



# BRITISH BERLIN AIRLIFT ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER No.35

Website:- [www.bbba-airlift.org.uk](http://www.bbba-airlift.org.uk)

Formed 9th September 1994

December 2011

Chairman, Geoffrey W. Smith  
Committee: Secretary: John Collier. Treasurer: Mrs Janet Howard N.W. Representative: Jack P. Steele Media & Website: Colin R. Cottle

## ***THE CHAIRMANS COLUMN***

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### **Introduction.**

#### **Berlin Visit 2012:**

We are now able to confirm that we will be visiting Berlin and the Harz Mountains by coach from the UK in May 2012. We have 30 people who have now reserved places. See the item on Page 8 of this newsletter.

#### **Tempelhof Airport**

The continuing saga of the now disused former Berlin Airlift lynchpin of the United States contribution, Tempelhof Airport has once again been making the headlines. We heard that it was hoped that the airfield could be used to create a parkland area in the city, similar to the parks in London, where they could become a facility for leisure and enjoyment for all in the open air.

However, the idea to try to develop the airfield into an amusement park is still being mentioned.

Whether this is a serious suggestion or not we do not know. However, if this is so such a place would be a travesty and not representative of all who were on the Berlin Airlift and especially to those people who have given their lives to keep Berlin free.

A petition to resist this idea is now being circulated. The Petition was highlighted in the article on page 12 of BBAA Newsletter No 34.

#### **BBAA Website:**

The BBAA Website has now had more than 7,000 hits. In other words more than 7,000 people have looked at the site since we added the webcounter. We now receive numerous enquiries and complimentary comments via this route. Several people have said that they find it very informative & most useful when looking for information & details about the Berlin Airlift.

Schoolchildren and students seem to be using it more than ever now. Not only just from the UK. We have recently had requests about the British involvement from students in California, Poland & Berlin for information and details about what happened in 1948/49. Our thanks are due to Colin Cottle who has developed the website and continues to keep it updated whenever he can.

An increasing number of Airlift sons, daughters and grandchildren are trying to find more information about their relatives involvement. However, we do need information to help to keep it interesting and up to date to those who use it. If you have a story to tell we would be interested to receive it.

#### **The BBAA Standard:**

There will come a time when we have try to lay-up the BBAA Standard.

We have been very fortunate since the Standard was first dedicated to have had only two Standard Bearers, firstly Les Drake and for the past ten years David Hildred.

However, with the passing years together with reducing numbers of members and of course general fitness we have to consider where and when the Standard can be officially laid-up.

Places like the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire immediately come to mind, but they regretfully say that they are constantly being asked the same question by many organisations and are not in a position to carry out such a request.

When the standard is finally laid up the committee feel that it needs to be in a place where it is accessible, can be viewed and the story together with the historical values that it represents can be appreciated.

The views, suggestions and comments of BBAA members would be much appreciated by the Association Committee .

***THE COMMITTEE WISH ALL MEMBERS OF THE BBAA  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR***

**WEEKEND REUNION 2012**

Due to the BBAA Group visit to Berlin in May 2012 the Weekend Reunion will have to be re-scheduled to either late September or early October 2012. A notice with full details and a booking form will be in the next issue No 36 of the Newsletter and also will be published in the BBAA Website at [www.bbba-airlift.org.uk](http://www.bbba-airlift.org.uk).

**FORMER ROYAL AIR FORCE DAKOTA CRASHES IN BERLIN - 20th June 2010**

The Air Service Berlin Douglas Dakota, formerly RAF Airlift Dakota KN442, which in recent years had been carrying out sight-seeing flights over the city of Berlin and had to make an emergency landing on Saturday the 20th June 2010 due to engine failure to the port engine shortly after take-off from the airfield at Schoenefeld.

The aircraft landed away from the runway the tail wheel hitting the ground first followed by the two engine nacelles. It then slewed across a paved road, finally hitting a metal fence which caused substantial damage to the right wing which was torn away from the fuselage. Both engines and the propellers were badly damaged. After an initial inspection Air Service Berlin stated that they considered that the aircraft could be repaired and restored to a flying condition.

A restoration fund had been established and donations were being received including a generous donation from the "Candy Bomber" Gail Halvorsen..

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on the 1st January each year. The Annual Rate is now **£15.00**, wherever situated. Cheques should be made payable to the BBAA and sent to:-

The BBAA Treasurer, Mrs Janet Howard,  
 80 Park Street, King's Cliffe,  
 Peterborough PE8 6XN

However, if you wish to pay by Bankers Order. The details are as follows:-

Payable to:

British Berlin Airlift Association.

Bank:- Lloyds/TSB Bank PLC Maidenhead.

Account No. 1223532

Sort Code: 30-95-36

**REFUELLING FLIGHTS**

**From John Collier, Association Secretary.**

**188 Station Road, Cropston, Leicester LE7 7HF**

**Please note!** We are sorry to report that no further Refuelling Flights are available at the moment due to the new safety restrictions now being imposed regarding the Royal Air Force carrying civilian passengers.

However, RAF Brize-Norton have stated that they would like members of the BBAA to visit the Station on a date to be yet arranged in 2011/12. Would you please let John Collier know that you will be interested in going on a visit to Brize-Norton if one becomes available.

**EMAIL DATABASE**

We have now set up a database of members Email addresses & telephone numbers. This will enable us to contact members more easily and also help to reduce the cost of mailing letters etc.

If you are willing to have your Email address on our database would you please contact Colin Cottle the co-ordinator. His Email address is: [cottle.c@talktalk.net](mailto:cottle.c@talktalk.net)

**OBITUARIES**

**Sqn Ldr L.E.A. (Zeke) Hacke - Wunstorf/Fassberg/Lübeck - Pilot No 30 Sqn. - Died 28th June 2011.**

**G. Eddie Stockton - Gatow & Fassberg - RASC Driver - Died July 2011**

**William John Tams: Flight Mechanic, Flight Lines - Gatow - Died August 2011.**

**Maj Gen D.M. Ralston Ret. - South African Air Force - Fassberg/Lübeck - Died August 2011**

**Mrs Jean Love, the wife of the late Mike Love, Skyways Operations & Traffic Officer - Died October 2011**

## **BERLIN VISIT 2012**

### **10 Days/9 Nights Coach Tour to the Harz Mountains & Berlin 2012**

**NOTE! THIS WILL BE THE FINAL LARGE GROUP VISIT TO BERLIN  
BY THE ASSOCIATION**

#### **PROPOSED INTINERARY**

**Day One – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May:**

06:00 Pickup Bright Street Peterborough, 06:55 Cambridge Services & 09:15 Union Jack Club, London.  
Travel – From UK via 11:00 Ferry, Dover/Calais to arr 21:00 our hotel in Dortmund for an overnight stay.

**Day Two - Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May:**

Travel – From our hotel in Dortmund to the Potsdammer Inn Hotel, Berlin for a 4-night stay.

**Day Three - Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May:**

Berlin – Morning –Tour of Berlin & the Allied Museum in Clayallee.

Afternoon - Visit RAF Gatow and meet the Berlin Military Train group.

Evening – RAF Gatow Meet up with the American BAVA Group for the beginning of the “Airlift Weekend of the Year Fiesta” Note! During the weekend German TV wish to carry out interviews with Airlift Veterans.

**Day Four - Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May:**

Berlin - Morning – 10:30 Airlift Commemorations at Luftbrücke Platz Tempelhof.

Note! A group of BBAA veterans to travel from Gatow to Tempelhof in the “Berlin Patrol” historic vehicles

Afternoon: Visit to the new HQ of the Cold War Museum at Kunersdorf near Berlin.

**Day Five – Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May:**

Berlin – Day At Leisure – City Shopping or Possible Boat trip on the Havel Lake.

**Day Six - Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May:**

Travel – From Berlin to our hotel near Goslar in the Harz Mountains.

Visit Goslar & Bad Harzburg enroute to our hotel.

Stay at our hotel for a three night stay: - 218miles

**Day Seven - Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May:**

Harz Mountains: Day At Leisure – Local sight-seeing & visit to Quedlinburg.

**Day Eight - Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May:**

Steam train ride up the Brocken Mountain from Wernigerode.

**Day Nine - Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May:**

Travel – Travel to our hotel in Belgium for overnight stay. 392 m

**Day Ten – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May.**

Morning: Shopping & Sightseeing.

Afternoon: Depart Belgium & travel to the UK via Ferry, Calais/Dover.

Drop off Union Jack Club, London, Cambridge Services & Bright Street, Peterborough – 230 miles

**This is only a proposed visit programme at the present time & may be subject to change.**

We do not have a firm price at the moment. The budget price we have is **£645.00** per person in twin or double room.

There is a single room supplement of **£138.00** per person.

Note! Due to other events taking place in Dortmund & Berlin during the same period as our proposed visit we only have a limited time to confirm hotel reservations. Please confirm your interest as soon as possible to:

**Mrs Janet Howard, 80 Park Street, Kingscliffe, Peterborough PE8 6XN**

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## THE COLD WAR MUSEUM - BERLIN

The Cold War Museum Berlin Exhibition Centre which was formerly situated at Harnekop to the north-east of Berlin has now been relocated to a new site at Kunersdorf which is to the south of Potsdam.

It was formerly a secret Telecommunications Bunker and was used by the former East German government until the reunification of Germany

After 1990 the bunker became surplus to requirement and all the equipment was removed. The bunker was sealed and the remaining buildings served as accommodation for refugees and the surrounding land was used as an ostrich farm.

The Rusterbusch e.V Association now intends to open the bunker to the public as a museum and relic of the Cold War.

The official opening of the museum took place on the 30th July 2011 at 11am with a welcome by Mrs Anna Edith Haase

Further information can be found on the Cold War Museum's website at [www.thecoldwarberlin.info](http://www.thecoldwarberlin.info)

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## AIRLIFT VETERANS INTERVIEWS ON FILM

We have been approached by a company who are recording on DVD video interviews of British veterans to produce an online military history archive.

The interviews will be placed on a website for use by schools, libraries, museums and the general public.

Each person interviewed will receive a DVD copy. The interviews will be filmed in high definition

This will not be a scripted agenda, just veterans personal stories and memories of their time on the Berlin Airlift in 1948/49.

The filming will be carried out at suitable locations in the UK, such as museums etc.

We need to know who will be interested in sharing their stories about their time on the Berlin Airlift.

In order to arrange these interviews and if you are interested please let our Webmaster Colin Cottle know as soon as possible at: Colin Cottle, 27 The Crescent, Cranham, Essex, RM14 1JZ.

Telephone: 01708 224560. Email address: [cottle.c@talktalk.net](mailto:cottle.c@talktalk.net)

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### SQUADRON LEADER L.E.A. ZEKE HACKE

Squadron Leader Zeke Hacke who lived in Great Wilbraham, near Cambridge passed away peacefully at his home on the 28th June 2011.

He had cancer, which he had fought for over a year. His wife Jeanne, three children and granddaughter were with him when he died.

A service of thanksgiving for Zeke was held at St Nicholas village church in Great Wilbraham.

He was a Dakota pilot based at RAF Oakington in the UK with No.30 Squadron and on the Berlin Airlift, serving firstly at Wunstorf, Fassberg and finally Lübeck.

He completed 240 trips to Berlin and back whilst on the Airlift and said at an interview with the Cambridge Evening News at the Imperial War Museum Duxford that the flights were dangerous particularly during the winter of 1948/49.

He said that as the flights to and from Berlin and the heights all aircraft had to fly at were in the defined air corridors there was little that could be done to avoid the bad weather, which was the cause of a number of serious accidents and the deaths of many aircrew, Royal Air Force & British Army personnel and also a number of civilian passengers.

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### 8th DECEMBER 1948.

We welcome new Associate member Bernhard Grabowiecki who tells us that his mother Ruth, was flown from West Berlin to England on the 8th December 1948 by being flown out from RAF Gatow..

She had arrived in West Berlin aged 15 years after being evacuated from the port of Danzig travelling overland to live in Charlottenburg in the British sector of Berlin.

They lived in the cellar of a bomb damaged apartment house in the Kaiserdamm in Berlin before moving to other properties. Bernhard is keen to try to piece together his mother's journey from Danzig to Berlin and then finally to England, particularly if anyone has a record or how to source them of Air Movements from RAF Gatow on the 8th December 1948

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## An Unresolved Mystery

By J Derrick Kendrick

Berlin Airlift - RASC- Buckeburg.

In the first half of 1948 I was undertaking my National Service in the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) and was based at HQ The Training Centre, Bad Lippespringe, (near Paderborn), BAOR, Westphalia, West Germany. I was running a drawing office of ten German nationals that prepared military educational and teaching materials and we constructed very large scale models of wartime battle fields such as the Libyan desert and Burmese jungle for use in Army officer re-training.

I had been called up in the second batch of National Servicemen in mid-January 1947 (the coldest and 'snowiest' of winters experienced in years) and subsequently, after basic training at Cirencester and pre-officer training at Buller Barracks, Aldershot, I had chosen to become a clerk rather than a driver. After Aldershot (they decided they had enough officers already in service) I was returned to Cirencester to undertake a Tactical Sketching course I had volunteered for. [We were supposed to get up before dawn, be driven to the main battle front, settle down in the dark with sketching pads and pencils at the ready, and sketch the position/s of any gunfire we could observe and our drawings were then to be transferred by dispatch rider on motor bike to GHQ for analysis and instruction to gunners where to shell when daytime arrived.] I was then posted to Thetford, East Anglia, to await an overseas posting. I was eventually posted to West Germany arriving in Bielefeld in early November 1947 before being sent on to Bad Lippespringe where I reached the rank of Corporal in charge of this drawing office.

I was expecting to be demobilized around mid 1948 when all demobilization was stopped due to the situation in Berlin. I was then posted to Buckeberg Schloss, HQ Berlin Airlift, as a statistician/draughtsman.

This is where the mystery occurs.

Although I can recall my duties which were to total the daily amount of derv, potatoes and coal arriving by rail from the Ruhr and going to Wunstorf airfield for air transportation to Gatow in West Berlin, I have no idea what actually went on in this Buckeberg Schloss. I do know that there were British, American and French officers occupying parts of the Schloss I never ventured into but I never found out what their roles were nor what they all did. I just attended the Schloss daily, crossing the bridge over moat with its giant carp lolling on the surface and did my calculations of amounts of daily goods and then drew up my large charts in coloured inks and presented them to my immediate superior an RASC army major.

I recall daily reading of the Frosty Winterbottom cartoons of Operation Planefare in the Berlin Airlift newspaper. [In passing - is there a record kept somewhere of these newspapers? That would make interesting re-reading.] I also recall hearing a story about how small carp were taken from the Buckeberg Schloss moat around the 1830-40's and wrapped in wet sacks and were sent as a gift by stagecoach to Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle and that they survived the journey and may still be around today (or their descendants are!).

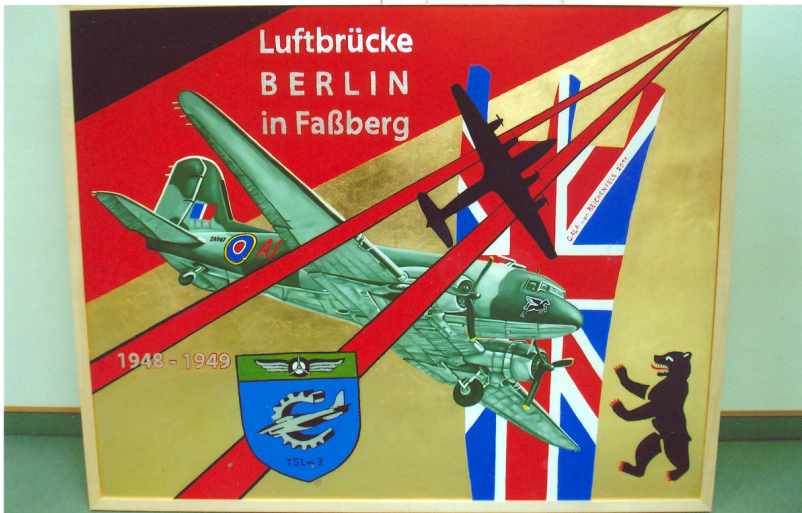
One other story to tell involved the belief that there were secret passages within the Schloss and that my little cramped drawing office was at the location of the start point of one such passage. So one night after work, two of us started tapping on the wooden panelled walls lining my office and pressing knobs and button in carvings seeking access to such a passage if there were any. Imagine our surprise when at one point the panel opened as a door. What to do now - obviously find a torch and start moving carefully down the narrow space behind the panelling - which we did. A little while later there was a chink of light ahead showing through another panel and so, very carefully we pulled on this panel and lo and behold it opened into a lighted space. It was one of the Schloss royal toilets. There in the centre of this large white tiled room was this large WC and seat and with a wash basin with gold taps on a side wall. The seat cover and seat edge of the toilet itself was adorned with purple velvet and it also had purple velvet arms either side as well! Comfort indeed and truly it was a "throne" room.

But I still didn't ever find out what went on at the Buckeberg Schloss as a vital part of the Berlin Airlift. At one time I tried contacting the RASC to see if their army historians of the RASC records of the regiment had anything published but there was nothing at all about the contribution of the RASC at Buckeberg Schloss.

On another occasion I found an e-mail address of the then occupiers / owners of Buckeberg Schloss in some tourist literature and so I wrote a message to them just like this one. I thought they might have been interested in these post-war exploits at Buckeberg Schloss but I did not ever get a response.

In most Berlin Airlift literature there is mention of Buckeberg alongside Wunstorf, Fassberg, Celle, etc etc. I don't think Buckeberg had an airfield and therefore I have always assumed this mention of Buckeberg was because of happenings at the Buckeberg Schloss. But what actually went on at the Schloss [apart from clandestine visitors via secret passages to the royal toilet) I have never read about anything anywhere. So ... before everyone drops off the twig if you do know can you please advise me? I'd love to know what these British, American and French officers were actually doing at Buckeberg Schloss and where they fitted into Operation Planefare. I didn't know at the time and didn't ask and I haven't been able to find out since. To me it is an unresolved mystery of what was Buckeberg Schloss's contribution to the Berlin Airlift,

J. Derrick Kendrick.



Fassberg - 27th August 2011

The painting by Frau Gala Van Reichenfels from Munich, presented to the Mayor of Fassberg Herr Hans Werner Schlitte at the Rathaus on the occasion of the Annual Last Flight to Berlin Ceremony



**BBAA - Germany Visit August 2011**

**Top. Hanover. The Fountains in the Gardens at Herrenhausen.**

**Centre - Thursday 25th August Müden, the Heidesee Park near Fassberg. Waiting for the Band Concert by the Berlin Gatow Luftwaffe Band**

**Left - Fassberg Airlift Museum. The Fassberg Flyer Dakota under its weatherproof canopy With a group of sheep waiting very patiently.**



**Fassberg August 27th 2011**  
**The two wreaths commemorating the last flight to Berlin in August 1949.**  
**BBAW Wreath on the right.**



**Fassberg August 27th 2011**  
**Rainer Kruppik, Eric Chambers, Geoff Smith.**  
**Underneath the “Fassberg Flyer”**  
**At the Luftbrücke Museum.**



**Bispingen near Soltau.**  
**The most unusual “Upside Down House” located at the new Theme Park. Nearby is the “Snowdome” with a ski-slope and lift**



**Hamburg August 2011**  
**The “Miniature Wonderland” exhibition centre.**  
**Five floors of working models and scenery.**  
**The exhibition includes Alpine scenes complete with Mountains, cable cars and ski lifts.**



**Celle/Fassberg visit August 2011. Bergen Bakery.**  
**During our visit to Bergen Barracks we were given a guided tour by Colin Albert, the Curator for the history of the base. We visited the former Bakery area, which was an enormous site. The Bakery was responsible for providing bread etc for all the British forces in the surrounding area.**



**Hanover Sunday 28th August 2011.**  
**The famous Gardens at Herrenhausen**  
**The Gardens are easily accessed by tramcar from near the main Railway Station**



Association Tie  
(Members only)  
£11.50 UK  
£12.50 overseas



60th Anniversary  
BBAA Memorial Miniature Replica.  
It stands 9 inches high on a  
Circular wooden base.  
Made of matt and polished Pewter,  
with Bronzed Eagle  
And dated  
Anniversary Plaque at the base.  
£20.00 UK  
Plus £5.00 postage & Packing  
Overseas cost on application



Cravat  
(Members only)  
£2.50 UK  
£3.50 overseas



Lapel Pin Badge  
£3.00 UK  
£4.00 overseas



Cloth Badge  
(Members only)  
Large £2.00 UK  
£3.00 overseas  
Small £1.50 UK  
£2.50 overseas  
With magnetic clasp  
£3.00 UK  
£4.00 overseas

## ***BRITISH BERLIN AIRLIFT ASSOCIATION***

***Shop -To place an order, write to Mrs Janet Howard,  
80 Park Street, Kings Cliffe, Peterborough PE8 6XN***

### **BERLIN REUNION 2012.**

At the Spring Reunion for 2011 held at the Eastwood Hall Hotel, Mansfield Road, Eastwood, Nottingham, BBAA members asked if it was possible to arrange a visit to Germany in 2012, to include the annual ceremony held at Luftbrücke Platz, Tempelhof, Berlin on the 12th May.

We have looked at various options for such a visit, especially as a coach tour was favoured by the majority of those members present. Two coach visits were considered. One was a 9 days nights visit to Berlin only and another was to stay in the Harz Mountains near to Goslar, with a visit to Berlin on the 12th May for the annual commemorations.

We have now agreed with Grey's of Ely to have a 10 day 9 nights visit to Berlin and the Harz Mountains. Please see the itinerary shown on Page 3 of this newsletter. For a coach visit to be viable however we do need a minimum of 30 people on the trip

A Berlin only flying to Berlin for 5 days, using a local coach and public transport has also been considered. Accommodation in Berlin is usually at a premium during this period as there are many events going on in and around the city.

**Note! An early response is essential to enable us to firm up the enquiry with the tour company.**

**BBAA SUPPLEMENT - ITEMS FOR SALE****BBAA VIDEO'S & DVD'S**

We still have available a series of video's covering visits made by members during the Commemorations in Berlin and London. Also, of visits to former Airlift airfields in Germany.

**Volume One.** This is a record of the dedication of the BBAA Standard at St Clement Danes Church and the June 1998 visit to Berlin. It covers the departure at Heathrow, arrival at Tegel Berlin. The ceremony at Gatow, the reception at the Berliner Rathaus, and the veterans march to the Allied Forces Museum. Also included is the ceremony at the Airlift Memorial, the Grosse Zapfenstreich Tattoo, Tempelhof Airday and the boat trip on the river Spree.

**Volume Two.** Covers the May 1999 large group visit to Berlin, including the boat trip on the Lake Havel, the visit to former RAF Gatow and the Air Museum, the Alliierten Museum, Tempelhof Memorial and the Veterans March at the Olympic Stadium Tattoo.

**Volume Three.** The Harz Mountains visit in August, including Wunstorf, Fassberg and Celle. Also the visits to Goslar and Colditz Castle.

**Volume Four:-** This is the May 1999 Dedication Service at St Clement Danes Church, the Strand, London Reception and at the Law Courts.

**Volume Five:-** The Air/Coach visit in May 2000 to Hamburg, Lubeck, Schleswig, Berlin, Wunstorf and Fassberg.

**Volume Six:-** Includes the Telford Reunion, May 2000, the BBAA Memorial Dedication at the National Memorial Arboretum on the 12th May 2001 and the visit to Royal Air Force Stafford.

**Volume Seven:-** The August 2001 Tour to Hanover, Fassberg, Wunstorf and Hamelin.

**Volume Eight:-** The April 2002 Spring Reunion at York plus, the May 2002 Tour to Hamburg, Ludwigslust, Glaisin and Berlin. A two and a half hour video. Good value!!

**Volume Nine:-** The May 2004 visit to Germany commemorating the 55th anniversary of the end of the Berlin Blockade with visits in Berlin to Tempelhof, the International Airshow at Shoenefeld, the Allied Museum and the former RAF Gatow.

From Berlin we move on to Hanover, then Fassberg, Wunstorf, Bad Eilsen and Buckeburg. Our final visit is to the former RAF Lübeck and the Baltic seaside resort of Travemünde.

This video is two and a half hours long and is available in VHS and also DVD format.

**Gloucester Reunion 2007 -** We have a DVD available of the Weekend Reunion at the Holiday Inn, Gloucester on the 26/28th April 2007. It covers the group tours to Slimbridge, Tintern Abbey and the SS Great Britain at Bristol docks

Note! They are DVD version's at **£12.00 including postage & packing UK & Europe and £14.00 elsewhere.**

**All Volumes are available now!**

. If you wish to purchase or reserve a copy, send a cheque payable to:-

British Berlin Airlift Association to - **BBAA**, Mrs Janet Howard, 80 Park Street, King's Cliffe, Peterborough PE8 6XN.

Note! Video's are now available in UK Pal and also NTSC format.

We also have available two videos showing the presentations at the Royal Aeronautical Society, in London on 28th May 1999.

These are **RAES Volume One**, The Morning Session, was chaired by Christopher Wain, former BBC Air Correspondent and includes:- The Role of Military Airlift by AVM S.M. Nicholl CBE and Industry's Response to Military Airlift Requirements by Air Cdre B. Poulton AFC RAF.

**RAES Volume Two**, The Afternoon Session chaired by John Tusa, was devoted to the Berlin Airlift with:- The Political, Military and Economic Background presented by Mrs Ann Tusa The Organisation and Operations presented by Gp Capt A.B. Stephens RAF (Retd) MoD Air Historical Branch. A film on the Berlin Airlift and finally Personal Reflections by Four Airlift Veterans.

These two videos are available, **only through the BBAA** as DVD's at a cost of **£18.00 each, including postage and packing. (£20.00 each overseas)** Send a cheque made payable to BBAA to Mrs Janet Howard, address as above.

**BERLIN COMMEMORATIONS MAY 2009 & THE COMMEMORATIONS AT THE NMA**

We have DVD'S available of the group visit to Berlin from the 9th May to the 15th May 2009 and the Weekend Reunion at the Tillington Hall Hotel Stafford with the 60th Anniversary Commemorations at the National Memorial Arboretum. To receive a copy write stating which DVD's you require to: Mrs Janet Howard, 80 Park Street, Kings Cliffe, Peterborough PE6 6XN with a cheque payable to BBAA for **£12.00** each in the UK and £14.00 elsewhere.

**Note! Add £2.00** to receive a copy of the Souvenir Concert Programme with these DVD.'s

Members are reminded once again that subscriptions are due on the 1st January each year.

The Annual Rate is **£15.00**, wherever situated. Cheques should be made payable to the BBAA and sent to:-

The BBAA Treasurer, Mrs Janet Howard, 80 Park Street, King's Cliffe, Peterborough PE8 6XN

**However, if you wish to pay by Bankers Order**, the details are as shown on page 2 of this newsletter:-

**Payable to: British Berlin Airlift Association.**

**Bank:- Lloyds/TSB PLC, Maidenhead. Account No. 1223532 Sort Code: 30-95-36**

**Note!** Would you please remember to amend your existing standing order if it is still paying the earlier subscription amount of ten pounds.

A small number of members are still having to send a separate amount of five pounds to the Treasurer

**A NEW BBAA BOOKLET**

We have a new Booklet entitled **AIRCRAFT & AIRBASES of THE BERLIN AIRLIFT 1948 - 1949.**

With personal recollections by Air & Ground Personnel.

It is A5 size and has a total of 62 pages and has been compiled over the past sixteen years by our late Chairman Sqn Ldr Frank Stillwell & current Chairman Geoff Smith from the time the BBAA was first formed in 1995.

It includes stories and also photographs supplied by many members of the BBAA, some of whom however are no longer with us.

The booklet is available from - Geoff Smith, 12 Tyesdale, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 9XZ.

The cost is **£7.00 each** including postage

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**BRIEFING BOOKLET and BBAA - THE FIRST TEN YEARS**

We have upgraded our popular **Briefing Booklet** on the Berlin Airlift. It is now 16 pages and includes photos of the BBAA Memorial at Alrewas, together with some of the British Airlift aircraft. It also includes details of Berlin Airlift museums and lists the British and Commonwealth casualties. The cost is **£3.00** each,

**BBAA - THE FIRST TEN YEARS:**

We have produced a booklet describing the first ten years of the BBAA:

It contains a potted history from 1994 to 2004 and a number of photographs, which include the May 2004 group visit to Germany to commemorate the 55th Anniversary of the end of the Berlin Blockade. The cost is **£5.00** each.

The cost includes postage.

Both booklets are available from:- Geoff Smith, 12 Tyesdale, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 9XZ.

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**THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM**

The Arboretum recently welcomed its millionth visitor and on the 17th May 2011 celebrated the 10th year since it was first opened by the Duchess of Kent in 2001.

.Following the opening of the Armed Forces Memorial by HM The Queen in October 2007 the visitor numbers have increased dramatically from around 20,000 to now 300,000 per annum and the NMA is now fully managed by the Royal British Legion.

The increase in numbers has caused the Arboretum to plan for the future by submitting a scheme to redevelop the car park and entrance area, enlarge the Restaurant, and create an "Armed Forces Pavilion & Heroes Square". An appeal for donations to help fund the new concept was launched this year by HRH Prince William, who is now the Duke of Cambridge.

The appeal is going very well with donations & pledges being received from trusts, companies and also many of the Royal British Legion branches.

If you wish to make a donation it can be made through the Arboretum's website [www.thenma.org.uk](http://www.thenma.org.uk)

A cheque can be sent to the NMA Appeal Office, 1 Fitzgerald Road, London SW14 8HA.

Cheques should be made payable to the NMA Appeal.

The Armed Forces Memorial now carries the names of over 16,000 Service men & women who have lost their lives since 1948, including some of those who were lost during the Berlin Airlift in 1948-1949..

With the present ongoing conflict in Afghanistan more names are being added all too frequently.

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**THE BERLIN WALL**

It is now 50 years since West Berlin was first cut-off from East Berlin by the erection of barbed wire barricades. The first barricades without any warning were installed on Sunday 13th August 1961, These were soon replaced by cement and concrete blocks with what became the first Berlin Wall. Later a more sophisticated wall over 10 feet tall was built to try and stop people from East Berlin escaping to the West. Many lives were lost trying to get to freedom..

The Wall finally was breached on the 9th November 1989 when hundreds of East Berliners after hearing on the radio that the crossing points would soon be opened streamed to the check-points. They were let through when the frontier guards were overwhelmed by the numbers.. Now, there is very little left to see of what caused so much grief for 28 years.

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**Photographs**

We would like to thank the following for supplying photographs for this issue of the newsletter:

Colin Albert - Colin Cottle - Eric Chambers - Joyce Rahim

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Note! The views and opinions expressed by contributors within this newsletter are not necessarily those of either the Editor or the British Berlin Airlift Association.

### AIRLIFT WEBSITES

There are numerous Websites with reference to the Berlin Airlift Some of those which may be of interest to members are listed below. You may know of others that could be useful - Please let me know. Ed.

You know ours of course - **bbaa-airlift.org.uk**

Alliierten Museum, Berlin - [www.alliiertenmuseum.de](http://www.alliiertenmuseum.de)

Gatow Old Boys - [www.gatow.org](http://www.gatow.org)

Find a friend - [www.servicepals.com](http://www.servicepals.com)

Forces Reunited - [www.forcesreunited.org.uk](http://www.forcesreunited.org.uk)

The Berlin Airlift Television documentary 1997-1998 - [www.kcl.ac.uk/lhcma/cats/berlinairlift/xb20-01.htm](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/lhcma/cats/berlinairlift/xb20-01.htm)

Details of Headquarters No 46 Group, Wunstorf, Fassberg, Gatow, Lübeck and Schleswigland -

[www.britains-smallwars.com/cold-war/berlin-airlift.htm](http://www.britains-smallwars.com/cold-war/berlin-airlift.htm)

HQ BAFO & 2nd TAF - Bad Eilsen Association & Reunion - [www.badeilsen.org.uk](http://www.badeilsen.org.uk) - Contact Geoff Lipscombe

Interpreters Dilemma - [www.tonycunnane.co.uk](http://www.tonycunnane.co.uk)

Royal Air Force Regiment Service Club - [www.easynet.co.uk/feeley/history\\_halwarren.htm](http://www.easynet.co.uk/feeley/history_halwarren.htm)

OC RAF Gatow Gp Capt B.C. Yarde - [www.rafweb.org/Biographiesarde/Yarde\\_BC.htm](http://www.rafweb.org/Biographiesarde/Yarde_BC.htm)

American Airlift site - [www.Konnections.com/airlift](http://www.Konnections.com/airlift)

### DVD - PETERBOROUGH REUNION 2008

We have a DVD available of the Weekend Reunion at the Holiday Inn, Peterborough on the 26/29th June 2008. It covers the group tours to IWM Duxford, Burghley House, the Cresset Big Band Concert, the Nene Valley Railway, the March Past through the city centre and the St. John's Parish Church Commemorative Service.

To receive a copy write to Janet Howard, 80 Park Street, Kings Cliffe, Peterborough PE8 6XN with a cheque payable to BBAA for £18.00 in the UK and £20.00 elsewhere.

We also have available, copies of the **Souvenir Programme** for the 'Forties Night' concert by the Johnny Harris Orchestra at the Cresset Theatre, Peterborough on the 28th June 2008. It is A4 size, 28 pages with photographs etc. (See page 8.)

If you would like a copy they are available from Janet Howard, 80 Park Street, Kings Cliffe, Peterborough PE8 6XN at a cost of £3.00 each in the UK or £3.50 overseas. This includes postage and packing. **Note! Only £2.00 if ordered with the Peterborough DVD.**

### BBAA - Celle/Fassberg visit 2011.

**Day One, Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August** - A small group of five people, consisting of BBAA members and friends made a visit to Fassberg to attend the annual Airlift ceremony on the 27<sup>th</sup> August.

The group which was Geoff Smith, Joyce Rahim, Eric Chambers, Colin and Josie Cottle. travelled from Stansted Airport to Hanover Airport with the German Wings Airline on Wednesday the 24<sup>th</sup> August, arriving at Langenhagen, Hanover at 10.20am

After picking up our five-seat hire car at the airport we travelled the short distance to Celle where we encountered our first problem, "Road Works".

Sat-Nav's do not solve this problem, so it was a little tour of the Celle environs until we got to the main road leading from Hanover into Celle. As we had done this route several times on previous visits we were now able to find our way to the Cellerhof Hotel.

We had a meeting arranged with our German friends, Karl & Rosemarie Rosenkranz and Klaus Peters arranged for 15.00 at the Waldafé near Mudén so we had little time to unpack.

Arriving at the Waldcafé just a few minutes late we had coffee and cakes before setting off for nearby Hermannsberg to visit a Tablecloth's & Cards shop.

As is usual with BBAA visits this is where you have to be prepared for the unexpected.

It was suggested that we could now have a short trip to visit Bispingen to see the new "UPSIDE DOWN HOUSE" and also the "SNOW-DOME".

The short trip turned out to be more than an hour away, but the house which was open to visitors was a very strange and unusual experience.

The Snow-Dome with its busy ski slope and chair-lift was a winter scene & temperature in August. Now, it was time to return to Celle, find a place to eat and then, sleep time back at the hotel.

The first day had been a long, but most enjoyable day.

**Day Two** – Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August: The morning was a visit to the British Army Hohne Barracks at Bergen where we were met by Val Rosse, the Secretary to Col Hugh Pearson, the Barracks Liaison officer. After lunch which was taken in the Barracks Restaurant, where Hugh Pearson was able to join us we were accompanied by Val Rosse and Colin Albert, who is the Curator for the history of Bergen Barracks on a tour of the enormous former Bakery unit and also the unloading ramp area of the former 1939 – 1945 Belsen Concentration camp

In the late afternoon we had to be in Mudén for the open-air concert by the Berlin Gatow Luftwaffe band followed by an evening meal at the nearby Heideseé restaurant.

**Continued on page 12**

**Continued from page 11. Celle/Fassberg visit August 2011.**

**Day Three** – Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August: This was a visit to Hamburg by the 11.22 train from Unterlüss railway station. We had to change trains at Uelzen and then took the train to Hamburg where we had lunch in the new Harbour City area. After lunch we walked to the Miniature Wonderland exhibition.

This was a huge exhibition area on several floors with models of Alpine & City scenes complete with working models of well known road, rail and air layouts. Very, very busy, but well worth a visit.

Following the Miniature Wonderland exhibition we then went for coffee & cake by the Alster Lakes and then back to the railway station for our return train. It was now time for our train, which did not arrive.

Thanks to our German friends with us we found that our train had been affected by a lightning strike during a thunder-storm.

After waiting and wondering what to do we decided to try to return by a different route which meant three changes, eventually arriving back at the station in Unterlüss where we had left our car and returned to Celle.

**Day Four** – Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> August: The day of the ceremony at Fassberg was very wet.

We began with a reception in the Town Hall, courtesy of the Mayor Herr Werner Schlitte, ably assisted by his wife Marina.

An excellent painting by Mrs Gala von Reichenfels of an RAF Dakoka in flight, entitled “Lufrücke Royal Air Force” was presented to the Mayor by the Artist.

Also attending was Mr Joachim Kiau from the Berlin Chapter Airlift Association.

Geoff Smith presented the Mayor with photograph's of the memorial bench seats dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum to Sqn Ldr Frank Stillwell & Mrs Doreen Smith.

The wreath laying ceremony was carried out at the memorial stone in Luftbrücke Platz with the BBAA wreath provided as usual by the local flower shop adjacent to the Town Hall.

Following the wreath laying a visit was made to the Luftbrücke Museum adjacent to the Fassberg Airbase.

We then made a visit to the home of Paul and Dagmar Hicks. Paul, the Chairman of the Fassberg Airlift Museum was recovering from a recent operation on his leg, but was making a good recovery.

Then we made our way to the Herrenbrücke Hotel in Fassberg, where we were joined at the evening meal by Manfred & Gerda Sturzenbecher, Mercedes Weitz and her husband Peter, Karl & Rosemarie Rosenkranz, Claus & Karin Peters.

**Day Five** – **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August:** This was a visit to Hannover, again by train from Unterlüss station. (My first visit back to Hanover Railway Station since arriving there by military train in 1948 from the Hook of Holland - GS)

We went by tramcar to the Herrenhausen Gardens, spending a very pleasant couple of hours walking around. Then it was back by the tramcar to Hanover Railway Station.

We had refreshments in a marquee just outside the station and were unexpectedly entertained for an hour by a 12 piece dance orchestra playing music of the 40's & 50's.

Then it was back to Unterlüss Station and then to Celle for our evening meal.

**Day Six** – **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August:** We were given an organised tour of the famous Stud in Celle (Landestüt Celle). Seeing how the horses were selected, trained and stabled. Following the visit to the Stud we had a guided tour of the historic centre of Celle, travelling in a horse drawn carriage.

**Day Seven** – **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August:** We spent the morning at leisure in Celle, walking around the shops, visiting the C&A store (sadly no longer possible in the UK) Then we travelled up to Müden village to the home of Claus & Karin Peters and in the afternoon Karin gave us a most interesting tour of the village.

We then finished off the day with an excellent evening meal at the home of Karl & Rosemarie Rosenkranz.

**Day Eight: Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> August:** This was the day of our return to the UK. The morning was spent in Celle, then we commenced our return to Hanover Airport, calling enroute to visit a local private airfield at Arloh that I had previously visited 12 years ago with John Collier, Peter Izard and my late wife Doreen.

We were made very welcome by a walking group who appeared to be the local German U3A. We were able to have a coffee with them in the clubroom.

(There wasn't any flying this time, unlike when on our previous visit we asked if they knew where RAF Celle airfield was located. One of the locals said “I know where it is, Jump in and I will show you”.

With there being four of us, plus the owner of the plane, which was only a four-seat capacity we therefore had to make two separate flights

So, we all had a flight in a small Cessna aircraft, flying over the former RAF airfield with Peter Izard being asked if he would like to take over the controls and land it if he so desired.

Peter said OK and did this flying around Celle, making a perfect landing back at the flying club in the Cessna)

Having plenty of time we thanked our hosts and left the flying club making our way cross-country to Hanover Airport at Langenhagen, finally arriving at the airport to return the hire car and pick-up the flight back to the UK..

Unfortunately, again we had a long wait for the flight back to Stansted, due to our aircraft being delayed in Italy for 90 minutes, before flying in to Hanover.

So, ended a most enjoyable visit to Germany once again and our thanks go to all those who helped to make it a success.

Geoff Smith.