

JOURNAL OF THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF GENEALOGISTS INC.

# The New Zealand Genealogist

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**Grandfather's  
secret secret**

RESEARCHING YOUR  
IRISH ANCESTORS:

**Irish flax growers**

**Genealogy and the Internet**

Mount Street Cemetery

**Why we need family history fairs**





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## COVER STORY

Soon after her article about Harald Andersen was published in the March/April 2010 issue of *The New Zealand Genealogist*, author Kathy Callaghan discovered that her grandfather had an even bigger secret that he had kept hidden from his New Zealand family all his life.

Kathy and her husband had planned a trip to Nannestad, Norway for July this year. Because they knew so little about the family, Kathy decided to write to the local newspaper in Nannestad to see if they would be interested in writing a story about her search.

The editor said yes and assigned a reporter, Magnar Haraldsen, the task. It turned out that Magnar's great-grandfather and Kathy's grandfather had the same name.

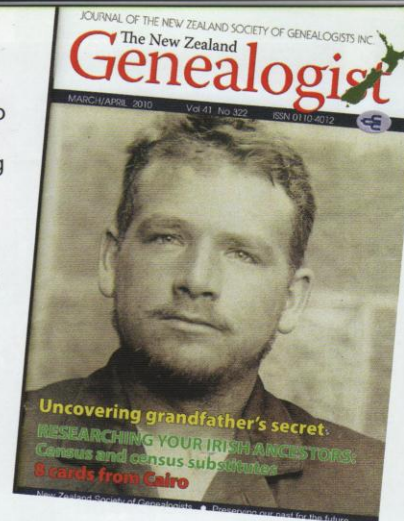
Read about Kathy's amazing discovery on page 217.



In the March/April issue of *The New Zealand Genealogist* magazine<sup>1</sup>, the story I had submitted about my grandfather Harald Oskar ANDERSEN, who was born on May 2, 1881 in Nannestad, Norway<sup>2</sup>, was chosen as the cover story. On the front cover with his photograph were the words "Uncovering Grandfather's Secret".

The story tells of information found in Harald's Naturalisation file held at Archives New Zealand in Wellington<sup>3</sup>. The discovery was that Harald had spent two months in jail after "jumping ship" after arriving in New Zealand in 1904. He had stolen the suit of a fellow crew member and for that "crime" had been imprisoned in Mt Eden Jail.

The family knew nothing of this, and the Naturalisation file supplied a huge amount of information and detail about Harald and his life on arrival in New Zealand. Little did I know that within a month of the publication of the story, I would discover an even bigger secret my grandfather had kept hidden from his family in New Zealand all his life.



## Uncovering grandfather's secret secret!

By CATHY CALLAGHAN

**O**UR FAMILY knew almost nothing of Harald's life in Norway prior to his coming to New Zealand.

My oldest cousin, Rose WELLINGTON went to Norway in 1996 to try and find some information and visited the National Archival Services of Norway in Oslo. She found Harald's christening record and the names of his parents, Anders MIKKELSEN born 1850, Hamar, Hedland,<sup>4</sup> and Karen Dorthea KRISTOFFERSEN born October 21, 1849, Hveim, Akershus<sup>5</sup>.

Whenever Harald completed documents in New Zealand he had chosen to call his parents Johan and Karen Andersen<sup>6</sup>, which explains why we could not find information about his parents. Later research discovered that Harald had a half-brother and sister. We had vague memories of a half-sister being mentioned, but not a half-brother.

Almost a year ago, my husband and I decided to do a tour of Scandinavia which ended in Oslo. We planned that we would visit the Nannestad Church where Harald had been christened. We allowed just one day for this, as we had no other information that led us to any other places of interest.

In May this year, one month before leaving for Norway, I decided to write to the *Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad*, the newspaper that covers Nannestad. I



Harald Oskar Andersen, 1958.

asked if they would be interested in writing an article about my search for my Norwegian roots and Harald's family. I hoped that someone may have information about his half-brother and sister. I attached the script of the story I had submitted for *The New Zealand Genealogist*. The editor replied immediately saying they were interested, and that the story had been passed to a reporter, Magnar HARALDSEN, who lived in the area.

Magnar contacted me to say the story would be in the paper the next Saturday.<sup>7</sup> On the following Monday he emailed me with very exciting news. He said that his own cousin had rung him after seeing the story in the newspaper. She had recently

started to look into family history and seeing Harald's name made her go back and check her records.

Harald Oskar Andersen had the same name as their great-grandfather. Could this possibly be the same man? Magnar said he would get his experts to check the official records and church books<sup>8</sup>.

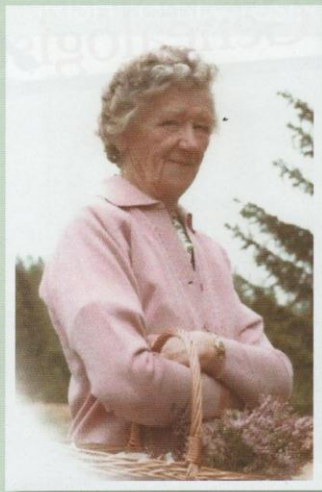
Magnar then emailed me and asked if I thought Harald Oskar Andersen, who was his great-grandfather, could be the same man as my grandfather. I replied that the only way this could be was if Harald had a child before he left Norway. Any child had to be born before 1903 because we had official records of Harald's journey to New Zealand<sup>9</sup>.

A few days later Magnar contacted me to say the official records showed that his great-grandfather Harald Oskar Andersen and my grandfather were in fact the same person! Not only that, Harald had two children before he left Norway, Marie Karoline Haraldsen<sup>10</sup>, born October 7, 1901 and Johan Haraldsen<sup>11</sup>, born November 1, 1902. Magnar, was the grandson of Johan Haraldsen and therefore my cousin.

What an incredible co-incidence! The family in New Zealand did not know they had a family in Norway, and the family in Norway did not know they had a family in New Zealand. What are the chances of a reporter being assigned a story and finding he is the centre of his own story?

Magnar then wrote a second article for the *Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad*<sup>12</sup> which he entitled "An Amazing Co-





Marie Karoline Haraldsen c1973



Johan Oscar Haraldsen with wife, Karen Johanne c1973.

Below: Haraldsen family July 2010.



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First cousins, Kare Haraldsen, Kathy Callaghan, Grethe Tiller, Arne Haraldsen.

incidence!" This started a rapid exchange of photographs and emails. How strange it was to see photographs of complete strangers who looked like my father and grandfather.

Of course this led us to ask the question — why would Harald leave his partner, infant children and mother and never contact them again? The answer gradually emerged from older members of the Norwegian family<sup>13</sup>. Apparently Harald and three friends were involved in a fight early in 1903 in which a man died. Harald panicked. He must have thought he was responsible for the man's death so he "disappeared". The Norwegian family thought he had gone to work on a ship (which was in fact true) and assumed he was lost at sea because they never heard from him again.

An inquiry into the death of the man involved in the fight showed that the man

died from striking his head on a stone and no one was charged with his death. By this time Harald was long gone and no-one knew where he was.

Harald's partner was Anna Otilie EDVARSDEN<sup>14</sup> born in 1882, in Eltonie. She and Harald were not married, and their two children were infants when Harald disappeared. Anna was not able to cope on her own after this, and the children were placed in foster homes. They had a happy childhood in spite of the circumstances caused by their father's disappearance.

We can only speculate as to what was going on in Harald's mind in 1903. Obviously he was terrified enough to leave his family and flee Norway. Throughout his life he may have thought his past was going to catch up with him. When he was dying in 1962 he murmured things about "people being

Below: Harald's New Zealand family, from left, Fred, Andrina (wife), Eric, Keith, Harald, Dorot







*The grand welcome.*

after him and coming to get him". At the time this was passed off as delirium, but we wonder now if he was haunted by his hidden secret for all his life.

The timing of this amazing discovery was incredible, as we were to be in Nannestad just three weeks after the story emerged. We were told that the family members in Norway were very keen to meet me.

So, on July 17, my husband and I arrived in Nannestad and it proved to be a very special day. We were met by four family members, including Magnar Haraldsen, the reporter. The women were dressed in traditional Norwegian dress, which is reserved for special occasions. This was indeed a special occasion! When we saw each other no words were

exchanged, just big hugs and tears. It was an emotional moment.

We visited many of the places of historical interest to Harald and his family, filling in many gaps about his life, such as where he lived and worked, where the "fight" took place, and where his infant children were fostered.

We were then taken to the Nannestad Community Centre for a meal. An incredible sight greeted us on arrival. At the top of the steps, flying proudly in the breeze, were the flags of both New Zealand and Norway. Standing in a guard of honour waiting for us were more than 50 family members. This kind of welcome is usually experienced by the Queen, not by someone like me from "little old New Zealand".

What an overwhelming experience to suddenly find myself in the midst of people who exuded so much love

and acceptance. As my eyes scanned the scene, I suddenly realised some of them not only looked like my father and grandfather, but they looked like me too. To my delight, I found I had three first cousins, and all of them were there. After greeting everyone, we were treated to a banquet of traditional Norwegian food. This was capped off when I cut an enormous cake which was decorated with a message of welcome and the flags of New Zealand and Norway.

Following the meal we visited the Nannestad Church, where Harald was christened. The church had been unlocked in our honour, so we were able to go inside and stand at the font where Harald had been baptised in 1881. As I stood by the font, I could not help but think about the scene that took place 130 years before. Little did his parents know that 130 years later, Harald's grand-



*Reporter Magnar Haraldsen with the author.*





Nannestad Church.

daughter from New Zealand would be standing in that exact spot and would be responsible for uniting two families from opposite sides of the world.

Weeks before we did not even know the other family existed, but now we were one much bigger family.

We family historians spend hours and hours poring over documents, searching the Internet and accumulating endless pieces of paper. How exciting it is when names and dates become real people, all with their own stories. "Uncovering

my grandfather's secret secret" was one of the most wonderful experiences in my life. It made all of that genealogical research worthwhile!

#### References

- 1 The New Zealand Genealogist, March/April 2010, Vol 41 No 322.
- 2 Digitalarkievt.
- 3 Archives New Zealand, Wellington.
- 4 The National Archival Services of Norway (Norwegian: Arkivverket).
- 5 The National Archival Services of Norway (Norwegian: Arkivverket).

6 Naturalisation File, Archives New Zealand, Wellington.

7 *Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad*, May 22, 2010.

8 DIS-Norge.

9 Certificate of Discharge.

10 Digitalarkievt.

11 Digitalarkievt.

12 *Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad*, June 26, 2010.

13 Family member story.

14 Digitalarkievt.

Kathy Callaghan,

Email: [kjcsinger@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:kjcsinger@yahoo.co.nz)

Translation of Norwegian Newspaper article:

### AN AMAZING COINCIDENCE

# Looking for my own relatives

By MAGNAR HARALDSEN

**NANNESTAD:** At the end of May Kathy Callaghan from New Zealand wrote an email to *Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad* asking for help to find her family relatives in Nannestad. Her inquiry gave some unexpected results.

Editor Erik Østmundset sent the email to the writer of this article, as I am born and grew up in Nannestad, and am EUB's co-worker in the community.

I did not know the name Harald Oskar Andersen, Callaghan's grandfather, whom she hoped to find more about. She thought the closest she'd get would be if anyone knew anything about her grandfather's half-siblings, whose names she had found through the church books.

In the article I wrote on May 22, I asked for any tip that could be sent to me, and that I could forward to Callaghan. I had an idea about a follow up in the newspaper if she found any relatives. An inquiry was also sent to some family researchers via Nannestad community. And other researchers have also been involved since the newspaper article. Great!! A lot of new information about the family has come to light.

#### Disappeared

Harald Oskar Andersen, who was a sailor, arrived in New Zealand in 1904. There he jumped ship and settled down. The family in New Zealand as well as in Norway, have known very little about this man's story. He told almost nothing about his life in Norway, where he left just after Johan Oskar Haraldsen, my grandfather, was born in 1902. The

family here never knew where he went. He never came back from the sea. Nobody knew whether he might have died. Because he "vanished" like that, he was never registered as emigrated. That's why all tracks stopped. Anna Otilie Edvardsen was left alone with two small children. They were not married.

#### Surprised

The story took an unexpected turn — more than 100 years later. We had no idea the key was at the other side of the world. Big was my surprise when my cousin, Wenche Myrvang, called and said she knew the name of the man I had written about in EUB. She was, together with her sister, Jane Olsen, doing some family research, and had made a note of her great-grandfather's name. She



Article in the Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad newspaper.

had found the name in the church books. When she saw the article, she thought the name was familiar. And yes, it was. Harald Oskar Andersen was the name in her notes.

"Do you know something odd?" Wenche said to me when she called after having read EUB. "The man in the picture in the newspaper is our great-grandfather".

It was almost unbelievable.

The family in New Zealand were just as surprised after our first email to them. They had no idea that Harald Oskar Andersen had two children in Norway, Johan Oskar (born 1902) and Marie Karoline (born 1901) when he left the country.

In New Zealand he got married and had six children. We have a lot of family there.

### Huge family

"We didn't know that grandfather Harald had children when he left Norway so this is very exciting for us. I can tell you that you have a big family in New Zealand. I want to know more about you all! I had never dreamt I'd find such close family" Kathy Callaghan writes in one of her emails to us.

Since then there have been a lot of emails. Kathy and her husband Ross are going on a longer trip and had already planned a visit to Norway. They knew that Harald Oskar Andersen was born in Nannestad, and no matter what would come out of the inquiry they would visit Nannestad to see where he came from.

They have asked Marit Jarum,

who has been Kathy's sister's penfriend for many years, to help. Jarum lives in Oslo, but is originally from Eidsvoll. She also suggested to Kathy that she should ask EUB for help.

### Overwhelming

"This is overwhelming and incredibly amazing. It's a coincidence that we now have found many new relatives. Without the inquiry from New Zealand we would have had

no trace of Harald Oskar Andersen, our great-grandfather", says Jane and Wenche. The whole family in Norway now knows what's happened and are thrilled about what has come to light. Saturday July 17, Kathy Callaghan and her husband are coming to Nannestad, and the family are looking forward to meeting them. Kathy's closest family here are her cousins Kåre Haraldsen, Arne Haraldsen and Grethe Tiller.



KOMMER Kathy og Ross Callaghan kommer til Nannestad 17. juli og får hilse på en stor del av Kathys slekt i Norge. (Foto: Privat)

### ET UTROLIG SAMMENTREFF

# Etterlyste min egen slekt

**NANNESTAD.** I slutten av mai skrev Kathy Callaghan fra New Zealand en e-post til Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad med spørsmål om hjelp til å finne slekt i Nannestad. Heravdelsens viste seg å gi uventede resultater.

**MAGNAR HARALDSEN** myrva@eub.no 900 68 99 90

Redaktør Erik Øsmundset sendte e-posten videre til undertegnede, som er født og oppvokst i Nannestad, og som er EUBs medarbeider i kommunen.

Jeg kjente ikke navnet Harald Oskar Andersen, Callaghans farfar, som hun håpet å finne ut mer om. Hun trodde det nærmeeste hun kunne komme var om noen visste noe om hans halvbrødre som hun hadde funnet navnet på gjennom kirkebøkene.

I artikkelen jeg skrev den 22. mai ba jeg om tips som kunne sendes til meg, og som jeg kunne forwardere videre til Callaghan. Jeg så for meg en oppfølger i EUB dersom hun fant slektninger. Foroppsettet ble i tillegg sendt til slektgranskerer gjennom Nannestad kommune. Også andre fjerre slektstforskere har megnet seg etter avisartikkelen. Kjempeflott! Mange nye opplysninger om familien er kommet fram.

**BLE BORTE** Harald Oskar Andersen, som var sjemann, ankom New Zealand i 1904. Der hoppet han av skipet, han kom med, og bosatte seg der. Familiene, både i New Zealand og i Norge, har vist svært lite om denne mannens historie. Han fortalte

at Anna Hagen var hans farfar. Første den under høyttalere.

## Etterlyser bestefars røtter

**NANNESTAD** 1904 dro Harald Oskar Andersen fra Nannestad til New Zealand. Han ble født i 1881, og nå ønsker han slekt fra New Zealand å finne sine røtter. Vi håper å kunne gjennomføre vår lille store drøm om å reise til Norge og samlet kunne besøke steder som min bestefar og hans familie bodde. Jeg ønsker svært slekt å komme i kontakt med mine røtter og er veldig spent på mulig å kunne besøke Norge.

eller Kathy Callaghan. Hun kan oppføre et bestefar fra New Zealand. Kåre Haraldsen ble født i 1891 i Nannestad, og at farvannet var Anders Mikalson. Han var ikke lever han ble født. Callaghans bestefar til Norge i juli, og ønsker hjelp til å finne sine røtter. Et det navn som kan hjelpe så ta kontakt med EUB-journalist Magnar Haraldsen. myrva@eub.no



**UTVANDRET** Harald Oskar Andersen ble født i Nannestad i 1881. Han ble sjemann og utvandret til New Zealand i 1904. Nå ønsker han slekt å vite mer om hvor han bodde og om det er noen som visste om Nannestad. (Foto: Privat)



**GLEDER SEG** Jane Olsen (t.v.), Wenche Myrvang, undertegnede og resten av Harald Oskar Andersens hittil kjente slekt i Norge gleder seg til å få besøk av slektninger fra New Zealand.

nesten ikke noe om sitt liv i Norge, som han forlot like etter at Johan Oskar Haraldsen, min farfar, ble født i 1902. Familien har ikke heller ikke vite hvor han hadde blitt av. Han kom rett og slett ikke hjem fra sjøen. Ingen visste om furei han «ble bortes på denne måten» var han ikke registrert som utvandret. Derfor stoppet alle spor. Anna Orlie Edvardsen ble alene med to barn. De var ikke gift.

**OVERBASKET** Så tok historien en uventet vending - over 100 år senere. At sakkeien lå på den andre side av jordkoden kunne vi jo ikke ane. Stor var derfor overraskelsen da min kusine, Wenche Myrvang, ringte og sa hun kjente navnet til mannen som jeg hadde skrevet om i EUB. Hun var sammen med sin søster Jane Olsen i gang med slektgransking, og hadde netter navnet til sin oldefar på en lapp. Det hadde hun funnet i kirkebøkene. Da hun så

### STOR SLEKT

Vi visste ikke at bestefar Harald hadde barn før han forlot Norge, så det er veldig spennende for oss. Jeg kan fortelle at dere har en stor familie i New Zealand! Jeg ønsker å vite mer om dere alle! Jeg kunne ikke drømme om å finne noen i så nær slekt, skriver Kathy Callaghan i en av sine e-poster til oss. Etter dette har det blitt mange e-poster. Kathy Callaghan og hennes mann Ross skal på en lengre ferietur og hadde allerede lagt inn et besøk til Norge. De var kjent med at Harald Oskar Andersen var født i Nannestad, og skulle umiddelbart resultat av henvendelsen besøke bygdene for å se der han kom fra. De har bodd Marit Jarum, som har vært brevvenn med Kathy søster i mange år, om hjelp. Jarum er bosatt i Oslo, men er opprinnelig fra Rådevold. Det var også hun som tipset Callaghan om å be EUB om hjelp.

### OVERVELDENDE

Dette er jo overveldende, og helt utrolig! Det er jo bare tilfældigheter som gjør at vi nå har funnet mange nye slektninger. Uten henvendelsen fra New Zealand ville vi sikkert helt uten spor etter Harald Oskar Andersen, vår oldefar, sier Jane og Wenche. Hele slekta i Norge er nå kjent med hva som er skjedd, og alle er henrykket over det som har kommet fram. Lørdag 17. juli kommer Kathy Callaghan og hennes mann Ross til Nannestad, og familien gleder seg til å treffe dem. De nærmeste er hennes gjensidende søsknebarn, Kåre Haraldsen, Arne Haraldsen og Grethe Tiller.