 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash and 4x100-meter relay. She set a world record in the relay, an Olympic record in the 200 and came just shy of a third.

Rudolph was the first woman in American history to win three gold medals in a single Olympics. The next didn't come until 1984, when Valerie Brisco-Hooks did so in Los Angeles. Florence Griffith Joyner then matched the mark in Seoul four years later, too.



With those Games being broadcast on television, Rudolph quickly rose to international fame.

From Sports Illustrated in 1960:

A slender 5 feet 11 inches, Wilma Rudolph can command a look of mingled graciousness and hauteur that suggests a duchess but, in a crowd that is one part Skeeter and 5,000 parts people, young men and babies will come to her in 30 seconds. Her manners are of a natural delicacy and sweetness as true as good weather. She tore up Rome, then Greece, England, Holland and Germany. In Cologne it took mounted police to keep back her admirers; in Wuppertal, police dogs. In Berlin her public stole her shoes, surrounded her bus (she boarded it in her bare feet) and beat on it with their fists to make her wave. Autograph hunters jostled her wherever she went, and she was deluged with letters, gifts, telegrams and pleas that she stay where she was or come to a dozen cities where she wasn't.

Rudolph retired from the sport two years later. She was voted into the National Track and Field Hall of Fame, the Women's Sports Foundation Hall of Fame, the Black Athletes Hall of Fame and earned a spot in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Hall of Fame in 1983.

She later served as the U.S. Goodwill Ambassador to French West Africa and was the track coach at DePauw University in Indiana. She also launched the Wilma Rudolph Foundation, which focused on promoting amateur athletics.

Rudolph died of brain cancer at 54 in 1994. Though her Olympic accomplishments were extremely important to her, it was her work after the Games, and the message her medals delivered, that meant the most to her.

Mourning "bear mother" Eva Herlitz

March 11, 2021

by Petra Götze, Berliner Morgenpost



The inventor of the Berlin Buddy Bears, Eva Herlitz, died after a fall in her home in Austria.

The news came completely unexpected: Eva Herlitz is dead. The "mother bear", as she called herself, died at the end of February after a fall in her holiday home in Kitzbühel. Her name is inextricably linked with Berlin's modern heraldic animals, the Buddy Bears.

Eva Herlitz was a primary school teacher and interior designer before she and her husband Klaus Herlitz founded Buddy Bär GmbH in 2001. The brightly painted bear sculptures have been part of the Berlin cityscape ever since. Eva Herlitz and her husband Klaus made them popular ambassadors for a cosmopolitan Berlin and for social commitment:



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152 individually designed bears - each representing a country in the world - traveled around the world as "United Buddy Bears", promoting tolerance and international understanding. Eva Herlitz vision: "As diverse and colorful and peaceful as these bears stand together, so diverse and colorful and peaceful could the coexistence of people be." She also worked tirelessly for this idea in Berlin.

She combined the open-air exhibitions of bear sculptures from St. Petersburg to Havana with fundraising campaigns and auctions for the benefit of local children's aid organizations. As a result, more than two million euros could be donated to Unicef and local aid organizations in Berlin.

She traveled around the world with her Buddy Bears

Eva Herlitz traveled around the world with her Buddy Bears, supported the construction of schools and hospitals for children in Malawi, Sierra Leone and Bolivia, and was always optimistic, friendly and persistent even in the event of problems and difficulties. Her motto: "It's a shame that the day only has 24 hours!" Her energy seemed inexhaustible when it came to promoting a donation project, winning supporters or privately helping a refugee family after the death of their father. For her commitment she was awarded the Order of Merit of the State of Berlin and the Federal Cross of Merit.

Eva Herlitz died on February 26th in the hospital in Innsbruck. She was 68 years old. Her husband Klaus, with whom she was married for 50 years, and her three sons are very grateful to the Innsbruck University Hospital that they were able to stay with her until the end without restrictions.



2003

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The Berlin Brats two Buddy Bears favorites:



Found at the Allied Museum
(former Outpost Theatre)

Honoring the Candy Bomber's
parachute drop

Warren Knarr '77 and wife
Carla

Photo by: Peter Stein '80



Buddy Bear @ Hotel Steglitz (our 2006 Reunion)



Buddy Bear Hotel Steglitz (our 2014 Reunion)

The "Secret" Life of a Berlin Brat

By Thomas "Tommy" Lint '91

What was school like for you growing up? I find myself 30 years removed from high school now and looking at things from a different perspective, the perspective of a parent. So, it does not seem unusual to start to glance back at how things were for me growing up when communicating with my children now. I do find myself using phrases like "back then" or "in my day" with my kids more frequently these days. In addition to that, my kids are quick to point out (with their mother's prodding no less), that I am the dinosaur in the room. Okay, so I am not ancient, but to a 6-year-old, 48 years old can seem really, really, really old. I digress, so I will go back to the original question that was posed. What was school like for you growing up? It is difficult for me to give a straightforward and uncomplicated answer to this question when asked, because my path was different than most folks I know and interact with on a regular basis. Thus, it is hard to adequately convey my experience to the "civilian" population or to those unfamiliar with what is known as "Brat" life and all its nuances.

I grew up in and out of a school system known then as DoDDS (Department of Defense Dependent Schools). Its modern equivalent is known as DoDEA (Department of Defense Education Activity). While my experience parallels many military dependent students, it deviates a bit with the fact that many of my formative years were spent in the city of Berlin in the throes of the Cold War! That means I am not just a Military Brat, but I am also part of a finite group of people known as Berlin Brats.

I suppose it is not unusual when you are the newbie in class, even when that class is full of military dependents, to get asked about your parents and their careers. I found myself in the roll of new kid on the Berlin block back in the late 1980's. "So, what does your mom and dad do for a living" I heard often when getting acquainted with my peers at my new school. My response usually made them laugh as I would reply, "I don't know what my dad does for a living, but my Mom runs a daycare." I mean, I knew my dad was in the Army, and I understood his work required a Top Secret-Special Access clearance. I was also aware that his Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was 05K-Non-Morse Intercept Analyst, but that was really all I knew. What does all of that translate to though? What it meant for me was that my dad could not talk about what he did "at the office" day in and day out. It also meant and still means that most discussions we have ever had about his military career have been cursory at best. It was and has always been a secret life. It was the one part of his life he couldn't really talk about. So, I guess you could say that by proxy I had to live the "secret" life too.

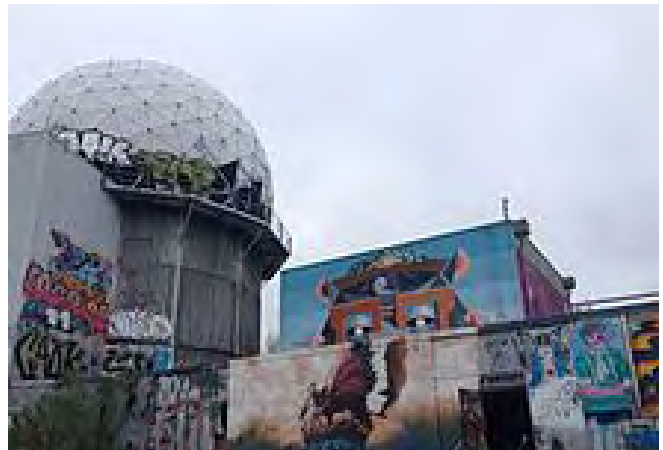
During his last tenure in Berlin, (he had several stints there), my dad's work schedule would vary. I remember that he would go for 2 weeks on the day shift, then 2 weeks on the swing shift, and would round out the schedule with 1 month on the midnight shift. When he left for work, his destination was not to the typical Army facility though. He often referred to his duty station as "The Hill". However, the hill my dad referred to was not an ordinary hill made by mother nature. Rather, it was a hill that was erected by humans. An artificial bump on the landscape that was to become the highest point in the walled city at 394 feet above sea level at project completion. That piece of real estate was known to the Germans as Teufelsberg or Devils Mountain. Ironically, the man-made mound was built atop of a Nazi Military College that was never completed and that acreage that was created would later become home to Field Station Berlin. Field Station Berlin has long been rumored to be part of a large global intelligence gathering network that functioned as a listening station. Those rumors seem plausible enough, as the station was visibly equipped with antennas, multiple geodesic domes, and multi-story buildings with few doors and windows visible in its construct (see picture below). An untold number of people spent their days and nights manning that field station as part of its 24-hours a day operation my dad among them.



Teufelsberg - Field Station Berlin in the 1970's

We, whose parents lived the secret life, became accustomed to answering the question of what our parents did for a living with hands raised ear high, head slightly tilted, and a shrug of the shoulders. There was no need for us to ask our parents to go to our schools and talk about their jobs on career day as it would have been a very short-lived speech due to the nature of their work. Admittedly, there were times of angst and frustration when trying to explain my dad's chosen vocation to outsiders and the uninitiated. Those queries often met with joking, cynical looks, and follow-up questions i.e. "So, your Dad is a spy?", or "Does your Dad work for the CIA?" and other questions like "So you can tell me, but then you 'd have to kill me right?". It was all meant as harmless banter that typically lead to smiles and hearty laughter during those exchanges amongst us as kids. The unknown was in fact my reality though. A reality that was also shared by a small subset of other Berlin Brats. In full disclosure, I joined the Army right out of high school and while at the military processing center and deciding upon my own Army career, my Dad's career MOS was a possibility on my list of options. So, in all reality, I could have gotten at least a generalized glimpse into the life he led for so many years had I wanted to. I chose a different path. So, his secret is still a secret to me.

A lot has happened in the world since that compound housing Field Station Berlin was decommissioned as a functional base. Of course, all the buildings were stripped of any sensitive military equipment they may have housed before shutting the gates for good. The Berlin Wall has long since been removed, the cold war is something my kids can read about in history books, and the geodesic domes and buildings that made up the field station are a shell of their former function. The buildings are abandoned and now tagged with graffiti (see picture right), panels are missing from the domes, and you can now tour the once hush hush facility for a small fee. My dad retired shortly after the Wall was dismantled but his clearance and obligations still require silence regarding the majority of his military work activities. Conjecture and speculation still abound as to what really happened inside the walls of the buildings on that small plot of land and I am resolute in my understanding that I will probably never truly know its official purpose during my lifetime. I know there are other Berlin Brats share in that same reality. The reality of not really knowing what Mom or Dad did while they were there. With all that said, I can say that the memories of those uncertain times in that grand city remain particularly vivid for this Berlin Brat that lived the "secret life" if only by proxy.



Remnants of Field Station Berlin in the 2000's



Photo from 1988 -
Berlin American High
School

P.S. I would like to take this opportunity to give a shout out and honor all the servicemen and service women that lived or are currently living the "Secret" life. The additional sacrifices they made and are making all too often go unnoticed. Thank you all!

About the Author:

Thomas "Tommy" Lint - Berlin American High School Class
Contact - Class of '91:

Born - Berlin, Germany (Berlin American Hospital)

Attended Berlin American High School as a Freshman and
Sophomore (Class of 1991)

Served as a Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)

Crewmember in the United States Army from 1991-1999

Served as a Logistics Specialist in the United States Navy from 2001 until retirement in 2017

Currently: Lead Support Technician for a cable/internet/phone company

Lives in Springfield, Missouri Married with 5 children

P.P.S. Tommy just came on board as the Class Contact for '91....and already he's writing for us!



Now - 2021 (haven't
changed a bit right?)

Continued from page 17

"The triumph can't be had without the struggle. And I know what struggle is," Rudolph said. "I have spent a lifetime trying to share what it has meant to be a woman first in the world of sports so that other young women have a chance to reach their dreams."



President Kennedy chats in his White House office on April 14, 1961, with Wilma Rudolph, winner of three gold medals in the 1960 Olympic Games. (AP/William J. Smith)



Class of '75

Graduates 75 with 6 sets of Twins!!!!

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

How's that even possible?

UPDATE:

Marvin Lindroth '75 (one of the twins mentioned last quarter in the April 2021 Newsletter) noted that there was another set. The Turner's....Michael and David. With SEVEN sets in '75 it's even more staggering!!!!

THE U.S. ARMY MUSEUM RE-OPENS POST COVID RESTRICTIONS



The Museum located in Ft. Belvoir, VA (DC area) re-opened on June 14th. Be sure to check the "BRATS TO BOOTS" virtual screen above in the "Brat section."

Upcoming Events

2021 Regionals:

Oct 2 - San Antonio, TX
Oct 10 - Colorado Springs, CO

OSB Gathering San Antonio, TX

Oct 28-31st, 2021

www.overseasbrats.com

Next Reunion

Proposals being
reviewed for new
western location
Summer 2022

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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)

Newsletter Brat: Carl Fenstermacher '73

Early '60s Site

By invitation only

Contact Jim Branson '64

jbranson01@hotmail.com

for an invite

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