

Kollisionen over Nørreskoven mellem 2 Halifax bombefly, den 16. sep. 1944

Fly-kollision over Nørreskoven i 2. Verdenskrig

Natten mellem den 15/16 september 1944 kolliderede to Halifax bombefly kl. 01.05 i luftrummet over Nørreskoven og vragele spredtes over et stort område mellem Elstrup – Østerholm – Hundslev.

De to besætninger på hver 7 mand blev dræbt på stedet.

Den tragiske hændelse skete efter at flyene havde deltaget i et bombetogt mod Kiel og var på vej hjem til basen i England.

- Det ene fly Halifax III MZ 915 tilhørte Squadron 466 Royal Australian Air Force og var stationeret ved Driffield i Yorkshire UK.

Det andet fly Halifax VII NP 719 tilhørte Squadron 432 Royal Canadian Air Force og var stationeret ved East Moor i Yorkshire UK.

Det australske fly ført af englænderen F/Lt A. Hutchinson styrtede ned her midt inde i skoven og det canadiske fly ført af canadieren P/O J. C. Gallagher styrtede ned i udkanten af skoven mod vest.

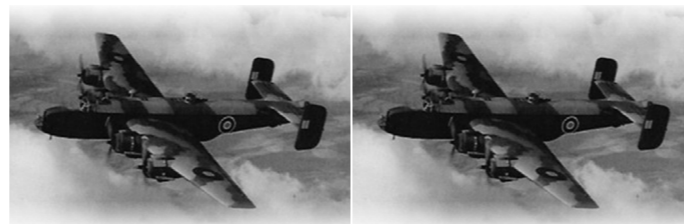
- Ligdelene af de 14 flyvere blev så vidt muligt identificeret og samlet op, hvorefter de blev begravet på kirkegården for allierede flyvere i Aabenraa den 18. sep. 1944

- Flere ligdele blev efterladt af tyskerne, men senere samlet sammen af daværende skovfoged Angelo og lokale beboere og begravet i højen her på stedet og et propelblad fra et af flyene blev sat som mindesmærke. Den 5. juni 1945 blev der afholdt en mindehøjtidelighed her ved højen.



Efter krigen blev de i højen begravede ligrester ført til de allierede flyvergrave i Aabenraa og der blev rejst en mindesten med inskriptionen: **RAF 16-9-1944** Propelbladet findes i dag på museet på Sønderborg Slot.

Denne info-tavle er sat på 60-års dagen, 16. sep. 2004



Besætningen på det australske fly:

The crew of the Australian aircraft:

Halifax III MZ 915 Sqn. 466 Royal Australian Air Force

F/L	Alexander Hutchinson	piloten	RAF
F/Sgt	Clive William Thomson		RAAF
F/Sgt	Keith Courtney Donald		RAAF
Sgt	William Henry Francis		RAF
Sgt	John Traill Leitch		RAF
Sgt	Benjamin D.M. Warren		RAF
Sgt	James Gill		RAF



Piloten: F/L Alexander Hutchinson i midten

Besætningen på det canadiske fly:

The crew of the Canadian aircraft:

Halifax VII NP 719 Sqn. 432 Royal Canadian Air Force

P/O	James Cornelius Gallagher	piloten	RCAF
F/O	Joseph Edouard Gerard Leblanc		RCAF
P/O	Dermot Reagh McCarthy		RCAF
P/O	Charles David Crowe		RCAF
P/O	Joseph G.G. Andre Labelle		RCAF
P/O	Hugh Norman McLeod		RCAF
Sgt	Charles Frederick Gill		RAF



5 besætningsmedlemmer. Pilot J.C. Gallagher i midten

Airplane Collision above "Nørreskoven" World War II

At 01.05 hours September 16 1944, two Halifax bombers collided in the airspace above "Norreskoven" forest and the wreckage was spread over a large area between the villages of Elstrup-Osterholm-Hundslev.

Each bomber carried seven crew members and all were killed instantly.

The tragic event took place after the bombers had participated in an air raid on the city of Kiel, Germany and were returning to their home bases in England.

Halifax III MZ915 belonged to Squadron 466 Royal Australian Air Force and was stationed at Driffield, Yorkshire, England.

Halifax VII NP719 belonged to Squadron 432 Royal Canadian Air Force and was stationed at East Moore, Yorkshire, England.

The Australian aircraft commanded by the English F/Lt. A. Hutchinson crashed here in the middle of the forest whilst the Canadian bomber, commanded by the Canadian P/O J.C. Gallagher crashed near the fringe of the western forest.

The corpse fragments of the 14 crew members were identified so far as possible and gathered, whereupon, they were buried at the cemetery for allied airmen in Aabenraa, September 18 1944.

A number of corpse fragments were left behind by the Germans but later gathered and buried in this hillock by the then forest ranger Angelo and some local residents. A propeller blade was set up as a memorial.

On June 5 1945 a memorial ceremony was held here at this hillock.

After the war, the corpse fragments buried in this hillock were taken to the cemetery for allied airmen in Aabenraa and a memorial stone with the inscription "RAF 16-9-1944" was unveiled here. The propeller blade can now be seen in the museum at Sønderborg Castle.

This information table was set up on September 16 2004 the 60th anniversary of this tragic collision.

