

Interview

We went to Lamsdorf and met Helene Dawson. She's from Great Britain and she is looking for her father's history. He was a POW (Prisoner Of War) in Stalag VIII B.

S: What's your name?

H: My name is Helene Dawson, because I am married. It is not the same name as my father.

S: OK and what is your father's name?

H: My father's name is James Harrison McAndrew.

S: The name sounds Irish!

H: Because it is.

S: Where are you from?

H: I'm not from Ireland. I am from Scotland.

S: Where do you know from, that your father has been here?

H: Well, I knew a little bit he told me because he was 40 years old when I was born. I had some of his army records with his number on and from that number and because of the Imperial War Museum in London I found out, that he was a POW. I didn't go down there I used the internet. I knew that my parents, James and Airene, married in December 1939. Four months after the war broke out. They had 48 hours „Honeymoon" and then he was separated. We were not reunited till 1945. My mother received a telegram saying: „Missing person:

Dead". But my mother would not take that as an answer. Noooo. He's still alive. And she waited many, many moments before she heard, that he was a POW. She went on to join the British army, because she said she needed to get him home.

S: So what do you feel at this place? Or is there an emotional connection?

H: It's very emotional. I started having a few tears at the first film that I saw. It's been a real privilege that I saw you and joined your tour because I would not have done this much, I would not have been to the actual „Camp Stalag 8B", it's where my father was. I always wanted to come here with my Nephew Garry, who is only eleven years younger than me so he's more like my brother. But he died four years ago. And now I'm here. For dad, for mom, my sister who doesn't want to be here and for Garry who wanted to be here.

S: I think it's too hard for your sister to come here.

H: Yes, we are different this way.

S: Do you have any children?

H: Yes I have two. I have a son, his name is Jack and he's 29 years old and a daughter Jenny, she is 24. Jack is very interested and my father said before he died, that every medal should go to Jack.

S: Do they know what happened to their grandfather?

H: Jack does but Jenny is not interested.

S: And where was your father? Army? Marine? Air Force?

H: He was part of the 124. (Northumbrian) Field Regiments, Royal Artillery.

Steven Fischer