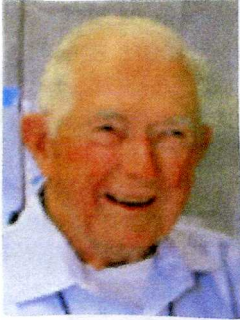




# *The Legacy*



**The Legacy is a quarterly publication of the Berlin Airlift Veterans Association**  
**Volume 28 - Issue # 3 -- July -- August -- September -- 2018**  
**[www.berlinairliftveteransassociation.org](http://www.berlinairliftveteransassociation.org) Facebook; BAVA Brats**



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FROM RAY ROBERTS SR.**

We're facing the last few months preparing for our venture in Omaha to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. We can celebrate that Americans British and French combined in the successful effort saving West Berlin and its 2.4 million people, plus stopping the growth of Communism. This great event 70 years ago developed many Heroes but sadly we lost a number of our comrades due to accidents and weather. They will be remembered in our reunion.

The 70<sup>th</sup> year of celebrations by England and Germany will give thanks for this success. England is planning a special event in London to celebrate both their support of the Berlin Airlift and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Air Force. The President of the British Berlin Airlift Veterans Association is Colin Cottle, their veterans will participate with the RAF for the celebration.

The official start of the BAVA celebration was held on June 26 at the Wall Technical Museum in conjunction with the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation where a large display of the Berlin Airlift was unveiled. On September 14, 15, 16 the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" will be at the Udvar Hazy Aviation Museum at Dulles International Airport in Washington hosted by the Germany Embassy. On Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> the national spotlight will be on the Air Force Memorial in Arlington VA where a Berlin Airlift memorial service will begin at 4:00 PM. This is co-hosted by the Air Force Association and the German Embassy. All BAVA members are invited to attend especially those living near the district.

Our celebration will begin in Omaha on September 26th with a nice easy schedule set up for you to enjoy without a high cost and without much walking. I want to thank Eddie Ide for his work in preparing the Omaha event for us. Eddie has worked to coordinate all functions for everyone with a good hotel, food, and active events to make this a fun trip for all of us. We need strong attendance to keep BAVA growing. The future for BAVA is to continue with our growth and keep reunions going.

Over the years we have lost many Berlin Airlift veterans. All of our BAVA veterans were and are outstanding Heroes for their service during those years of 1948 & 49. We can thank President Harry Truman directing our nation to bring aircraft from all over the world to establish a successful Airlift. Now Renee Rodgers, daughter of BAVA Secretary "Dub" Southers, has formed the BAVA Brats with the descendants of our veterans. I want to encourage all "off springs" to join "bavabrats" on Facebook and get active in all our functions, and eventually take over the leadership of BAVA. I will look forward to the Board Meeting in Omaha to discuss changing our by-laws to include the BAVA Brats on the board, the 2019 reunion, plus more. I look forward to seeing you all in Omaha.





## BERLIN AIRLIFT HISTORICAL FOUNDATION UNVEILS DISPLAY HONORING FRED HALL & AIRLIFTERS



On June 27 a large display of Berlin Airlift memorabilia was officially unveiled in the Wall Township Military Technical Museum at Wall NJ. The display is a tribute to Fred Hall and features the many artifacts he gathered as a Berlin Airlift Veteran, as crew member of the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom", as BAVA Reunion Chairman and Treasurer. It was funded by Catherine Hall who worked diligently with Fred over the years to fulfill his duties to BAVA as eyesight and health declined.

Measuring 25 feet wide and 10 feet tall the display was designed and assembled by C-54 crew member Glenn Able a retired professional designer. This is actually a tribute to all Berlin Airlift Veterans with many details shown. The space is provided by the Military Technology Museum and Information Age, a non-profit organization that has one of the largest and rarest collections of static and operating vehicles in the world surrounding the airlift tribute. Museum location and hours are at: [www.infoage.org](http://www.infoage.org). Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation is at: [spiritoffreedom.org](http://spiritoffreedom.org)



Left side panel



Showcase displays anniversary souvenirs



Right side panel





## AIRLIFT HISTORY FOR BAVA LEGACY

### JULY - AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 1948

**This is part 3 of a 7 part quarterly history of the airlift from January 1948 thru September 1949**

**AIR CORRIDOR STATISTICS;** The only agreement signed by the Russians for access to Berlin was for three air corridors. It provided that each was 20 miles wide to an altitude of 10,000 feet. The distance shown is the mileage over the Russian zone. There were no land access agreements.

**THE SOUTHERN CORRIDOR** extended north east 211 miles from Fulda to Berlin and passed over three Russian air bases. This was the route used by the Americans from Rhein-Main and Wiesbaden. The flight distance from RM to Berlin was 288 miles.

**THE CENTRAL CORRIDOR** went due east from Hannover 115 miles to Berlin, it passed over two Russian air bases. This was used as a one way exit from Berlin back to the West German bases.

**THE NORTHERN CORRIDOR** went South East from Hamburg to Berlin and was 95 miles. It was the main route to serve the 7 British air bases.

**Notes;** C-54 aircraft will be identified as A/C. Rhein-Main will be identified as R-M

ATS = Air Transport Squadron TCS = Troop Carrier Squadron

### JULY 1948

1. Soviets Withdraw from Berlin Kommandatura. The 60th and 61st Troop Carrier Wings (TCW) based in Europe are attached to the airlift based at Kaufbeuren and R-M.
2. 20th TCS from Panama and 54 TCS from Alaska begins flights from R-M
3. 19th TCS from Hawaii begins flights from R-M. Russians reject lifting the blockade unless the allies give up the idea of a West Germany.
5. Two squadrons of (RAF) Sunderland flying boats begin operating from RAF Finkenwerder to land in Lake Havel in Berlin. Their cargo is salt as these aircraft had corrosion resistant.
7. The first coal is flown to Berlin in barracks bags as airlift exceeds 1,000 tons in 24 hours.
8. First fatal accident; a C-47 crashes near Wiesbaden results in three deaths, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt George B. Smith, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Leland V. Williams, and army civilian employee Karl Hagan..
10. Lt. Gail Halvorsen leaves Brookley AFB Mobile AL and heads for Rhein-Main in C-54 # 548. 9 A/C from 17<sup>th</sup> ATS leave Great Falls MT.
12. Lt. Gail Halvorsen's makes his first flight to West Berlin. A new runway is started at Tempelhof, work continues for a second one at Gatow.
18. Lt. Halvorsen meets children at Tempelhof. The next day as his C-54 makes his approach to Tempelhof he drops three handkerchiefs parachutes with candy attached.
19. The first of SAC 60 B-29's from Rapid City SD arrive at RAF Scampton in UK with 10 crew members. 30 more B-29's will follow. To eliminate congestion, RAF moves all C-47s from Wunsdorf to Fassberg to make room for 4 engine York aircraft to deliver first coal in duffle bags.
22. General Lucius D. Clay flies to Washington to discuss the situation with President Harry S. Truman. American aircraft strength reaches 54 C-54s and 105 C47's. British airplanes, total 40 RAF York's and 50 C-47s. Maximum daily tons to date: 1,500 tons (U.S.) and 750 tons (British).
23. Military Air Transport Service (MATs) prepares to accept eight additional squadrons each with nine A/C. Major General William H. Tunner receives orders to become Commander of Airlift.
- 25 Second fatal crash; A C-47 crashes into a Berlin apartment house in the Friedenau borough. Killed are 1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. Charles H. King and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert W. Stuber.



### Berlin Airlift history for BAVA Legacy part 3 continued.

26. West Berliners agree to form a government. Berlin police split between East and West. Three western ambassadors begin meeting with Stalin in Moscow. No positive results
27. 9 A/C from 12<sup>th</sup> ATS leave Westover for R-M. Russians threaten to fly in the corridors. General Tunner and advance party leave U.S. First British civil tanker aircraft are hired, three Lancastrians of Flight Refueling section, these are converted bombers that bombed Berlin 3 years earlier.
28. 9 A/C from 11<sup>th</sup> ATS leave Westover for R-M
29. General Tunner and advance party arrive in Wiesbaden and establish the 7499th Air Division.
30. 9 A/C from 22<sup>nd</sup> ATS leave Fairfield CA for R-M. New daily record: 1,918 tons flown by U.S.
31. 7 A/C from 23<sup>rd</sup> ATS leave Fairfield CA for R-M. Western envoys discuss blockade situations with Soviets in Moscow. In 339 flights, lift hauls 2,027 tons to Berlin. By the end of July the British and American areas had received over 7 million displaced persons from the territories of Sudetenland, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Romania and Lithuania that were taken by the Russians.

July tonnage delivered by British and Americans; 69,005.7 in 13,528 flights.

### AUGUST 1948

1. RAF decides to operate all C-47's from Lubeck, British zone.
2. No blockade resolution likely after Western envoys meet with Stalin.
3. Two more MATS squadrons leave the U.S. for airlift.
4. Lt. Halvorsen reports to his commander and faces the music over the parachute candy drops. General Tunner likes the idea and operation "Little Vittles" is born. Gail becomes the "Berlin Airlift Candy Bomber". Thirteen British civilian aircraft join the lift: nine C-47s (Fassberg), two Hythe flying boats at Finkenwerder, one Halton, and one Liberator (Wunsdorf).
5. Oberpfaffenhofen AB (Obie), opens as to a maintenance depot for 200-hour inspections. First manufactured goods leave Berlin by air. Work starts on additional airfield at Tegel in French sector approximately 19,000 workers, 40 % women work 12 hr days for 1.4 Deutschmark an hour and a hot meal. Half of the meals go home to feed families.
7. Combined airlift - new daily record- 666 flights, 3,800 tons.
8. Two more MATS squadrons leaves U. S. for Germany.
10. 18 A/C from 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> ATS leave Kelly AFB, TX for R-M. New record 2,437 tons in 346 flights.
12. In 707 flights USAF and RAF deliver 4,742 tons; First day exceeding minimum 4500 tons.
13. Fiftieth day of the airlift "Black Friday". One A/C crashes and burns at Tempelhof and two others are damaged avoiding the fire while landing in heavy fog. General Tunner demands a revised flight pattern and that experienced air traffic controllers be recalled to the Air Force.
14. A C-74 Globemaster arrives at Rhein-Main and will make 24 flights to Berlin before returning to the U.S. in September. It can carry 30 tons of cargo each trip. 3X the A/C.
15. First 10-tons of newsprint since June 25th reaches Berlin.
17. 7 A/C from 3rd ATS leave Tokyo and 8 A/C from 1<sup>st</sup> ATS leave Hawaii for R-M. The first C-74 participates in the Berlin Airlift,



### **Berlin Airlift history for BAVA Legacy part 3 continued.**

21. USAF takes over RAF base Fassberg and 317 Air Wing takes over RAF Celle. A/C will fly only coal because of its location near the Ruhr coal mines. British Aircraft are moved to Lubeck.
24. Midair crash of two C-47 during fog over Ravalzhausen near Fassberg. Killed are, Capt. Joel M. Devolentine, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. William T. Lucas, Maj. Edwin C. Diltz and Capt. William R. Howard.  
New U.S. daily record: 395 flights. - 3,030 tons.
26. Berlin city assembly meeting called off after a demonstration and disruption by communists.  
Tonnage delivered to Berlin by U.S. planes passes 100,000 ton mark.
31. In Berlin the four military governors fail to agree on currency issue and lifting the blockade.  
August tonnage delivered by British and Americans; 119,002.5 in 18,142 flights.

### **SEPTEMBER 1948**

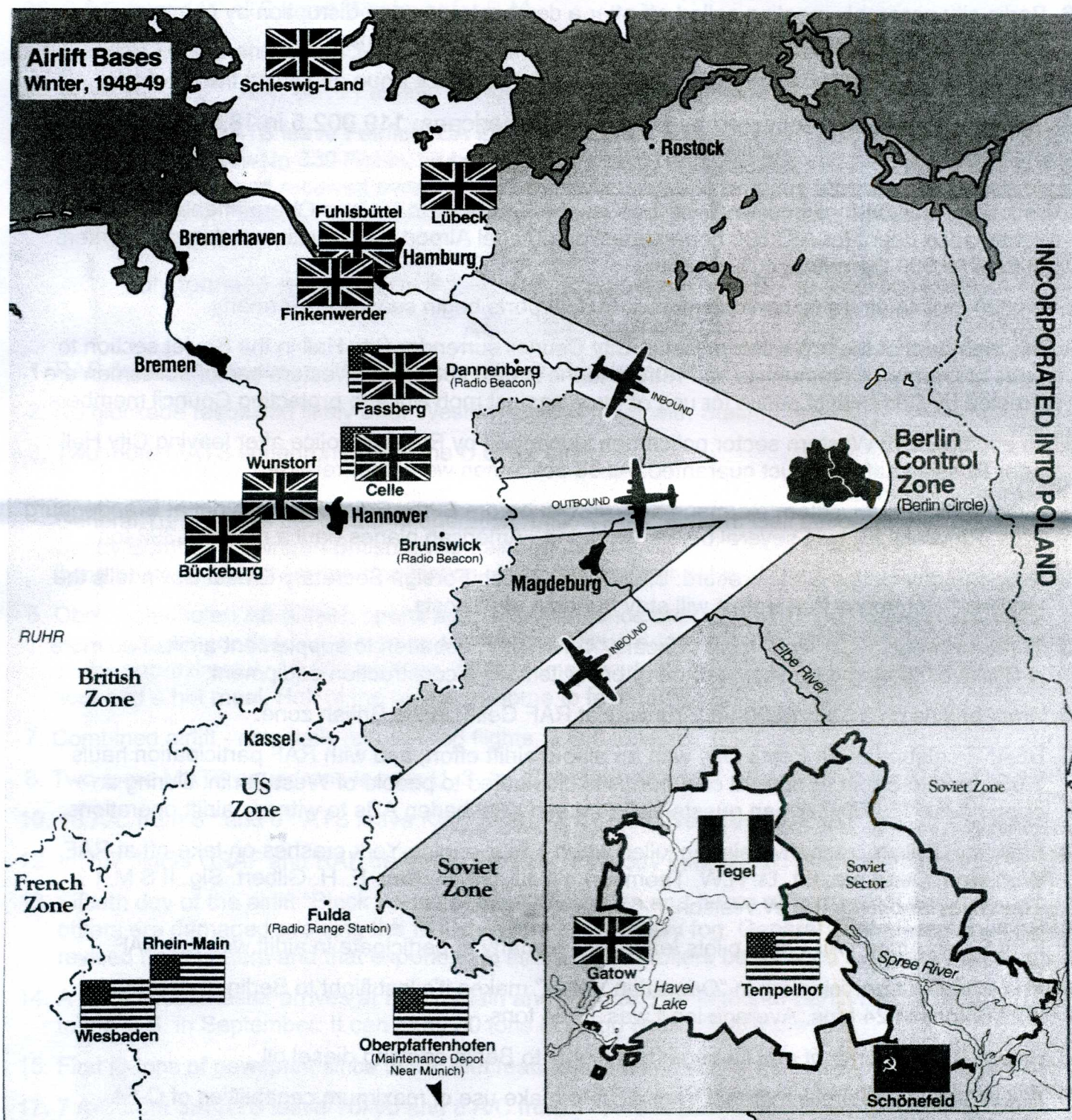
1. Work begins at Burtonwood Air Base, Lancashire, England, to replace Oberpfaffenhofen as a maintenance depot for A/C 500 hour inspections. Tegel Airport Construction underway, workers will total 19,000 Germans, 40% women.
2. First 20 civilian air traffic controllers from U.S. airports begin service in Germany.
6. The members of the pro-western Berlin City Council surrender City Hall in the Soviet section to mobs of German Communists and retreat to the British sector. 19 Western sector policemen are arrested by Communist police for use of force against mob while protecting Council members.
8. An additional 19 Western sector policemen kidnapped by Russian police after leaving City Hall under Russian safe-conduct guarantee. All 38 policemen were later released.
9. Thousands of pro-western Germans hold protest before Berlin Reichstag then riot at Brandenburg Gate. Russians kill two, several others wounded. American planes haul a record 3,392 tons.
10. New one-day United States record: 3,527 tons. British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin tells the House of Commons that Britain will stay in Berlin at all costs.
13. Three twin-engine C-82s "Flying Boxcars," arrive at Wiesbaden to supplement airlift. Two more will arrive the next day. They can carry bulky items like construction equipment.
15. Work begins on a new 1,800-yard runway at RAF Celle, in the British zone.
18. USAFE celebrates Air Force Day with an all-out airlift effort, and with RAF participation hauls 7,058 tons to Berlin. A special coal bonus is distributed to people of West Berlin. During an open house 15,000 German guests visit R-M and Wiesbaden ABs to witness airlift operations.
19. First fatal British crash: five airmen killed when a four-engine York crashes on take-off at RAF Wunsdorf. Dead are; Flt. Lt. H.W. Thomson, Flt. Lt. G.Kell, Nav. E. H. Gilbert. Sig. II S.M. I Towersley and Eng. II E.W. Watson.
21. Fifty South African Air Force pilots leave for Germany to participate in airlift with the RAF.
24. The lone C-74 participating in "Operation Vittles" makes it's last flight to Berlin. It delivered 428.6 tons in 24 trips. Average load was 17.84 tons.
26. British Tudor aircraft of civil lift begin test flights to Berlin carrying diesel oil.
30. All USAFE C-47s are withdrawn from airlift to make use of maximum capabilities of C-54.

September tonnage delivered by British and Americans; 139,622.9 in 19,729 flights.



The British zone and its airbases were in the North of West Germany  
American and French zones were in the central and south.

The air corridors into Berlin were 20 wide and to 10,000 feet altitude.  
In the lower right is a map showing how Berlin was divided into sectors





## BAVA Helps Students Gain State Title and High Honors in National Contest

Four Anacortes WA Middle School students won first place in their state National History Day competition and placed in the top 20 in the national finals contest held at Univ. of Maryland.

The team members are Ryan Horr, Michael Hanrahan, Trey Patrick and Will McClintock. They won first place in the documentary category in Washington State with their video about the Berlin Airlift in 1948 - '49, and finished in the top 20 in the national contest.

The students met throughout winter and spring to read primary and secondary source material, including documents from the Truman Presidential Library. They conducted phone interviews with college professors but the highlight for the team were the interviews with BAVA members Chuck Childs, Ralph Dionne, Gail Halvorson and Ingrid Azvedo.

Dr. Mark Wenzel Superintendent of Anacortes School District e-mailed the following.

"The experience was really transformative for our students. The opportunity to talk to veterans and *Ms. Azvedo helped connect the students to history in a very real and personal manner. They truly became experts on the airlift and gained a great appreciation for all those who served and the role America played in promoting democracy abroad. We're very grateful to BAVA, Eddie Ide and the individuals who shared their stories with us. It's an experience our students won't forget.*"



Trey Patrick, Michael Hanrahan, Ryan Horr and William McClintock met with Ingrid Azvedo.

The student's documentary is on YouTube as [youtube.com/watch?v=MYGKA7std8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYGKA7std8)

The school flew BAVA member and author Ingrid Azvedo to Anacortes to sit and meet with the students giving her first person presentation.

Her new book "Divine Intervention" was written up in the last Legacy. To obtain a signed copy send a check for \$ 25.00 payable to Ruth Publications, LLC. PO Box 1205, Coolidge, AZ 85128 . For credit card orders call; 1-888-720-3922  
It is also available on Amazon.

Thank you Chuck, Ralph and Gail for lending support to these school students.



While going through the many archive items of the Historical Foundation we found one case of Air Lift Laughs, by Jake Schuffert. (1999 edition)

These are in mint condition and offered to BAVA members for \$ 25 including U.S. mailing.

This \$ 25 price is for BAVA members only. Non-members are \$ 50.00 plus \$ 6.00 postage.

Make your check out to: Palindrome, c/o; Eddie Ide 1831 Lazenby St. Newton NC 28658.

Proceeds less mailing cost go to BAVA & BAHF.

**When they are gone they will be gone, period!**