

## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

contact: paoci@eur.army.mil  
phone: 49-6221-57-5815 / DSN 370-5815  
fax: 49-6221-57-6376 / DSN 370-6376



RELEASE #2008-01-10-01

Jan. 10, 2008

### ELVIS HAS LEFT THE BARRACKS: U.S. ARMY EUROPE SIGNAL OFFICIALS TURN LAST SWITCH ON FRIEDBERG BASE

By Sgt. Elizabeth Sheridan  
5th Signal Command Public Affairs Office

**FRIEDBERG, Germany** -- Elvis Presley made a special guest appearance at Ray Barracks here Jan. 7, returning for a brief moment to pay his respects to his old military stomping grounds.

With the sound of Presley's "Hound Dog" reverberating off the cement walls, Lt. Col. Thomas Salo, commander of U.S. Army Europe's 102nd Signal Battalion, joined Jurgen Jaeger of the 102nd in shutting off the main power supply to the KN-4100 telephone switch during a closing ceremony for the base's Building 3705.

Elvis called the barracks home from October 1958 to March 1960 when he served here as a member of the 3rd Armored Division's 1st Battalion, 32nd Armor.

"The historical aspects of this post warranted a ceremony, here in this former home of Elvis," remarked Salo. "Thousands and thousands of people were able to communicate from lines connected to this building. It is the end of an era."



COURTESY 3RD ARMORED DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Pvt. Elvis Presley poses for a photo outside his unit at Ray Barracks in Friedberg, Germany in 1958, during his two-year stint as an Army jeep driver there. With the post closing, officials from U.S. Army Europe's 102nd Signal Battalion turned off the installation telephone switch Jan. 7.

The massive telephone switch, installed in 1986, enabled the 102nd to provide communications to the Friedberg and Giessen military communities with 400 official

military and 20 commercial lines. By 1996 the capacity was bumped up to 1,400 official and 40 commercial lines.

“This is not the first communications site to close, and it will not be the last, remarked Salo.

The closure ceremony for U.S. Army Garrison Giessen, which encompassed Ray Barracks, was conducted September 28, 2007. Building 3705 is the last building on Ray Barracks to be turned over to the Department of Public Works for release back to German control, explained James Neufeld, chief of the operations management cell in Hanau, Germany.

“It is fitting that ‘commo’ is the first in and last out,” said Salo. “We do not turn off until the last customer is gone. They’re gone, so its time to flip the switch.”



[www.hqusareur.army.mil](http://www.hqusareur.army.mil)