

**FP-007**

**BEAR STATUE**

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The bear you see before you may have a charming, playful air about him. But he is actually a reminder of a stressful period in international relations.

From 1945 until 1961, the United States was engaged in a “Cold War” with Communist countries in Europe. Tensions were high as both sides raced toward nuclear superiority. During that period, both the country of Germany, and its major city, Berlin, were divided into two segments - one democratic, the other Communist.

This 84-pound sculpture was a gift from the people of Berlin to the people of Dallas during the height of that Cold War. It was created by German sculptor Hildebert Kliem, who was renowned for having restored many of the historical buildings in Germany that suffered damage during World War Two.

The sculpture debuted on October 11, 1970 which Texas Governor Preston Smith had proclaimed "German Day" at the State Fair of Texas. Berlin's secretary of federal affairs represented it at the ceremony. After the sculpture's unveiling, the U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps provided a salute to the Federal Republic of Germany on the Court of Honor in front of the Hall of State.

Why a bear? For more than 700 years, the black bear has been the unofficial symbol of Berlin. The official city crest of Berlin features a black bear standing on two legs. Many believe the bear symbol may be a nod to the 12th-century leader of the region around Berlin, an ambitious ruler who was known as Albrecht the Bear.

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