

Sønderho

Sønderho, from which the dance Sønderhoning comes, is a small town on the Southern tip of Fanø in Jutland in Denmark. The village lives primarily off of summer tourism today. It has beautiful beaches, including one of Denmark's best naturist beaches which Per Olaf Lassen writes about in *Badstedet Fanø* [Resort area Fano].

Sønderho had one of the first windmills in Denmark (1696) and although it fell into disuse, it was restored to operational condition in 1995 with the help of an American son of Sønderho and other generous donators.

Denmark managed to remain neutral during the First World War. However, because of its geographic position between Germany and England, Danish neutrality was violated on several occasions. In these cases Denmark had the obligation, according to international law, to detain foreign soldiers violating the Danish neutrality. German Zeppelin L3 crashed on the Danish island of Fanø. In January 1915 the airship took part in the first air raid on England and was hit by engine problems and bad weather during a reconnaissance mission over the North Sea. On February 17, 1915 Lieutenant Commander Hans Fritz had to make a forced landing on Fanø after a failed attempt to reach the Zeppelin base near the Danish town of Tønder. After the crash landing the airship was deliberately set on fire, and the crew was interned in Odense (island of Funen).

Fanø was important in WW2 history. The German Air Force placed one of its first top secret *Freya* radar sites on Fanø near Sønderho. One of the first to give British intelligence any details about the *Freya* radar was a young Danish Flight Lieutenant, Thomas Sneum, who, at great risk to his life, photographed radar installations on the Danish island of Fanø in 1941. He brought the negatives to England in a dramatic flight which is fictionalized in Ken Follett's novel *Hornet Flight*. Sneum's deed is also mentioned in R. V. Jones's *Most Secret War* as a 'most gallant exploit'. The true story and most details of Sneum's mission were finally told in 2009 by Mark Ryan in *The Hornet's Sting* London: Skyhorse Publishing ISBN-10 1602397104. Intelligence gathered by Sneum and other members of the Danish resistance assisted the allies in countering the German radar system by about 1943. Peter Willumsen writes about German fortifications on Fanø in *Der Atlantikwall auf Fanø* [The Atlantic Wall on Fano].

There are several novels written in Danish about coastal life in and around Fanø. Hugo Hørlych Karlsen wrote *Den første sønderhoning* [The First Sønderhoning] and *Hollænderen* [The Hollander] which bring Sønderho to life in the 15 and 1600's. One novel, by Dorte Nors, was translated into English by Martin Aitken in 2008: *The Wadden Sea*, Boston University Press.