

NATURE AND CULTURE

The heavy water war



Photo: visitRjukan

THE ATOMIC BOMB had not yet been invented when WWII broke out. However, the threat of a nuclear race remained an underlying concern for the duration of the war. The Vemork plant, which was occupied by the Nazis, produced heavy water – an ingredient thought to be essential to developing a nuclear bomb. A total of four military operations aimed at the heavy water plant at Vemork were carried out.

- 19 November 1942: Operation Freshman. The operation fails. 41 people are killed.
- 28 February 1943: Vemork is blown up. No fatalities.
- 16 November 1943: Air raid. 912 bombs are dropped on Rjukan and Vemork. 22 civilians are killed.
- 20 February 1944: The sinking of D/F Hydro. 14 civilians and 4 German soldiers are killed.

NATURE AND CULTURE

The heavy water war on film



THIS TRUE STORY from WWII has been adapted for the screen several times. Nine of the original saboteurs played themselves in the 1948 film *Operation Swallow: The Battle for Heavy Water*.

With *The Heroes of Telemark* from 1965 starring Kirk Douglas, the story of how the Norwegian resistance blew up the Nazis' heavy water plant in Rjukan reached a worldwide audience. Seventy years after the action has once again been recreated, this time as a 6-part TV drama. The TV series *The Heavy Water War* recounts the dramatic backstory of the sabotage campaigns in Rjukan. The scientist Werner Heisenberg is forced to help the German war machine develop an atomic bomb. At the same time Professor Leif Tronstad is plotting an audacious attempt to blow up Norsk Hydro's heavy water plant at Vemork in Rjukan. Parts of the TV series were shot in and around Rjukan and Vemork over an 8-week period in early 2014. More than 150 local extras participated in the shoot. Photo: visitRjukan, InnBrodde

Layout: Nina Akerstvein / trykk Erik Tanche Nilssen as



Vandrerregionen

www.vandretelemark.no

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WHAT TO SEE ON THE WALK

THERE ARE STUNNING views of Mount Gaustatoppen.

Photo: Fotograf Jakobsen

VESTFJORDDALEN:

The long and steep valley in all its glory.

Photo: Fotograf Jakobsen

MEMORIAL: The stone memorial at Vemork was erected in remembrance of the heavy water saboteurs.

Photo: visitRjukan, Espen Håkonsen



8 KM ONE WAY / 2.5 HOURS

FAMILY-FRIENDLY HISTORY WALK →



Rjukan – Telemark

WALK Saboteurs' trail

THEME The heavy water war



Photo: Fotograf Jakobsen

THE SABOTEURS' TRAIL (Sabotarstien) was used by the Norwegian resistance men when they blew up the heavy water plant at Vemork. Photo: Fotograf Jakobsen



Description of the walk

A FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRIP suitable for relatively fit and experienced walkers of all ages. This trip allows adults and children to learn more about the heavy water sabotage operations during WWII. Start the trip at Rjukan Fjellstue. From there, follow the grit road through the Hirdalen valley for around 1.5 km. Next, the trail enters varied terrain through both woodland and open landscapes. There are information boards along the way telling the story of how the Norwegian saboteurs made their way from the Hardangeridda plateau down the steep gorges to Vemork in order to destroy the heavy water plant. The characteristic landscape makes this trip a unique experience. The trail is clearly marked, and there is a fairly steep descent near the end.

Driving directions

FROM RJKUKAN: Follow route RV37 westbound for around 11 km to Rjukan Fjellstue on the right-hand side of the road.

FROM THE CENTRE OF RAULAND: Follow route RV37 eastbound for around 36 km. Turn off the main road at Rjukan Fjellstue.

P Car parking on the left-hand side. (GPS: 59°085.546' E8° 44.304')

BUS FROM RJKUKAN: Park your car at Vemork, walk back to the main road, turn left and continue for around 100 m. Cross the road and take the bus scheduled to depart at around 12.35.



At www.walktelemark.com you will find an overview of hiking trails and accommodation for hikers.



FURTHER READING

"Rjukan & The Heavy Water War" by Ian Brodie.

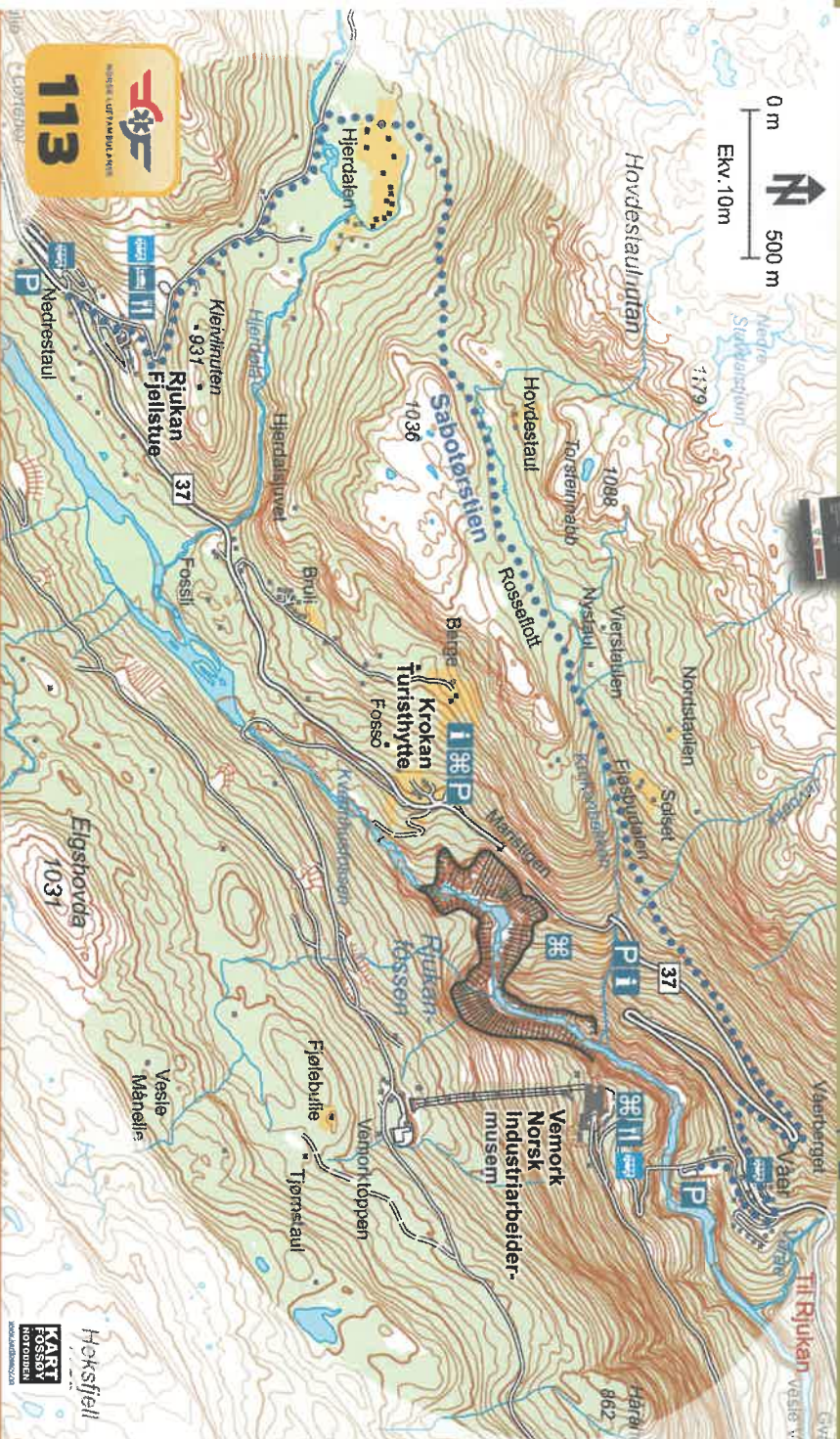
You are responsible for your own safety during the walk. Treat the countryside and grazing animals with respect. Take only photos, leave only footprints. Please take your rubbish home with you. Enjoy the trip!

Map:
Rjukan Vest – Måsvatn 1 : 25 000,
Norges-serien Rjukan 10025 1 : 50 000



Remember to wear sturdy footwear. There are some winding and wet sections along the route.

Access:
May-October.



Scale 1:25 000

Equidistance 10 m

markert summer trail



Photo: Ian Brodie



Photo: Ian Brodie