



The background of the entire image is a photograph of a vast, flat, snow-covered landscape. The snow is bright white and has some subtle textures and shadows. In the distance, a dark, rocky horizon line separates the snow from a clear, deep blue sky. The text is overlaid on this background.

I visited

NORTHERN NORWAY

to find out about the

AURORA BOREALIS

also known as

‘The Northern Lights’

with support from the Henry Morris Memorial Trust

NORGE (NORWAY)



- My Dad and I flew from Gatwick Airport, U.K, to firstly Oslo and then Alta
- We walked through the night to our accommodation—a cabin on a campsite. It took 2 hours
- I wanted to find out what the stories behind the Northern Lights were—what did people think they were before they knew the science behind them?

**Wednesday 6th
September**

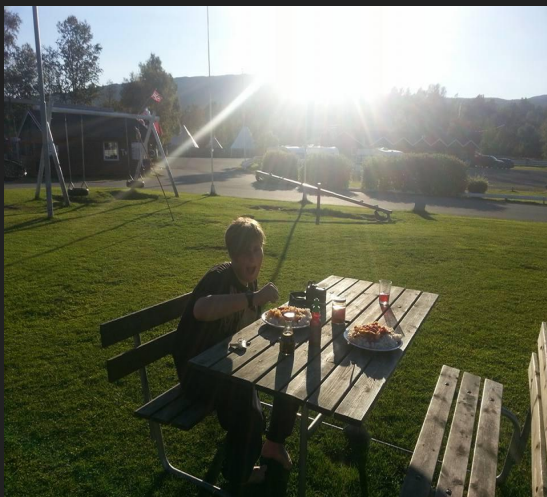




On Wednesday we arrived in Alta airport at about 22:40 and after a few minutes we got ready for the 12 km walk ahead of us. We set off on the route to the campsite. When we arrived we went straight to sleep in preparation for our first full day in Norway.

Our accommodation
from
06/09/17-11/09/17

A small cabin at Alta
River Campsite



Thursday  7th September

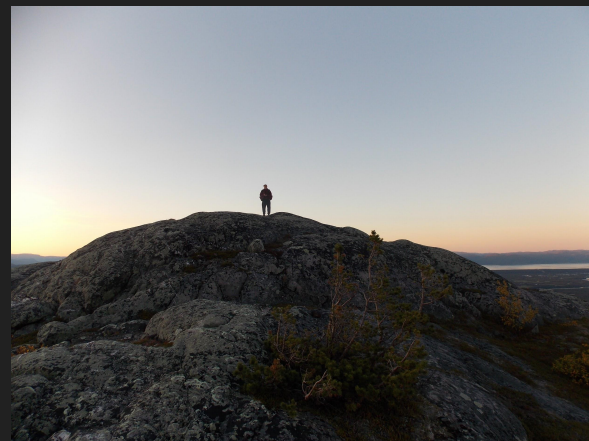


On Thursday we decided to go to the Alta Rock Carvings museum, which was right next to the fjord. The carvings ranged from about 2,000 to 7,000 years old and were mainly of reindeer and dragon boats. Some of the carvings were coloured in. This was so people could see them more easily.



Later, on day 2, we took the arduous journey up the Skoddevarre mountain range. We went there to go to a natural pool about half way up, but we got lost and so followed the marked trail up to the top. Once there, after a quick breather, we decided to stay up for the evening, to see the Northern Lights. The view was so much better higher up than at sea level and would give us a better chance of seeing them due to no light pollution. This was the first mountain I had ever climbed and I was worn out by the top!

As night drew in we started to see a green line in the sky. We knew at this point it was worth the climb! The more we waited the bigger and stronger the wisps grew, dancing across the sky and dropping jaws as it went. We had brought a few snacks and a space blanket to keep us warm but cold and hunger disappear when you are met with such awe and beauty.



Skoddevarre 07/09/17

The Northern Lights



Friday
8th September





On Friday around midday, we decided to climb the Haldde Toppen mountain trail which was about 10 km long and peaked at 900m above sea level. At the top was an old observatory and we hoped we would see the Northern Lights really clearly there. Our hopes became slimmer with every step as “grey clouds rolled over the hills bringing darkness from above”.

Although this meant that we had walked ‘til exhaustion to no avail, the thought of turning back seemed even worse as when we got to the base of the mountain we would still have an uphill 20k cycle to go. Luckily there was also a big house at the top of the hill, so we knew we had shelter for the night. In the house there were some German students who were studying in Alta for a few days before going back to Tromsø. We did not see the Northern Lights as it was too cloudy but instead rested and rejuvenated for our long journey back.



Haldde Observatory 8/9/17

Saturday 9th September



On Saturday morning we made our slow descent, back down the mountain and across the land, returning to our campsite around 17:30.



A video of
local
husky
dogs
training
for the
winter.



A scenic landscape photograph showing a coastal town nestled between a rocky shoreline and a large body of water. In the foreground, there are large, grey, moss-covered rocks and a few evergreen trees. The town in the middle ground features numerous houses with dark roofs and some autumn-colored foliage. The background consists of a calm body of water and distant, hazy mountains under a cloudy sky. Overlaid on the right side of the image is the text "Sunday 10th September" in a purple, sans-serif font.

Sunday
10th
September

On Sunday it was time to go souvenir shopping. On the way we decided to go and try to find the pool half way up Skoddevarre again. Taking a shortcut we did some rock climbing instead of sticking to the path. Soon enough we found it and had a quick dip but it was freezing cold so we left shortly after.



I spent some time putting together all the myths that I had found out about the Northern Lights.

Norse Mythology

What we know as The Northern Lights was once believed to be the flickering, flashing radiance shed from the armour and weaponry of female sky-riding warriors, the **Valkyries**. Their task was to soar over battles, on horseback, choosing those who would lose their life. They worked for the mythological Norse God of war and death, **Odin**, and took half of the forsaken to **Valhalla**, Odin's great hall of the fallen.

Bivrost, the bridge between heaven and earth, was made of three colours representing the Aurora Borealis. **Heimdall**, the watchman of the gods, guarded the bridge to prevent evil creatures from crossing.

If they did, **Ragnarok**, the ultimate destruction of gods and men, would break loose.

I found this out by visiting the Northern Lights Cathedral in Alta Sentrum.

Sami Lore

The Sami people believed that Aurora Borealis was in fact the spirits of the dead and had some superstitions about the Northern Lights, one of which was that waving to the northern was considered disrespectful. I believe this is because if aurora borealis was the spirits of the dead then waving to them may disturb them from their rest. It was believed that the Northern Lights could swoop down and take children away if they were disrespectful or rude.

They also used to use the Northern Lights to settle arguments. Each person would pick a wisp from the sky and whoever's wisp grew stronger would win the argument. It is almost like they were calling on their ancestors in the Northern Lights to help them.

The Sami sometimes heard crackling in the Northern lights and many people still say they can hear this when Aurora Borealis is stretching its luminescent legs.

Further information about the myths behind the 'Lights'

Nordic folklore associated the northern lights with the souls of dead women. In western Norway, it was said that the Northern Lights were caused by dead virgins as they waved their mittens in the hopes of attracting a suitor. There was also a saying about elderly spinsters "She's so old that she'll soon be off to the northern lights".

In Nordic tradition, the Northern Lights were supposed to be quite dangerous for women. They were encouraged to stay indoors and if they left the house, they should cover their heads in case the Lights came down from the heavens and ruined their hair!

The Inuits of Greenland and Canada believed the Lights to be the haunt of the dead . When the northern lights were especially strong they believed that the dead wished to contact their living relatives. Whistling to the northern lights could apparently cause their movements to become more lively.

**Monday 11th
September**



HIGHLIGHTS



**How has this
trip changed
me?**

**And Why
Henry Morris
fund is worth
it.**

Firstly this trip has given me an experience to hold with me forever.

And it has taught me a lot about how society changes over time.

But perhaps the most valuable thing that this marvellous trip has taught me is that with a bit of hard work and some help from others I can do things I thought I would never do.

This is why the Henry Morris Memorial Trust is such an important thing to offer to teenagers as we steam towards adulthood. It teaches us that we can turn our ideas into a reality.



Thank you