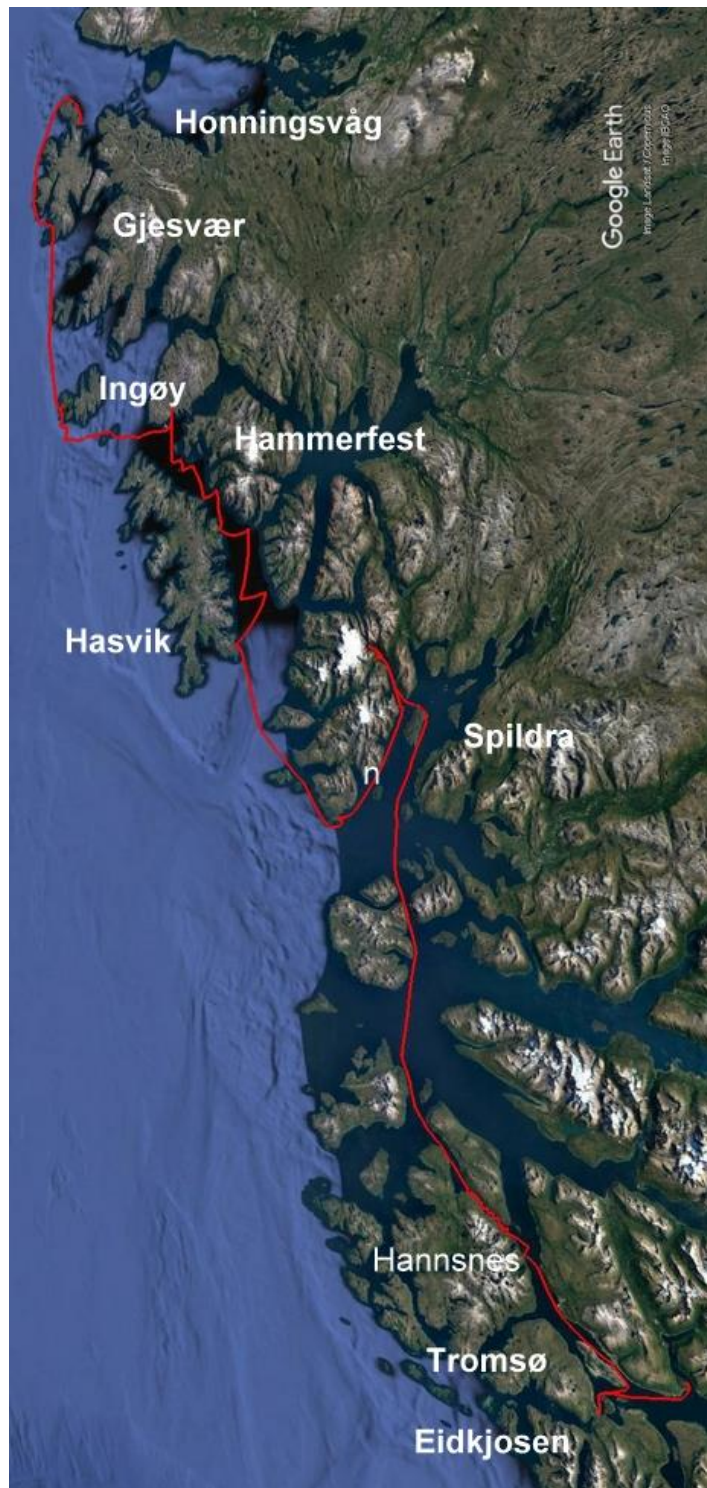


**1st Report: Olavsvern**  
**69°32.3N 19°2.1E**  
**Honningsvåg**  
**70°59.5N 25°58.2E**  
**July 18 to August 12**

## Route Overview



After a long and impatient wait, we find out on Friday, July 10 that Norway's borders are now open. Alex immediately books the next flight and so on Saturday, July 18 an Edelweiss plane takes us from Zurich to Tromsø. Our friends, Susanne and Chérif are on the same flight. During the many weeks full of suspense, we kept in contact, since we intended to get our boats out of the cave and to prepare them for the voyage together. We have a reservation in the Quality Saga Hotel for two nights; the boats can only leave the cave on Monday.

In celebration of the occasion we have a drink at the pub Rorbua, dine at a nice restaurant and will have breakfast together in the morning.

**Sunday, July 19.** A monstrous military ship is moored at the pier. It looks like it is very soon going to leave; we closely observe the maneuver. The young lady takes the line off the bollard; she is obviously in charge, although her clothing does not exactly look like a uniform.



The lines are off and we wonder how such maneuvers function.



Does he really give the commands with hand signals? It certainly looks that way. The bow and stern thrusters move the ship parallel to the pier out into the sound.



We want to visit Fjellstua on the mountain top and the Arctic Cathedral and so we walk across the bridge that connects

the Tromsø island with the main land. On the way we pass this funny mural painting. Many such works of art ornament houses in the city.



The cathedral is closed for visitors; a worship service is under way. We take the cable car to the top and go for a long walk. The view is fantastic, far below the bridge, the city center, in the far distance at the foot of snow-covered mountains to the west the Sandnes Sound, the Nord-



both and Eidkjosen. Tromsø received many meters of snow last winter and up here there are leftover patches of snow that will not melt away this summer. Pretty small flowers at every step. Cairns everywhere, artfully built.



Do you see the man with a hat?



A cabin could offer shelter, but the weather is not too bad and we prefer to remain outside, enjoy the view, and have a drink from our water bottles.





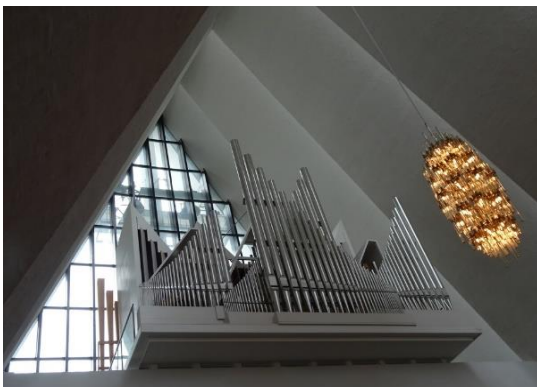
The descent leads us across slippery sections; none of us is wearing cross-country shoes that would make it easy. But with caution we arrive at the cable car station, indulge in a beer, and go back down to visit the cathedral. Its architecture and construction are impressive.



Inside the chandeliers obstruct a good view to the altar and the organ. Although they are very special in themselves, their



position is a flaw of the interior design in my eyes.



We go back to the hotel, take a short nap, and enjoy a very good meal in a fine restaurant.

**Monday, July 20.** That's the day, *Silmaril* and *Cachana* will come out of the cave. A taxi takes us to Olavsvern. We board our boats and Alex immediately finds out that our batteries are dead! I manage to start the engine, thank goodness. The gate opens at 14:00 and with somewhat weak knees I maneuver *Silmaril* very carefully backwards out of the cave, her mast jutting out 6m over the stern. *Cachana* is already outside and Susanne takes our picture. Thanks!



We tie up both boats at the rusty barge at the entrance to the cave. The procedure is not exactly simple, but Susanne climbs up nimbly and gives us a hand.



*Silmaril* lies close behind *Cachana*, so that Alex can work on our mast from *Cachana's* deck. He needs to fix an eye for the shackle on the halyard of the new sail.



Inside the constant drone of the motor fills my ears, while I start unpacking and getting our beds ready. The monster must run to provide at least the power for the light and the fridge, no way around it.

We have dinner on *Cachana* and celebrate our first night out of the cave and the beginning of new adventures on the water.

**Tuesday, July 21.** Rain is pattering on the deck. We finish clearing the boat. Ole-Tom Strand will meet us at 16:00 with his truck crane at the pier of the Eid Bygg building supplies in Eidkjosen, where the masts will be stepped. It is only a short trip; we leave in good time and chug along with our amputated boats to the meeting place. Ole-Tom arrives at 16:00 sharp. *Cachana's* mast is soon stepped. Susanne and Chérif lend a hand with our heavy Furlex and Ole-Tom manages with a clever swing

of our forestay around the spreader to maneuver it in its proper position; and *Silmaril* is also ready for the final rigging. We move the boats to the small marina of Boreal Yachting Charter nearby, where we can stay for one night at the short jetty next to the catamaran of the company.

The four of us have dinner in the cafeteria of the Eid Handel store, a rather modest establishment, but for lack of choice, the only possibility for our thank-you invitation.

**Wednesday, July 22.** Alex is bursting to replace the batteries. But first we have to move the boats. Boreal Yachting assigns us tow boxes, where we can stay for a few days. As soon as *Silmaril* is moored at the new place, Alex and I take Bus No. 42 to Stakkevollan in the north of the city center and order seven new batteries at JH Motor. They will be delivered after closing time around 17:00. We are overjoyed to have solved our problem with such ease. We return to Eidkjosen and the minibus arrives as promised, unloads the old batteries, and takes the old ones back. Great service. Susanne, Chérif and Alex haul the heavy things to the boat, I cannot help, they are far too heavy for me. Like last year, Susanne and I take turns in preparing the evening meal. Tonight, we are spoiled with a scrumptious dinner on *Cachana*.



**Thursday, July 23.** The sky is overcast, rain trickles occasionally. Alex connects the batteries, hooks up the instruments at the mast foot and puts away his tools. I go shopping with the foldable cart. Two banana crates fit perfectly; *Silmaril* is now well-stocked with the necessary supplies for the next days. I prepare dinner tonight.

**Friday, July 24.** Thank goodness, no rain this morning, despite the low-hanging gray clouds. Our forestay needs to be remounted: the two strands of the visitor for the new sail have gotten on the wrong side without our noticing yesterday. The maneuver is difficult. The bolt resists replacing for a long time. But with the help and ingenious ideas of Susanne and Chérif it is finally achieved. The two also assist us with the setting of the sails. Across the bay is a small marina and several rather large fishing boats. Alex inquires, whether we could store our ten



diesel jerrycans in their hall. We will not need them this year; it is too late for our planned trip to Svalbard. The owner, Astor Iversen, drops by to get them. He also promises to let us know, whether we could possibly leave our boats at his marina for the winter 2020/2021, since Olavsvern will probably no longer be available.

**Saturday, July 25.** *Cachana* is leaving for Tromsø. Susanne and Chérif expect a visitor arriving from Switzerland tonight and plan to sail north Sunday morning. We still have much to do before we can head north. The new extension to the sprayhood needs to be adjusted and fasteners put in place. Alex starts with the job right away and struggles with it the rest of the day. I continue to clear ship, to complete lists, write for a while and prepare meals.

**Sunday, July 26.** Another day spent with various chores. Toward evening the extension is mounted and does not look too bad. We will succeed in removing the remaining folds in the canvas. It will be perfect.

**Monday, July 27.** We leave for Tromsø. It is warm, almost hot! The starter batterie needs to be replaced; it is just a few millimeters too large to fit in its old place under the bed in the aft cabin.

After an odyssey by bus and a pretty long walk with the very heavy battery on the little cart in tow we reach JH Motor. It is replaced, hauled back, and connected in the evening. More chores and unforeseen repairs call for attention in the next days.

On Tuesday to **Friday, July 28 to 31**, we make several trips to the shopping mall near the airport to buy parts for the installation of the new active AIS, the insulation of the heating conduits and a LED indicator for the battery charger.

The electrical valve of the seacock for the head is also broken. Alex replaces the magnetic switch. Every day we make a great effort to restore shipshape conditions on *Silmaril*.



Alex exerts himself honestly, but the chaos on board is considerable.

We also need propane. Thank goodness, the filling of our German gas bottle is not a problem. With the bottle on the little cart we take the bus to Stakkevollan, a suburban quarter of Tromsø, where we find the filling station near the Skattøra Marina after a short walk. The friendly attendant

serves us right away and we return to the city. *Silmaril* is ready for the voyage.

**Saturday, August 1.** Lars and his partner Sunnøve arrive today. They will sail with us for few days. We go shopping and prepare the aft cabin for them. They need a couple of empty cabinets and the bedding.

Around midday they stand on the jetty, put their luggage in the aft cabin, go for a short shopping spree and we take off. Lars takes the helm, Sunnøve is busy taking pictures. We fill up diesel and water in Skattøra Marina and head for Hansnes, where we have stayed overnight with Lars last year.



The weather is great. We soon arrive at the ferry stage in front of the small fishing port. Our place at the head of the first pontoon is taken, so we make fast where the Polish boat was moored last year.



**Sunday August 2.** Unfortunately, there is absolutely no wind. We motor in the direction of Dunvik on the isle Spildra.

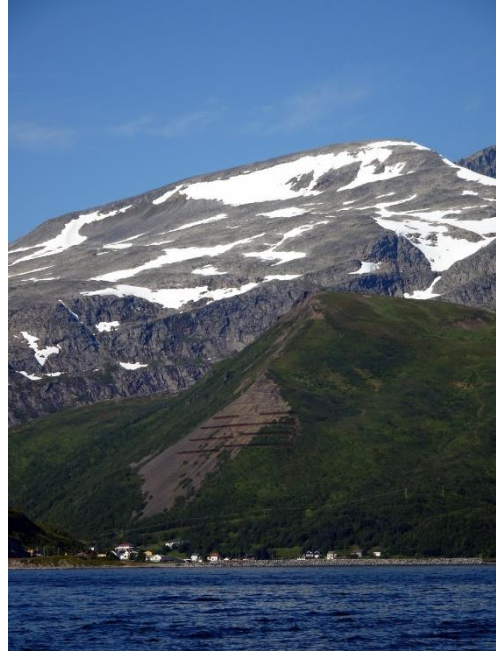
Despite a cloudless sky and bright sunshine, it is cold, very cold. Even Lars is wearing a hat, a turtle-neck sweater and off-shore pants, certainly an unusual look in our eyes.



While we enjoy the ride, Sunnøve makes lunch.



The mountains around us still show large patches of snow.



Alex and Lars are fishing.  
A ling has bitten, the largest fish in the cod family. We never caught this species.



Lars proudly displays it and cleans it right away.

At the entrance to Dunvik, we see a free space at a floating jetty and proceed to moor *Silmaril* there. The space belongs to a fisherman. A phone number is posted. Lars calls and is told that the owner is out fishing and will only return in a few days. The fast ferry lands regularly, a sign that the isle is a busy place, with active inhabitants and sought-after tourist attractions.



**Monday, August 3.** The harbormaster comes on board and talks about his island while Sunnøve and Lars are taking a dip from the stern platform.

He describes archeological finds and mentions prehistoric polar bear graves. Polar bear graves? Yes, after sacrificial rituals the animals were eaten and the remains entombed.

His wife is keeping the store. It is small but very well-stocked. We will go shopping with her later on.

We go for a walk; the polar bear graves are too far away, but on our way, we detect spectacular rock formations, folding, layering and most bizarre shapes.



Lars assumes that a busy troll was re-



sponsible for this stack of thin slabs! The view across the Kvæningen fjord to the northern summits of the Kvæningen district is beautiful. The craggy pinnacles, the snow patches, and the glaciers pre-



sent a wonderful backdrop.  
This is the house of the harbor master  
and his wife. The store is small but we



find everything we need. A table and two  
benches under the roof at the entrance in-  
vite us to sit down and take the time for a  
drink. We talk to Mrs. Harbor Master. She is very proud of the flowers around the  
house that she grew herself. Her greenhouse makes it possible at all. Her garden  
proves the very harsh climate on the island and demonstrates the effort it takes to  
have fresh vegetables on the table. We are so impressed!

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A number of families dry fish for domestic use. The old drying racks witness that  
fishing used to be a major means of sub-  
sistence on the island.



Unfortunately, we do not spend enough  
time to observe much of the local fauna.  
We only see large flocks of seagulls and  
terns and there is a curlew that flies up  
from the pasture and poses on top of a

pole probably to distract us with its piercing cries from its nest in the meadow. Alex meets a Swiss family near the store. They were on the same flight from Zurich to Tromsø as we were. They rented a camper for their trip north and a small motor boat today to visit and explore Spildra. The island has indeed plenty to offer and the inhabitants spare no effort to attract tourists and to make a good living.

We leave Spildra around 15:00 under a cloudless sky heading for the Jøkelfjord, where at its very end the glacier Isfjordjøkelen, a southern part of the gigantic Øksfjordjøkelen reaches down to the water.

On the way we see many puffins. The birds make me smile whenever I look at them; their colored bills and their hectic running on the water before they take off are so funny.

We arrive at the bottom of the fjord a little late; the glacier is no longer in full sunshine.



As all over the world, this glacier is melting as well. The picture we took in July 2009 shows the retrogression of the ice. The glacier reached further down and the snowfield at the water was much larger.

We turn around and drop the anchor in Skalsabukta, the bay we also stayed overnight in 2009. The water is deep, it is not an ideal anchoring place. But with patience we find a spot, although in 20m depth; this should cause no problem with



the favorable weather outlook for the night. Alex releases 50m of chain and activates the anchor alarm. We feel safe.

The murmur of the nearby creek is the only thing that disturbs the wonderful silence; there is not a soul in sight.

**Tuesday, August 4.** A glorious morning greets us after a clam night, cloudless sky, oily water. We enjoy a leisurely breakfast and discuss, whether the little delta of the creek would have provided secure anchoring, shallower water, and the drift of constant current away from the shore. We should consider this option at another place another time and test it.

We take the time for a few pictures and indulge in this great landscape. A decrepit house stands lost in a cleared pasture. Farming was certainly the livelihood of many in Jøkelfjord.

We sail northwest out of the fjord. The wind freshens and we decide to spend the night in Seglvik.



The harbor is small and not exactly inviting; a few fishing boats are moored at short floating jetties dotted with all kinds of material.

We make fast at the longest. Lars inquires at the ferry landing stage, whether we can stay here. The man recommends against it; the pontoon is not securely anchored. Lars and Alex fasten additional lines to the stabile pontoon behind us and we feel safe to remain where we are.

Lars and Sunnøve go for a walk. Alex stays onboard. I follow them shortly and stroll through the village to the other bay over the hill. No one around. Like on Spildra yesterday I detect impressive rock formations and a striking



sugary white lode between the layers of the dark gray, almost black rock. It looks like quartz to me, although I have very little knowledge of minerals and geology in general.

No matter what its formula, it is simply beautiful.



I come across weird still lives, abandoned sheds, empty fish drying racks. If there were no manicured gardens and well-tended flowerbeds around obviously inhabited houses, the harbor, a few cars, and the fast ferry that regularly arrives, I would suspect a ghost town.

Late in the evening a sailboat appears. We immediately recognize the gorgeous boat of our friends Jørn and Vigdis, the *X-Yacht Explorer*. What a coincidence! They make fast at a short floating jetty and we run over to talk to them. The two are on their way home from the North Cape back to Tromsø and intended to stay overnight in Loppa, but left the place unnerved by the bad conditions in the exposed harbor, wind and waves rocking and shaking the boat at anchor so violently that cooking, eating, and sleeping in peace was out of the question. They are very tired and starved. We leave them and will say good bye tomorrow morning. We start early, the crew of the *Explorer* is still asleep. Alex will send a text message and propose to meet them at leisure in Tromsø later on.



Our next destination is Hasvik at the southern coast of Sørøya. The little wind is unfavorable; we will probably have to engage the engine all the way across the stretch of open sea between Loppa and Sørøya. Nevertheless, we set sails a short distance outside Seglvik. Alex and Lars are busy trimming the sails in order to keep on course for Hasvik. But the wind soon dies down completely and *Silmaril* stops moving at all.

It is once more time to fish. No result at first. But the second attempt is crowned with success: Lars has a beautiful cod on the hook.



A handful of fulmars hope for a meal. Fulmars are among my favored birds. They are excellent flyers: for many hours have they been circling our boat during all the years of our voyages in northern waters. They do not belong to the family of seagulls, although they resemble them. They are tube-nosed birds, rather related to the albatross. The bulge on their bill is their nose, two elongated nostrils, through which they can discharge the saltwater that they swallow with the feed uptake.



The weather is murky; the mountains of Silda are outlined by the clouds like paper cuts. The engine keeps rumbling. After three hours we arrive at the entrance to Hasvik harbor.



The guest jetty is empty, but we need water and diesel and want to fill up first. A fisherman is at the diesel pump for water; this could last a while. Lars and Sunnøve inquire, whether we could get water at

the brand-new pontoons of the small marina of the Great Fishing Adventures close by- Yes, we may, so we do. Diesel is not urgent; we moor *Silmaril* at the empty guest jetty and will fill up diesel later on.

Ferries arrive regularly. The place seems quite large and busy. We take a walk through the village. The church does not resemble any other we have come across in Norway so far. It is a pearly-white hexagonal building with a light-gray slate-covered roof. It stands on an elevation and is surrounded by a neat park with a few very old

graves. Unfortunately, the door is locked; the windows are high up and do not reveal its interior.



A big Coop store on the main street offers a wide selection of everything one could possibly need. It looks like it caters a rather large hinterland.

Hasvik Airport is one of the smallest in Norway. Its runway is too short for jets; small turboprop-powered aircraft, the so-called Dash 8 serve it. Now there is not one airplane in sight. Only a handful of workers is busy installing some new electronic device on a small tower. It looks like Corona restricts traveling here as well.

The soccer field, however, shows signs of lively use; a forgotten ball, two t-shirts left behind on the modest two-step stand and a pretty new surface

The last ferry is leaving the landing stage in the somber evening light. A sharply delimited warm front is slowly moving north.

The electrically driven seacock of the head does no longer work. Alex replaces the fuse. Around 03:00 Alex needs to pee. As he opens the seacock with the switch, smoke rises from the bilge. The defective valve must be removed to pump out the toilet bowl. Alex handles the heavy tools as gently as possible, but the noise is unmistakable. Neither Lars nor Sunnøve appear. That's it. All Alex needs is time devoid of well-meant advice.

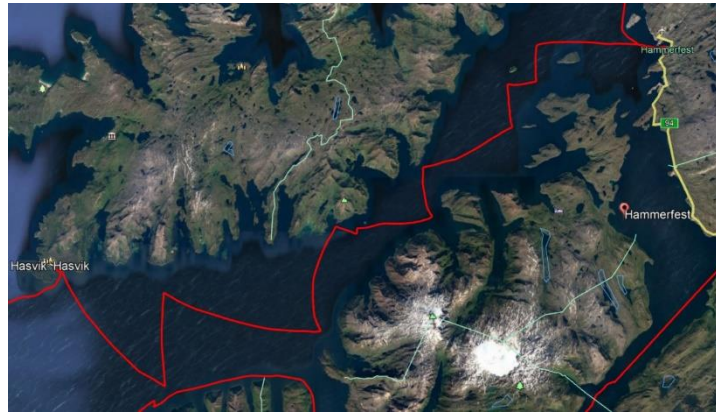


**Thursday, August 6.** Smirking on Lars's face in the morning. He understood very well that Alex did not need help with his work in the night. Sunnøve claims to have been fast asleep despite the noise through the thin wall next to her ears! The head is now in good working order. The seacock without the magnetic valve simply remains open for the rest of the trip. We leave Hasvik under an almost cloudless sky, but somewhat misty views.





Out of the two harbor basins in the fjord, the wind rises. We set the sails and tack toward Hammerfest. Our track from Google Earth shows our tacking angles. The first really bad ones were caused by the current and shifting winds. Later on, tacking the angles improve. We try to sail long tacks, but a small island, shallow water and two Hurtigruten ships force us to tack quite often and the distance to Hammerfest diminishes only slowly.



Lars is at the helm, concentrated. Sunnøve takes over for a short while, takes pictures and steers with one hand and the left foot!



Alex and I are not asked to take a turn.



Around midday the official skipper takes a nap. The surrogate helmswoman drops her book while reading and has a snooze.



After ten hours on the water we arrive in Hammerfest. Alex and I recognize the imposing church from our passage with the Hurtigruten in December 2009. It is

another spectacular example of Norwegian ecclesiastical architecture. I only vaguely remember the harbor and the town.

As we enter the port, the Hurtigruten ships *Nordnorge* and hidden behind it the *Lofoten* are moored. The company has reduced its service and the ships do not run their regular schedule, another bad



effect of Corona.

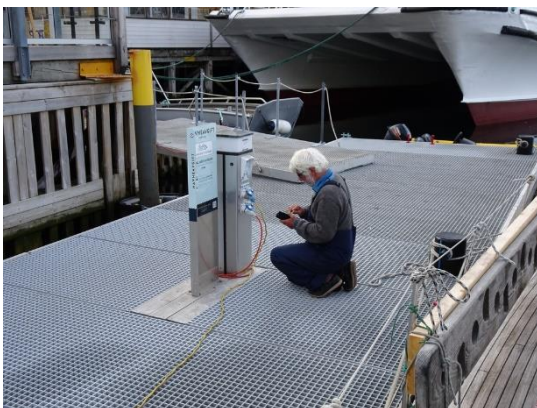
We head for the eastern harbor and the guest pontoons. Most spaces are taken, but we detect a good spot alongside the pier behind a *Comfortina* and make fast.



Alex taps the post on the pier for shore power, whips out his smart phone and checks the fee in the app Gomarina. Unbelievable but true, 12m boats cost 400NOK, 40sfr.! And there are no showers, no washing machines nor tumblers at the sailors' disposal. Admittedly, the public

toilets are not far, at least one good point. Even in Tromsø *Silmaril* "only" costs 285NOK. Most harbors so far have asked for 200NOK.

All four of us are tired. No one seems to have the energy to prepare a meal. Lars invites us for dinner. In the restaurant *Brygga Mathus* on the pier nearby we indulge in reindeer and whale meat. Here in the far north, where reindeer and



whale are hunted by the indigenous Sami people securing their livelihood, we are "allowed" to eat these specialties.

After the scrumptious meal, we relax in the cockpit and talk about this and that. A night cap and a glorious sky round off a long but nice sailing day.



**Friday, August 7.** We stay in Hammerfest for the day. All four of us take a shower on the boat and take the time for a nice long breakfast. I go shopping in the nearby Coop to replenish the food supplies and take a few pictures. Bikes always attract my

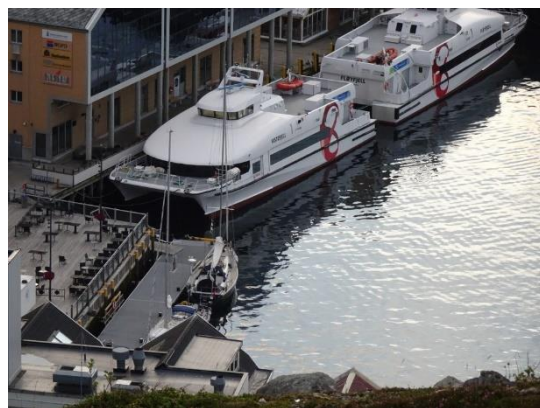


attention and this one is a perfect addition to my collection!

Alex is waiting for me. He needs to find different connectors for our various power cables. Most of them are corroded and must be replaced. And I want to buy wool. Sunnøve knits mittens with so-called Fritids Garn, a Norwegian quality that is suitable for felting. I plan to knit and felt a light-weight mat to protect our bottoms on hikes from wet or dirt. They will replace our ugly foam rubber things

and make personal little gifts for the "birds of passage" among our families and friends.

The two of us start on our search for connectors and wool. Hammerfest is a large city and after a few inquiries we find what we need within a short walking-distance. Lars and Sunnøve also go shopping; later on, they climb the mountain behind the harbor and inspire us to do the same. Since the sun never goes down far behind the horizon and it is light far into the night, we leave around 20:00, Lars and Sunnøve show us the way. Right behind the pier we take the stairs to the footpath. Already halfway up we see the church and small *Silmaril* in front of moored ferries.



A Sami house stands further up on a plateau accessible by car. It is a restaurant run by Mikkel and Solveig from Kautokeino, a famous attraction in the city. Unfortunately, everything is locked and the interior too dark to see something through the windows. We have to content ourselves with exterior details.

The building technique is familiar; we have seen turf houses years ago on



Iceland, in Newfoundland, and on the Faroes.

They are impressive buildings found where in ancient times harsh climate and lack of wood gave rise to such constructions.



We pass the house and walk up the gentle incline to the mountain top. Lars and Sunnøve have spotted reindeer behind the summit; we want to see them! The path is not steep, we have time and enjoy the fabulous view: at our feet the city, a small lake and in the far distance on the horizon the outline of the mountains to the west, the industrial port across from the city harbor, where *Nordnorge* lies, and fur-



ther north a suburban quarter. Behind the summit we tiptoe very carefully to the descent on the other side of

the mountain and see the crowning of our hike. A small group of reindeer lie in the



heather; they hardly move, only this one ogles us suspiciously, obviously ready to flee.

They all look very healthy, their fur glistens, is thick and wooly. We almost have a bad conscience to have eaten the meat of such beautiful creatures.

We are back on the boat around 22:00.

**Saturday, August 8.** I wake up very early, the others are still asleep. Before we take off, I want to buy a good supply of the Espresso Coffee Coop has in stock. Unfortunately, the store is still closed. So, on my way back to the boat I take the time to snap a few shots close to the guest jetty. Water splashes into a pretty fountain in the little square. I like it, but cannot find the name of the artist who created the sculptures.



A red phone booth attracts my attention. It is transformed into a little bring-one-take one library. I wonder whether the phone is still in working order. I am tempted to test it, but whom would I call? We have no friends in Hammerfest.



Back on *Silmaril* the crew is indulging in doing nothing. I join them. The weather is great and the time ripe for a leisurely discussion of further plans.

We will sail north, heading for Ingøy, an island on the approximate latitude of the North Cape; that is agreed. Three smart phones are whipped out and the different weather forecasts compared. No wind at the moment, but this will most probably change later on. Shortly before we leave, persons in white

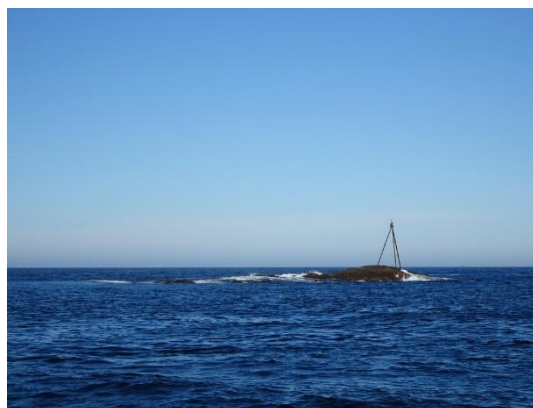


outfits with hoods and face masks run around an ambulance on a jetty a hundred meters away, where a hospital ship is moored. The ambulance suddenly takes off at neck-break speed. Has Corona arrived in Hammerfest?

We cast off and chug out of the harbor. The "green guy downstairs" will rumble for quite some time, we expect. To our right Melkøya appears, the small island that is totally covered with the gigantic plant of Snøhvit, Snow White, the largest terminal of the Norwegian gas fields.



There is still no wind after hours on the water. The boys fish between Shipsholmen and Revsholmen, but without success. Finally, toward midday the wind rises. Soon we reef the mainsail and *Silmaril* rushes north, the wind steady and rather strong. As we reach the latitude between Rolvsøya and Ingøya, thick fog suddenly envelops us. The gusty wind freshens even more and we experience a strenuous and almost blind ride west of Ingøy. The wind from ENE pushes us away from the island. We tack twice in order to get closer to it and to reach the approaches to the harbor. Before we enter the maze of small islands and cairns to the east, where the harbor is situated in a small bay at the western shore of a deep estuary, we take the sails down, engage the engine and enter the Leisund. Lars had mastered the difficult stretch with bravura; we never felt insecure for a second. As soon as land is to the left and the right, the fog lifts thank goodness. Markers like this one and the dangers they signal can only be reliably located in good visibility. The electronic chart on the plotter indeed shows the marker, but is *Silmaril* truly in the position the chart indicates? In thick fog the radar would help to determine the exact position of the obstacle. The lighthouse on Fruholmen, tall and seen at great distance, the most northerly lighthouse in the world greets us in brilliant sunshine. The buildings are located



on the skerry to the north of Ingøy, nothing but water from here to Svalbard. The first cast-iron tower was constructed between 1864 and 1866, was 33m high. In the second World War, the keeper and his family were evacuated, the tower bombarded and totally destroyed. After the war, the new concrete tower was built in 1949, square and 18m tall; it was

manned by a keeper and his family. No one lives there any more, the light was automated in 2006.

After half an hour we arrive at the entrance to the fishing port. Cirro-stratus clouds stand in the sky like graphic characters.

The blurry outline of the famous antenna on Ingøy reaches 362m up against the clouds. It is said to be



the tallest construction in Scandinavia. It is no longer in use since December 2, 2019.

After deciphering the various rusty markers, we eventually find the entrance to the harbor in the very shallow water. The guest jetty is empty and we make fast alongside. It is 17:30 and we discuss the weather enjoying an anchor beer.



The sky above us and the weather forecast predict a warm front and bad conditions. The night will bring very strong winds and we are glad to lie on the lee side of the jetty. *Silmaril* will hang on her lines and not be crushed against the pontoon.



The man in the store tells us that two fishermen are expected who plan to hide here from the predicted storm. We move *Silmaril* a bit in order to leave plenty of room for both of them.

We also heard about a so-called trail of love. So, after dinner we take a stroll up the hill. The path leads across a 73.5m high pass to the hamlet at the northwestern bay of the island.

It was built in 1908 and is said to have given a love-sick man the opportunity to visit his lover secretly. The story must have been embellished by wild fantasies over the years.

The fishermen have arrived, one lies in front of us and one behind.



The moon is already up and the sun still above the horizon. We start on our hike. The flat part of the path impresses us with the



astounding effort the construction demanded. Next to the perfectly arranged slabs, huge boulders safeguard the chasm.



Higher up we marvel at the art of construction, where the path runs along a cliff and where an ingenious bridge spans a rivulet in a small gorge.



The trail must also have facilitated the transportation of goods from the secure harbor in the protected estuary to the hamlet exposed to wind and weather. From the pass



the trail leads down to the bay that is open to the storms from the north. Moreover, the maze of skerries and cairns in its approaches hardly guarantees access during the winter months

The evening sky is aglow even at this time. It is almost midnight. We return to the village



Strong gusty winds of BF 7 are predicted for the night. We hope to be able to sleep a little.

**Sunday, August 9.** The night was pretty short, as expected. *Silmaril* was safely tied up, but rocked and shaken in time with the unearthly bluster and whistling of the wind. Gusts of 35kts to 40 kts

woke us shortly before midnight. The wind died down in the early afternoon. The weather forecast is bad. we will have to stay put. Lars and Sunnøve decide to leave. They are afraid that the ferry service will be interrupted by the approaching storm and that they will have to remain here for an unpredictable time, maybe days. The ferry arrives at 17:00 today. We go for a walk. The church stands on a little hill above the bathing place. A memorial plaque next to the small changing cabin mentions happenings during the war, the bombing in the years 1944 and 1945, the mandatory evacuation of all the inhabitants and the burnings of all the homes and sheds.



A picture in the cabin shows the old hamlet below the church. It has disappeared



altogether, not a single trace of any building remains.

The church was not destroyed in 1945. Its interior is light and spacious, the building far too large for today's community. Signs of deterioration show outside; slate tiles are missing in the roof, fractions of them lie on the ground. It is very difficult to find money and labor among the few permanent inhabitants to keep it in perfect shape.



We turn back. It is time for Lars and Sunnøve to leave us. The ferry lands at 17:00 sharp. A car is unloaded. A grope of bikers from Hammerfest is ready to board. They spent 10 days on the island.

There are many streets and practicable by bike. The community offers rooms in the old schoolhouse no longer in use for teachers and children. Tourists are very welcome, but who except Norwegians would know about the possibility to spend a vacation on such a remote island?



We say goodbye; Sunnøve will send messages about their journey home. Alex and I start on a long walk. On our way to the antenna, we meet a woman picking cloudbberries. She visits her brother and tells us about her childhood and about the horror of the German occupation. Before the retreat of the German army from Finnmarken, Hitler had dic-

tated the scorched-earth policy. The entire district was evacuated, all animals slaughtered, the towns and villages burned without exception. Only a few churches were spared. That was all. A number of sites were reconstructed, but only a part of the inhabitants returned. On the islands and in out-of-the-way villages the redevelopment without existing infrastructure was simply impossible. And there was the problem of collaboration. After the war had ended, the population was terribly paranoid; who

had collaborated and who had been in the resistance? For many the fear to return to their homeland was stronger than the wish to live their old life again. The woman grew up in this house, a white dot on the horizon seen from the village. Her way to school, summer, and winter, was long and taxing. She had to walk a few kilometers on narrow paths and through swampy fields around the lagoon. Despite all the hardship, she had a happy childhood and returns every year for a visit. We practically followed her way to school up to the house, passed the drying racks and the site of the gigantic antenna.



The woman had told us that the community makes a great effort to bring back a fishing industry. A few fishermen do live in the village. Will they succeed?



At the antenna we marveled at the dimensions. Steel cables of unbelievable diameter run from various heights down to huge turn-buckles anchored in head-high concrete blocks to stabilize the slender construction. The forces that develop during storms are inconceivable. '



And there is the weight of ice that builds up on the cables. The sign makes clear how real the danger is. Underneath the cables ice may fall, obviously not just small icicles!

We continue to the birth place of the woman. It is no longer inhabited all year round, as we suspect. The buildings look sound, but the rubbish around the house, torn fences, tall weeds in the neglected

garden show that it is no longer a working farm.

On our way back we meet many kinds of birds: geese, two curlews, oystercatchers, tow eagles high up in the sky and large flocks of seagulls. Unfortunately, I do not have good pictures of them, although I took many. Dusk was falling and there was not enough light. But a wall decoration on one of the houses in the village proves that there are eagles on the island

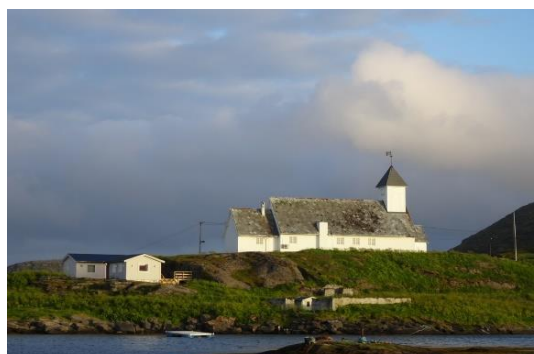


Soon we are back on the boat. Our long walk lasted over three hours. Alex studies the weather situation. We can probably leave Ingøy tomorrow.

**Monday, August 10.** The weather leaves much to be desired. However, toward midday we dare to go out and head for the North Cape. The 20kts wind from aft is not the problem, but the storm of last night still sends waves between 2m and 2.5m high. *Silmaril* dances up and down and her stern shifts from left to right. Strength and feeling for the boat's movements are necessary at the helm in order



and plenty of food for them. Rabbits in abundance live in the island. The last sunrays cast a warm light on the church on the other side of the lagoon.



to keep her somewhat under control through the turbulent water, a roller-coaster ride. We regularly take turns. The skipper takes over, but is not very patient with the demanding conditions; he leaves the work to the trustworthy competence of the autopilot and even takes a nap. Down below the signs also point to rough conditions: the troll, our mascot from day

one on *Silmaril*, lies down and the flower vase to be tied to the mast.

We are heading for Gjesvær on Magerøy. The harbor is at a reasonable distance. Shortly before the entrance we take the sails down and I maneuver the boat alongside the guest jetty. the weather is miserable, we are terribly tired and forgo a walk through the village, although it is still late afternoon. After a light meal we are overripe for bed. The morning weather will decide whether we round the North Cape tomorrow or turn back.



**Tuesday, August 11.** The clouds are gray thick and very low, but there is absolutely no wind. It is decided, we chug along toward the North Cape. So close to the most famous cliff in Scandinavia and in such weather, we cannot pass the opportunity of sailing around it.



Fulmars accompany us along the coast of Magerøy flying low over the waves. Puffins flee from us; They are hardly visible against the dark water and far too fast when they take off. So, no pictures!

Around 11:00 the cliff of the North Cape appears behind the most northerly headland. Indeed, the Cape is not Norway's



most northerly point; no road leads to it and it does not offer a spectacular view over the precipice. Nevertheless, we celebrate here close to the not so famous headland.

With a sip of aquavit and a tiny liquid sacrifice for Neptune we drink a toast to the most northerly point of our voyages with *Silmaril* ever.

The wind increases a bit. We unfurl the genoa. Before midday we sail very slowly past the Cape, high up on the cliff in light mist the globe and a few people who wave with raised arms.



Slowly we move away from the gigantic cliff.

Fog starts to descend on it.



We hardly move, start the engine, and enjoy the view to the dark craggy fog-crowned famous mountain behind us.



Alex drops the lure and hopes to catch our dinner. No success.

We continue across the Kamøy fjord, and round the eastern promontory of Mager-

øy so prominent with its famous lighthouse, the Helnes Fyr.



A few fishing boats come in sight. This must be the perfect spot. But unfortunately, no outlook to a scrumptious fish dinner.

In a bay further south appear the houses of Kjelvik, a hamlet with colorful buildings at the foot of the steep incline. A stone wall protects the village from falling scree and boulders.



There is no wind at all. Far away after the second point of land, opens the entrance to Honningsvåg, where we will stay overnight. We have time and Alex tries his luck again. We drift along and

this time a beautiful cod is on the hook. Alex files the gorgeous specimen right away and I put two nice portions of fresh fish wrapped in my special fish towel in the fridge.



We have what we need and we are anxious to find the place for the night. Our destination is less than an hour away. We start the engine and soon pass Nordvågen, a fishing village at the outskirts of Honningsvåg. A street connects it to the town that allows easy access.



The large buildings are probably a sign that the fishing industry and trade are a solid basis for a prosperous community.

Honningsvåg is situated at the foot of a mountain range. Control structures safeguard exposed sections of the town against avalanches. The harbor is protected by a long breakwater.

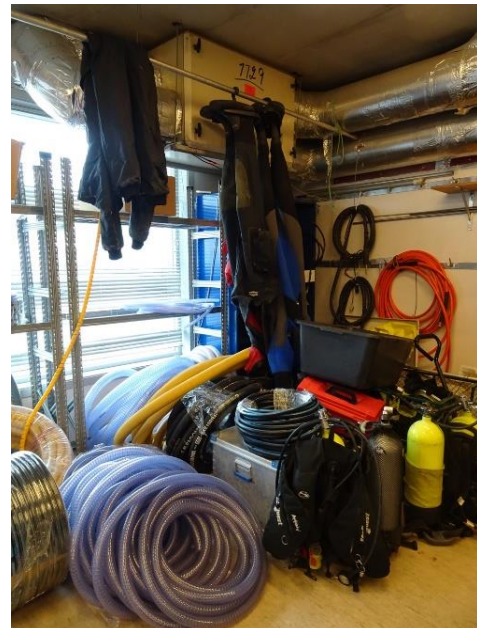


We turn into the harbor basin and look for a birthing place. A suitable space seems free on a pontoon with fishing boats. We moor *Silmaril* alongside. A young fisherman offers shore power from his boat and assumes that we are al-

lowed to stay, although the guest places are on the other side of the harbor. We invite him for dinner in return for his spontaneous welcome. His name is Jørn Sivertsen, is the owner of the fishing boat *Emily*, baptized in honor of his young sister. He is busy remodeling his boat for longline fishing and helps a friend between his own chores, a crab fisherman. He suggests, we stay up until midnight, when his friend is expected to come in with a load of king crabs and would certainly sell us some.

I am too tired to stay up. Alex wants to keep awake and experience the unloading.

**Wednesday, August 12.** In the morning Alex reports: he received a gift of 2.8kg of king crab, 13.5 legs and 2 claws and "paid" with a souvenir corkscrew from Switzerland. The legs are soaked in salt water and wait to be cooked. Let's go, this will take time and we need to get diesel and water at the fish factory way back at the end of the bay before we leave. There is no diesel pump in the city harbor. Alex must also replace an important spare part for the antenna. Honningsvåg is the best place to hunt for it. As soon as the crab legs are cooked, we get going. Alex takes a last look, yes everything is O.K.



In an overstuffed store Alex does indeed find the missing part. While the owner gropes and finds the article among his supplies, I take a



few shots in the vicinity. A construction site reveals how challenging the building business usually is, solid rock underneath a very thin layer of soil, as quite everywhere in Norway.

On the other side, I see *Silmaril* behind Jørn's fishing boat. A traditional rowboat gently swings on a buoy on the oily water.



It is almost 11:00, the Vinmonopolet just opened and I can replenish our wine inventory. It is important. This is probably the only alcohol store on our way south for many days.



Alex is back on the boat to prepare our departure. The Hurtigruten ship *Midnatsol* has arrived at the pier close behind us and the maneuver must be perfect. Running into the line is a secure choice, we take off without a problem, leave the inner harbor basin and head north to the pier of the Storbukt Fiskeindustri AS, where diesel and water are supposed to be available.

We moor *Silmaril* on the floating jetty and Alex inquires, where the pump is. I peek into one of dozens of crates being unloaded from a large ship; they are brimful of king crabs. The creatures are very large and horrendously alive.

We have to move to the main pier. A young Polish man appears. He brings the diesel hose, hands it to Alex way down and while the tank is filling, he comes back with the water hose. A few workers come out of the hall and take pictures of *Silmaril*. A Swiss sailboat is obviously an extremely rare sight here.

We pay cash below deck and do not begrudge the young man an extra to his probably very modest pay.



With all the necessary supplies on board, we take off and head for an anchoring place further south.

Susanne and Chérif are in Hammerfest and we will soon meet them and continue toward Tromsø together.

We are so looking forward to sailing with Susanne and Chérif.

