

Memorial speech, August 17, 2003

14.00 o'clock to day the 17th Aug. was the crew from Lancaster JA 851 49 Squadron honoured, when flowers and a wreath was laid in the sea by help of the Naval Home Guard ship "BRIGADEN" It was done near the place, where the aircraft sunk 60 years ago. Thank you to the crew for their effort

The night between August 17 and 18, 2003, is a very special and historical day to remember in Holm. 60 years ago young and brave Airmen lost their lives and today a memorial stone is dedicated to these men.

61 years ago, same day, Holm was attacked by RAF Bombers due to a navigation failure. Luckily no one was killed in Holm – only a horse. The population knew that it was a mistake. Later they learned that the German city Flensburg had been the real target for the RAF Bombers. I still remember the night of the bomber raid, even though I lived in the neighbouring parish.

The memorial stone that we dedicate to the Airmen here today, carries the names of 7 men – 6 Englishmen and 1 Australian. All were young men, doing their duty for their countries against a terrifying regime – the Nazi Germany. It was a regime that suppressed and killed the free populations of Europe.

The Airmen participated in a very important attack against Peenemünde. It was an attack where the production facilities of long distance missiles were destroyed.

These airmen were on the way home in their Lancaster together with 2 other Lancaster. All 3 aircrafts met their fate in the airspace over Denmark. A German fighter shot them down one by one. The Airmen we remember here today were the first to go down.

3 days ago an old RAF friend of mine phoned me from England. His name is Des Richards. He was invited to be here today, but he was not able to come due to the illness of his wife. The Squadron 106 of Des Richards also participated in the bomber raid against Peenemünde. His Group Captain John H. Searby led the bomber raid. The Squadron 106 lost 2 Lancasters by Königsberg. Des Richards will be here today in his thoughts.

The 7 airmen will be remembered in the future in the parish of Holm due to this memorial stone. The 7 men are a part of the history of Holm.

The stone will remind us of the brave men that gave their young lives for our freedom. It is our duty to keep the memory of these men in our hearts. They gave their tomorrow for our today.

Good bless them

Gunnar Hounsgaard 16. aug. 2003