

Road Construction in Brattfjorden

It was around 1953, and I was 17 years old at the time. I had returned from fishing in Lofoten, and it was nice to get work to earn a little extra money.

At that time the government was helping to create a program to employ people. Some people called it relief work, but I thought it was OK, and it didn't matter to me how I earned money.

In this case it was road construction in Brattfjorden. I used our fishing boat to get there, and I slept on board and also cooked my meals there. I did like the work at hand. For the most part it consisted of constructing a bridge over the river flowing from Brattfjord lake. Some of the people working there came from Brattfjord. I was young at that time and didn't know much about family and who we were related to, but today I know that many of the people who lived there were descendants of my great grandfather /great grandmother Peder and Barbro Olsen. There was another man there from Mørsvik, Alf Arntsen, and Hilbert and Edmund were from Stavfjord. They were all living on board their boats, and as it was summertime it was pleasant.

At that time an old lady lived where we worked, her name was Marselia. One evening after work Edmund, Hilbert and I went to help this lady prepare her potato field for planting. We had no problem finishing the work, and then we had to come inside for coffee. This lady lived alone, and she didn't have a barn so she kept chicken in her living room. I thought it was amusing, all of a sudden a chicken would be flapping her wings from somewhere up under the ceiling. This lady also had good connections in the city, so when we were done with our coffee she fetched a bottle of rum these people had given her. We each were given a few drops in a cup, and remember it as a nice little taste as a thank you for a job well done.

Thinking back on this little story from Brattfjord gives me great pleasure. The work there didn't last long, but it was a happy memory.

Garle Pettersen

(Translated by Solveig Dreyer)