

**From:** Kovach, Karen E Ms HQ INSCOM  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 15, 2006 8:33 AM  
**To:** 'wmachristen11@rochester.rr.com'  
**Subject:** FW: History of the 77th



United States Army  
Intelligence and Security Command

**KAREN KOVACH**  
Writer-Editor

8825 Beulah Street  
Fort Belvoir, Virginia  
22060-5246  
E-MAIL:  
Karen.kovach@us.army.mil

COML: 703-706-16  
DSN: 235-16  
FAX: 703-706-25  
OPS CNTR: 703-706-20

**From:** Kovach, Karen E Ms HQ INSCOM  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 14, 2006 9:33 AM  
**To:** 'wmachristen11@rochester.rr.com'  
**Subject:** History of the 77th

I work in the INSCOM History Office. Your Freedom of Information request is going through channels--it was recently received by the INSCOM Records Center (a separate entity from the History Office). My office does not keep retired records, so the Records Center is the appropriate place for your request to go. He has copied the unit reports (you are correct, the unit reports cover FY61 to the unit's inactivation FY64).

I wanted to contact you, however, with an "out of channels" reply.

The archivist UNOFFICIALLY shared your request with me--so, please consider this an informal contact. FOIA requests usually take a long while to process, especially in this case since the reports are still classified. The reports (unit histories) will have to be reviewed for declassification. In the meantime, I thought you'd like to know that we have a few photos from the inactivation ceremony. Also, I extracted a short history from the unit reports, but, I'm afraid there's not too much unclassified information that I could include, so it's mostly administrative.

What I have, I will mail to you--along with one of our INSCOM picture history books because it has a later (probably 1970's) photo of Wobeck, which was where one of the 77th's permanent sites, Det II, was located.

I hope this information will be of some use and that the declassification of the unit reports proceeds quickly, and in time for your reunion.

Sincerely,

Karen Kovach  
INSCOM History Office

*I tried emailing using both a 11 and 11 - but neither sent.  
Regarding classification - the only reason the reports are classified 40-years later is that cryptologic material is exempt from automatic declassification. Only when the reports are requested through FOIA do they get reviewed.  
Hope this info helps*



## History of the 77<sup>th</sup> US Army Security Agency Special Operations Unit

Prepared 13 March 2006  
INSCOM History Office

The 77<sup>th</sup> US Army Security Agency Special Operations Unit traces its roots to the 279<sup>th</sup> US Army Security Agency (ASA) Company (Field), organized at Seckenheim, Germany on 15 Oct 57 and assigned to USASA, Europe. The company moved from Seckenheim to Frankfurt, Germany in late 1957/early 1958. On 24 Mar 59 the company was redesignated the 279<sup>th</sup> USASA Detachment (Field). It was redesignated as the 77<sup>th</sup> USASASOU at Rothwesten, Germany on 5 Jun 61. The US Army Security Agency had a unit located at Rothwesten, Germany since 1957.

The mission of the 77<sup>th</sup> US ASASOU was to conduct communications intelligence and electronic intelligence activities under the control of the US Army Security Agency headquarters. The 77<sup>th</sup> operated several mobile signals intelligence positions performing missions assigned by US ASA Europe.

Headquarters of the 77<sup>th</sup> US Army Security Agency Special Operations Unit from 1 July 1960 through 20 June 1961 was located at Rothwesten Air Base, eight miles north of Kassel, Germany. This location was also the home base for the 319<sup>th</sup> US ASA Battalion. The 77<sup>th</sup> was billeted in two permanent, stone buildings. The administration, supply, and maintenance offices were located in building 9243, while those personnel not in the field on operational missions or temporary duty orders were billeted in building 9226. Because of the mobility and the nature of missions in which the unit participated, the number of personnel quartered and working in the field and in garrison fluctuated.

Its location at Rothwesten Air Base placed the 77<sup>th</sup> 100 miles north of its supporting supply units in Frankfurt, Germany. To alleviate the many difficulties in logistical and administrative support, the 77<sup>th</sup> USASASOU relocated from Rothwesten Barracks, Kassel, Germany to Offenbach Kaserne, Frankfurt, on 13 Jul 61. The authorized strength of the unit at that time was 5 officers, 107 enlisted men and 9 local employees. Offenbach Kaserne was a small compound consisting of five permanent stone structures arranged around the outside of a rectangle, leaving the center open for vehicle parking or a recreational area. Personnel not on operational missions were quartered in building 1333. All married personnel authorized government quarters were quartered in the various military housing areas within Frankfurt am Main. Commuting time between Frankfurt am Main and Offenbach Kaserne was about 40 minutes. Building 1327 was designated as a gymnasium. Building 1328 housed the unit mess and dayroom.

Personnel, being cognizant of past achievements of the unit continually strived for success. By proper utilization of personnel, capabilities, and delegation of responsibilities among dependable noncommissioned officers, many achievements were realized and a high state of morale was maintained among personnel of the unit. Elements of Detachment I were located at various sites throughout West Germany. Personnel assigned duty at Detachment II at Wobeck were re-located from various locations in the vicinity of the operations site into one hotel. Personnel sent on operational missions to areas lacking military facilities were quartered in hotels or private homes.

During FY63, forty-seven enlisted men completed their term of service. Of this number, 20 were reenlisted. The authorized and assigned strength of the unit at the beginning of the fiscal year and 1 June 1964 was as follows:

	<u>1 July 1963</u>		<u>1 June 1964</u>	
	auth	assigned	auth	assigned
Officers and Warrant Officers	7	7	9	6
Enlisted Men	96	95	123	101
Indigenous	9	6	9	2

Other than for the rumor of imminent discontinuance, morale was high even for those at field detachments. Field teams departed the home station with a minimum of six persons.

The 77<sup>th</sup> USASASOU was discontinued at Frankfurt, Germany on 15 June 1964.

Note: From 22 Jun 66 until 15 Dec 67, the 9<sup>th</sup> USASA Field Station, located in the Philippine Islands, also had the designation of 77<sup>th</sup> USASA Special Operations Unit. The unit was redesignated on 15 Dec 67 to USASA Communications Unit, P.I.



## A HISTORY OF ROTHWESTEN

Stone Age relics have shown that the Rothwesten Area had been inhabited and farmed for more than 4000 years. In 1294 the area, then called Rothwardshusen, and controlled by the Bishop of Paderborn, was traded to Henry I, the first Landgrave of Hesse. In 1552 the Clenberg family began a reign that lasted for 200 years.

The domain had been state-owned since Landgrave Frederick II purchased it as a food producing center for Kassel. However, in 1936 the agricultural mission became secondary when the airfield was opened as a Luftwaffe pilot training center and fighter base and soldiers from all branches of the service came there to be trained as pilots. The airfield was one of the most modern and up to date for its time. In 1937 the German Air Force built a radio and observation station north of Rothwesten. In 1947 the US Air Force built a communications station on the site.

Because of masterful camouflage techniques employed by the Luftwaffe during World War II, the base was never discovered by Allied Forces until very near the end of hostilities. On 5 April 1945 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division entered Rothwesten from nearby Hofgeismar. While elements of the division were entering the airfield by the rear gate, German Air Force units were departing through the front gate.