



From the office of the Sturmbannführer  
22 May 2023

Guten Tag Kameraden,

### What's new?

Command staff would like to commend all members, veteran and new of your outstanding work so far this year. 2023 has been incredible. Our ranks have increased not only in numbers but also in quality. This speaks to both our leadership and veteran members and their ability to provide a unique and welcoming environment for members to learn and grow as reenactors and people. However, we do not stop here! We still have big goals to meet, and the work continues on. Keep pushing and keep coming to events. Our unit is a team effort and everyone has to give their best in order for us to be the best.

New members!!!! Please welcome Anwarter Lucas Bryan and Anwarter Jake Kelly to the Wiking family. Lucas bring prior experience with reenacting and Jake brings his military experience. Please also welcome Chris Hutchenson as a 5<sup>th</sup> SS recruit and NCO for the Falschirmjaeger detachment and Andrew Mays as the NCO for the 10<sup>th</sup> Besaglieri Italian forces. Command staff believes these men and what they offer will be a fine addition to the unit.

Additionally, we are extremely excited to officially announce our Kampfgruppe formation. The 5<sup>th</sup> along with our fearsome Italian allies, valiant Falschirmjager comrades, and experience Heer brothers are taking the next step together for reenacting in Texas and our region. There are big plans on the horizon and some details still to be finalized, but the future is looking bright. This also provides a unique opportunity for recruitment, so at events be sure to mention the options available for people interested in the hobby. The goal is for all groups to grow together. If you have any questions reach out to command staff or the NCOs for each Kamprgruppe unit.

Promotions!!!! Congratulations to the newly promoted SS-Rottenfuhrer Joseph Halepeska and SS-Rottenfuhrer Jimmy Pugh. Both men have exhibited strong leadership skills and a desire to improve not only themselves, but also their comrades. Jimmy will be stepping in as Matthew's training assistant and Joseph as our Italian liaison. As the unit continues to grow, there will be opportunities for more members to move up in the ranks. Keep working and keep helping us be the best! Congratulations, gentlemen.

Sincerely, Unterscharfuhrer Campise

### General Updates:

- **The last event of the season before our summer break will be June 16-18 (Father's Day weekend) at George Ranch. Please attend if possible.**
- All new members MUST fill out the unit medical form. See the S1 at your next event.
- All members need to have a persona form filled out for your soldbuch, see the S1 for a copy
- If you DO NOT have a soldbuch, the expectation is to have one by your next event.
- If you need your soldbuch filled out or updated, see the S1 at your next event.
- Jimmy has found a relatively inexpensive generator. If we can get 10 members to pitch in between \$10-\$20 each we can easily get it.
- Moving forward there will be a google registration form sent out prior to events. The expectation is to fill this out so the Command staff can get a better idea of attendance and the needs of members at events.

### After Action Event Report: Operation Husky

This May from the 12th through the 14th the 5th Wiking Living Historian Unit attended "Operation Husky." A private tactical event held in Waco, Tx. The tactical event was to be held Saturday, but members of the 5th began arriving early Thursday afternoon. Thursday was spent setting up camp and preparing for the following days.

After camp was set a fire pit was dug in camp and a fire lit. The unit sat around the fire during the evening and lively chatter filled the night air. The weather was warm but once the sun went down things cooled down a bit. And there was a good amount of cloud cover that helped keep things cool. After this the unit headed back to camp and later fell off to bed.

Friday morning the unit began to rise between 6:30 and 7:30. Members had breakfast and geared up for the day. Once ready the unit fell in for inspection. Weapons and gear were inspected and once command had deemed the unit ready, they began to walk out to the field for training.

Once in the field the unit settled in a small open clearing for training. The kubelwagon became stuck in a muddy spot in the clearing and had to be dug out. Unit members worked to free the vehicle until eventually it was able to be pushed out of the mud and driven to a dry spot.

Following this training began. Training covered multiple topics. SS-Unterscharführer Stulting led a class discussing radio communications, hand signals, infantry tactics and the makeup of a German squad. After this the unit continued with tactile training. The unit practiced moving in formation and hand signaling. After that the unit practiced both defensive and offensive ambushing.

After this the unit returned to the clearing to break for lunch. Once finished, the unit put their gear back on and began to walk back to camp. Weapons training continued there. Weapons such as the k98 and MG42 were discussed.

Following training several members of the unit left to spend time at the gun range. After returning they dispersed for dinner. After dinner members returned to camp and spent the rest of the evening chatting before beginning to head to bed. It rained heavily throughout the night and was quite muddy by the morning.

Saturday morning began early. Unit members rose and began to ready themselves for the day. It was warm and muggy and the rain from the night before had left the grounds muddy. Members of the unit were divided up and given their commands and positions for the upcoming battle.

The battle began in the late morning. Within the first few moments of the battle the mortar became out of commission due to wet munitions and left. The PAK canon was also soon left for

similar reasons. The members of these crews reformed into infantry for the rest of the battle.

After the first battle commenced the allied and axis forces stopped for a break. The Axis forces remained in the field, anticipating a second battle, and the Allies returned to camp. Afterwards a second battle commenced between the remaining Allied and the Axis.

After this the unit returned to camp for the evening. They attended a dinner held by the event organizers and spent time in comradery during the evening.

The following morning unit members worked together to break down camp after the weekend. Once camp was cleared and all gear was packed, the unit bid their farewells until the next event.



History Segment:

*Biblical Fire - Remembering the Bombing of Dresden Seventy-Eight  
Years Later*

**A Photo Showcase Written and Compiled by Wiking Member Claire Taldo\_**

On the night of February 13, 1945, over a fifteen minute period, eight hundred and eighty tons of high explosive bombs and incendiary devices were dropped on the German city of Dresden by the Royal Air Force. During the attacks the Allied aircraft encountered little if any air opposition, leaving them able to freely bomb the city and the city itself effectively a sitting target. Less than three hours after the first bombing a second attack, consisting of almost twice the number of aircraft as the first, began. The city was still aflame from the first attack.

These bombings and subsequent bombings were staged as an attack upon Axis forces by the British and U.S Allies during the Second World War. The horrific event destroyed an entire city and took the lives of thousands of innocent civilians, as well as Allied P.O.Ws. The damage done is almost unfathomable and a stomach turning reminder of the gruesomeness of war. It is oftentimes difficult to even comprehend or imagine the scale of the destruction.



*Two aerial shots showing smoke rising from the bombed city.*



*"There was an indescribable roar in the air – the fire. The thundering fire reminded me of the biblical catastrophes that I had heard about in my education in the humanities. I was aghast. I can't describe seeing this city burn in any other way."  
- Rudolf Bergander, artist and witness to the bombings*





*An estimated 90% of the city was decimated.*









*Photos taken of the city after the bombings show the extent of the destruction.*





*"I saw the destruction of Dresden. I saw the city before and then came out of an air-raid shelter and saw it afterward, and certainly one response was laughter. God knows, that's the soul seeking some relief."*

*- Kurt Vonnegut, witness to the bombing and later author of the famed novel, Slaughterhouse-Five.*



It is estimated that between 25,000 to 35,000 of the 600,000 men, women and children in the city lost their lives to the bombings. But due to the nature of the attack it is unlikely that the true number will ever be known. The bodies of the victims were often piled together on makeshift funeral pyres, coated with benzene and set aflame to cremate them. Others were unceremoniously buried in mass graves.



*Survivors of the bombings work to gather and lay out the bodies of the dead.*



*The bodies of dead Dresden citizens lay in the streets, survivors look on. A pyre of bodies can be seen in the background.*



*Bodies lay stacked on a makeshift pyre, awaiting cremation.*



*The previously pictured pyre of bodies aflame. Many bodies were cremated in similar group fashion. There was no time to attend to individuals.*



Quelle: Deutsche Fototek

*The body of a woman discovered in the rubble.*



*The body of a man discovered in the rubble.*



*A wreath left for a victim of the bombings. Roughly translated it reads, "Now time separates us - your wife and children."*





*A young man tends to what vegetation is left in a garden.*





*Women work together to clear rubble in these three photographs.*



*Young boys assist in cleaning up debris from the bombings.*



In his 1955 book *Return of the King* author J.R.R Tolkien writes, *"It needs but one foe to breed a war, and those who have not swords can still die upon them."* A reminder that war touches all. Even the innocent, those who have no say, or those who have no involvement in the turmoil. And that simply existing in times of war makes everyone a target. The men, women and children in Dresden that lost their lives to the 1945 bombings are a grim reminder of this reality. These photographs serve as a grisly

yet dire remembrance of their fate and a reminder to never forget how humans needlessly suffer under the cruelties of war.

**Moving Forward:**

- **16-18 - Richmond, TX (Public Display / Weapons Demo)**  
**„Fathers Day Event“** - This event will take place at the George Ranch Historical Park in Richmond, TX. Families will be buying tickets for their fathers to participate in firing weapons. They will start with the Texas Revolution and Civil War Era and work their way to WWII. They will be BLANK FIRING. George Ranch will be paying for ammunition. The unit will give classes on the weapons and then permit the fathers to fire them. Weapons will range from k98, MP-40, Mortar, G-43, and (if permitted by the owner) the MG-42. This event will also double as unit training.  
<https://www.georgeranch.org/eventcalendar/fathers-day-event/>
- Not required but if possible, any donations to keep up the website are appreciated. They can be sent to <https://www.paypal.me/ccampise>

Aufrichtig,

Dan Jackson, SS-Sturmbannführer  
Gary Badley, SS-Standartenoberjunker  
Cameron Campise, SS-Unterscharführer  
Matthew Stulting, SS-Unterscharführer  
Claire Taldo, SS-Schutz