**Camp 702** **King's Cliffe, Peterborough, Northamptonshire (Kingscliffe).**

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| **1947 Camp List** | | | | | | | |
| 702(G.P.W. Labour Holding Unit) | Kings Cliffe, Peterborough, Northants | E |  | Wansford 333/4 |  |  |  |

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| **Prisoner of War Camps (1939 – 1948) - Project report by Roger J.C. Thomas - English Heritage 2003** | | | | | | | |
| OS NGR | Sheet | No. | Name & Location | County | Cond’n | Type 1945 | Comments |
| TL 006 972 | 141 | 702 | Kingscliffe (King's Cliffe), Peterborough | Northhamptonshire | 5 |  | Precise location not identified. NGR given for village centre. |

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| **Location:** There were 8 locations around the airfield for pow camp 702. The main location was identified by Martin J Richards – <https://www.systonimages.co.uk/>  NGR TL 06225 98656 alongside Old Sulehay Forest. About 6km NEE from King’s Cliffe. Just to the SW of Wansford, (note the telephone number in the 1947 list).  **Before the camp:** The King’s Cliffe airfield was about 3 km away – the pow site was one of several accommodation areas based around the airfield.  **Pow Camp:**  **1945** **– RAF POW Administrative Centre**  Kings Cliffe Camp 702 was in existence in 1945 as an administrative centre for pow camps based at RAF stations.  **December 1945** – the site was visited by a Mr A Helps from the Political Intelligence Department; “*for the purpose of screening; then was a very small skeleton force of Germans only at the camp which is as you know the administrative centre for R.A.F. stations employing P of W*.”  Mr Helps gave a brief report of his visit in a letter dated 9 January 1946 – he referred to the camp as ‘Kingscliffe 702’. The skeleton force consisted of 6 Germans under the direction of Flight Sergeant C Marshall. They were designated as a central support department (Zentral Betreunge abteilung) for welfare and educational supplies to 19,000 pows at 240 RAF stations. They also produced a fortnightly newspaper for pows.  The Germans requested, on behalf of all the RAF pow camps – more books, visits from lecturers, films, gramophone records - and for the production of the newspaper, a rotary duplicator and a typewriter. |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1958 |

**1946 – 1947 Transit Camp and Administration Centre.**

As well as being the HQ administration centre for pow camps at RAF stations, 702 King’s Cliffe became a temporary holding centre for pows on 5 March 1946 with a capacity of 3000. Although it was listed as, ‘No.702 Base Transit’ Camp – it was also designated by the RAF as ‘No.1 German PW Holding Unit’. Pows were shipped here mainly from camps in Belgium, Canada and the USA. They generally stayed for just a few days before being posted to the many other camps at RAF stations.

**26-28 June 1946.** The first re-education visit for the HQ camp was conducted as a general survey and to vet candidates for Wilton Park. The visitor was Major C H B Readman of the Durham Light Infantry / Intelligence Corps. He only visited the main 702 King’s Cliffe site where the number of permanent pows working as staff had increased.

Strength Officers: 1 (M.O.) O.R.s: 321 of which 254 were permanent staff and 68 were ‘sick, light duty or awaiting posting’.

The pows had not yet been politically screened but the camp was recorded as ‘grey’. There were 9 candidates for the special training camp at Wilton Park.

Commandant: W/Co B J Skinner Camp leader: O/Fw. (Hans Joachim) Saras (B-)

O/i.c PW: S/L F Schofield Deputy C/L: St.Wm Nedwed (B-)

Chief interpreter: Sgt Henden German M.O.: O/Arzt. Lindner (B) (or Lingner)

S/L Schofield was due to leave and be replaced by S/L Wood. The camp leader and deputy were recorded as having been in the USA where their records were ‘*none too good’*, however they were seen to be doing a good job at this camp.

There was a brisk turn-around of pows through the camp – from March to June, 19,000 pows had been processed here. The camp was not expected to be open for long: “*The number of PW asked for by the RAF is 28,000 and when they have been received, this camp will be closed down for PW and revert to its former use as a RAF fighter station*.”

The camp was described: “*PW are housed in huts on 8 different dispersal sites round the airfield. All have electric light. PW come to the central dining hall on the communal site for their meals, the camp staff usually on bicycles. A feature of this camp is the complete absence of barbed wire. PW are all working on maintenance duties on the station or are employed as members of the clerical staff…. The health, canteen and clothing situation is satisfactory.”*

As in other camps, pows who had been sent from the USA had been mis-informed that they were returning home, morale was therefore seen as ‘*not as good as it should be’*.

All mail for RAF pow camps was sorted at this camp.

Some standard re-education activities took place for the permanent pows, however, due to the nature of the camp these were limited:

Newspapers – received but German papers were irregular. Wochenpost was received.

Library – 335 books.

Lectures – none so far.

Discussion groups – none so far. The reports of the Nuremberg trial were received and posted in the canteen.

Films – once a fortnight.

Radio – one set in the canteen.

Camp magazine – none.

Press reviews – daily, posted in the canteen.

English instruction – one class of 16.

Other Activities:

Religion – ‘*not much interest shown’*. Padres: Uffz Klag (A), protestant and Uffz. Mrazek (B+), R.C. Two huts were used as churches, one had a harmonium.

Education – classes for music, radio technology and French.

Theatre – none. ‘*No talent available’*.

Orchestra – “*there is an excellent string and wind orchestra of 15/18 PW under Hans Busch, a professional musician. A concert of light and classical music was put on for my benefit and considering the length of time they have played together, it was a most praiseworthy effort. They also give concerts to neighbouring camps*.”

Football – a first class football pitch with three teams; the first team had an unbeaten record against neighbouring camps.

**26 August 1946.** English Inspector’s report. Commandant now S/Leader Wood. Lagersprecher (camp leader) was still H Saras. 243 German pows. There was one class of 15 pows studying English.

**7 September – 17 December 1946.** Two members of the Segregation Section, Messrs. George and Hudisteanu, visited 50 pow camps at RAF stations. These camps were listed as hostels for Camp 702. In each camp the German Camp Leaders and others of potential interst for re-education were interrogated. The reports gave very brief details. Some pows were also accommodated in billets. The Luton Airport camp leader, H J Saras, was described as having no political affiliation and “*a steady efficeint type”.* However, the Camp Doctor, Gottfried Lingner – “*claims no political affiliations. He is overbearing – over confident and unreliable”;* he was classed as category C.

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| **Location of RAF pow hostels:** | **No of pows** | **Camp leader and notes (abbreviated).** |
| Abbots Rifton 264 M.U. | 286 | Reception was good but no great interest was taken in the work of the team.  B40572 Ob.Btsmt. Johann Wauschkies (B-) Pg.Anwaerter 1937 Allg.SS 1933-1935. As a seaman he was abroad from 1929-1933. He is not particularly bright or intelligent but is apparently efficient from the point of view of the British staff.  Re-education is fairly well under way at this Station where visits are made by COGA lecturers.  A camp newspaper has also been started by B40038 Uffz Walter Rudel (B+) who has recently returned from Wilton Park Training Centre. It is understood that Bush House [location for the PWE] receives copies of this newspaper. |
| Barkston Heath \* | ? | Ulrich Huar (B+) very efficient and well thought of by British staff and pows. Keen on re-education and genuinely tries to do his best in this respect. |
| Bottesford \* | 76 | ? |
| Bassingbourn | 48 | D392565 Ogefr. Albert Mueller (B-) A most interesting pow who speaks perfect American. He is a mining engineer and was 18 years in America... He bacame an American citizen in 1927 and married an American woman of German origin. As Ortsgruppenleiter of the Volksbund in a small German community he had difficulties with his employers and returned to Germany with his wife and family in 1939 where he regained his German citizenship in 1941. Both his own and his wifes relatives are still in USA. He has contrived to form a small Arbeitsgemeinschaft and has given lectures on the future of Germany and Europe but has little faith in his own ability as a speaker. About 5 pows take advantage of his English course for dvanced Students. He was undoubtedly very emotionally moved during the interrogation. |
| Black Bushe | 49 | B98057 Fw. J Eisenreich (B). Apparently efficient from the point of view of the British staff i.e. for maintaining discipline but politically is quite apathetic. |
| Bletchley | 84 | B367637 Uffz Karl Scheidt (B+) A good sound, efficient type. He is working hard at an Arbeitsgemeinschaft but at present lacks the necessary political knowledge and documentary help. |
| Brampton Grange | 53 | Reception was very good and the Officer i/c was most co-operative and interested. He was himself pow in Germany for some time and takes a keen interest in the pows under his command.  B95791 Fw. Kurt Schliekert (B+) Regular soldier with no political affiliation. A good efficient type who has started English and technical classes. He is keen on re-education but lacks the necessary knowledge. He is anxious to start a political Arbeitsgemeinschaft but as he does not consider himself or any other pows on the station able to take on the job, he states that he has made application to RAF Kingscliffe for a pow capable and experienced enough to do it. |
| Bushey Hall | 50 | A422547 Fw. Otto Boettiger (B). This PW is non political and quite unimpressive. He claims to have an anti-Hitler outlook due to the fact that he has been wounded 5 times. |
| Bushey Park | 49 | A840370 Oberfhr. Ehrenfried Brandt (B+). No political affiliations. A commercial traveller in textiles, he travelled in England before 1939. Highly intelligent, speaks excellent English and takes great interest in the PsW welfare. Bad news from his wife and family in the Russian zone is causing him some anxiety and he will probably defer his repatriation. He is ultimately planning to emigrate to an English speaking country. |
| Cottesmore | 130 | A Eickenbusch (A) is a most efficient type with very sound democratic views. He takes a leading part in re-education. |
| Cranfield | 24 | C643622 Uffz. Otto Klaas (B). H.J. Kameradschaftsfuehrer Pg. 1940 (ueberwiesen). A good intelligent type who was in an anti-Nazi camp in America. He speaks good English and would have been interested to go to Training Centre had it not been for the present plight of his family to whom he considers he owes his first duty. |
| Desborough | 91 | Hermann Wolfram (B+) a clerk by profession who is neither particularly intelligent nor capable of exerting much influence on his fellow pows |
| Ely RAF Hospital | 37 | B135434 Bruno Teuber (B) Polizeischule Brandenburg 1931. Apathetic and non political. He wishes to become a policeman again and as such believes that he should not take any part in politics. |
| Farnborough South | 25 | B215995 Ofw. G Rissman (B) is not very impressive but appears to try to take an interest in re-education. Although there are only 25 Ps/W on this station he seems to have started a little discussion group. |
| Folkingham | 46 | Horst Lewerenz (B+) is very young (21 years old) to be a Camp Leader. However he is quite efficient at and keen on his job which includes interpreter duties. This site appears to be quite a happy little community. |
| Halton | 285 | Ofw. Johann Jaegar (B-) Lanespolizei 1932-1934 taken over by Wehrmacht 193 PG 1932 SA 1931-1932. Captured in Tunisia in 1943 he is particularly anxious to emphasise the benefit of the re-education he received during his three years stay in America. There is however no sign of activity on his part in this camp.  Camp Pastor AA 063644 San. Uffz. Hoehne, Karl (B) Evang-Luth Pastor by profession. SA 1934-1935 speaks reasonable English. The opportunities at this camp for this PW are very great, but he appears incapable or unwilling to grasp them. He would undoubtedly derive great benefit from a course for pastors. |
| Hendon | 40 | B275730 Gefr. Rudolf Regehr (B). No political affiliations. Speaks good English and is apparently efficient but shows no interest in politics. |
| Henlow 13 M.U. | 51 | A425236 Fw. Guenther Sick (B). Regular soldier. H.J. 1933-1934 non-political. Camp leader by virtue of his seniority in rank but lacks personality and drive to be able to take part in any re-education work. The general standard of education is below average and consequently very little interest is shown in political matters. A high percentage of the pows have been held in Belgium where they had not seen even the K.Z. film. |
| High Wycombe | 50 | B367910 Ofw. Rudi Schickel (B) Commercial Correspondent. No political affiliations – quite an impressive war record E.K. I + II – Speaks good English but does not appear to be at all interested politically. Until recently the Station Commander had forbidden English newspapers. He has now given permission for Times and Observer to be obtained for Ps.W and these papers have been ordered although at the time of visit not yet delivered.  Among the recent intake from No.263 M.U. Stansted Mountfitchet were included 3 C and 1 C+ Ps.W. |
| Husbands Bosworth | 60 | Siegfried Struck (B-) Pg.34 SA 32, Truppfuehrer, appears interested in re-education, and prepares and delivers lectures from items of news taken from English papers. |
| Kenley | 38 | B23574 Fw. C Schulz (B-) Volksschullehrer. *[= primary school teacher]* Rather a negative type who tries to create a favourable impression. |
| Lasham M.U. | 47 | 90970 Fw. Wilelm Schnittger (B+) is apparently an efficient Camp Leader but is very apathetic towards re-education. He is reasonably sound and could be useful if given the necessary guidance and inspiration. |
| Leighton Buzzard | 25 | C788857 Alfred Funke (B+). H.J., N.S.St.B. Abitur, Bauingenieurschule*.* Very pleasant type who speaks good English. He is efficient and takes a great interest in re-education. He runs English lessons which are attended by about 10 PsW. |
| Little Horwood 71 M.U. | 49 | B40276 W Altenhoff (A). Comes from an old democratic family. His father was formerly with KPD and is now an active member of SPD. Has very sound ideas and runs the camp with the aid of a freely elected committee. He has arranged regular discussions and although he has a decided leaning to the left he could not be described as pro-Russian.  821981, W Borries (A) Operatic singer and Radio announcer on Berlin Short Wave Station in English, Dutch + German, SAJ 1931, SPD 1933, Pg. 1935/39. Reichstheaterkammer 1936/1939. He has spent a great deal of time in Holland where he sang from 1929-1935 in season. According to his statement he was handed a red Party Card in Amsterdam in 1935. He works well with the Camp Leader and claims that he was active in an Arbeitsgemeinschaft in Canada with Bremmerich Edgar who he says is the announcer on the German PW Programme from the BBC. |
| Lordsbridge 95 M.U. | 94 | 20227 Gefr. Erich Flieger (B) Young and non political but is apparently doing a good job from the British Staff point of view. He has a brother B169931 Ogefr. Heinz Flieger, pow at 165 Camp Watten and is anxious that they be brought together.  The apathy in this camp is very marked. There are 15 pows with repatriation Group numbers under 9 and Repatriation rumours are the chief topic of conversation. |
| Luffenham North | 98 | Erwin Heilmann (B+) is a good solid type, very efficient and with sound Anti-Nazi views but little ability to spread them among his fellow Ps/W. |
| Manston | 104 | D384263 Sold. Walter Bruns (B-). 22 years of age, captured with Hermann Goering Div. in Africa in 1943. Made Camp Leader by virtue of his knowledge of English when there were formerly only 20 prisoners on this station. Is totally unsuited as Camp Leader and D384249 Gefr. Walter Bruchhaus (B+) has been recommended to replace him. |
| Medmenham | 123 | B141573 Wm. Walter Pechmann (B) – Labourer. No political affiliation. Has no news of his wife and family, and is in consequence inclined to be disinterested and apathetic. |
| Mildenhall | 107 | D927757 Ogefr. Rudi Betz (B+). No political affiliations. A good sound type who is very keen and interested in re-education. He apparently tries very hard and has been recommended for Wilton Park Training Centre.  This station has a high percentage of youths of which 31 have been ear marked for Youth Camp and a visit by a T.A. should prove to be valuable. |
| Milton Ernest | 54 | Reception was cordial but the arrangements so far as interrogation were concerend left much to be desired. Curiosity rather than interest was shown in the work of the team.  B97259 Fw. Karl Heinz Lantow (B) Chemical student Pg.1938 N.S.D.St.B. 1940. He stated that he was much too busy with his normal duties to be able to take part or encourage any re-educational work and that he had little enough time for his own studies in which he was more interested.  The pows on this station live at Staughton and are transported daily to and from Milton Ernest, their place of work, some 12 miles away. There is no radio in their compound. |
| Oakington | 115 | Reception was casual and no particular interest was shown.  B96990 Ogefr. Dietrich Gierth (B+) No political affiliations. A pleasant efficient type – speaks very good English. Seems interested in re-education and has tried to get talks and discussions going, but so far has been beaten by the general apathy in the camp. He also claims to have asked the Warrant Officer i/c pows to try to arrange visits and lectures from Cambridge University – so far without success.  This station also has visits from COGA lecturers. |
| Odiham | 29 | Gefr. Helmut Poser (B). Only 22 years of age. Captured in Africa in 1943. He is Camp leader by virtue of his reasonable command of English which he taught himself in America. |
| Polebrook 273 M.U. | 50 | Alfred Mohns (A) is a sound – efficient type who does good work by lectures – discussions and news reviews |
| Rauceby | 60 | Heinz Mader (B+) Pg.37. NSLB. NSV. Gefolgschaftsfuehrer H.J. Leiter der H.J. Spiel – und Singschar in Annaberg is a professional music teacher, who is very keen on re-education. He gives advanced lessons in English. |
| Ruislip | 22 | D266627 H.Fw. Eugen Hinz (B). Senior NCO type with no political interest. |
| South Witham 200 M.U. | 102 | Walter Koester (A) aged 42, was formerly (in 1925) in Hamburg Police. His wife is half Jewish and he had difficulties with Party and was eventually dismissed from the Police. Highly efficient and co-operative P/W from all pints of view. |
| Spitalgate 17 SFTS (Service Flying Training School - Grantham) | 84 | A Marent (B+) SA 33/37 and subsequently Regular Soldier, is an exceptionally good type who is having a very good effect on his fellow Ps/W. He is efficient – willing – intelligent and reliable. |
| Stanmore | 52 | There was a decidedly uncooperative British staff at this Station.  Camp Leader D213440 Hpt.Fw. Bernhard Schulte (B+) Regular soldier 1934. A good efficient type. His father was and still is a Dutch citizen. In view of the possibility of his early repatriation, he is group 4 and in the British zone, he has suggested D247532 Ogefr. Strauss, Franz (B) as his successor as Camp Leader. It is however highly probable that his place will be taken by the present interpreter D 247534 Ofw Schaarschuch, Heinrich (B) who although Group 3 (Russian zone) will probably volunteer to defer for 6 months. |
| Sunninghill | 57 | AA 006246 Fw.Hoffmann (B). Professional soldier since 1935, previously with Hamburg Police. Does not create a very favourable impression, probably due to the fact that he has only been Camp Leader at this station for about a fortnight. |
| Tangmere | 22 | B208077 Gefr. Gerold Luetje (B-). Has been recommended for the youth camp. Reported that B26032 Ogefr. Luebke Ernst had been in KZ but unfortunately this PW is at present in the Royal Sussex Hospital and it was not possible to interrogate him. The British staff was unable to confirm that he had been in KZ He is domiciled in the British zone. |
| Thorney Island | 40 | B180776 Fw. Wilhelm Kueppers (B+) a good type who appears to try very hard. Would improve if given a little help and guidance. |
| Upwood | 125 | Franz Kublak (A) is a good efficient type who tries his best to spread his democratic views but is at present handicapped by lack of material from HQ. He has no Party record. |
| Uxbridge | 20 | B98632 Fw. Heinz Vieweger (B). A good efficient type who could, with assistance develop into a useful PW. |
| Waterbeach | 86 | B58851 Ob.Maschmt. Reinhold Seemann (B-). Spielmannszug AllgSS 1939/40. Young and inexperienced despite the fact that he is the senior NCO. |
| West Drayton | 111 | 530332 Wm. Christian Keim (B+). This PW has had considerable experience in America where he was a camp leader for 2 years. He has founded an Arbeitsgemeinschaft which at present holds a lecture every fortnight. |
| West Malling | 38 | Uffz. G Kocks (B) Volksschullegrer. By virtue of his profession he could be useful. Speaks very good English and from the point of view of the British staff is quite satisfactory. In regard to re-education however he is completely lacking in initiative and is a perfect “B”. |
| Westwood (Peterborough) | 100 | F Germer (B) is willing and popular with Ps/W but not sufficiently intelligent to give and impetus to re-education. |
| Wing | 19 | B143306 Ogefr. Karl Hohoff (B). H.J. Kameradschaftsfuehrer/Hauptscherfuehrer 1937-1941. Young and efficient but inexperienced. He works as a driver. |
| Wittering | 40 | Heinz Schroeder (C) 22 years of age, a waiter; captured in North Africa. Like most young pows on this site he is of the opinion that Hitler was a tool of capitalists. Repatriation announcement caused considerable disappointment since the pows calculated that at the present rate they may have to stay in this country for another 1 or 2 years. |
| Wyton | 59 | B97061 Gefr. Werner Hilliger (A) S.A.J. 1926/31 G.D.A. 1927/33. A very good efficient type with sound ideas. He takes great interest in re-eduction and gives on an average one lecture a fortnight. |

\* Confusing entries in report – numbers are given for Bottesford, **but** the camp leader details refer to Barkston Heath which is about 14 miles away.

(EK =Eisernes Kreuz - Iron Cross / GDA (Gewerkschaftsbund der Angestellten) - white collar union / HJ = Hitler Youth / KZ = Concentration Camp / NSLB = Nazi teacher federation / NSDStB = Nazi Student Union / NSV = Nazi welfare organization / SAJ = Socialist Workers Youth / TA = Training Advisor).

It was noted that many of these camps were isolated and the Kingscliffe site had set-up a Welfare Section under Sgt Turk. A newspaper was also being produced for all sites to provide pows with information.

**22-24 February 1947.** As part of the re-education programme administered by the Control Office for Germany and Austria (COGA), Paul Bondy, a German-speaking refugee gave lectures at the main camp and 2 hostels.

**12 May 1947.** English Inspector’s report. Commandant still S/Leader Wood. Lagersprecher Schfenk. 280 German pows in main HQ camp. There were no English classes – one conversation class was due to start. Classes, when held, were in the Information Room. Another problem arose from the camp being widely dispersed with sites being as much as 3 miles apart. Repatriation dates had been set and were eagerly anticipated.

**18 June 1947.** Visit for a re-education survey and interviews for the Training Centre at Wilton Park. Strength: 1 officer; 247 other ranks.

On the day of the visit: at various RAF sites there were 1417 pows – 1139 in transit for repatriation / 30 held on Automatic Arrest etc / 248 permanent staff at the Kingscliffe site.

Of the 248 staff, screening figures were: A = 6 / B+ = 43 / B = 139 / B- = 60 / with no category C.

Commandant: S/L V T L Wood Camp Leader: Rainald Schlenk (B)

Interpreter: Sgt Eisler / Cpl.Dodd Deputy C/L: Erich Mueller (B)

German M.O.: Dr Joseph Fischer, Oberstabsarzt, (B).

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Corporal Dodd was regarded as outstanding, “*a highly intellectual young man, a product of Cambridge University and virtual Studienleiter and guiding spirit for re-education. He is a brilliant student of German, highly respected by all and is fully aware of COGA aims and ideals in re-education.”* Sgt Eisler was good on the “*documentation side*”.

It was noted that the British staff were all keen on re-education and outside cultural visits were being organised. Visits had already been made to Cambridge University.

Morale was seen to be ‘fair’, with some of the older men concerned about repatriation and their families.

Standard re-education activities were happening, but still limited. There were however, two orchestras – one classic, one jazz; and a good theatre group.

**July 1947.** The camp closed.

**Postal Items seen:** Letter-sheet to Germany dated December 1946.

Pow postcard from ‘RAF Kings Cliffe’ to Germany, dated May 1946 and another dated April, 1947.

**After the camp:**

<https://repatriatedlandscape.org/england/pow-sites-in-the-east-midlands/pow-camp-702-raf-kingscliffe-pow-site/>

**Further Information:**

National Archives –

AIR 29/1416 – German POW Holding Unit, RAF Station King’s Cliffe. Dated February 1946 to August 1947

FO 939/190 – 702 Holding Camp, Kings Cliffe Camp, Peterborough, Northamptonshire. Dated 1946 – 1947. (Used abolve).

Some pictures and information - <http://www.kingscliffeheritage.org/archive.php>