



Anyone with information on this ship?



Kristiansund's Sundboats are world's oldest continuous public transport system still in operation

For centuries, people made a living from the sea on the islands of Kristiansund, Norway. Situated about half-way up the country on the west coast, Kristiansund is made up of four different "lands" or islands: Kirklandet, Innlandet, Nordlandet, and Gomalandet.

Until 1742, the place was called Fosna, but when it received town privileges, the name was changed to Kristiansund, after the Danish king.

In the late 17th century the area gained notoriety for "klippfish" or cliff fish – dried cod. The smooth rocky bluffs or cliffs were the perfect place to dry the cod in the sun. Klippfish provided economic prosperity for the region for the next two hundred years.

Before bridges were constructed, the latest in 1961, there was a need for transportation between the different islands. Many people had their own boats, and as the population increased during the 19th century some men, and one lady, began to row people and goods for money, evolving into a nice little business. The municipality decided to take more responsibility for this means of transportation, and granted licenses to those who wanted to row.

But small row boats provided little comfort, especially in bad weather. In 1875, local businessmen formed the Kristiansund Steamship Company, and put its first boat, **KVIK** (Quick) into traffic on Nov. 18, 1876. Soon after, two more boats followed: **RAP** (1877 – meaning swift) and **FRAM** (forward).. People called the boats "Sundboats"

(Sound Boat or Strait Crossing Boat) and from the start the company was a huge success.

The company paid a yearly dividend to its shareholders, but during the First World War, they began having financial problems as coal-prices soared, ticket-prices could not be increased accordingly. The deficits forced the company to give up, but the municipality continued the operations with the fleet of six boats, and changed the name to Kristiansund

Municipal Sundboat Company. From 1928, the company was managed by the port-authorities.

In late April 1940, Kristiansund was severely damaged by German bombing. One of the boats sank at a pier, and for a brief period the operations were halted. During the war-years, the boats sailed to places outside the harbor, and by 1943-44, the boats carried 2,635,900 passengers, still a yearly record. In 1951, the company replaced the coin-tickets with paper-tickets, and



the last steamboat went out of service.

In 1958, a new **RAPP** was built which still operates on the harbor. But passenger numbers dropped during the ensuing years as vehicular traffic increased and people lived and worked outside the harbour-area. Fortunately this trend has turned around in the last few years and the Sundboats now serve about 90,000 passengers per year.

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