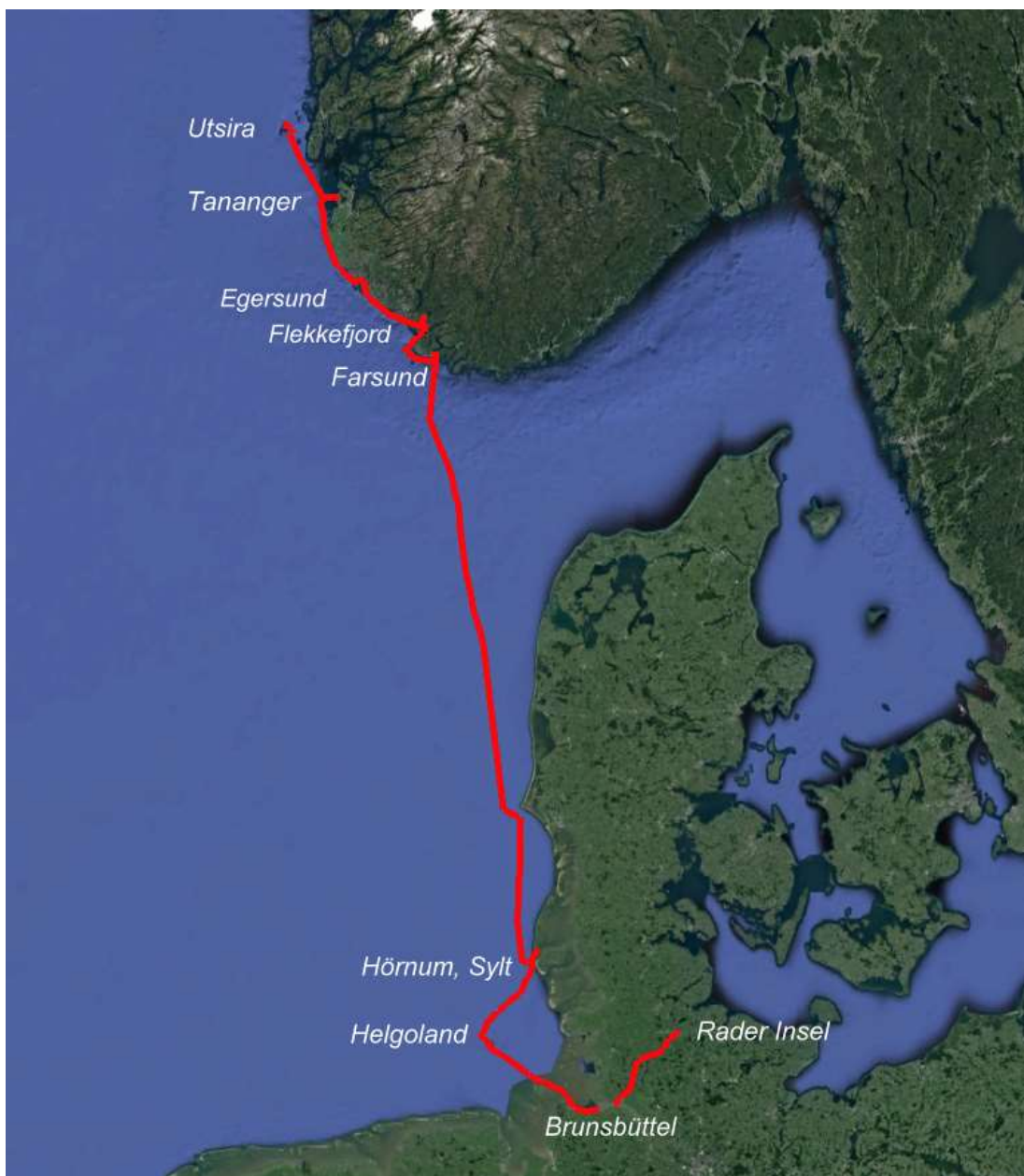


1st Report: Rader Insel
54°19'.8N 009°43'.0E
Utsira, Norway
59°18'.7N 004°53'.7E
May 21 to. June 23, 2019

Route Overview



We left home on **Tuesday, May 21** with a rental car, drove north and stayed overnight in the guesthouse Rialto in Staufenberg, Germany. The same family from India also runs a restaurant and we enjoyed a delicious meal.

Wednesday, May 22. Wedel is our next destination, where we pick up some things that Alex had ordered for the engine and we continue to Rader Insel after a short visit to Ingrid and Achim.

The key to the room "Flut" (High Tide) is at the usual place in the small white box in the kitchen. It's a bit like coming home.

Thursday, May 23 to Tuesday, 28.

Very few boats are still in the shed and the work on *Silmaril* begins.



First, Alex is applying the anti-fouling and takes care of the jobs on the propeller and the engine; I start organizing the interior

and sand and varnish the flag pin and the boat hook.

Time flies, we interrupt work once in a while and enjoy a cup of coffee and a piece of home-made cake in the marina building a short walk from the boat shed.

Wednesday, May 29. We get up very early; *Silmaril* will go into the water today and last preparations need to be done on the mast before 09:00. Alex is busy checking everything, I am ready with the camera and here she comes. In a few moments she is suspended on the crane, swung over the water and carefully lowered.



This is always a nervous moment, when we have to go on board and check whether all is watertight! No waterspouts? Mr. Rosemann shouts. No, all is well, and the straps can be removed. *Silmaril* is moved a bit forward to step the mast. When all is

ready, I start the engine, it works fine, and I steer her into the corner between the pier and the first ponton.

We sleep in our room for the last time. Tomorrow our bed on the boat will be ready.

Thursday, May 30. The room needs to be cleaned for the next lodgers. We pack everything and deposit suitcases and bags in the car for the time being. Ingrid and Achim arrive for a two-day visit. Achim will help to clap on the main sail, a job I do not want to do alone anymore. Unfortunately, it starts raining; the two go for a bike ride, Alex and I attend to chores in the boat.

At their return, I serve a large mushroom omelet and a salad in the common room. We enjoy the meal and the evening together. We had reserved the other available room at the marina "Ebbe" ("Low Tide") for them and we turn in rather early to be ready for hard work tomorrow.

Friday, Mai 31. The weather has improved, Achim helps with the main sail, Ingrid and I slip the clean socks on the fenders and get coffee and cake for the boys, which is provided by Mr. Schreiber, the 97 years old owner of the marina. Our visitors go on another bike tour and we need to do some shopping. On our return, Ingrid and Achim have left for home already.

Saturday, June 1. The first night on the boat was peaceful despite the chaos around us. We have breakfast in the common room.

Alex discovers water in the bilge. We suspect that the tap of the shower on deck was not closed properly when Alex filled the water tank. He keeps watching the water level, no dramatic increase, so we decide to quit work a bit early and drive to Rade to eat at the well-known restaurant Brauers Aal Kate (Brauer's Eel Cottage). After 20km drive we arrive just across from Rader Insel. Now we know why the island has this name. Before the Kiel Canal was built there was a lake here and the breakthrough for the canal between the river Eider and the lake created this narrow and long island, the Rader Insel, Island of Rade.

We eat in the restaurant, operated in the 5th generation of the Brauer family. The building lies directly at the riverside, the interior is decorated like a fishing hut and their daily catch in various preparations make up the largest part of the menu card. The dish we order is not only fresh but very tasty.

Sunday, June 2. First thing in the morning, Alex checks the water level in the bilge. No dramatic change, but even with the tap closed completely, water must be dripping from somewhere. And sure enough, our boiler is leaking! What a mishap. We had planned to leave today or tomorrow.

Alex finds a suitable model on the internet. The ship chandler in Bremen, SVB, has one in stock. Alex reserves it online. We will have to start tomorrow at the crack of dawn and drive to Bremen to pick it up. Thank goodness Alex had redeemed a voucher for a free weekend for the rental car and we can keep it until midday tomorrow.

Our friend Bänz has arrived. He is working on his boat *Seamagix* and we will go out for dinner with him.

Monday, June 3. The alarm clock goes off at 04:30. We start about an hour later. The traffic situation is acceptable, later on it will become chaotic, as we well know. Upon arrival at SVB just before 08:00 we find out that the shop is closed until 9:00. Alex had checked the opening hours, but 08:00 is only valid for the phone service! We have coffee in a nearby place, go through the list of parts Alex will need and return to the shop. After half an hour we are ready for the return trip.

Shortly after midday we arrive at the Avis agent in Rendsburg. We make the deadline for the return, but surprise: the little bang we heard on the road was a stone that hit the windshield and made a small mark. The damage needs to be repaired; the costs will be between Euro35 and Euro800, according to the decision of the TÜV, the equivalent of our Strassenverkehrsamt, the Car Safety Agency.

Bänz picks us up. We are grateful for his kind help. Back at the marina Alex starts work immediately.

The days from **Tuesday, June 4 to Friday, June 7** are work from dawn to dusk with the installation of the new boiler without leaks. Alex could not get the proper conical fittings and has to rely on Teflon tape, a process of trial and error!

The chaos in the boat is considerable. Only a narrow path remains that must



be rearranged at regular intervals to allow me to move around and find what tools or parts Alex needs. I try hard to remember where I stacked things, not an easy job. Patience!

Mr. Rosemann grins as he walks by and hints at an arrival in Norway in winter!

Bänz visits twice a day and asks about the leaks!

Friday, June 7. Very early in the morning, while Alex is already working on the leaks and I am about to prepare breakfast, I see a shelf cloud of awe-inspiring size and color moving in the sky at incredible speed. I run for the camera and Manage to take a picture. But before



But before I'm ready for a video to catch its breath-taking pace it is already over the marina building, separating, dissolving and disappearing in the distance.

What a spectacle. I never saw such a weather front in my life, although we encountered very many impressive weather phenomena on our trips.

Seamagix is ready for the water. Bänz in action.

Last discussions with Rosemann jun.



Around midday Alex is successful: no more leaks, all the connections are tight, the new boiler is leak-proof. His dogged patience pays off. Congratulations! Alex is finally relieved of his awkward four-day position.



The ogre lies on the jetty and will be taken away to the recycling center to provide at least a few usable spare parts for someone. What a relief! The job is done and we can start planning our departure.

Saturday, June 8. Alex and I spend hours to clear the chaos and to organize the departure so badly behind schedule. We invite Bänz for our last evening to celebrate. I serve sauerkraut, bacon and potatoes, a typical Bernese meal for our dear Bernese friend. We will not see him again in many months, since he and his wife Uschi are will be away on a trip across the Atlantic.

Sunday, June 9. Last breakfast, last preparations, last goodbys and at 12:15 we cast off. Our next destination is Brunsbüttel at the eastern end of the Kiel Canal.

Bikers wave to us from the paths on both shores; they profit from the nice weather of the Pentecost holidays. We pass large flocks of swans, ducks and coots. They do not seem to object to the dark brown water.



Some of them flee from our bow in the last seconds. They obviously adapted well to the traffic on the canal.

Fortunately, there is not much traffic today; we are overtaken only by one big cargo. Most of the behemoths come against us and are visible from far away.



Once in a while sailboats are heading east. They are probably on their way home after the holiday. The small one keeps very close to the shore, highly advisable when such a colossus is overtaking.



Beautiful clouds in the sky:
A somewhat crazy comet . . .



. . . and what?



After five hours we arrive in Brunsbüttel, the harbor is quite full already as expected, but we are invited to tie up alongside the boat of a friendly couple from Wedel. The water of the great northern lock moves very close to the moored boats, just behind a narrow wooden plank attached to the jetty of the harbor.

A gigantic float with a massive load is approaching the southern lock chamber: two colossal parts for a huge ship that will probably be welded together in one of Hamburg's shipyards.

One tugboat is pulling, a second one is pushing, an impressive maneuver very skillfully performed by both captains. We eat at the restaurant Torhaus just across on the pier and soon turn in. Tomorrow we will sail through the lock and continue with the current on the Elbe and northward out to the open water.



Monday, June 10. Shortly after 08:00 we leave the harbor, cross over to the small lock for pleasure crafts and tie up at the wharf and wait until the white light is blinking and signals to proceed into the lock basin. Only two other boats are in the chamber with us.

As soon as the lock gate is open, we castoff and are on the Elbe. The current is right, but the wind makes us gibe a few times until abreast of Cuxhaven we can take course for Helgoland. The wind, the waves and the distance to the isle of Amrum have caused us to change the planned route and to touch at Helgoland.

The crossing is taking quite a lot of energy out of us. Unfavorable bearing and strong wind cause strenuous pitching and rolling: *Silmaril* is behaving like a wild rocking horse. After months on land, we have again to get used to the routine of reefing and tuning the sails. We will manage.

Around 16:00 we enter the port of Helgoland. Many sailboats of the traditional Pentecost Regatta crossed us on our way, and we had hoped to find the harbor reasonably crowded. But we only find a place alongside as third boat from the pier.

There is still rather strong wind and the swell in the harbor is considerable. But we are tired and sleep well, well acquainted with the movements of the boat and the sounds in the rig.

Tuesday, June 11. The weather is not great, we stay here. It is our 53rd anniversary and we decide to celebrate with a trip to the Düne, the adjoining island to Helgoland. We take the small ferry, eat in the restaurant near the landing and go for a stroll around the small island. Large populations of seals live on the sandy beaches.

We go as close as suggested, not to disturb them. At about 30m I take pictures, observe the colony for a long time as the animals play or dose on the white beach. None of them takes any notice of us. Thousands of tourists have watched them; they are absolutely used to being close to people.



The beaches are not only sand, there are stretches of gravel. Millions of colorful stones cover the ground of the southern and eastern part of the island. We find a number of black flint stones and witch stones. The famous Helgoland diamond, the red flint is hard to find. It reveals its red color only when the geode-like rock is broken. I did not find one, but Alex



bought me a tiny piece for a special souvenir of our stay.

A great variety of other beautiful stones tempt me to add them to my collection, a gorgeous red seaweed-decorated specimen for example. Fortunately, this one is far too big; it weighs a ton! And it will remain here forever.



A small seal lies abandoned on the deserted beach. It keeps uttering pitiful sounds, almost like moaning. Is it ill? All the other



animals on this beach are far away and only care for themselves.

The beach chairs have been closed and turned away from the water. It is still early in the season; droves of tourists will only arrive in summer.

The ferry takes us back to the main island and a short walk to the jetty and to *Silmaril*.



Wednesday, June 12. It's raining. The weather is awful. We stay another night. Alex is puttering about, there is

always something to do. I take the parcel for Jutta with her book and the heart stone to be shipped. The map shows the location of the post office on the hill. I walk up the steep path and enjoy the narrow lanes with their pretty houses and the manicured gardens. There is no post office up here, and parcels must be sent from the customs office near the ferry landing in any case. I take another path down and buy a small bottle of eau de parfum, White Linen by Estée Lauder. Alex had suggested the fragrance I love as another souvenir!

I register the parcel at the customs office, and have it shipped.

Later on, I want to take Alex for a walk on the hill. This time we take the elevator up. In the well-stocked little tea shop, we replenish our supplies, Alex's favored black tea, the "Qstfriesen Blattmischung, and Roibos. My favored herb tea is not available, verbena is a tea drug, only on sale in pharmacies! Well, we checked there, they could order it, but of course it would take days to arrive!

After our walk, Alex gets diesel before we start for a bird-watching excursion. Rain is in the air, but about half of the participants want to go. Our guide, an enthusiastic young woman is all for it and we take off. Halfway to the "Lummen Felsen" high up on the cliff, the first drops are falling, by the time we arrive pelting rain is drenching us. But our guide ignores the bad weather and fills us in with many details on the breeding habits of the birds nesting here: guillemots, razorbills, fulmars, kittiwakes and gannets. A group of gannets is nesting right next to us, just behind the fence at arm's length. What an experience! Our guide is spending a year on the island as an exchange student. Her knowledge is impressive; she fascinates us with details, we will probably soon forget. No matter, we listen attentively to her speech and through

her waterproof telescope we observe individual birds in the tall cliff high above the water despite the enduring rain.

It goes without saying that my camera stays well protected from the wet weather, no pictures, we will just have to do our best to remember!

After an hour in pouring rain, drenched to the skin we walk back to the boat, hang the wet clothes up, dress in warm things and turn the heater on. We eat something, prepare for the departure tomorrow and go to sleep.

Thursday, June 13. We are up early and plan a visit to the chandler before we start. This time it's not for spare parts, but for alcohol. Helgoland sells tax-free beer, wine and spirits and all the chandlers are very well-equipped, much better for alcohol than for parts. We do cherish the tradition of an anchor drink, a few restful moments on arrival, at anchor or at a pier, with a glass of gin and tonic, a Campari orange or a sundowner, rum, orange juice and a sprinkle of nutmeg.

We also have to pay the fees.

Silmaril lies now directly on the pier with two other boats alongside. Our neighbors are ready to make room for us and cast off. And so are we now.

The German boat next to us gives us a bad scare: he turns his bow too much out and his stern touches our outboard motor. A crashing noise and he is away. The motor cover has a tear, but no other damage so far. His flagpole suffered severely for sure. On his way out his bow comes inches close to the boat in front, but his wife manages to push off at the last second and they are clear. What a debacle! Our own maneuver goes smoothly, what a relief.

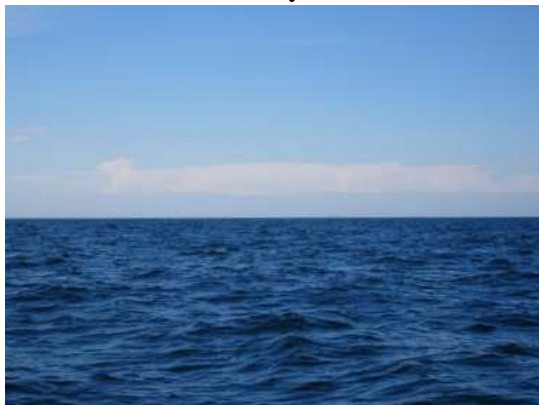
We beckon with the torn cover for a while, but our neighbor is obviously too nervous to notice. Never mind, the damage is easily repaired with a needle and strong thread. We leave the two to overcome their frustration and to take courage for the next maneuver: to make fast again at the pier. Their dog is howling!

I take a few turns in the calm harbor basin to allow Alex to put the fenders in the hold and to untangle the lines before we hit more agitated waters.

Soon we are on our way in beautiful weather. We hoist the sails and pass the island on its eastern side heading north.

The famous Long Anna appears, the impressive landmark of Helgoland, the 47m tall rock of red sandstone.

A short while later there is only water before us and a fire-spitting long cloud monster in the blue sky.



The day promises to turn out very much to our liking.

In the early afternoon the wind dies and the motor needs to be engaged. The

"mixer", our DuoGen generator has to come out of the water and we have to take in the sails.

Hours later we pass a very long strip of brown-yellow water. Are these the same algae that we saw last year on the shore of Poland? Blue algae? In any case, it must be some sort of algae flowering.



We had planned to touch Rømø. The wind and the current thwart our intention and we decide to head for Hörnum, a place at the southern tip of Sylt. The long approach is extremely shallow. We observe the markers with great care and are surprised to find that our electronic chart shows them in a different place than they actually are. The chip is old. We bought it in 2017 when it was already out of date, but the only one to be had at the time and far better than nothing at all on the plotter.

The water here is subject to constant sand shifts, the markers are moved regularly, so our antiquated chip causes a problem. Alex determines the coordinates of the markers with the help of two newer navigational programs on his iPad and marks them on the plotter. And then we rely on our eyes. We find the entrance to the marina in Hörnum without mishap.

At 19:00 *Silmaril* is securely moored in the very attractive little marina. Alex had called the harbor master and he reserved this perfect spot for us.

The tidal range is considerable, the iron ladder to the land varies in length; now at low tide the steep climb is a bit scary, almost two meters. The harbor master is expecting us in the club house. We register our arrival and look around. The club members have remodeled the premises lately, elegant bathrooms, an expensive washing machine and tumbler, a little kitchen for drinks and some food to be served in the cozy club room, the harbor masters' job during office hours. We are impressed by the professional work.

Glad to be here!



Friday, June 14. It's raining. Alex disassembles the heater. The burner is totally soothed. Then the rig and the loudspeakers in the cockpit need attention. I take care of the ship's household, washing, cleaning, writing mails.

Toward evening we take a walk to the ferry pier, where we treat ourselves to a scrumptious local meal in the small eatery: mussels prepared in two different ways, famous food on Sylt. The people who run the place are Polish!

We talk to German tourists at our table and suddenly someone behind me says in Swiss German: hey, I know you guys! There stand Marie-Therese and Dani Schwarz from Effingen. They are on a vacation touring the region on their motor bikes and



stay for two days. We invite them to a glass of wine on *Silmaril*.

Dani is the iron artist who created our wonderful "Bird on the Cherry Tree", our quirky grill on wheels "Firewagon", our bronze sculpture "Herr Hässig" and our bronze candle stick the "Spoon Carrier" (pictures on request!).

We talk for a long time about who is who in Effingen and

surroundings. We are still interested in the village chronicle.

What a merry and exciting evening! We decide to invite the two, when we will be back home, so that Marie -Therese can see, where "Herr Hässig" now lives. She was against selling it when Dani had made it.

Saturday, June 15. The weather is not great, chilly and rainy occasionally. We walk to the store, buy food and heft the four bags back to the boat, put everything away and go out again to explore the village despite threatening rain.

Outside the center of the place toward the western shore, lovely thatched houses are built among the hilly sand dunes. They are all designed in traditional style.

These homes are large and certainly owned by very wealthy people.



All the garages are underground; built into the hills not to disfigure the landscape? Hard to say. Many houses sport skillfully stacked stone dry walls and wattle fences.



A new construction shows somewhat different elements. Will it be thatched?

In the village itself there are less new traditional houses, but still pleasing building complexes where the common folk can probably afford to rent or own a place for their vacation.



We eat a pizza in a cozy old little restaurant and go back to the boat. A long wonderful shower in the marina building is the perfect lullaby.



Sunday, June 16 to Monday 17. Around 09:00 we say good-bye to the friendly harbor master and sail for about two hours back on the same track we came in to the exit out of the shallow water through the tidal inlet called Holtknopsloch. There is plenty of water and we turn north and west along the coast of Sylt toward Norway. I take a picture of the imposing lighthouse in memory of wonderfully agreeable and eventful days.



The weather is clement enough to knit in the cockpit without getting stiff fingers.

Alex hoists the curtesy flag as soon as we arrive in Danish territory.

In the vicinity of the offshore wind farm of Esbjerg a heated discussion flares up about the imprecise electronic chart viewed on the plotter. I worry about sailing into the night without accurate navigation. To calm my nerves, Alex inserts a few way points taken from two programs on his iPad. I still cannot sleep during his watch. Always the old story.

The full moon illuminates the short night and my watch passes uneventfully.

Alex takes over at 02:30 for a few hours and it's my turn again. Around 06:00 three cargoes arrive from the south. Two of them are of no concern. But the *MV Heroic Leader*, a 200 by 33m giant approaches on collision course. What now? I observe him for a while and decide to let Alex sleep and to take the initiative myself. I call him up on the radio and report that he will be very close to us in about 20 minutes, that we are under sail and I alone on deck for the moment. The officer on watch is very polite; he will slightly alter his course and pass behind us. What a relief! He passes about 300m away from us. I call him up again to say thank you.



Alex wakes up at 08:00; I cook porridge and then go to sleep. With a warm meal in my stomach and an exciting watch behind me I am asleep in no time.

I wake up refreshed and in good spirits with the outlook of sailing into the harbor of Lillehavn in daytime.



The wind dies down and we will not be able to reach Lillehavn as planned. So, we will see where we make landfall. Close to the shore we furl the sails and Alex decides to dock in Farsund. The place is about 5nm inland. At 21:30 we moor *Silmaril* on the western pier. On the eastern pier, better sheltered from the wind, the boats are tied up far apart but too close together for us to squeeze in between.

Tired from the crossing, we go to sleep without the planned stroll through town.

Tuesday, June 18. We sleep late and leisurely prepare to leave. Flekkefjord is our next destination.

We untie at 10:30 and revel in passing gorgeous landscape, summer houses and miniature jetties on tiny islands and mere piles of stone everywhere.

That's how we remember Norway.

Passing the famous landmark of Farsund we

head out to the open water. The lighthouse is no longer in operation, but the construction is impressive and is kept in



good repair. It stands alone on a minuscule island. The lighthouse keeper and his family had an isolated and rough life far out in the bay. The weather is not good, murky sky and hazy visibility.

The imposing light house of Lista



has no clear contour in this weather. It was constructed between 1834 and 1836 at the southeasternmost cape of Norway's mainland; it is 39.5m high and its light covers a range of 17.5nm. It is now a museum.

The journey to Flekkefjord is thrilling. We pass a number of fish farms. It is not clear wa-



ter what they pump out of this ship. The farms have problems with the feces of the fish that accumulate beneath the nets.

To save the free-living salmon from extinction by innumerable fish farms is not really an appealing solution. The fish suffer from lack of oxygen when they grow big; they jump way out of the water and gasp for air when there is hardly any water left among their bodies. It is a frustrating spectacle. We definitely do not buy farm-raised salmon, even from Norway.

Behind an island we spot two oil platforms. The company is bankrupt and can no longer operate them. They stand and wait. Scrap them? Wait for better times? No-one has an answer. The Norwegian oil business is not any more what it had been. Before we get to Flekkefjord a diving tower stands on the shore. We shudder; who would think of bathing? Not for us even in summer!



In the harbor I drive to the diesel station; we fill the tank and the jerrycans. These homes with the boathouses in the basement are just behind us. The town is surrounded by water. Everyone owns a boat



of some sort. Boathouses of all constructions everywhere; hundreds of jetties available for those who do not own a boathouse.

The small marina is almost empty.



It was an easy day. We sailed just for a few hours. Today we do take a stroll through town. We enjoy the atmosphere of plenty of water and great numbers of

boats and ships.

Special old houses are witnesses of a rich past; lumber trade, herring fishing and the leather industry were important businesses.

Wednesday, June 19. Rain is announced for later in the day, so, we leave at 06:30 to avoid it. Egersund is 30 nm away and we would like to get there before the rain. We know the marina from a previous trip. It can be reached from the south and the north. That will shorten the distance to our next destination tomorrow.

The journey takes us past rocks beautifully colored by various lichens. We love this landscape despite many a sarcastic commentary by certain friends how seeing hundreds of such rock piles could possibly be captivating time and again! Our eyes simply revel in forms and colors of this primeval landscape.



Around 11:00 we already reach the entrance to the harbor and see the "legs" of the gigantic oil platform tower high up above the actual platform. We assume that they can be moved up and down to adjust to the depth of the water, as the toothed rack suggests.



Trawlers pass us on their way to work out to sea. The lighthouse stands isolated on the hill closest to the water.



An attractive summer house appears nestled among the rocks on the shore.

I believe that I took the exact same picture on our previous trip to Egersund.



Few boats lie in the marina. A man kindles the charcoal of his grill on the jetty in the drizzle! He is the temporary harbor master. The yacht club is responsible for the marina and the members take turns at the duty of care taker and harbor master.

He and his wife live on their boat now and do the jobs. They are very friendly, offer to open the bath room even at night, when it is supposed to be locked.

We buy a hamburger in the small tavern, drink coffee and stroll to the shops in the rain. Alex needs fittings. The well-equipped hardware store has everything in stock! He also buys good raingear for me, just in case I have to take the helm in the rain. Then we go shopping at Kiwi. We know the retail chain from Nørvevika. The sales-clerks wear frog-green checkered outfits, the color of peeled kiwis! Everybody is friendly, the shop offers all kinds of items on sale and a piece of the huge cake for free. We are not really tempted.



Despite the rain we take a stroll through town. The church is famous, locked unfortunately, also pleasing from the outside, but the miserable weather does not allow pictures, not even later on from the jetty. Too bad.

Thursday, June 20. Alex installs the fittings he bought yesterday and believes the diesel-air problem in the engine and the heater systems to be solved.

We leave around midday and take the northern exit from Egersund harbor.

Who might live here? It does not strike us as a first-class hotel.



The bridge at the northern exit is not very tall, but we have passed under it before. The sign on the shore shows 21m height; it's enough, we know. Nevertheless, to look up directly under the bridge is scary; it is very difficult to judge the distance between the mast top and the concrete. Are we safe? Yes, the antenna did not touch! All is well.



The landscape is quainter here behind the large isle of Eigerøya; farming and fishing characterize the villages on the shore.



Many fields are sprinkled with earth cellars, some of them no longer in use, obviously.

After passing this lighthouse we reach the open water again. The wind freshens, we set sails and with wind abeam *Silmaril* rushes through the water with occasional 8kts! Great feeling. Alex sets a waypoint at the entrance to Tananger from where we can reach the harbor under sail. That's always his incentive: to use the engine as little as possible and to demonstrate his skill to navigate with precision.



Rocks and shallow water all around us. Although they are well marked, I am very uneasy at this speed with my weak vision. Alex is confident to reach the harbor on this course and enjoys the ride tremendously!

Far away a huge cruiser crosses our path, a cargo comes our way with safe clearance. So far, so good. And then a small tanker bears down on us from starboard. I scream, Alex assures me that it's OK., he tells me to keep course and to press on and with my howling and the tanker's wild honking *Silmaril* flits across his bow. That was too much for me. Our heated discussion ends with my statement that in a similar situation I will (not would!) furl the main sail single handed and proceed under genoa. Faster and simpler maneuvers are possible that way.

Just at the entrance to the marina we take the sails in. We know our way; we have been here before when Renzo was with us and we had moored at the hotel pier. We see that this is no longer possible, but we find a space along the new pier in front of the rescue ship. There is no shore power installed yet; Alex mounts the windmill and we are fine.

He talks briefly to some neighbors; the young man in the yellow jacket needed our assistance for landing. The strong wind caused him problems alone on his boat; he has owned it only for a year and lacks the experience.



Later on, we discuss various tricks with him about landing and leaving. He is eager to try out driving into the line and our “Chnebeltrick”, the stick trick that Alex learned in Greenland from a Danish military ship.

To drive into the line is necessary routine for us and well-practiced. But to get a long line on board can take time or it gets entangled. The “Chnebeltrick” offers a perfect solution: as soon as the stick is out of the loop, the stick (securely tied to the reeling) and the line are quickly hauled on board.



Alex demonstrates the trick with a short line and it falls into the water. The young man leans way down in the heroic attempt to keep the line from sinking and nearly falls between pier and boat! Fortunately, just nearly. He is young and proves impressive strength and balance in the act of saving himself.

Friday, June 21. It's time to attend to various chores and to go to town. I take care of mail I promised, print some pictures, prepare envelopes, write a few postcards. Alex is busy with the camera and the pictures on the computer, the date it faulty. And he needs to get rid of the water jet that squirts out of the pump handle of the head. He manages both tasks before the bus leaves for Stavanger. Well done!

On our way to the bus station we watch three girls enthusiastically celebrating the Norwegian summer: their bikes and clothes in a heap they laugh and shout and splash about in the freezing water. We are still wearing our woolen underwear.



Years ago, we visited Stavanger during the turmoil of a festival, when the harbor was crammed full of large old sailboats. Today a cruise ship is moored at the pier. Thousands of passengers stroll through the town under their umbrellas; pelting rain or drizzle for hours.

We look for the office of the harbor master to register *Silmaril* for the stay in Norway. The door is locked. The information center provides us with a phone number. The answer is straight forward: small vessels do not need registration. Nice to hear, but we have second thoughts. We keep the number in our papers, just in case.



The old town across from the cruise ship pier is less flooded by tourists. We have a beer (sfr. 10 for 3dl in a plastic cup!) under the awning of a jammed bar in company of the Friday night crowd, all Norwegians. This side of the harbor is too far away for the cruiser's passengers. They probably already stand in line in front of the dining room!

On the way to the bus station, I'm lured into taking a picture despite the drizzle.

A fantastic wool store canvasses its products with a pair of over-sized hand-knitted hose. What a laugh and a beautiful job clo up! I refrain from going inside. To finish the sweater of fine silk I'm working on will take a long time. I do not need any material unfortunately.

We stroll around the pond passed the king's garden.



The premises used to belong to a



school and conveys the peace and quiet of a cloister.

The bus ride is restful. Here and there we feel a jolt; the driver keeps touching the curb at the numerous stations. The rural landscape with grazing cows and sheep pleases our eyes after the bustle of the town.

Back on the pier near *Silmaril* a school class celebrates the summer!



We shudder, watching them! Close up we notice that the kids have goose bumps all over their bodies; their lips are blue! No wonder at this water temperature.



Our next destination is the island of Utsira. Alex will decide in the morning, when we take off.

Saturday, June 22. As usual, we have breakfast, take a hot shower at the service building, prepare *Silmaril* for departure and talk to the Norwegian neighbors for a while. They are on their way south, have four weeks to go and plan to sail through the Gøta Canal to Stockholm.

We cast off using the "Chnebeltrick", I drive into the stern spring, *Silmaril* moves nicely, bow to pier and stern clear of the boat behind and slips out of the tight space between the two boats without mishap.

As soon as we are out of the marina and the harbor, the engine starts to stutter. The diesel conduits draw air again! The new installation has not solved the problem. I feel uneasy, but Alex comforts me, he will just work the pump and get rid of the air, if the conduits are not freed automatically.

We set the sails to make sure to be able to maneuver even without the engine in case of emergency. The wind freshens, we make good speed, but the course is a bit off the waypoint in front of the harbor entrance. We jibe a short distance below the island, careful with the 20knt wind, in order to arrive under sail at the waypoint. All goes well, the engine purrs like a kiddy, we furl the sails and I steer through the narrow entrance into the harbor.

There is little room, but behind *Garp* from Karmøy there is space enough for us.

We like the old boat. It is a replica of a Colin Archer. The original was built in Larvik, where the shipbuilder Colin Archer developed and constructed the famous rescue and pilot ships around the middle of the 19th century. We have been there and explored the place and the museum and its original exhibits. The modern houses at the pier are inhabited. Are they summerhouses for tourists or private homes of islanders? We go for a walk to the south harbor only about 2km away.

The small fishing harbor lies behind this building. Its water is shallow and the



entrance very narrow. Only small boats can be brought in.

The houses surrounding it are well cared for, show traditional building elements, nice colors and are certainly in use. A few of them are covered with slates of various shades of gray.

We saw some in a courtyard stacked into wooden crates.



Nobody could tell us, where they are produced. We only heard that slate roofs are a time-honored tradition. Other roofs are covered with corrugated iron sheets, tiles or eternity panels. Still, we are surprised to see so many like this one. They must be expensive.

Artists have painted funny animals on house walls.



It's a special place, Utsira, so many out of the ordinary details to enjoy.



Across from our pier, there are what we jokingly call dinosaur eggs stacked in a heap near the landing, silage or hay wrapped in plastic foil. Farming and fishing obviously occupy part of the 206 residents, most of it probably on a small scale, producing for the sustenance of the islanders.



Everything is green, many kinds of flowers in the fields and meadows. The roadsides are not mowed often, tall grass and innumerable herbs and wild flowers are blooming, a feast for the eyes.

That's the funniest road sign. Not



only is it understood by the smallest child, but the dangerous bump it warns against is about 10cm high! We cannot imagine the speed it would take to cause such a jump. The narrow and winding streets on the island force vehicles to go slowly anyway and motorcycles seem non-existent.

Back in the boat we get a huge surprise: engine noise, the well-known woosh of a bow thruster, and looking out from below we see a monster bow directly behind our stern loom into the sky. The ferry *Utsira* has arrived. It connects the island with Haugesund roughly 18nm on the mainland.



A very thick yellow hawser runs from its bow to a bollard next to our boat. No problem, the crew of the ferry do not mind our nearness in the least and we are safe, our stern is protected by the end of the pier. The captain climbs on an old tractor with a trailer waiting beside the harbor building and drives home. We can eat in peace and go to sleep. The ferry stays here

over night and will only leave early in the morning.

Sunday, June 23. As we get up, we hear the engine of the ferry running. Alex goes out, watches the loading of the cars for a while and helps with the hawser. Everything that has to do with ships and water fascinates us. Breakfast can wait.

The *Utsira* is leaving for Haugesund. Leaning into a sweeping curve it heads out of the harbor through the narrow inlet out to the open water. Time for breakfast.

We will explore the island by bike today, go shopping between 12:00 and 14:00 in the only store cum eatery and have something to eat.

Alex stops the time he uses to assemble the bikes. He succeeds in a good



quarter of an hour. They are almost ready to go, only the saddlebags are yet missing.

I had planned to see the inside of the old church. But the detour would probably take too long, the opening hours of the store are reduced on Sunday and we need supplies and food for lunch.

The chef serves a baguette with meat, vegies and cheese baked in the oven; a small salad goes with it, just what we need.

We want to drive on every street of the island, it's time to start.

First, we pedal up to the lighthouse. The fire was lit for the first time in 1844. The tower is 13.3m tall; since it stands on the cliff 78m above the water it is the tallest light in the country and shines out to sea with a range of 23 nm.

In 2004 the light was automatized. Today, part of the buildings serves as tourist lodgings, one houses a small restaurant, in others a foundation offers rooms for resident artists.

We have coffee and a waffle (for Alex) and talk to the man who runs the place and a friend of his about the premises and the many sheep that roam the surrounding meadows. They are supposed to stem from wild sheep, but the men could not name a



particular race. To me, they look a little like Heidschnucken from the Luneburg Heath in northern Germany, small animals with slender legs, horns, long shaggy fleece, all shades from white to dark gray. The farmers breed a very different kind, big, pure white, no horns.



Down in the lush meadows, cattle are grazing. Again, we do not know how many islanders are farmers and how important their products are for the sustenance of the island.

We should speak Norwegian to get information for so many things we wonder about. It's probably wishful thinking to

manage learning the language in the near future!

We pedal to the church, a lovely group of buildings, pearly-white, slate-covered.

The small cemetery with very old tombstones lies right behind it.



The new cemetery is located further down in the middle of a large field.

The leaflet we received in the store mentions archeological finds in the vicinity of the two wind turbines at the northeastern shore of the island. Let's go! Up and down the paved road leads us to a gravel track; at times the hills are too steep and we push our bikes.

The archeological sites are marked, but barely visible. Thanks to the iPhone translation we learn that during the construction of the wind turbines, the museum in Stavanger conducted excavations and found traces of human dwellings under the 10cm to 20cm thick topsoil. The settlement is supposed to be 10'000 years old and located nearer to the shore, owing to topographical change.

There is not much to see of the ancient remains for our untrained eyes. At least we cannot really spot them. And the prominent stone ring does probably not belong to

the dig site, according to the leaflet. but does lie within the marked area. It still is quite an impressive structure in the middle of this wild landscape.

A short way further up we reach the two wind turbines. They turn with a gentle whirr. Every so often we hear a little clunk and a buzz and the propeller moves into the wind. An immense figure is painted on the mast. It could be a penguin. It is too tall for a picture, too bad. We should have looked at it from the water to find out. Alex studies wind turbine data directly beneath the revolving wheels.

I am more interested in the grand view, the



quaint details of the spectacular surroundings, the small moor lake pitch

black and blue water and the amusing paintings here and there on the rocks.



We turn back to the boat.

In the evening we take a walk to the advertised bathing place. A narrow steep foot path takes us up the knoll behind

the pier. We pass a small pond, local art floating on its surface: a back stroker fashioned from plastic refuse is securely tied to the shores.

Further up we get to the small bay on the right-hand side of the entrance to the harbor as we sailed in.



A small hut stands alone somewhat removed from the shore. A changing cubicle? It is constructed with nothing but plastic containers.

The wooden platform is either not finished or already destroyed again.



A few rusted barbecues lie around. Maybe in very good weather some enthusiasts may come and pay a visit. We are not tempted in the least, neither to swim nor to grill!

The bay is said to have been inhabited already during the Iron Age and in the Middle ages by Vikings. A board explains some details in Norwegian, English and even German.



Six slipways to drag up the fishing boats up on land, a number of small houses with a cleared area around them for the cultivation of modest crops and a "seagull house", a trap built of stone to catch seagulls bear witness to a seasonal Viking fishing site.

Other such sites are found on the island. The seagull house is unique to Utsira.

We laugh out loud as we discover *Silmaril* at the pier silhouetted against the dark bow of the ferry monster!

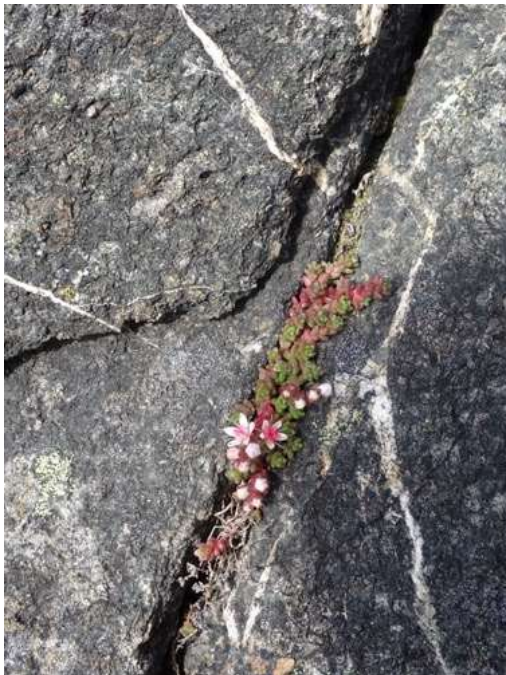
On our way back I take a last picture of the beautiful light illuminating the



old buildings reflected in the perfect calm in the small fishing harbor. Not a ripple disturbs the reflection.

And it's time to put away the bikes, to prepare dinner and to get everything ready for departure tomorrow.

Before bed we recall the hundreds of impressions of our bike tour. Pretty close-up images of saxifrage, lichens and the typical cotton grass have fascinated me among a million other impressions on our tour.



And we truly pedaled along all those roads on the island. The distances are not great, only a mile and a half separate the northern from the southern harbor.



We had a glorious time on Utsira, despite the fact of very little contact to islanders. Well, what can you expect in two days, non-stop on the go and no Norwegian!

We will leave before the ferry arrives tomorrow morning and head for the mainland.