**Camp 99** **- Military Hospital Shugborough Park, Shugborough, Staffordshire**

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| **1947 Camp list** | | | | | | | |
| 99(Hospital) | The Military Hospital, W. Shugborough Park, Shugborough, Great Haywood, Staffs | W. | Prishosp,  Great Haywood | Rugeley 285 & Milford 291/2 | (Blank) | Major.R.B.Asterley | V111/356/3 |

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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 |
| SJ 991 226 | 127 | 99 | Shugborough Park Hospital, Great Haywood | Staffordshire | 4 |  | Military Hospital. Returned to parkland |

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| **Location:** Within the Shugborough Estate. The NGR above is for Shugborough Hall. The military hospital was SJ 995 216 – only part of this site was for pows.  **Before the camp:** Part of estate / farmlands. Military Hospital.  **POW Camp 99:**  **1942 – July 1946:** Camp 99 was at Chepstow Military Hospital then Foxley Military Hospital.  **12 July 1946** - Entry in Hansard;  ***“****Mr. Swingler* [Labour MP for Stafford] *asked the Secretary of State for War how many huts and other forms of accommodation in Shugborough Park, Milford, Staffordshire, are controlled by his Department; how many of them are vacant and for how long they have been vacant; and what steps are being taken to dispose of them.*  *Mr. Lawson - There are two groups of huts on this site. One group, consisting of 51 huts of various sizes, was empty for about six months,* ***but was recently allocated for use as a prisoner of war hospital with effect from 12th July.*** *The other group, consisting of 14 huts, is in process of being released*.” **(House of Commons - 12 July 1946,** Volume 425).  **14 July 1946** – The pow hospital moved from Foxley MH to Shugborough.   |  | | --- | | Oversight and development of re-education activities and English teaching for German pows was carried out by PID (Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office) / COGA (Control Office for Germany and Austria – UK). Visits and reports were made. The standard of the reports varied greatly. The visitors took little interest, if any, in activities other than re-education. They rarely mentioned welfare, sports, games, pastimes, crafts, etc of the pows. |     **29/31 July 1946** – Report on ‘Progress of Re-education.’ |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1962 |

“*A well equipped, hutted hospital-camp in pleasant country surroundings*.” There was no fence surrounding the pow section to keep it separate from the rest of the site.

Strength of hospital staff; 17 officers; 267 Other Ranks; 29 Nursing Sisters = Total 313. 134 patients [capacity 900].

O.C. Hospital: Lt Col Evans RAMC Camp leader: Oberstabsarzt Schallock (B)

Camp Commandant: Major Asterley Deputy C/L: Sdf Walter (B-)

Interpreter: 2nd Lt Folger German M.O.: Nil

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| Political screening of hospital staff: | A+ | A | B+ | B | B- | C | C+ | Unscreened |
|  | 2 | 17 | 25 | 109 | 51 | 31 | 3 | 75 |

Major Asterley was appointed as Commandant in June 1946. His main duties were the oversight of pows, their accommodation, security and administration. He was supportive of the aims of re-education and wished to have some of the C grade pows removed.

Lt Col Evans, however, took a different attitude. He was the commanding officer within the hospital, and was only concerned with the smooth running of the hospital – he had no interest in re-education. His opinion overrode Major Asterley’s.

2nd Lt Folger was, “*an efficient young I.O. of Polish origin*.” He too was seen as supportive of re-education, but Lt Col Evans wished for him to consider himself only as a translator.

Camp leader Schallock replaced the former leader, General Attig\*. Schallock was regarded as a successful leader. His move away from National Socialism was believed to be sincere and he was upgraded from (C) to (B). He submitted a list of the ‘black’ (C grade) pows that he thought should be transferred from the camp.

[\*Generalarzt Dr. med. Rudolf Attig - Military Medical Doctor. Held at Grizedale Camp 1, then Island Farm Special Camp 11. 26th April 1946, transferred to Shugborough. 25th June 1946 transferred back to Island Farm Special Camp 11. His time at Shugborough suggests that he had been sent there to assist preparing the site as a pow camp/hospital. However, he may have been removed for political reasons as the report stated that his removal had; “*weakened to Nazi Group of the camp.”]*

Deputy C/L Walter replaced “*Nazi adjutant, Teichert.”* Walter did not prove to be any better; “*proved untrustworthy and has aligned himself with the Nazi element amongst the officers.”* The visitor proposed to downgrade him to (B-) and have him removed. An arrest report had been submitted for him as a former member of the S.D. [*Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsführers-SS* – SD - the tribunal at the Nuremberg trials declared that the SD was a criminal organisation].

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|  | The 29 Red Cross Sisters – “*are the worst single element. Apart from one white, they are predominantly pro-Nazi and hostile to any re-education*.” In March 1946, a PID Segregation Team screened four Sisters as:  C+ [active Nazis] Hannah Linek and Kuehn – both SS.  C [Nazis] Elsa Strauss and Gertrud Krommes.  The visitor wanted these four to be transferred and held in a different camp. He gave an account that a previous outspoken Nazi matron from this hospital was removed and repatriated, then subsequently released to go home – this made a very bad impression on those pows who were not Nazis and were still in captivity.  Of the 15 Medical Officers, most were no trouble, but three were obstructive to re-education:  StArzt von Rohden (C+), aged 52, openly supported Nazism.  StArzt Russe (C), Austrian who wished to be in a German Camp, until he found out that Austrians were being repatriated sooner.  StArzt Brinken (C), defended most aspects of Nazism.  40 medical students did not cause any trouble. Too bust with studies to take part in re-education. |
| Photo by ICRC – Shugborough Park 99 |

180 Medical orderlies and camp staff, estimated 15% white, 60% grey, 25% black. Most were uninterested in re-education.

30 pows made up a ‘fatigue party’ – they were uninterested in re-education.

Patients at this time included, General der SS von Jenner [? No info found], 2 other Generals and a Vice-Admiral.

Overall morale was good. The pow staff had been busy during the two recent moves and enjoyed a large measure of freedom and privileges in comparison to other pows.

The standard list of re-education activities was given:

Wochenpost and Ausblick – 120/40 copies respectively. Ausblick not being supplied regularly.

Newspapers – 12 English daily papers and 5 on Sunday were purchased. Some periodicals received. No German papers had been received for 2 months.

Library – Good with 1500 volumes mainly supplied by the German Red Cross. Many pows wished to buy books, but there were delays due to censorship.

Lectures – None had visited since the hospital moved to Shugborough – it was requested they start again.

Discussion groups – A Democratic Study Group met weekly with 30-40 attending. *“Many PsW are restrained from attending by the hostility of the black element*.”

Films – The camp had a 16mm projector on loan from the YMCA, unfortunately it had broken down. It was hoped films would start once the projector was repaired.

Wireless – 2 sets with loudspeakers in hospital wards and OR quarters. Another set in the officers’ mess. 2sets were privately owned.

Camp magazine – ‘Der Neue Weg’ 45 copies weekly, produced by the Democratic Study Group, and opposed by some of the doctors and Sisters.

Information room – Under construction.

English instruction – 2 small classes.

Other camp activities –

Religion – A permanent chapel-hut was available. Protestant padre Schoesser (est B-); “his influence is dubious.” 40 pows attended Sunday services. RC padre Hornsberg (B+); “weak and vacillating.” 60 attended his services, including patients. A small RC study group was also held.

Education – classes being restarted after the move.

Entertainment – a theatre group had started “but there is little talent.” One variety show had been produced. There was a string quartet playing light music. The theatre could hold up to 200 and was also used for lectures.

**30 July 1946** - Entry in Hansard;

**“***Mr. Swingler asked the Secretary of State for War the reasons for the delay of six months in allocating for use 51 huts in Shugborough Park, Milford, Staffordshire; and if he will immediately release the remaining 14 huts on this site.*

*Mr. Lawson - It was planned to use this site as a prisoner of war hospital and it was earmarked and reserved for that purpose, but many alterations had to be carried out. As I informed my hon. Friend on 12th July, the 14 surplus huts are already in process of release.* (House of commons - **30 July 1946** - Volume 426). A further entry on 8 October 1946 referred to the disposal of the 14 surplus huts.

**5/8 August 1947** – Re-educational Progress Report. The 3rd PID report, the 2nd is missing. Strength of Hospital Staff; 23 officers, 383 OR, 1 Nursing Sister = 407. 486 patients.

O.C. Hospital: Col M P Power OBE, MC, RAMC Camp leader: Oberstabsarzt Dr Heffe (B-)

Camp Commandant: Major R B Asterley Deputy C/L: Olt Hahn (B-)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Hornung / Sgt Sandig German M.O.: Nil

Col Power had been recently appointed as Commanding Officer in the hospital, he was more supportive of the aims of re-education than his predecessor.

S/Sgt Hornung was due to leave. Like many Interpreters he was not of British origin. The visitor was clearly pleased to see him go; “*Having done little of real benefit, with his almost anti-British sentiments he will prove no loss to the camp.*”

Sgt Sandig was an Austrian Jew – “*Despite this, he is not very conversant with the language, but he is learning fast*.”

The Camp leader had held this position since January 1947. Aged 38, claimed to be anti-Nazi as he had Jewish relatives, no Nazi Party record. *“Sound and reliable, he still shows slight militaristic traits… possesses a likeable personality and commands respect of British and German staff*.”

The Deputy C/L was not regarded as a success in his post. Aged 29, a forester, “with no sense of war-guilt – rather he has asserted that British bombers instigated the bombing… been known to talk almost boastingly of his war-time achievements.” It was recommended he be removed and arrangements were being made.

The troublesome Nursing Sisters had been largely removed as had most other C grade pows. Simplified screening was in use: A 10 / B 396 / C+ 1.

StArzt von Rohden, previously identified for removal, was still at the camp – the only C+ remaining – “he is still spiritually enamoured of National Socialism but he is quiet, keeps to himself, and remains here solely because he is a specialist and cannot at the moment be replaced.”

Morale had improved with greater concessions and facilities. Negative aspects remained the slowness of repatriation, especially as doctors were often held back, and news from home.

One of the patients at this time was Fieldmarschall von Brauchitsch – “*he is quiet and keeps very much to himself.”* He was later arrested on charges of war crimes, but died of pneumonia in 1948 before he could be prosecuted. Approximately 80 of the patients were Ukrainian. Their morale was low, especially due to language difficulties, lack of reading mater, etc. These pows were ex-members of the Waffen-SS Division Galizien. The division was accused of major war crimes against civilians.

Re-education activities were very similar to those from a year previous. There was still some mild resistance to activities from the doctors and most patients, due to their condition were apathetic. Changes –

Films – YMCA films every 3 weeks and Travelling Films Ltd fortnightly. Patients fit to attend were paid for, (6d entry for Travelling Film shows) by the Welfare Fund, but that Fund was running low.

Discussion groups – The Democratic Study Group had lapsed. Discussions were held on mainly medical and general matters.

Camp Magazine – this had lapsed, but was being restarted.

Press reviews – Popular. Held daily with translated extracts from newspapers.

Information room – exhibited text and pictorial displays on subjects such as ‘The British Parliament.’

Other camp activities –

Religion – Same Protestant padre Schoesser (upgraded to A). A new RC padre, Major Dybul (B+) – “*Dogmatic, self-opinionated, and somewhat supercilious… he cannot, however, be classed as dangerous.”*

Entertainments – The theatre group and 12 piece orchestra gave performances. Other groups from nearby camps visited from time to time.

Outside contacts for doctors and German staff –

Selly Oak Hospital, Birmingham

Lichfield Cathedral

Staffordshire County Council meetings.

Christian Students Movement, Stafford

Society of Friends, Stafford.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Football Club.

It was hoped more contacts would soon develop.

**20 November 1947** – The hospital was used to train doctors and other staff. “*A small Rhinelander, General Kurt Pflieger, went to Camp 99* [20/11/1947] *to be trained as a masseur and stayed there four months – a unique personal initiative.”* Masseur were used in physiotherapy. (Thresholds of Peace, p350, Matthew Barry Sullivan, 1979, Hamish Hamilton).

**31 March / 2 April 1948** – Final Survey. Strength of hospital staff; 21 officers, 247 OR, 1 Nursing Sister = 269. Patients; 7 officers, 171 OR.

A new Interpreter: S/Sgt Roberts – “*although not brilliant, is a decided improvement on his fore-runners.”*

A new Deputy C/L: Kpt Lt Luebcke (B+)

Screening figures: A 3 / B 444. 322 pows repatriated to date.

A survey was conducted in camps still open at this time concerning pow attitudes to the British. It was largely pointless, carried out far too late and in totally random ways. Some visitors simply gathered whoever was around and asked them to give a show of hands to the questions, some only asked a ‘selected’ group. For what its worth (nothing?), the results at Shugborough of a “*cross-section of staff and patients”* were:

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| Attitudes to the British: | Hate | Dislike | Distrust | Indifference | Ready to trust | Liking |
|  | 0% | 10% | 10% | 15% | 10% | 55% |

No Resettlement Officers had been sent by PID to this camp. Many expressed a fear of returning to Germany, especially those from the Russian Zone. Many pows were enquiring whether they could remain in the UK.

Outside contacts –

Visits to Lichfield and Worcester Cathedrals; Birmingham clinics; a trip to London; Council meetings and local courts at Birmingham and Stafford.

Some visiting lecturers had given talks.

Ukrainian and YMCA choirs had visited the camp.

**After the camp:** 2019 part of the Shugborough Estate.

**Further Information:**

National Archives - FO 1120/223 – ‘Re-educational survey visit reports for camps 93 to 99’. Used above.