


<p>Project: Pennylands Camp 22 - WW2 POW Camp Respondent: Jean McMurdo. Year of Birth: 1926. Age: 91. Connection to project: Mother's friendship with German POW. Date of Interview: 15th May 2017. Interviewer: Anne Griffiths. Recording Agreement: Yes. Information & Content: Yes. Photographic Images: Yes (Number of: 2). Length of Interview: 8:06. Location of Interview: Logan, Ayrshire. Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n Pro</p>		
Time (from: mins/secs)	Time Coded Summary/Transcript	Transcribed Extract (from- to: mins/secs)
0:00	Introduction, welcome and information about respondent.	0:00-0:33
	Q1. What is your connection to Pennylands?	
	A1. My connection is really through a memory of my mother. I was born and brought up in Miller Road, New Cumnock in a little bungalow which my mother and father had built and it was over the hedge from what used to be New Cumnock tennis court and the bowling green. It's still there, but the tennis courts ceased to exist a long time ago. At that time, I had left school and was working in the Ministry of Labour office in Kilwinning, I was in digs in Kilwinning and came home at weekends only and when I came home at weekends I always heard the story of the Prisoners of War who came Monday to Friday to work, now I don't know what that means, I don't know what they were doing but they came to work in what used to be the tennis courts. They were ferried up there every day from Pennylands Camp and it was a group of POWs. I don't even know how many there were but my mother kept talking about these poor boys far away from home and they're all somebody's boys she would say and my mother who was mother earth decided she would see what she could do for them. Of course, rations were still imposed then, she didn't have a lot to spare but what she could spare she shared with the boys across the hedge and it fell to one particular POW, whose name was Emil Eisele to come to the other side of the hedge and get a great big teapot of tea and a plate of whatever she could manage to scrape up from her rations. She developed a relationship with Emil which surprised me no end because my mother couldn't speak German and Emil couldn't	0:38-5:18

	<p>speak English or even Scottish! But somehow or other the pair of them developed a very warm relationship as Emil took the teapot and the goodies over and brought the empties back to her. Now these were stories as far as I was concerned because the POWs didn't come at the weekend when I was home and it wasn't really till after the war when Emil went home to Germany and letters started to come over from him. He always expressed his gratitude, he would never forget this, this lady who was so kind to him. It was a quandary as my mother couldn't read what he was saying or write back to him! In my Cumnock Academy days, I managed to get myself Higher German which allowed me to translate and to write the letters back to Emil. These letters went on for quite a while. I remember one of the letters saying, one of the first ones, saying – he knew of course I was writing on my mother's behalf and he said that the letters were written in very proper German, that would be school text-book German and I didn't know whether to be chuffed or not but took it as a wee bit of a compliment because at least he knew what I was saying. The letters went on for quite a wee while and then we got a very sad letter from his family saying Emil had died and that was the end of that, but it was happy thoughts of how a Scottish lady could make great friends with a German POW when neither of them could exchange a word that was understandable. So that's my connection with Pennylands simply for that's where he was billeted.</p>	
	<p>Q2. Whereabouts in Germany was Emil?</p>	
	<p>A2. Can't remember. It's way back in the mists of time. It was just something of interest to me. It was very important to my mother. I didn't have a picture of Emil, I'd never met him. No photographs. So, as a person I just had to imagine who he was and of course I was young at the time and I was much more interested in the male inhabitants of Ayrshire! Without bothering about German POWs who just happened to be here. I'm sorry I can't give you, I do regret it. I wish I even had some of the letters but the letters were never mine and I certainly didn't fall in with them when my mother was an old lady but you know she spoke about Emil all the rest of her life. Emil became very important to her. I think because he represented all the people we knew from our village in New Cumnock who were serving abroad somewhere and I think in her mind she thought if I do that for these boys maybe somebody will do that for our boys. It showed too, well you can't say war is futile but it's always for a purpose but people are thrown into it, we don't choose to go to war, Emil didn't choose to fight for Germany. I got to the stage when I think about Emil that they should put all these national leaders in a field and let them slug it out. It would save a lot of people from great misery, wouldn't it? Losing their life, losing limbs. Losing loved ones.</p>	<p>5:43-7:37</p>

Closing statement and end of interview.

8:06



Le faic bhon
Chrannchur Nàiseanta
tro Mhaoin-Dualchais a' Chrannchuir