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**Reunion 2021—an Update**

*To protect the health of our members, remove the anxiety members would have over making travel plans, and reduce the financial exposure to BUSMVA, it was deemed best to cancel the Billings Reunion. We stated that the Board would continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation, and we are hopeful for a successful 2021 Reunion in New Orleans, currently scheduled for 9-14 May 2021.*

The BUSMVA Board has continued to work hard to prepare for the 2021 reunion. We have been keeping track of the COVID situation in Louisiana and worked with the hotel, the National WWII Museum, restaurants, and potential entertainers. We continue our communications with these businesses with the hope that plans for a successful reunion can be developed.

During the planning it has become evident that a 2021 reunion will be different from

what our members usually expect. As we continue to plan, the Board would like feedback from the members. This will help guide our decisions.

According to the recent White House Coronavirus Report, Louisiana remains in the red zone for cases, indicating more than 100 new cases per 100,000 people. In the last week, the positive tests indicate a COVID-19 rate above 10 percent.

Gov. John Bel Edwards' Open Safely Plan entered Phase Three on September 14. Much of the Phase Two Order remains in effect. The order includes a statewide mask mandate, opening Orleans bars to 50% of capacity and allowing businesses to move to 75% of capacity while observing social distancing requirements. However, group tours are still not allowed and neither is indoor live entertain-

*(Continued on page 5)*

**Mr. C's Caps Retires**

An institution almost from the beginning of BUSMVA and a stalwart service initiated and nurtured by long-time Sales Director (Emeritus) Joe Morrison, it is with profound regret that we announce the retirement of Mr. C's Caps. Quality clothing items such as polo shirts, jackets, caps, sweatshirts and similar garb were offered by Mr. C's Caps, but that is no more. Despite this development, BUSMVA is grateful for the longtime service of this family-run company and steps have already been taken to acknowledge their support of BUSMVA in providing these items to our members and others.



The customary order form that has been a part of this newsletter has been removed. Please do not order any-

thing from this point forward as Esther cannot process your order.



offer additional items featuring our relatively new logo and clothing items with a broader range of colors and options.

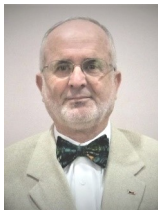
We will provide a rundown of those items in the December issue of the BUSMVA Observer and on the web site at the "News" tab when more specific information is available. Thank you for your patience and please watch for it soon!

Sales Director Chris Tureaud has been negotiating with a number of replacement vendors and is confident that one will be selected within the next few weeks. The new vendor(s) will also

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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

**Jerry Bryson**

It feels as if I should be making plans to go somewhere soon. This is being written a week prior to what would have been our 2020 reunion in Billings, Montana. When this awful thing called Covid-19 reared its ugly head there was no clue just how much it would end up affecting all the careful planning going into that event. Then too, those members who had begun to make their necessary reservations had to scrap those plans. That is now old history and is behind us; however, it was not an easy call to make. Now we continue forward, ever hopeful.

You are receiving this third newsletter of 2020; it is also time for the reminder that membership dues renewal is here. Between now and the first of 2021 I will be reminding those who need it to get their dues of \$25 mailed back right away. We have 596 active names on our rolls now, and we all should know how important it is to keep our membership numbers from slipping too fast and too much. BUSMVA needs your commitment to continue as an active member. You will be receiving post card and email reminders.

The BUSMVA board had their second online/live conference, using Zoom. Regardless of how one feels about some of the technology we must deal with every day, a Zoom conference allows each of us to see and hear one another (on our computer screens, tab-

lets, and phones). In my opinion it is a vast improvement over trying to swap emails around, back, and forth. Our meeting lasted slightly more than an hour and was productive in allowing a discussion on a variety of subjects. One suggestion that came out of our Zoom meeting was the idea to schedule a similar meeting, a Town Hall discussion, but open it up to all of the membership to participate. That is a top priority and every active member will be advised of the date and time.

For those unfamiliar with Zoom, instructions on making a connection and login credentials will be given beforehand.

In closing let me remind you that 2021 will be election time once again. There will be four offices on the ballot, and this is a call to all members to consider running for an office. Also, if one of your BUSMVA associates would make a good officer, be the one to convince him or her to get on the ballot. Along those same lines, of consideration to stand for an elected office, volunteers are needed. Yes, I know one of our first cautions we all got was "never volunteer"! In the past BUSMVA had an honor guard to post the flags at reunions. An historian is also needed. So, raise your hands out there. Call or drop me an email for consideration. You have heard from me, now let me hear from you.

## VP's Dispatch

**Rose Miller**

### Update on the Berlin Brigade Plaque and the National Museum of the U.S. Army

—The unit tribute plaque for the U.S. Army Berlin Brigade plaque has been produced and it is awaiting shipment to the National Museum of the U.S. Army for installation over the next few weeks. The museum will update me when it is installed and will send a photo. I will share that on our website, Face Book page and in the Observer. Great job by our generous members and donors. You should be proud that BUSMVA is a founding sponsor of the museum. The museum will be installing state of the art kiosks that will include our association's name along with names of all donors. Remember it is FREE to register your service and the support of your family at the museum. <https://armyhistory.org/the-registries/>. This is an opportunity to preserve your personal and family's history. Your histories will be stored in a database that will be searchable at the kiosks. You can still purchase a brick to honor your ser-

vice or that of a family member or comrade. Cost is \$250 for a 4"×8" brick or \$500 for an 8"×8" brick. Order on line at <https://frsengraving.com/armymuseum/#/>

Donations are 100% tax deductible. There will soon be an app on the Army History website, [www.armyhistory.org](http://www.armyhistory.org), and at the kiosks to help you locate our Berlin Brigade Plaque, our BUSMVA brick and your personal bricks. Since some of us may not be able to visit the museum, the app will also allow you to view photos of bricks. The soft opening of the museum is still pending and I will post that information as soon as it is available.

### This might be your time to volunteer!

Have you been a BUSMVA member for years or are you a new member? Have you just retired from working full time? Are you an amateur or professional historian? Do you have experience in mar-

*(Continued on page 3)*

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## Welcome Home Tour Update

Vern Pike



Covid-19 has again thrown a monkey wrench into plans. The Checkpoint Charlie Foundation has postponed the planned Welcome Home Tour for the below-listed selectees from 3 through 10 October 2020 to 18

through 24 April 2021. While we are disappointed in the postponement, we are encouraged that the city of Berlin is determined to host the Tour next year and not cancel altogether.

The Welcome Home tour group will be staying at the Hotel Air near the Kurfürstendamm. Their hotel bill will be covered by the Berlin City government, as will the cost of tours, transportation within Berlin, and similar expenses. Transportation to and from Berlin must be paid for by the tour member.

We've had a number of changes to the approved list since March, so here is the latest list of those slated to go:

BULLARD, Dennis  
CARRIGAN, Jim  
DAVIS, Macon  
EDINGER, Bill  
GALANTO, Wayne

KISTLER, Ross  
LUNA, Mario  
PIKE, Vern  
SUMNERS, Allen  
VALENCIA, Al  
VAUGHAN, Bob  
WAAK, Don

BUSMVA received over 40 expressions of interest from Berlin veterans. Not all, unfortunately, could be selected to go. For those who applied and were not selected, please consider applying again in 2021. One of the 2020 selectees had applied in 2019 and was not selected that year, but tried again in 2020 and it worked!

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Berlin veterans to see the enormous changes that have occurred in the former Divided city in which you served so long ago. Please consider reviewing the criteria (posted on BUSMVA's web site, berlinveterans.com) or reach out to me via email or phone if you'd like to participate.

## VP's Dispatch (continued)

*(Continued from page 2)*

keting or recruiting? Do you like to meet fellow veterans and help them reunite and create memories (have fun)? Have you enjoyed our reunions and made new lifelong friends? Do you plan your vacations around the reunions? Do you have ideas for attracting new members and making the reunions even more memorable? Then 2021 may be your time to volunteer. We really could use a volunteer historian to help with our initiatives to preserve our legacy and inform

members of our history. In addition, several elected board positions will be open in 2021, to include the Vice President position. Our Association will be sustained and will thrive in the future with enthusiastic, committed, and active volunteer leaders. I can share that service to our association has been personally rewarding and fun! Please let any board member know if you are interested in volunteering or being a candidate for an elected position. We want you and need you!

## Facts About Berlin

Did you know?

- Berlin was founded in the 13th century and has been the capital of Germany (this time) since 1990.
- The city has a population of 3.5 million people, making it the largest in Germany and the 7th largest in the European Union.
- About 30 percent of its area consists of parks, gardens and lakes.
- Berlin is said to be the only city in the world with 3 opera houses. The city also has an estimated 15 theatres and concert venues, and 2 world class zoos.
- Berlin is home to more



than 100,000 students.

- Exploring Berlin by boat is popular as within the city there are over 180 km of navigable waterways. The city also has an estimated 1,700 bridges, far more than Venice.
- There are 9 castles in the city, including the spectacular Schloss Charlottenburg. The 17th century palace is famous for its beautiful gardens and collection of 18th century French paintings.
- Berlin has an estimated 6,500 cafes and restaurants, over 500 ice cream parlours and several vineyards.





## Member Spotlight—Vern Pike, 287th MP Company



Verner (Vern) Pike, Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired) has been a long-time member of BUSMVA. His long service to the U.S. Army features an impressive series of assignments, but he is the first to say his most cherished assignment was his first—in Berlin. Vern is also noted for having been centrally involved in the October 1961 standoff between the Soviets and the U.S. at Checkpoint Charlie

and his written account of that incident is gripping in its drama. A portion of his book is below and on successive pages; he has agreed to post it here.

Vern's assignments, over a 30-year career, include:

- Platoon Leader, 287th MP Company (July 1958-August 1961)
- OIC, Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin, (August 1961-October 1962)
- Operations Officer, Armed Forces Police, Washington, DC (1963-65); provided security during burial of President Kennedy in 1963; 1965 Presidential Inauguration Parade Committee deputy
- CO, 560th MP Company, Vietnam (1965-66); deployed MPs in 14 locations throughout South Vietnam
- Assistant Professor, Department of Social Sciences, USMA, West Point, NY (1968-70)
- XO, 504th MP Battalion, Vietnam (July 1970-January 1971)
- Provost Marshal, Americal Division, Vietnam (February-July 1971)
- Staff Officer, DCSOPS, Army Staff, Pentagon (1973-74)

- Executive, Plans Directorate, ODCOPS, Army Staff, Pentagon (1975)
- CO, 385th MP Battalion, Stuttgart, Germany (January 1975-August 1977)
- Deputy G5, VII Corps, Stuttgart, Germany (September 1977-July 1978)
- Student, Army War College (1978-1979)
- G5, VIII Corps, Stuttgart, Germany (August 1979-June 1981)
- CO, 14th MP Brigade, VIII Corps, Stuttgart, Germany (June 1981-August 1983)
- Army Fellow, Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA (August-November 1983)
- CO, Det, 7th SF Group, Operation Island Breeze, Grenada (December 1983-June 1984)
- Chief, European Division J5, JCS, Pentagon, (August 1984-August 1987)
- Deputy Director, Institute for National & Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Fort McNair, DC (September 1987-May 1988)

Vern has been married to Renata since December 1958.

They have three sons and two grandsons. They are very proud of their sons who have fashioned successful careers for themselves as attorneys; one son holds an MBA.

Vern and Renata returned to North Carolina in 1997 where they built a home in Pinehurst. In 2014 they moved to a senior living facility in Cary, NC.

Vern's main hobby is barbershop chorus and quartet singing where he sings tenor. He's active in numerous military and veterans groups, including BUSMVA, and travels internationally to include recent trips to Cuba, Morocco and Israel.

### Checkpoint Charlie: Hotspot of the Cold War By Verner Pike

*The following is a segment from Verner Pike's book. Used by permission.*

It began on Sunday, October 22, 1961, as Allan Lightner, the state department's representative in Berlin, sought to drive through Checkpoint Charlie enroute to the opera in East Berlin. Lightner, the senior U.S. civilian official in Berlin, drove with his wife to attend the opera in the Soviet sector. Across from Checkpoint Charlie, their Volkswagen with green U.S. forces plates was stopped by Vopos who demanded they show their passports before entering East Berlin.

Following standard instructions for official American personnel, Mr. Lightner refused. While his car was detained, the MP Alert Squad, continuously on duty at Checkpoint Charlie, was ordered to march into the Soviet sector, fully armed, surround Mr. Lightner's vehicle, and escort him

back to safety in the American sector.

Although a principle had been established by force, the following day the East Germans announced that in the future, only uniformed Allied personnel would be allowed to enter without showing documents. The British acquiesced to this demand, but not General Clay. He was determined that we would not back down.

What brought the Allies to the October 1961 tank confrontation that could have triggered World War III? It was the DDR's belief it had the legal right to control all travel flow to and from the Soviet sector in East Berlin. And they did that by restricting access to seven crossing points to the Soviet sector. There were several crossing points simply for Germans, several for Berliners, and one crossing point for those we called Allies. That crossing point became

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## Reunion Update (continued)

*(Continued from page 1)*

ment.

More specifically, the mask order states, **“Every individual in Louisiana shall wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when inside a commercial establishment or other building or space open to the public, whether indoor or outdoor (except while consuming food or drinks).”**

Guidance from the Governor, the Louisiana Department of Health and the Office of the State Fire Marshal (the State Emergency Management Agency) states:

**“Individuals 65 years or older, people of all ages with poor control of medical issues like high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, or a weakened immune system are at a higher risk for getting very sick or dying from**

**COVID-19 and should strictly adhere to all CDC guidelines, and are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible.”**

With the coronavirus data and meeting restrictions in New Orleans consideration is being given to moving the reunion to 2022. A final decision has not been made as we continue to monitor conditions in New Orleans. Your opinion can help inform the Board’s decision. You are encouraged to provide feedback by answering a few questions. You can provide your response by completing the online reunion survey questionnaire using the link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2021reunion>.

To access the survey enter the password **Orleans2021**. Only one response per email account will be recorded.

## Reunion Survey Questions

**Despite the Covid-19 situation in New Orleans, I/We will attend the BUSMVA reunion in 2021:**

- Extremely likely*
- Very likely*
- Somewhat likely*
- Not at all likely*

**To comply with the State’s Executive Order, BUSMVA may need to restrict reunion registration to 50 member participants.**

*That is OK. BUSMVA should still hold the reunion in 2021.*

*BUSMVA should reschedule the New Orleans reunion to 2022 or later.*

**A recent poll found only 21 percent said they would be willing to take the first coronavirus vaccine released by the Federal government. Should BUSMVA wait on a scientifically proven vaccine before holding a national reunion?**

- No. It doesn’t make a difference. I am not going to take a vaccine.*
- No, but wait until a vaccine is widely available to the public.*
- No, we should take our chances and hold the reunion.*
- Yes, wait for a scientifically proven vaccine.*

**Current evidence suggests the coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Should this change plans to hold the reunion in 2021?**

- No.*
- Yes.*
- Not sure.*

**National WWII Museum. Working with health consultants, State and Federal Health Agencies, local hospitals and doctors the Museum has established operational procedures which include:**

- **Entrance is limited to 10 people per group.**
- **Groups of 10 are admitted in 15 minute increments.**
- **The public must register for a time to start the tour. With these limitations, If BUSMVA could get a block of time, it would require at least 3 hours for our members just to enter the Museum. (Assuming 120 members attend). It would take additional time to see the exhibits in the museum.**

**Are these limitations acceptable to you?**

- No.*
- Yes.*

Comments:

*Please communicate your responses to Reunion Director Berry Williams. See page 2 for contact information. You may mail, email, or phone your responses in. Or, as stated above, you may participate in the SurveyMonkey survey at the link above. Thank you for your participation.*



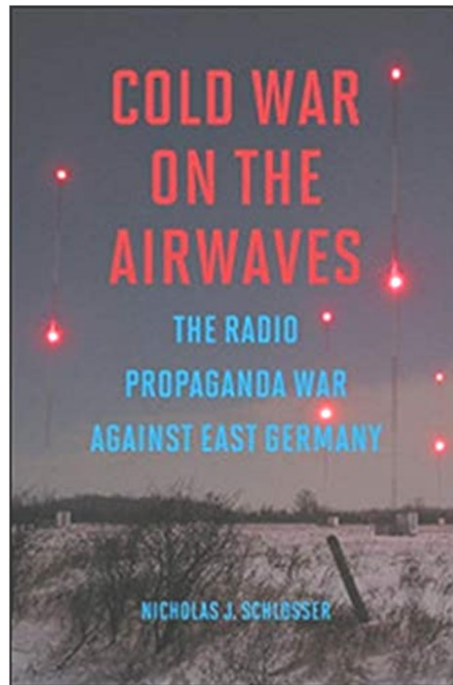
**Book Review**  
**Cold War on the Airwaves: The Radio Propaganda War Against East Germany**  
 by **Nicholas J. Schlosser**

*By BUSMVA Member Timothy F. Fitzpatrick*

My experiences as a youth in Berlin, as a member of the Berlin Brigade, and as a Psychological Operations Officer have always made me appreciate RIAS [*Radio im amerikanischen Sektor*], but I never knew the breadth and depth of what RIAS meant to US efforts in Berlin and to the people of East Germany. Nicholas J. Schlosser in his book “Cold War on the Airwaves: The Radio Propaganda War against East Germany” has given us a precious gift to our understanding of the contributions of RIAS to the psychological combat between the Soviet block and the United States and between the contrasts in freedom between East and West Germany. The book sums up the importance of RIAS to East Germans, Berliners and the United States and is powerfully captured when Schlosser writes “...RIAS went from being just a purveyor of news and information to a quasi-United States Embassy, a representative of the United States in East Germany.” RIAS was founded by and controlled by the United States, but staffed by Germans and engaged in the front lines of influence and political warfare against communism.

Schlosser relates the early beginnings of RIAS, formed to counter the Soviet’s Radio Berlin which they, curiously enough, broadcasted from the Eifel Tower-like Funkturm in the British Sector and refused to share with the other occupying powers. To compete, the American Forces initiated broadcasts on the old Nazi wired (telephone line) radio system, developed so allied bombers could not home in on Berlin through a signal. This wired (Drahtfunk) Broadcasting in the American Sector (DIAS) led to US broadcasting in its sector as the voice of the U.S. occupation

government. DIAS soon began radio broadcasts and became Radio (Rundfunk) in the American Sector (RIAS).



Schlosser describes the stages of RIAS’ efforts over time and in reaction to Berlin and world events. Throughout its history, the RIAS emphasis on credible and objective news from a United States perspective and calling out DDR and communist failings were its hallmark. The people of East Germany came to rely on this during crisis after crisis starting with the Berlin Airlift, during the 17 June 1953 East German uprising and Soviet suppression, the Berlin construction of the Wall, and during the long

period of the Cold War itself. RIAS reported the easing of tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the collapse of the Wall, and Berlin and German reunification.

Schlosser writes this book not in a technical manner, but in very human terms that goes to the heart of RIAS’ dedicated staff and their understanding of the information (and entertainment) needs of their audience in clear contrast to communist deterministic programming.

I strongly recommend this book for all Berlin U.S. Military Veterans as you explore the totality of what the U.S. meant to Berliners on both sides of the Wall and to complement our own understanding of RIAS giving voice to what we in the U.S. and allied forces physically stood for.

RIAS still exists as the RIAS Berlin Commission (<http://riasberlin.org/en/about-us/>). The RIAS Berlin Commission was founded in 1992 as a binational organization for the promotion of German-American understanding in the field of broadcasting and promotes the exchange of persons and information in the field of broadcast journalism between the two countries.

Cold War on the Airwaves: The Radio Propaganda War against East Germany by Nicholas J. Schlosser is Published by the University of Illinois Press (1st Edition November 3, 2015) and is available at Amazon.com.





## Checkpoint Charlie: Hotspot of the Cold War (continued)



*(Continued from page 4)*

Checkpoint Charlie.

The DDR started to demand its rights in small gestures. They would not allow civilian vehicles to enter into East Berlin without stopping and producing identification. At first they didn't stop our U.S. forces' civilian-plated vehicles. Then they began to stop them. That triggered a number of incidents that resulted in the Military Police Alert Squad being activated. The East Germans were beginning to stop all vehicles.

The Berlin Brigade had an intelligence (G-2) operation which used both unmarked Criminal Investigation Division (CID) vehicles with U.S. Forces plates — the CID officers and warrant officers were the drivers — and Army sedans with uniformed drivers and officers.

Their mission was to drive over into East Berlin and learn what they could about the disposition of Soviet and East German military units. Under the four-Power agreements it was forbidden for German, either East or West, military units to be in Berlin. The Vopos would try and smash their headlights or rip off an antenna. It was pure harassment. These incidents became a

regular occurrence. So the provost marshal was tasked with doing these patrols in unmarked vehicles. Up to this point, there had been no problems with U.S. Army vehicles, but civilian vehicles were stopped.

In early October 1961, Vopos at Friedrichstrasse stopped CID Warrant Officer Joe Keough from entering the Soviet sector. The Berlin Provost Marshal, Lieutenant Colonel Bob Sabolyk, was directed to confront the Vopos to release Keough. I accompanied Sabolyk to act as an interpreter.

We walked over to the Soviet sector and spotted some DDR officials. The colonel asked me to ask the East Germans why they had stopped Keough's car. The East Germans replied that they ran the checkpoint and all foreigners would have to produce ID. The colonel demanded to see a Soviet officer and was refused. We returned to the American sector, and the colonel contacted General Clay.

General Clay ordered Keough to return to the Soviet sector with an armed MP escort and three gun jeeps armed with M-14s and twelve fully armed MPs. Their weapons were loaded with a round ready to fire, and the bare bayonets glistened under the sun. Their orders were to escort

Keough's vehicle into the Soviet sector.

It got pretty tense. It was a violation of the Four Powers occupation agreement to be armed while entering another allied sector. So by doing this, we were putting the MP unit at risk. The East Germans watched but made no challenges. This followed the Lightner incident of October 22, 1961.

On Wednesday, October 25, 1961, with JFK's approval, General Clay sent two Army officers across in civilian clothes in a vehicle with U.S. forces plates. The East Germans turned them back for refusing to show their passports

to the officers, and they were once again escorted back into the Soviet sector by three jeep-loads of armed MPs.

Half an hour later, ten American M-48 tanks and two armed personnel carriers took up positions near Checkpoint Charlie. The following night, thirty-three Soviet tanks assembled in the Soviet Sector and parked conspicuously near the Brandenburg Gate. It was the first ap-



pearance of Soviet armor in the city since the revolt of 1953.

On Friday afternoon, October 27th, standing inside a drugstore at the corner of Friedrichstrasse and Zimmerstrasse, looking into East Berlin, I was talking with Major Glen Tyree, commander of F Company, 40th Armor, whose tanks had just departed Checkpoint Charlie to return to Tempelhof Air Base.

It was a great view for us right down the Friedrichstrasse. We were taking a smoke break when I spotted a column of tanks approaching us from the Soviet sector. Major Tyree directed me to bring his tanks back immediately, so I raced to Tempelhof during rush hour traffic to recall our tanks.

The American tanks rumbled back at about thirty-five m.p.h. This struck terror into the West Berliners at rush hour, since they remembered all too vividly the Soviet invasion of their city in April 1945.

What intrigued us was that in front of each tank in the So-

*(Continued on page 8)*



## Checkpoint Charlie: Hotspot of the Cold War (continued)



(Continued from page 7)

viet Sector was a flag man. Later, when I got to look inside one of the tanks, I believed they must have been crewed by Asians who spoke little, or no, Russian, because the room inside was so cramped.

Meanwhile, the tanks faced each other while General Clay played a cat-and-mouse game with the Soviets and East Germans. General Clay knew the Soviet military better than most Americans. He knew that the Soviets did not want to take pointless risks. He also knew that the Soviet military disliked Ulbricht.

General Clay's major concern was not the communists, but JFK's advisors, who warned that Clay's tactics could trigger World War III. Documents released after the Cold War ended, however, would confirm that General Clay had it right. Warning President Kennedy that he would resign if the President didn't back him, he said, "I can be of no real service if it's deemed wise to be extremely cautious in Berlin."

The Soviets were concerned about the American armor because they knew the East Germans had no authority to stop American tanks. The Soviets didn't trust the East Germans in such a tense confrontation.

General Clay, however, couldn't tell if the tanks were German or Soviet because they had been freshly painted, with all the markings removed, and the crews wore no insignia of rank or unit.

Clay directed Lieutenant Colonel Bob Sabolyk, Berlin provost marshal, to ascertain that the tanks were either Soviet or East German, stating that, "if they were East German tanks we would go to war." Colonel Sabolyk then directed me to use his Provost Marshal sedan to cross over into the Soviet sector and positively identify the tanks and crewmen as either Soviet or East German. Specialist Sam McCart and I jumped into a US military sedan and drove into the Soviet sector. While they appeared to be Soviet T-54s, I couldn't tell because they had their vehicle markings painted out.

Parking behind the tanks, McCart and I walked up to the last tank and observed no one in, or around, the tank. In fact, I could see no military personnel around at all. Colonel Sabolyk directed me to ascertain that the tanks were either Soviet or East German. Since the tanks had no visual

indicator of being either Soviet or East German, I decided that I needed to get inside one of them to positively identify them as one or the other. With my heart pounding, I climbed up and into the tank and found the crew compartment empty. Inside I saw Russian lettering on the instrument panel, as well as a copy of a Red Army newspaper that I took when I exited the tank.

After climbing down and out of the tank, I noticed a group of tankers in a meeting behind the lead tank. We approached the tankers' meeting. I had a basic understanding of Russian and the leader was speaking Russian. These were Soviet tank crews. When the Soviet officer spotted the two American MPs, he started speaking rapidly. We hastily returned to the sedan and sped back to the American sector.

I told Colonel Sabolyk the tanks were Soviet. The colonel at first didn't believe me. After I explained how I knew, I handed him the Red Army newspaper. The colonel handed me the phone and directed me to report to General Clay. When I did, there was stoned silence on the other end of the phone. General Clay then asked to speak with Colonel Sabolyk.

From late afternoon on Friday, October 27,

1961, American and Soviet tanks on full alert faced each other at Checkpoint Charlie. The world held its breath . . . and waited. After sixteen hours of muzzle-to-muzzle confrontation, both sides withdrew their armor on Saturday morning. As far as the Americans were concerned, they had stood their ground.

I still marvel at my luck that there wasn't an armed Soviet tanker in that tank. I realize to this day that a Soviet tanker shooting an American officer inside his tank in the Soviet sector could have created an international incident.

It was a small victory for us, but it demonstrated that the Soviets were responsible for the security of their sector of Berlin and not the East Germans. Some historians believe the tank confrontation proved to be one of the decisive moments of the battle for Germany during the Cold War. It had shown the East Germans that their masters were still from Moscow. The Soviet Union remained the power behind the throne in East Germany.

*Pike, Verner N.. Checkpoint Charlie: Hotspot of the Cold War . Charles St. James Publishing Company. Kindle Edition.*







# Berlin: Then and Now



Feuerbachstr. S-Bahn in Steglitz



(c) Sergey Larenkov





# BUSMVA Pins, Patches, Memorabilia Store



Order Form				
	Size	Qty	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Patches	S or L (BBde only)		\$3	
Pins & unit crests	N/A		\$3 except for 6th Inf, which is \$6	
Challenge Coin	N/A		\$10	
Stickers and Decals	N/A		BBde patch—\$1.50; BUSMVA decal \$2 (circle the item you're ordering)	
License Plate Frame	N/A		\$5	
Shipping & Handling \$3 for pins, patches, misc.; \$5 for license plate frame				
Total Enclosed				

Patches—BBde, Sm & Lg; Checkpoint Charlie; Berlin Bear; 6th Inf; 2nd BG/6th; 3 BG/6th, Special Troops; Air Force



Pins & unit crests—USAF, 6th Inf, BBDE, various U.S. Army



Challenge coin, front and rear



Stickers and Decals



License Plate Frame



Items to be shipped to:

Name	
Address	
City	
State	
Zip Code	
Phone	
Email	

**Make Checks and Money Orders Payable to:**

**BUSMVA**

**Mail to:  
Chris Tureaud  
310 Laurel Hill  
San Marcos, TX 78666**

**NO CREDIT CARDS, PLEASE!**





**New Members to BUSMVA**



Last Name	First Name	City	State	Berlin Dates	Berlin Unit
Clark	Milton W.	Burnet	TX	1963	A Co., 1st Bn 26th Inf
Martin	Thomas	Marysville	WA	1976-78	CSC, 2nd Bn 6th Inf



<b>Taps</b>			
Photo (if Available)	Name	Date of Death	Berlin Service and Special Note
	Leroy N. Suddath Jr.	27 Feb 20	Non-member of BUSMVA, but he was the Commanding General of the Berlin Brigade from Nov 81—Aug 84.
	Raymond Pyle	17 Jul 20	Member 1221. Served in Co B/H&S Bn/7781 AU, Feb 54—Feb 55. At the request of Raymond's family, a photo of his favorite cap is displayed in lieu of a picture.





**The BUSMVA Observer**  
Berlin US Military Veterans Association  
123 Antler Way Dr.  
Sherwood, AR 72120  
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