

## Ellie Targett – Norway and the Norwegians.

The Hall was decorated with bunting and flags, to commemorate Her Majesty's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday as Ellie Targett gave a return visit to the History Group Meeting to talk about the customs, famous people and places and the folklore of Norway, using a PowerPoint presentation.

Ellie began her talk by telling us that there was more to Norway than just fjords, bunting and flags, trolls and brightly painted houses. She briefly mentioned that Norway has the longest ski-jump in the world; a 6000 year old cave drawing of a man with skis, and that Norway has the earliest evidence of skiing (5000BC), before embarking on the main topic – famous Norwegians.

She began by talking of Fridtjof Nansen (1861 - 1930), an explorer, scientist and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate in 1922. Nansen courageously exposed the severe famine in Russia to a sceptical world. She continued by telling us of Roald Amundsen (1872 - 1928), who famously beat Scott to the Antarctic. Later in her talk she covered Thor Heyerdahl, whose exploits in the raft 'Kon Tiki' made him famous throughout the world.

Trolls feature a lot in Norwegian folklore and art and Ellie mentioned a Norwegian artist whose drawings were instantly recognisable. Another famous Norwegian artist mentioned was Eduard Munch (1863 – 1944), whose disturbing painting 'The Scream' is known throughout the world.

As a light interlude Ellie encouraged the group to learn and sing a Norwegian folk song 'Alle mann hadde fota', which we accomplished with much gusto. Then Ellie continued by talking about the past and present Norwegian Royal Family; national costume; National Day on 17<sup>th</sup> May; the Gokstad Viking ship dating back to the 9<sup>th</sup> Century; and the Vigeland Sculpture Park in Oslo.

More famous Norwegians included Hedrik Ibsen (1828 – 1906), the founder of Modernism in theatre, and the most performed dramatist in the world after William Shakespeare. Ellie concluded her talk with Edvard Grieg (1843 – 1907), the composer of 'Peer Gynt' and also an accomplished pianist.

To round off the meeting, the History Group commemorated Queen Elizabeth's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday by singing the National Anthem, after which Geoff Bailey, History Group Chairman, led three rousing cheers for Her Majesty the Queen. Refreshments included themed cupcakes.

Heidy Hague.

