

# cleanest place on earth (with whale meat, yet)

Norway has simply got to be the cleanest place on earth. There lay Bergen, sparkling in the sunshine at the head of its crystal fjord, no smog to interfere with the view from the plane. We registered at a student dormitory, noted with delight the rolled-up edierdowns in their starched jackets, inspected the plumbing (This got to be a habit, for in each student dorm the facilities were different, though they all featured the main attraction, which was a flush tank with the lift rod protruding through the top, capped by a knob, no levers, no side arm gear where the suction can prevent a valve from nesting squarely.) American manufacturers take note. This is a fool-proof system, though doubtless hard on the plumbing profession which is accustomed to answering calls of "The water's running through and I can't make it stop," or "the wire dingus is broken, can you come?" With direct lift vertically, the valve stays put, never any problem about seating it.

The showers in the student dorms are designed for single occupancy of a room. With two people assigned to each room, as in the tourist season, the first customer at the shower has it all his own way. The tiled floor floors, the drain gurgles, and the customer can step up onto the toilet seat for a basis for to-whoing while the tide ebbs. The second person has the choice between wearing those green rubber skindiving fins or hip boots. In the first domicile in Sweden, there was a suggestion of a curtain which did little to deflect the cascade. From then on, there was no protective curtain, and you took your chances. Get up at five a.m. to beat your room-mate, or waken just in time for breakfast and swim for your life. There was an almost universal switch to sponge baths along the middle of Denmark. Easier on the hair if you'd visited a damefrisor and parted with Kronen to get a shampoo and a wave.

One dorm had a unique feature. The shower was located right over the toilet. We discussed possible procedure. All suggestions were turned down as impractical, including the proposal that one foot in the john might be the solution. Any group which has been traveling together for some time is apt to become a little earthy in its approach to problems.

You've heard a lot about lact of inhibition in Scandinavia. Pay it no mind. The young folks of Norway hike practically constantly, with fifty-pound packs strapped to their backs. Uphill they go, toward the source of the wild waterfalls, climbing over crags, hobnobbing with the reindeer, working off a load of potential sin in the course of a thirty-mile

day, registering at a hotel along toward eight o'clock, streaming with rain, blistered as to feet, hair both male and female hanging in dank strands, yearning for nothing more than a hot bath, something to eat, and a toss in the eiderdown. Not a pre-nuptial toss, just a plain ordinary toss designed to restore energy for the next day's thirty-mile climb.

Bergen's waterfront is filled with ships from every nation, including Russia. A hammer and sickle on a funnel looked odd at first, but its appearance is standard in any Scandinavian port. Remember that Norway is a seafaring nation, with tentacles reaching out into away-and-beyond. It was a seafaring nation before the United States was even dreamed of, and it goes steadily about its business of remaining a seafaring nation. You will find chunks of raw red meat in the fish market. It's whale meat. And whale steak is utterly delicious, something which Hix, with memories of the whale meat in Cambridge during the first World War, is reluctant to admit, but let justice be done. We had a platter of whale steak with onion gravy at the commons in Oslo, and it would have satisfied Nero Wolfe.

Nobody could possibly describe the scenery of Norway, though travel folders make a pale attempt.

For one thing, it is clean, clean, clean. There are no anti-litter signs. Norwegians really love their country and they would not dream of defiling it with trash. The absence of smog, considering what the Eastern Seaboard in this country has been up against for the past several weeks, is the main contribution to clean living. Hydroelectric power is the answer. With all that potential power gushing down the mountains, on its way to feed the fjords, there is no need for other fuel for generators. Electricity is cheap. Isolated farmsteads on the tips of rocky headlands have washing machines, and electric heat. Thin power lines cobweb themselves out of the consumer, and when central power is lacking, a householder can harness a waterfall for an independent supply.

Farmers are subsidized, for production of food is all-important. Education is also subsidized. These benefits are reflected in the tax rate, which is a staggering fifty percent. But children have state dental and medical care, nobody goes hungry, any man who wants work can find it. It is a Socialist state even though it has a king.

Those potato patches, bright green and luxuriant, alongside every rural home in Norway, are a reminder of the Occupation during World War II, when Norwegians lived on potatoes and potatoes almost

exclusively. "But," explained the courier, "the children's teeth did not suffer. Potatoes have lost vitamins and minerals." One of the group muttered, "Look, Ma, no cavities, but I gained thirty-five pounds."

That was Mrs. MacDuffy, who, as an instructor in home economics, was up on her calorie counts and her basic nutrition chart, a wad of common sense and practically compressed into a small body which could dance rings around half the group and give the other half a do-si-do for its money. The entire roster of folk dancers on the tour was comprised of professional people, teachers, doctors, retired educators and such, welded together by a common interest in preserving traditional forms of folk lore.

A telephone call by the courier established that it had been taken from the train and delivered to the lunch-stop restaurant at Flam, a village at the head of the fjord. It would be sent on along with the next group of tourist to cross the ridge. Further telephoning in Oslo yielded nothing. Bus after bus pulled up at the University headquarters. Still nothing. This dulcimer was not just any run-of-the-mill dulcimer. It had been made especially for Margaret by her grandfather, with skill and with loving hands. Its loss was much greater than that of an instrument which could be purchased in a store.

The last night of the stay in Oslo, the day before emplaning for Denmark, there was a phone call from the office. The dulcimer had arrived, or something which the switchboard operator believed to be a dulcimer. Would Margaret come down to headquarters and identify her property? Margaret flew. Ten minutes later she was back with the dulcimer, prepared to stage concerts all over the dorm. How did it come? The dancers were anxious to know. The dulcimer had become a vital part of their existence. It was THEIR dulcimer. They had lost sleep over it, followed its problematical journeys, and now they needed information so that the matter could be decently buried.

It would be fun to report that it came by carrier pigeon, remembering Mark Twain's reluctance to spoil a good story with strict adherence to the truth, but the fact is that it came on the shoulder of a girl on the back of a motorcycle, a girl in a crash helmet who was glad to hand it over. She had been, she said, under the impression that she was transporting some sort of a fancy bit of armament, probably a machine-gun. She had simply accepted responsibility for its delivery as a matter of course, a courtesy from one world traveler to another. Scandinavians equate

part of the proposed program in Denmark.

The padded and embroidered carrying case was not among the baggage shuttled across the gangway between one steamer and the next on the fjord. It wasn't in the dunnage delivered later in the day at the ski lodge high in the mountains. It wasn't among the clutch of suitcases which reached the university dormitory in Oslo.

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Americans with gangsters, gangsters with guns.

We wanted to ask if she had stayed at the fabulous ski lodge, but she was up and away, scorching down the quiet streets of Oslo, her hair streaming from beneath her crash helmet.

The ski lodge had been the high point of the stay in Norway, with its huge fireplaces and blazing logs, its big dance floor for needed practice, and its entire second floor given over to the group.

There were still ravines filled with snow on this high and forbidding plateau. Dag had stopped the bus, and we had tumbled out to snow ball each other, with Oslo, and the highest ski-jump in the world, still many miles away.

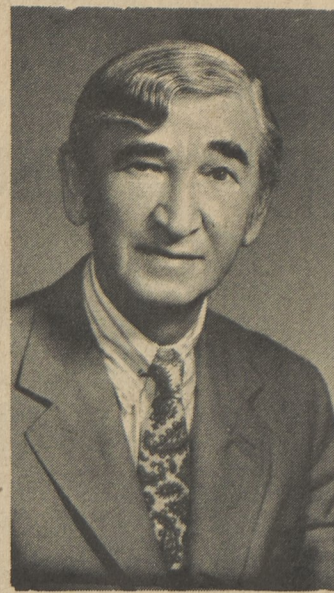
We began talking about maybe buying a reindeer skin. Tourist-traps at the restaurant in Flam had been stocked with stacks of skins, and here in the mountains were skins, still in residence, still attached to the reindeer. Nice heavy fur, black and white and grey. Later, the stores in Oslo were crawling with reindeer skins, nicely tanned, soft to the touch, and not too costly—if you happened to want reindeer skin for in front of your fireplace. Most of us tossed a coin, reindeer skin or Norwegian ski sweater, the cost about identical. (I have a ski sweater in which I will doubtless look like the Old Man of the Mountain, model. I felt I could get along without a reindeer skin, though it was tempting. Where else can you get a reindeer skin except in Norway? But you can't buy everything that you see in the stores, and a few pennies had to be saved for shopping in Copenhagen.)

That's the trouble with traveling, you see things you want, and if you pass them up you'll never see them again except in an American store marked "Made in Japan." And that's a tag which is guaranteed to take the bead off the wine.

On the way down the mountainside toward Oslo, Dag pointed out barn roofs with grass growing on them and an occasional small tree. He said that when the grass needed mowing, the farmer lifted the family goat up to the roof and let it earn its board and keep. When the grass was neatly clipped, he lifted it down again and milked it.

Dag, with small confidence in tourists, didn't let us out of the bus at the university dorms

# Wyoming Nat'l. Bank names another director



I. Eric Feldman

The appointment of I. Eric Feldman, Wilkes-Barre, to the board of directors of the Wyoming National Bank of Wilkes-Barre, effective Aug. 7, brought the number of members to 21, it was announced by Harold J. Rose Jr., president of the bank.

Mr. Feldman is vice president of Standard Equity Corp., Wilkes-Barre, which operates a chain of finance offices in Eastern Pennsylvania.

A native of Swoyerville, he is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. S.M. Feldman. He is a graduate of Luzerne High School and received his B.S. degree at the University of Scranton. He served in the Army during World War II.

Mr. Feldman is a director of Pennsylvania Consumer Finance Association; former vice chairman of the Wilkes-Barre Housing Authority; active in U.J.A. and Jewish National

Fund drives; he has served on many committees with the Pennsylvania Consumer Finance Association.

He is active as a Mason and Shriner, holding memberships in Lodge No. 61, F & AM; a member of the Wilkes-Barre Rotary Club, and Jewish Community Center. He is a member of Ohav Zedek.

Other members of the Bank's board are Noel B. Caverly, chairman; Bernard C. Banks, C. C. Groblewski, M.D., Thomas M. Lewis, H.M. Vivian, Sterling L. Wandell, Joseph H. Williams, Nathan L. Foreman, George L. Ruckno, Charles A. Shea Jr., Max Rosenn, Laning Harvey, Darrel Crispell, John Daugherty, Frank M. Henry, Roy A. Gardner, John N. Conyngham, Edgar G. Scott, Harold J. Rose Jr., and Barry C. Boyer.

# 1967 fabrics act offers protection

Consumers who take advantage of flame-retardant fabrics can help reduce the injuries and deaths that occur each year from clothing catching on fire, says Ruth Ann Wilson, extension clothing specialist at The Pennsylvania State University.

The Flammable Fabrics Act of 1967 provides for the elimination of hazardous flammable fabrics used in wearing apparel and home furnishings. This act also gives the Department of Commerce the authority to establish more extensive test standards for judging fabric flammability. Fabrics that do

no meet flammability standards must be either flameproofed or destroyed, Mrs. Wilson points out.

Because of government's concern for safety, fiber and fabric manufacturers are increasing their efforts to provide flame-retardant fibers.

Fiber producers are experimenting with changing the polymers before the fibers are formed or changing the molecular structure by grafting after the fiber is formed to produce flame-retardant fibers. The technique used will depend on the cost.

until he had procured registration and room keys for everybody. He said it saved time and complications to get these matters out of the way, that he'd put our baggage in our rooms, right this way, please. And remember to close the windows before leaving for dinner, as the rooms were on the ground floor and even in Oslo there was no percentage in inviting trouble. And don't forget to turn in your keys when you leave.

Three days later, remembering to turn in our keys, we left for Copenhagen, accompanied by protests from other tourists, "Hey, have a heart, it's Sunday morning. Cut the racket."

## canning caution

The pressure canner is the safest and best way to can low-acid vegetables, reminds Louise W. Hamilton, extension food and nutrition specialist at The Pennsylvania State University. Ten pounds pressure gives a temperature of 240 degrees which is necessary to process low-acid foods. The oven is not safe for canning.

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