



BUSMVA

OBSERVER



Berlin U.S. Military Veterans Association

A Non-Profit Veterans Association

www.berlinveterans.com

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2018 Reunion in Berlin



In a word, things were *hot*. Not only the temperatures, which were uncharacteristically toasty for Berlin, but the whole reunion was *on fire!* Ranging from tours to Potsdam, the Allied Museum, the Reichstag, and other venues, the large number of attendees made sure to put their mark on the city that they defended so long ago.

Details of the reunion begin on Page 3!

287th MPs with the U.S. Ambassador to Germany

By Vern Pike

The 2018 BUSMVA reunion in Berlin featured the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift.

Berlin MPs were treated to a very special event during the reunion; the opportunity for a special tour of the US Embassy Berlin and to meet with our Ambassador.

Wednesday, August 8th was, for us, the “MP Day” of the reunion. We were to visit our former “office,” Checkpoint Charlie, then have dinner together that evening. Colonel Rose Miller contacted the former Defense Attaché, Colonel

Jim Brown, MP Corps, now a civilian member of the Embassy, who arranged for a tour of the Embassy for our MPs and spouses. Included in the itinerary was a 10 minute visit by the US Ambassador Richard Grenell. Ambassador Grenell’s visit with us lasted over an hour as he was fascinated by our MP accounts of The Wall going up in August 1961, the role of MPs protecting the villagers of Steinstücken, and the confrontation with Soviet tanks in October 1961.

Ambassador Grenell told us of his project related to the Allied Museum: when the Museum finally moves to Tempelhof, Ambassador Grenell wants to return the Outpost Theater to its movie theater role by providing first run American films to Berliners. He will seek supporters to obtain rights to the theater, along with funding to provide popular US films to Berliners. He asked for our views on whether this project was a worthwhile venture to pursue. We assured him it was.

Ambassador Grenell was so impressed with the accounts by our MPs of actions at Friedrichstrasse when The Wall went up in 1961 that he asked for a photo with Wayne Daniels and Vern Pike at Checkpoint Charlie the following day. Both MPs were transported by the Embassy to Checkpoint Charlie where the Ambassador was waiting for them. He introduced to them the editor-in-Chief of the Bild Zeitung, Germany’s largest news tabloid, who presented to them a large carton, nearly 20 pounds in weight, containing a photo album of the history of The Berlin Wall, and a 6 square inch

(Continued on page 10)



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Opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily those of BUSMVA or its Officers and Board

President's Corner

I would first like to thank all that attended the 2018 Berlin Reunion, especially the 50+ members that had never been there before. We enjoyed a great week, especially at the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift at Tempelhof. I have attended each reunion in Berlin (5 of them) and was glad I took my son on this one. I like to thank Berry for the tours, which were all different from years past. As for the 2020 reunion somewhere on the West Coast, it has yet

to be determined. We have had several locations suggested and welcome more. As for next year that also will be determined soon and everyone will get an update in the Observer. Checking the numbers that were in Berlin, looks like the largest attendance ever. I would also like to welcome our new board members and know they be an asset to our group. One again I thank you for allowing me to lead you as your President... Vern (Sgt Gus) Gibson

Vern Gibson

Membership Notes

The Back to Berlin Reunion 2018 is in the history books, with its detailed planning and hard work. To those involved in its success, both known and unknown, a hearty thank you is certainly in order. Those who made the commitment to attend and participate in the events...it couldn't have happened without you. If you've never attended one of our annual reunions, you are missing out. When the location and details are announced for the 2019 reunion, give it some serious consideration, and attend.

As usual, there was a good response for 2019 renewals at the conclusion of the annual membership meeting in Berlin. That event officially kicks off the membership renewal campaign for 2019. Our current membership numbers continue to remain around the same level they have been for the past few years. We have 732 ac-

tive members; regular and associates. Our membership year runs from January through December.

Not long after you receive this newsletter many will also receive renewal reminders for 2019. Along with that reminder will be an opportunity to register your '2 cents worth' and offer suggestions. As a BUSMVA member we would like to know what you like, or what improvement you believe deserves consideration. I am adding this informal polling of the membership to learn your thoughts and ideas on what could improve our great organization. Those of you who have already made your 2019 renewal are not being forgotten. You too will receive the questionnaire and an opportunity to submit your ideas.

A final reminder to please keep us updated on any address, email and phone number changes.

Jerry Bryson

Secretary's Desk

I am pleased and excited to have been elected your Secretary. It is a daunting task, because Bergie Stanley is a hard act to follow. Personable and friendly, I had occasion to meet Bergie in 2014 in Branson. I was struck by his approachability and general good humor. We miss him.

I have been warmly welcomed by the BUSMVA Board and I'm grateful for their guidance and sincere dedication to BUSMVA. As we all know, we are a shrinking group of veterans and essentially closed to those who haven't had the good fortune to have served in the focal point of the Cold War.

For those who may not know me, I am an Army retiree, having served as a musician and in various other capacities, including translator, in the 298th Army Band. I arrived in West Berlin in January 1983 and remained until September 1991, in one assignment. I saw the curse of the Berlin Wall, and encountered the aftermath of the senseless killing of Major Arthur Nicholson in 1985. The terrorist threat was real during the 1980s and after the La-Belle disco bombing in 1986, those of us in Berlin experienced increased security measures. All of that paled in comparison to

the events of 9 November 1989 when an off-handed comment by an East German communist leader resulted in the opening of that accursed Wall, which then led to incredible activities leading up to and beyond Reunification in October 1990.

Those were heady times, especially when you're a musician in an Army band!

Like all of you with your former units, I am proud of my association with the 298th Army Band and had occasion to write about the unit. The 298th deactivated in September 1994 after having arrived in Berlin in July 1945. The 298th saw much during its 49-year history in Berlin and I was able to capture a microcosm of that experience.

That aside, I have been active in regulated industry since my retirement from the Army, and I have now entered semi-retirement from my second career. I remain musically active on at least 4 different instruments and am an enthusiastic pistol and rifle shooter.

I hope to provide you excellent service to you as your Secretary, and hope to bring in some fresh ideas to keep us moving forward.

Allen Lawless

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2018 BERLIN REUNION

Berry A. Williams

Some highlights:

- > 198 BUSMVA members and their families attended the reunion.
- > 18 diplomats, mayors, children of the Airlift, members of the military and others were guest of BUSMVA.
- > More than 300 attended the 70th Anniversary Memorial Service of the Berlin Airlift.



>The Boroughs of Tempelhof-Schöneberg and Steglitz-Zehlendorf were partners supporting the reunion and BUSMVA members.

> District Mayors Cerstin judge Kotowski and Angelika Schöttler thanked BUSMVA members for their 50-years of service which kept Berlin free from Soviet rule and made democracy possible.



District Mayor Angelika Schöttler



A salute to those who gave all so Berlin could be free by Vern Gibson, BUSMVA President

- > For 62 members and their guest this was their first BUSMVA reunion.
- > BUSMVA members booked 103 rooms at the Steglitz International Hotel; one third more rooms than the 70 booked during the 2014 reunion.
- > Rose Miller was elected BUSMVA Vice-President.
- > Allen Lawless was elected BUSMVA Secretary.

Continued on page 4

> 19 members of the 298th Army Band returned as a "Unit" to play in Berlin after departing the city in 1994 - 34-years years ago. The 298th was the longest serving Allied unit in Berlin.



Welcome Dinner Concert



70th Berlin Airlift Anniversary Service



Col. Ryan A. Link with the USAF Europe/AFRICA Command recalled the Airlift during remarks at the 70th Anniversary Memorial Service.



Group Captain Roland Smith with the Royal Air Force and British Embassy placed a wreath remembering the 39 members of the Royal Air Force who gave their life that Berliners might live in freedom.



Col. Alex Walford with the U. S. Embassy laid a wreath remembering the 31 USAF pilots and crew who gave their life for freedom and democracy during the Airlift.



70 rings of the bell, one for each American and British pilot or crew member who lost their life for freedom and democracy in Berlin



> William J. D. Freeman, BUSMVA member, recognized by District Mayor Cerstin judge Kotowski as having served as a Military Policeman during the Airlift.



When trucks were loaded with coal, food and other supplies from planes, Freeman and others with the 759th Military Police Battalion escorted the trucks to delivery points in the American Sector.



Mercedes Wild, District Mayor Angelika Schöttler and William J. D. Freeman



Mercedes Wild a child of the Airlift and friend of the "Chocolate Pilot", Col. Gail Halvorsen, remembered the Airlift days during remarks at the 70th Anniversary of the Airlift Memorial Service.



Fred Willis delivers a prayer of remembrance and thanksgiving at the Airlift Memorial Service.

Lutz Ammann was presented an award for his many years of service to BUSMVA. Lutz has been a key to the success of Berlin reunions.

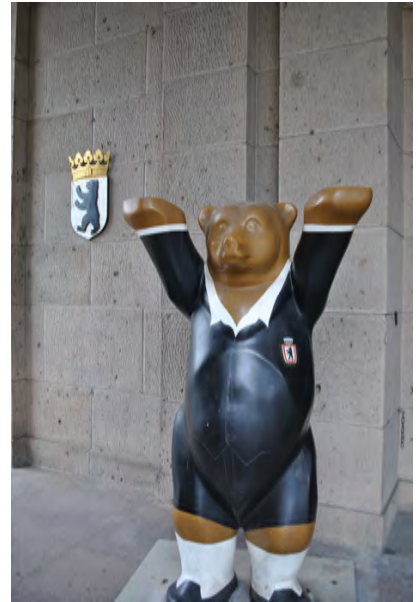




Monday Night Welcome Dinner with concert by the 298th Army Band.



Picnic at the Former American Chapel and visits to former U. S. Army Facilities



Above: Visit to Potsdam and Cecilienhof Castle where the Potsdam Agreement was negotiated and signed by American, British and Soviet leaders.

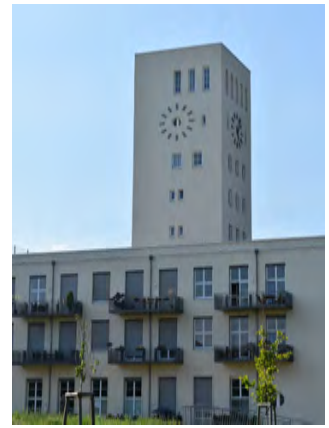
Right: District Mayor Cerstin judge Kotowski holds a reception for members of BUSMVA and delivers remarks about the Airlift and America's 50-year commitment to the city of Berlin. She concludes, the fulfillment of those actions bind Germany, Berlin and America together as "Friends Forever."

A special thanks to Adolf Knackstedt who translated for BUSMVA during the week.





More reunion photos!



2019 BUSMVA Reunion
Columbus, Georgia
May 12 – 17, 2019

“Far across the Chattahoochee to the Upatoi stands our loyal alma mater Benning School for Boys.”
Yes! We return to the Army Infantry School and Columbus, Georgia for the 2019 BUSMVA Reunion.

As expected, the Columbus and Fort Benning area offer many military and cultural opportunities. To help us select the activities most important to our members please vote on the following choices. Unless you arrive early or stay longer we are not in Columbus to visit all of these attractions. Please identify your first, second and third choices.

- _____ Visit the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center at Patriot Park. This is the nation’s only museum built to honor the Infantry. See life-like scenes from eight conflicts in Infantry history along a 100-yard-long ramp, signifying the Infantry’s role in taking the last 100 yards of any battle. Trace the footsteps of the Infantryman from the Revolutionary War to events in the Persian Gulf and battles in between. See displays of weapons, uniforms, and vehicles of the U.S Infantry. While you’re here you can experience a movie in the IMAX Theater or have target practice in the virtual Rifle Range.
- _____ Attend a “Follow Me” reception at the Infantry Museum with musical entertainment provided by infantry re-enactors.
- _____ See a “Ranger in Action Demonstration” that shows what a Ranger goes through to graduate, followed by a lunch at a Base Mess Hall, and a windshield tour of Fort Benning.
- _____ Set sail at the National Civil War Naval Museum at Port Columbus. Follow Admiral Farragut onto a replica of his flagship, *USS Hartford*. Go below deck and see where the sailors slept, ate and passed time. Climb on board the famous ironclad *CSS Albemarle* and brace yourself for combat as the ship comes under attack and the crew scrambles to battle stations. Then, stand at the bow of the *CSS Jackson* and view the 225-foot long hull of the largest surviving scratch-made ironclad in the world.
- _____ Join us for a “Damn the Torpedoes” reception at the Naval Museum with musical entertainment provided by Civil War re-enactors. Register to win chances to fire the 7” Brooke cannon!
- _____ Tour Warm Springs, Georgia and President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Little White House. Have lunch at the Bulloch House and shop at stores in Warm Springs.
- _____ Visit Andersonville Prison and the National Prisoner of War Museum which tells the story of prisoners of war throughout American History. This is the only museum solely dedicated to interpreting the American prisoner of war experience.

MAIL YOUR VOTE TO BERRY WILLIAMS, 1117 MANCHESTER DRIVE, RALEIGH, NC 27609
OR EMAIL BERRY: berrywms@mindspring.com

SURVEY DEADLINE – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

REGISTRATION FORM AND HOTEL INFORMATION WILL BE IN THE DECEMBER *OBSERVER*

Reflections of a 298th Army Band Piano Player who did the Berlin 2018 Reunion

He returned to Berlin much older and wiser than those days when he played the Real Book in his head, stroking those piano keys on one night and marching the damned 4-Ring holding that wretched pair of Zildjian cymbals the next day. God, he hated it back then, but realized, even then, that the music kept him alive. But at the same time, back then he had a full head of hair too, and blamed Berlin for losing it by the handful.

When he arrived in Berlin that hot August night in 2018, he reflected back on things. He dimly remembered the Steglitz



area, but that was understandable given that he hadn't been anywhere near there since the late 1970s. Somehow it looked different, but not foreign. He smelled the air, but it didn't have that tang that he remembered from coal burning and their remnants hanging in the tepid air. He remembered the gigs he'd played in Berlin venues long since forgotten, featuring beer gardens on nights such as this after lugging that damned Fender Rhodes piano out of the truck and up onto the stage. It was never in tune, but decent enough for an Army band, he observed with a wry grin.

Venturing out of the hotel, he walked up Schloßstrasse, but didn't go far. After all, he had flown in from New York City and was a little tired. He passed by a few shops and they seemed a little familiar, but not enough to enter. He wasn't quite ready for that, being content just to remember, think, and observe.

Originally from New Jersey, he was a city guy. Definitely comfortable in larger venues. But somehow, this city that he'd left back in 1978 seemed a bit more diffuse, more enticing, yet more diverse than even he was ready for. He wasn't afraid, but at the same time, he wasn't quite willing to fully embrace it either. He reckoned it just took a little getting used to.

Crossing a few streets, he told himself he was not quite as fast as the traffic system wanted him to be. He would get about halfway across the street before that damned signal would start counting the seconds down until the light changed, and he'd have taxis and buses and cars of all kinds crawling up his ass. He laughed, because he never thought of himself as being slow or tired, but he thought, well, maybe now I am.

But he always returned to the music. The music had been his profession and his passion from the beginning, and it centered him. He thought of the rehearsal that was scheduled later that evening and wondered who he'd encounter. There were some good guys back then and thought he recognized a few names when he signed on and learned who else had signed on. He thought he was a little nuts because it wasn't cheap coming over here like this and living in New Jersey definitely took a few bucks to get along. But he was back here in Berlin now, and would make the best of it. After all, so much had happened since the Wall was up and now that it was down, what was different? He almost asked himself that question aloud.

He had prepped a little bit before flying back to Berlin. He had pulled out his old, tattered copy of the Real Book and had read down a few of the old standard tunes that he was sure they'd play. It didn't take long when the chord progressions and patterns, along with the melodies, returned to his fingers like the old friends they were.

Army band combos were funny things. Comprised of musicians who were from completely different areas of the country, different backgrounds, different tastes in music, they often returned to that collection of American jazz standards encased within that book that no one dared to bring on the bandstand. They called that book different names. Some called it the "Real Book" and others called it the "Fake Book." Either way, it was expected that there'd be little to no reading. You either knew the tune or you didn't.

At the rehearsal, there was a guy, a drummer, that he remembered gigging with. And a sax player. Oh, and a trumpet player that he'd heard about but hadn't gigged with. The bass player was a younger guy, but he had both a fretless electric bass and an acoustic electric bass. All of these guys were old salts and they played the intros down, the head, and then took turns soloing. Some tunes had a bridge, but most didn't. After the solos, they went back to the melody and then out. The rhythm section carried most of the heavy lifting, but he, the piano player, did much of the soloing at first, relinquish-



ing that task to the horn players as they listened to the overall effort and became comfortable with each other.

It was like old times again, and he was thrilled and excited to be back in the city, and a little relieved too. He wondered if

(Continued on page 10)

New Members

Last Name	First Name	City	State	Berlin Dates	Berlin Assignment
Callahan	Mike E.	Murrells Inlet	SC	12/1963-7/1966	3rd Bn, 6th Infantry
Carroll	Richard C.	Hopkinsville	KY	5/1970-5/1973	Berlin Brigade Aviation Det.
Holt, Sr.	Fred I.	Barefoot Bay	FL	6/59-11/63	287th Military Police
Horn	Kenneth	Gaston	OR	12/1980-2/1984	Det B, 42nd MP Gp (Customs)
Hurvitz	Louis B.	St. Paul	MN	1981-1984	298th Army Band
Lynskey	Norman T.	Minneapolis	MN	8/1965 - 2/28/1968	78th US ASA SOU
Randolph	Elizabeth A.	Newberg	OR	1988-1990	298th Army Band
Wiggins	Edwin	Round Pond	ME	3/1973-12/1975	HHC 2/6 Inf & HHC 4/6 Inf.

Just for laughs



"I've got attention deficit disorder, Sarge."

(Continued from page 1) - Berlin MPs

piece of The Wall. Pictures were then taken of Daniels, Pike and the Ambassador. On August 13th, 2018, an article appeared in the Bild Zeitung, featuring both MPs that worked at Checkpoint Charlie, with the headline "Fear? We're Americans!" Vern Pike was OIC of Checkpoint Charlie and was on duty the afternoon in October 1961 when the Soviet tanks appeared on the Friedrichstrasse. Wayne Daniels escorted a pair of US M-48 tanks, on that day, from Turner

Barracks to Checkpoint Charlie. The headline was in reference to the comment made by both MPs, when asked if they were afraid, responded that they were Americans doing their job, fear was not an issue.

They expressed the view of every US soldier stationed in Berlin, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of Soviets and East German Volksarmee troops. That was the Berlin Brigade!

(Continued from page 9) - Piano Player

he'd remember the tunes that would be played and realized that not only did he remember them, but he remembered others too, and quoted from those other tunes in his solos. The combo jelled quickly and it was like they'd always gigged together, within reason, of course.

After the rehearsal, he went back upstairs and hung out with the band guys who were there. They did what all band guys do when together – they laugh, tell stories of what they remember, and get caught up with those they served with and made friends with those they didn't serve with. There was a camaraderie borne of being in a place far from home, and decidedly a little dangerous with the communism thing and being behind that Wall that was a scourge. Even back then, he knew it was an abomination, but he didn't truly have an appreciation for how much of a rape it was to humankind until later in life when he saw on TV the happenings when that accursed Wall came down. He remembered that night in

1989 when he saw people dancing on the very Wall that had gotten more than a few people killed while attempting to breach it.

Later in the evening, he went out with the drummer and his son, and a few others. They went under the bridge where the Döner kebab stand was, and got something to eat and drink. That hot August night was upon them and they had much to talk and laugh about, with their laughter echoing under the concrete bridge and in the ears of the homeless wretches stretching out where they could.

After all, this was Berlin and they were back again after many years. Much had happened since they were last there, but somehow it seemed the same. He was grateful for their collective experience, and more than a little grateful for the opportunity to play some jazz with some guys that he knew, and didn't know.

He knew it would be okay.



BUSMVA Merchandise Store



Patches—\$3 each	Berlin patch (large and small); Checkpoint Charlie; Berlin Bear; 6th Infantry; 2nd Battle Group/6th; 3rd Battle Group/6th, Berlin Special Troops; Air Force	Miscellaneous Items	Challenge Coin—\$10 Berlin Patch Bumper sticker—\$1.50 BUSMVA window decal—\$2 6th Inf Reg crest—\$6
Pins—\$3 each	Army, Air Force, Dancing Bear, Berlin patch	BUSMVA License Plate Frames!	\$5 each with \$5 shipping & handling
Please include \$3.00 for mailing costs! Make Checks Payable to BUSMVA and mail to:		Joe Morrison 107 Remington Circle Houston, MO 65483, phone 417-967-0027	

Order Form for BUSMVA Gear				Size	Qty	Total Cost
T-shirt Ash Color (no pocket) Embroidered Checkpoint Charlie on front	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$13.00 \$14.00 \$17.50				
T-shirt Blue (with pocket) Embroidered Berlin Bear/BUSMVA	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$13.00 \$14.00 \$17.50				
Sweat Shirt Ash Color 9oz Heavyweight w/Checkpoint Charlie logo	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$27.00 \$29.00 \$31.00				
Sweat Shirt Same as above with Berlin Patch logo	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$27.00 \$29.00 \$31.00				
Official Jacket Royal Blue w/light lining; large Berlin logo on back and Checkpoint Charlie logo on front	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$68.00 \$72.00 \$77.00				
Golf Shirt Royal Blue with pocket; Checkpoint Charlie logo on front	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$23.00 \$24.50 \$26.50				
Golf Shirt Ash color with pocket; Berlin Bear and BUSMVA on front	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$23.00 \$24.50 \$26.50				
Golf Shirt Blue with pocket; Berlin patch on front	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$23.00 \$24.50 \$26.50				
Golf Shirt Red with pocket; Berlin patch on front	S-XL XXL XXXL	\$23.00 \$24.50 \$26.50				
Embroidered name on shirts and jackets add for each:		\$6.00	NAME: _____			
Golf Cap with Berlin logo, Blue or Red	One size	\$15.00				
Golf Cap with Berlin Bear logo, Blue or Red	One size	\$15.00				
Shipping & Handling (see side bar)						
Total Enclosed						

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City	
State	
Zip Code	
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Email	
<p>Make Checks and Money Orders Payable to:</p> <p>Mr. C's Caps 9042 Roubidoux Rd. Bucyrus, MO 65444 417-967-0261 417-967-3257 Email: mrccaps@centurytel.net</p> <p>NO CREDIT CARDS, PLEASE!</p>	



Cost of Gear	Shipping & Handling
\$10.01 to \$20.00	\$6
\$20.01 to \$30.00	\$8
\$30.01 to \$40.00	\$10
\$40.01 to \$50.00	\$12
\$50.01 and up	\$14





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Taps

Photo (if Available)	Name	Date of Death	Berlin Service
	Abraham L. Drieth (Member #331) of Mead, CO.	27 June 2018	1954-57, 6th Infantry
	Harold E. Schwartz (Member #2249) of Pay-ley's Island, SC	28 July 2018	11th CID/G2 Berlin Brigade/Allied Staff