

It was on this day in 1954, **THE FIRST PART OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS TRILOGY CAME OUT**, *The Fellowship of the Ring*. It was the sequel to J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, which was released in 1937, and was the story of a small, human-like creature with hairy feet named Bilbo, who goes on an adventure through Middle Earth and comes back with a magical ring. Tolkien had written *The Hobbit* for his own amusement and didn't expect it to sell well.

J.R.R. Tolkien once wrote, "I am in fact a hobbit in all but size. I like gardens, trees, and unmechanized farmlands. I smoke a pipe, like good, plain food, detest French cooking . . . I am fond of mushrooms, have a very simple sense of humor . . . go to bed late and get up late (when possible). I do not travel much."

*The Hobbit* sold pretty well, partly because C.S. Lewis gave it a big review when it came out in 1937. And so Tolkien's publisher asked for a sequel. Tolkien decided the new book would be about Bilbo's nephew Frodo, but for a long time he had no idea what sort of adventure. Finally, he decided it would be about the magical ring, though the ring had not been such an important part of *The Hobbit*.

Tolkien spent the next 17 years working on *The Lord of the Rings*. As he was a professor at Oxford, he had to write in his spare time, usually at night, sitting by the stove in his study in his house. He was well into his first draft by the time World War II broke out in 1939. He hadn't set out to write an allegory, but once the war began, he started to draw parallels between the war and the events in his novel: the land of evil in *The Lord of the Rings*, Mordor, was set to the east of Middle Earth, just as the enemies of England were to the east.

The book became more and more complicated as he wrote, and was taking much longer to finish than he'd planned. He went through long stretches where he didn't write anything, and he thought about giving up the whole thing. He wanted to make sure all the details were right, the geography, the language, the mythology of Middle Earth, and he made elaborate charts to keep track of the events of the story. His son Christopher drew a detailed map of Middle Earth.

Finally, in the fall of 1949, he finished *The Lord of the Rings*. He typed the final copy himself sitting on a bed in his attic, typewriter on his lap, tapping it out with two fingers. It turned out to be more than half a million words long, and the publisher agreed to bring it out in three volumes. The first came out on this day in 1954, three-and-a-half thousand copies, but it turned out to be incredibly popular. It went through a second printing in just six weeks. Today more than 30 million copies have been sold around the world.

## To a Daughter Leaving Home

by Linda Pastan

When I taught you  
at eight to ride  
a bicycle, loping along  
beside you  
as you wobbled away  
on two round wheels,  
my own mouth rounding  
in surprise when you pulled  
ahead down the curved  
path of the park,  
I kept waiting  
for the thud  
of your crash as I  
sprinted to catch up,  
while you grew  
smaller, more breakable  
with distance,  
pumping, pumping  
for your life, screaming  
with laughter,  
the hair flapping  
behind you like a  
handkerchief waving  
goodbye.

"To a Daughter Leaving Home" by Linda Pastan, from *The Imperfect Paradise*. © W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

## INSIDE PASSAGES by Holly Harden

When people in my small town got news of our upcoming visit to Norway, there was something of a commotion. People called, stopped me on the street, and slipped me notes written on communion cards during the sermon. One woman even followed me down Aisle 3 at my grocery store. "You have to visit the sardine factory," she insisted. "You can't leave Norway until you do." Everyone had recommendations to make: visit the Kunstmuseet KUBE, don't miss the sculpture park in Oslo, keep some kroner handy for public restrooms, and for God's sake, and don't fold your open-face sandwiches.

Even people I don't know have suggestions for me. Some lady at the airport in Amsterdam told me to be sure to see the Seven Sisters waterfall and I'd be nuts to not spend time at the *Datchestipedium Skalla Nasjelle Kunstsenternorsk*. That's what I recall, anyway. I was tired at the time so not much registered.

And then there are all the brochures and tourist booklets to fill in the spaces, and with excursions you don't have to think much at all. Just sign on up and you're good to go. Which, in Geiranger, I did. I rode a bus through a series of what they call "hairpin turns" all the way up through the clouds. Almost to God. I wanted desperately to see a troll, which I didn't. I wanted to see bachelor farmers in flannel shirts splitting wood or herding cows. No luck. I didn't see much up in those clouds except rain, but I did

pay 5 kroner to use a public restroom and I did see the Seven Sisters on the way up (check those two off the list). It was worth the price of admission, which was \$99.00, and I was happy to pay. Sometimes it's really great to give it all up and let someone else show you around.

**THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR THE WHOLE NOTION OF "IMPULSE" AND TAKING A STROLL ON YOUR OWN.**

But. The truth of the matter is I'm a crappy tourist. I prefer to wander around and find what I find. Keep the scenic touring books and the pamphlets and the maps. Itineraries and mountains don't belong together, and museum tour groups are torture. Give me a bottle of water, and afternoon, and a fjord in Norway, and if you can get me to the pier, I'm good to go. No directions necessary. Off the well-worn path is where I want to be.

I remember well a visit to Greece nearly 20 years ago, when I rode on a tour bus through the country studying Mediterranean culture with a group of about 20 people from St. Olaf. We visited the Parthenon, and stood on the Areopagus from which the apostle Paul spoke to the people of ancient Athens. We drove up to Delphi and found the oracle, ran the length of the Olympic stadium, and walked through the ruins of the

labyrinth on the island of Crete.

Let me tell you, though, that the best thing about that trip wasn't listed on the syllabus, and no one recommended I do it. Christos, our bus driver, whom I'd befriended and who thought I might enjoy it, took me along for dinner at the home of his friends, a family in a small town up in the mountains, a town whose name I forget. We stayed long into the night, eating souvlaki and tzatziki and gyros, drinking retsina, and laughing at each other's stories as Christos did his best to translate. I left there knowing more about Greece and its people than I ever might have learned in a tour group or book.

Now I'm not suggesting a trip isn't worthwhile if you stick to the list, but there's something to be said for the whole notion of "impulse" and taking a stroll on your own. There are lives beyond the souvenir shops. There are grocery stores and dentists and people bending over in their gardens. There are children wanting a snack. And there are kitchen tables with chairs all around and wine waiting to be poured. Remember, it's not so much where you're going, it's the getting there. Just mind your head along the way.

*Holly Harden is a writer from Scandia, Minnesota. She doesn't care much for knick knacks but boxes are always good because they hold things.*



## FIELD NOTES Strand Flats and Fjords by J. Dykstra Eusden

As the *Veendam* exits and enters these lovely Norwegian fjords we pass each time across a geologic threshold called the strand flat. This is the shallow water brim around the mainland that gives way to inland fjords that are much deeper. In the past 3 million years there have been many glaciations that have eroded the mainland valleys, deepened the fjords and brought sediment to the continental shelf pushing the shelf edge west away from the coast. The strand flat ranges from about 40 meters below to 40 meters above sea level. It is composed of islands with a flat region parallel to the

shoreline encircling higher terrain, the remnants of an older eroded landscape. It formed by a combination of glacial and fluvial erosional processes as well as some freeze-thaw cracking of rocks.

The fjord mouths are situated where drainages from the mountainous interior reach the sea crossing over a shallow threshold at the strand flat. The fjords deepen inland and have been sculpted into erosionally weaker rocks or along easily eroded bedrock fractures. Each successive glaciation deepened the fjords. The steep-sided walls curve

gradually under water to a relatively flat bottom resulting in a characteristic U-shaped fjord profile. There is usually some glacially-derived sediment on the fjord bottom made up of silts clays and the odd rock or snow avalanche deposit composed of coarser gravels, boulders and sands. Quite often when the glacial ice stopped advancing or retreating it left a moraine deposit represented by a stony submarine ridge or threshold.

*See the APHC naturalists throughout the day in various locations throughout the ship. They're still going strong, despite the lack of whales (though fins have been spotted).*

## PASSENGER NOTES

God bless these good Norwegians! Today I left my wallet on a Trondheim city bus after searching for Norwegian coins and finding only Danish. Somehow the wallet escaped being put back in my Healthy Back Bag, and our party of four went on happily to spend the morning at Nidaros Cathedral (St. Olaf's). When we realized with horror that the wallet was missing, my husband walked four blocks to the bus company office and reported the loss at 1:00 p.m. At that time the bus company had not had a report of any found items. We woefully returned to the *Veendam* thinking of the lost credit card that would have to be cancelled quickly and the driver's license to be replaced. Arriving in our room, my husband found a call on the phone, recorded at 11:12 a.m. The green wallet had been returned (before we knew it was gone) to the *Veendam* gangway. We can only guess that we are indebted to some honest passenger and a bus driver who drove up to the pier on his next circuit.

— Lisa Hudson

"Hi. Here is a Washington State patrol patch. May I exchange for one of yours?"

"Sorry, but no. We do not exchange."

"Ok. Thank you for your time."

No patches from Italy, Austria or Switzerland. But three patches were exchanged in Germany. The last time my wife and I spent a month in Europe we were able to exchange

five rotary flags. Knowing that there would not be much rotary activity on the *Veendam*, we brought Washington state patrol arm patches this time. The lady at the Alesun Politi Station took my patch and business card and told me to sit down and wait. Ten minutes later a police officer gave me a brand new police shirt with all the police insignia on it. The police receptionist in Trondheim told me to come back in two hours when Olaf would be in. Olaf gave us a police hat with the badge on it and an extra badge.

As we were walking back to the *Veendam*, PHC tourists going the other way suggested that I put the hat on.

"Oh, no. Not in Norway."

Just then Olaf came up behind us and gave us one of his business cards. We invited him to come visit us in Washington. He said that would be unlikely.

So, then. Are there any law enforcement passengers on board who can tell me when there will be a police or sheriff's conference in the Pacific Northwest sometime in 2007 or 2008? I would appreciate it if you could tell me so that Olaf could receive an invitation.

— Tom Bennett ([tombennett@remax.net](mailto:tombennett@remax.net))

Garrison — Thank you for being such a healing presence in my life, week to week on the radio, and now by your good-natured participation in this well-planned adventure.

You have gathered such a wonderful, warm

and talented group of people who work on the show (on and behind the scenes), and, though I came by myself, I am not traveling alone, as I have met almost only open, kind and interesting people on the cruise.

— Anonymous

## THIS JUST IN Talent Show Contestants Announced

Please congratulate your fellow passengers who qualified for Friday night's Talent Show:

**Green Show:** Carol Strachan  
Dick Kaufmann  
John Molzer  
Belinda Bremer Dickins  
Jan Carlberg  
Annie Janssen  
Meredith McComb

**Pink Show:** Paul West  
Hannes  
Serena Shorr  
Sara Zentmeger  
Margaret Bonds  
Kay Morton  
Sherry and Tom

All contestants have been notified. Thanks to everyone who auditioned. And remember, only one show per passenger, please.

*Got Notes? Drop 'em at the HAL front desk—4:00 p.m., no later. Please. Last day to submit is Friday, July 20th!*

## THE BOOK NOOK by Marcia Pankake

Loved Norway's Summers;  
Hated Its Winters

### Edvard Grieg, Letters to Colleagues and Friends

edited by Finn Benestad

translated by William H. Halverson  
Columbus, Peer Gynt Press, 2000.

A prolific correspondent, Grieg wrote to literary figures (Ibsen), to composers (Brahms) and to his family and friends. He wrote about religion: "You say, 'Just try Jesus!' One can try a topcoat, but not Jesus." He wrote about politics: "You must agree with me that until we can get the union [between Norway and Sweden] improved or changed or dissolved there is no use thinking about achieving peace with the Swedes." And of course he wrote about personal matters and about music. In a letter to his parents about first meeting Liszt he described hearing Liszt play his Violin Sonata No. 2 in G major, which he'd brought as an obligatory gift. "So what does Liszt do? He plays the whole thing, lock, stock and barrel—violin parts, piano parts, and even more than that. Yes, he played fuller, more broadly, in such a way that the violin part came into its own right in the middle of the piano part. He was literally all over the keyboard at the same time without missing a note. And how did he play? With the ultimate greatness, beauty, and brilliance in his understanding of the piece. I think I laughed—laughed like an idiot." Common Good Books, in St. Paul, [www.commongoodbooks.com](http://www.commongoodbooks.com), has a supply of out of print copies selling for \$20.

*Marcia Pankake is a retired librarian and long time editor of Prairie Home publications. She can tell you anything you might wish to know about "Kristin Lavransdatter."*



## VIKING NEWS by Christina von Nolcken

WHAT DID THE VIKINGS EAT?

The Vikings did not enjoy delicious food like ours today aboard the *ms Veendam*. Even so, those at the top of the food chain must have had an extremely nutritious diet (rumor has it that Ivar the Boneless was nine feet tall). Dairy products and fish played an important part of this diet, as did bread, which was sometimes made with wheat but more often with barley. Meals were served twice a day, in the early morning and in the evening. The morning meal consisted of bread along with porridge, oatcakes, milk, cold meat and fruit. The evening meal, would, in a wealthy farmer's house, have included sausage, fish, eggs, milk, meat, onions, mushrooms, cheese, apples, hazelnuts, strawberries, blackberries, and honey. Food might be flavored with salt, which was prepared by evaporating seawater over a fire. Everyone drank ale, including the three-year old Egil in Egil's Saga, but the wealthy also enjoyed mead and imported wines.

(For some of this I am indebted to R. Chartrand, et al., *The Vikings: Voyagers of Discovery and Plunder* (2006)).

*Christina von Nolcken is the PHC Norway Cruise Viking expert. She gets a wild look in her eye when she talks about all things Viking.*

## THINGS OVERHEARD

"You know, I would go anywhere with these people. I don't even care where the ship goes." —Dick Kaufmann, 3rd time APHC cruise passenger

"My ears are popping."  
— on the way up the Geiranger road

"Everyone is really nice on the ship except for the nurse in the infirmary. She's crabby."  
— on the tender into port

"Everybody looks busy. Is there something going on I don't know about?"  
—Rich Dworsky

"No pastoral kissing on the deck."  
— older passenger to younger passengers

"You know I was looking around for one of those white bags and I couldn't find one so I just swallowed it." — in the elevator

"The pointy end is the front of the ship."  
— sailor talking to non-sailor



CAN'T GET ENOUGH?

Take some home.

WE HAVE CDS, BOOKS AND  
DVDS FOR SALE.

Quantities are limited.

## You Really Ought to Know

Please note that still photography is permitted for personal use only. No flash or video allowed. And one more thing—when taking a photo during a performance, please respect your fellow passengers by not standing in front of anyone during the show.

Prairie Home staff will be taking Saturday off in Oslo. Please send your final Ballast submissions by 4:00 p.m., Friday!



APHC Camera Club

## Calling all shutterbugs!

Drop off your digital photo cards to the APHC Info desk in the lobby before 4:30 p.m. each day and we just might add them to a slide show.

Final opportunity to submit  
photos for the Camera Club  
is Saturday, July 21 by 3 p.m.  
Get 'em in soon!