

**Penn State vs. Dresden:**

# Experience of a lifetime

## *Penn State-Behrend classroom extends to Germany for students*

by Nadine Cross  
Collegian Staff

Penn State meets Germany--a cultural exchange and a good time all in one.

"I think it was one of the best new programs I have seen at Penn State," said Dr. Steven deHart, associate professor of German and humanities, describing the study abroad program in Dresden, Germany.

The program, held this past summer, was the first study abroad program sponsored by a branch location of Penn State.

According to students, the experience was not only about learning, but fun as

Students spent four weeks in Dresden studying one of a selection of four credit German language courses and experiencing local culture.

To experience the culture and practice their German, students completed everyday tasks such as shopping and ordering food.

"The students' assignments were designed to thrust them into everyday life in Germany," explained deHart. "In addition to attending class each day, they had to order meals, buy stamps at the post office, use public transportation, and shop at the grocery store. They managed to solve all kinds of problems and meet many local people who were anxious to help them along the way."

*Once I saw Trier, I was ready to stay for another three weeks. The town was something out of a fairy tale with painted buildings, cute little shops and cafes, and Roman ruins everywhere."*

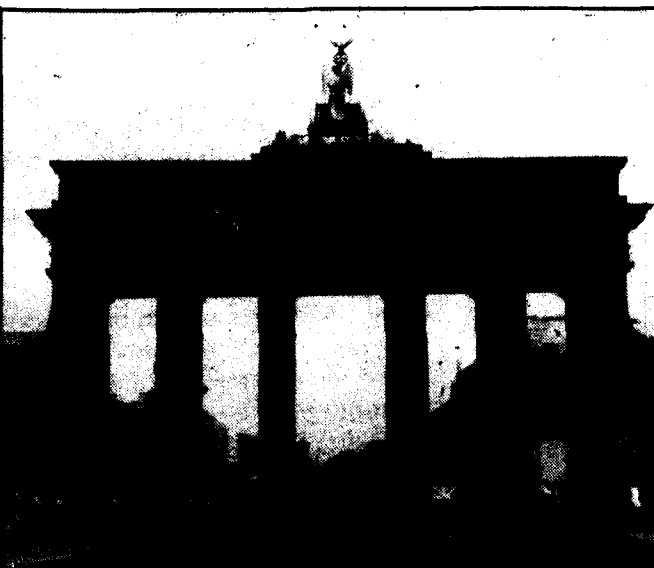
- Rachel Capp

well.

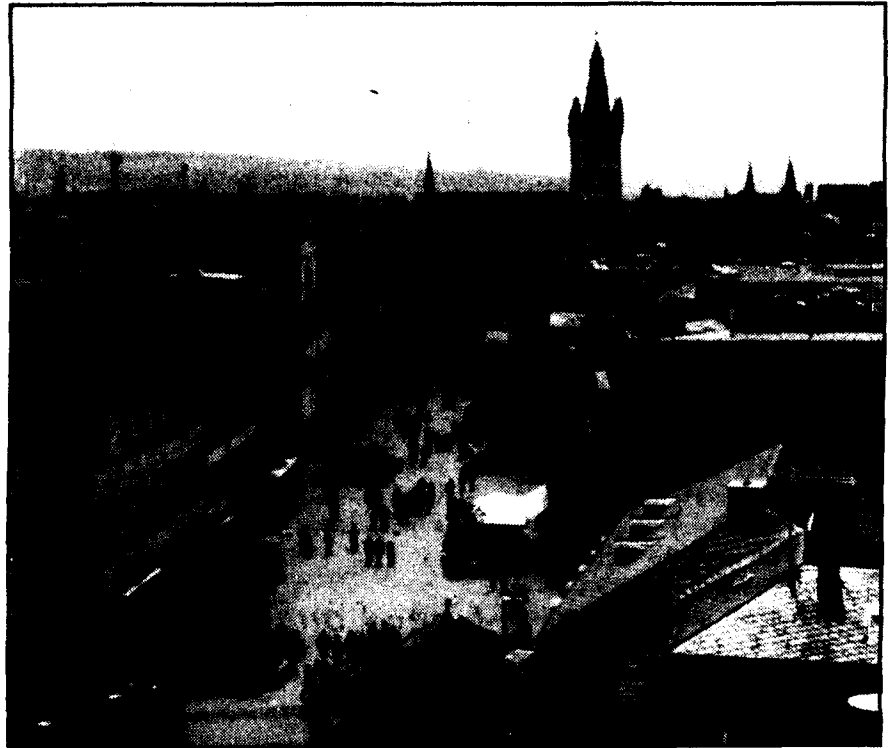
"It was the greatest learning experience of my life," said Joe Stiller, a junior who made the trip to Dresden. "I think everyone who went on the trip would say the same. I had so much fun, I would do it again."

According to deHart, the students blended in to the town and a favorite activity was going to the all-night gas stations/grocery stores since most stores in Germany close at 6 p.m.

"Many (local people) were pleased to see Americans trying to speak to them in their



**German Architecture**  
The top picture is one of Germany's many castles. The bottom picture contains the Brandenburg Tor, which is in what used to be East Berlin.



**TRIER, THE OLDEST CITY IN GERMANY:**  
This will be the destination of next year's trip.

own language," said deHart.

For some students, this hand-on learning was their favorite part.

"My favorite part of the trip is hard to nail down," said Stiller. "However, the most interesting part had to be actually speaking German and having someone understand you."

Dresden, located in the eastern part of Germany near the Polish/Czechoslovakian border, had no contact with the western world prior to the end of World War II.

Following the war, the area went on a tremendous buying spree of western goods and is still going through major reconstruction.

"There is an incredible comparison to East and West Germany. I'm very glad we went to Dresden," said Gretchen Kline secretary of the German Club. "It's absolutely incredible to see a city dark and grey now redone--between dark buildings you'll see the Western influence of a yellow house with green shutters. The comparison between the East and the West will always be present. It has left a lasting impression."

*"It was the greatest learning experience of my life. I had so much fun I'd do it again!"*

- Joe Stiller

Many American institutions can be found in Dresden. There is McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut and Wendy's.

Tradition does remain though, a popular local dish is red cabbage, veal and potatoes.

Germans do drive American cars, but the most popular cars are Mercedes Benzes and BMWs--including motorcycles, dump trucks and garbage trucks. Many citizens walk or take public transportation.

After their stay in Dresden, the students ventured on to Trier, built by the Romans in 14 B.C.

"Trier claims to be the oldest city in Germany," said deHart.

The group took a six-hour walking tour visiting the Roman ruins.

"Once I saw Trier," said Rachel Capp, a junior from Valencia, PA, "I was ready to stay for another three weeks. The town was something out of a fairy tale with painted buildings, cute little shops and cafes, and Roman ruins everywhere. To run through passages that have been there since the Roman Empire was unfathomable."

Since many students expressed an interest in returning to Germany this summer, deHart will continue the study abroad program.

This time, students will stay in Trier with a three-day trip to the German capital of Berlin.

Anyone interested in going should contact deHart at x6448 or attend a meeting of the German Club.

The Division of Humanities and Social Sciences presented "In Europe with Penn State-Behrend" Tuesday, lead by deHart. The program featured a movie and discussion of the study abroad experience.



**WHERE'S THE TRAM?:** from l-r: Fritz Hieber, Dr. Steven Dehart, Kim Heidler, Rachel Capp, Joe Stiller, Alex Hintenoch, Gretchen Klein, Bruce Bennett, Ginny Schwartz, Sue from Gannon, Julie Hinetenoch, and Sam Black at Erie International before they depart for Germany