

Cold War Trail

1. Germany divided: East and West



Make your way to the back of the exhibition space and find the Trabant car

Who owned this car?

Was this car easy to get hold of?

Read the quote by Dan van der Vat underneath the Trabant car. How would you describe the car based on the information in its object label and in the quote?



Walk towards the tank and follow the Cold War section of the timeline to the right until you find this poster in the corner.

How would you describe the Trabant car based only on this poster?

Why do you think we have this car in a museum about the impact of war?

2. The Berlin wall



Follow the timeline back to the light box with the picture on Mao Tse-tung on it to find the answer this question - when was the Berlin Wall built and why?

In addition, read the information on the *Divided City* Action Station opposite and play the game.



Find this Berlin Wall Search-light

Read the information in its object description panel.

What extreme measures were taken to ensure that people did not cross the Berlin wall?

When did the Berlin Wall finally open up and why?

Conrad Schuman, an East German border guard defected to West Berlin, on 15 August 1961, just three days into the construction of the Berlin Wall. This image has since become an iconic image of the Cold War era.



3. Military action in the Cold War

The two superpowers of the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union, did not declare war on one another. Instead, they engaged in 'proxy wars'. This refers to conflicts in which one or both of the two superpowers gave military aid to opposing forces.



You will need to use the second large light box and the Cold War cabinet to answer these questions.

Can you find any examples of conflicts that occurred during this time which could be considered part of the Cold War?

What was the outcome of the three year conflict in Korea?

Which conflict in Asia involved Britain?

Looking at the objects, can you identify what other major Communist power (not the Soviet Union) was involved in these 'proxy wars'?

If you were creating a display about the Cold War and could borrow one item from this cabinet, what would you choose and why?

4. Reactions to the nuclear threat

During the Cold War, Britain built an arsenal of nuclear weapons. Britain was allied with the United States, which was involved in a nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union.



In 1962, nuclear war was narrowly averted during the Cuban Missile Crisis. British civilians were provided with advice on how to protect themselves from nuclear attack.



Follow the timeline to Silo 5: *Science, Technology & War* and find this object.

Read the information about the effects of a nuclear bomb and then watch the safety film produced by the government in 1976.

Why do you think the British government produced this film?

Do you think the advice in the video would have been useful given what you have read about the effects of a nuclear explosion? Explain your answer.



Look in the cabinet to the right. Can you find any other publications provided to civilians to advise them in the event of a nuclear attack?

5. Protests for peace



In June 1980 the British Government's decision to allow the United States to site 96 cruise missiles at Greenham Common was met with widespread protest. Those in favour believed that the Soviet Union might be deterred from initiating a nuclear strike on Western Europe if the Soviet Union thought Britain was capable of nuclear retaliation.



Head to Silo 2: *Women & War* (near the Trabant) and find this Greenham Common badge in the 'Peace workers' case. Read the information about it on the object label.

In December 1982 more than 30,000 women gathered to join hands around the base at the 'Embrace the Base' event. The women were invited to bring a gift with them that symbolised the life that they wanted to protect.



Protester, Ann Pettitt describes what she saw that day.

One woman had hung her wedding dress on the fence and left it there. She hung her wedding on the fence and walked away and left it. To me, I just sort of walked around with tears streaming down my face looking at these things; you know laughing and crying at the same time.



**Why do you think people felt so strongly about the government's decision?
What do you think their concerns were?**

In 1983 the base was ready and the missiles were stationed at Greenham as planned.

Who would you have supported? The government or the protesters? Why?
