

Press coverage of our activities concerning the liberation of Nuremberg in April 1945

Translations by courtesy of Mr. James P. Federline, Government Relations Advisor, Joint Multinational Training Command, Grafenwöhr (Bavaria), edited by Gerhard Jochem

As Joe brought peace to the city. City tour offered exciting insights into the end of the war

by Marco Puschner (*Nürnberger Zeitung* 21 April 2015)

Stadtführung bietet spannende Erkenntnisse zum Kriegsende

Als „Joe“ der Stadt den Frieden brachte

VON MARCO PUSCHNER

Rund 40 Teilnehmer begaben sich am Sonntag gemeinsam mit „transiturs Städtereisen“ auf die Spuren eines einfachen amerikanischen Soldaten, der im April 1945 nach Nürnberg kam und in den letzten Tagen des Krieges noch einmal um sein Leben bangen musste. Wegen der großen Nachfrage gibt es nun noch einen dritten Termin für die von der Nürnberger Zeitung unterstützte Stadtführung.

Es beginnt mit Einschusslöchern. Am Künstlerhaus, dem früheren „Korn“, zeigen sich einige Stellen von jenen schweren Kämpfen, die sich im April 1945 in Nürnberg abspielten. Gefechte, mit denen die US-Amerikaner überhaupt nicht gerechnet haben – wie die Historikerin Susanne Rieger bei ihrer Führung immer wieder deutlich macht. In keiner anderen deutschen Stadt seien die Alliierten auf so einen fanatischen Widerstand gestoßen wie in Nürnberg, wo die vorrückenden Soldaten beispielsweise sogar von der Lorenzkirche aus beschossen wurden. „G.I. Joe befreit Nürnberg“ ist der Bandtag überschrieben, wobei „G.I. Joe“ stellvertretend zu verstehen ist für all jene US-Amerikaner.

Aus den Berichten und Erinnerungen der Soldaten geht Rieger zufolge hervor, dass sie nicht nur über den heftigen Widerstand an sich erstaunt waren, sondern auch darüber, wie sich ihnen da in den Weg stellte. „Das auch sehr viele Frauen, noch dazu sehr junge, unter den Heckenschützen waren, kam für die Amerikaner sehr überraschend.“ Die Alliierten seien durch das Königstor, das Sternor und das Fürbörner ins Stadttzentrum gezogen, erläutert Rieger, die am Fürbörner einige seitliche Parkaufnahmen vorzeigt. Darauf ist zu sehen, wie die US-Amerikaner Durchgängen an die Bevölkerung machen – als die Bilder entstanden sind, waren die Kämpfe des 20. April schon Vergangenheit.



Am Königsturm beginnt die rund zweistündige Führung von Susanne Rieger, die sich mit den Teilnehmern auf die Spuren von „G.I. Joe“ begibt. Foto: Mark Jochow

About 40 participants went on Sunday along with *transiturs city tours* in the footsteps of a simple American soldier who came in April 1945 to Nuremberg and had to fight for his life in the last days of the war. Due to high demand, there is now a third date for the newspaper supported Nuremberg city tour.

It starts with bullet holes. At the House of Art, the former *KOMM*, they still bear witness to some of those places where heavy fighting took place in Nuremberg in April 1945. *Skirmishes which the Americans never expected*, as the historian Susanne Rieger makes it clear time and again in her tour. In no other city in Germany the Allies were met with such a fanatical resistance such as in Nuremberg, where the advancing troops were fired upon by, for example, from the Lorenz Church.

G.I. Joe liberates Nuremberg the tour is overwritten with and *G.I. Joe* is representative for all Americans *who risked their lives so that we can live in freedom and peace today*, said the tour

guide. Until the evening of 20 April by 2200 hrs. the Nazis were finally defeated, there were 900 deaths, including 140 U.S. soldiers. Senseless victims says Rieger - because it certainly was only a matter of time before the city had to give in to the two invading infantry divisions of the U.S. Army. According to Rieger it is clear from the reports of the soldiers and memories that they were amazed not only by the fierce resistance in itself, but also about who stood in their way. *The fact that many women, even the very young, were among the snipers, came as a surprise to the Americans.*

The Allies entered the walled inner city through the Königstor (King's Gate), the Sterntor (Star Gate) and the Färbertor (Dyers' Gate) heading for the center, explains Rieger, as some rare color photographs mostly from the Färbertor show. It can be seen how the Americans made announcements to the people - as the pictures were taken, the battles of 20 April 20 were already over with. On Jakobsplatz Rieger then speaks in detail about the last hours of the war in Nuremberg, because 70 years ago that was the decision place. *Gauleiter* (head of a Nazi district) Karl Holz had blockaded himself and his followers in the police headquarters. Four times the Americans asked Holz to surrender - in vain. When a group wanted to give up and left the headquarters, it came under fire by its own people. Holz eventually fell in battle, the Americans also took about 50 Nazis in captivity.

While the 45th Division still had to fight at Jakobsplatz, the 3rd Division already celebrated their victory on the Main Market Square. There, in the city center, where there was another victory parade for both divisions on 21 April, the tour ended.

At the end of the tour Rieger cited a report of the war correspondent Collie Small and recalled that the Americans renamed the then Adolf Hitler Platz in *Iron Mike Place*. That was the nickname of General John W. O'Daniel, the commander of the 3rd Division.

The second tour date is 26 April and already fully booked. Therefore, there will be a third tour on Sunday, 3 May at 1400 hrs. Meeting point: Königstorturm. Participation is free, registration required.

Fallen in the struggle for the freedom of Nuremberg. Memorial meeting for slain U.S. soldiers

by Mathias Orgeldinger (*Nürnberger Zeitung* 21 April 2015)

Gefallen im Kampf um Nürnbergs Freiheit

Vor 70 Jahren wurde Nürnberg durch US-amerikanische Soldaten befreit. Vor der Gedenktafel an der Zeppelintribüne erinnern am Sonntagabend Deutsche und Amerikaner an die rund 140 GIs, die zwischen dem 17. und 20. April 1945 im Kampf um die Stadt ihr Leben ließen. Organisiert wurde das Treffen vom Nürnberger „Verlag testimon“.

„Wir wollten konkret vor Ort etwas für die amerikanischen Soldaten machen“, sagte Gerhard Jochem von „testimon“ im Vorfeld der Veranstaltung. Man habe etwa 20 Personen eingeladen, darunter auch Oberst Mark A. Colbrook, den Kommandeur der US-Armee-Garrison Bavaria. Dieser erinnerte bei seinem Besuch in Nürnberg an die Generationen von US-Bürgern, die nach dem Krieg in der Stadt stationiert waren oder sogar dort geboren wurden, sowie an die sehr guten Beziehungen zwischen Amerikanern und Deutschen.

Susanne Rieger von „testimon“ hob die historische Bedeutung der Zeppelintribüne hervor. Die Sprengung des Hakenkreuzes sei ein weltweit bekanntes Symbol für das Ende der menschenverachtenden NS-Diktatur: „Deutschland war nicht fähig, sich selbst von der braunen Pest zu befreien.“ An der Befreiung Nürnberg waren vor allem die 3. und 45. Infanteriedivision der 7. US-Armee beteiligt. Die 3. Division rückte von Norden, die 45. Division von Süden her vor. Am 20. April um 11.35 Uhr erreichten Soldaten der 3. Division den Hauptmarkt und hissten gegen 18.30 Uhr die amerikanische Flagge.

Marco Frömter vom Deutsch-Amerikanischen Männerclub Mittelfranken las die Namen gefallener US-Soldaten vor. Und Bernd Jesussek zitierte aus dem Buch „Autobahn to Berchtesgaden“, der Biografie des amerikanischen Infanteristen Sherman W. Pratt. Am 17. April 1945 detonierte in Pratts Nähe eine 8,8-Zentimeter-Schwerartilleriegranate.



Vor der Gedenktafel an der Zeppelintribüne erinnern Deutsche und Amerikaner an die im Kampf um Nürnberg gefallenen US-Soldaten. Rund 140 GIs verloren im April 1945 bei der Befreiung der Stadt ihr Leben. Foto: Mark Johnston

70 years ago, Nuremberg was liberated by U.S. troops. On Sunday evening Germans and Americans remembered in front of the plaque on the Zeppelin Grandstand the approximately 140 G.I.s who lost their lives in the battle for the city between 17 and 20 April 1945. The meeting was organized by the Nuremberg *Verlag testimon*. *We wanted to do something concrete on site for the American soldiers*, said Gerhard Jochem of *testimon* prior to the event.



Colonel Colbrook in front of the memorial plaque (photo: Gerhard Jochem)

We have invited about 20 people, including Colonel Mark A. Colbrook, the commander of the U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria. During his visit to Nuremberg Colbrook remembered the generations of U.S. citizens who were stationed in the city after the war or were even born there, as well as the very good relations between Americans and Germans. Susanne Rieger of testimon emphasized the historical significance of the Zeppelin Grandstand. The demolition of the swastika was a world-renowned symbol of the end of the inhuman Nazi dictatorship. Germany was unable to free herself from the brown plague.

During the liberation of Nuremberg, especially the 3rd and 45th Infantry Divisions of the U.S. 7th Army were involved. The 3rd Division advanced from the north, the 45th Division from the south. On 20 April at 1135 hrs. the soldiers of the 3rd Division reached the Main Market Square and at about 1830 hrs. hoisted the American flag.

Marco Frömter, president of the German-American Club Men's Club Middle Franconia read out the names of fallen U.S. soldiers. And Bernd Jesussek quoted from the book *Autobahn to Berchtesgaden*, the biography of the American infantryman Sherman W. Pratt. On 17 April 1945 a 8.8-centimeter grenade detonated close to Pratt. While his friend George, who was kneeling beside him, was killed by shrapnel, he himself remained unharmed. *Why did I not die? To this question I never got an answer.*



Susanne Rieger showing a picture of soldiers of the 42nd and the 45th I.D. meeting at the western city limits of Nuremberg in April 1945
(photo: Gerhard Jochem)

Following the events at the *Zeppelintribüne*, the participants met in the restaurant *Bahnhof Dutzendteich*. The Nuremberg eyewitness Werner Hübner (87) described how he was drafted in November 1944 into the Wehrmacht. *My company commander said that he would not send 17-year-olds in the fight against the Russians.* That's why he was trained as a radio operator and experienced the end of the war in the Bavarian Forest, told Hübner.

In a bomb tank he paddled across the Dutzendteich pond

After a march through the forests of the Upper Palatinate he reached on 17 May his hometown in plain clothes. In 1946 he had built, together with friends, canoes from the auxiliary tanks that American bombers dropped. *We then paddled to the Dutzendteich pond*, says Hübner. Positively he remembered the *German Youth Activities*, which were organized by the Americans in a villa on the Dutzendteich. There were movies and books, but especially American newspapers that as a teenager one could not get anywhere else.

Following the footsteps of GI Joe. City tour follows the trail of a U.S. soldier - additional tour date

by mn (*Nürnberger Zeitung* 24 April 2015)

Auf den Spuren von GI Joe

Stadtführung folgt den Spuren eines US-Soldaten — Zusätzlicher Termin



„GI Joe befreit Nürnberg“ heißt eine Stadtführung der besonderen Art. Illustriert wird der Rundgang mit historischen Aufnahmen von authentischen Schauplätzen.
Foto: unbekannt/transiturs Städtereisen Nürnberg—München

Die Themenführung „GI Joe rettet Nürnberg“ folgt den Spuren eines einfachen amerikanischen Soldaten, der im April 1945 nach Nürnberg kam. In ten der 45. Infanteriedivision, der am 29. April 1945, dem letzten Tag der Kämpfe in Nürnberg, zwischen Schüttbergen und Heckenschützen platz und Hauptmarkt. Eine Besonderheit der Tour: An den authentischen Schauplätzen werden zahlreiche zeitgenössische Aufnahmen gezeigt.

The guided tour *G.I. Joe liberates Nuremberg* follows in the footsteps of a simple American soldier who came to Nuremberg in April 1945. In the last days of World War II, in no other German city did the invading U.S. military meet such fanatical and senseless resistance.

At the former *KOMM* and current *Künstlerhaus* (House of Art) bullet holes still bear witness to the bitter fighting that took place in the city in the spring of 1945. This resistance was not expected by the U.S. Army, according to the guide Susanne Rieger. The historian leads the

historical tour of the southern-part of the old town, following the footsteps of a soldier of the 45th Infantry Division who on 20 April 1945, the last day of battles in Nuremberg, between piles of rubble and snipers had to risk everything, along with his comrades of the 3rd Infantry Division north of the Pegnitz river.

At the Königstorturm the approximately 2 hour tour begins. The starting point was not selected without reason: through the Königstor (King's Gate) - as well as Sterntor (Star Gate) and Färbertor (Dyers' Gate) the Allies moved into the city center 70 years ago. Other stations include Jakobsplatz and the Main Market Square. A special feature of the tour: At the authentic locations numerous contemporary photos will be shown.

Because of the great success, *transiturs Städtereisen* (city tours) and their sponsors *Nürnberger Zeitung* have added another tour opportunity: In addition to the already sold-out tour next Sunday, 26 April, another one will take place on 3 May.



Honorary medal (front & back) given to us by Colonel Colbook
(photo: Gerhard Jochem)