

On June 12, 2008, storyteller Kate Dudding (www.katedudding.com) visited Chicopee Public Library to research a story about the students' part in Operation Little Vittles. She read and photographed the Operation Little Vittles scrapbook. When she got home she emailed photographs of the three letters written to the Candy Bomber (Schokoladenflieger) to storyteller and teacher Richard Martin (www.tellatale.eu) of Darmstadt, Germany. He had two of his classes translate the letters using the following method:

"The class worked in pairs and we then discussed and settled on an agreed version. Of course, this was influenced by my own language skills but not exclusively. Some of their suggestions were better than mine and so incorporated.

But it was a useful exercise. Translating is a difficult art."

When Kate discovered and wrote Richard that Darmstadt was on one of the flight paths of Berlin, with a navigation beacon used by the pilots, Richard wrote back saying:

"We are just to the south of Frankfurt International Airport, one of the main suppliers. As we approach it on the motorway there is a monument, the beginning of an arch. The end of the arch is in Tempelhof. Parked next to the arch is one of the planes used. These arches are replicated at all the airports which supplied Berlin."

Here is a photo of the memorial that Kate found on the Internet <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/photodb/photos/080423-F-0017C-101.jpg> with this caption:

Staff Sgt. Kevin Cloyd rinses the nose art on a static C-47 on display at the Berlin Airlift Memorial site of the former Rhein Main Air Base near Frankfurt International Airport in Germany. Sergeant Cloyd and a team of approximately 30 volunteers from Ramstein AB spent three days cleaning the display aircraft for refurbishing in preparation for a Berlin Airlift 60th Anniversary Celebration to take place there in June 2008. Sergeant Cloyd is an aircraft maintenance crew chief at Ramstein AB.

(U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Corey Clements)



Below are the translations of the letters. We are pleased to add information to the Operation Little Vittles collection at Chicopee Public Library.

Kate Dudding, Richard Marsh and his students, June 18, 2008

Dear Candy Bomber,

We want to thank you most warmly for your sweet gifts. The bars were joyfully received by all the children. Especially the younger children who had never eaten chocolate were completely overwhelmed by the taste: before, chocolate had been just a dream. Of course, you can buy chocolate, but don't ask how much it costs! Most parents cannot scrape enough money together to buy a bar for their children.

With all our best wishes for your flights, our greetings and thanks from Class 7b, 11th School, Lichtenrade,
Dieter Zabel

(Translated by class 10a, Edith-Stein-Schule, Darmstadt, Germany)

Dear Candy Bomber,

Yesterday in school something wonderful happened. A candy bomber surprised each and every child with a bar of chocolate. What a long time it had been since I had eaten any. It tastes fantastic and I'm really grateful. It's a good job the chocolate was not just dropped because otherwise the grown ups would have taken it off us. So again, thank you very much.

My best greetings,
Harald Peterk.
11th School, Lichtenrade, Class 3a

(Translated by class 9c, Edith-Stein-Schule, Darmstadt, Germany)

Dear Candy Bomber,

With this name even we, the children of Lichtenrade, have heard a lot of good things about you. Many newspapers have been writing about your helpfulness, and the children who have already received something from you ensure that you are famous and loved everywhere.

Today we have a special request for you: wouldn't it be possible for us in Lichtenrade to find a few of your little parachutes? We should be so grateful – and so delighted.

We send our best wishes to accompany you as a powerful talisman on all your flights.
Warmest wishes and the best of luck,
Class 9, 11th School, Lichtenrade.

(Translated by class 9c, Edith-Stein-Schule, Darmstadt, Germany)