

# Transcript

00:00:04 Speaker 1

Chris Swithenbank interviewing Hillary Williams at the Porthcawl Museum on the 11th of July 2023.

00:00:14 Speaker 1

Hello Hillary, thank you for coming

00:00:16 Speaker 2

Hello Chris.

00:00:17 Speaker 1

Hello. Right. You're going to tell us a story about Uncle George.

00:00:23 Speaker 2

That is correct. Uncle George Bush, who joined up during the Second World War and unfortunately was captured and was put in Stalag 4B at Mühlberg-Brandenburg, which is in the South of Saxony, in the Stalag prisoner of war camp there.

00:00:52 Speaker 2

Fortunately, he survived and when he returned home, there was a street party for him at 14 Lewis Street, **Cardiff** [?], and I have a couple of photographs of the 'Welcome home Daddy' from the war.

00:01:15 Speaker 1

Excellent. Yeah, great. OK. So do you know when he was captured?

00:01:21 Speaker 2

I don't know any more than that.

00:01:23 Speaker 1

No. OK.

00:01:26 Speaker 1

How long was he in in the prisoner of war camp? Any idea?

00:01:30 Speaker 2

No, I don't I don't know.

00:01:33 Speaker 1

OK.

00:01:36 Speaker 1

Any any idea how he how he came home? Was he how was he released? Any ideas? No?

00:01:44 Speaker 2

Nothing. Nothing. No, I only know know this bit. Unfortunately, it was through on going on, yes, on the Internet, isn't it, and and joining up to Ancestry and doing the DNA. That was good.

00:02:01 Speaker 1

Yes. Yeah.

00:02:04 Speaker 1

That's OK. So who are the people in these pictures?

00:02:09 Speaker 2

His brother, George's brother, Ted.

00:02:15 Speaker 2

Georges wife, Dolly. My grandmother, Charlotte Bush.

00:02:21 Speaker 1

So that's his mum? Yeah.

00:02:22 Speaker 2

Yes. And there's his daughter, Valerie. And these are the neighbours.

00:02:28 Speaker 1

All right, OK

00:02:32 Speaker 1

So you have a nice welcome home then? Yeah.

00:02:34 Speaker 2

Yes, very. Fortunately, he was well when he came home.

00:02:42 Speaker 1

And did he tell anybody anything about his time in the prison?

00:02:47 Speaker 2

No, they kept quiet. It was all so horrific, wasn't it, that that they kept quiet about it. Unfortunately, I looked up on on Wikipedia regarding the Stalag 4 and what was interesting is that the camp's Welsh soldiers created their own periodical called Cymro, which is Welsh for Welshman, and edited by one prisoner, William John Pitt.

00:03:21 Speaker 2

And they encouraged all the prisoners, when they would receive letters from home, to put anything, any little bit of news, even if it was anything to do with the latest film that was out, everything to be put in this little magazine in order to boost the spirits of the inmates.

00:03:50 Speaker 2

And at the moment, although there were quite a few magazines produced, out of the eight issues, some of them now are in the National Library of Wales.

00:04:15 Speaker 1

So they would be available to view now. Good. Oh, that's that's interesting, isn't it? Yeah, that's great.

00:04:22 Speaker 2

And the the only one issue was produced, of course, with limited facilities, and so the papers were then taken from hut to hut for everyone to read.

00:04:40 Speaker 1

Yeah, so limited circulation, then. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:04:43 Speaker 2

Yes, that's right. Yes.

00:04:46 Speaker 1

I don't suppose it was easy to get a hold of paper, was it?

00:04:48 Speaker 2

No, no, never mind ink, you know. Yes. Yeah. Yes. I believe that the camp was originally supposedly to hold about 20,000 people, but when the Soviet army arrived at the camp in April 1945, there were about 30,000 people crowded in there. And out of these, were 7250 were British. Those that had died, mainly mainly from tuberculosis and typhus, were buried in the cemetery in neighbouring Neuburxdorf, Bad Liebenwerda. There do you know it there?

00:05:40 Speaker 3

Neuburxdorf, Bad Liebenwerda.

00:05:46 Speaker 2

And there's a memorial and a museum commemorating them there.

00:05:51 Speaker 1

Right. Oh right. OK. That's interesting. Thank you very much.

00:05:57 Speaker 1

OK.

00:06:02 Speaker 1

So you is there any more you can tell me about this?

00:06:11 Speaker 2

No, I think that's about it, no.

00:06:17 Speaker 3

You want to expand upon the the fact that they went to the cinema and their house.

00:06:22 Speaker 2

No, that's a different story, [?].

00:06:22 Speaker 1

Was, yeah, we we do that as a separate story, so.

00:06:28 Speaker 1

Yeah. OK. Thank you. If I can take those together and I will give you a number to go with those in a moment. OK, thank you. And what's story #2?

00:06:46 Speaker 2

My father's other my father, William Bush, his other brother, Ted Bush, also lived in Cardiff, not far from George Bush.

00:07:01 Speaker 2

And one evening in 1942, I believe it was, no it was January the 2nd, 1941, and the family, my Uncle Ted, his wife and their son Teddy, decided to pick up Ted's sister, who lived in Cwmafan, Port Talbot, and as a treat, take them to a cinema in Cardiff. So they went to see a George Formby film, 'It's in the Air'.

00:07:48 Speaker 2

And as they were enjoying the film, the sirens came over. Everyone had to leave the cinema, so they jumped into their car, hey were fortunate they had a car in those days, and they drove back to Cwmafan and stayed with their sister, Doris, there for the evening.

00:08:15 Speaker 2

When they returned in the morning, they returned to find that their house in Jubilee Street had been bombed that previous evening and there was nothing left of it. The only thing rescued was my cousin Ted's prized Hornby train set that he'd been given for Christmas only a week or so earlier. It was the only thing left whole and undamaged.

00:08:49 Speaker 2

And I have a photo here of the house before it was bombed and also of of the street as it was after it was bombed.

00:09:05 Speaker 1

Wow, that was a lucky escape then.

00:09:07 Speaker 3

It really was.

00:09:09 Speaker 2

Out of the raid, 95 homes were totally destroyed and 233 were so badly damaged that demolition was the only alternative.

00:09:25 Speaker 2

Another hundred another 426 houses in the vicinity were uninhabitable until repairs were made and this was in the depths of winter, and so they most of them were taken to rest centres and given temporary accommodation.

00:09:53 Speaker 2

Luckily, my uncle Ted's family were able to go back to Cwmafan and live there for the next three years until the war ended and housing new housing was built for them.

00:10:12 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:10:16 Speaker 1

Sobering, isn't it?

00:10:19 Speaker 1

You can't imagine.

00:10:20 Speaker 2

And so many were killed. It doesn't record how many were killed at the time.

00:10:34 Speaker 1

Yeah, that's really, yeah. Really brings you home, doesn't it? Yeah. Thank you.

00:10:40 Speaker 2

And my cousin is still alive, aged 90, living in Rumney in Cardiff. Yes, comes to Porthcawl to see the Elvis festival. Yes, yes.

00:10:53 Speaker 1

Oh, well, there you go. Oh, yeah, that's not long away now. No, no,. There you go. Excellent.

00:11:04 Speaker 1

Thank you. OK. So is there any more about about this story you can tell me or?

00:11:10 Speaker 2

No, no, that's it.

00:11:11 Speaker 1

OK. All right.

00:11:12 Speaker 1

We'll go on to story number three then.

00:11:21 Speaker 2

My mother's May's brother, Quinn Hill, he joined up and he became a cook in the Army and he was posted to Dhekhelia. I'll spell it. DHEKHELIA. Which the camp was outside Larnaca in Cyprus and he was stationed there, I have the photo of him, on the 26th of January 1946. Well, he was there then during the war and just after, and he worked in the Cyprus internment camp that was set up, maintained in Cyprus by the British Government, for the internment of Jews who had immigrated or attempted to immigrate to Mandatory Palestine, which was in violation of British policy at that time.

00:12:41 Speaker 2

There were a total of 12 camps which operated from August 1946 to January 1949, and in total held 53,510 Jewish people.

00:13:04 Speaker 1

OK and.

00:13:06 Speaker 2

The British released them and transported them to Haifa at the rate of 1500 a month.

00:13:22 Speaker 2

And the last 10,000 internees being evacuated to Israel during January and February 1949.

00:13:37 Speaker 1

And do you know anything about his time there?

00:13:40 Speaker 2

No, unfortunately.

00:13:44 Speaker 1

But you do have some photos.

00:13:48 Speaker 2

There's a photo of him in his army uniform, his cook uniform, and then with others who were also working on the camp here.

00:13:56 Speaker 1

Yeah. Yes.

00:14:01 Speaker 1

OK.

00:14:02 Speaker 1

That's that's interesting. Thank you very much. OK.

00:14:15 Speaker 1

OK, I will stop the recording now then, if I can work it out, there you go.