

Geitahuset

This building was built at the end of the 1930's as a combined goat-shed and boat-house. The ground floor (the boat house) is a frame work construction, while the 1.st floor (the goat shed) has a wicket gate construction with three wicket gates. The building was hit by a landslide some years ago, and a large stone went through the roof. Remains of the goat pens can still be seen on both floors. The goats are excellent climbers and they grazed on the steep mountainsides above the fjord. In the old days the farmers in Osa also kept goats but nowadays there is not a single goat left, neither here nor there. The shed serves as storage today. Amongst other things stored here are a carriage and a timber sledge.



The car road to Osa

The German occupants started the construction of the road in 1941, but they never completed it, and Osa didn't get road connection before the mid 1950's when the road was completed as far as Sævartveit just outside Osa. A couple of years later there was a road all the way to Osa.

The road was built by hand without the use of any modern machinery, and the main tools in use were shuffles, bars and sledgehammers.

A track on rails, a stone-cradle and a crane operated by hand were the most advanced equipment that they had. But, look at the road and the impressive stone-walls– and admire the work that these men did. Even frequent use of heavy vehicles during the development of hydro-electric power in the 1970's and 80's haven't damaged these. The work of these men back in the 1940's and 50's was certainly the very best.



Øydvinstod Culture Trail



Øydvin Gard 2008
www.oydvin-gard.no



**Information to those who want to walk
the culture trail in Øydivenstód**

The trail goes through varied terrain, on gravel road and through fields, and you may find it a little bit rough on some spots, so please wear solid shoes and take care. We have made an attempt to mark the trail on the map, using the following signs:

=====	Car road/paved road
= = = =	Gravel road/farm road
-----	path
-----	Rough path (you need to be fit to walk this one)

We kindly ask you to stay on the path or road
Please shut all the gates when passing through
We have no responsibility for your safety – you walk on your own risk
Have a nice walk!

The landowners

Røykjanes

The name means “Smokey Ness” – referring to the strong winds, especially from the south east, which tumbles down between the mountains, whipping the sea water up into the air like smoke or steam. On days, when this occurs is one better of ashore than at sea.

The cliffs here are solid rock and this type of rock is very poor when it comes to nourishing plants and flowers, and this of course has an effect on the local flora. But still, the variety of plants and flowers is quite large on a relatively small area. There are several different types of plants and flowers, all being related to different factors such as distance from the fjord, type of rock, type of soil, temperature of the soil (sunny spot, in the shadows, under an overhanging cliff etc.) and use in days gone by, when this was an open field where they made hay in summer.

The forest – if one can call it that – is a mixture of “pioneer trees” as birch (*Betula verrucosa*), aspen (*Populus betula*), band willow (*Salix caprea*), planted Norwegian Spruce (*Picea abies*), linden (*Tilia Cordata*) and hazel (*Corylus Avellana*) which are typical for the lower parts of the forests along the fjord. The botanist will find a variety of plants and flowers that is quite unique for this area. Close to the shores of the fjord the vegetation is rather poor – with little variety in species this far inland, but there are also species which are well adapted to the shade beneath the trees, as woodruff (*Asperula odorata*), less rich areas with wood hair-grass (*Aura flexuosa*) and sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), and richer areas with running water where you will find marsh thistle (*Circium palustre*) and meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*). One gets the same impression when it comes to mushrooms as well as plants, it is the most common ones that one finds, Chanterelle (*Cantharellus sibirius*) and other mushrooms such as *Boletus edulis* and *Leccinum versipelle*. Some rare species are found such as *Leccinum pseudoscaber* and *Hydnellum conrescens*.

Fishing in the fjord is free of charge - no license has to be paid as long as you’re not deliberately fishing for sea-trout and salmon. When fishing here it is likely that you will get a catch, but probably one of the more common fishes as cod, pollock, flounder, eel, spiked dogfish, wolf-fish or as mentioned above, a sea-trout or a salmon. Seals can often be seen chasing fish, and with some luck you might even get a glimpse of porpoises breaking the surface for air. Røykjanes is also frequently used by the locals as a beach, but be aware of the fact that Osafjorden is deep and cold!

The old track from Osa to Øydvinstód

Before they built this track rowing or sailing the fjord, or crossing the mountains was the only ways of getting to and from Osa. When they started on the construction of the hydroelectric power plant in Osa in 1917, they realized that they needed a new track, due to the problems that the fjord often bid them, especially when it was frozen in wintertime. Engineer Berger, who was employed by Osa Fossekompagni was in charge of the building of the track in 1918. He managed to get the authorities to accept this track as a public road, which meant that it was the authorities who were responsible for maintenance of the track or the road. The everyday supervision of the track was a task for the local sheriff.

Most of this track was destroyed, when the road to Osa was built during the Second World War (1940-1945), but you can still walk some parts, for instance, the next 800-900 metres of this culture walk is still the old track. Nearer Osa (about 2 km from here) you can find the old track again – on the outside of the old tunnels. There was not always a solid track, just logs of timber that were bolted on to the cliffs along the fjord.

The large rocks and stones that you can see today on the track today and in the fjord have “stranded” here after the building of the road to Osa. They “burned” the cliffs (blew them up) when building the road and large rocks and stones would often tumble down from the cliffs and end up here, either by or in the fjord

Osanaustæ

The Osa boat house as this means, has its name from the time when the old track between Osa and Ulvik turned off from the fjord here. The track went up across Osaflothen and through the Øydvæ farm to Brakanes.

Osaflothen was also used by the army (local soldiers) during military exercise.

The boathouses

The boathouses are of two different types of construction, the first one is a built with a wicket gate construction, and the second one is of the “logged” type.

They both need maintenance, and we hope that we will get financial help from the authorities and others to do so.

Røykjanesløypet

The timber launch which ended here in the old days started in Kølgrovedalen, a bit further up the hillside.

You can find more about these timber launches under number 6 – Sjøhageløypet.



Øydvinstód culture trail

The name of the farm means:	Øyd -vin	– the land between two fjords –field
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The four farms at Øydvæ were previously owned by the Barony in Rosendal, and were in the Barony’s ownership until 1933. The farmers were in other words tenants, but these patches down by the fjord were owned by the farmers or tenants themselves. Lots of other farmers had a right to have boathouses here, and there where special areas where the farmers were allowed to pile up their timber.

The old country road from Brakanes came to an end here, on branch going down to the boathouses belonging to the Øydvin farms and one to the old store which was situated here.

Several of the farms have land along the fjord, including patches on the opposite side of the fjord as well. These areas were used for several purposes; firewood was found here, and grass and leaves, used as food for the livestock in the wintertime was cut here. These areas were also used as pastures, and the paths leading to the summer farms in the hillside and the mountains start here.

The fjord was the most important means of transportation for most people, using boats of all sizes to get around, and this led to the building of several boathouses, with storage above the actual boathouse, where they could store firewood, hay and dried leaves. This is all history now, and deer hunting is the main activity in these areas today.

Unfortunately, many of these boats and boathouses are in a rather poor state today. Still quite a few see their importance, and try to keep the boathouses as best as they can. Three of the boathouses have recently been restored, with financial help from the Municipality of Ulvik’s culture fund. Others have been restored by their owners without any financial assistance from others. Our hope is get others interested, and maybe they can help us financing the restoring the boathouses, which are yet not restored.

It is probably a poem by the poet Olav H. Hauge that has made Øydvinstód fairly well known outside Ulvik:

DO ANOTHER MAN A FAVOUR

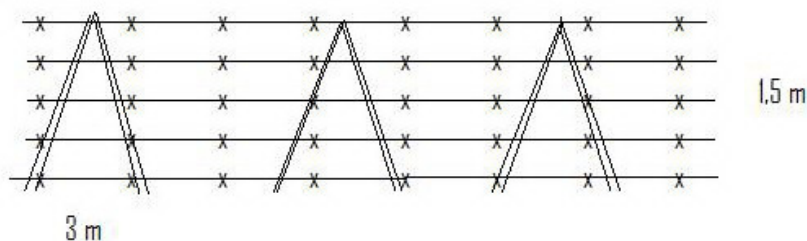
*He came down
from the hills,
wanted home,
Got himself ferried from Osa
out to Øydvinstó.
And he was open-handed
and offered to pay.*

*But the man from Osa
was not for sale.
I want to pay;
I can't reach you
to do you a favour.
Then do another man
a favour,
said the man from Osa
and shoved off.
(translated by Robin Fulton)*

Defence constructions from the 2nd World War, 1940-45

On a bright summer day in 1941 the workers employed by the Germans came to Øydve and wanted to borrow a saw and an axe. They met grandfather, Torbjørn and he was as kind as usual and lent them what they wanted. After a while, a heavy smoke could be seen from Sjøhagen, (the land down by the fjord) Most of this land was covered with spruce which was about 15-20 year old, and now the workers had started cutting down these trees.

This was the beginning of the building of a huge German defence construction. Two fences made out of barbed wire were put up from the mountainside by Kalvagjere and all the way along the fjord to the mountainside above Røykjanes, approximately 1 km long. The two fences were put up parallel to each other, and they were approximately 3 meters wide and 1,5 meters high, with 8-10 lines of barbed wire and a line of thick wire in addition. (Please, see drawing)



There were built 8-10 trenches in the area, and a canon post was built on the hill towards Øydve. One of the trenches is situated about 30 metres northeast of this board, behind the fir tree. (Today it's filled with rocks and stones).

The other ones have been removed, only one is left. This was probably the largest and most well made one and is situated in the hillside, at Rauestijen, approximately 150 m west of here. (See signpost) There are two trenches on the spot and the upper one was probably built as a canon post. Walk up and have a look for yourself.



The wild roses that grow in the trench today may be a symbol of the fact that the trenches never were used, and that we had peace in Norway after five long and dark years under foreign rule.

Øydvinstód

The store with post office, phone and steamship quay

The store, phone, post office were located here and the steamships called in several times a week.

People from the surrounding farms and from Osa gathered here, especially at weekends, to talk and exchange news and points of view on daily matters. In summer, during the sprout-fishing, Øydvinstód was one of the places where the fishermen would gather, and sometimes there would be a lot of boats in and around the quayside area. The old country road from Brakanes went as far as Øydvinstód.



The store was started at the beginning of 1900, and during the construction period in Osa from 1917 to 1923 Øydvinstód became an important junction, for transportation of people and goods, and for social and cultural interaction.

Osa and the farms at the far side of the Osa fjord

In 1900 Osa had about 80 inhabitants and the same number of people lived at Bagnstrond (on the far side of the fjord, a couple of miles further out). They had a track called "Strondavejen" between the farms at Bagnstrond, but they had to

use boat if they wanted to go elsewhere. Today no one lives there all year around. The houses are only used during the holidays. Both Osa and Bagnstrond had a school. These buildings are still in use, but serve other purposes today.

The farms of Sygnetveit (straight ahead on the far side of the fjord) housed two families, and about 10-12 people lived there all the year round. The farmers had sheep and goats. Sailing or rowing the fjord was the main way of getting around, but there was also a rather poor track along the hills or mountainside from Sygnetveit to Osa. There was often ice on the fjord in the winter. It was not always strong enough to carry the weight of a man, but too thick for a rowing boat to break through. This meant that they couldn't get across the fjord. Still, there were times when they had no other choice than to try to get across, even if the ice wasn't all that strong. On these occasions they would drag a boat along, which they could jump into, if the ice broke. "Old" Magnus (1872-1951) would cross the fjord on the ice if a stroke of his stick didn't break it.



Sjohageplasset

You can see remains of a former tenants-place just below the forest; a dwelling house and a barn. There used to be a smokehouse here as well, but this is no longer visible. Most farms had tenants-places like this. The tenants rented a small piece of land from the farmer where they could grow vegetables, potatoes and crops. As payment for the rent, they had to work on the farm. Most of the families had many children and little money and most of them had to have other income in order to survive.



Many of those who went to America from this area were tenants looking for a better future on the other side of the Atlantic. The last tenants here were Oddmund Sveinsson Bolstad and his wife Anna Magnusdotter, and their children; Anna Maria, Magnus and Hans. The buildings burned down around 1900, and the whole family moved to Hjeltnes.

Sjohageløypet

In the old days –they had to float the timber on the fjord when they wanted to move it from one places to another. In these steep hills launching of timber was the usual way of getting it out of the forest. The timber launches were often in small valleys, where the trees, rocks and stones were removed. They used a horse to drag the logs to the launch, and some of the tracks can still be seen in the forest today, as deep marks in the terrain. Once the logs were dropped in the launch, gravity did the rest of the job. Sometimes, if the hills were very steep, a wire was used when launching the logs, in order to prevent them from getting too high speed and thereby getting damaged. (A broken log has no value)

This way of transportation ended in the 1950's when the tractors became common on the farms. Sjohageløypet – ended right here, and from here on, the timber went by sea to the saw mills.

The sawmills by Døgro

At the far side of the fjord, by the river Døgro there were once two sawmills, one at each side of the river. A lot of timber from Ulvik and the surrounding municipalities were brought here by sea. The remaining stone walls of these sawmills are the witnesses of an industrial adventure that is just history today.

Sjohageløo

The house was built as a barn just before the 2nd World War. Hay was stored here in the summer, and brought home to Øydvæ by horse and sledge in the winter.

It is one of the last buildings to be built using the same construction method as in the stave churches, called Wicket gate construction (you'll find more about this construction type under number 4). Today, more than 65 years later, this way of building has become popular again.

The house has been extended and serves as a holiday home, but the original construction is kept as it was and is a decorative part of the living room.



Orchards

The Hardanger area is the main fruit district in Norway. The sheltered, warm hillsides and the rich soil provide excellent conditions for fruit growing. The reason to this is the Golf Stream, which sweeps along the Norwegian Coastline. On the other hand are these steep hillsides no good for anything else than orchards.

The main production is apples (there is an apple orchard a little bit further out on your right), but pears (to your left), plums and cherries are also grown in the area.

In former days every village had its own Fruit storage (Co op) where the fruit was sorted, packed and shipped to the market. Today this is done at a central packing and storage centre; Hardanger Fjordfrukt at Utne.

The boathouses

This area is pointed out as a conservation area in the municipality's area plan, due to these boathouses.

By looking at them you will see that two different building techniques have been used:



Wicket gate constructions

Main building technique used in the Western part of Norway. We know that it has been in use since about 1500 and it is older than the technique where you use logs of timber.

A wicket gate is constructed of two posts or poles bound together with a beam, and stiffened by cross-bracing. The wicket gates were set up in line along the length of the building. At the top they were joined together by a wooden girder on which the roof rafters were placed.

The boathouses in this area are built with 3 wicket gates. Wooden nails were used when joining them together.

Log constructions

The logs of timber were put on to each other and groove and tongue were tiled in the corners.

The weight of the logs held the construction together.

The salt seawater makes the logs more or less waterproof, and it is also the reason to the rather bright grey colour of the houses.

Most of the boathouses have slate roofs. There were several slate quarries in the Hardanger area. These large, heavy slates were produced at Sollesnes and beneath Vassfjæro, and shipped out using horses, cable-cars and boats.

Several of the old roofs that you can see in Ulvik and the surrounding villages are covered with such slate.

The boats

There are still more than 20 old wooden boats in the boathouses in Øydvinstód.

People with knowledge of the Norwegian boat building tradition will find several different types of boats: Most of them are of the "Strandebarm/Hardanger" type with three boards, not very different from another famous type of boat; "Oselvar".



The farms of Øydvæ and Haoheim kept their cattle on the far side of Osafjorden in the spring – the far side being called "Bortom", and the places where they kept their cattle, Øydvæsælæ and Brimmedalen. Øydvæ also had a summer-farm in Døgersdalen. In this boathouse you can see two "færingar", this type of boat was the most common one.

The most significant type of boat is the large boat, which were used to transport horses and cattle across the fjord, two to three generations ago. Each boat could carry 6 cows (smaller than today's cows) and there ought to be four men rowing, two in front and two in the rear of the boat.

When they gave up the use of Døgersdalen as a summer-farm, sometime around 1880-1890, they rowed the cattle in a similar boat all the way to Eidfjord for a number of years.

You will find more information about the boats on the boards put up inside the boathouse. You are welcome to have a look for yourself, but please – do remember to close the doors again!



This boathouse – "Storanauste" – was rebuilt in 2004-2005, a new slate roof was among the things that were done.

