Dear Ladies & Gentlemen
Dear Adviser and Friends of the Cold War Museum / Berlin Chapter

I am pleased to offer the following report about the activities and developments of the Cold War Museum/Berlin Chapter. We have had a very interesting invitation to an event.

**September 2009**

We returned to the United Kingdom on the 24th of September 2009. The Secretary of State had invited us to the Commemoration of the End of the Berlin Airlift Operation which was been held at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffordshire on 26th September.

The Veterans of the Berlin Airlift marked the 60th anniversary of the end of the Operation with a special ceremony at the National Memorial Arboretum yesterday. More than 500 people arrived for a service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance at Alrewas, Staffordshire, to mark the occasion and to pay tribute to the 39 British and Commonwealth service personnel and civilians who died during the Berlin Airlift.

A letter from the City Mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit, was read from the Military Attaché of the German Embassy, Brig Gen Franz Nolte. He said: "The wave of solidarity West Berlin experienced back then has never been forgotten."

We shared a very impressive and moving ceremony with the Veterans, their friends and families. A special thank you goes to Mrs. Sue Campbell and Mr. Bill Campbell for organizing and arranging the event.

Both did a great job.
On Friday the 25th of September a conference was held at the Tillington Hall Hotel for High School students from the Staffordshire area to inform them about the Berlin Airlift. Fifty students together with their teachers attended. The mobile Berlin Airlift Exhibition was also exhibited at the conference I want express my gratitude to all who made this event possible.

On November 9, 2009 marks the 20th Anniversary when the Berlin Wall came down.

The beginning

“No one has any intention of building a wall.”

Walter Ulbricht, head of the GDR State Council, discusses the “Berlin Question” at an international press conference on June 15, 1961, at the House of Ministries in East Berlin. In his speech, Ulbricht welcomed Soviet proposals for a peace treaty and called for the neutralization of West Berlin. Additionally, he stressed that the GDR leadership had no intention of building a wall……

August 13, 1961 the erection of the Berlin Wall

When the East German Authorities closed the border between East and West Berlin on August 13, and the Berlin Wall was erected in late August, this was to stop the movement from East Berlin to West Berlin. The East German Parliament has built up the high concrete wall in response to a communiqué from Warsaw Pact Nations appealing for a halt in the mass exodus of East Berliners and East Germans that had embarrassed communist regimes as 2,300 people per day crossed from East to West, most of the refugees were young, and well educated people.
November 9, 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down.

"The Wall … will still be standing in fifty and even a hundred years' time": that's what Erich Honecker is still saying at the end of January 1989. And the GDR does seem stable to most people at the time, even though the dilapidated condition of industrial plants, the old parts of cities and the roads, as well as the air and water pollution, all herald the imminent economic disaster.

But the pressure to carry out changes in the GDR comes from outside. The Soviet Union is in a deep economic and political crisis. To end the arms race and limit military spending, the leaders in Moscow and all their allies sign the CSCE agreement in January 1989. Among other things, they undertake to guarantee all citizens the right to leave a country and return again.

On May 2 1989, Hungarian border troops take down the barbed-wire fence to Austria. In the GDR, the first demonstrations are held to demand the right to leave the country: over 100,000 people are waiting for their applications for exit visas to be approved. But the GDR government remains firm.

At the start of the summer holidays, a large number of GDR citizens decide to do something about the situation: they occupy the Permanent Mission of West Germany in East Berlin and the West German embassies in Warsaw, Prague and Budapest. Thousands of mostly young people travel to Hungary with the aim of reaching West Germany via Austria.

On September 10, the Hungarian government opens the border to Austria for GDR citizens as well. The Wall is crumbling, but the SED party still has support in Prague.

GDR citizens are forbidden to cross the border from Czechoslovakia to Hungary. At the end of September, over 10,000 GDR citizens occupy the West German embassy in Prague to force the authorities to allow them to leave. On September 30, Honecker gives in and lets the refugees go. West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher announces the news from the balcony of the Prague embassy.

The GDR government continues its firm stance and shuts the border to the CSSR. At the same time, Honecker gives the order to "nip in the bud" the ever more frequent demonstrations.

His plan to bring up tanks in Leipzig "for intimidation purposes" is however rejected by military leaders. On October 17, Erich Honecker is ousted from office in the SED Politburo. His successor, Egon Krenz, announces a "turning point", but the demonstrations against the SED now spread across the entire GDR. Hundreds of thousands of people demand free elections, permission to form opposition groups and freedom to travel. And, on November 9, the Wall finally comes down …

The chronicle of the year 1989 traces the stages of dissolution, exodus and protest. It focuses upon the dramatic events before and after the fall of the Wall – reconstructed and illustrated with documents, film and audio material, photographs and eyewitness interviews. Leading politicians like George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev, Helmut Kohl and Egon Krenz have a say along with generals and officers of the Ministry for State Security and the National People’s Army (Nationale Volksarmee), as well as normal Berliners who helped bring down the Wall.
In January 1990 we visited the Berlin Wall behind the “Reichtags-Building after a Frisbee tournament. After we had thrown a disc several times through and over the gone Berlin Wall, an East German frontier soldier told us in a friendly manner to leave the East German side. I asked him if he didn’t want to throw the disc, since we would gone soon. After initial hesitation Thomas Müller threw the disc through this hole in the Berlin Wall. A German T.V. station, the ZDF, and their show “lass Dich überraschen” had managed it in June 2001 that the picture was admitted to the museum “Story of Berlin” as a permanent exhibition object. The then Governing Mayor of Berlin, Mr. Eberhard Diepgen, revealed the exhibition in the museum. He told me that he insisted on revealing this important document of our time himself although he was under pressure at the time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. January 1990</td>
<td>The photo</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1990</td>
<td>Publication: the National Sport Association NRW publishes the photo for the first time on the front page</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 1990</td>
<td>Publication: Washington DC. Frisbee Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 1990</td>
<td>Publication: UPA USA (official organ of the world Frisbee association) title: East Block Ultimate</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. October 1990</td>
<td>Publication: the Aachen newspaper published the photo with the addition: a sport photo of historical value.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1990</td>
<td>The National Championship of the USA is dedicated to freedom, because of the photo. The American player Julie Halpern had sent the photo to the contest.</td>
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Further information about the Cold War Museum is available by internet:

www.coldwar.org/BerlinChapter
www.atombunker-16-102.de

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