

## Visit to Berlin November 2009

Those of you who were stationed at Spandau 1966-68 will remember what a great posting it was with such memorable tourist spots such as the Corner Bar and Stefani`s. As it was the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the wall coming down, and there was an exhibition on at The Allied Forces Museum in Clay Allee, I decided to get a cheap return flight to Shonefeld which use to be in the Soviet Sector and is now used mostly for budget flights. I stayed at one the many Ibis Hotels which are situated in Berlin; mine being in Wilmersdorf to the South West of Stadt Mitte and handy for both `U` and `S` Bahn.

I spent one morning at The Allied Forces Museum; The only Queens Own Highlanders photo`s are ones which I gave them and which are not on display yet. Maybe some of you can remedy that and send some photos by E-Mail. In the afternoon, after a brocky, chips and beer, I visited Wavell Barracks which is still standing although looking a bit run down and amazingly the flag pole opposite the Guardroom is still there; the brocky stall is gone though.

Of course I visited Checkpoint Charlie which a bit of a tourist trap now; a bit like The Royal Mile in Edinburgh and appears to have been taken over by Turks. Berlin is a vast city now with apparently two of everything and it is an experience to visit what was once The Soviet Sector which was `Verboten` to us in the 60`s.

I had plenty of time to explore and decided one day to visit Sachsenhausen which is the small township of Oranienberg to the North of Berlin and approxiamately 40 mins by `S` Bahn. Oranienberg does not appear to have changed much since the fall of The Wall and yes, I did see a Trabant being driven around. Sachsenhausen was the main Concentration Camp for Berlin residents and many Jews were sent there before being transferred to Auswitz. It was a place also for political prisoners, traitors, and Homosexuals. Well worth a visit as much of it is still standing.

I had a wander around the married pads in Dickens Weg; the BMH is still there and now a Krankenhaus as is the school which is still a British School. Strangely there is a sign outside the school requesting that the gates are kept closed as the wild pigs are there around all day. A strange way of describing the children I thought until I realised that the area is inhabited by wild boar.

If anybody wishes to contact, or visit, The Allied Forces Museum, the Wall display is on until May next year and contact details are as follows.

Alliierten Museum, Clayallee, 135, D-14195, Berlin. E-Mail [kostka@alliiertenmuseum.de](mailto:kostka@alliiertenmuseum.de)

Schutzen Strasse in 1966 taken from Checkpoint Charlie. Beyond the barbed wire is the 'Death Strip', a mine field with an East German watch tower in the distance. Anybody trying to escape would either be blown up by a mine or machine



gunned.

The same Strasse in November 2009 during the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of a reunified Germany. The scene has changed somewhat.



The nearest building on the left of the photograph is the building with .....RLAG (Vdb) on the upper photograph.



**Wavell Barracks , Spandau 1966-68**



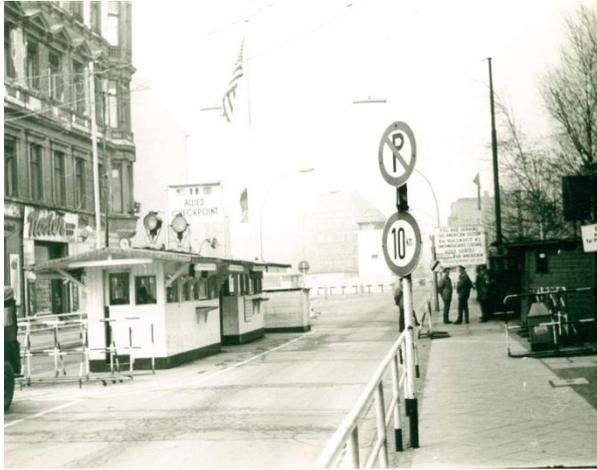
**Wavell Barracks Spandau, Nov 2009**

**CHECKPOINT CHARLIE – BERLIN**

The Allied Checkpoint in West Berlin looking towards the Soviet sector with Friedrich



Strasse



heading into the Eastern ( Soviet Sector). The watchtower and tank traps are in The Soviet Sector. These photographs were taken in 1966-68 when The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Queens Own Highlanders were stationed in Spandau.



This scene was taken in November 2009, 20 years after the wall was taken down. The white gabled building on the left can also be seen on the left of the earlier photographs.

All photographs by Colin Hughes.