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Translation of the pages [5+6 of PROPEL 2019 – 5](#):

From a very committed webmaster.

The other day the editor had this e-mail:

Dear Editor,

On 17 August during Roskilde Airshow 2019 I met some kind members of The Association of former Soldiers of the Royal Danish Air Force who encouraged me to write an article to your magazine PROPEL. I am pleased to do that.

Kind regards, Anders Straarup

A deserved distinction

Anders Straarup has established the website www.airmen.dk which deals with Allied airmen that crashed in Denmark during World War II.

He has received the [The Ellehammer Challenge Cup](#) 2018 for his effort with www.airmen.dk on the ground that "The material is of such a high quality that it will be preserved by the National Museum of Denmark when Anders Straarup (born 1944) has passed away."

The Ellehammer Challenge Cup was instituted in 1992 by The Danish Aviation Writers' Club, and every year it is given *"to a man or a woman – for instance a pilot, an inventor or a constructor – who has continued the pioneer work of Jacob Chr. Ellehammer for the benefit of the development and safety of aviation."*



(Photo originally placed [here](#))

Chairman Andreas Krog of The Danish Aviation Writers' Club (left) presented [The Ellehammer Challenge Cup](#) 2018 to Anders Straarup in November 2018. Photo: Preben Pathuel

Allied planes shot down over Denmark

By Anders Straarup

I was never a member of The Association of former Soldiers of the Royal Danish Air Force, but I am fully aware of your very useful work as a link between former soldiers. As a First Lieutenant and Artillery Observation Officer in the North Jutland Artillery Regiment together with a part of the Prince's Life Regiment I was in the local defence to defend the air stations in Region II, primarily Karup, so I know the environment and I like it.

PROPEL August 2019 mentions your part in commemorating air crashes at Vesterlund and on the island of [Als](#), and it is easy for you to find more about them on AirmenDK. I have them with the numbers [p324](#) and [p326](#).

You are scattered all over the country, so you will be able to find information about planes shot down in your area on 'Planes – clickable map' and the similar map with 'Cemeteries' with 1030 airmen buried in Denmark, and in the 'Search form for the database' on AirmenDK www.airmen.dk. Now I have been working on it for 12 years. There are photos of all gravestones to airmen and monuments to crews of planes and links to where you find them.

Out of 463 planes and 3088 airmen in the database I want to highlight 5 planes that came down near later air stations by means of numbers from AirmenDK

On 13 AUG 1940 a Blenheim ([p017](#)) was shot down over what is now Air Transport Wing Aalborg. All 11 planes that participated in the attack were lost. The formation was seen at Søndervig west of Ringkøbing, so the Germans gave the Englishmen a very violent welcome over Aalborg. 20 of the 33 British airmen perished and were buried in [Vadum Churchyard](#).

On 02 MAY 1942 a Manchester ([p071](#)) was shot down near Lilholt, now Fighter Wing Skrydstrup. The crash site is marked with a memorial stone in the military area. A woman lost her husband, who was the pilot of the plane. Then she married another pilot, who many years later on his deathbed told his 3 sons that actually another man might have become their father! Then [they went to Denmark](#) to find out more!

On 25 SEP 1942 a Lancaster ([p114](#)) was shot down near Grønhøj about 10 km from Karup, now Helicopter Wing Karup. The rear gunner was late to bail out from the burning plane, but his parachute failed to open up. He and the other 6 perished airmen were buried in Frederikshavn. Nearly 70 years later a nephew from Scotland asked if I knew more about the plane of which his uncle was the pilot. Exactly 70 years and 8 months after the air crash we unveiled a memorial stone at the Grønhøj Inn. There were 27 standards and 250 people at the unveiling – maybe also some readers of this magazine. The Royal Danish Air Force made the Missing Man Formation. The RAF Memorial Room is always open.

(Photo originally placed [here](#) with the caption: *At the unveiling of the [memorial stone in Grønhøj](#) on 25 May 2013: Squadron Leader Robert Hylands RAF laid a wreath while Major Peder Korshøj saw to it that the standards were shown with style.*)

On 20 FEB 1944 a B-17 ([p269](#)) was shot down near the later Air Station Tirstrup, closed in 1998, now known as Aarhus Airport. The plane had been hit over the target Rostock, so it lost fuel. The pilot set the course for Sweden, but he decided to make a perfect belly landing on Djursland, which they thought was a part of Sweden. Danes explained the situation to them. They walked away with a sack of oranges, so it was easy to follow the trail of orange peels. All 10 airmen became Prisoners of War.

On 09 APR 1944 a B-17 ([p276](#)) landed on what became Air Station Værløse, closed in 2004. The plane was hit on the return flight from bombing an airplane factory in Poland and it lost fuel. All ammunition and all machine guns were thrown out while they were flying over water. From the Baltic Sea they reached a country where red flags with white crosses were flown. It had to be the flag of Sweden, as Denmark was occupied and unlikely to use its own flag! The pilot reached a fine open place and prepared for a landing. Then he saw camouflaged planes with swastikas on the tails – and a German fighter plane came from behind! He had to land. It cost the 10 airmen 13 months as POWs not to know the difference between the Danish and the Swedish flag.

In 2018 AirmenDK on About AirmenDK was provided with a fine [Foreword](#) by the man of the future, [Major General Anders "ERA" Rex](#), Chief Air Staff, Defence Command Denmark. Later in 2018 I was presented with the [Ellehammer Challenge Cup](#) for my work with [AirmenDK](#). It will be lifelong. There is always more to do – contributions from readers of PROPEL are welcome.