



Berlin Brats Alumni Association Newsletter

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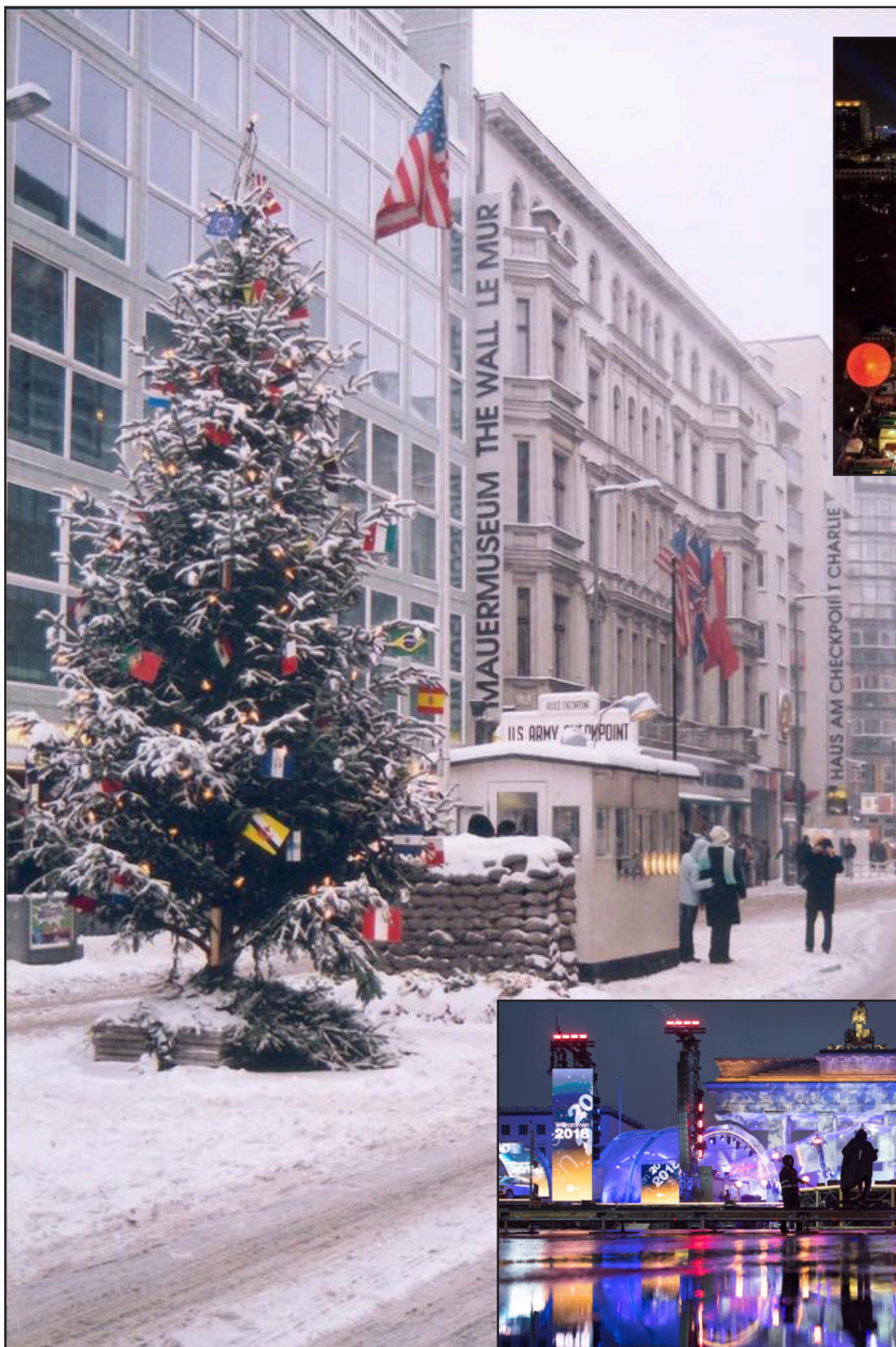


Photo from <http://www.globalo.com/join-freedom-hub-change-world/>



Checkpoint Charlie decorated for the season in a blanket of snow. This photo was posted in December on the Berlin Brats FB page. By New Year's Eve, it was clear it appealed to us Brats: 2,246 people had viewed it, with 158 likes and 19 shares. Top right: Crowds gathered in front of Brandenburg Gate to celebrate the start of the new year. Bottom right photo: The Gate reflected in a puddle during a rehearsal prior to the New Year's Eve party.



Photo by Ralf Hirschberger/dpa via AP

December Brat gathering in Denver

Karrie (Kotcher) Wymer '86 organized a seasonal get-together for Berlin Brats in the Colorado area at Denver's Christkindl Market.

Originally, Christkindl Markts were utilitarian, a simple means for people to buy food and seasonal essentials such as blankets, firewood, and anything needed to endure the winter. Eventually, people started selling ornaments, toys, and other items that, while not vital for survival, made for a merrier atmosphere, including Glühwein and Bier.

Obviously, Berlin Brats know how to be merry wherever they gather!



Top photo, left side of table front to back: Shawn Bingham '86, Hilton 'Marcus' Huff '89, and Leroy Garrison '86. Right side of table, front to back: Eunice (Fitzsimmon) Huff '89, April (Munger) Bingham '87, Karrie (Kotcher) Wymer '86, and Devon Ferguson '87. Bottom photo, L to R: Mary Ann (Cunha) Glover '76, Lydia (Gadarian) Orlando '76 (attending all the way from Minnesota!), and Darla (Tabor) Hung '88.



Rediscovered: 250 Missing feet of the Berlin Wall

by Fergus O'Sullivan
Citylab, January 25, 2018

This week the Berlin media unveiled a sensational discovery: a largely intact 80 meter (262 feet) section of the Berlin Wall that everyone assumed had been demolished. Battered but still standing, this section of the Wall remains in its original location in the quiet northern Berlin suburb of Schönholz. It had actually been rediscovered by local historian Christian Bormann as far back as 1999—but he's kept it a secret since then. Bormann only chose to bring it to public notice this week (via his personal blog and contact with local officials) after growing concerned that its dilapidated condition placed it in peril of collapse.

That such a remnant could go unnoticed even in a backwater seems incredible. This was once one of Europe's most heavily, lethally monitored frontiers, and one of the most infamous objects in the world. How did it ever fade into obscurity? The answers reveal some fascinating details about the Berlin Wall's history and functioning.

It certainly helps that this newly discovered section is in such a hidden-away location. Wedged in scrubby, unbuilt suburban land between a cemetery and the tracks of the S-Bahn railway, it's in a place few people need to visit. And in its most basic form, the Berlin Wall wasn't exactly eye-catching as a structure—it certainly wasn't very tall. Its surprisingly modest height ranged between 11 and 13 feet, while its construction out of concrete slabs

topped with smooth pipe gave it a deceptively humdrum, unprepossessing appearance.

While it wasn't as fearsome-looking at its reputation suggests, it was still

close to impregnable once fully complete. What made it nigh impossible to scale was not its height, but the so-called "Death Strip" alongside it, a broad, heavily guarded fringe where a barbed wire-topped fence enclosed an area of raked sand and anti-tank obstacles called "Czech hedgehogs." With the death strip removed, the Berlin Wall itself looks relatively unassuming, its construction from prefabricated panels mirroring numerous other structures built during the years of the German Democratic Republic.

This is especially true of the newly rediscovered section—because it doesn't even look like the rest of the Wall. It's an unusual remnant from the very first years of the Wall's existence. When the barrier was first strung around West Berlin during the night and early morning of August 12 and

13, it was a hastily installed cordon of barbed wire fences, augmented with concrete a few days later. The rediscovered section

was actually built up from the remaining walls of some tenements bombed out during the Second World War, Bormann believes; their cellars filled in with rubble to prevent access to anyone



seeking to tunnel under the Wall. The early Berlin Wall's combination of wire and concrete with such relatively makeshift arrangements was largely replaced by concrete only from 1965 onward, while the Wall took on its final appearance as a chain of concrete slabs between 1975 and 1980.

A few pieces of the original 1961 Wall persisted, however, in just a few locations where they were still deemed solid enough not to pose a security risk. The rediscovered section at Schönholz is one of these early remnants. It passed under the radar as just another random piece of shabby concrete wall—because, now that the barbed wire has disappeared from the V-shaped brackets capping the wall, that's exactly what it looks like.

Visitors hunting down the remnant in search of Cold War shivers may thus be disappointed. At the same time, there's a clear poignancy to the discovery. Once this masonry barrier was a lethally-charged fault line running between two global power blocs, the political equivalent of tectonic plates. Now that this remaining section of the Wall looks like any other rundown, unremarkable slice of urban blight, that not-too-distant past when it formed a heavily-guarded frontier seems ghostly, unreal.



Photos by Christian Bormann

Hung up for good: Remote German forest depot where thousands of phone

by Dan Bloom
Daily Mail/UK

Its wares splayed in dazzlingly pink neat rows, this is the remote forest depot where thousands of phone booths go to die.

The one-and-a-half acre site, buried deep in the woods near the town of Michendorf, is Germany's only mass phone box graveyard of its kind. Nowadays it has few yellow boxes, which are the oldest types, and is full mainly of newer pink phone booths which have had to be discarded through lack of use by Deutsche Telekom.

Although some will be stored for reuse when other booths in prominent places break, they are being sold to the public for as little as 300 Euros (£250) each. The 'vintage' yellow boxes command a higher price of 450 Euros (£370).

There is a catch, however - buyers must find a way to lug the 300lb (135kg) monsters home themselves. Since the sale began the phone booths have found some quirky uses, Deutsche Telekom spokesman Georg von Wagner told *Der Tagesspiegel*.

The sale began at the end of 2014, and is likely to go on for some time as phone booths gradually vanish from public life. Once the only way for children to tell parents they were alive or for jobseekers to apply for work, the metal boxes have been in terminal decline worldwide since the dawn of mobile phones.

In 2003, there were still more than 100,000 across Germany - but in many areas they have been gradually eliminated or replaced with cheaper, easier-to-run wall-mounted models. By 2014, there were only around 40,000 left.

Those sold already have been turned into greenhouses, recording studios, showers, miniature libraries, movie props and beach shelters.

'Telephone booths awaken in many people fond memories,' said Deutsche Telekom employee Betina Kückels-Viehl - revealing one buyer even met his wife next to one of the booths.

She said: 'A prospective buyer had volunteered for example, because he had met his wife 35 years ago against a yellow phone booth and he wanted to surprise her with a copy.'

'Often, they also serve as a shelter for technical equipment or be placed in museums,' she said - but several have been bought by artists. Some people have put them in their gardens to be used as miniature greenhouses. Others have turned them into boutique shower rooms. More still have become movie props, tiny recording studios, beach shelters, and even a soundproof room to make phone calls - from mobiles.

It may sound surprising, but the firm said many office

workers were finding their environment so distracting that it helped to have four metal and glass walls built up around them.



boxes go to die...and one could be yours for just £250

Ready to downsize? Berlin's coolest clubbing experience awaits

Forget mega-clubs and head instead to Berlin's tiniest discos - converted phone booths complete with

dry ice, strobe lights, obligatory mirror ball and a choice of tunes.

Created by enterprising company Teledisko, the diminutive discos are currently installed in two locations: Club Katerblau, which hosts a version accessible during opening hours, and Raw Gelände, where a glitzy gold booth welcomes partygoers day and night.

The coin-operated entry ensures that no one but you and your chosen friends can access the bright yellow party booth. Inside, Teledisko has all the trimmings of a proper nightclub - a smoke machine, stroboscope, light effects, a disco ball, dry ice, and a touchscreen that lets you select and play your favorite music. The cramped interiors might prevent you from taking selfies, but the booth comes with a

built-in camera that takes pictures and records videos of your unforgettable night.



REQUEST TO ALL ARMY BRATS

From the "National Museum of the U.S. Army" currently being constructed in the D.C. area. (Ft. Belvoir, VA).

A special request has been made to us!

They would like Berlin Brat "Growing up Army" stories for the museum.

They want photos, videos, and Brats to take their survey here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/Ujbi5Q8eGrsopzbT2>

They are also creating a documentary film for Growing Up Army that will include video interviews with real Army families. Instructions to create and upload a video:

<http://thenmusa.org/gua-video-instructions/>

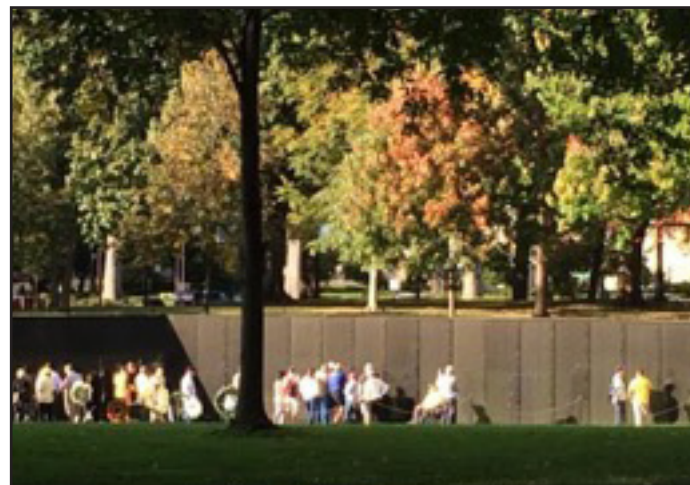


CONNECTIONS

Did you know? There's a 'Brat tree' on the Mall in D.C.



During "Grand Reunion '96" (an all schools event) held in Washington, DC, Brats planted a tree (left photo) at the Vietnam Wall. This past fall, in September 2017, Patricia Hein, Stuttgart '75, returned to the Vietnam Memorial and took a picture of what she believes to be the tree as it looks today (foreground, below photo). *Photos from Patricia Hein.*



Sister City

from Jim Branson '64



Los Angeles' sister city is Berlin

Together in N'awlins

Chris Marvin '89, Mike Haddock '89, Chris Haddock '85, Michael "Smurf" James '87, Ken Magee '88, and Mike Flores '88 at the NOLA reunion in June 2017.



BRAT GET-TOGETHERS

Berlin bear on the loose

*Honorary Brat, drinking everyone's Bier.
Photo from Mary Ann (Cunha) Glover '76.*



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26 October 2017

Michael James '87 and Katie (Singleton) Peckkonen '87 at a West Berlin eatery in Anchorage, AK.

The Ernst-Reuter-Platz Caper:

Freedom, friends, and fountain foam in Berlin during the Cuban Missile Crisis

by Kent Kay '64

Thomas A. Roberts High School, Berlin, Germany, during the Cuban Missile Crisis

My father and I moved from Hong Kong to Berlin in the early sixties. Finishing touches on the Wall were in progress with a little razor wire here and a pure white "killing zone" there. While West Berlin put on a brave face as the bastion of the free world, for all intents and purposes we were prisoners surrounded by a heavily fortified wall. I was an American civilian dependent and had little choice but to attend Thomas A. Roberts High School.

In Hong Kong, I wore a King George V blazer and tie to school. TAR was a tad less formal. The Brits beat me with a cane when I went American teenager on them, but I did manage to get a fine education. I knew that study was not destined to distract me in Berlin.

I was greeted at TAR by my new American principal with warnings advanced on a list of "undesirable" individuals to be avoided at all costs. I departed his office and immediately sought out the colorful people on his list. And what a group it was. Imagine a confluence of bad judgment in a cast of characters made for mischief. We had a soft-spoken "leader" in the form of one fully grown, big, bad-ass 20-year-old sophomore. No kidding, Gary looked like a man and enforced the values enjoyed by men. Childlike antics or bad manners invited a beat down, and heaven help the fool that messed with us.

Include in our group one gifted "farm boy" from the South who could down a liter of beer in under three seconds. We would repair to the British NAAFI Club on a Friday night and wager Bob's skills against any non-com at the bar. Bob would inhale the beer, slam the stein on the bar and yell "sueeeey." The Brits

hated us but always came back for more. Two of our key players were neither American nor TAR students. Include native Berliners, Mike and Dieter, who had learned to speak English with a distinctive "GI" Southern drawl. Mike owned an old yellow Opal convertible and was our guide to the German side of Berlin. The brothers knew where to find a quality beer or six on a Saturday night. Our invitations to the party were printed in English, French, German, and Russian.

We had a terrific collection of vehicles, including Jerry's flame red MG sports car, Tim's war-era Mercedes "staff car" complete with plastic dice shifter, and my historic WW II-era VW sedan. Include Tim's vintage Horex 400 cc motorcycle with knobby tires and straight pipes that would guarantee him a military escort out of East Berlin.

Whatever powers of judgment we did possess withered under the pressures and stress of the Cold War. Our multifarious international police encounters were simply cultural misunderstandings. Clearly, the authorities did not "get" the American teenager. A good joke, a well-crafted prank, and a measure of mischief were our birthright. One evening we were stopped by the German Police with ten intoxicated TAR guys in Mike's tiny Opal (include three in the trunk). We piled out of the car like drunken circus clowns and prepared for our traditional "catch and release" act. Even the most intoxicated among us could see that the authorities were a tad upset, but we understood that the poor Germans were not equipped to process this kind of behavior. Mike and Dieter were

the first in line for the interrogation and began by speaking to the police in perfect "GI" English and then switching to perfect "Berliner" German. Always a show-stopper, our two German nationals were inevitably suspected of being Cold War spooks which meant that all of us, including the three in the trunk, were liberated and released back to the streets of Berlin. We spent the rest of that evening driving laps around a "roundabout" circle

having our picture taken. All in a night's work.

In any Sector it was an asset to have the son of military police ride shotgun. When trouble came our way, we always put the big Polish kid at the end of the line for dramatic effect. The MPs would examine our identification, suffer our lame excuses, attempt to understand our two "wild card" German nationals (speaking German of course), and work their way down

the line. When Mike's last name was introduced to the festivities, liberation was inevitable. In all our nefarious exploits, we never came across an MP with the fortitude to arrest the Commander's son or his friends. Ditto the Brits. Ditto the French. In theory, West Berlin was policed by Americans, Germans, British, and French. In practice, none of them found a way to police our particular group of lunatics. What an opportunity.

To grasp the genius of the great Ernst-Reuter-Platz caper, you must harken back to the height of the Cold War. Where else could you park with your girlfriend and make out to the chatter of machine-gun fire in the night? During the Cuban Missile crisis, American tanks rattled by on high alert and Russian MIG fighters buzzed TAR low enough to see the red stars on the wings. For future reference, if you are close enough to a Russian MIG to see the red stars on the wings, you are too close. Suffice it to say there was abundant gnashing of teeth and wringing of hands within the military community. Berlin was on the front lines of a crisis unfolding a world away, and my peer group needed to blow off some steam. Remember, the Russians made us do it.

Our plan was simple and elegant. We intended to create a beer stein "head" of foam on the Ernst-Reuter-Platz fountain within view of the Brandenburg Gate. East and West would enjoy, as one, a giant simulated head of beer. A brilliant application of American ingenuity, but given the tense international situation in Berlin this was one high-risk caper. Failure or discovery were out of the question, thus was our planning

both exhaustive and scientific. Tests were made on the performance of various foaming liquids. One of our crew was a bagger at the PX and "acquired" a case of dishwashing liquid. Logistics were planned for two drivers and four reasonably sober assistants. The stage was set.

At the fountain, each co-conspirator was responsible for the insertion and disposal of two bottles of detergent. Stealth was achieved by parking the vehicles at a "stand off" location. We split up and staggered our activities so that no group connection could be made if one of us were identified in the inevitable television footage. The deed was done but nothing happened. We waited, and waited, and finally, to kill some time, we repaired to a local bar for a beer.

Abject terror greeted us back at the fountain. Ernst-Reuter-Platz appeared to be much larger with the addition of our "head of beer," which stood six feet tall, growing before our eyes. A crowd was gathering and behaved in a most "un-German" fashion. Berliners were going nuts covering themselves with foam and jumping into the fountain. The giant head of beer proved irresistible. Berliners were parking their cars in the street and diving into the Ernst-Reuter-Platz fountain.

Everybody but the authorities got the joke. Although not part of our agenda, we did make the evening news (East & West), the cover of every morning newspaper, and an AP release for the international community. My father busted me in the morning when the giant head of beer appeared on the front page of his morning *Berliner Zeitung*. Holding up the paper he said, "this stinks of you and your mutant friends."

Ouch. Of course I confessed. We all did. What were our parents going to do? Pay for the repairs to the fountain?

Background notes

Thomas A Roberts High School and the AYA (American Youth Association)

Because there was a Cold War on, the kids from TAR enjoyed the use of a "clubhouse" complete with dragon lady supervisor (later arrested on site for stealing AYA funds), the requisite pool table, a record player, dance floor, and an upright piano. We were, after all, living on an "island of democracy" where a cold Löwenbrau cost a dime in the PX commissary and the AYA clubhouse was kind of cool.

Stars like Leslie Gore and Jerry Lee Lewis showed up "USO"-style to entertain the faithful. Jerry Lee had his teen niece/bride in tow, which kept us talking for weeks. On the dull side, writers like John Cheever would pop in for a reading or some Senator would stop by for a photo-op with us living the American dream surrounded by hostile Communists.

JFK, on his famous "Ich bin ein Berliner" tour, greeted us on a military reviewing stand set up in the middle of Clay Allee near the school. Good stuff. We knew these "privileges" were bestowed because we would be the first to go if things went south with the Russians...something like a Cuban missile crisis, for example.

Thomas A Roberts High School

Our namesake, Thomas A. Roberts, was the first marine to die on Normandy

beach. I arrived in Berlin about the time the East Germans finished the Wall. I had moved from Hong Kong to Berlin with my father and observed in short order that we were human shields long before it was fashionable. Our school existed to show the flag and we knew it.

Like any American high school, we fielded football, basketball, and soccer teams. We competed in the military command "C" league. Road games put us on a duty train for the night through East Germany to play our vaunted foes in backwater towns like Bremerhaven (great Navy chow), Bad Kreutznach, Bitburg, and Karlsruhe. We lost to them all. Outside of Johnny Booth, our diminutive Korean wrestling star, the Berlin Bears were losers in all sports.

To improve international relations, we also played soccer matches with the French and the Brits up in Hitler's Olympic stadium in the British Sector. Kids our own age beat us so badly that we were put up against their middle school teams who were half our size but still beat the crap out of us. Cold comfort, but the grown-up version of the Army Berlin Bears stank up the joint just like us baby Bears. Blame it on the Russians.

Most of my friends were military de-

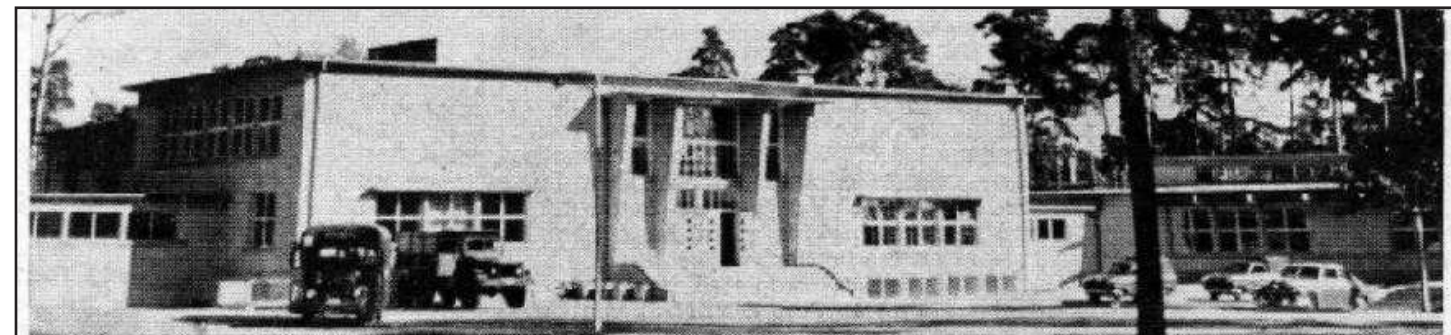
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Background notes, *con't from page 9*

pendents of sergeants, spooks, the commander of the NATO air corridor, the head MP, etc. I was one of a handful of civilian dependents at TAR. My father was in Berlin to represent the interests of Pan American Airlines. We were part of a subgroup of Pan American Airlines employees and dependents, pilots kid mostly, all dads, no moms. Go figure. Include in our group a brother and sister with American Opera star parents who sang principle roles for the Deutsches Opera. We went about the business of being American teenagers in a dream space, answering to no one in particular. As civilian dependents, we were functionally invincible, had an amazing time, and never saw the inside of a police station. The German authorities had no idea what to do with us.

To illustrate the point, my friend Tim lived with his dad on a tree-lined lane in Dahlem that boasted an old-world charm complete with gas lights. Following a particularly demanding evening at the beerhall, Tim and I discovered that if one shook a gas-light lamp with sufficient vigor, said lamp would go out. American ingenuity at its finest found us turning this little German street into darkness one lamp at a time. Some poor German must have made a complaint because one early morning as we staggered down the lane shaking the gaslights off we were met by a Berlin City Police car with the back door open awaiting our arrival.

Tim did not speak German, and as I had recently relocated from Hong Kong, my second language was Cantonese. We did understand that "Aussweiss" meant ID and Tim had no ID whatsoever which is a crime in Germany. I was packing a learner's driving permit from the State of Arizona. Don't ask how a guy from Hong acquired such a thing but the poor German policemen went pale and spoke in hushed tones for a spell. The Komandante turned to me and said in passable English, "My daughter goes to Arizona State University. You know where is Tempe?" Thus, we bonded with the German police and enjoyed another "catch and release" success.



Mike and Dieter took us to amazing places in Berlin. They knew that one could squeeze into an opening on an obscure hillside of rubble and be inside Hitler's bunker. We explored for miles the city of concrete that had been built under Berlin by the Nazi fellas. Berliners had long ago removed any WWII artifacts but, all told, we spent some amazing weekends in this bunker. Mike also knew his way around the vast system of air conditioning ducts that ran under Templehof airport. We found access tunnels to all the fire stations, the tarmac, and other points of interest. It was no accident that we were never arrested doing these stupid stunts. Drinking was out of the question for our high-risk exploits. We planned every caper, we went in sober; machine-gun fire in the night focuses the attention. We took our exploits seriously.

Mike and Dieter showed us the soft spots in the Wall. Huge sections of Berlin are heavily forested. The American sector included a major portion of the Gr newald forest and lake. This was a great place to park or explore the dreaded "no man's land" so emblematic of the Wall experience. While we occasionally heard machine-gun fire in the night, that did not deter our drunken forays into the killing zone. If you wanted to steal a sign that said "YOU ARE NOW LEAVING THE AMERICAN SECTOR," in three languages, you had to know your way in and out. We got good at these things; it is the American way.

The night Kennedy was shot, Berlin did not adopt the young and handsome President; it fell in love with him. He brought the entire clan to Berlin, which meant a lot to us. He told us he was a Berliner and meant it. I was necking under a grand piano with a light-Colonel's daughter when the phone rang. It was a German judge in tears telling me that the President had been shot. I said bull shit and hung up the phone. As I explained the call to her, bells started to ring outside. On the street, every church bell in Berlin was keening for the great one's passing. Every window of every house burned a candle. We wept and lit a candle of our own.



New Year's day breakfast with Berliner Kindl glass mimosas at the Magee house.

Happy New Year! from Ken Magee '88

Colorado Brat Club up and running



Right photo: Chris w/his father's 1952 Berlin letter jacket and wearing our 2006 Homecoming Reunion logo'd polo shirt; he attended the Reunion with his mom, a Berliner.



Brat Chris Kyrios (Karlsruhe '75), whose father was the first principal of Berlin American High School and chose our school colors after his alma mater Harvard (crimson & white), has started the Colorado Brat Club. (Many Berlin Brats already know him....as he has attended and worked several of our regionals and attended our 2006 Reunion in Berlin, with his mother, a Berliner!).

The Club is Facebook based – a public group with 550 members. They hold regular events for Brats in the Denver and Colorado Springs area. Their last event was attending the Denver Chriskindl Market. Attendance has been growing from 30 upwards to a 100. Several Berlin Brats already regularly attend. Visit their page and ask to join!

Berlin's 'newspaper poet' walks in a long line of eccentrics

by Sally McGrane

New York Times, The Saturday Profile
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/06/world/europe/berlin-holger-bleck.html>
 October 6, 2017

As the moon hovered in an electric blue sky, Holger Bleck found a bench in a park tucked away in Berlin's elegant government district. Hunching a little, the 44-year-old newspaper seller started his nightly rounds as he always does, leafing quickly through one of the next morning's editions of *Die Welt*, the paper he hawks.

He looked at the front-page story — which might be about the German elections, natural disasters, American politics or, like tonight, the retirement of Vladimir Klitschko, the Ukrainian boxer — and began to try out a few rhymes.

"No longer does the boxer linger," murmured Mr. Bleck. "Was there a stiffness in his fingers?"

Next, he added cheeky rhyming lines about the scandals of the day, from German diesel emissions to tainted Dutch eggs, and after checking the arts section, considered a mini-paeon to a cultural phenomenon like "the killer new 'Blade Runner.'"

Fifteen minutes later, poems memorized, Mr. Bleck set off on foot for the restaurant Paris Moskau, his first stop of the night. "I get stage fright every time," he said, beads of sweat forming



Holger Bleck, who sells newspapers by composing and reciting rhyming versions of the news, at the Ständige Vertretung bar in Berlin.

All photos by Gordon Welters for The New York Times.

on his brow. "I start to think, 'Maybe this is going to be the night people realize I'm not so great. That tonight, everything ends.'"

So far, in the 20 years Mr. Bleck has been working as the German capital's unofficial newspaper poet, that night has yet to come. In spite of the digitalization of newspapers and Mr. Bleck's own struggles with attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder, he has managed to carve out a niche — and earn a modest living — reciting rhyming versions of the news and selling printed papers, night by night, table by table, in some of the city's fanciest establishments.

Along the way, Mr. Bleck has become a kind of cultural fixture, joining a tradition of beloved oddball Berlin characters that dates to the 19th century.

Back then, Jewish Berliners imported Parisian-style cafe and cabaret culture to their city, said Burkhard Meyer-Sickendiek, a literature professor at Berlin's Free University. "It was a funny way of engaging with bourgeois

Prussian society, and became an important part of Jewish intellectual life."

In Mr. Bleck — whose recent rhymes include "Kiss kiss, smoochy smoochy, how embarrassing! It's Scaramucci," which works in German as well as English — Mr. Meyer-

Sickendiek sees an heir to the Jewish humorists of that time. (One of those in the 19th century, Julius Stettenheim, had a routine in which he pretended to be reporting from the front during the Russian-Turkish War while wearing a bathrobe and drinking a beer.)

"Berlin loves these kinds of people," Mr. Meyer-Sickendiek added. "People who don't behave as you're expected to."

Mr. Bleck has a lengthy list of long-time fans. In one evening, those professing admiration included multiple waitresses; the deputy editor in chief of the giant national tabloid *Bild*, Florian von Heintze; and a former German defense minister, Volker Rühe. "I've known him for 20 years and I hope he does this for another 20," Mr. Rühe said.

Nevertheless, Mr. Bleck still faces a nightly challenge of winning over the vast majority of his public, the tourists and local people who have never heard of him. "At first, I always stutter and stumble," he said. "My self-confidence vacillates a lot, from day to day. Sometimes people think I'm homeless, selling this 'street sheet.'"

On this particular night, Paris Moskau was almost empty. Mr. Bleck got into position next to a table — papers

across his chest like a shield, eyes fixed to the ground — and, in his lyrical voice, began reciting. After a sale, he headed quickly to Zollpackhof, a riverside beer garden with a view of the German chancellery.

The first tables ignored him, as he urged, "Pay 250 cents! If not for the paper, then for the talent!"

By the fourth table, though, under a grand old chestnut tree, Mr. Bleck hit his stride: the guests beamed up at him, throwing their heads back with laughter. One drinker protested he was no longer capable of reading the paper. "You'll be sober in the morning!" countered Mr. Bleck. A quarter of an hour later he had sold 16 papers and was off, walking briskly through the darkened government district toward more lively streets.

At the upscale wine bar and restaurant Lutter & Wegner, the manager, Sasha-Michael Gruel, smiled at Mr. Bleck as he came in. "Anyone who comes to Berlin, or lives here, they recognize he belongs to traditional Berlin," Mr. Gruel said.

While it is not entirely clear that everyone who buys a paper from Mr. Bleck ever reads it, Ulf Poschardt, editor in chief of *Die Welt*, is happy that Mr. Bleck now sells his exclusively. "I

was always fascinated by him," said Mr. Poschardt, who said he always buys a copy from the poet when he sees him, but has never told Mr. Bleck that he actually runs the newspaper.

"We all know the future is digital," he

said. "But people like him show all the romanticism of old journalism. He makes this effort we put into our newspaper really poetic."

Poetry initially played only a small role in Mr. Bleck's life. He won a poetry

prize as a teenager in East Germany, but he dropped out of a poetry club out of boredom and moved on to other things.

Trained to operate an offset printing press, he became so nervous before his qualifying test that he failed. Later, having passed the test, he found the work unbearably dull. "If you're creative, it's really monotonous," he said.

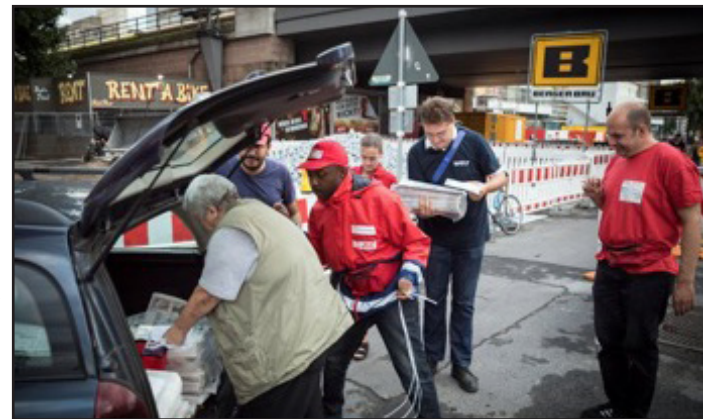
Mr. Bleck began by selling newspapers part time. His first night on the job, he sold only 20. "The guy I was working for said, 'That won't do!'" Then Mr. Bleck remembered the Christmas poems he had to recite as a child before he could receive his presents. "I decided to make a poem, out of desperation," he said. It worked, and his unusual career began.

It was only in 2008 that Mr. Bleck discovered he had ADHD. "I thought maybe I had it," he said. "I'm chaotic, sometimes I have a hard time sending in my bills on time. I know that I dumbfound people."



Mr. Bleck counting up the receipts from a night's work.

Ultimately, he decided against taking medication, reasoning that he was happy with his current life, working three hours a day, five days a week, and living in a small, unrenovated apartment. "I'm getting older," he



Mr. Bleck picking up his stack of newspapers earlier in the day. Selling *Die Welt* is now his only job.

said. "Sometimes I worry that I have nothing saved, and think I should get a different job, not just live from reciting poems for people at night."

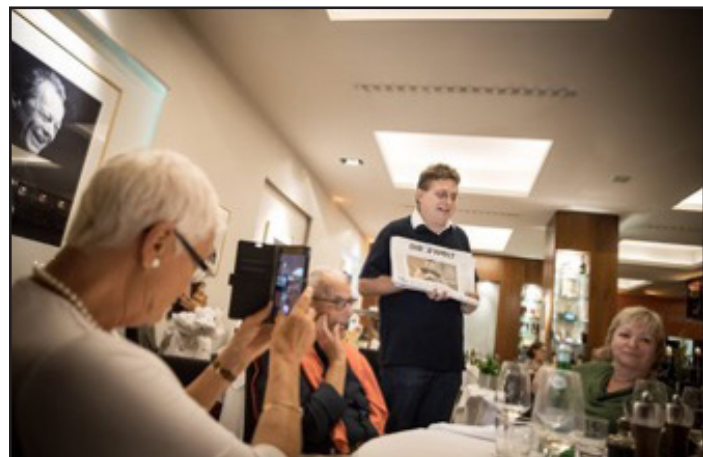
As the night stretched on, the poet found his flow. In low-lit dining rooms and at sidewalk tables, the responses grew warmer and warmer. "It touches the heart," said Sabine Dozel, visiting from Hamburg, as she bought a paper from Mr. Bleck at the French restaurant Entrecôte.

"He should be the press speaker for the White House," said Christian Sommer, a movie industry lobbyist who was sitting nearby.

Outside Borchardt, where the creative class drinks champagne, a woman in silver high heels asked Mr. Bleck if he had another job. "No," he said. "That's why I can really blossom here."

At the end of the night, Mr. Bleck rested at the bar in the back of an Italian eatery that has a standing order for one copy of *Die Welt*. He admitted he often feels he has not accomplished enough, that his fear of larger, cabaret theater-style audiences can be debilitating. Still, he said, he is happy with what he does.

Setting down his Coke, Mr. Bleck picked up one of the few unsold papers. "Studies show it's much easier to concentrate on the printed word, that you can pay a lot more attention without things flashing at you all the time," Mr. Bleck said. "In our world, everything is too fast, it's all rushing by us. But a newspaper, it's something you can hold on to."



Mr. Bleck at the restaurant Il Punto. He has become a cultural fixture in Berlin.



Throwback photos



Top photo: Forty-two years ago; the '75-'76 JV cheerleaders (L to R): Laura (Colangelo) Morris '79, Gertrude Nix '78, Tammy Key '78, Linda Brining '77, Shana (Keller) Scott '77, and (top) Denece (Browne) Squires '78. Photograph by Robert Boubo '76. Bottom left photo: Dean Boyd '62 and Patricia (Burwell) Boyd '63 in the back-yard of #5 Thanner Phad, Berlin. Sweet memories; still married all these years later. Bottom right photo: Mary Ann (Cunha) Glover '76 in front of the iconic Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche in Berlin.

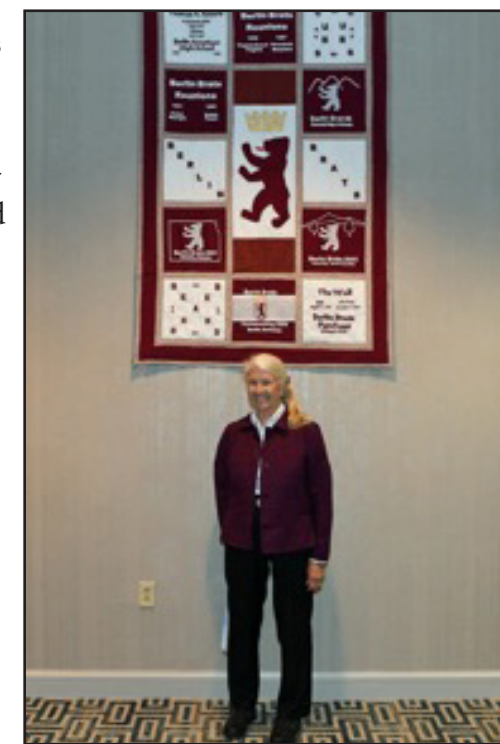


"Senior teenagers" honored at Overseas Brat Gathering

Three "senior teenagers" were featured in the Saturday program at this past year's Overseas Brat Gathering in September 2017.

The senior teenagers present were Dave Klinger '47 (Frankfurt HS/Germany), Joan (McCarter) Adrian '49 (Nurnberg HS/Germany), and our very own Marianna (Lieurance) Mounsey '50 (Thomas A. Roberts/Berlin, attended 1946-1948). All three

were among the first Brats to attend school in Germany following World War II.



Left photo: Marianna Lieurance as a freshman in Berlin, spring 1947. Right photo: Marianna (Lieurance) Mounsey '50 at the Berlin Brats Reunion in New Orleans, June 2017, 50 years later.

View these new items on our history page on the BB website

IN HISTORY 1990

22 June 1990 Decommissioning of Checkpoint Charlie

Checkpoint Charlie is lifted and removed. Now located at the Allied Museum (aka Outpost Theatre).

A replica of the 1961 1st Guard House now stands on the site.

YOU TUBE VIDEO OF THE DECOMMISSIONING

In History 1942-43

The Story of AFN

U2 surprises U2 riders in the berlin U-Bahn



The Edge (left) and Bono of the US band U2 on the U2 line.

Photo by Stefan Henseke

Dec 6, 2017. Underground station Olympiastadion, track 1. Departure according to timetable: 12.30 pm. But the U2 direction Pankow stops. The minutes pass. Typical BVG, one would like to think. Nope. Not today. This time the passengers did not wait for the train, but the train waited for two important passengers: Bono and The Edge, the two Irish rock stars. The one from U2.

So there is a premiere: U2 in the U2. To adver-

tise the Irish new album, "Songs of Experience." The record company of the band had invited fans in the BVG special train, for selfies, autographs, and a few questions to the stars. At 1:15 pm the time has come: with 45 minutes' delay, U2 takes off amidst the jubilation of over 100 fans.

The highlight of the tour: the stop at the Deutsche Oper underground station, and an improvised unplugged concert on the platform.

15 minutes, three songs, including the classic "Sunday, Bloody Sunday." A subway train, direction Pankow, arrives, stops - Bono grins and sings the hit "One" through the open doors. Amazed looks of the passengers. Is that about Bono? The doors close, the train leaves - and the concert is over.



Secret live gig in the U2 on Wednesday noon.

Did You Know?



A protest outside the DDR parliament on 7 November 1989 calling for the Wall to come down. It did so two days later, sparked by Mr. Schabowski's comment.

Dependents of foreign service personnel stationed at the U.S. Embassy in East Berlin in the 1940s through the 1990s went to school in West Berlin at American schools located there: TAR, BAHS, and JFK. Even when the Wall went up in 1961, dependents daily crossed the Wall to go to school and return 'home' to East Berlin.

The fall of the Wall was an accident. An East German Politburo Communist official, Günther Schabowski, was asked by a journalist about current travel rules on 8 November 1989. In response, he said, "We have decided today to implement a regulation that allows every citizen of the German Democratic Republic to leave East Germany through any of the border crossings." The answer stunned journalists, who asked when this new change would come into effect. "According to my information, immediately, without delay," said Mr. Schabowski. Officials had actually planned to phase in the new changes beginning the following day, and citizens were meant to apply for vi-

sas in an orderly manner just for visits. His comments were widely broadcast by the media and caused a rush on the Wall by East German citizens trying to reach the west side of the city. So, instead of orderly visas for visits and phased opportunities, tens of thousands made a bid to leave the Soviet bloc on 9 November 1989, and the comments were attributed with causing the rapid fall of the Wall on the very same day.

After the fall of the Wall in 1989 and the reunification of Germany in 1990, Russian forces remained in East Germany until 1994. And as it was, Germany ended up having to pay to get the Russians to leave.

While he was Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1992, General Colin Powell asked his Soviet counterpart why their forces couldn't depart earlier. The Russian general explained that their students were still in school. The last Soviet forces did depart East Germany when their students completed their school year in August 1994.



The "Berlin U.S. Military Veterans Association" (i.e., BUSMVA) is holding its Reunion this summer, August 5-11th, 2018, in Berlin. They are planning a Memorial Service and Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Airlift as part of their week-long reunion activities.

Several former members of the 298th U.S. Army

Band have volunteered to give a concert at the Airlift Celebration. Details are still being worked on. Any of our parents that wish to join BUSMVA and this Reunion should visit their website at: www.berlinveterans.com.

HILL AIR FORCE BASE, UT, UNITED STATES

07.18.2017

Video by Burke Baker

Air Force Public Affairs Agency, OL-H (Hill)

Rapidly moving military personnel, equipment, and supplies have played a huge role in the history of warfare. The U.S. Air Force has demonstrated for more than 70 years that it excels in rapid global mobility efforts. The Berlin Airlift, a herculean humanitarian airlift effort, broke the Soviet Union's blockade of West Berlin and shattered previous airlift records, breaking the airlift barrier.

The same hard work and determination by those Airmen continue today as Mobility Airmen are in 23 countries and 77 locations around the world. They continue to enable global access for our allies and joint operations though 24 hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week operations with a mobility aircraft taking off every 2.8 minutes somewhere around the globe.

This video is part of a series of 10 videos for the Air Force's 70th Anniversary. The theme for the series is "Breaking Barriers Since 1947" with each video highlighting a significant milestone in Air Force History.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/538726/breaking-barriers-airlift-barrier> (Video 1: Berlin Airlift)

Berlin Airlift: June '48 – Sept '49



Newly designed:

The Allied Museum is rebuilding its exhibits at Clayallee, despite future move

by Franz Michael Rohm
translated from Berliner Morgenpost
June 14, 2017

When visitors enter the foyer of the former "Outpost" theater, where US soldiers watched films in English until 1994, they now face life-size figures of Berliners. The shots show scenes from the invasion of the Allies, which were made in July 1945. "We plan to change this situation in the future," says Bernd von Kostka, who has been the Director-General of the Allied Museum since April last year. "Multiperspectivity" is his concept, by which the permanent exhibition in the "Outpost" is to represent the ideas of both sides, the soldiers and the Berliners. "We think of speech bubbles and audio recordings, which concern fears, for example before werewolf partisans, on the one hand, or, on the other hand, the women's fears of what the foreign soldiers could do to them," says Kostka.

Despite some 70,000 visitors last year, Kostka is concerned that people believe the museum at Clayallee is already closed, especially Berliners. "We will certainly be staying here at the Dahlem location for about four years," he estimates, despite the museum's projected move to Tempelhof. That is why he works closely with the Steglitz-Zehlendorf district and other museums in the south-west of Berlin. A joint flyer was published in which all the museums of the district are presented. He wants to show with these museum improvements that "We continue to operate actively in Dahlem."

It is expected that the rental contracts for Hangar 7 in Tempelhof will be signed in the summer, and the Allied Museum will be moved later. Still, there are refugees on the airport grounds, and the hall must be renovated and rebuilt. "We know how long things can take in Berlin," explains the native Rhineland-Palatinate. Nevertheless, he and his

five-man team are already working on the plans for the new location. "We expect to significantly increase the attractiveness of the new premises and the central location." The goal of the museum director in Tempelhof is to double the number of visitors. The museum will continue to be free for visitors.

A challenging, exciting task

Kostka has worked as a curator for the Allied Museum since it was opened in September 1994 by Chancellor Helmut Kohl. "It was a very exciting and challenging task," said the 54-year-old history scholar and political scientist. "The Western powers handed over thousands of objects to the museum during their withdrawal in 1994. In addition to this, we had numerous everyday items, photographs, letters, documents, and the permanent exhibition through veterans' associations of the Allies and donations from the Berlin population."

The number of items in the collection grew over time to around 150,000. It was only recently that they were able to acquire some 220,000 photos from private ownership for "a really favorable amount," according to Kostka. Best of all: the majority of the black and white photographs had already been digitized by the owner.

The permanent exhibition, "How enemies became friends," is

featured in the theater. Outside in the courtyard stands the museum's eye-catcher: a four-engine British Hastings propeller engine plane. With machines of this type and the legendary Douglas C-54 of the Americans, the Western powers supplied Berlin with air support during the Soviet Berlin blockade in the late 1940s for over a year. That is why the Volksmund called the aircraft "Rosinenbomber."

Everything here are originals

"The Hastings is one of four more originals of this type worldwide," says Kostka proudly. This is, by the way, a real key feature of the Allied Museum: "Everything that visitors see here are originals." Also the blue-gray car of the French military train and the façade of the first guardhouse at Checkpoint Charlie, erected shortly after the building of the wall on Friedrichstraße. Likewise, the last, much more modern and functional checkpoint at Checkpoint Charlie, which was raised on June 22, 1990, in the presence of the two-plus-four foreign ministers, is also original.

In the open air are further relics of the Cold War in Berlin: a border guard tower and three masonry segments. "They come from Potsdamer Platz," says Kostka. Muralist Thierry Noir, however, first painted the typical, colorful pictures in Dahlem.





Lee Angel '64 as Santa at local VA hospital in California, December 2017.

BAHS alum releases first album of gospel music

Excerpted from article by Katie Hansen, *jdnews.com*

Everything changed the day Chris Moore '90 wrecked his truck. Strapped into a gurney and driven to a hospital half an hour away, the musician said he had a conversation with God on the road.

After that moment, he dropped out of the rock and roll band he was playing in — something he had been doing for close to 20 years — and started pursuing ministry.

Moore, a single father of a 17-year-old daughter, Marissa, also released his first album thereafter.

Wherever I Go, released by Tate Music Group on May 20, 2014, is a gospel album with rock, folk, and country influences — also known as Christian rock or Christian contemporary.

Wherever I Go has 10 original songs written, performed, and produced by Moore in his in-home studio.

Moore plays all the instruments on his tracks except for a few drum tracks, and sings all the harmonies, individually recording each part and then layering them on top of one another for the complete sound.

“Because [Moore’s original music is] stylistically true to who he is — he’s a mixture from blues to coun-

try to gospel -- the album is a reflection of that,” his friend Jay Parker said of *Wherever I Go*.

His one-man team and home studio hasn’t limited his sound. Moore, who sings and plays multiple instruments, includes a little bit of everything in his songs, including acoustic and electric guitars (six- and 12-string), bass, drums, keyboard, mandolin, banjo, and a tiny bit of fiddle, which he is teaching himself to play. He also plays piano, ukelele, dulcimer, zither, harmonicas, and hand percussion.

Moore began his singing career at the age of 4 as he traveled with his family’s gospel group The Hollands.

He was up on stage before he hit 5, his parents immediately recognizing his “impeccable knack for harmony,” he said. At age 5, he learned to play the drums.

When his mom remarried, Moore’s family moved to Germany where his stepfather, a military policeman, was stationed. While in high school in Berlin, Moore sang in the choir, which traveled all across Europe.



Chris Moore in his home studio. Photo by John Althouse/The Daily News. Chris’s BAHS senior photo.



Aldi plans for the United States

by Debra Kelly@_ellaturday
<http://www.mashed.com/79564/untold-truth-aldi/sl/>

All photos by Getty Images

In 2017, Aldi announced they were planning on becoming a major competitor in the US grocery store market. At the time the announcement came, they had around 1,600 stores across the country, and their game plan included raising that to 2,500 and investing a mind-blowing \$3.4 billion into current and future American endeavors. The push into the American market certainly isn’t anything new; the German company had first gained a foothold in their home country before spreading across Europe, and there’s a fascinating history behind this up-and-coming US chain.

Mom-and-Pop beginnings

Aldi’s is a multi-billion dollar, global company, but it started with a single grocery store in Essen, Germany. It was called the Karl Albrecht Spiritou-sen and Lebensmittel shop, was run by Karl Albrecht and his wife, and opened its doors in 1913. Opening a grocery store wasn’t the elder Albrecht’s first career choice, and it was only after emphysema brought his work in the mines to a halt that he opened the store. Their sons, Theo and Karl, worked at the store as well, and took it over in 1945. They’re the ones that took the company global, but it’s been a rocky road.

In spite of the numerous growing pains the company has been through, that original location is still open. They

still keep regular business hours, but they’re closed on Sunday.

As the company spread across the globe, Aldi became known for their low prices and bare-bones set-up. That’s no coincidence, and according to the *Independent’s* profile on Karl Albrecht, that economic outlook started in the years around World War II.

Both brothers served with Germany’s Wehrmacht during the war. Theo fought in Africa with Erwin Rommel, while Karl was sent to — and wounded on — the Russian front. When they returned home, it was to a post-war Germany that clearly had no use for all the fancy — and expensive — extras that grocery stores typically came with. That even went as far as “extras” like shelves for merchandise, and the earliest Aldi stores didn’t even have those. The Albrecht brothers developed their spartan business plan based on what they knew post-war shoppers wanted: a good product, full stocks, and affordable prices.

Two Aldis ... and Trader Joe’s

Today, there are actually two different companies: Aldi Nord and Aldi Sud, or North and South. In the 1960s, Theo and Karl Albrecht couldn’t agree on whether or not they were going to allow their stores to sell cigarettes. They came up with a pretty shocking



known as the “Aldi equator” — and Theo took the north while Karl took the south. You can tell the difference by looking at the logo: Nord’s logo is a basic blue and white, Sud’s logo is orange and blue. It’s the southern Aldi that’s a bit fancier, and when it came time to expand to the rest of the world, those countries were divided up, too. Stores in areas like the UK, Ireland, and Australia are all Aldi Sud, while you’re shopping at Aldi Nord if you go into France or Poland.

There’s only one country where Aldi Nord and Aldi Sud share pieces of the grocery store pie, and that’s in the US. You wouldn’t know it, though, and that’s because Aldi Sud — with its blue and orange logo — does business as Aldi, and Aldi Nord goes by another name: Trader Joe’s. What? Shocking, we know! But take a closer look.

Quality testing

Since Aldi built their reputation on affordability, it’s easy to associate that with a cheap product. But they take the idea of quality very seriously, and in 2013 they invited *The Telegraph* into their headquarters. It was a big deal — it was the first time an “outsider” was allowed through the very expensive doors.

Aldi has an entire team that works in their test kitchens, and they adhere to some strict policies. Product purchasers join the test kitchen twice a day, sample about 180 meals every week, and try each product 30 times before it even makes it to Aldi’s shelves. They’re not done yet — they re-test

Continued on page 22



Aldi plans, *con't from page 21*

every product at least once a year, and every time one of their competitors launches a similar product, theirs goes back to the test kitchen. In the test kitchen, cost isn't taken into consideration at all —something might be cheap, but they still insist that it be good, too. Once a product meets the approval of the test kitchen, it then has to measure up to the standards of Aldi's managing directors... and then, it's finally offered to customers.

How cheap are they?

Aldi stakes their reputation not just on quality, but on how much cheaper they are than their competitors. Andy Prescott from *Clark.com* went and did some serious leg work, wanting to find out if Aldi really was exactly what they advertised: In this case, he had a flier



claiming they were 42 percent cheaper than their competitors. That's no small potatoes, and he headed to both Aldi

and Walmart, found both the national name brands and the store brands of the exact same items, and compared the prices. Prescott looked at a range of products, from ham and applesauce to sandwich bags. When he compared Walmart's name brand pricing to Aldi's store brand pricing, he found there was a 41 percent savings to be had by shopping at Aldi. Not bad! But if you're looking to save money, you're buying store brands... so how do those compare?

He found that Aldi is still cheaper than Walmart's store brand, by about 20 percent. That's no 42 percent, but it's still a significant number — and in today's world, most of us watch our pennies where we can.

Cost-saving measures

One of the first things you might notice when you're looking at the shelves in Aldi is that the product is still in boxes. That's not employees being lazy, it's exactly the opposite. *Frugal Bites* got a peek behind the curtain, so to speak, and got to visit Aldi's Illinois offices. According to them, product is shipped in boxes that aren't just designed to be functional, but they're a part of what's called the "invisible case" project. Instead of having employees spend time opening boxes and putting individual product on shelves, they open the box and put that on the shelf — saving hours and, in turn, wages. And it's necessary for employees; according to one ex-employee's *I Am A Reddit*, they were required to empty

an entire pallet worth of goods in 30 minutes. That's no time at all!

Business Insider says you'll see efficiency packaging else-

where, too. Things that aren't boxed — like produce — are wrapped in bundles and milk is shipped pre-racked, all to streamline the process from receiving to shelving to checkout.

According to *Forbes*, Aldi checkouts move about 40 times faster than those of other retail stores, and that's great news if you just want to get in, get out, and get home (and who doesn't?). There are a couple of things they've put in place to help keep things moving, including conveyor belts just long enough so that one person can unload a cart full of groceries and have enough space for everything.

Take a look at some of the products, too. You'll notice most of them have more than one barcode — there are multiple barcodes so no matter how

the cashier picks something up, it's in the perfect position to be scanned.

Go to any other grocery store, and you'll see people sitting at the checkouts, others stocking shelves, and others at designated counters. Aldi is different, and according to their recruitment guidelines, there are only four different positions they fill at each store. There's the store manager and assistant store manager, which are titles you're used to hearing. But their other employees are the store assistant, who can be doing anything from working the cash register to restocking shelves, and then there's the caretaker, who helps "keep our store clean and presentable." Job descriptions on their official site are frustratingly vague, and according to people who have worked there, that's on purpose.

Aldi isn't very forthcoming about things like staffing and business practices, so most information is from former employees. According to responses on *Indeed*, staffing is kept to a minimum with only eight to 10 people being employed at each store and only two or three working any given shift. This low level of staffing may be part of the reason they're able to keep prices so low.

Double Guarantee policy

Sure, most places will offer a money-back guarantee, but Aldi offers even more than that. They call it their Double Guarantee, and that means if you don't like something, just return the unused portion and they'll not only replace it, but they'll give you your money back, too.

Sounds like a sure-fire way to run yourself right out of business, doesn't it? POPSUGAR talked to Liz Ruggles, a spokesperson for Aldi, and she explained. "We're so confident in the quality of our products that we offer a double guarantee [...]"

That's impressive! It's no wonder they go to such lengths to guarantee the quality of everything on their shelves, and they absolutely stand by each and every product — their bottom line depends on it.

Eco-friendly steps

In 2017, The Guardian reported

on the results of a massive field study showing insecticides and pesticides had a huge negative impact on bee populations, which have been declining for years. That makes Aldi's move to ban all products created with the help of bee-harming pesticides that much more landmark.

Aldi's announcement came in 2016 (via Greenpeace), and officially went into effect on January 1. Any suppliers who wanted to keep selling their products to the grocery chain needed to phase out any and all pesticide-containing chemicals that were harmful to bees. That requirement went above and beyond the partial ban previously written into law by the EU.

Now more than ever, we're aware of the additives in our foods, and in 2015 Aldi announced they would no longer manufacture or sell products with questionable ingredients.

With the announcement (via *Con-*

sumerist), they confirmed they were no longer selling items with partially hydrogenated oils, artificial and synthetic coloring, or added MSG. According to CEO Jason Hart, about 90 percent of the products sold at Aldi are their own brand, so that gives them some serious control over the ingredients in the food they sell. And, if you haven't noticed a difference yet, you won't. They didn't make the announcement until after they'd already done it.

Major awards

Picking up some of Aldi's brands will save you money, but it turns out you're not even compromising on the quality of the food you're buying — and they have the awards to prove it.

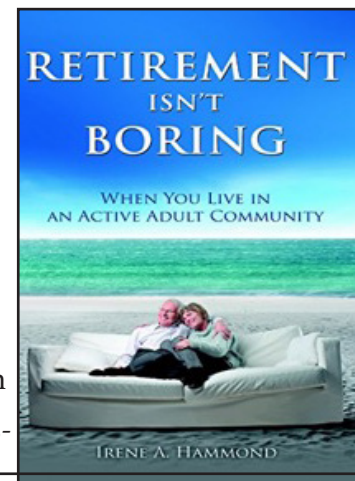
In 2017, Aldi's Cotes de Provence Rose placed second in the International Wine Challenge for rose wines, and that's even more impressive considering it only costs around \$10 a bottle. It beat wines that regularly sell for three

times the price, and it was all done in a blind taste test. And in 2015, Aldi's Highland Black 8 Year Old Whiskey took home some top honors at the International Spirits Challenge, where they also won awards for their 5 Year Old Whiskey and their Clarke's Kentucky Bourbon Whisky. That rounded out a big year for Aldi in the British market, where they took home 25 medals in the Grocer Food and Drink Own Label Awards. The competition compared the products of grocery stores across the UK, and with both Aldi and their budget competitor Lidl both doing better than the more expensive stores, they both considered it a win for the idea of affordable, quality products — something acknowledged by the British consumer rights group Which?, who has voted Aldi their supermarket of the year for 2009, 2012, 2013, and 2015.

Brat's book is a dream come true

If you are about to turn fifty-five years old, there's a good chance you're thinking about where to go and what to do when you retire. Thousands of people just like you have already made the leap, and many of them are enjoying life in active adult community. On the beach, in the mountains, in the desert, wherever you

have envisioned for your retirement, it's waiting! Irene A. (Jenkins) Hammond '83 is a veteran real estate agent who prides herself on help-



ing people find the perfect place to retire. She answers the questions you have been pondering and brings up other details for consideration.

In this book, get the answers to questions such as: Is an active adult community right for me? What are the benefits of a large or a small community? Is it

easy to make new friends in these communities? Should I purchase a new build or purchase a resale home? What is Estate Planning?

From: Irene Hammond <irene.hammond@exprealty.com>

Would you help me experience the next level of my dream? I wrote a book. Got through the publishing process. (phew). Now need YOUR assistance for the next step.

Today, my goal is to hit best seller status at Amazon. Please come and purchase the digital book from Amazon. Leave me a great review, too. Think of it as sitting down over a cup of coffee with me, catching up and enjoying the moment.

Also, if you know of anyone who is thinking about moving to an active adult community anywhere in the country, please send them this email so they can get it, too.

Most of all THANK YOU; you have helped make this crazy dream of mine come into reality.

Let me know if I can help you achieve one of your dreams.

Love, Irene

Adidas limited edition shoes are also public transport tickets

by Daphne Milner

from *It's Nice That*, 17 January 2018

Adidas and the Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG) public transport system have formed an unlikely team, releasing a new shoe that doubles up as a year-long public transport ticket for 2018. The sought-after trainers are unfortunately limited edition as Adidas has only released 500 pairs, which are being stocked in just two stores in Berlin. *The Local* reported people camping outside the two shops up to four days before the EQT Support 93/Berlin shoes' release date, Tuesday, 16 January 2018. The crowd had grown to 550 people by early Tuesday morning.

The shoes are decorated with Berlin's well-known U-Bahn pattern and they will give wearers free travel on the city's U-Bahn, buses, trams, and ferries until 31 December 2018. While an annual BVG ticket for zones A and B normally costs €761, with the cheapest annual

ticket available at €728, the trainers cost only €180. This has attracted an unusual crowd; a mix of trainer collectors and commuters hoping to save some money. But in order for the trainers to work as public transport tickets, riders will have to be wearing both shoes. A single shoe pulled out of a handbag will be declined. The collaboration has come about to mark BVG's 90th birthday and to encourage BVG ridership.



Upcoming Events

Dallas area

GermanDeli.com-
hosted regional
27 January 2018

11 am - 4 pm

Fort Worth, TX

Overseas Brats Gathering
Aug 23-26, 2018
Hosted by: Overseas Brats

Next Reunion

we head "west"

2018

location scouting year

then the vote

2020

REUNION!

(location determined by vote)

Contact Information



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Find us on Facebook@

"Berlin Brats Alumni Association"

(the official fan page site)

"Berlin American High School (BAHS)"

(an open group chat page)



follow us on Twitter
@BerlinBrats

Newsletter Brat: Kimberly Keravuori '85

Early '60s Site

By invitation only

Contact Jim Branson '64

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for an invite

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