



# BERLIN BRATS NEWSLETTER

C/O LAURA COATS-THORNTON, 744 POE STREET, AZLE, TX 76020

## BERLIN BRATS UPDATE

1993  
FALL

For some of you this newsletter will be the first opportunity you've had to see what we've been up to. Almost a year has past since we organized. In that time a lot has happened.

Step one for us was getting in contact with the national registries for overseas alumni. Berlin Brats Association owes a debt of gratitude to OSCAR and Overseas Brats for their invaluable help in forwarding addresses of Berlin alumni. Most of you came to us through them.

Step two was MAIL. We've sent out over 500 pieces of mail in the form of newsletters, postcards, and letters. It's been busy, but hopefully it will get BUSIER! The response has been great, although, admittedly not everyone responded. We just knew they were there because their letter wasn't returned. Those addresses are listed on the roster.

The roster is still in the process of being updated. Every month we receive at least 5 new addresses. Each time we've mailed out information, we've discovered someone has moved. The other update the roster needed was correction. I want to thank Frederick Martin for his invaluable information (and all the addresses he sent).

After we could look at the roster more accurately, we went about sending out names of former alumni to area "volunteers" who live in the area of the alumns last known address. We've been able to find several alumni this way.

In the process of finding lost addresses and contacting former alumni, we've been able to reacquaint several of you with old friends. These "mini-reunions" gladden my heart, and confirm that our purpose in maintaining contact is valid.

I received a phone call late one night from an ecstatic friend who illustrates what we're all about. I asked him if I could share his story, and he agreed to let me. See "I Never Thought I'd Hear From Anyone Again".

In addition to trying to increase the number of addresses we have, we are also trying to encourage reunions. One sad discovery I've made since starting this is that there have been very few reunions for the Thomas A. Roberts/Berlin American High School Alumnae. As far as I can tell, there have been fewer than 10. Considering that Thomas A. Roberts/Berlin American High School is one of the oldest DoDDS schools (1947), this is really sad.

Because of the lack of reunions, and because there is earnest interest in having a reunion, Berlin Brats has signed on to be a part of the GRAND REUNION '93 to be held in August of 1993. This will not interfere with the All-Class Reunion planned in 1996, but it will be in addition to that one. (See "Grand Reunion '93" for more information.)

Another opportunity being pursued is the Overseas Brats Gathering this October in San Diego. Every alumni in California and neighboring states was sent an invitation to attend this seminar. Overseas Brats will host this event designed to teach groups how to organize, find alumni, and hold reunions.

To date, there will be four Berlin Brats represented there. These are people who have expressed an interest in learning more about organizing and hosting reunions. This is not a reunion, but since almost none of the California alumni have had an opportunity to see any other Berlin Brats, we're taking advantage of this offering by Overseas Brats. Hopefully, the California Crew will learn how to organize an event, and host one!

That brings us up to date. Now, what does the future hold? Naturally, after the O.B. Gathering in San Diego, we'll have some new ideas, but for now our plans are to continue to forward the names of lost alumni to area "volunteer" contacts who will attempt to locate them. In order to do this, we need copies of the Seniors of each class.

(Their hometown was listed.)

We are continuing to pursue leads you send us, although, with the printing of the newsletter that pursuit has slowed.

As part of the agreement of being included in the Grand Reunion '93 Reunions Unlimited, will find the names of all lost alumni through their database. (I am checking on the cost of this--if there is any.) We will be a part of the Grand Reunion '93 next August.

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*I Never Thought I'd Hear From Anyone Again*

It all started in January when BB received the OSCAR list. One of the last names on the list looked familiar to me, but the spelling was different from the person's I recalled and the first name was different. So I sent the "first contact" post card to the address as it was listed, with a "Forwarding Address Requested" along the bottom of the card.

It paid off. The post card was returned with a correction. (Thank you Mr. Postman.) The last name was incorrectly spelled and the address was different. The corrected last name was the one I remembered--Bloebaum. (It's familiar to many of you, too! Class of '69, '70, '73, etc. HA!)

I mailed the corrected address to the person whose first name still did not ring a bell. About two months later, I received a reply. BINGO! It turned out that there

were about 5 Bloebaums who attended Berlin American High School at different times. I forwarded rosters and old newsletters and Purpose and Goals sheets to all the names Mr. Wayne Bloebaum gave me.

About two weeks later, late in the evening, I received a delirious phone call from Dave, Class of '70. He had just called two of his old buddies from Berlin. They had already made plans to see each other this coming summer. His comment was, "Thank you. I never thought, or dreamed, that I would ever hear from anyone from Berlin. Those were the happiest days of my life. I left just before I started my Senior year, and hated the high school I attended state-side."

After leaving Berlin, Dave and his family were shipped to Almagordo, NM, where he graduated. He joined the AF and was stationed in Upper Heyford, England 1970-1973. He had made a trip back to Berlin then, but was only able to contact a couple of people. He is now a Federal Civil Service Technician employed by the Nebraska Army National Guard. (See Photo)



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**NOTES AND POST CARDS...**

"It's fun to know some Berlin Brats made it to this side of the world. Hopefully we can set aside a weekend day and meet over coffee and a central location!"--*J. Anderson-Weber*

"Do you have information on \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_? I talked to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ within the last 2 months. Nice hearing from you."--*P. Ray Bunch*

"I'm happy to see your efforts on behalf of the many BAHS students, grads, alumnae, etc. I've included the names of a few more BAHS grads that I've kept in touch with. They may or may not respond to your association."--*R. Martin*

"Just a quick note to let you know how much I, for one, appreciate all you're doing and have done. You've helped me get in touch with people I haven't spoken to in over twenty years and it sure was fun. Keep up the good work."--*L. Neeb-Rashchella*

"I'm thrilled that you're doing this--it's fun to see where people are that I never expected to be aware of again."--*J. Houk Willner*

*In addition to notes and postcards, I have received the nicest cassette tape sent by Ronald Rainville. After listening to this wonderful tape, I was struck by the history I had been entrusted with. I haven't had time to transcribe the tape, but thank you. I hope we can help you find your lost friends.*

YOUR ASSOCIATION'S PRESIDENT MADE THE COVER OF OVERSEAS BRATS, AUGUST EDITION.

**OVERSEAS Brats**

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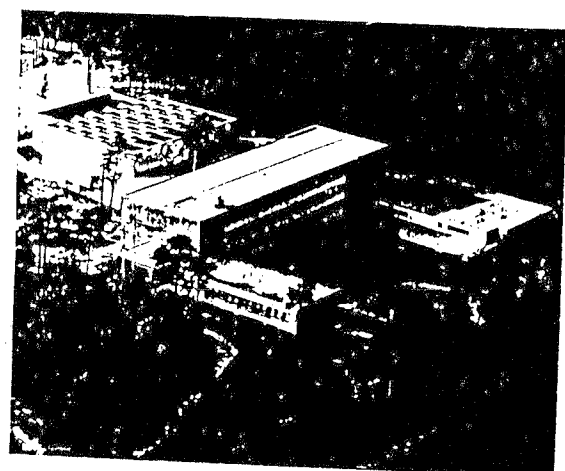
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A Picture of  
 Berlin American High School

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GRAND REUNION '93

August 6 - 8, 1993

Hyatt Regency - DFW Airport  
 Registration fee, \$120/person

INCLUDES:

- Memory Book
- Commemorative Grand Reunion T-shirt
- Friday Night Dinner and Entertainment
- Saturday Night Dinner and Entertainment
- Sunday Morning Brunch

Side trips will be scheduled to Six  
 Flags, Dallas, etc as determined by the  
 level of interest.

HELD BY: Reunions Unlimited of Colorado

PHOTOS FROM THE MAY 1991 REUNION



Bob O'Neill and Linn Harrison-Folger chat about their exercise regime.



(Left - Right) Karen Hansen-Witt, Jerry Owens, Phyllis Owens, Cathy Coats-Kelton, and Patti McManus-Williams look through some old year books.



The Shop 'Til You Drop Group: Shirley Parker-Wells, Laura Coats-Thornton, Nancy Liepmann-Van Duzer, Jim Stottle, Roseann Terry-Philips, Jeri Polansky-Glass, and Brenda Ezell.

## BOOK UPDATE...

"Overseas Brats" Children of the Cold War,  
by Bruce Jones and Merle Metcalf

In July, Mr. Jones wrote to thank me for forwarding the information about his upcoming book highlighting the experiences of children stationed with their parent overseas during the Cold War Era. His book is near completion, but he lacked any input from Berlin kids. Several of you responded, so now we have a showing in his upcoming book.

Mr. Jones will be in California this October to attend the Overseas Brats Gathering. He will bring the group up to date as to the progress on the book.

## BOOK REVIEWS...

Military Brats: Legacies of Childhood Inside the Fortress, by Mary Edwards Wertsch

If you haven't heard about this book, you will. Mary Wertsch writes a moving account of life as a Military Brat taken from interviews with over 80 military brats. She uncovers the psycho/social response to aspects of military life, including the military's response in recent years to meet the needs of dependents in these areas. Civilians will also find aspects reflect their experience (i.e. corporate mobility/rootlessness, preacher's kids sense of mission, or police authoritarian structure.) Ms. Wertsch writes, "I believe that Military Brats are America's most invisible minority; What I have tried to do is make us more visible--and understandable to ourselves and others."

After hearing about this book through the "grapevine", I decided to read it. My first impression was, "This is full of fluff; there

can't be that much said about military brats." I was wrong. It was not tedious reading and it was illuminating. It elicited a lot of discussion around my house. My husband read the book because he said it helped him understand me. (So now, I'm no mystery!)

The introduction was written by Pat Conroy, author of "Prince of Tides" and "The Great Santini", himself a military brat. My favorite part of the book was his introduction, but don't stop there if you get the book. It's well worth reading. It made me feel better about myself.

War Brides Revisited: The Brides of WWII, 1942-52, by Elfrieda Berthiaume Shukert and Barbara Smith Scibetta

Ellie Shukert and Barbara Scibetta spent 6 years chronicling the lives of "War Brides" between the years of 1942 and 1952. The book is an account of all they underwent leaving their homelands for military life and American culture. The authors went so far in working on the book that they sponsored a reunion with War Brides and their families.--from Overseas Brats Magazine

The Absentee American, by Carolyn D. Smith

Ms. Smith uses stories relayed to her from Overseas Brats members/subscribers to give a composite of Overseas Brats' differences from the general American public. She argues that adults who spend their early years experiencing foreign culture offer the business world a vital link to international relations, and can play a major role as "intercultural mediators".--from Overseas Brats Magazine (*If you are like me, you never thought of yourself as an "intercultural mediator", but it's nice to know someone is tooting our horn. The book is not restricted to Military Brats, it includes all overseas kids.*)

## CORRECTIONS...

I wish I didn't have to admit to having made any errors, but here goes. Aside from the numerous errors in the class listings in the roster, I made quite a few others.

Notably:

Letterhead, footnote "Thomas A. Jefferson/Berlin American High School, etc". (Thank you older alumni for pointing this error out.) Since I attended the 1st and 2nd grade there, this is terribly embarrassing. It should read THOMAS A. ROBERTS/BERLIN AMERICAN... All I can say in defense is, I set that font at midnight one night and all I could think of was Thomas A. Jefferson or Thomas A. Edison. Knowing how historical Jefferson was...it just sounded right.

Newsletter date: I wrote in the contact letter to some of you new contacts that we printed the newsletter in August. That's when I want to have all my articles. As it is, I'm barely getting it done in September. Sorry! The dues are due in August! (\$10.00)

## BERLIN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

In May, BAHS held its final Renaissance Award Assembly. Prizes awarded students and parents included a Euro Disney Trip, Elton John Concert tickets and a club membership. The seniors earned \$90,500 in scholarship moneys. These scholarship included booster clubs, NCO clubs and various colleges.

The high school opened its new Library/Media Center in early December. I also have the fall sports season schedule.