

# Anne Kristine Olsen Strom Oral History Interview, 1982

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Strom, Anne Kristine Olsen
<b>Title</b>	Anne Kristine Olsen Strom Oral History Interview
<b>Dates</b>	1982 (inclusive) 1982 1982
<b>Quantity</b>	3 file folders 4 photographs 1 sound cassette
<b>Collection Number</b>	t163
<b>Summary</b>	An oral history interview with Anne Kristine Olsen Strom, a Norwegian immigrant.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">Pacific Lutheran University, Archives and Special Collections</a> Archives and Special Collections Pacific Lutheran University 12180 Park Avenue South Tacoma, Washington 98447 Telephone: 253-535-7586 Fax: 253-535-7315 <a href="mailto:archives@plu.edu">archives@plu.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	The oral history collection is open to all users.
<b>Additional Reference Guides</b>	
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Sponsor</b>	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## Biographical Note

Anne Strom was born on February 1897 in Bjørnør, Norway to Josef Olsen Hasen and Karen Jensen. Her father was a fisherman, and the family lived on a small farm. In addition to Anne, there were eight other children in the family: Oline, Kirsten, Lars, Martin, Karen, Josef, Ove, and Karl. Anne's mother passed away when Anne was four and a half, and her father did not remarry. Oline was eighteen at the time, and Anne's grandmother also lived with them, so the younger children were taken care of. After Anne finished school, she obtained a job on a neighbor's farm, where she did housework and later returned home to take her turn helping her father. When Anne was twenty, she decided to emigrate and wrote to her uncle in Grantsburg, WI. Her uncle sent her money for a ticket, and Anne left Norway in August 1920 with her friend Karen Tellefson, who had previously been to America. They landed on Ellis Island on the sixteenth and then took the train to Grantsburg. In Grantsburg, Anne went to her uncle's house and obtained a job on a neighbor's farm in the spring. Karen then decided to move to Duluth, MN, and Anne went with her. In Duluth, Anne found work at a match factory and also met her husband, Alfred Strom. Alfred was from the same community in Norway as Anne, and Anne knew he

was in the United States. They were married August 1923 and had two children: Ingvald and Ruth. The family eventually settled in Tacoma, WA. In Tacoma, Anne has been very active in the Daughters of Norway. She has served as President and chaplain of the grand lodge. Anne also maintained traditional Norwegian cooking in her household, and her children learned some Norwegian. She has returned to Norway five times.

### Lineage

Full Name: Anne Kristine Olsen Strom. Maiden Name: Anne Kristine Olsen. Father: Josef Olsen Hasen. Mother: Karen Jensen. Paternal Grandfather: Ole Olsen Hasen. Paternal Grandmother: Karen Hasen. Maternal Grandmother: Nella Jensen. Brothers and Sisters: Oline Hasen, Kirsten Hasen, Lars Hasen, Martin Hasen, Karen Hasen, Josef Hasen, Ove Hasen, Karl Hasen. Spouse: Alfred Julius Strom. Children: Ingvald Kenneth Strom, Ruth Irene Strom.

## Content Description

This interview was conducted with Anne Strom on April 6, 1982 in Tacoma, Washington. It provides information on family background, emigration, employment, marriage and family, community involvement, and Norwegian heritage. The interview also contains copies of Anne's emigration papers, Anne's Certificate of Achievement from Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Corporation for passing Test No. 1 for Welder, and photographs. The photographs consist of Anne and her father (taken in Norway), Anne at the North Star restaurant, and Anne and her husband Alfred at the time of the interview. Also see Alfred Strom. The interview was conducted in English.

## Use of the Collection

### Restrictions on Use

There are no restrictions on use.

## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

The Oral History collection project was started during an experimental course on Scandinavian Women in the Pacific Northwest. Students in the course were encouraged to interview women and learn about their experiences as immigrants to the United States. The project was continued and expanded with support from the president's office and by grants from the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, from the Joel E. Ferris Foundation and the Norwegian Emigration Fund of the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project was directed by Dr. Janet E. Rasmussen. The collection was transferred to the Archives and Special Collections Department.

### Acquisition Information

### Related Materials

To search and view Pacific Lutheran University's digitized images, visit our [Digital Assets Website](#)

## Processing Note

The interview was conducted by Anne Kristine Olsen Strom using a cassette recorder. A research copy was also prepared from the original. To further preserve the content of the interview, it is now being transferred to compact disc. We deliberately did not transcribe the entire interview because we want the researchers to listen to the interviewee's own voice. The transcription index highlights important aspects of the interview and the tape counter numbers noted on the Partial Interview Transcription are meant as approximate finding guides and refer to the location of a subject on the cassette/CD. The recording quality is good

The collection was transcribed by Mary Sue Gee, Julie Peterson and Becky Husby.

## Bibliography

Rasmussen, Janet Elaine. *New Land New Lives: Scandinavian Immigrants to the Pacific Northwest* Tacoma, Washington University of Washington Press 1993

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

The partial interview transcription highlights important aspects of the interview. Numbers may be used as guides to important subjects. Two numbers separated by a slash indicate that the first number is for cassette and the second for CD.

Container(s)	Description
<b>Cassette</b>	
163, side 1	023: Anne Kristine Olsen Strom Born in Bjørnør, north of Trondheim, Norway. Born on February 10, 1897.
163, side 1	084: PARENTS Josef Olsen and Karen Jensen. Father was a fisherman. Had a small farm with sheep and a few chickens. Did not have a cow so got milk from the neighbors or used canned milk.
163, side 1	124: CHILDHOOD HOME Had a small house. Big family, grandmother lived with them. Had nine children.
163, side 1	137: Father supported them all with his fishing. He was gone during the big fishing time. They lived close to the water. Father went north to fish for a few months in the winter. Fished for skrei (cod in spawning). Salted this and dried it. Sold it when it was prepared. Father went with other men.
163, side 1	250: PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER

Container(s)	Description
	Karen. Father from the same area where they lived. Mother was from Norbotten. Maternal grandmother was Nella Jensen. Both grandfather were probably fishermen. They also had a small place to grow some food.
163, side 1	319: BROTHERS AND SISTERS Oline did housework, she did not marry. Women had to do spinning, weaving, knitting and sewing. Made all you ate and wore. Kirsten did housework, she still lives in Norway on the home place. She is married and had two children. Lars married and had two children. He was a fisherman. Martin drowned. Anne tells about this. Karen did housework. She married a farmer in Sirdal and had five children. Josef was a fisherman. He had a home on the home place. He had five boys, they did not stick to fishing. Ove had a business in Trondheim. Karl lives in town. He helped Ove with his business, wholesale fishing business.
163, side 1	505: SCHOOL Quite a ways to walk to school. Was on the island where they lived. They were used to walking.
163, side 1	532: Mentions a shoemaker that lived on the island. He made ordinary shoes. They had woolen socks to keep their feet warm.
163, side 1	550: Mother passed away when Anne was four and half years old. Her sisters were pretty good to her. They learned many things early.
163, side 1	573: Recalls when her mother died. Remembers a few little incidents about her mother. She died in childbirth. Father did not remarry. Oldest sister was 18 and her grandmother lived with them.
163, side 1	630: CHURCH Not any on the island. Could row to one not far away. People still got together and went to church. They did not go every Sunday. The minister had three different churches. They went once a month. Father read the Bible to them on Sunday.
163, side 1	674: CHRISTMAS Very nice. Cleaned house, everything put away. Christmas Eve at 6 o'clock they had Christmas porridge. Bells rang from the church at 6. Had a decorated tree. Left food on the table. Could stay up all night waiting for Christmas. Could not go anywhere on Christmas Day. Was a Holy day. Second Christmas Day you could go out and visit friends. Christmas lasted until after New Year's.
163, side 1	737: PRESENTS

Container(s)	Description
	Were not many gifts. Main thing to be content with what you had. One she got an apron. They had to go to town to get gifts. Took a day to get to town. Everyone was like a family in their community.
163, side 1	784: CHRISTMAS FOOD Risengrynsgrøt. Had meat on Christmas Day. Did lots of baking, lefse, cookies, julekake, and bread.
163, side 1	809: Worked for the neighbors after she got out off school. Went into town and got a job at a farm in the country. Did housework and chores.
163, side 1	843: Came home for a while and took her turn helping her father. Her sisters then went out working.
163, side 1	857: When she turned 20 she got the notion to come to America. Heard about it from many people. She had an uncle in Grantsburg, Wisconsin. His name was Hjalmar Jensen. Anne wrote to him and he thought it was a neat chance to get a job of some sort. He offered to help her.
163, side 1	875: Anne came over with a neighbor who had already been once to the U.S. Her name was Karen Tellefson.
163, side 1	901: People seemed to be making a better living in America. There were hard times in Norway. She would be with her uncle at first.
163, side 1	918: Anne did not think hard about leaving. You always think that you will come back.
163, side 1	924: Her uncle sent her money for the ticket. Went to Oslo to catch the boat. Took a boat to Trondheim from her home place, a boat to Bergen, train to Oslo, then a boat to New York. This was in August 1920. Landed in New York on August 16.
163, side 1	956: Took the Bergensfjord over. Sea was calm. She was seasick the whole way. Never got used to the sea. She was in bed most of the time.
163, side 1	992: FIRST IMPRESSION

Container(s)	Description
	Everything looked nice. Had a terrible thunder and lightening storm in New York.
163, side 1	1006: ELLIS ISLAND No trouble because her friend was with her. She helped with everything.
163, side 1	1013: TRAIN TRIP Was fine. Friend could order food. They went to Grantsburg, Wisconsin.
163, side 1	1016: Stayed with her friend in Wisconsin. She then went to her uncle's place. Got a job on a neighbor's farm in the spring. Her friend moved to Duluth, Minnesota. Anne went too. She got a job there. Had a problem with the language. Could not understand the food names. There was a Swedish girl who helped her learn the names.
163, side 1	1066: Worked in a match factory. Packed matches in boxes and wrapped them in cartons. Liked this better than housework. Got more time for herself. Made \$40 a month. She worked a long day, eight-hour days at the factory.
163, side 1	1102: Housework had Thursday afternoon and Sunday afternoon off.
163, side 1	1110: Learned some English at the factory.
163, side 2	030: She knew her husband was in the U.S. before she met him again. They met again in Duluth, Minnesota where Anne was living.
163, side 2	078: MARRIAGE SERVICE Married in August of 1923. Husband was a blacksmith in a blacksmith shop. Rented an upstairs in a house. This is where they lived. Had some friends and relatives in. Had a wedding dinner. Wore a white dress. A Lutheran minister presided at the wedding, Pastor Carlsberg.
163, side 2	182: Anne did day housework after they were married. They had an employment service in town.
163, side 2	206: Learned the language. Went to school in Duluth after she was married. Went to try and get their citizenship paper. Anne was on her husband's citizen papers

Container(s)	Description
	and had her own citizenship papers. No trouble getting her papers. Talks about a few questions that they asked her.
163, side 2	304: Decided to go out west. Her husband like it out west. No cool winters. Came to the coast in 1925, took the train. Went to Tacoma. Husband had got in with some wood business. Came to present house in 1936.
163, side 2	380: Bought their house during the Depression. They struggled hard to pay for the place.
163, side 2	393: Went back to Duluth for a few years. Did not stay long. Duluth more like Norway than Tacoma.
163, side 2	430: CHILDREN A son and daughter. Daughter died of cancer when she was 48. A son lives in Mount Lake Terrace, Kenneth. He worked for the Navy when he was young. Anne worked in the shipyard during the war. It was good money. She thought she could help her country and help herself. Did welding.
163, side 2	487: Tells about what her son did in the way while in the Navy. Since the Navy he worked for the city doing various jobs. He married a Tacoma girl. They are divorced now. Their children are married.
163, side 2	538: Daughter was married to Morgan, an Army colonel. They lived in many places. They divorced. She died of cancer. Have four children. Comments on divorce.
163, side 2	586: CHURCH Active in Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. Children went to Sunday school.
163, side 2	609: SCANDINAVIAN ORGANIZATIONS Daughters of Norway. Has been President and Chaplain of the Grand Lodge. Sews and helps make Norwegian costumes for the dance team. Was President in 1955-56. Had smörgåsbords, bazaars, rummage sales, and all kind of doings.
163, side 2	665: TRIPS BACK TO NORWAY In 1946, her father was still alive. In 1960, she went alone, both times. Went by boat. In 1962, she went with her husband. They flew over. In 1970 and 1978, they went and visited relatives and friends. Had a birthday party for her father's 88th birthday in 1946. This was very special. Talks more about this event. Describes foods they had.

Container(s)	Description
163, side 2	770: CHANGES IN NORWAY After the war it was sad because the stores did not have anything. Her brother went to the country during the war. Hard to get certain products during the war. Last time she was in Norway, things were blooming, stores had everything. Home place still there. No one lives there. Old log house.
163, side 2	849: Children learned Norwegian in the home although they were never taught it. Daughter could read Norwegian.
163, side 2	872: COOKED SCANDINAVIAN FOODS Fish and potatos, suppe, flat bread, lefse (Hardanger lefse).
163, side 2	892: SPEAKS IN NORWEGIAN Table Prayer.

## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Christmas  
 Education--Norway  
 Emigration and immigration  
 Family--Norway  
 Marriage service  
 Naturalization  
 Norway--Social conditions--1945-  
 Norwegian-Americans--Northwest, Pacific--Interviews  
 Norwegian-Americans--Social life and customs  
 Ocean travel  
 Railroad travel  
 World War, 1939-1945

### Personal Names :

Strom, Anne--Interviews  
 (creator)  
 Hasen, Karen  
 Hasen, Ole  
 Strom, Alfred  
 Strom, Ingvald  
 Strom, Ruth  
 Hasen, Josef Olsen  
 Jensen, Karen  
 Jensen, Nella  
 Tellefson, Karen

### Corporate Names :

Bergensfjord (Steamship)  
 Daughters of Norway (U.S.) Embla Lodge #2 (Tacoma, Wash.)



Ellis Island (N.J and NY)

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (Tacoma, Wash.)

**Family Names :**

Hasen family

Jensen family

Olsen family

Strom family

**Geographical Names :**

Bjørnør (Norway)

Duluth (Minn.)

Tacoma (Wash.)

**Form or Genre Terms :**

Oral histories

**Occupations :**

Domestics

Match industry workers

Finding aid prepared by Kerstin Ringdahl and Amity Smetzler  
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