

BERLIN FELLOWSHIP COLLECTION
1952-2015

FINDING AID

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Administrative Information

Title:

Berlin Fellowship Collection, 1952-2015

Creator(s):

Berlin Fellowship

Collection Identifier:

CFT00180

Extent:

10 Boxes, 3.88 linear feet

Repository:

David Allan Hubbard Library
Fuller Theological Seminary
135 N Oakland Ave
Pasadena, CA 91182

Acquisition Information:

Gift, c. May 15, 2015, from Mrs. Ursula Unterumsberger from Berlin, Germany. Frau Bärbel Eccardt, from whom these files originated, was a church worker at the Zinzendorf Parish, the West Berlin home of Berlin Fellowship. Hard drive of digital files.

Transfer, 2014, from the Presbyterian Historical Society (originally deposited by Bradley Baur and Reverend Jane Holslag). Papers including the California-based Berlin Fellowship meeting minutes and team reports from the 1970s-1996.

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Language:

English, German

Preferred Citation:

[Identification of Item], Berlin Fellowship Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.

Name of Cataloger/Date Completed:

Collection cataloged by Jane Holslag, February 2019. Finding aid written by Jane Holslag and Alyson Thomas, February 2019.

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Administrative History

The “Berlin Fellowship” program ran from as early as 1961 until 1996 within the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The program had its roots in an American Christian ministry of reconciliation in the years immediately after the Second World War (World Deputation, 1st Presbyterian Church of Hollywood). The ministry initially focused on work in German youth and reconstruction camps. During the early years of the Cold War and in the 50’s, during the so-called “Kirchenkampf” (church-state struggle in the GDR), contact between American and German Christians continued. Reciprocal visits ensued and retreats for church workers, including those from the GDR, were held in West Berlin.

After the Berlin Wall’s construction in 1961, the Americans maintained contact with East German Christians, offering encouragement, strengthening for faith, prayer, personal visits, and other manner of support, interest, and care. Over time, this ministry became known as the “Berlin Fellowship” program. Dedicated American Christians raised money and sent small teams to West Berlin; these teams made day visits in East Berlin. The program developed into a ministry including East-West encounters, which resulted in conferences in East Berlin and regular visits to churches throughout the entire GDR. It was particularly important that the contacts made were at the ‘ground level’—visits were to be primarily in small cities and villages and specifically at the congregational level.

The program in West Berlin was housed in the Zinzendorf Congregation in Tempelhof and was led by Pastor Ted Schapp and congregational co-worker Barbara Eccardt. From its inception, “Berlin Fellowship” was supported by the administrative leadership of the Evangelical Church of Berlin (West), which generously underwrote a major portion of the program costs. Cognizant and supportive of the ministry, bishops and other important eastern church leaders contributed to program planning through the West Berlin church workers’ regular visits.

The so-named ‘East Committee’ met once a year; this group was composed of representatives from various congregations in the German Democratic Republic, as well as the church workers from the Zinzendorf congregation. At the meeting, plans for the year’s upcoming visits, choosing which congregations would receive teams, and choosing the trip theme comprised the discussion. Each congregation to be visited was responsible for planning its own program.

Before travelling into the GDR, the Americans had a week of preparation in West Berlin. Officially, they travelled as tourists, registered with the police, and overnights in Inter-Hotels. The congregations received them with their own prepared program plans for the visit.

The visited congregations were particularly taken by how the Americans described their lives and how they viewed their own Christian activities. On the other hand, the Americans were impressed by how Christians lived in an atheistic country. The resultant discussions were intense, and many were very honest and open conversations. For those from the GDR side, the visits were a ‘window to the world.’

Between 1961 and 1989, it is estimated that more than 200 individual Americans visited the GDR, some of these more than once. Approximately 100 congregations were visited, many more than once.

After the wall opened in 1989, it became apparent that this visitation program “Berlin Fellowship” had been closely watched by the Ministry for State Security. Both East Committee meetings and a regular group gathering in East Berlin, known as the “Fellowship-Gruppe,” were reported on. Two strategic operational files/operative procedure files (OV) were opened on members of Berlin Fellowship, evidencing long years of activity of reporting and observation. Sample material from these files is contained in this collection.

After 1989, two-way visits began with members of eastern German congregations traveling to American Presbyterian congregations. In 1996, this visitation ministry ended with a celebration, “Hallelujah Amen,” at the Stephanus Stiftung in Berlin.

- Description provided by Ursula Unterumsberger, May 2015

Related Collections

Arthur Frederick Glasser Collection, 1932-1997

Ralph Hamburger Collection of the Berlin Fellowship, 1950-2012

James, Walt, *Tumbling Walls*, La Jolla, California 1990

James, Walt, *Wenn Mauern fallen*, Berlin 1993

Holslag, Jane, *Berlin Fellowship, East German Perspectives and Missional Encounter 1969-1989* Dissertation, Münster 2013

Cataloger’s Note

In many cases, the materials were retained in their original file folders, which had been reused multiple times prior to donation. The original folder titles have been retained, and their relevant new descriptive titles are penciled on the folder.

Holslag’s penciled cataloging notes were retained in the archival boxes and file folders as well. The notes often relate Holslag’s additional contextual commentary regarding the material’s contents.

Scope and Content

The Berlin Fellowship Collection, 1952-2015 consists of physical and digital materials received from the Berlin Fellowship U.S.A. and Berlin Fellowship, Germany. The records document the activities of an informal group of Presbyterian laypeople and pastors who maintained an ecumenical visitation ministry with Christians in the German Democratic Republic, 1961-1996.

Formats include subject files, correspondence, photographs, reports, minutes, financial records, clippings, scrapbooks, publications, audio cassettes, and digital files. Materials were created from 1952-1996.

Subjects

Berlin Fellowship
Berlin (Germany) – Religion – 20th century
Cold War – Religious aspects
Ecumenical movement
Deutscher Fernsehfunk
Hollywood Presbyterian Church (Hollywood, Calif.)
Missions
Presbyterian Church – History

Arrangement

The collection has been organized into the following series:

- Series I: Berlin Fellowship, U.S.A. (Boxes 1-8)
- Series II: Berlin Fellowship, Berlin, Germany (Boxes 9-10)

Series Description

Series I: Berlin Fellowship, U.S.A. (Boxes 1-8)

Series I consists of files received from the Presbyterian Historical Society in 2014 with select additions by Reverend Jane Holslag in 2015. The materials largely consist of meeting minutes and team reports from the 1970s-1996 from the Berlin Fellowship based in California, U.S.A. Memorabilia and photographs are also included in this series.

Series II: Berlin Fellowship, Berlin, Germany (Boxes 9-10)

Series II consists of digital files and paper files received from Berlin, Germany and represent the united efforts of Baerbel Eccardt, Ursula Unterumsberger, and Jane Holslag at the request of the retired east German Bishops Johannes Hempel and Werner Krusche. The paper files were taken from Barbara Eccardt's estate; Ms. Eccardt was the former congregation co-worker in the Evangelical Zinzendorf Congregation in Tempelhof. She was responsible for the congregation's Ecumenical Center (known as *Ökuz*) and for its guests. She was among the most important figures in the Fellowship Program and meticulously recorded the trips and team visitations.

In addition to paper files, the series contains slides, photographs and audio cassettes. All were donated by various individuals (i.e. Walt James, Helen Anderson, Dr. Jane Holslag, and Barbara Eccardt).

The hard copy of all original materials and a duplicate of the digitized files may be found in the Evangelical Regional Church Archive, Berlin.

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At the initiative and with the financial support of the Americans (Berlin Fellowship and Diaspora Foundation, both in California), the original materials have been digitized. All materials are located on an external hard drive as PDFs and have been deposited in the archive at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. (Collection 180, Box 10, Item 6)

Federal Republic of Germany 'protection of information' regulations have been communicated and shall be observed.

Container List

Series I: Berlin Fellowship, U.S.A. Boxes 1-8.

Box 1: Berlin Fellowship Minutes & Correspondence

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Mission Statement/Vision/Statement of Purpose	1977-1992
2	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1993-1996
3	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1992
4	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1991
5	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1990
6	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1985-1989
7	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1984
8	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1983
9	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1982
10	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1981
11	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1980
12	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1977-1979
13	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1977?
14	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1974
15	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1973
16	Berlin Fellowship Minutes	1972
17	Correspondence	1980
18	Zinzendorf Choir Trip	1976

Box 2: Berlin Fellowship Correspondence

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Correspondence	1973
2	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1969-1970s
3	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1991-1997
4	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1993
5	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence & BF Report	1992-1993
6	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1992
7	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1991
8	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1990
9	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1989
10	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1988-1989
11	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1985
12	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1984
13	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1983
14	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1982
15	Berlin Fellowship Correspondence	1981

Box 3: Berlin Fellowship Orientation Manual Materials

Folder	Item	Date/Note
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1	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1993
2	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1993
3	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1992-1993
4	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1992-1993
5	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1992
6	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1992
7	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1991
8	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1989-1990
9	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1989
10	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1989
11	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1989
12	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1989
13	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1988
14	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1988
15	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1988
16	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1987
17	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1986
18	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1986
19	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1986
20	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1986
21	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1986
22	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1980-1986
23	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1985-1988
24	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1984
25	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1984-1987
26	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1983
27	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1982
28	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1982-1986
29	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1981-1982
30	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1980s
31	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1978
32	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1978-1982
33	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1970-1979
34	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1970?
35	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1980s?
36	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1970s?
37	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1970s
38	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1970s
39	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1970s

Box 4: Berlin Fellowship Orientation Manual Materials & Team Member Reports

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1970s
2	Collected Materials for Orientation Manual	1965
3	Team Member Reports	1991-1995

4	Team Member Reports	1990s
5	Team Member Reports	1985
6	Team Member Reports	1981
7	Team Member Reports	1981
8	Team Member Reports	1980
9	Team Member Reports	1980
10	Team Member Reports	1980s
11	Team Member Reports	1977
12	Team Member Reports	1973
13	Team Member Reports	1970
14	Team Member Reports	1970s

Box 5: Berlin Fellowship Treasurer's Reports, Congregational Correspondence, Applications

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Treasurer's Reports	1986-1987, 1990-1993, 1995
2	Congregational Correspondence / Church Relations	1990-1992
3	Congregational Correspondence / Church Relations	1984
4	Congregational Correspondence / Church Relations	1980-1981
5	Mailing Lists	1978, 1981, 1986
6	Membership/Mailing Lists	October 30, 1991
7	Team Members Applications/Correspondence	
8	Team Members Applications/Correspondence	1982-1985
9	Team Members Applications/Correspondence	1987-1994
10	Team Members Applications/Correspondence	1980-1982
11	Team Members Applications/Correspondence	1980-1987
12	Bishop Krusche's 1985 Visit	1985
13	Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes / Scrapbooks	1980s-1990s

Box 6: Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes, Scrapbooks

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes / Scrapbooks	1986-1991
2	Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes / Scrapbooks	1984
3	Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes / Scrapbooks	1988

Box 7: Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes, Scrapbooks

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes / Scrapbooks	1984
2	Helen Compo Anderson Team Notes / Scrapbooks	1986

Box 8: Audio/Visual Materials

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Walt James interviews Probst Uwe Hollm, West Berlin.	May 3, 1987.

2	Bishop Werner Krusche (Magdeburg). Chapel service at World Vision International.	May 29, 1985.
3	J.B. Philips speaking to 1951-51 World Deputation Teams, Hollywood 1st Presbyterian Church.	Sept. 4, 1952.
4	Ralph Hamburger giving biographical information to Monte Vista Grove Homes Retirement Community, "Glimpses of My Life and Ministry."	Sept 16, 1999.
5	Last words of West Berlin Pastor Alfred Schroeder. Key German leader in the early years of BF.	Fall 1991.
6	Walt James. History of World Deputation Teams.	May 1996.
7-8	Two CD's of Bishops Werner Krusche and Johannes Hempel commenting on the fall of the Berlin Wall and years thereafter.	Post 1989.
9	VHS Schapp retirement: Trumpet and Organ/Crosta, Zinzendorf Choir-Laguna Beach	1964-1988

Series II: Berlin Fellowship, Berlin, Germany. Boxes 9-10.

Box 9: Berlin Fellowship, Berlin, Germany

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Item Level Index of Series II Materials	2015
2	Miscellaneous Church and State Publications	1977-1990
3	Miscellaneous Church and State Publications	1977-1990
4	Travel Information East and West	1988-1989
5	West Berlin Tourist Information about East and West Berlin	1981-1990
6	West Berlin Tourist Information about East and West Berlin	1981-1990
7	German Democratic Tourist Information	1978, 1990
8	Orientation Materials	1965-1986?
9	Orientation Materials	1965-1986?
10	Miscellaneous Materials	

Box 10: Berlin Fellowship, Berlin, Germany

Folder	Item	Date/Note
1	Miscellaneous Materials	
2	Walter James' Materials – possibly to be returned to Walter James' collection in the FTS Archives	1987
3	Tourist Information – West Berlin	
4	Souvenir Ephemera from Helen Anderson	1986
5	Souvenir Ephemera from Helen Anderson	1986
6	Hard Drive with digital copies of the Berlin Archiv The hard copy of all original materials and a duplicate of the digitized files may be found in the Evangelical Regional Church Archive, Berlin. Table of Contents can be found in a supplementary Excel file.	2015

Box 10, Item 6: Berlin Archiv – Digital Hard Drive Arrangement

The series is divided into 4 subseries according to media form:

Subseries 1: BF_01	Paper files
Subseries 2: BF_02	Slides
Subseries 3: BF_03	Photographs
Subseries 4: BF_04	Audio cassette recordings

For the most part, the paper files are chronologically ordered, as originally found.

Both slides and photographs are ordered, as well, chronologically; where possible, thematic considerations dictate order (teams, individuals, locations, events). The audio cassette recordings could not all be dated, and the quality of these recordings does not meet 21st century standards.

The paper files had all metal and duplicates removed. Intentionally, the collection contains examples of ‘common knowledge’ information or material describing the overall church and political situation. In the same light, orientation information and instructions, along with historical and political background information for the American visitors has been left intact in the collection.

This file collection consists of 30 itemized units, which are protected in special archive folders. Title and table of contents for each unit are available in German and English.

The compilation is in Excel, and the corresponding inventory, which consists of four Excel files, corresponding to the collection division.

Table of Contents can be found in a supplementary Excel file.