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Editorial

Firstly, I hope you are all well, and stay well. I write this just as the Government here is introducing new restrictions that may last 6 months, so who knows whether there may not have to be another extra *Review* in March!

My request in the July issue for stories about how Norwegian A met British B seemed to fall on deaf ears, but my e-mail plea, saying that this issue depended in part on you, produced a stream of responses for which I am very grateful. I am also grateful to others who sent in articles or suggestions for articles. As soon as I realized I had enough material for this issue and the January issue I felt I could relax a bit.

It has been fascinating going through the submissions about how Norwegian A met British B or how someone of one nationality ended up living in the other country. Some articles evoke a bygone age with concepts like tea dances, being in service, or living in a pension or boarding house, and some are right up to date with a young British man meeting a Norwegian girl at a rock concert in Roskilde. One would even make a good short film. Many, of course, have the war as the backdrop to meetings. One, in particular is so vivid, that though it is over double the length I specified, I am including it. I decided to spread these 'how A met B' between this issue and the January issue, so that I could include other items, so don't be disappointed if you don't find your story here. I also hope that reading the memoirs in this issue may inspire others to send in their stories. I would particularly welcome more from Oslo members.

Other items in this issue include an interesting article on the friendship between Graham Greene and the Norwegian poet and dramatist Nordahl Grieg. There is also a fascinating article on the superstitions of Norwegian fishermen, and still in a marine vein, an article on how painting one blade of a wind turbine black, can protect birds. Finally there is a very positive report, despite the restrictions of Covid, from an Anglo-Norse scholarship-holder at the University of Tromsø.

A Norwegian Hero Educated at Cranleigh School

By Martin Williamson, Cranleigh School Archivist

The last Cranleighian to die before VE Day was 24-year old Olav Ringdal who was shot dead by the Germans on April 4th 1945. He is commemorated on the School memorial, but he did not serve in any of the armed forces. He was a member of the Norwegian resistance.

Ringdal was one of more than 50 Norwegians who came to Cranleigh in the late 1930s and early 1940s, initially as a way to learn English after they had completed their formal education at home. The tie between Norway and Cranleigh was so strong in those years that it was proposed that David Loveday, the headmaster at the time, spend a summer there meeting prospective parents. When the war came, the Norwegian government went into exile in London and many of them sent their children to Cranleigh.

Ringdal was the only son of a wealthy shipping merchant in Oslo. He arrived at Cranleigh in September 1937 and stayed for two years. He was a house prefect in 2 North and won his school colours for hockey. By the time he returned to Norway to study law at the University of Oslo, the war had started. Loveday noted on his file that he was 'held in high regard by all'.



As the war progressed he became an active member of the resistance, his academic background being put to good use as co-editor of an illegal newspaper, as well as working as a courier with propaganda, and leading the information service. During this time he was trained by the leading resistance

fighter and saboteur Gregers Gram, who himself had been trained by the Special Operations Executive.

In November 1943 Ringdal was arrested by the Nazis as part of a rounding up of 1166 students following an arson attack on the university. Over half were sent to Germany for 'readjustment' although Ringdal was not among those. He continued with his resistance work.

By April 1945 the Germans were facing defeat and the persecution of dissidents in Norway was stepped up. In a bid to undermine Operation Derby, a black propaganda initiative run by the SOE, the Germans raided a number of houses of suspected resistance members. One managed to sound the alarm and as word spread most went into hiding. Ringdal went to Bygdøy allé 117 in west Oslo, which he believed was a safe house, but it had been compromised by someone in the resistance. On arrival he was confronted by German soldiers and was shot dead. Later in the day another resistance associate, Roy Nielsen, also turned up there, and although he was alerted to the presence of the Germans, he was shot dead escaping.

In 1952 Ringdal's father paid for a boat to be built in his son's memory. The *Olav Ringdal Jr* served until 2004 with the Norwegian Society for Rescue at Sea and now, extensively restored, operates as a pleasure boat. As far as we know the only memorial to him is at Cranleigh.

As a footnote, there was one other Norwegian Cranleighian who was killed by the Germans while serving with the resistance. Alfred Larsen (2 and 3 South 1939) left Cranleigh on the same day as Ringdal. He was executed on April 30th 1942 in reprisals following the killing of two Gestapo agents. A third Norwegian, Erik Sunde (2 North 1935) was shot down over France in August 1944 while attacking German positions while serving with the RAF.

Ed. This article originally appeared in the Old Cranleighian Society, is reprinted by permission and was brought to my attention by another Old Cranleighian, Roger Crane.

Additional Information

By Rolf Christophersen

My father had lived in London since 1905, and had attended Cranleigh School, Surrey, so when his friends in Norway asked where they should send their boys he obviously mentioned his old school.

I was very fortunate to have known the three Norwegians mentioned in the previous article very well indeed. They were fine people and a great loss. Alfred Larsen's father had been the boss of the main tobacco company in Norway, and Alfred, like most Norwegians really enjoyed taking part in the school sports, including rugby, for which Cranleigh had always been very well known.

Erik Sunde's father was a member of the Norwegian Cabinet in London during World War II so Erik was in England from early on in the war. He joined the Norwegian Air Force, went to Canada for training as a pilot and came back when qualified to serve in a Norwegian Squadron based at North Weald, under the control of the RAF. He was shot down over Northern France while flying a Spitfire.

(I think I should mention that although I was and still am a Norwegian I served in the RAF. I think they did not realise that I was a 100% Norwegian, seeing that they knew I was born in England and had all my education here.)

As the previous article mentions, Olaf Ringdal was one of the last Norwegians to be killed by the Germans literally a few days before they capitulated. His father was in shipping and I remember calling on him soon after the war was over when he confirmed that he had arranged for a *hytte* to be built in memory of his son. During my several visits to the Jotunheimen in the 1950s with one of my brothers, we used to spend the night there.

Finally, on 1st July 2016 I attended a War Memorial Un-veiling at Cranleigh School. There was a very impressive memorial service followed by the unveiling of a sculpture by Nicholas Dimpleby (brother of David and Jonathan Dimpleby), who was also an old Cranleighian. Around it, there are glass panels on which the names of the fallen are engraved.

Nordahl Grieg's Friendship with Graham Greene

By Johanne Elster Hanson

'A friendship can be among the most important events in a life,' Graham Greene wrote in his second memoir, 'and a way of escape'. In this volume, fittingly titled *Ways of Escape*, Greene also described his meetings and correspondence with the Norwegian writer Nordahl Grieg. Although they met only three times, Grieg ended up making a lasting impression on the English

writer, and proved to be just such an escape that Greene sought.

Their first meeting took place in September 1932, at a time when both men were going through times of unrest. After two consecutive literary failures, the young Greene had just finished the manuscript for *Stamboul Train* and was feeling depressed. Meanwhile, Grieg had moved back to Oxford and was struggling with his book of essays on English poets. Their unexpected meeting, which happened through a mutual acquaintance, seems therefore to have been a welcome change for both men, and Greene later wrote in *Ways of Escape* that 'to me [Grieg] certainly brought a measure of hope (...) carrying it like a glass of akvavit down the muddy lane in Chipping Campden.'

Greene elaborated on his meeting with Grieg in his diary, describing the Norwegian as 'charming with his accent, his courtliness, his unexpectedness, which I could not follow closely enough.' Grieg had suggested Greene should take up a lectureship at the University of Oslo ('an idea too good to be obtainable' Greene noted), or at least give a talk at the

Anglo-Norse Society. Despite the abruptness of Grieg's visit, Greene later wrote that he immediately felt 'caught up' in Grieg's intimacy. This feeling seems to have been mutual: Grieg related their meeting in a letter to his friend and Greene's Norwegian translator, Nils Lie, on 16 September, describing Greene as 'an unusually nice and sympathetic fellow'.

The two men did not meet again until Grieg's London exile during the war years, but what Greene called 'the dreamlike atmosphere' of the Norwegian writer's friendship remained. They corresponded throughout Grieg's stay in Russia and the Baltics in 1933-34, and discussed everything from literature to a failing love affair:



Graham Greene in 1939. Source Wikimedia Commons

Grieg commented on the English writer's latest publications: ('the communist

scene was very unconvincing'), and implored Greene to come and join him wherever he was. '(...) it was a matter of messages,' Greene later wrote, 'warm and friendly and encouraging and critical, mostly in other people's letters. (...) Nordahl Grieg, like a monarch, never lacked messengers.'

In the summer of 1933, Greene contacted Grieg about a potential meeting. He had decided to set his next novel in Stockholm, and was hoping to see Grieg there. Grieg wrote back to Greene from Estonia on 5 August: 'I was very glad to get your letter. I am - alas - on the other side of the Baltic, but still things can happen'. Asking why Greene did not go to Norway while in Scandinavia, Grieg insisted that 'You have got many friends there now.'

Grieg also invited Greene to Estonia, but the English writer was unable to afford tickets, lamenting: 'O damnation, I wish I could come, but I can't.' He later wrote in *Ways of Escape*: 'How I wished I had borrowed, begged or stolen the necessary funds and replied to at least one of those messages - "I arrive on Saturday."' Greene did however travel to Oslo, where he was introduced to Nils Lie, Lie's wife Ingeborg, and the writer Sigurd Hoel.

After his return from Russia, Grieg founded the left-wing political journal *Veien Frem*. Without Greene's knowledge, the first edition had advertised a future contribution from him. 'Are you angry?' Grieg asked. 'If you forgive me for old days' sake, please then send me an article, something hairraisingly(sic) good.' And the second edition of *Veien Frem* did indeed feature a hair-raising contribution from the English writer - the short story 'Brother', published in *The Basement Room and Other Stories* the year before.

Their second meeting took place after the German invasion of Norway in 1940, when Grieg had just helped smuggle the gold from the Norwegian Bank out of his occupied home country. Interviewed by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation in 1976, Greene sniggered as he remembered the following scene:

When he arrived with the gold I went and saw him at the Charing Cross Hotel, and the room was full of Norwegian exiled politicians and what not, they were sitting on the bed, he was lying on the bed, they were sitting on the floor, and Nordahl was telling his adventures.

In *Ways of Escape* he elaborated on how Grieg managed to make 'a private corner between bolster and bedpost', talking 'of anything that seemed at the moment to matter - Marxism or the value of history or the Spanish war and Hemingway's new book'. It appears that Greene was still just as 'caught

up' in Grieg's intimacy as he had been during their first meeting almost eight years ago.

The two men's final meeting took place in London in the autumn of 1943, 'an evening of which, because I never imagined it could be the last, I remember only talk and talk, then an air-raid siren and some gunfire, and talk again', Greene wrote in *Ways of Escape*. Nils Lie could also remember 'an evening with Graham Greene, who is a wonderful person and a sincere Catholic.' Greene had been characteristically pessimistic about the future. 'Against this, Nordahl placed his indomitable belief in humanity', Lie explained, 'so contagious that he veritably converted the Catholic.'

On 2 December 1943, Grieg was allowed to join RAF bomber fighters on a raid over Berlin. Bomber Command suffered one of its greatest losses that night, and three of the squadron's four war correspondents were reported



Nordahl Grieg. Source: Wikimedia Commons

missing – among them Nordahl Grieg. 'Nordahl Grieg was an omen or a myth, and he remained a myth', Greene later wrote of his Norwegian friend. 'Even his death was to prove legendary, so that none will be able to say with any certainty, "In this place he died."'

Greene never forgot his Norwegian friend, writing in *Ways of Escape*, 'Each of our meetings was separated by a space of years from the next, yet I would not have hesitated to claim friendship with him – even a degree of intimacy.' There seemed always to have been arguments around Nordahl Grieg, but without 'a trace of anger.' Greene would later describe his relationship with Grieg as that of 'a friend I had grown up with,

to whom I could speak and with whom I could argue about anything in the world.' He was the only man Greene had ever met 'with whom it was possible to disagree profoundly both on religion and politics and yet feel all

the time the sense of goodwill and an open mind.'

Grieg's high spirits, his good humour and 'charity', which Greene described as being 'of greater value than the gold of the National Bank,' seemed always to have an encouraging effect on the English writer, and might help explain why the atheist Stalinist and the troubled Catholic kept in touch for so long and always tried to meet up in some corner of the world. Greene's writing certainly makes it clear that he, long after Grieg was gone, could still remember the feeling of intimacy that the Norwegian writer had inspired, and which Greene described as being as impersonal 'as sunlight.'

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Norwegian-British Relationships

Norman McDonnell (UK member)

My mother Erna Stefanie Aaby was born in Sande i Vestfold in 1904, the second of five siblings to Jenny and Thorvald. She left Haga Folkeskole aged thirteen with good grades, and helped in the family cafe by the bridge. She and her younger sister, Freda, subsequently 'lived in' as domestic servants on the Jarlsberg estate. She told me they bleached the sheets by washing them

with wood-ash from the fireplaces and spreading them out in the sun. There was little money or prospects so after a broken romance she took a 6 week English language course and sailed to England in 1936. Her eldest brother Thorbjørn left at the same time to look for work in USA. She met my father, Frank McDonnell, whilst in service to a Jewish family north of the river.

Dad was a Thames lighterman (skilled work using tides, currents and oars to manouvre large heavy barges up and down the Thames). He lived with his five brothers and three sisters above the family pub, the Brown Bear, a couple of hundred yards from Tower Bridge, opposite the main gate to St Catharine Dock. Mum was a regular at the Norwegian Seamen's Church where she met the second officer of the ship she came over with. I suspect he took her to the Brown Bear where she would have met Dad and all his family. Mum recalled how jolly, glamorous and smart they all were in the evenings. A whole different world from Sande in Vestfold. They married a couple of years later and rented a flat by Cherry Garden Pier, a stone's throw from the Norwegian Seamen's Church. Very handy for both mum and dad, but in those days Bermondsey was about as dirty, smoggy and undesirable as you could find, so when the war started and Dad joined the merchant navy, mum moved a bit further away from the docks to New Cross.

Ingrid born Oct 1937 and Elsa in 1938 were named after mum's best friends whom we called aunties. Women spent two weeks in hospital for childbirth then so when I was due during the London blitz in Feb 1941 Ingrid and Elsa were evacuated to a vicarage in Leicestershire. When mum visited them she saw they were both covered in fleabites. The people refused to hand over my sisters or their ration books so Mum phoned Pastor Ursin at the Norwegian Church who organised a car to take us all back to New Cross.

Ingrid remembers our evacuation to Surrey. We were all assembled in Farnham village hall and people came to choose the children they would take care of. Mum would not agree to us being split up, so as nobody had room for three, the hall emptied and we were left behind. Quite by chance a spinster called Bea popped her head round the door. She lived in a tiny cottage in a forest but was a lady's companion to Hilda who lived in a lovely big house in Frensham with a drawing room, a grand piano and a cook! Not only did she agree to take us children, she took Mum as well with her housekeeping experience from Jarlsberg. There were two farms close by, a dairy farm and a very messy farm with lots of pigs and chickens. We loved it. The big house had a sack of oats delivered from Scotland that took ages to cook so the

porridge was boiled in a huge pot on Sundays, shared out and re-heated the rest of the week.

We returned to London when the air raids grew less. The house was very cold in winter. My sisters slept at the back of the attic, (a nurse had the front part). I was in the bedroom with Mum and we had another room and kitchenette. No bathroom but we shared a toilet with the family that lived in the basement. It was warm down there as Mr Benton worked on the railway so was able to get coal. We had a small paraffin heater which stank and was also taken down to the Andersen shelter to make tea during bombing.

By May 1942 the government was using anything that would float to get supplies across the Atlantic. Dad signed on a small rust-bucket built in 1918 for service on the Great Lakes. She had a thousand tons of permanent concrete ballast so she would stay upright when loaded with tanks and heavy weapons on deck for North Africa. Too slow to be in a convoy she was plodding across the Atlantic at six knots when sighted by u-boat 506 heading back to base to re-arm. With no torpedoes left, 506 shadowed the ship until 0230 when it surfaced and opened fire. The first shell demolished the wheelhouse, the second destroyed the stern gun platform and the ship sank in flames. Dad and his surviving shipmates were subsequently picked up by a US warship.

All ship losses were censored so Mum knew nothing until she heard from Thorbjørn. He had landed a job as an electrician at the New York home of banker J P Morgan (then the world's 5th richest man). He wrote 'Frank got his feet wet but is fine now'. Merchant seamen had their pay stopped from the moment the ship sank so Dad went from New York to Montreal where he took a job in a rope works while waiting for his next ship.

I remember Dad coming home during summer 1944 when the doodlebugs started. His younger sister Ada and her new soldier husband were visiting so we were all crammed into the shelter and the roofs and garden were in flames from incendiaries. Dad was on his way to the pub next lunchtime when a tram inspector shouted at him to take cover. He ran into the Co-op just as a V1 exploded in Malpas Road and he got buried under piles of tins and rubble. He came home very cross and told Mum she had to take us all back to Frensham where we remained till the end of the war.

It was a successful marriage with three children along the way and dad continued at sea until forced to retire after a heart attack in Japan when he was 68.

How Carol met Stein (Oslo member)

The story really begins back in 1972, when the very first family holiday abroad for Carol's family is a wonderful trip to Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm. Beforehand, Carol had obtained and studied the book *Teach Yourself Norwegian* while her sister had done the same with the Swedish book. With the holiday being a great success, the following year sees the family embarking on an even more fantastic Norwegian State Railways holiday on the 'troll train' from Oslo to beautiful Voss and then on to Bergen. On returning home, Carol contacts NSB to ask them for ideas as to how she might further improve her limited knowledge of Norwegian. They suggest sending an article to the weekly magazine *Alle Kvinner* asking for Norwegian pen friends. Carol follows this advice and receives 18 replies, thereby establishing a lasting contact with people in many different areas of Norway.

We now fast forward to 1976, when Carol's boss at work keeps nagging her to select a data course to attend, this being regarded as a perk of the job in those days. Though Carol isn't really at all keen to do so, her boss's persistence eventually forces her to give in. Consequently, on Tuesday May 11th 1976 Carol sets off on the Underground for London. Being an early bird, she is the very first participant to arrive at the course location and, on sitting down to wait the arrival of others, she takes out an edition of *Alle Kvinner* to read.

Not long afterwards, the second course participant to arrive is Stein, who has flown over from his home base in Oslo. Carol glances up to see a tall, thin, fair-haired gentleman heading in her direction. Stein is actually very shy, but on noticing that the only other person present is reading what he believes to be a Danish magazine, he plucks up the courage to go over and sit down next to her. To his surprise, he now discovers that the lady in question is in fact English. Stein, who comes originally from Lillesand, actually tells Carol that he comes from more well-known Kristiansand, unaware that one of her existing pen friends is ... a Lillesander.

The data course lasts for four days and, by the end of it, a new pen friend has been added to Carol's list. Carol and Stein meet again briefly in the autumn that year, when Carol visits one of her pen friends living on the outskirts of Oslo, and then again the following spring, when Carol flies to Oslo to see the 17th May celebrations. Their only contact for the 15 months after that is by correspondence, but when Carol comes to Oslo again in the summer of 1978, they get engaged. Their wedding takes place in England the

following April, followed by a honeymoon in Wells, before the couple return to Oslo where they have lived extremely happily together for the last 41 years.



Carol and Stein (Stendal) in 2013

Inger-Marie Fleischer (UK member)

My father, Bror Ørnulf Fleischer was born in Christiania in February 1898, though his parents' home at the time was Uleåborg, Finland, where my grandfather was working for the British timber company Denny, Mott and Dixon. Daddy was a 'boy soldier' with the 'White Finns' in the Finnish Civil War. After attending Forestry School in southern Norway in 1922 he spent five exciting years working for Denny, Mott and Dixon in the Passvik River area of northern Finland. The company then wound up this operation and offered Daddy a job in their London office in Adelaide House. Soon after his arrival in 1927 he moved into a Danish-run guesthouse at Aubert Park, N5, which was popular with Scandinavian ex-pats.

Mummy, Edith Mary née Minshull was born in Eastington Vicarage, near Howden East York in 1903. She trained as dispenser and had taken a job

in a Canonbury Surgery, which recommended the Aubert Park guesthouse as convenient reputable 'digs' for a lady. As it held regular tea dances I assume that my parents met at one of those. Mummy's much loved father visited once and my father hurried to introduce himself and shake hands. This was their only meeting as the Rev. Minshull died suddenly in 1931.

Both my parents left Aubert Park, as both had family commitments. Daddy moved into a flat share with a Swedish friend in South Kensington and was sending money home to his elderly parents in Trondheim and Mummy took over responsibility for her widowed grandmother whose son had pre-deceased her, but the friendship continued. They married in 1934 and sailed to Norway for their honeymoon, despite Mummy's passport being in her maiden name. They were in Norway again from 1935 to 1937.

When Daddy applied for naturalisation papers (British citizenship) in the late 1930s the process was speeded up because of the need to get older people into the reserve forces and so release younger ones for the combat forces, so Daddy served in the RNVR where he remained throughout WWII. Because he had recently spent time in Norway and spoke good English, in 1940 he was called to the Admiralty when Whitehall was planning an invasion of Norway. A brave force set off from Portsmouth, but had to put in at Weymouth, Germany having pre-empted them and France having fallen.

Fishing, Risk and Luck

By Arne Kruse

Most people are of course aware of the fact that you give bad luck to a fisherman if you wish him good luck, and some will have witnessed how many fishermen follow certain rituals to secure their luck while fishing. They may admit to it or not, but many have established a set routine and adjust to particular rules before they go fishing or while they are at it. Such habits may apply to amateur fishermen as well as to the professionals.

In this piece I will reflect on the kinds of rituals and routines found among professional fishermen along the coast of Norway as they are documented generations back, and also as I experienced them myself

while growing up in a fishing community and working on board a fishing boat, a so-called purse seiner, while a student. When I first climbed on board, I was greeted by a disapproving skipper when he saw an umbrella sticking out of my rucksack. How could I be so careless? The first week of fishing was fruitless and the skipper was sure to repeatedly tell me and everyone else that the reason for our bad luck was that the newcomer had brought an umbrella on board. And right enough, when I actually needed my umbrella one rainy day ashore, it was nowhere to be found. I assume it had been thrown overboard, although the topic was never raised. It should be noted that the fishing was exceptionally good in the weeks following the mysterious disappearance of my umbrella.

My experience with the unfortunate umbrella fits into a very widespread belief that objects associated with life on land should not be brought on board a boat. This rule extends to the names of the objects themselves. Perhaps the most important language taboo of all is to name animals with claws, such as cats, and farm animals such as pigs and horses. These words would lead to misfortune if they were used while fishing. All along the coast of Norway the belief is found that it invokes bad luck to mention the minister when at sea. Similar naming taboos, however, are found across the entire North Atlantic area where the Norse culture spread during the Viking Age: Shetland, the Orkney Islands, the Faroe Islands and Iceland. The distribution of the naming taboos can thus be explained through migration and cultural spread during the Viking Age. But what is even more fascinating is that what is taboo among the fishermen throughout the North Atlantic, in principle seems to be universal. Similar taboo perceptions have been mapped in Newfoundland, on the Malacca Peninsula, in Guyana, in the Baltic countries and several other places. What appears universal is a fundamental principle that what is strongly associated with the land should not be used or mentioned at sea. We are probably dealing with a common conception about a fundamental duality between the two elements of land and sea. Humans live on land and belong on it, and when at sea, we attempt to control an unnatural element. The boat is the thin shell that supports us and keeps us terrestrial creatures away from a potentially hostile element.

In addition to naming taboos fishermen will often read signs or see omens. If a cormorant is seen flying out to sea when preparing to go out fishing it is interpreted as a good sign, but if the bird is coming in from the sea you might as well give up on fishing that day. I have several times been told

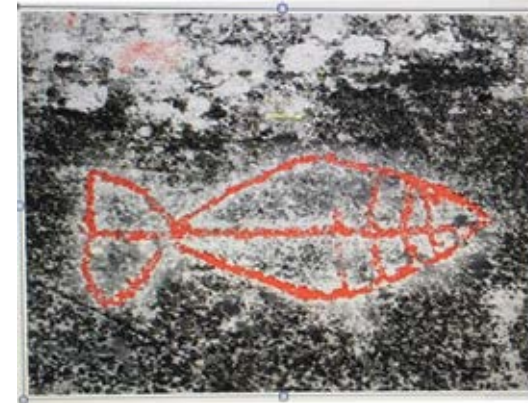
stories about old fishermen who would not go out to sea if they met a cat or a woman on their way down to the boat, reflecting the clearly-defined gender roles in the traditional fishing community.

Rituals linked to boats and fishing are typically that a boat should only be manoeuvred clockwise, the oars must always stay in pairs, and one must never count the fish one has caught while still at sea. In Norway, as well as along the wider North-Atlantic coasts, there are stories about certain people who secured fishing luck for the rest of the day by letting go the first fish they caught.

Why do fishermen make life difficult for themselves? What do they gain from a ritualised practice and by avoiding certain words? The most obvious reason is that it must have to do with the uncertainty of their profession. Not only is it a dangerous life; the fisherman must also make a living from the depth of the sea that he only sees the surface of. And this is probably the key: it is a matter of trying to influence what cannot be controlled, and that is achieved beyond rational actions, with use of magic. By following the accumulated experience of his ancestors, inherited rituals and rules around what is taboo, the fisherman can feel confident that he has done all that is possible when facing the forces of nature and destiny. It can be said to be a kind of psychological placebo effect; an ineffective remedy, a deceptive medicine that still has an effect through an illusion of control. By following the established procedure, he would feel safer and more prepared.

Magical thinking of course no longer plays as important a role as it once did in fishing communities. Good boats and modern equipment have dramatically reduced the risks and dangers in the profession. Nevertheless, there are still aspects of risk involved; the working conditions are less safe than almost any other profession and the catch is always difficult to predict, and it turns out that modern fishermen are far from free from magical thinking. Thus, it has been found that modern fishermen in Norway, Shetland and New England follow rules of the type that one should never whistle on board, not leave the harbour on a Friday, never close the trawl bag before leaving the quay, not mention pigs or horses, and so on. Typically, fishermen will admit that this is superstition, but they also confess that they still respect the taboos. It seems that, in addition to mitigating the level of personal and economical risk, the naming taboos and rituals may help to generate co-operation within the crew and construct a shared identity as fishermen. This in-group identity is illustrated by a story I was told about a skipper on board

a modern trawler. After days of poor fishing, problems with the electrical system and a deteriorating mood among the crew, he organised a hunt for the culprit on board. The crew was instructed to look for anything they would all agree, jokingly or not, had no place on board. One of the crew soon identified



Rock carving of a halibut, Alta, Finnmark

a souvenir figurine of a horse which then was sermoniously thrown overboard. It is said that the fishing improved, the electrical system was no longer an issue and, consequently, the crew's mood improved immensely.

Superstition and magic rituals are not unique to fishing, although it probably is the activity and profession most associated with superstition. Many football stars, Formula 1 drivers and

tennis players – all of them youthful idols and images of modernity - perform rituals before and during the game or race. This could be not to shave before the match, to wear a certain amulet around the neck, and similar. David Beckham is said to have had a variety of rituals. The Dutch football legend Johan Cruyff used to spit his chewing gum on the opponents' half of the pitch before kick-off. During the cup final in 1969, he forgot the chewing gum. His team, Ajax, lost 4-1 to Milan, and Cruyff said the episode had affected his game. Later in life Cruyff advised coaches to oppose superstition and ritual among their players, precisely because he thought the practice could influence attitude and effort.

Many of us will remember how in childhood we thought in magical terms; 'Today it's raining, and it's because I'm sad.' Magic is so embedded in the language that we as adults hardly think about it when we use magic imagery, as when we say 'touch wood', 'it is in the cards', etc. There is something universal about attempting to master the uncertainties in life; we act rationally based on our knowledge, but where rationality ends and uncertainty takes over, it actually pays off to follow a ritual based on old practice. Modern research has found that we feel more confident and perform better in situations where there is a degree of risk or luck involved if we

follow rituals or magic routines. So, maybe Cruyff was wrong to forbid his players from performing rituals before a match. And the skipper was probably justified to make my umbrella disappear.

Painting One Turbine Blade Black Reduces Bird Fatalities by 72%, says Study

By Leigh Collins

This 'contrast painting' could speed up permitting of new wind farms and allow turbines to be installed in places previously thought to be too problematic, scientists argue.

Scientists in Norway have found that painting one of the three blades on a wind turbine black reduces avian deaths by 72%.

If this 'contrast painting' were to be implemented at new onshore and offshore wind farms, it could reduce public opposition, speed up permitting processes and enable wind farms to be built at sites previously thought to be too problematic, they write in a scientific paper.

The study by researchers at the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research examined bird death data collected between 2006 and the end of 2016 at Statkraft's 152.4MW Smøla wind farm on the bird-rich island of the same name off Norway's west coast.

Four turbines at the Smøla project had a single blade painted black in August 2013, so avian fatalities were recorded for seven-and-a-half years before the painting and three-and-a-half years afterwards.

Trained sniffer dogs were used to find bird carcasses and feathers at the bottom of turbines at the wind farm, with dead birds found by wind farm personnel and passers-by also recorded.

The data showed that there was 'an average 71.9% reduction in the annual fatality rate after painting at the painted turbines relative to the control [ie, unpainted] turbines'.

The authors of the study, which was published in the Ecology and Evolution journal, did point out that the number of deaths fluctuated 'considerably' from year to year, 'stressing the necessity of a long-term study' to support their findings.

Why does a black blade reduce bird collisions?

In the paper, the scientists explain why birds are susceptible to flying

into rotating turbine blades and why a single black blade helps them to perceive the rotor as an obstacle.

Relative to humans, birds have a narrow binocular [e.g, using both eyes to focus on one object] frontal field of view and likely use their monocular [using each eye independently] and high resolution lateral fields of view [i.e, having eyes on opposite sides of their heads] for detecting predators, conspecifics [i.e, birds of the same species], and prey,' the authors write.

'Within an assumed open airspace, birds may therefore not always perceive obstructions ahead, thereby enhancing the risk of collision. To reduce collision susceptibility, provision of "passive" visual cues may enhance the visibility of the rotor blades, enabling birds to take evasive action in due time.'

It is thought that birds see the rotating white blades as a 'motion smear' – the blur effect humans see when waving a hand quickly in front of their eyes – and do not perceive this blur as a moving object.

Painting one blade black is believed to create motion smear patterns that the bird perceives as a moving object, 'as the frontal vision in birds may be more tuned for the direction of movement'.

An experimental laboratory study with American kestrels at the University of Maryland in 2003 tested the impact of seven different blade patterns ('striped, staggers and whole black'), as well as coloured blades, to see which was most clearly seen by the birds. The whole black pattern proved to be the most visible.

The Norwegian scientists concluded: 'We recommend to either replicate this study, preferably with more treated turbines, or to implement the measure at new sites and monitor collision fatalities to verify whether similar results are obtained elsewhere, to determine to which extent the effect is generalizable.

It is of the utmost importance to gain more insights into the expected efficacy of promising mitigation measures through targeted experiments and learning by doing, to successfully mitigate impacts on birdlife and to support a sustainable development of wind energy worldwide'.

Article originally appeared in the online magazine



and is reprinted with permission. The full link to the article is <https://www.rechargenews.com/wind/painting-one-turbine-blade-black-reduces-bird-fatalities-by-72-says-study/2-1-861643>

Norwegian-British Relationships, continued

Sybil Richardson (Oslo member)

We met as students in Manchester, and I followed in the footsteps of many English girls before me, being swept off my feet by a Viking! I met Lars, if I remember correctly, in John Lewis Department store in Manchester, where he was working in admin in order to gain practical experience as part of a business course at Montgomery House, and I was working as a trainee cosmetic consultant as part of my studies at the Helena Rubinstein School of Cosmetology. Our different experiences put us in good stead as we ended up as agents for Rimmel Cosmetics in Norway, which was at the time based in

London and is still going strong world-wide today.

I arrived in Oslo from my home town of Liverpool on a bleak and snowy day at the end of December 1960, having spent my last Christmas Day with my family. I left England for Norway on Fred Olsen's *MS Braemar* arriving in time for my first New Year's Eve with my Norwegian husband and his family!

All this seems decades away, which of course it is, but certain things hang on in one's memory, like struggling to learn a new language, learning to ski and to hold knitting needles 'the Norwegian way'. As in most multi-cultural families we tried to give our two sons a little bit from both sides

of the North Sea. Both their paths led them to King Olav who was himself half English. Even, had the honour of being commissioned to paint the last portrait of King Olav and Per served his national service on board *MS Norge* when King Olav visited the major cities on the west coast of Norway. Thanks to the Anglo-Norse Society the bonds between our two countries are as strong as ever.



Sybil and Leif in 1960

Torkill and Gwenda Fozzard (UK members)

I think one could say that it was theosophy that brought my parents together! My Norwegian grandparents on my mother's side were both teachers and interested in theosophy, and the whole family, including my mother Åse attended a theosophy summer school in Sørumsand some time in the mid 1930s.

My father was born in Horbury in Yorkshire, but a friend of his, Edwin Bolt, who was also interested in theosophy recommended that he attend the summer school, which is how he met Åse, my mother. They were married in 1937 and Åse followed my father to the UK, and to Cambridge, where he worked in the Department of Anatomy of the University and she, having quickly learnt English, worked in the University Library.

I was born in 1942, but because of the German occupation of Norway, communications with the motherland were difficult, hence my Christian name, Torkill is wrongly spelt. It should be Torkil, but my mother put 2 'll's in it for good measure! My sister, Kari, was born in 1945.

After the war our family had many happy holidays in my grandparents' mountain cottage in Haltdalen half way between Trondheim and Røros. I have fond memories of my grandmother's delicious meals of trout caught by my grandfather in the local river and cooked in cream, also of the abundance of *blåbær* and *molter* which we used to gather in the woods and moorland bogs in late summer.

In addition to being a keen fisherman my grandfather, who had worked on the Oslo-Bergen railway, was also a good carpenter and he built a loom for my grandmother, who quickly established herself in the local community and used to give talks on weaving to the women's institutes. My mother inherited the loom and my sister Kari, who lives in Switzerland now has it, so many of our soft furnishings are made either by my mother, grandmother or sister.

After I married in 1974 my wife, Gwenda, and I travelled extensively in Norway. We have walked in the Jotunheimen, been to Lofoten and had two trips with *Hurtigruten* to see the midnight sun. On one occasion we met two Norwegians in St Petersburg while on a cruise. They invited us to visit them in their home in Brønnøysund and arranged for us to be interviewed by the local press!

The cabin, Fosslia, latterly owned by my sister, has now been sold to a local farmer, whose farm is actually in the next valley, but I am glad it was not

sold to a complete stranger.



Basil Cowlshaw (Oslo member)

I have had the pleasure of being a member of the Oslo Anglo-Norse Society for many years and received an honorary membership in 2012 and am today the oldest member of the Society.

My story starts when I joined the RAF as a wireless operator in 1941 and was later shipped off to Norway at the end of the war, sailing into Oslo and docking at Akershus Castle on May 20th 1945. I vividly remember handing out tinned fruit, spam and corned beef to the Norwegians who came to greet us. It was a strange situation as there were at the time still thousands of German soldiers in the city. I spent 3 months at Gardermoen, which was then just a small military airbase and then continued my work at Holmenkollen radio station. I eventually returned to England, but found it hard to adjust so I decided to return to Norway in 1949 and found myself a job with Philips.

I have worked as a translator for many years and have translated numerous documentary books such as *The 17th Olympic Games*. I translated Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* which was performed at the London Comedy Theatre and have worked as a translator for the NRK- Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. My latest project is translating Alf B.Jacobsen's book *Narvik 1940*. I have in addition also published a lot of my own works.

I met my Hungarian wife Julie during a visit to Bulgaria in the 60's and after a lot of red tape Julie moved to Norway where she has worked as an authorised Oslo city guide and translator. Our daughter Jackie works as a producer for NRK. My passion is parachuting, which I am still doing after some 50-odd jumps behind me. Norway had been a wonderful

place to settle down in and I can look back on my life here with many happy memories.

Alan McDowell (UK member)

From Ireland to Norway and back – almost

'Finland has the most beautiful women in the world' went the advert for summer working abroad. A 'no-brainer' then for two single male, Northern Irish engineering students entering their final year at University. I got a job offer but my flat-mate Dave didn't, so alas Finland was out. 'Why not Norway?' said our other flat-mate, Lars, from Sandvika (just south of Oslo), so Norway it was. No success with the equally beautiful ladies but my job, working for Elektrisk Bureau a/s (EB) went well. So much so that they said if I ever needed a job...

Graduating from Manchester University with an honours degree in Electronics should have guaranteed me a job in England, but in 1971 things were tough and by the end of the summer I hadn't found anything I liked. However I had found a very attractive blonde, Linda, who unbeknown to me then would later become my wife. I thought that I might do better job-wise in Norway (the Northern Irish do have quite a bit of Viking blood in them as you know) so like a young Viking I headed North. But in 1971 to be able to work in Norway you had to have a job arranged before you entered the country, and unfortunately there was now a 2 year hiring freeze at EB while they built their new HQ at Billingstad - so they were out.

But when your best friend's mother and father live in Bærum and are dentists, they know everyone and as their neighbour owned Flebu Luftteknik a job was found. On day one I was taught to weld (something that would have triggered a strike in an English factory) but the work was fun as I have always enjoyed making things. No, one doesn't need an engineering degree to weld so over the next five or six years as my Norwegian improved I started repairing TVs for Stereospecialisten in Sandvika, then selling test equipment for Gustav A Ring and finally until 1984, selling large computers for Digital Equipment Corp based in Oslo...

Surprisingly in 1972 Linda agreed to marry me and move to Norway. Luckily she fell in love with Norway just as much as I did, qualified as a nurse at Aker Sykehus, gave birth to twin girls and made many Norwegian friends in the process. For reasons we are still unsure of, in 1984 we moved

back to England (Ireland, or more specifically Belfast was rather too lively in 1984 courtesy of the IRA). Despite frequent Norwegian holidays over the years we have missed all the great Norwegian friends we made during the 13 years we lived there. We solved that problem by buying a house near Filtvet (it was supposed to be a summer *hytte* but that's another story) and now as pensioners we try to spend as much time there as possible all through the year. Even with the virus on the loose we have just come back from a 5 week visit.

Interestingly Asker kommune is building a new large *eldresenter* at the bottom of our road between Filtvet and Tofte, so who knows where we will end up in a few years' time!

Lise Brekkeflat (UK member)

My father Einar Johan was born in Bergen in 1916, and worked at Andel's Salterier in Kong Oscarsgate, first as a fourteen year old errand boy, then as an apprentice, specialising in making varieties of Norwegian sausage.

Anyone who has relatives in Norway will know of the hardships endured by the Norwegian people during the grim years of German occupation. Food was scarce and fresh meat was severely restricted. Einar and some of his close colleagues at the Salterier decided that their only chance of helping the Allies in the war effort was to escape to Britain. This was a dangerous idea as many who had previously attempted this, had been discovered by the Gestapo, tortured and executed. However, Einar and his close friends were determined to try.

He and three of his close colleagues, Egil Carlsen, Leonard Sæland and the boat's owner Ludvig Midtvedt, escaped from Telavåg, on 19 June 1941, in the 22ft *MS Sjøblomsten*, arriving six days later in Fetlar in the Shetland Isles. Einar and his comrades were sent to London, where they were able to enlist: Egil and Leonard joined the army and Einar joined the air force. Einar then trained as an armourer, with 331 Squadron and was based at North Weald in Epping, Essex.

While at North Weald, Einar met Emily Seaton (born 1920) at a dance at The Tudor Hall in Hoddesdon, the closest town to the Squadron's base. Many of the airmen cycled there for this popular Saturday night event. Before the outbreak of war, Emily had been an assistant in her father's shop, Seatons Newsagents, Confectioners and Tobacconists in the High Street and then

worked in the Civil Defence in Cheshunt and Hendon. Einar and Emily were married in St. Paul's Church, Hoddesdon in February 1944. They had a brief honeymoon in Dumfries in Scotland, as it was then necessary for Einar to rejoin his Squadron to travel to the near continent.



Våpenmekaniker Einar Johan Brekkeflat fra 6331 Servicing Echelon sammen med sin ektefelle Emily Seaton etter bryllupet 27. februar 1944 i Hoddesdon. Armourer Einar Johan Brekkeflat of No. 6331 Servicing Echelon together with his wife Emily Seaton following their wedding on February 27th 1944 at Hoddesdon. (Foto/photo: via Lise Brekkeflat)

At the end of the war, after numerous trips to the Continent, involving lengthy separation from Emily, Einar was posted to Gardermoen, Oslo, where he was demobbed. Returning to his home town of Bergen, he was reunited with Emily, who had now moved to Norway. Einar resumed his position in the Salterier and their son was born in March 1947.

Due to Emily's parents' failing health, Einar and Emily made the decision to move back to England in the early 1950's. Einar worked in production at the local pharmaceutical company Merck, Sharpe and Dohme in Hoddesdon from 1951-1976. In June 1956, their daughter was born. Einar passed away in England in March 1991 at the age of 74. Emily passed away in June 2012 at the age of 92. Both have their ashes scattered at the base of the memorial commemorating the Norwegian airmen who were stationed at North Weald airfield in WW2.

Einar and Emily's marriage established an enduring love and bond

between their families in Norway and England. Their children continue to maintain this closeness, with frequent visits to friends and the families of Einar's three brothers in Bergen, Voss, Sognefjord and Hønefoss, in the east of Norway.

(Details of Einar and Emily's wedding can be found in Cato Guhnfeldt's *Spitfire Saga*, Volume V)

First Year Report of an Anglo-Norse Scholarship-Holder at the University of Tromsø

By Jo McKillop

I moved to Tromsø in the autumn of 2019 to begin my MSc in Arctic Marine Biology and settled into life here with surprising ease. I didn't know Norwegian, but I got onto a course and English got me by just fine until I could learn the language. The pace of life here is very different to London, as is the size. It took me a surprising amount of time to get used to not hearing trains and trucks and sirens all day and night. The peculiar day/night cycle of the Arctic is a nuisance to someone who is not accustomed to it, but an easily surmountable one through diet and technology and a little discipline. A regular newsletter encourages international students to partake in cultural events, of which there are many. I have never seen English national costume, nor do I know of much holiday cuisine beyond mince pies and hot cross buns, so it has been fantastic to come here and be among these people who will at most holidays put on a *bunad* and meet in the town square to eat the holiday food. Tromsø knows it is Tromsø, and has no problem helping me to learn what that is.

Studying at UiT has been amazing so far and for a number of reasons. There is a different mode of communication between lecturer and student here compared to UK universities, more relaxed, the classes are smaller. I have enjoyed and benefited from this. Even the postgraduate degree is highly modularised, offering a lot of choice in how I have structured my degree. I came here to study Arctic Marine Biology, and this may well be the best place in the world for that. Norway is also a friendly country with research interests in the Arctic and Antarctic, and so as a prospective polar researcher myself I consider it beneficial to have some immersion in the culture of those who are also researching in polar regions. It improves communication, which in science is always a good thing.

I had an interesting turn of events with module selection where I couldn't figure out the registration system (note to future students: undergraduate modules start with a 2, postgraduate modules start with a 3). When I went for help, they told me of three modules which had been scheduled to have zero overlap: Arctic Marine Systems Ecology, Arctic Marine Pollution, and Ecotoxicology. I thought "alrighty, it's been a while since I got stuck into physical chemistry, but I can brush up", but it all rushed back fast and I discovered that I actually love marine pollution and toxicology! That may have come out wrong: I love the study of marine pollution and toxicology.



I am in love with how connected the university and the city are. There are thousands of dormitory spaces but none of them on campus, so students are embedded in local neighbourhoods. The university operates most of the museums in town, and students are also encouraged to use civic services such as the free hire scheme for outdoor equipment. I have had a number of dives here, swum a fjord, climbed a mountain, using kit that was free and diving gas that was the cheapest I've seen. This connectedness also extends to industry:

UiT has links to the city's numerous marine and polar research institutes, and through these links I have accessed a supervisor for my thesis project. I cannot get into too many details right now because of trade secrets, but it is within the realm of ecotoxicology.

And then it happened: Coronavirus.

Life here stopped. Workers were furloughed, classes were moved online, sports were cancelled. All to the good, of course. The shutdown was the right call at the right time. Still, it changed a lot. The grant I got from Anglo-Norse was going to first help bridge the gap while I found employment and then fund enrichment activities which would deepen my understanding of North Norway. Instead the pandemic put the kibosh on finding work and I had to trim sails a bit: I moved in with my boyfriend to save on rent and food, and the grant served as a lifeline which kept me in Tromsø and studying where I would otherwise have had to go home and abandon my degree. I am grateful to the Anglo-Norse society for giving me the opportunity to maintain my immersion in the culture of Norway and to continue my studies here in Tromsø, a city which is very rapidly feeling like home.



Honorary Presidents are their Excellencies the Ambassadors to Great Britain and Norway.

NB. ANS - Oslo Centenary plans for 2021 have unfortunately come to a standstill due to the latest Corona restrictions. We will be sending notice of any developments as soon as we can.



The youngest reader of the Anglo-Norse Review?
Nora Carbone-Hansen, aged 3