

**Dave “Tab” Black**  
**Lubeck 1958-60 & 1961-62**  
**MOS: 056 DF**

**1961**



**2000**



I arrived in Lübeck in the late summer of 1958, by way of my hometown of Tampa, Florida; Ft. Jackson, SC; and Ft. Devens, MA; with a short stop at the 184<sup>th</sup> ASA Co. at Rothwesten. I came up by deuce-and-a-half - seems the driver may have been one Jim Huffman. My arrival was memorable in that upon walking in to Jurgen Haus late of a Saturday afternoon, I found a full scale party in progress; and nary a sober head in sight. Well, maybe one – someone did point me to a vacant garret room and allowed I could borrow some blankets from other beds to get me through the weekend.

Within a few weeks I had earned my place at the bar, albeit keeping a few stools between Bobby Hamilton and myself. To my surprise, I found some of the locals were actually civilized (John Otaviano, Charlie Thorne, Bob Gregory–aka Cool Breeze, Bo Gray III), some were not (Wild Mike Janicki, the late aforementioned Hamilton), some were large (Artie Gemmell, Hansi Weber, Food Gauthier) and some were not (Willy Langraf, Squeeky Sommerville), some were extremely intelligent (too many to name) and some were not (they usually had rank to make up for it, though). To a man it seemed all were hell bent on having the best damn time possible at every moment and enjoying the waves of beautiful girls that swept in and out like the Travemuünde tides. All in all, just about the most wonderful place there was out at the edge of the free world.

Time passed swiftly, alas, too swiftly. Two years disappeared into a foggy haze, but there are a few bits that remain... The Riverboat & Michael Naura’s Jazz Band, Hanseatendiele, Jederman’s (big & little), Der Kahn, The Blau Maus, Travemuünde and Timmendorf, the Kudeldadeldu, the Strass, Restaurant Wakenitzhof, rumpsteak mit pommes frits, the Kulmbacher, Fliegerhorst Muti’s & BP Muti’s, Luck Bier, Rote Katze’s mitternacht steaks, Steinhager, Pushkins, Bommelunder mit Pflaume, flaming Escorial, Hochspannung, Ratzeputz, Asbach, - & how much should one tip Opa, the restroom attendant at the Boat, for

throwing up in his sink anyway? The Bahnhof, Ochenschwanzsuppe, a Kerouacesque road trip to the south of France with Bad Back Harry Rodgers and John Ridell ... "Black, one of the three of has got to refuse to start drinking as soon as we wake up in the morning - or we'll never get out of Heidelberg". Painting the orphanage, playing soccer and having Christmas parties for the kids with skinny Santas.

Anyway, I left in the summer of 1960, returned home to Florida for a few months, but couldn't adjust... musta been Post Traumatic Strass syndrome. Anyway, I re-enlisted with the assurance I would return to Lübeck. I made it back by the winter of 61, wiser perhaps, and still loving every moment. New friends and more good times; Maxims, Billets in Blankensee, Roy Clark's Elswigklause, basketball with the Grenzschutz, Hamburg, the Beatles, then... (gasp) a transfer out of town – down into provincial Westphalia.

That was it, I decided, if I'm not going to be in Lübeck, I might as well get married and settle down. So, I proposed to the former Marion Guelle and we were married in January 1963. A memorable 'polterabend' party the night before and a quiet civil ceremony started us on a path that has continued for these next 38 years.

Life has been pretty good, stints in the corporate world that took us from California to New York City and back again. I have started and sold a few businesses, sold real estate, and am now cruising along toward retirement in local government service. Along the way we raised a daughter and two sons who live nearby and lead successful lives – and who also gave us four wonderful grandchildren to spoil. The Lübeck Association has renewed many of the old friendships and given us many new ones as well. We look forward to the reunions, to the people... and even if now I take only 1 or 2 sips of Asbach where once a bottle would have just been a pump primer, its enough to rekindle the warmth that these fond memories bring.

So, that's it – Tschuss!  
Tab & Marion Black

PS... I think I did some kind of military thing in Lubeck, too, but I'm not sure.