



Stockheim ♥ Haberschlacht ♥ Niederhofen ♥ Kleingartach ♥ Hardheim

WINNING THE PEACE WITH PEACE THROUGH
VIGILANCE • STRENGTH • HONOR • RESOLVE

CHARLIE BATTERY IS LOCATED

*A*fter exhausting and rigorous virtual archeological investigation using our state of the art imaging satellite, the Charlie Battery Team announces the discovery of the ruins of the original Charlie Battery Nike Ajax & Hercules Guided Missile base on The Heuchelberg, near Kleingartach, Germany.



Even though it's been 50 years, the vague traces of the Charlie Battery Guided Missile Site ruins are still clear to our imaging satellite. Image Map 1 is taken from an altitude of about 15,000 feet.

The barracks and launching areas are still fairly discernible, however, the IFC has been completely obliterated due to 50 years of plowing and agriculture, so I've had to estimate its location. The battery certainly does have an impact on the overall landscape, however, because two of the three areas are placed back from the primary agricultural fields, they are not immediately seen.

Charlie Battery was only about 3-7 minutes from the East West border, so there were always crews on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There were ready rooms in both the IFC and Launching Area for these duty crews, so when an alert was activated firing time was almost immediate.

The geography of the area is really quite fascinating. With thousands years of agriculture, it has been sculpted and shaped into its present state.

Vineyards are the primary endeavor in our neighborhood. They cover many of the south facing hill sides, and in studying each hillside, it becomes obvious that each village has it's own vineyards to tend.

The road into Haberschlacht running along the ridge, has below it, a hillside of grapes that extends almost right into the village



Image Map 1

THE HEUCHELBERG OVERVIEW WITH THE FOUR VILLAGES

itself. And of course, viewing from the Schloss Stocksberg with Stockheim below, the beautiful sweep of vineyards following the contours of the hillsides seemed endless.

The slope below the wooded area of the barracks was the focus of Kleingartach, as well as the vineyards along the hillside below the launching area seems to run right down into the area of Niederhofen.

Kleingartach seems to be the closest village to the barracks. I never took any of those paths down to that village, because there was no way to find your way back after dark. So usually the main focus on that side of the Heuchelberg was Niederhofen and the Gasthaus Rose.

It's interesting, the Americans liked their beer cold, so the gasthauses of choice would keep some cold ones in the cooler for the GI's. I used to see some of the old timers keep their flip top bottles beer close to the warming stove and drink it warm.

As we move in a little closer we begin to see a little more detail in the site areas and the roads. The elevation of Image Map 2 is about 8,500 feet. The Niederhofen/Haberschlacht road can be clearly seen running, first into the forest down the hill towards Niederhofen. And in the opposite direction, along the tree lined ridge above the vineyards, one descends down into Haberschlacht.

I can remember riding in the back of a duce and a half on the way to Heilbronn,



coming out of the tree lined road into Haberschlacht, seeing old ladies with head scarves dressed in black sweeping the early morning streets getting started with their day.

Seeing these old ladies bent over all day working in the fields was a regular event, and it always made a real impression on me. And those tractors towing trailers of steaming mounds of horse and cow manure in the early morning, are still clearly etched in my mind.

They all worked very hard because they had to. Even at those old ages everyone had to contribute to get the job done and to survive.

From Haberschlacht one could turn right and go to Stockheim and to Kleingartach, or continue on through to Brackenheim, on to Whaton Barracks in Heilbronn.

Heilbronn was where one had to go on sick call. It's a large city on the Neckar River and once in a while we would go there on pass, but that was a rare event, because it was so far away.

Image Map 3 is views the agricultural landscape from 6,600 feet, and it's interesting how the fields were molded in with the forest areas. This seems to intentionally connect the various forested areas so that wildlife and woodlands have reproductive continuity, thereby insuring the survival of both.

Also, I think these woodlands acted as



buffers to the wind and weather, thus lessening their impact. The tree line that runs along the ridge from the Schloss Stocksborg up the page to the larger forest area on Image Map 2, is a perfect example of a wind break protecting the vineyards below from the winds that sweep across the top of the plateau.

There were real winters on The Heuchelberg, and it got really cold. Walking back to the barracks at twelve or one o'clock in the morning was a real challenge.

However, a snowy winter night was one of my favorite times to pull guard duty around Alpha Section. The main reason was, the snow made it very light out, so it was easy to see what was going on. As long as one was dressed for the weather, along with your pair of Mickey Mouse Boots, one was relatively comfortable.

I can see that the woodlands to seem to have diminished in size on The Heuchelberg. The increase in population has probably put pressure on forest areas to become farmlands in order to provide food and resources for their needs.

Image Map 4 is from an altitude of 3,300 feet, and gives real close-up detail to the former barracks area. Clearly defined is the road to and into the battery area through the main gate.

The reservoir and over-flow parking area are also well defined. The road then turns left passed where the barracks, physical plant, and the motor pool garage were, as



Image Map 4

BARRACKS AREA DETAILED CLOSE-UP

well as the jog to the right on the forest side to accommodate the fueling station, and then on to the motor pool vehicle parking area at the far end past the barracks area. It was very narrow in width and long enough for all of the administrative and motor pool needs.

From an altitude of 3,000 ft., Image Map 5 illustrates that the Launching area is still the most clearly defined of all the areas.

The Launching Area Main Gate entrance and the perimeter road to the LCT, Ready Room, and the Assembly Building (Missile Maintenance) are still quite evident.

Also, the inner perimeter sections service road, as well as the section locations themselves are all very discernible. The LCT/Ready Room area seems a bit less evident, with the signs of replanting or for-estation in evidence.

The Niederhofen vineyards below Bravo Section is still as I remember it, and is illustrated on the website in the Launching Area Section. [Click Here](#) to view the image.

For the most part the site is going back to nature, which is as it should be rather than being destroyed by some sort of conflict or conflagration. It served its time and now it is done.

