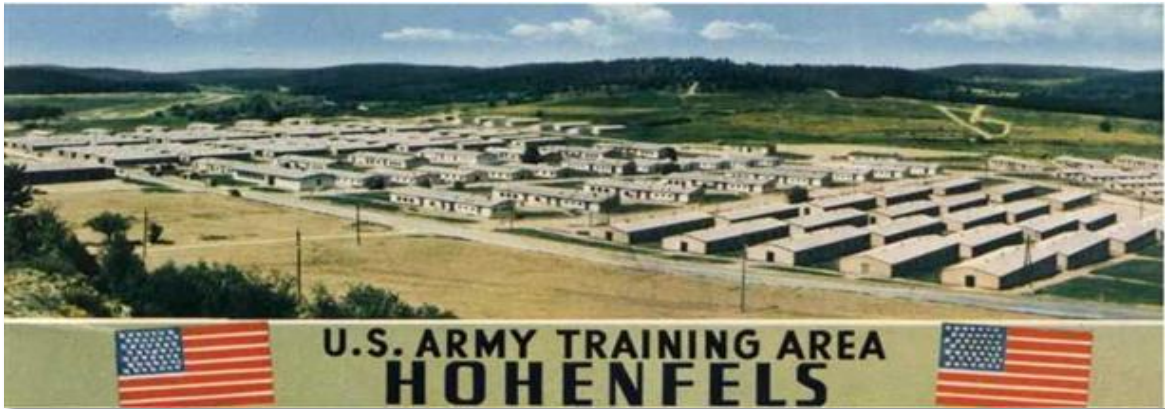


CHAPTER 7

Kosovo Force Deployment - Overseas Training, Hohenfels, Germany



Hohenfels is located in the heart of the Bavaria region in Germany. It was the most beautiful countryside Neil had ever seen. Hohenfels, literally *High rock*, is a municipality in the district of Neumarkt in the region of Upper Palatinate (German: *Oberpfalz*). The town is host to the United States Army Garrison Hohenfels, which operates the Joint Multinational Readiness Center for training NATO armed forces.



CHAPTER 7



CHAPTER 7



CHAPTER 7

Segments of this Multi-National Training would also take place at installations in Wiesbaden and Grafenwoehr.

Wiesbaden – A is a city in central western Germany and the capital of the federal state of Hesse. It has about 273,000 inhabitants, plus approximately 19,000 United States citizens (mostly associated with the United States Army). The city, together with nearby Frankfurt am Main, Darmstadt and Mainz, is part of the Frankfurt Rhine Main Region, a metropolitan area with a combined population of about 5.8 million people.

Wiesbaden is one of the oldest spa towns in Europe. Its name translates to "meadow baths," making reference to the hot springs. It is internationally famous for its architecture, climate (also called the "Nice of the North"), and its hot springs. At one time, Wiesbaden boasted 26 hot springs. Fourteen of the springs are still flowing today.

Wiesbaden is situated on the right (northern) bank of the Rhine River, below the confluence of the Main, where the Rhine's main direction changes from north to west. The city is across the Rhine from Mainz, the capital of the federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate. Frankfurt am Main is located about 38 kilometres (23.6 mi) east. To the north of the city are the Taunus Mountains, which trend in a northeasterly direction.



CHAPTER 7

Grafenwöhr – A town in the district Neustadt (Waldnaab), in the region of the Upper Palatinate (German: *Oberpfalz*) in eastern Bavaria, Germany. It is widely known for the United States Army military installation and training area, called Grafenwöhr Training Area (Tower Barracks), located directly south and west of the town.

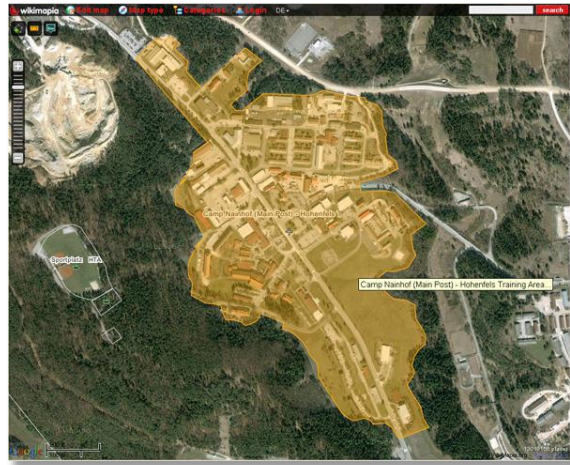
The military installation is also home to one of the largest Army construction projects in Europe, called Efficient Basing-Grafenwöhr. The Grafenwöhr Training Area (Tower Barracks) houses the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command (JMTC). The 7th Army JMTC owns almost all of the U.S. Army training facilities and assets in Europe. The Grafenwöhr Training Area is one of its largest training areas and includes ranges that can accommodate nearly every weapons system currently used. Though operated by the U.S. Army, the area is the largest multinational training area in Europe. Grafenwöhr (Tower Barracks), also known as the East Camp, is the main post and is located on the north east edge of the training area. The Vilseck military community, also known as Rose Barracks, or the South Camp, is on the southern boundary.

The Grafenwöhr Army Airfield provides air flow to all air traffic requesting services including but not limited C-130's from the 37th Airlift Squadron at Ramstein AB, Germany. The airfield is manned 24 hours a day by advisory services and at a minimum from 08:00 to 17:00 by air traffic controllers both in a control tower and an approach control. Due to its length and relative proximity to the JMTC training area, it makes for a realistic simulation of short field operations encountered around the world. Bunker dropzone is also located within the Grafenwöhr Training Area. It is used to practice airdrop of troops, equipment, and supplies.



US ARMY TRAINING CENTER AT HOHENFELS

The German Army originally founded a training area in Hohenfels in 1938. On April 24, 1945, Major General Stanley Eric Reinhart's 65th Infantry Division captured Hohenfels. Generalmajor Gustav Geiger, staff and guards surrendered. A POW camp, Stalag 383, with numerous British inmates was liberated.



In 1951, Hohenfels became a training area for the United States military and was used primarily by United States forces until 1956. In 1955, the German Bundeswehr was founded, and in 1956 the first German unit was stationed in Camp Poellnricht (i.e. Lager Pöllnricht) which had been formerly, a displaced persons camp, until their deactivation in 2001. From 1956 to 1988, the Hohenfels Training Area was used by NATO forces consisting primarily of American, German, Canadian, and occasionally British and French forces.

In 1988, Hohenfels became the home of the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC), the mission of which was to provide realistic combined arms training for the United States Army, Europe, and Seventh Army's maneuver battalion task forces in force-on-force exercises.

Exercises revolve around the fictional nation of Danubia and its three provinces of friendly Sowenia, hostile Viislakia, and neutral Jursland. The opposing force is the fictional army of Danubia. The 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment represented the "4th Guards Motorized Rifle Regiment". M113A2s are used to replicate Soviet BMP-2 IFVs and M60A3 tanks are used to replicate Soviet T-80 tanks.

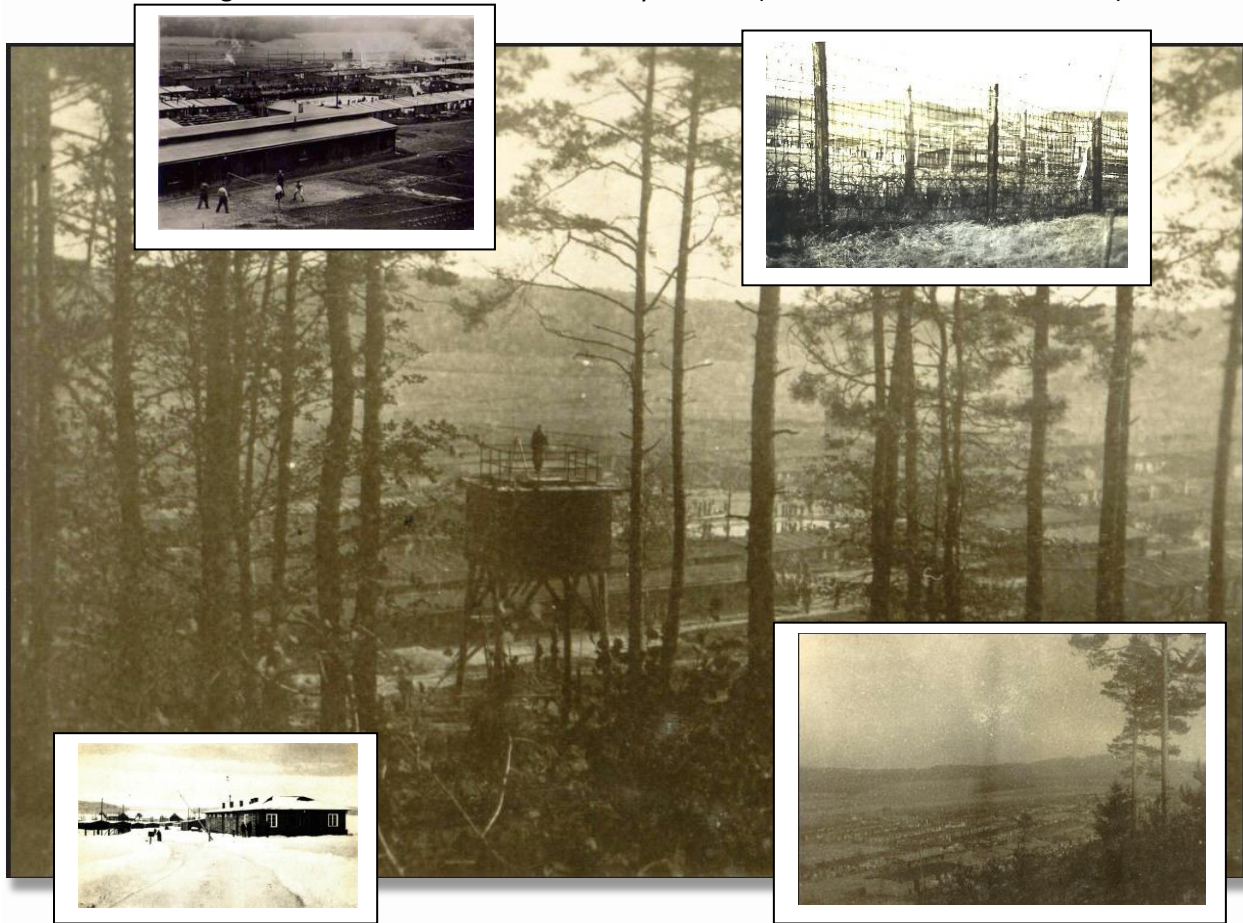


In December 2005 the CMTC was transformed and officially named the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC), part of the Joint Multinational Training Center (JMTC) which oversees training of all of United States Army Europe (USAREUR).



STALAG 383

The training site at Hohenfels is on the same ground as a former World War II POW Camp, Stalag 383. Stalag 383 housed British and Australian prisoners and it looks like a POW Camp still ... bars, fences, razor wire and the cement foundations of the original camp remain. Today, there are newer huts built on those pads but to those living in the facilities it still feels like a POW camp. The bunk beds were possibly 50 or so years old and the food was absolutely horrible! Some say the ghosts of WWII still remain. This camp lies fifty miles due north of the infamous prison camp at Moosburg, the final prison camp from which 2nd Lt. George A. Hofmann was liberated in May of 1945 (28 miles northeast of Munich).



The camp, formerly for officers, was built on a gentle slope in the middle of a piece of heavily wooded country, some miles from the nearest town. Instead of being crammed by the hundreds into unpartitioned barracks, the NCOs (non-commissioned officers) found themselves allocated small dormitory huts holding fourteen or less, described by one of them as "snug billets". The camp had plenty of room for sports fields and walking space besides, and some larger barracks for theatrical shows and indoor recreation. When Red Cross food arrived to supplement the ordinary German prisoner-of-war ration, there was little to complain of at Hohenfels. Much effort went into constructing small stoves so that private food could be cooked when desired. POWs spoke of there being "more freedom and less interference" and of the camp being "far less depressing" than previous camps they had the pleasure of visiting. The winter proved to be cold, but there was sufficient coal and the men were allowed to collect wood from a nearby forest. For most of them it was indeed the best camp they had been in – relatively speaking, it was the best of the worst.

CHAPTER 7

After various delaying tactics, Stalag 383 was finally evacuated on April 17th 1945. The POWs were forced to leave the camp and march 60 miles south via Regensburg to Frontenhausen where they were liberated by advancing American troops.

NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD AND MOLDOVAN FORCES TRAIN IN GERMANY

Major Neil Edgar's final test prior to movement to Kosovo was a 17-day Mobilization Readiness Exercise. It was a fast and furious training exercise and the soldiers were tested both mentally and physically. The exercise was created to simulate 6 months of events that have recently occurred in Kosovo in just 17 days. While the operational tempo is slow in Kosovo, when 6 months of events are compressed to 17 days it makes for a hectic two and a half weeks! In Germany the soldiers of the 30th were subjected to perhaps the most realistic Crowd Riot Control training imaginable. They conducted Fire Phobia training where they walked through walls of fire, and had to fend off and contain rioting role players with shields and 'soft' batons. The training was as intense and realistic as Neil had ever seen in his fourteen years of service. The exercises were recorded on the official home page of the United States Army.

HOHENFELS, Germany - Armed with riot shields and batons, North Carolina National Guardsmen with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment and a platoon of soldiers with the 22nd Peacekeeping Battalion, Moldovan Ground Forces trained in riot control tactics while at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) here June 25, 2015.

The Moldovan platoon was attached to Alpha Company during their JMRC rotation in preparation for a deployment to Kosovo in support of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission. U.S. Army Lt. Col. Bill Gray, the commander of the 1-252nd Armored Regiment, was pleased to be training with one of North Carolina National Guard's partners through the State Partnership Program.

"I am glad they are attached to us, they integrated quickly with Alpha Company and are very professional," said Gray.

During the JMRC rotation, the units were trained in riot control with the culminating event replicating a worst-case scenario called "Dynamic Manner." U.S. Army Capt. Sam Barrow, the commander of Alpha Company, explained that their mission was to deescalate a hostile crowd, remove obstacles and restore peace to an urban area.

"Dynamic Manner is a challenging event, the opposing force can move quickly and they turned up the intensity, our team had platoon integrity but during dynamic manner we showed that we have company integrity," said Barrow.

U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Billy Green, the first sergeant of Alpha Company stated, "This was difficult training but for our company it was a great team building exercise, we will be going to Kosovo fully confident in our ability to assist KFOR."

The Moldovan platoon acted as a quick reaction force for the scenario and was called in towards the end of the demonstration to repel the opposing force out of the village.

CHAPTER 7

Moldovan Capt. Victor Trohin, a platoon leader for the 22nd Peacekeeping Battalion, was satisfied with how his platoon performed and worked with members of Alpha Company.

"We take every training opportunity seriously, it is useful for us to train with other nations. I am pleased with today's training," said Trohin.

When deployed to Kosovo later this year, the Moldovan platoon will be assigned to the Multinational Battle Group-West and Alpha Company will be with the 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team as the Multinational Battle Group-East headquarters element. The training at JMRC was a welcomed opportunity to train with a long-standing partner and also provided a chance to improve skills that will be used for domestic operations.

"We are fortunate to have the opportunity to learn these skills here and be tested like this. The next time Alpha Company is called up for the Rapid Reaction Force back in North Carolina, we will be more than ready," said Barrow.

The RRF mission is an annually assigned to a specific unit within the NC Army National Guard. A unit assigned this mission is always in the ready to assist local, state or federal authorities within a short notice. The involvement in the RRF mission continues to show the NCNG's ability to be ready, reliable and responsive.



Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, conduct riot operations during a training exercise in preparation for the unit's deployment to Kosovo at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center... (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Craig Norton, 382nd Public Affairs Detachment/Released)

CHAPTER 7



Soldiers, right, of the 252nd Armored Regiment engage simulated rioters played by soldiers of the 4th Infantry Regiment while conducting crowd riot control training during a Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission rehearsal exercise in Hohenfels, Germany, on June 20.



Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, conduct riot operations during a training exercise in preparation for the unit's deployment to Kosovo at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015. This will be the 16th rotation a National Guard headquarters element has been deployed for the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission as the U.S. higher command. The KFOR mission has had a total of 27 rotations of either active duty or NG Soldiers supporting it since June 1999.



CHAPTER 7



Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, load a M1165 HIGH MMWV with equipment prior to beginning a riot training lane in preparation for their Kosovo mission at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015.



Moldovan soldiers march out of the training area where they were conducting a riot training exercise with the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015. The 252nd was preparing for a deployment to Kosovo.

CHAPTER 7



A soldier assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team and Moldovan soldiers monitor the environment during a training exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015. The NCNG and Moldovan military have shared a unique bond since 1996 when they became aligned through the National Guard's State Partnership Program.



U.S. Army 1st Lt. Patrick Lake, assigned to Headquarters Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, discuss operations with Moldovan Capt. Ruslan Varivanon during a training exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015.

CHAPTER 7



Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team and a Moldovan soldier monitor the environment during a training exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015.



Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, conduct riot operations during a training exercise in preparation for the unit's deployment to Kosovo at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015.

CHAPTER 7



Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, conduct riot operations during a training exercise in preparation for the unit's deployment to Kosovo at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015.





Medical Soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment, 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, evaluate a casualty during a training exercise in preparation for the unit's deployment to Kosovo at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, June 25, 2015. Although it was training, the events could easily be mistaken as the real thing. Role-players hurled foam rocks wrapped in duct tape, rolled smoking tires, and charged the line, throwing their bodies at full force against the shields testing the capabilities of the troops in training. During the culminating training event (a crowd riot) there were several injuries suffered on both sides. At times the military does assume risk during training to expose soldiers to what it might really be like when things go wrong on the 'battlefield'.

Although a riot hasn't happened in the region of Kosovo recently crowd riot control training is an important point at JMRC because it's a task U.S. Soldiers aren't familiar with and could be called on to perform while deployed.

FIRE PHOBIA TRAINING

"Get out of here!"

Rioters yell as one hurls a Molotov cocktail at multinational Soldiers, bursting into a wave of fire that crashed against riot shields. Chanting and banging their batons on their shields in a rhythm, the wall of Soldiers pushed forward and the eased mob back.



CHAPTER 7

That is just one training scenario U.S. and multinational forces encountered during their rotation at Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, in June Of 2015 – and it is one they will never forget.

At the Hohenfels Training Area, riot control is a staple of NATO's Kosovo Force training but during KFOR 20, June 2015, the Portuguese Fire Phobia Team turned up the intensity with specialized training to familiarize forces with tactics and techniques for reacting to and mitigating the threat of improvised incendiary devices or weapons such as Molotov cocktails.

Albanian, American, Armenian, Romanian, and Slovenian soldiers participated in the training.

"Every time that you are working in CRC and there are rioters, one of the worst tasks you have to perform is reacting to a cocktail," said Portuguese Army First Sgt. Nuno Meves, fire phobia training lane instructor. "Usually the rioters lose to physical efforts, so they have to resort to something else, which in most cases is the Molotov cocktail and it can create *problems for us.*"

Standing side by side, Soldiers took turns having gasoline filled cocktails thrown at their feet and being set on fire. During cold training, the soldiers practiced with plastic bottles filled with water, so the troops could practice their reaction time, and the actual steps they have to go through to put out the fire with their riot gear, help dissipate the flames and move them through the fire. The techniques included going into a protective posture when they spotted a cocktail, stomping their feet while moving forward and waving their riot shields after the cocktail exploded near them. The platoon leaders in each platoon were assisting their soldiers, making sure they were using the proper techniques. The participants were very anxious about doing the live training.



"It takes a lot of training so that's why we have to start with cold training using water bottles," said Meves. "This is a very specific task you have to perform in a real situation so you have to be well prepared."

"It's very hard to train this situation because all the [Soldier's] senses tell them when they are on fire to run away. So we have to fight that and we have to keep them focused," said Meves.

Completing these tasks isn't the everyday norm for these Soldiers, Meves added. Having to deal with a rioting crowd throwing cocktails and other items is completely different from the usual combat tasks these Soldiers are used to.

Each situation brought unique challenges with them but U.S. and multinational forces took on the training at hand and effectively learned new skill sets. With the rotation behind them, the Soldiers can now turn their attention to KFOR and, hopefully, not have to employ any of the new skills they've learned.

CHAPTER 7



The fear of getting burned, and catching on fire were personal concerns, said Sgt. Suren Mirozoyan of the Armenian Army. "Every time there is a crowd control mission you may have to deal with a situation like that," said Mirozoyan. "The training was well organized and the instructors briefed us very well. It made me more confident. A situation is less dangerous if you know how to react."



This was the second time the Fire Phobia training was integrated into the KFOR mission-rehearsal exercise. Despite working with fire, there were no injuries.

"They all worked as a team," said Grella. "I think it's something we need to incorporate more often, because as we draw down troops we might be sent other places, not just Kosovo, for peace-keeping m



A U.S. Soldier of 1st Battalion, 252nd Armored Regiment moves through fire while conducting fire phobia training during a Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission rehearsal exercise (MRE) at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, June 16, 2015. The KFOR MRE is based on the current operational environment and is designed to prepare the unit for peace support, stability, and contingency operations in Kosovo in support of civil authorities to maintain a safe and secure environment.



CHAPTER 7

