

Memorial Service

On the 15th April 1994, Miriam and her husband Sam travelled to Gram for the 50th Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony. They met with one of the survivors, navigator John MacFarland who had travelled from Belfast. Townspeople and farmers who were witnesses to the shooting down and, one by one, they recounted their experiences. A poignant moment was when 90-year-old lady unwrapped a parcel to reveal a fragment of the plane that she had treasured for fifty years. This was presented to John MacFarland expressing her gratitude to him and those who gave their lives for the freedom of Denmark.

Miriam writes:

‘The Chief Rabbi of Denmark, Bent Melchior, held a memorial service at which he spoke in English, Danish and of course Hebrew and thanked the community for their devoted respect of the Jewish boy in their midst.

Before my pilgrimage to Denmark, I was distressed to think that my dear Jewish brother was buried in a churchyard, but when I saw the engraved headstones, I realised that the four companions all lay together under one sky and were at peace. Christianity and Judaism united in death.

As a measure of the high regard in which the wartime dead of the RAF are held by the Danes, the Church Council have erected a special memorial headstone in the Garden of Remembrance, to the four dead airmen. It reads: ‘They gave their lives so that the people of Denmark should be free.’

If anyone finds themselves in Jutland and could pay a visit to my brother’s grave in Gram Churchyard, I would be eternally grateful’.