



APRIL IS OUR MONTH! APRIL IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SALUTE MILITARY CHILDREN



By Maj. Travis Mueller, Joint Force Headquarters - Pennsylvania National Guard (2024)

Though the label “military brat” is worn with pride by those who grew up in military families, many outside that lifestyle are unaware of just what those children go through, good and bad.

Each year, the Department of Defense joins national, state and local governments, schools, military-serving organizations, companies and private citizens in celebrating military children and the sacrifices they make, especially every April during the Month of the Military Child.

Started in 1986 by former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, the Month of the Military Child allows Americans to celebrate military children for their service on the home front and in their communities.

According to the DOD, more than 1.6 million military children face challenges and unique experiences due to their parents’ service. Some of those challenges include moving away from friends, separating from their parents for long periods or seeing their parents come home physically or mentally hurt.

Throughout April we encourage service members, families and friends to show their support for military children by wearing purple and using the hashtag #purpleup on social media.

April 15 is designated as “Purple Up! Day,” when people are especially encouraged to wear purple. Some states, localities or schools may select different dates.

THE NEW 2025 BRAT PATCH featured above ...

can be found at BX/PX’s nationwide in our Month, ie: APRIL.

The patch incorporates the “Brat Color, ie: Purple and the Brat Flower, ie: the Dandelion!

Will McBride, a former U.S. army soldier who moved to West Berlin in 1955 is being featured at Brohan-Museum in BERLIN, March 1st to June 1st.



A Berlin museum is paying tribute to the work of the late American photographer Will McBride, a former U.S. army soldier who moved to West Berlin in 1955 after completing his 1953-55 tour of duty in Würzburg.

McBride's photographs will be on display at the **Bröhan-Museum** in Berlin from **March 1 to June 1**.

After his military discharge, he stayed in Germany and landed in West Berlin, a city destroyed by the war and divided into four sectors by the Allies.

McBride worked as a freelance photographer for major magazines of the era like Life, Paris Match and Stern. When President John F. Kennedy, West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt and West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer pulled up at the Brandenburg Gate in an open-top car in 1963, McBride captured the moment as a photo reporter.



Towards the end of his life, he mainly worked as a painter and sculptor.

After moving to West Berlin, he started documenting everyday life amidst the ruins of war - lonely people, wounded veterans, women clearing away rubble while their children ran around in lederhosen. Some scenes were heartbreakingly memorable, such as West Berliners holding their babies up in the air, trying to show them to their relatives in the East who couldn't come to the baptism.

Will McBride's photos were the first to be featured at the Amerika Haus cultural exchange institute in Berlin when it opened in 1957. McBride, as he once declared, "fell in love" with Berlin and its people. The city became his home. Beyond photographing the ruins, he was a keen observer of human behavior. A Sunday drive in a Beetle to Lake Wannsee with girls in petticoats or teenage parties on riverboats: these scenes captured by McBride showed the leisure side of Berlin and could just as well have been taken in the midwestern United States.

The bulk of his photography work was not often seen in the USA. Much of his work was published in the German youth magazine Twen, among other European magazines. Twen provoked a scandal when they published McBride's portraits of his pregnant wife Barbara in 1960. Everyone knows the controversial 1991 Vanity Fair cover showing a very pregnant Demi Moore. Annie Leibowitz's inspiration was the picture by McBride of his pregnant wife Barbara that was published in Twen. Though modest by today's standards, his photo was considered obscene at the time.

Solo exhibitions of his work since 2000 have included at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, the Dany Keller Galerie, Munich, Galerie argus fotokunst, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin and C/O Berlin.

In 2004 McBride received the Dr. Erich Salomon Prize from the German Society for Photography. He died in 2015, age 84.



Twen (short for "twenty") was a magazine for the first generation of postwar teens and young adults. It was a wild conglomeration of the controversial ideas and blooming freedoms of the 1950s.



Gary Powers Jr. Cold War Espionage Tour of Germany and the Czech Republic

Join us in support of the New England Air Museum!

Travel Dates: October 6-15, 2025

10 days/8 nights



What's Included:

- Round-trip transfers from the New England Air Museum to JFK Airport
- Round-trip airfare from New York
- 8 nights in centrally located, 4-star hotels
- On-tour guidance and commentary by Gary Powers Jr. on Days 1-10
- On-tour support by NEAM's Director of Education, Dr. Amanda Goodheart Parks, on Days 1-10
- Full-time CHA Tour Director Days 2-10
- On-tour transportation by private bus
- Breakfast & dinner (or lunch) daily
- Sightseeing tours & visits in itinerary

Prices & Deadlines:

Full Tour Price: \$6,750.00* per person

*Deduct \$200 if you don't require round-trip transfers between New England Air Museum and New York's JFK Airport

Land Tour Price: \$5,750.00 per person (does not include round-trip airfare and airport transfers in USA and Europe)

Prices based on double occupancy.

A \$600 single room fee will apply for travelers without roommates.

Enroll with a \$495 deposit by May 1, 2025. Final payment due July 1, 2025.

New England Air Museum members will receive a special \$100 discount! To become a member, call Dr. Amanda Goodheart Parks at 860-623-3305 x313 or email her at agparks@neam.org.

Questions about enrolling?

Call CHA at 1-800-323-4466 or email info@cha-tours.com.



Join famed author, lecturer and historian Gary Powers Jr. on this exciting, 10-day tour of Cold War and espionage related sites in Germany and the Czech Republic in support of the New England Air Museum (NEAM).

Day 1: Departure from the USA Meet fellow travelers at the New England Air Museum where you will board your private bus transfer to JFK Airport. Upon arrival, check in for your flight and meet Gary Powers Jr. who will accompany you overseas and throughout your trip.

Day 2: Arrival Berlin Welcome to Germany! Upon arrival in Berlin, your CHA Tour Director greets you at the airport where you board your private motorcoach. Later, enjoy an orientation drive to get better acquainted with the German capital. See Brandenburg Gate, once the city's triumphal arch, now a symbol of German reunification, and view remains of the Berlin Wall that once divided the city from 1961 to 1989 during a visit to the Berlin Wall Memorial. Check into your hotel and enjoy some free time to relax and unwind before enjoying a Welcome Dinner.

Day 3: Berlin-Potsdam-Berlin Morning sightseeing of Berlin includes visits to the Checkpoint Charlie Museum, located at the most well-known border crossing point between East and West Berlin, and the German Spy Museum where you will gain insight into the intriguing world of Cold War espionage. This afternoon, learn more about Germany's military aviation history as you visit the Military History Museum Gatow located on a former airfield. Later, proceed to Potsdam to visit to Glienicke Bridge (the "Bridge of Spies") where Gary Powers Jr. you will offer a personal overview about the exchange of American pilot Francis Gary Powers and Soviet KGB Colonel William Fisher that took place there on February 10, 1962. Return to Berlin.

Day 4: Berlin Morning sightseeing of Berlin includes visits to the Hohenschönhausen Memorial, formerly the Stasi's main political prison, the Berlin Stasi Museum housed in the former headquarters of the Minister of State Security, and the Allied Museum on Clay Allee to learn more about the important role that the Western Allies played in Germany during the Cold War era.

Day 5: Berlin-Leipzig-Dresden Travel to Leipzig where sightseeing upon arrival includes visits to the Museum in Der Runde Ecke, housed in the former Stasi headquarters, and the Leipzig Forum of Contemporary History Museum which chronicles GDR history from the beginning of the

Cold War. Continue to Dresden to visit Dresden's Military History Museum, located in a former military arsenal, and the Bautzner Strasse Dresden Memorial, the site of a former Stasi prison. Overnight in Dresden.

Day 6: Dresden-Prague Cross the German border en route to Prague, the historic Czech capital. Learn more about Cold War politics and espionage during your sightseeing tour of Prague. Visit the Prague Museum of Communism and explore the fascinating Bezovka Nuclear Bunker, one of Prague's largest fallout shelters hidden beneath Parukarka Hill. Later, enjoy a walking tour of Prague to see the 500-year-old astronomical clock.

Day 7: Prague-Misov-Pilsen-Prague Enjoy a full-day excursion from Prague today. Journey to Misov to visit the Atom Museum, the world's only nuclear weaponry that is open to the public. Later, drive to Pilsen for an included tour of and lunch at the famous Pilsner Urquell Brewery before returning to Prague.

Day 8: Prague-Rozvadov-Nuremberg-Stuttgart Depart Prague for Rozvadov where you will experience what life was like in the former Czechoslovakia during the days of Communism during visit to the Iron Curtain Museum. Then cross the Czech border as you re-enter Germany. Proceed to Nuremberg to visit the Nuremberg Trials Memorial where the ground-breaking post-World War II trials took place during which former Nazi leaders were tried and convicted as war criminals by the Allies' International Tribunal. Continue to Stuttgart.

Day 9: Stuttgart-Speyer-Sinsheim-Heidelberg A full day of sightseeing begins with a visit to the Stuttgart Cold War Bunker. Later, marvel at the incredible collection of retired aircraft and vintage automobiles on display during your visits to the Museum of Technology in Speyer and the Technik Museum in Sinsheim. Proceed to your hotel in historic university town of Heidelberg on the Neckar River.

Day 10: Departure for USA Transfer to Frankfurt Airport to board your return flight to JFK International Airport, arriving later the same day. Upon arrival, board your private bus transfer to the New England Air Museum.



Enroll Online at: www.cha-tours.com/garypowers/neam

80-Years Later . . .

80 years ago, Patton's Army rolled into what is now the largest US military community overseas.

Americans are still great friends with the German people of K-Town (Kaiserslautern)

Reprinted from: Stars & Stripes, March 19, 2025

By: PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN



In a photo taken by a Pfc. Warner of the 166th Signal Photo Co., a U.S. Third Army soldier guards German prisoners in the public square in Kaiserslautern, Germany, as other soldiers mill about, March 21, 1945. The Army seized the southwest German city from the Nazis a day earlier. Today people would recognize the 23rd Monument at center and the Fruchthalle at right. (U.S. National Archives/Signal Corps Archive)

Army's arrival in Kaiserslautern on March 20, 1945, marked the beginning of a decades-long relationship that would see the U.S. military shape the economy and identity of the city and surrounding area like nowhere else in Europe.

Gen. George Patton's Third Army faced little resistance as it advanced through southwest Germany into a small industrial city scarred from years of Allied bombing.

Today, the Kaiserslautern Military Community is the largest of its kind overseas, home to more than 50,000 American service members, civilians and their families. It likely would have shocked the American platoon sergeant who led troops into the city.

"We got places to go," Tech. Sgt. Byron Hoover told Stars and Stripes in March 1945, reflecting the desire to push further into Germany. "Who wants to be mayor of Kaiserslautern?"

U.S. troops entered the city as part of Operation Undertone, an assault to clear the Saar-Palatinate region and establish bridgeheads over the Rhine River between Mainz and Mannheim.

Capturing Kaiserslautern was an early objective for Allied forces. Hitler's men were ordered to hold on to it at all costs. But in early March, the unexpected capture by U.S. forces of the Ludendorff Bridge in Remagen, about 60 miles north of Mainz, allowed a rapid advance into central Germany.

The success of Operation Undertone reduced Kaiserslautern's strategic value. By the time U.S. forces arrived outside the city, German Field Marshal Albert Kesselring had already ordered a general retreat to the Rhine.

The Allies on the city's doorstep found a remnant of German soldiers low on morale, weapons and leadership, said Christian Decker, head of the Palatine history department at the Kaiserslautern-based Institute for Palatine History and Folklore.

"Like in other parts of Germany, the last resort of the regime was young boys and old men, 16 and over 60," Decker said. "It was obvious how it was going to end."

On March 20, American soldiers are said to have raced down the autobahn in their military vehicles to see who could arrive in Kaiserslautern first. Soldiers with the 10th Armored Division carried on in their M4 Sherman tanks toward the Rhine, while about 10,000 soldiers from the 80th Infantry Division occupied the city.

The Americans kept about 100 German soldiers as prisoners of war in the city's Fruchthalle, a building that still stands. Outside, several hundred women and children huddled together and wept noisily, Stars and Stripes reported.

But among the sadness and fear of the unknown, there a sense of relief, Decker said, adding that the surrender prevented more death and destruction. Bombing campaigns the previous year destroyed about 60% of the city. There were reports that some 200 bombers were on standby in Metz, France, to bomb Kaiserslautern if there was resistance.

U.S. forces remained in the city until July 1945, when they handed it over to their French counterparts. By this time, there was a significant food shortage. Residents had reportedly resorted to eating horses that had died from starvation.

The arrival of the French was an extra burden as they had few resources of their own and Kaiserslautern's population had to feed the occupiers. The winter of 1946-47 was particularly harsh, with even milk for small children strictly rationed.

But a few years later, Kaiserslautern's fortunes changed for the better. In June 1948, the Soviet Union attempted to cut off access to West Berlin in what became known as the Berlin Blockade, the first major crisis of the Cold War.

To counter Soviet expansion in Europe, Western Allies created NATO in 1949. About two years later, France allowed the U.S. to take over more than two dozen military bases in Kaiserslautern and the surrounding area.

"The return of the Americans was received positively," local historian Jürgen Keddigkeit said. "There was a great fear of Russia, and the U.S.A. was seen as 'life insurance.'"

Construction boomed to house the influx of troops and others who moved to the area for economic opportunities. Bases and other military infrastructure, including Ramstein Air Base — which began construction in 1952 — were built or refurbished.

"It was incredible how many dollars were invested into this region during the early 1950s," said Michael Geib, a historian and former director of the Docu Center Ramstein. "After the shock of the war, the Americans came with their dollars, and the German community was very much impressed."



BERLIN AIRLIFT REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE

With a mission to keep the Berlin Airlift from being forgotten in our culture Eddie Ide formed the "Berlin Airlift Remembrance Alliance" (BARA) in late 2013. This grew out of his avocation for the airlift that began in 1998 as the planner of the European tour of the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation's C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" for the 50th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. Since 1998 he has given over 160 talks in schools, universities, service clubs and museums. (*Eddie spoke to our Brats that attended our "regional" in Monroe, NC 11/2018*). In the educational venues he recognized that the audiences lacked basic knowledge of the Berlin Airlift, even graduating History Majors in colleges.

The response has been significant, in less than two years the alliance has over 18 organizations as members. There is no charge of being an alliance member, just a commitment to keep the memory of the airlift alive in our culture thru its members. Eddie's task is to be an information communicator of events and plans for each of the members, gathering and sharing information "from all to all". He communicates with two leaders in each organization and trusts them to share with their members, that would probably total about 3,500 members.

Although the Berlin Airlift was the most significant non-combat military operation of the twentieth century it was overshadowed by the Korean War 11 months later. This took many Berlin Airlift aircraft and aircrews to the Orient. But the Berlin Airlift stopped the spread of Communism in Western Europe, plain and simple! Because of its success there hasn't been a war between Western European nations in over 75 years. If the Berlin Airlift had failed and the Soviet sphere was spread to the English Channel, would there be a NATO? Airbus Industries? The tunnel linking France and England? Euro Currency? Olympic Events? NFL football or Oktoberfests? Could they have been held under Soviet rule? Would there have been a nuclear war in the 1950's?

Plans are going forward to make a 25-minute Berlin Airlift Power Point presentation with a script available to speakers nationwide, so the story can be told locally in any venue. Zoom meetings are planned and BARA will in the future provide educational links and information for schools to have the Berlin Airlift as a one-week study course in 5 forty-five minute segments.

The website: berlinairlift.org has the logo of each member with a link to their individual website. It contains videos, news, and lists upcoming events. Through the website you can reach Eddie with any questions and reach each individual member organization.

The Berlin Airlift Remembrance Alliance members are:

Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation—Berlin Airlift Veterans Association - [Berlin Brats Alumni Association](http://BerlinBratsAlumniAssociation.org)- German Embassy (Washington) - 317th Veterans Group - Luftwaffenmuseum Gatow - Luftbrücke Frankfurt - Germangirlinamerica.com - German-American Heritage Foundation - Allied Museum in Berlin - Candy Bomber Foundation - Freedom Pavilion - Fassberg Berlin Airlift Museum – Culture to Colors - Cold War Museum - Checkpoint Charlie Association - RAF Burtonwood Association - Karlshorst Museum

The C-54D, traveling on board the “BERLIN AIRLIFT MUSEUM & EXHIBIT”

By: Glenn Abel

Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation (BAHF)

Having been an Industrial Graphics Designer for many years, I am by necessity and habit a detail-oriented person. My assigned crewmember functions began in the original C-54E that was destroyed by the tornado.



The original Berlin Airlift Museum & Exhibit plane, the C-54E pictured left was destroyed in the tornados of April 13, 2020 in South Carolina. We reported on this in our Apr 2020 quarterly issue.

The Berlin Brats Alumni Assn. held a “regional” (luncheon) and viewed this flying museum & exhibit on Nov. 10, 2018 at the Monroe, NC Warbirds airshow.

Pics posted on your “reunion page” on our website.

As Loadmaster/Scanner, my inflight duties involve moving about the cabin in full view of the Berlin Airlift Museum/Exhibits. Over time I began to notice small defects and began allotting time to make corrections to these defects. This soon expanded to much larger repairs changes and upgrades to improve the museum/exhibits that increased to many long working hours.

With the loss of our original C-54E, I was heartbroken having devoted countless hours and effort to make her a gem. Tim Chopp (BAHF President) once said to me “in the 26 years I’ve been operating the C-54, the on-board Berlin Airlift Museum/Exhibit has never looked better,” it made me proud to hear those words.

Following the loss of the C-54E, I was very hesitant to help salvage what we could out of the wreckage for fear of how it might affect me emotionally, but as a dedicated crew member, I do what I’m told and do it to the best of my ability. My first visit to the wrecked C-54E was as detrimental to my emotions as I feared it would be, however, with the acquisition of the replacement C-54D, a new chapter would begin. Tim, always trying to see the positive side of a situation said these comforting words to me “this really is a great opportunity for us as we are beginning with a blank slate and can add, remove, and make improvements to the entire museum/exhibit.” Those words provided the spark and opened the door for me to create new graphics to help the BAHF mission to preserve the memory of the great Berlin Airlift.

The first order of business was to salvage the floor exhibits and the overhead display exhibits from the wrecked C-54 and after making repairs and improvements, install them in the replacement C-54D. Then the work began as to what improvements we could make to the interior and how could we highlight the Berlin Airlift history with a new and improved Berlin Airlift Museum/Exhibit. Tim and I had many planning meetings coupled with many e-mails to set a path to start down. With plenty of wall and ceiling space available, we decided to utilize that space as a photo gallery. This began an extensive online process and large format images would be added to the ceiling area and smaller images would be added at the window level. All images would be captioned to assist visitors in understanding their significance and to free up crew members from lengthy explanations as many times the C-54 can become overcrowded with visitors, making it difficult to make a meaningful presentation.



The fuselage ceiling was painted blue to represent the sky, but to also help reduce the feeling of being confined. We discussed the addition of clouds and images of airborne C-54s to further push the feeling of an open sky above. Open areas on the walls received large posters and informative maps to further educate visitors. Several areas will also receive large scale images to give the impression that a visitor was actually part of the depicted environment. Located at the very rear of the interior at the rear entrance door will be a multi-phased plan for the installation of large-scale images of bombed out Berlin. The concept is to have visitors enter the rear entrance to the C-54 and experience what the Berliners had to endure after the war and during the Russian blockade by viewing the entire rear of the fuselage interior with graphics of the bleak

devastation and carnage as to what Berlin looked like after the allied bombings during the war. Then, upon entering the main cabin through the Brandenburg Gate will bring them into a new invigorating environment filled with hope as a result of the Berlin Airlift mission to "save a city".

Due to the unexpected demanding schedule for the C-54 in 2024, we participated in 18 events involving 30 flights in a 9-month period. As a result, we were unable to devote the time and attention to completing these planned additions and improvements. Hopefully 2025 will allow us to complete these major additions plus a lot more. Despite only a few of the museum/exhibits being incomplete, I am very pleased with the story and history the exhibits tell. The sole purpose and mission of the BAHF organization is to preserve the history and to educate the public of the importance about the great Berlin Airlift of 1948 and 1949. I feel our endeavors with the improvements and new additions to the C-54D on board Berlin Airlift Museum/Exhibits have done just that.



Brandenburg Gate replica on plane's entry

**NEXT:
THE "CAMEL CARAVAN TO BERLIN" DISPLAY TO BE INSTALLED**



To continue our purpose and mission of history, education and remembrance about the GREAT Berlin Airlift of 1948 and 1949, the next addition to the C-54s on board Berlin Airlift Museum/Exhibit will be the lighthearted story of "Clarence" and the "Camel Caravan to Berlin". "Clarence" was a young camel used to offer rides to children in exchange for toys and a variety of donated items from Western German families that would be flown to blockaded Berlin and distributed to the children. On October 21st, 1948, the first delivery of 3.5 tons of donated food, books, candy, and toys were flown by a C-47 to Berlin. This was repeated with several more flights to include Christmas deliveries. The new display will illustrate this hope-giving event with photos, text with history of this operation, and a diorama of a C-47 with Clarence and spectators.

Here's this year's Calendar Schedule for visiting the C-54E

April 11, 12 & 13: Beaufort USMC, Air Station, SC USMC Air Show
May 17 & 18: McGuire AFB, NJ USAF Air Show
June 6, 7 & 8: Reading, PA Mid Atlantic Air Museum's WW II Weekend
June 14: Scott AFB, IL Open House and STEM Exp
June 21 & 22: Latrobe, PA Westmoreland County Air Show
July: Angola, Indiana Working on the date and event
July: Sheboygan, MI Working on the confirmation
August: Oshkosh, WI Working on the confirmation

For the latest information, check the BAHF web site at <http://www.spiritoffreedom.org>

WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND BRATS TAKING IN ONE OF THESE AIR SHOWS AND STEP ON BOARD!

Be sure and tell Tim Chopp, Chief Pilot and President of the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation you are a Berlin Brat!

He will make your visit "extra-special!"

ALBA BERLIN – has reached out to us!

Alba Berlin is the professional basketball club that is based in Berlin, Germany. The club was founded in 1991 and is today the largest German national basketball club by membership figures. Alba Berlin hosts its home games at the Uber Arena and competes in the Basketball Bundesliga and the Euro League.

After winning eleven German Championships, eleven German Cups, three German Supercups, and the FIBA Korać Cup in 1995, Alba Berlin is considered to be the most successful German basketball team, both domestically and internationally. With an average attendance of more than 10,000 fans per game in a season, it is also one of the most popular basketball clubs in Europe.



In 2013, Alba was portrayed in the ESPN documentary series *Basketball Capitals*. In 2014, the club was the first German basketball team to beat a reigning NBA champion, the San Antonio Spurs.

(8 October 2014, 94–93 in a buzzer beater!)

The Club is working on an historical project which aims to explore the broader history of basketball in Berlin. They are planning an exhibition and have started researching for contemporary witnesses both with the U.S. Military team in Berlin and with perhaps us....BAHS.

“We know far too little about these US/West Berlin interactions and exchanges in the field of Basketball”

“.....that’s why I would love to talk to military/high school members who were involved in whatever way”.

“The US-American influence on Basketball in West Berlin is one of the central elements of our project. That influence had begun with US Army’s post-WWII German Youth Activities program and became permanent through invitations to Berlin teams to play against Basketball teams from the military units. It would be extremely interesting for us to find out if there was a similar exchange on the level of high schools.”

If you were a BAHS player and have any INFO on playing German teams/players, exhibitions, etc. we’d love to hear from you. Alba Berlin is working closely with our American Curator, Florian Weiss, at the “Allied Museum” (formerly Outpost Theatre). Many of you know Florian from our 2006, 2014 and now 2024 Reunion in Berlin.

PLEASE DROP US A LINE AT THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND WE’LL PUT YOU IN CONTACTTHANK YOU!!!

Back in time: S.S. United States

Patricia (Geaney) Kerrigan '66

In 1963 my father was assigned to the Berlin Brigade in West Berlin, Germany. We sailed from New York to Bremerhaven on the S.S. United States, and returned in 1966 on the same ship. Especially during the Cold War, military families were sent all over the world. They traveled on military ships and planes, and on commercial liners if space was available.

For most of us, getting to our father's next duty station was an adventure. Whether it was a long ride in a hot car squabbling with siblings for space on the back seat, flying over land or sea mostly in military planes, or sailing across oceans in calm or stormy weather, these journeys were memorable, taking us north, south, east, west, and often to foreign countries.

Sailing on the S.S. United States, when my father was assigned to the Berlin Brigade in 1963, was to me the most memorable of our many moves. For an almost fifteen year old, it was truly a new kind of adventure. My parents had only a few battered old suitcases, so we ordered new luggage through the Post Exchange. We shopped for clothing suitable for multiple nights of shipboard dining.



However, as exciting as the preparations were, somehow, I could not quite fathom what this trip would be like. Therefore, about a month before our departure, my father took me to New York City, only an hour from West Point where we lived, as the ship was in port and visitors could go aboard. I believe the word I used to describe the ship to my mother was "fantabulous." I was amazed that the ship seemed like an entire city, in fact, five city blocks long. It even had its own kennel where our family dog, Suzie, would be boarded.

Finally, on August 2, 1963, my parents, my older brother Eddy, my younger brother Bobby, my baby sister Janice, and I waited in the lobby of the Thayer Hotel at West Point, for our transportation to Pier 86 in New York where we would board the ship. Relatives from the city waved to us from the pier as the ship began to move. We sailed under the Verrazano–Narrows Bridge under construction at the time, participated in a lifeboat drill, and basked in the summer sun watching the skyline of New York City disappear. We sailed out of New York Harbor leaving behind a country strong and hopeful, and with a young and vigorous president in the White House. We headed toward the "Oasis of Freedom" 100 miles deep into the Soviet zone of Germany.

I quickly met a girl my age, also a military brat headed to Germany, and we spent our days exploring the ship. In the movie theater, we were swept away by Paul Newman, starring with Joanne Woodward in *A New Kind of Love*. We swam in the pool surrounded by deep blue walls decorated with maritime signal flags spelling out "Come on in, the water's fine."

On the morning the ship docked in Le Havre, I made my parents get me up in time to stand on deck so I could see France (albeit only the port), having been fascinated by the French language and culture in 9th grade. We had calm seas and mostly sunny weather on the voyage, and before we knew it we were disembarking in Bremerhaven, and were taken by military bus to dinner after which we boarded the Duty Train to Berlin. What a contrast to the luxury of the ship and the freedom to roam it at will, was that night of stopping at check points, and sitting up most of the night expressly to peek out the window of the sleeping compartment, seeking a glimpse of what communism looked like. Of course, I saw only sleeping villages that night. A few weeks later, as I stood at the Wall, the brutality of that thin line between good and evil became abundantly clear.



On July 7, 1966, we were back on the S.S. United States heading to New York and then to Fort Benning, Georgia. My younger siblings had grown, I had just graduated from high school, my older brother had married and was staying in Berlin a few months longer before enlisting in the Army. Suzie, now joined by two miniature red finches in a birdcage, made the trip as well.

On our return home, we had stormy skies, rain, and one night of rough seas. However, it too was a memorable trip. I was now old enough to be in my own stateroom, and my roommates were two sisters, also military brats returning from Germany. We had much in common, and quickly became friends. The older sister was my age. I was heading in the fall to Dunbarton College in Washington, D.C.; she was heading to Purdue.

Interestingly, I paid more attention to the décor of the public rooms on this sailing. The exquisitely carved glass doors, the deep red chairs, and the glass top tables of the ballroom made an impression that has stayed with me all these years. Also, I remember one rainy afternoon writing post cards in the library and commenting to my mother how I really liked the rich green and blue color scheme of the room. I think of that room whenever I see the colors blue and green together.

My taste buds must have matured; I had much greater appreciation for the food on our trip home. My husband has heard many times how much I loved the chilled crabmeat cocktail that I ordered as an appetizer every night.

On July 13, 1966, we were up early and on deck. We knew we were home when we sailed past the Statue of Liberty. It was an amazing sight after three years in the shadow of the Wall. The sights, the sounds, the friendships, the excitement, the adventure of it all is deeply ingrained in my memory.



Continued on page 22

PAN AM GIFT

By: Kate (Murphy) Scrivener '88



I recently received this lovely Pan Am poster from a family friend. We had been talking about defunct airlines and I mentioned how my heart would always belong to Pan Am. That's what we always flew as a State Department family **and, of course, they were the only American airline to fly in and out of West Berlin.** My friend, who is well versed in history and certainly knowledgeable about all things Berlin, had no idea that only airlines of the three occupied powers could fly in and out of Berlin.

“What? No Lufthansa?” Only Air France, British Airways and Pan Am were permitted to cover the Berlin routes. I added that Pan Am pilots and their families lived with us, attended schools with us and even had I.D. cards to access the same base services. Lufthansa never flew to Berlin until reunification.

In addition to the awesome poster, I learned from my friend about the Pan Am Hotel located on the Ku'damm. Apparently, it is a rentable event space but once a month you can buy tickets to visit the lounge for drinks and a snack. Will definitely plan my next trip to Berlin around that!

<https://panam-hotel.de/en/events-tickets/>

Graphic credit: <https://www.panam.org/jet-age/a-dangerous-game>



Pan Am Lounge (above)

Airplane Route to West Berlin ->



BRAT GET-TOGETHERS



Quite the “Beer Flight” Brats!!!

Joy (Campolo) Turner '88 links up with Cillia (Batchelor) Lang '89 in Charlottesville

HOLD THE DATE: SUNDAY, JUNE 8TH, 2025

We will be holding a San Antonio regional (i.e.: luncheon) downtown!

Details will be published soon! Stay tuned – but mark your calendars now and plan on joining us!

SCHNITZEL TOUR '25 – PHOENIX – MARCH 23, 2025

Hosted by: Mike Cannon – Heidelberg Brat



Berliners in the Haus!

(L to R) Jim Wright '72, Reed & Diana (Green) Kempton '72, Naomi & Mike Friedrich '75, Carl Fenstermacher '73, Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72 & Jackie Runyon, Spouse of Jim



Brat get-together:

March 21, 2025
Hollerbach's in Sanford, FL
(bedroom community of Orlando)



R side: 2nd in
Joy (Campolo) Turner '88 and
then Linda (Kump) Simonsen '89
and wife Lisa Sheldon.

L side: 3rd in,
Cody Burdette, Joy's brother who
was born in
BERLIN!!!!



Local Paper – Steglitz-Zehlendorf
group has 25,000 members

LOOK WHAT APPEARED ON EBAY:



Peter Stein '80, our Brat Communicator, found this and alerted Jeri (BBAA) who in turn alerted some of the '68 Football team members. Lo and behold, Mel DeVibliss '71 ('67-'70) jumped on it immediately.

The seller informed us he purchased the football at an estate auction in western PA.

Mel writes:

This was our second year as Division Champions. I was actually on the varsity squad. The football was presented to Coach George Pepoy at our awards ceremony. He coached in Berlin from '68 until the school closed in 1994 and passed away on 30 March 2019 in Bradford, PA.

I visited Coach two years before his passing. I am still in touch with his wife Inga and two daughters, Nina and Sonja both class of '90.

My wife Vicky and I celebrated our first anniversary with the Pepoys while visiting Berlin on leave. I was an Army, 2LT at the time. Coach is still adored by many!

This football just reminds me..."It's a small world!"

On the Right: Mel along with other team members connected with Coach Pepoy at our 2012 Reunion in D.C. who is 2nd from right, front row in this faculty picture.



After seeing Mel's football pic – Elaine Stingel '75 posted a pic of brother Mike Stingel's '69 Letterjacket with the '68 patch.

Bernie Beausoleil '72 made a point of stopping in to see Mel and had his pic taken with the football:

After taking care of business in Magnolia, TX, it was great to dine with longtime friend and fellow Berlin Brat high school classmate Mel DeVilbiss and his wife Vicky. Vicky made a delicious dinner with all the trimmings. Mel and I are holding the fond keepsake, the 1968 Berlin Cubs Silver Division Championship football!

Prost! (Cheers!) Bernie

The "Football!"

by Mel DeVilbiss '71

Jeri sends me a text to check my email. My internet is out and I don't have my primary email linked to my phone. It was such an urgent message she sent me the eBay link by text. I go to the link and there's the football: The 1968 BAHS team gave Coach Pepoy in honor of not only winning the Silver Division Championship his first year as the head football coach, but by doing it undefeated.

No best offer – give the asking price and buy it outright.

Background: This football represents the second of three years in a row the BAHS Cubs won, or shared, the Silver Division Championship. The preceding year, under Coach Elstran, the Cubs went 5 and 2, but the league was so balanced the teams were tearing each other up. When the dust settled, Berlin shared the championship with one other team.

Then came the 1968 football season where Coach Pepoy lead us to an undefeated season and sole ownership of the championship. I don't recall who had the idea, nor who did the artwork, but the team enthusiastically supported it and everyone signed it. It was given to him during the awards ceremony with a standing ovation.

The next year was the surprise! The 1969 football season was supposed to be a rebuilding year with the greatest common denominator being the fabulous running back, Cleo Johnson '69. We lost our second game to Bitburg 14 to 8 in a controversially called contest. A week later we would face the division leader Wurzburg and beat them 24 to 14. Two weeks later we would face the undefeated new division leader Augsburg and wallop them 66 to 6. While we were thumping Bremerhaven (Coach Pepoy's old team) by 50 points, the two previous division leaders were dueling each other to see who would share the division championship with us.

They tied! We took sole possession of the Silver Division Championship for a threepeat. Bitburg never won another game.

The Football: Coach proudly displayed the '68 football his entire life. Shortly after his passing in 2019, his wife, Inga, found it necessary to relocate from Bedford, PA to a location near her daughter in New York. She stated she had lost track of the football, was pleased I had acquired it and approves of it being donated to AOSHS.



But then there was H__by B__k 23 this blue light uncovered. It took me a while, because no one in the team photo had number 23. Then I remembered Herbie Black, c/o '71 made it a practice NOT to make photo shoots – Bingo – got you Herbie! Finally, using a bright Army flashlight with a red filter uncovered the final three names designated with “rl.” As you read the list below, shown in the order I found them, if there are underscored characters that’s all I could make out, but were sufficient enough to identify the signature. There are three additional names I can pick out a possible character or two – but not enough to make a determination.

ALL MEL'S MEMORABILIA (AND HIS SLEUTHING ITEMS) - >





Germany

Bucket List



Must See

- Neuschwanstein Castle
- Brandenburg Gate (Berlin)
- Cologne Cathedral
- Black Forest
- Miniatur Wunderland (Hamburg)
- Rhine Valley
- Heidelberg Castle
- Dresden Frauenkirche
- Zugspitze
- Sanssouci Palace (Potsdam)

Must Eat

- Bratwurst
- Currywurst
- Sauerbraten
- Pretzel (Brezn)
- Schweinshaxe
- Käsespätzle
- Maultaschen

Must Buy

- Cuckoo Clocks (Schwarzwald)
- Haribo Gummy Bears
- Meissen Porcelain
- Birkenstock Sandals
- Ritter Sport Chocolate
- Steiff Teddy Bear

Must Experience

- Oktoberfest (Munich)
- Christmas Markets at Dresden
- Autobahn Drive
- Neuschwanstein Castle Tour
- Rhine River Cruise
- Wine Tasting in Moselle Valley
- Bundesliga Match

Must Do

- Hike in the Bavarian Alps
- Explore the Berlin Museums
- Attend Wagner's Opera in Bayreuth
- Visit Europa-Park
- Ride the Harz Steam Train
- Take a Day Trip to Lübeck
- Climb Cologne Cathedral's Tower
- Skiing in Zugspitze
- Drive Along Romantic Road

Best Time To Visit

- May to September

Number of Days Needed

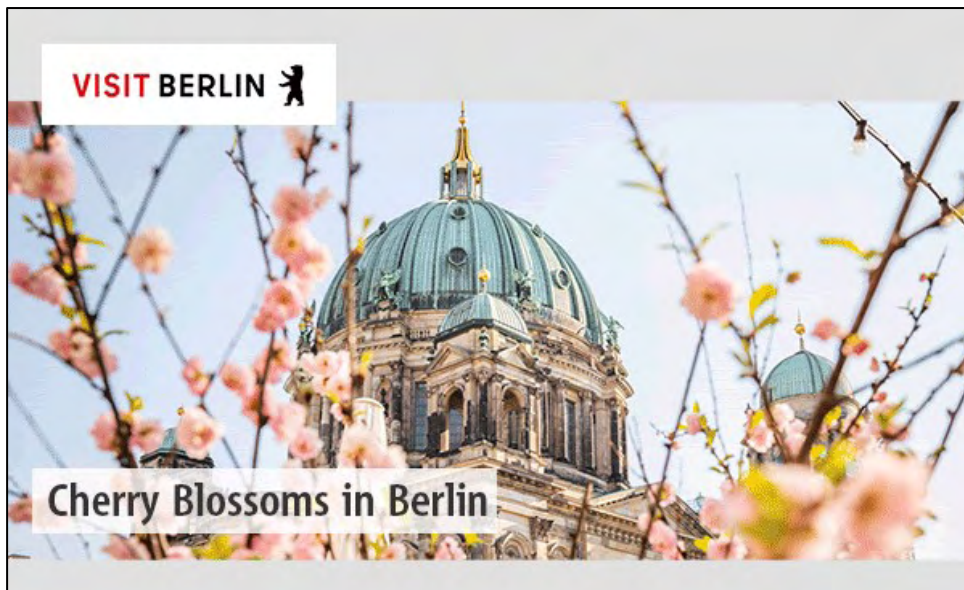
- 7 Days

Tips

- Know phrases like "Danke" (Thank you), "Entschuldigung" (Excuse me), and "Sprechen Sie Englisch?" (Do you speak English?)
- Use the Deutschland-Ticket for all regional and local public transport.
- Most stores, including supermarkets, are closed on Sundays.
- Use Deutsche Bahn's DB Navigator app to check train schedules and delays.



Did you know BERLIN celebrates "Cherry Blossom" time? **Berlin Blossom** season is here!



The **blooming cherry trees** in shades of pink and white give the capital a fresh touch of color. The perfect time to venture out on a springtime tour of Berlin.

Hanami, as the blossom viewing is called in Japanese, is particularly beautiful in Berlin because of the unusually large number of cherry trees here. **They were a gift from Japan when the "Berlin Wall" came down almost 35 years ago.**

Each year in spring BERLIN enjoys the beautiful **Sakura** blossom again.

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In 2006, I discovered a large framed picture of the S. S. United States in an antique shop. It now hangs in my office. In 2022, I was able to see the ship in person in Philadelphia. Changed as the ship was, in my mind she was as beautiful as ever. The S.S. United States, the Flagship of the United States, was the largest and fastest ship on the seas. This was the sleek, elegant ship that carried my family across the ocean to Berlin. In my mind, the two are connected: the ship and Berlin. The superliner and the superpower. On the high seas, this superliner represented the United States. In West Berlin, the superpower, the United States, and her allies France and Britain, represented might, capability, decency, the line of defense against the ugly brutality on the other side of the Wall.



Throwback Pics:



The night of 9-10 Nov 89 was the first time East Germans are allowed to cross through Checkpoint Charlie on foot. A flood of Trabants will soon follow.



Mstislav Rostropovich performs Johann Sebastian Bach's "Suites For Unaccompanied Cello" during the fall of the Berlin Wall, 1989

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A common expression among Germans in the area at the time was, “Are we keeping a pig or an American?” Geib said, highlighting the choice people had between having livestock or earning money from housing an American on their property. By 1959, the U.S. military was the third-largest employer in the area.

Another reason for the swift shift in sentiment was the promotion of American culture and values. The Amerikahaus in downtown Kaiserslautern offered books, films and sessions where jazz and rock ‘n’ roll records were played. The center also had a bus that traveled through rural areas, disseminating American culture.

Meanwhile, the younger generation visited American service member clubs, where “they drank cocktails and whiskey and smoked Lucky Strikes,” enhancing trust and camaraderie, Geib said.

Relations were not always perfect. In the early years, residents complained about U.S. troops frequenting prostitutes. Protests against U.S. policies also occurred near Ramstein over the years.

However, historians note that there were never major calls by area residents for the U.S. to leave. In a speech in 1985, West German President Richard von Weizsäcker said the day Germany surrendered and ended World War II in Europe should be seen as a “day of liberation” for Germany, rather than a day of defeat.

Despite the camaraderie that has grown over the years, the day the Americans entered Kaiserslautern is rarely portrayed that way. The city will not hold any commemorations to mark the anniversary this year.

However, it’s a different story in Baumholder, 36 miles northwest of Kaiserslautern. It’s been described as “the most American town in Germany.”

On Tuesday, U.S. troops stationed there marched through Baumholder’s streets with its mayor to celebrate 80 years since the Americans arrived. Residents watched from their windows and waved American and German flags as the soldiers passed by.

“This is another example of how close the relations are here,” Bernd Mai, 64, a German employee of U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz, said of the parade, which he helped organize.

The Nazi regime built the barracks at Baumholder ahead of World War II. When the Americans arrived on March 18, 1945, German forces had already retreated. Today, the U.S. base is about the same size as the town, and the military and civilian communities are closely integrated.

“When I was born, the Americans were here. I could never think of this space being without Americans,” Mai said of Baumholder’s Smith Barracks.

However, recent comments from Washington have led to questions about the future of the U.S. in Germany, including in the Kaiserslautern Military Community, which sometimes includes Baumholder depending on who is defining it. Baumholder is in the middle of a \$500 million expansion to host Special Forces and support units in the coming years.

Col. Matt Alexander, commander of the Army’s 16th Sustainment Brigade, spoke at a ceremony following Tuesday’s parade.

“What is as clear as the weather today is that the U.S. presence in Baumholder will only grow, and with it, the relationship we have with the people,” Alexander said on a rare sunny March morning.

Mai said he hoped so. “There is always a little fear that the U.S. will leave,” he said. “Not only because of the economic factor but because of the friendship with the U.S. forces. We love to have them here, and we want to keep them as long as we can.”

If anyone deserves recognition and appreciation for their selfless service, it is military children. Born in military hospitals around the globe, they will learn far too young goodbyes will be frequent and difficult. At some point in their toddler years, they inevitably will hug a camouflaged leg of someone other than their uniformed parent by mistake. They will move repeatedly, usually at the precise point in time when they feel most settled.

-April *Military Officer* magazine



Month of the Military Child

Upcoming Events

Next Reunion

Summer of 2027
We rotate to "eastern" U.S.
Location TBD

DODDS & AOSHS REUNION

July 14-18, 2025
Reno, NV

MyDoddsReunion.com

**Overseas Brats
Gathering (Reunion)**
October 2-5, 2025
St Charles, MO

Texas-Osb-2025

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)

Newsletter Brat: Carl Fenstermacher '73

Early '60s Site

By invitation only
Contact Mike Cleveland '61
clevelandmb@yahoo.com
for an invite

American Overseas School Historical Society

Frank Roehl, President
website: www.aoshs.org

Overseas Brats

Joe Condrill, President
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