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# Anglo-Norse Review



# ANGLO-NORSE REVIEW

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Cover image: On 8th May 2025 a memorial event took place on *Normandiekaien*, (known to many of us as the Fred Olsen quay), where wreaths were laid in memory of the 52 Norwegians who lost their lives in events connected to D-Day. The text on the plaque is in both French and Norwegian and also mentions the nearly 3,000 Norwegians who participated in actions at sea, on land and in the air. Photo credit. Kari Anne Rand

## Editorial

This issue comes out about two months after the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Norway and Victory in Europe, so it is appropriate that there are items reflecting this. The cover shows a plaque that was erected for a memorial event that took place on May 8th and Wiktor Mølleskog's article (for which there could have been many more illustrations if space had permitted) highlights an event that was both commemorative, festive and educational.

The article about Norwegian gifts is the result of a fascinating talk, given to the Anglo-Norse in November 2024 by David Wheeler, who commented on the difficulty of choosing the images for a printed article after being able to show so many in a talk.

Photos of King Harald on a trailer attached to a tractor on Bjørnøya evidently 'flew round the world' and it did seem to be too good an opportunity to miss to say something about why this part of Norway is so important for so many reasons.

Readers of the *Review* may have noticed that there have been a considerable number of articles concerning the Saami in recent issues, and the editor has to admit that she has developed an interest in their situation in relation to the state, aspects of which are reflected in the article on the Saami language in this issue.

I had heard of the Norwegian Study Centre in York, but until I read the article written by Dr Williams I had no idea about what an important role they play in Norwegian-British relations.

*God sommer!*

## Norwegian Gifts

*By David Wheeler CVO*

The exchange of gifts between royal families across Europe has formed a significant contribution to the royal collections down the centuries. This article looks at some of the Norwegian gifts and artefacts now forming part of the British Royal Collection, following the reestablishment of the Norwegian Monarchy in 1905, and is a resumé of a talk given to the Anglo Norse Society on Tuesday 5th November 2024.

The marriage between Maud of Wales, the sixth child of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra and Alexander of Denmark, known as Prince Carl, the second son of Fredrick VIII and Queen Louise on the 22nd of July 1896, further cemented a union between Britain and Denmark, already firmly tied with the union of Edward VII and Alexandra, as Alexandra's father had acceded to the throne of Denmark, as Christian IX.

Maud was born in London at Marlborough House, then the official home of the Prince of Wales. She regularly visited Denmark for family gatherings and it was there she came to know her cousin Prince Carl. Following the marriage at Buckingham Palace, attended by Queen Victoria, the couple settled in Copenhagen but divided their time between Denmark and England, as their marriage gift from the then Prince and Princess of Wales was Appleton House on the Sandringham estate, where Maud had spent much of her early years. Their only child Prince Alexander, later to take the name of Olav, was born at Appleton House on 2nd July 1903.

Following the dissolving of the union between Sweden and Norway in 1905, Norway became an independent state and King Oscar II of Sweden and Norway abdicated from the Norwegian throne. After much discussion by the Norwegian government the crown was offered to Prince Carl who was married to Maud, a member of the British royal family, who already had a son as future heir.

On 27th November 1905 Carl took his constitutional oath before the Parliament as Haakon VII, the first independent Norwegian king for 518 years. King Haakon and Queen Maud were crowned at Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim on 22nd June 1906.

Photography has always been of great interest to the Royal family since its invention in the mid-19th century, and the photographic collection forms numerically the largest part of the Royal Collection.



Fig 1. Christmas card to Queen Mary from Olav, aged 14, wishing her a merry Xmas and a happy New Year. (with some probable pen malfunction)



Fig 2. A *plique à jour* viking ship from Sandringham

Maud was a keen photographer as was her mother Alexandra and although her personal albums now form part of the Norwegian Royal Collection, many pictures were exchanged between the family and particularly her sister Victoria. Signed photographs were given on many important family and state occasions. In 1917 Olav sent his Aunt May (Queen Mary) a Christmas greeting with a photo taken of him playing tennis (Fig.1). Albums were also made up and given as gifts.

Some of the earliest decorative objects from Norway are to be found at Sandringham. These are a charming collection of '*plique à jour*' enamel trinkets with similar items from Russia, and France. (Fig.2). The Norwegian objects are mostly made by Marius Hammer who was based in Bergen. Hammer was the head of one of Norway's largest silversmith companies producing brilliant enamelwork for tourists and export.

Following the coronation of King Haakon and Queen Maud, the royal couple made a state visit to the United Kingdom in 1906 followed by a return state visit by King Edward VII to Norway in 1908. Sadly, all records of these early visits have been lost, and a record of gifts has not survived in the archives but coronation medals



ALT FOR NORGE ('everything for Norway') followed by 18 NOVBR 1905, the date on which Haakon VII took the Norwegian throne, and finally HAAKON MAUD 22 JULI 1906, the date of the 10th wedding anniversary of Haakon VII and Queen Maud, (also their first wedding anniversary as King and Queen).

Family anniversary gifts were also given during the reign of



Fig 4. The Art Noveau casket by David Andersen.

and commemorative medallions from Nidaros Cathedral are in the medal collection at Windsor.

A commemoration gift of the Coronation of Haakon and Maud is also at Sandringham. It takes the form of a silver-gilt model of a Norwegian wedding-crown (Fig.3). It is pierced, in the pattern of crowned lions holding crowns and hung with stylized heart-shaped discs. The headband is studded and inscribed

Haakon, the favoured supplier being the firm of David Andersen (1843-1901). Andersen was in apprenticeship to the jeweller Jacob Tostrup in Christiania (Oslo) establishing his own workshop in 1876, and in 1887 the David Andersen Company in Oslo, committing to the creation of the highest quality of artistry, which ensured the company's



Fig 5. The silver-gilt coffee service given to George V and Queen Mary at their coronation in 1911.

alongside names such as Carl Faberge, Cartier Brothers and Rene Lalique.

A striking Art Nouveau casket decorated with green enameled holly leaves and cabochon glass berries (Fig.4) was very likely a Christmas gift to Edward VII from Maud and Haakon and is currently on display in the 'Edwardians' exhibition at the King's Gallery.



Fig. 6. The coffee service given by King Haakon to Queen Elizabeth at her coronation.

enduring success. He earned a reputation for excellence in traditional techniques as well as innovative and new designs, particularly with guilloche enameling (clear coloured enamel fused over engine-turned and finely textured base metal), and 'plique à jour'. David Andersen became a premier company in the world of jewellery and fine bibelot design

Probably the finest example of Andersen's work in the Royal Collection is the coffee set given to King George V and Queen Mary for their Coronation, 22nd June 1911 (Fig.5). It is made in silver-gilt and decorated with bands of pale blue guilloché enamel and oval reserves, overlaid with the silver gilt GvM

monogram. It comprises of a pot of baluster shape, with swan neck spout and ivory scroll handle, jug, basin, cups and saucers, spoons and tongs.

A second coffee pot, jug and basin was given by Haakon as a coronation gift to Queen Elizabeth in 1953 (Fig. 6) It is also made by Andersen in silver gilt but of a rounded globular style and decorated with

grey guilloché enamel with small beak spout and silver gilt collar engraved with stylised foliage on a ring foot. The dedication note is signed from 'Uncle Charles'.

Queen Elizabeth's state visit of 1955 was her first to a country outside the Commonwealth and was to be the final state visit hosted by King Haakon. Queen Elizabeth was presented with the Grand Cross with Chain of the Order of St Olav and an engraved glass vase from the Hadeland glass factory (Fig.7). The vase had been made by the designer Benny Motzfeldt who had just been employed by the Hadeland Glassverk and it is also interesting to note that her (third) husband,



Fig. 7. The Hadeland Glass vase designed by Benny Motzfeldt and given to the Queen on her state visit to Norway in 1955

Commander Birger Fredrik Motzfeldt was seconded as aide to the Duke of Edinburgh by the King for the duration of the visit.

The Hadeland Glass factory had been founded in 1762, with production starting in 1765. Craftsmen then were recruited mainly from Germany and production consisted largely of bottles, jars and household glassware. In 1852 Ole Christian Berg developed the glassworks and refined production making smaller crystal items such as wineglasses, bowls, dishes and vases. In the 1920's Hadeland Glass moved away from European



Fig. 8. The Hadeland glass bowl given to Queen Elizabeth by King Harald and Queen Sonja in November 2021.

traditional designs and copies to develop its own designs, and is now the oldest industrial company in Norway, claiming continuous operation since its foundation.

Since 1955, the principal gifts from the Royal Family in Norway have been created by the Hadeland Glass Factory. For example, in April 2021 King Harald and Queen Sonja gave HM Queen Elizabeth for her 95th Birthday a vase and in November 2021, a bowl made as a limited edition and inspired by artwork created by HM Queen Sonja (Fig. 8).

Many of the contemporary glass gifts are displayed in the Casson Suite at Windsor Castle

(NB. All images in this article are the copyright of the Royal Collection Trust/© His Majesty King Charles III 2025.)

*Editor's note. David Wheeler is Senior Conservator of Decorative Arts Royal Collection Trust.*

## King Harald and Queen Sonja Visit Svalbard

*Compiled by the Editor*

On Saturday 14 June King Harald (88) and Queen Sonja (87) visited Bjørnøya on their way by the royal yacht Norge to Spitsbergen, where they spent 16 and 17 June. (Spitsbergen - the official name of the main island and Svalbard - the official name of the whole archipelago).

In one sense there was nothing unusual about the visit, as King Harald has visited Svalbard several times before, both officially and unofficially, but not only has the geopolitical climate changed recently with Donald Trump saying he thinks Greenland should belong to America, and Russia invading Ukraine, but environmental issues have become more urgent.

Photos of the King's visit to Bjørnøya flew round the world when fog prevented him from arriving by helicopter. Instead he had to struggle onto land from a boat and then sit on a garden bench on a trailer attached to a tractor.



King Harald (with yellow gloves) on an improvised royal carriage on Bjørnøya. Photo © Cornelius Poppe NTB

Asked why he was visiting Bjørnøya the King replied, *'dette er en del av Norge, derfor er vi her'* (This is part of Norway. That's why we're here). But the visit was not just a gentle assertion of sovereignty; the weather station there plays a vital role for all the ships in the area, be they fishing vessels of various nationalities, military vessels, or the Norwegian coastguard that patrols the area. So it was not only a royal photo op when Queen Sonja released the daily weather balloon on Bjørnøya. It underlined the fact that Bjørnøya and Svalbard are NATO's eyes in the north, something that was further emphasised when the Chief of Defence, Eirik Kristoffersen, and the Commander of the Norwegian Joint Headquarters, Rune Andersen recently visited Svalbard. (Rune Andersen was there in uniform just a week ahead of the King).

On arrival in Longyearbyen King Harald gave a speech in which he said that increased international attention was being paid to Svalbard and that this gave rise to both challenges and possibilities, and he went on *'jeg er derfor glad for at våre myndigheter er vårt felles ansvar bevisst – både når det gjelder geopolitikk, klima og utvikling av lokalsamfunnet her'* (I am therefore pleased that our authorities are conscious of our joint responsibility – both with regard to geopolitics, climate and the development of the local community here). And he went on, *'vi trenger gode internasjonale avtaler og tillit til at vi kan stole på hverandre, for å gjøre det beste for fremtiden til vår ene, felles, klode'* (we need good international agreements and confidence that we can rely on each other, in order to do the best for the future of our one, shared planet).

With regard to climate, the warming of the Arctic has caused a number of landslides on Spitsbergen, and one in 2015 in Longyearbyen killed two people and damaged several houses. The warming and freezing of the permafrost has also caused problems for the airport runway in Longyearbyen and meant that the foundations of some buildings have had to be reinforced.

On Monday 16 June the King visited the last Norwegian coal mine on Spitsbergen, which will be closed by the time readers of the *Review* receive their copy. Thus will end over 100 years of coal mining on Spitsbergen. The mine was meant to close in 2023, but partly as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the rise in the price of oil, it was decided to delay the closure till 2025. The closure of the last Norwegian mine (there is still some mining in the Russian-owned mine in Barentsburg) means the end of any industrial activity in Svalbard, which now has to rely on tourism and scientific research.

## The Man who Fired the Torpedo that Disabled the *Bismarck*

*Compiled by the editor from material supplied by Tony Dixon's son, Michael*

Lieutenant-Commander Tony Dixon, born November 1917, joined the Royal Navy as a midshipman in 1938 and trained as a pilot on Tiger Moths and Hawker Moths. When war was declared in 1939 he was appointed to 815 squadron and joined the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal* which was sent to Gibraltar and the Mediterranean. While Tony Dixon was undergoing further training in Alexandria, Germany invaded Norway and *Ark Royal* was dispatched to Scotland and Norway, where the job of the navy was to attack German aircraft and the Swedish iron ore supply route on its way out of Norway to Germany.

It is at this point that Michael Dixon, Tony's son, **would like the help of any readers who have family or friends in northern Norway in case any of them have stories about the following event.**

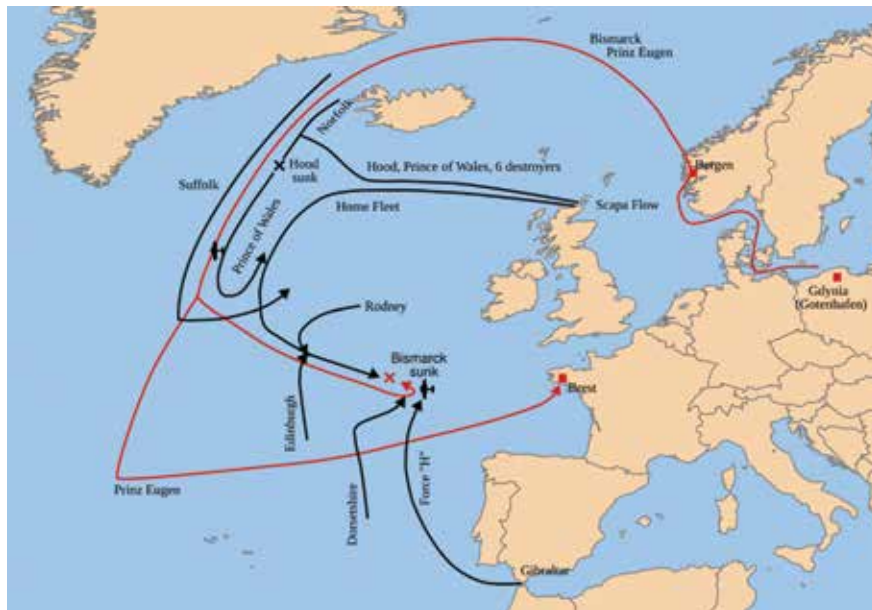
In his later years, Tony told Michael that on one occasion he had to land on a frozen lake somewhere, which he remembered as being called Scarland, presumably Skånland in Troms County. He discovered that he had been extremely lucky because the ice had already started to thaw in places. Clearly friendly contacts were already in place and he and his crew stayed with a Norwegian family who had contacted a Norwegian schoolmaster who came down and told them where the nearest air station was and how to get there. They put on skis and towed a sledge from the area to some RAF personnel who provided them with a small quantity of fuel and they returned to their plane. Taking off they then got to a new RAF station where they asked for more fuel and had to take it at night and take off early the following morning to Harstad where an airfield was being built. On arrival they tried to land on the runway where they sank right through, and the nose of their plane tipped over, as those building the runway were putting a metal covering on top of the sludgy runway material.

**If any reader has friends or family who might know who the Norwegian family was where Tony and his crew stayed or who the schoolmaster was, please contact the editor.**

Back in the UK Tony, now a sub lieutenant rejoined the *Ark Royal* which was part of Force H, based in Gibraltar. This was a crucial Royal Navy task force formed in June 1940 under Admiral Somerville, and its task was to

protect British shipping in the Atlantic.

On 19 May 1941 intelligence was received by the British that the German battleship *Prinz Eugen* and the *Bismarck*, which had only entered German service in August 1940, had left the safety of Gotenhafen (Gdynia in Poland) and been spotted off the coast of Bergen. On 23 May the two ships were sighted in the Denmark Strait, close to the coast of Greenland and on 24 May the battlecruiser *Hood* and the battleship *Prince of Wales* made contact with the German force in what became known as the Battle of the Denmark Strait. A fuel tank in the *Bismarck* had been hit, and was leaking oil, which meant that she had to make for Brest instead of escaping into the North Atlantic, and her trailing slick of oil enabled British cruisers to shadow her. Early on 25 May, however, the British shadowers lost contact with the *Bismarck*, but her captain believing that he was still being shadowed, sent a long radio message to headquarters in Germany. This enabled the British to triangulate Bismarck's rough position and send aircraft to find her, and on 26 May a Catalina flying boat spotted her 700 miles from Brest, while



The route of the *Bismarck* and the *Prinz Eugen* in red and the home fleet in black. Source: Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_Rhein%C3%BCbung](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Rhein%C3%BCbung)

Somerville's Force H was already sailing north to intercept it.

It was impossibly bad weather when Somerville launched 14 Swordfish, which were biplane torpedo bombers, and of which it was written in the *Guardian* obituary for Tony Dixon that they were almost obsolete 'and could barely make 90 knots in a following wind', but they were still the principal weapon of the Fleet Air Arm. Of the 14 Swordfish taking off from the *Ark Royal* one of the last was that piloted by Sub-Lieutenant Tony Dixon. On the first sortie he missed the *Bismarck* but saw that she had been struck. On the second he had to approach from below the cloud, which made him a 'sitting duck'. With the main guns pointing directly at him he launched his torpedoes from 2,000 yards. It is not known whose torpedo struck the *Bismarck's* steering gear and propeller, but she was now fatally disabled and the *Dorchester* came in to give the coup de grace.

Tony Dixon later became a flying instructor and finished the war as lieutenant commander.

## Liberation Convoy 2025

By Wiktor Mølleskog

*Editor's note. Wiktor was born at the start of WWII and joined the Norwegian Merchant Navy in 1957 as a 15 year old boy and worked his way up to Master. He spent 42 years in the Norwegian Merchant Navy, the last 20 as a Ship's Captain. Since his retirement he has been very much involved with projects concerning WWII sailors and their legacy.*

About 2 years ago I started working on the idea of getting some restored Norwegian boats from WWII to sail from Norway to various UK ports to celebrate the maritime effort and the close cooperation between Norway and Britain during the war.

In May this year this became a reality. On 2 May the following boats were assembled in Bergen Harbour, *S/S Hestmanden*, *M/K Erkna*, *M/K Andholmen*, *M/K Heland* and *M/K Arnefford*. I had the honour of laying the wreath on the statue of King Haakon 7 and declare the start of the Liberation Convoy 2025. Then on Sunday 4 May we left Bergen and after a 35 hour bumpy voyage we arrived at Lerwick, Shetland, where we were met by the Lerwick lifeboat and a fire-tug spraying water.

Our visit to Shetland was fantastic, every shop was decorated with

Shetland and Norwegian flags.

We visited all the important Norwegian sites from WWII. Lerwick, home to the Norwegian Navy and a group of MTB's (Motor Torpedo Boats,



Memorial Service, Lerwick 8 May 2025, with the Norwegian Ambassador third from the left. Photo courtesy Wiktor Mølleskog

which are overwater naval boats carrying torpedoes normally only carried by submarines.) We also visited Lunna, the first base of the Shetland-gang, and Scalloway that became the permanent base of the Shetland-gang and the Shetland Bus. On the evening of 7 May the crew members of the Liberation Convoy paraded in procession from the harbout to Lerwick Town Hall for a Civic Reception (photo page 29).

On the 8 May there was a memorial service at the Shetland County War Memorial and wreath laying on the War Graves, and a Memorial service at the Shetland Bus Memorial, Scalloway followed by a visit to the Scalloway Museum. Interestingly the Memorial at Scalloway is a model of *M/K Andholmen* that was part of the Convoy. The Norwegian Royal Navy Band held a memorial Concert at St. Columba's Church Lerwick.

The 9 and 10 May were days of open ship and different schools visited

the Liberation Convoy ships.

On the 11 May *S/S Hestmanden* and *M/K Andholmen* departed Lerwick for the Orkneys, with the rest of the boats going back home to Norway. More than 5000 people had visited the Convoy during the stay at Lerwick.

On the 12 May *S/S Hestmanden* arrived at Stromness in the Orkneys



17.mai, the Orkney way. Photo courtesy Wiktor Mølleskog.

where it stayed until 15 May. During its stay there was open ship every day and wreaths were laid on the war graves. On the 16 May it arrived at Kirkwall, where it stayed together with *M/K Andholmen* until 18 May.

17 May, Norwegian Independence Day, which is observed every year in the Orkneys, was celebrated in the traditional way with parades through the town.

On 19 May *S/S Hestmanden* arrived in Aberdeen and stayed there until 24 May with open ship and different exhibitions every day and a wreath laying on the war graves. *M/K Andholmen* returned to Norway.

*S/S Hestmanden* left Aberdeen 24 May and arrived in Edinburgh on 25 May. During its stay in Edinburgh it was berthed next to the old Royal Yacht *Britannia*. It stayed in Edinburgh until 30 May and there was open ship every

day and a wreath was laid on the War Graves there.

*S/S Hestmanden* arrived in Newcastle on 31 May. It was met at the mouth of the River Tyne by a flotilla of small vessels led by the Old Tynemouth Lifeboat and a fire-tug spraying water-jets. A royal welcome! It was berthed at Spillers Wharf in the middle of town. The stay started with open ship from day one.

Sunday 1 June started with a Church Service at the Chapel in Trinity House Newcastle. The Service was lead by the rector of the Norwegian Seamen's Church London and a Dean from Newcastle Cathedral. The service was held in both Norwegian and English and was followed by coffee and biscuits. In the afternoon there was open ship and the ship was visited by Sea Cadets.

Monday 2 June started with open ship with more visits by school classes and sea cadets. Monday evening *S/S Hestmanden* and the Liberation Convoy 2025 held a reception for the dignitaries of Newcastle and the surrounding area. I had the honour of handing the Haakon 7 Freedom Medal to Chris Flanighan and his family in memory of his grandfather War-Sailor Karluf Thorsen.

Tuesday 3 June saw the laying of wreaths on the war graves together with representatives of the British War Graves Commission, the British Legion, the Captain of Trinity House, the Vice Lieutenant of Northumberland, the Flanighan family, local school children, the Captain of *S/S Hestmanden* and myself (photo, page 30). The rest of Tuesday 3 June was open ship.

Wednesday 4 June we had a visit from a 100 year old war-sailor who had served on the Murmansk convoys (photo page 30). He was determined to get onboard and did so very well. BBC and ITV television held interviews with him, the Captain of *S/S Hestmanden* and myself. The rest of the day was open ship.

Thursday 5 June saw the departure from Newcastle and return to Norway of *S/S Hestmanden*.

The Liberation Convoy was well worth doing and I am proud of having been a part of it. Around 25,000 people visited *S/S Hestmanden* and the other boats during their stay in British waters.

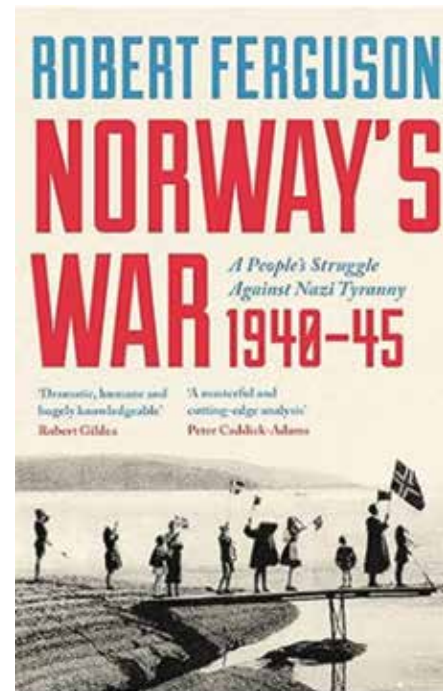
## Norway's War 1940-1945. A People's Struggle against Nazi Tyranny by Robert Ferguson

Review by Tony Insall

You might think that more than eighty years after the end of the Second World War, there is nothing new which can be said about the conflict and its impact. Robert Ferguson provides further evidence showing that's not the case. Ferguson, a British journalist who moved to Norway in 1983, has previously written biographies of Henrik Ibsen and Knut Hamsun. This is the first time that he has ventured into wartime history. *Norway's War*, entertainingly written, tells some of the story of the occupation through vivid accounts he has unearthed, describing the courageous actions of a small number of Norwegians who found significant ways of standing up to Nazi oppression.

Ferguson also includes a detailed account of the three-week visit which Himmler paid to Norway in January 1941. Himmler was fascinated by Norwegian history and culture, believing in the scope for developing close links with a people which he considered was as Aryan as his own. (Though Ferguson does not mention it, this contributed to an ambitious scheme to develop Norway into a model Aryan society with Trondheim as a cultural capital and naval base.)

Among the personal stories Ferguson includes are those describing how Sigrid Helliesen Lund and an English Quaker, Myrtle Wright who had been stranded in Oslo by the German



invasion, played an important part in helping Norwegian Jews to escape arrest and deportation. (Despite their efforts and those of others, 774 Jews were deported, about a third of the total Jewish population, of whom only a handful survived.) He also explains how Einar Høigård, a 35-year-old

father, teacher and librarian took part in organising Norwegian teachers to protest against the Nazification of the education system, despite the fear of imprisonment and torture that eventually led him to take his own life; and how Eivind Berggrav, the Bishop of Oslo, took an unyielding stand against German attempts to force change in its liturgical practices. He was removed from his post and imprisoned, and shortly afterwards all the bishops and clergy resigned their positions too. And the most detailed and remarkable story concerns Gunnar Waaler, an officer in the Norwegian state police, or Stapo, who became a double agent working for Milorg, the military resistance organisation, providing valuable information and personally conducting refugees to safety in Sweden.

Unfortunately, the coverage Ferguson gives to the activities of these brave individuals severely restricts the amount of space available to do justice to the main threads of the rest of the story, and to provide context for much of what he writes about. This has led to some important omissions. There is minimal mention of the Norwegian government in London and its links with resistance groups in Norway, or of the support which was provided from Britain for resistance activities. The activities of Sivorg, the civilian resistance organisation, are covered in just a page – which does little justice for example to those who worked to produce the Bulletin and Free Trade Unionism as underground newssheets. (This work earned Einar Gerhardsen and Halvard Lange, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in the first postwar government, lengthy spells in Sachsenhausen concentration camp.) And while he writes at length about Gunnar Waaler, he makes no mention of four other Norwegian members of Stapo who also reported to Milorg, Per Frivik, Otto Mjærum, Leif Strenge Næss and Arne Solum, and who were awarded the King's medal for courage after the war. And although he mentions the NOK 340 million which the government paid in 1999 in restitution to the Norwegian Jewish community, he might also have described earlier, similar, gestures of reparation at a time when a financial payment would not have been feasible: permitting the immigration of 660 Jews into Norway in 1947, or shortly afterwards and much more unorthodox, the act of Haakon Lie in persuading the head of the Security Service, Asbjørn Bryhn, to provide Norwegian passports to Jews in Poland and Romania to enable them to travel to Israel. Lie was known to be a friend of Israel: it was he who took the initiative in arranging for Norway to sell heavy water to Israel in 1958, a most controversial issue both at that time and afterwards.

The book contains some unfortunate errors, too. It was not Milorg operatives who carried out the Gunnerside attack on the heavy water plant at Vemork – it was a group of Norwegians led by Joachim Rønneberg who were working for SOE. It was not the case that both the aircraft towing the Freshman gliders crashed: one returned to base. The heavy water plant was not operational again within three months, it took more than six. It was not Milorg operatives who sank the *Hydro*, it was some of the Gunnerside team. There are errors in other areas too. For example, the communist Asbjørn Sunde's Osvald group, which operated largely independently of the rest of the resistance, did not continue its campaign until the autumn of 1944. It stopped on receipt of instructions to do so from Moscow, in June 1944. (A maverick communist group, Saborg, which had occasionally cooperated with Milorg and SOE, continued in Bergen until the end of the year.) And Gunnar Sønsteby's Oslo gang did not take part in the disruption of German troop movements by destroying railway lines and bridges in late 1944 and 1945: that was achieved largely by other agents sent over by SOE, and also by Milorg.

These errors and oversights detract from what is in other respects an interesting book which breaks new ground. But it is still a worthwhile addition to the literature, further illuminating how intrepid and courageous Norwegians were prepared to risk, and sometimes lose, their lives in the struggle for freedom.

## A glimpse into Saami languages

By Professor Lene Antonsen

*Buorre beaivi!* Directly translated this is 'good day' in English. The usual way of answering is *lpmel atti*, which means 'God gave'. Shaking hands is very common among the Saamis, also when meeting relatives and friends whom you have not seen for a while. Then you say *Bures!* which means 'good'. These words are the most important words for you to know, if you are meeting a North Saami. (For pronunciation: <https://borealium.org/en/resource/voice-se-female/>)

### From two ancient origins

Saami languages are a group of Finno-Ugric languages (in the Uralic language family) that are spoken by the Saamis in Norway, Sweden, Finland

and on the Kola Peninsula in Russia. At present there are nine living Saami languages. Eight of the languages have independent literary languages; Ter Saami has no written standard, and there are only a few, mainly elderly, speakers left. Most Saami languages are unintelligible to each other, but neighbouring languages are more or less intelligible, at least for the people living close to the language borders. The largest Saami language is North Saami, with about 20,000 speakers in Norway, Sweden and Finland. The other languages have together fewer than 4,000 speakers.

Linguistic historians estimate that Proto-Saami emerged in the period before 600 BC. In the centuries since then, the Saami language has split into several languages. Around half of the Saami vocabulary is shared with other Uralic languages, as for example the word for 'father' (see table). Also, many word stems are borrowed from Indo-European languages. All words related to agriculture are borrowed from Germanic, like words for livestock, such as 'sheep', but also words for the products of agricultural activities. The Saami word for bread has the same etymology as the English word 'loaf'.

But most of the remaining words are not found in any other living language, for example the general words for 'wind' and 'three'. This shows that Saami languages have two ancient origins; one is Uralic and the other is from languages which may have been used ever since the ice disappeared from the area where the Saamis live today. The Saami grammar differs greatly from Germanic languages, and has a lot in common with Finnish, which also is a Uralic language.

### Becoming community-supporting languages

Most North Saami speakers live in Norway, and the language is spoken by 80–90% of the population in two municipalities, Karasjok (Kárášjohka) and Kautokeino (Guovdageaidnu), in the inner part of Finnmark, close to the border with Finland. In this area Saami is the language of instruction in school. In Kautokeino there is the Saami University of Applied Sciences, which has both teaching and administration in the Saami language, and in Karasjok there is the Saami parliament and here NRK-Sápmi (Saami National Broadcasting) and the daily newspaper (Ávvir) have their headquarters.

After a period of more than a hundred years of strong suppression of Saami languages, when the languages were not allowed to be used in schools, there was a policy change from around 1960. It was not until 1967

that Saami education was started in the schools in Inner Finnmark, where a majority of the population were Saami speakers. In 1988 the Norwegian Constitution was revised to ensure that conditions enabling the Saami people to preserve and develop their language, culture and way of life were enshrined. In 1989 the Saami Parliament was established as the representative body for Saamis in Norway. Saami language gained status as an official language alongside Norwegian in the 'administrative area for Saami language', that from 1992 applied to North Saami in six municipalities. The administrative area has been expanded many times since then, and now includes 13 municipalities, of which eight are in the North Saami area. There are similar administrative areas for Saami languages in Finland and Sweden. In Russia, Saami language has no official status, but is included in the list of indigenous minority languages.

Over the past 30 years North Saami language has greatly strengthened its position and is more and more becoming a community-supporting language, and is in use in more and more parts of society. Also the other

|         | <i>North Saami</i> | <i>South Saami</i> | <i>Skolt Saami</i> | <i>Kildin Saami</i> |
|---------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| a Saami | sápmi              | sacmie             | sä'mmlaž           | сáммь               |
| father  | áhčči              | achtjie            | e'čč               | алжъ                |
| sheep   | sávva              | sirve              | sau33              | лáмьпэсь            |
| bread   | láibi              | laejpie            | lei'bb             | лэййп               |
| wind    | biegga             | biegke             | piögg              | пйңжк               |
| tree    | muorra             | moere              | muõrr              | мўрр                |

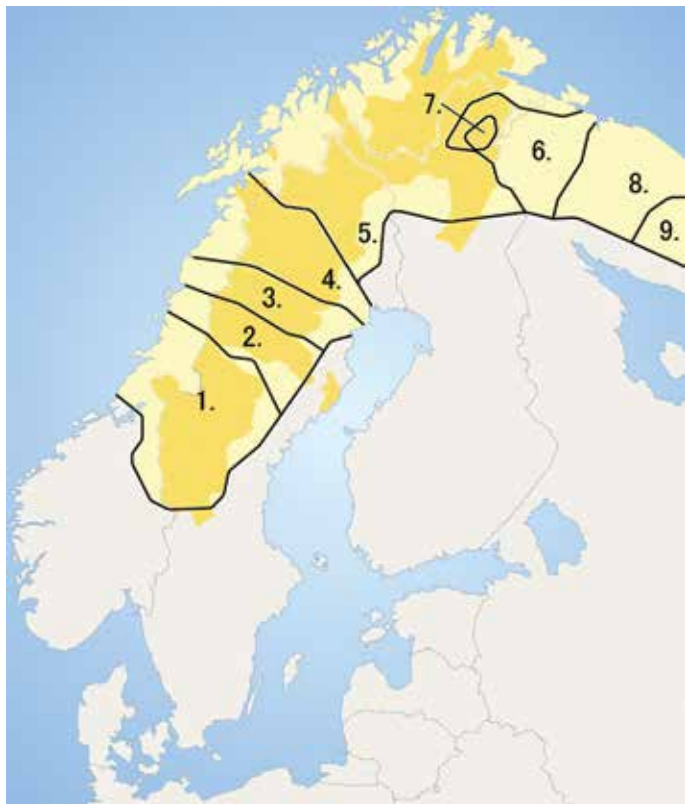
Table of varieties of Saami. Source: the author

Saami languages have become increasingly used in official contexts, but with considerably fewer speakers, and therefore also fewer writers and translators. But there are many artists who use their Saami language, so also the small Saami languages are heard from concert stages.

### The right to education in Saami

Since 1999 all Saami children in Norway have the right to education in

Saami, regardless of where in the country they live. Even though the Saami languages have official status, the right to learn Saami in school applies only to Saamis. Only inside the administrative area for Saami language do *all* children have the right to learn Saami. Interest in learning Saami language is increasing also among adults, mostly among Saami people who have not grown up speaking the Saami language, and among people who have



(Map source: [https://nn.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samiske\\_spr%C3%A5k#/media/Fil:Corrected\\_sami\\_map\\_4.PNG](https://nn.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samiske_spr%C3%A5k#/media/Fil:Corrected_sami_map_4.PNG), Released into the public domain.)

000), 6. Skolt Saami (300), 7. Enare Saami (500), 8. Kildin Saami (600), 9. Ter Saami (?). Darker areas represent municipalities where Saami is an official language.

married into a Saami family, or want to work in a Saami area. The biggest challenge now for all Saami languages is to train enough teachers.

The map shows traditional boundaries for the Saami language regions, but there are no reliable sources for the number of Saami speakers, and the numbers in the map are uncertain:

1. South Saami (500), 2. Ume Saami (20), 3. Pite Saami (50), 4. Lule Saami (2000), 5. North Saami (20

## Nearly 50 years of The Norwegian Study Centre in the UK

*By Dr Gweno Williams*

This article introduces the Norwegian Study Centre in the UK, a long-standing success story which deserves to be much better known. The Norwegian Study Centre or NSC (<https://www.york.ac.uk/nsc/>) funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Education, is an academic centre based at the University of York, in the Arts and Humanities Faculty. For nearly 50 years it has provided a valued academic bridge and ongoing interchange between Norwegian and UK Higher Education.

Our historic name sometimes causes confusion, through mistaken assumptions that we teach Norwegian language and related topics. In fact, the NSC is a unique HE centre with a dual identity and remit, facing simultaneously towards Norway and the UK. Academic courses in English Studies are held in York for undergraduate and postgraduate students registered for degrees in Norway, including teacher trainees and in service teachers. NSC staff also regularly contribute to and engage with the Norwegian Higher Education system through publication, co-operative projects, examining, supervision, course development and other academic activities.

Representing an Anglo-Norwegian academic partnership spanning nearly half a century, the NSC is an outstanding example of historic creative international academic co-operation, founded on the concept of mutual benefit and advantage.

### Students from Norway

Since about 1980, approximately 1000 students per year registered for English Studies degrees in at least 14 Norwegian HEIs have travelled to York for popular immersive enhancement courses of different lengths, devised and taught by well-qualified and highly experienced UK academics employed by the University of York. Over the last 30 years at least 900 students have taken a semester length accredited programme taught at the NSC, which directly contributes to their Norwegian degree.

We estimate conservatively that approximately 47000 students from Norway have studied at the NSC so far, including those who 'visited' York virtually during the lockdown period, when the NSC offered and maintained

a full study programme throughout, including online interactive lectures, seminars and even pub quizzes!

In any typical year the NSC also welcomes approximately 60 Norwegian academics and administrators as student group leaders, researchers or scholars.



Studenter fra Høgskolen i Østfold studying at the NSC. Photo credit: Norwegian Study Centre, University of York

### Academic staff

Conceptualised in Norway in the late 1970s, the NSC is funded by the Norwegian Government via the University of Bergen. An elected Board of academics from institutions across Norway reviews and oversees its work. It is deliberately located in a prestige UK university through a formal Memorandum of Understanding. The NSC's multidisciplinary team of UK academics and professional support staff is headed by a competitively appointed Norwegian-speaking Director on secondment. The Directorship is open to academics working in HE in Norway, normally appointed for 2 years. So far, the NSC has had 27 different Directors, with different academic specialisms, from universities and HE colleges all over Norway. The NSC academic staff team deliver continuous overlapping memorable short enhancement and credit-bearing semester programmes in English literature, culture, linguistics, politics and pedagogy, with a strong emphasis

on the contemporary. Since NSC courses relate directly to Norwegian English Studies degree programmes, tuition is significantly subsidised, although students are responsible for travel and accommodation costs.

The NSC has a valued ongoing 'Anglo-Norse' dual identity and function, serving Norwegian HE by academically interpreting, representing, and teaching contemporary UK and Anglophone culture whilst facing and engaging with students and academics in Norway and wider Scandinavia. Since Norwegian children begin learning English when they enter primary school, our work with trainee and in-service teachers has a particularly wide influence.

Study opportunities at the NSC. Photo credit: Norwegian Study Centre, University of York

NSC staff have natural opportunities to develop extensive insights into, and connections with, Norwegian HE. Colleagues in Norway regularly call on our expertise for a wide range of examining, supervision, committee work and other academic contributions. Whilst English is the NSC's exclusive working language, 75% of current NSC academic staff voluntarily attend regular Norwegian language classes to support informed participation in online meetings or attention to curriculum documents published in Norwegian.

## Teaching

Teaching at the NSC is multi-disciplinary, collaboratively informed, and based on immersion principles, encouraging students to 'do what cannot be done in Norway' by extending their English Studies learning into the local environment and culture. The beautiful, historic, culturally rich city of York is our 'living classroom'. We aim to stimulate knowledge and insights into contemporary Anglophone culture, including global Englishes through multi-modal approaches and modelling best practice.

Student satisfaction with our teaching is extremely high; the NSC regularly achieves evaluation scores of 95% plus for teaching and learning, programme organisation, and a wide range of additional cultural activities (theatre, school visits, heritage sites). NSC teaching has also stimulated and informed student choice of topics for MA and PhD study.

## What does the future look like?

The NSC's strengths have consistently included the ability to work effectively and creatively with others for mutual benefit, and a high degree of imaginative flexibility. Since Anglo-Norwegian and wider Scandinavian educational and cultural landscapes are changing fast in 2025, such qualities are likely to be important in the future.

Factors such as the prevalence of ambient English through technology, Norway's rapid modernisation and desire for greater cultural recognition underpinned by economic confidence are also likely to influence the nature of the NSC's future offerings and activities. The Norwegian Embassy has recently facilitated a 'North Sea Consortium' of 4 Norwegian universities and 4 UK universities, including York and the NSC, to stimulate partnership and collaboration.

We are alert to these prospects and have already engaged with some new connections and developments.

When Jon Fosse was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, NSC staff responded by producing a public performance of scenes from his plays in York, including a brief introduction to Nynorsk. The sold-out event, which we have been asked to repeat, was generously supported by our good friends the York Anglo-Scandinavian Society.

Following recent contact from the Danish High School Teachers' Association seeking staff development courses on contemporary UK literature and culture, the NSC has provided course places for a significant

number of Danish teachers, with more to come.

We have also begun a conversation with Sami Allaskuvla, the Sami University in northern Norway, to see if there might be common ground for fruitful future collaboration.

In conclusion, if you have read this article with interest and can see or would like to explore some promising way to connect or develop an idea which seems congruent with the NSC's values and activities, please don't hesitate to get in touch at [nsc@york.ac.uk](mailto:nsc@york.ac.uk). We value our friendships and partners highly, and are flexible and enthusiastic about new possibilities. Any new initiatives must, of course, be financially robust, in line with the current pressures on universities.

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Photos for Mølleskog's article:



The evening of 7 May when members of the Liberation Convoy attended a civic reception in Lerwick Town Hall



Wiktor Mølleskog  
photographed with  
the Vice Lieutenant of  
Northumberland



The 100-year old sailor who had  
sailed with the Murmansk convoys  
and managed to get on onboard  
*S/S Hestmanden* and was interviewed  
by the BBC and ITV



Queen Alexandra of Denmark with her grandson Crown Prince Olav of Norway