

"Lest We Forget"

In December 2017 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) had registered in Denmark the total of 1,004 identified Commonwealth graves at 131 sites. Currently there are a further 106 unknown Commonwealth graves. These particular headstones are distinguished by being engraved with the words of Rudyard Kipling, "Known Unto God". All these graves are carefully and proudly maintained in perpetuity by CWGC in generous and willing cooperation with local parish interests.

There is of course an anniversary associated with each grave but not always marked by the visit of descendants or others wishing to pay their respects, simply and sadly because in many cases there are none to mourn. Very gratifyingly, locally based volunteers and other voluntary initiatives step in, take an interest and then the Commonwealth and Allied fallen of two World Wars buried in Denmark are remembered, "Lest We Forget".

As we move further into the first half of 2018 here is a forward look at some selected commemorations in which BCCD members and other members of the public might wish to participate. These events have been chosen because they will mark 75th anniversaries (1943) and 100 years (1918).

75th Anniversary Commemoration in Fredericia

For example, there will be a 75th anniversary commemoration at the Memorial Stone, Lyngnæs, near Fredericia from 1100 to 1230 on 10th March to commemorate the crew of Lancaster ED305, RAF 44 (Rhodesia) Squadron. Organised by Forsvarsbrødre, the Danish Defence Brotherhood (Royal British Legion equivalent) in Fredericia, the ceremony will include the presence of family descendants and VIP guests.



ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) Day

ANZAC Day, the National Day of Remembrance commemorates all Australians and New Zealanders who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations. Taking place on the 25th of April each year and ably organised by the Australian Embassy in Copenhagen on behalf of the Australian and New Zealand community, onlookers are welcome to observe the poignant outdoor ceremony. There is always an impressive number of participants, including veterans proudly displaying medals with some travelling from Jutland and southern Sweden to participate. The wreath laying ceremony led principally by the Australian, British and Turkish Ambassadors takes place at the "Soldier" monument to the Danish Fallen outside the southern gate to Kastellet.



Parking is always scarce anywhere in Copenhagen and with the limited number of parking spaces near Kastellet use of public transport is advised. For further details nearer the time please follow the helpful advice on the Australian Embassy's website:

<http://denmark.embassy.gov.au/cpgn/contact-us.html>

RAF 100 Years

2018 also marks the centenary year of the RAF's foundation on the 1st of April 1918, designated "RAF 100". There will be commemorations and ceremonies in the UK to mark this auspicious occasion, the link is here:

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/raf100/whats-on/>

Given the very limited range of the aircraft of the day, perhaps surprisingly there are in Denmark two graves of RAF airmen from 1918 commemorated by CWGC.

The first of these brave men is Lt W. A. "Toby" Yeulett, DFC. His story is even more fascinating because this action was the first attack flown by aircraft from the world's first aircraft carrier, the converted Battle-cruiser, HMS "Furious". Just offshore from Esbjerg and flying at first light Lt Yeulett and 6 other airmen in Sopwith Camels bombed the three Zeppelin sheds in the then north German town of Tondern (now Tønder, South Jutland). The hydrogen gas bags of the two Zeppelins and a balloon were hit and destroyed but sadly Lt Yeulett

ditched in the North Sea before he could reach the safety of "Furious". His grave can be visited in Nørre Havrvig, on the west coast of Jutland where the centenary date of this intrepid action occurs on 19th July 2018.

The next CWGC article about these brave people whose individual sacrifices gave us the freedoms we enjoy today will include the second RAF World War One airman together with selected ceremonies in the second half of 2018.

As mentioned in the opening paragraph there are Commonwealth War Grave Commission headstones in churchyards and other cemeteries all over Denmark. To inspire and help with your visit there is a lot of useful information on the CWGC website and even more historical background on the wider internet:

<https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-cemeteries-and-memorials/results?country=Denmark&msort=cemetery&tab=cemeteries>

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