

Arnfinn Bruflot Oral History Interview, 1981

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Bruflot, Arnfinn
Title	Arnfinn Bruflot Oral History Interview
Dates	1981 (inclusive) 1981 1981
Quantity	3 file folders 2 sound cassettes 3 compact discs
Collection Number	t064-065
Summary	An oral history interview with Arnfinn Bruflot, a Norwegian immigrant.
Repository	Pacific Lutheran University, Archives and Special Collections Archives and Special Collections Pacific Lutheran University 12180 Park Avenue South Tacoma, Washington 98447 Telephone: 253-535-7586 Fax: 253-535-7315 archives@plu.edu
Access Restrictions	The oral history collection is open to all users.
Additional Reference Guides	
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

Arnfinn Bruflot was born on October 19, 1904 in Naustdal, Sunnfjord, Norway to Lars Henrik Bruflot, a dairy farmer, and Anna Maria Gjengedal. Arnfinn had five older siblings: Nikolai, Jakob, Reinhart, Andreas, and Albert. Arnfinn began school at the age of six and went on to high school, middle school, and college. In 1928, he decided to immigrate to America, where he settled in Tacoma, WA. There, he was first employed at St. Paul Lumber Mill and was later employed as a painter. In the 1930s, he obtained an editing job at the Western Viking, a Norwegian newspaper. In addition to editing, Arnfinn wrote editorials, did artwork, and supervised. In 1948, Arnfinn married Ingrid Grolid and had one son, Norris.

Arnfinn had always had an interest in writing, and after he retired, he began to write more seriously. He has published four poetry books and a novel, including Juni-baten - 1969, Det Storkna Havet - 1970, Praeriekveld - 1973, Dei Kom til Amerika - 1975, and Inn I America - 1980. His writing is aimed at social developments and has received good reviews. Arnfinn believes that Norwegian heritage is very important and a good influence, and he has participated in the Sons of Norway, Nordlandslaget, and Northlight - Unique Light of Northern Norway. He has also been a member of the First Presbyterian Church. Arnfinn feels that America has given a lot to him, and he has no regrets about immigrating.

Lineage

Full Name: Arnfinn Bruflot. Father: Lars Henrik Bruflot. Mother: Anna Maria Gjengedal. Paternal Grandfather: Nels Vonen. Paternal Grandmother: Rise Vonen. Maternal Grandfather: Jakob Gjengedal. Maternal Grandmother: Martha Gjengedal. Brothers and Sisters: Nikolai Bruflot, Jakob Bruflot, Reinhart Bruflot, Andreas Bruflot, Albert Bruflot, Spouse: Ingrid Grolid. Children: Norris Bruflot.

Content Description

This interview was conducted with Arnfinn Bruflot on June 30, 1981 in Tacoma, Washington. It contains information on family background, emigration, marriage and family, Arnfinn's writing career, and Norwegian heritage. The interview also contains two articles on Arnfinn and his writing career. 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

Processing Note

The interview was conducted by Morrene Nesvig 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

Arnfinn Bruflot Oral History Interview, 1981
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv70796>

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
Cassette	
64, side 1	008/12 : PERSONAL BACKGROUND Born October 19, 1904 in Naustdal, Sunnfjord, Norway.
64, side 1	029: PARENTS Lars and Anna Maria. Father, a farmer of mainly cows, some sheep, goats, and horses. Sold dairy products.
64, side 1	067/13: BROTHERS AND SISTERS (See family lineage)
64, side 1	074: PATERNAL GRANDPARENT Risa, typical Norwegian grandmother.
64, side 1	095: NORWEGIAN SCHOOL DAYS Started age 6, ended age 14. One year later on to high school (Ungdomsskole or Folkehøgskole).
64, side 1	125/01: NORDLANDSLAGET Getting money to send students to Norway's high school.
64, side 1	138: MIDDLE SCHOOL Worked hard, shorter period of time, on to college. Depression came surplus of educators, etc. College was in Nordfjord.
64, side 1	182: DECIDED TO COME TO AMERICA Heard stories, had obligations to meet.
64, side 1	209/02: FAMILY'S REACTION TO EMIGRATION Mixed emotions.
64, side 1	217: INTEREST IN WRITING Started as a hobby. Wrote for local paper. Serious after retirement.

Container(s)	Description
64, side 1	225: JAKOB SANDE Great inspiration to him.
64, side 1	242: POETRY Wrote poems, made first page on National newspaper.
64, side 1	249: FEELINGS ABOUT COMING TO AMERICA Mixed, open options. August 10, 1928 landed in Quebec, Canada (see counter I-290).
64, side 1	268/03: BOAT TRIP Passengers from same valley. Went from Bergen to Southampton, England and then to Canada (nine days).
64, side 1	290: LANDED QUEBEC Able to talk a little French, knew German better (See counter I-249).
64, side 1	290: BLAINE Immigration station (U.S./Canada border).
64, side 1	314: JEFFERSON HOTEL (TACOMA) Stayed upon arrival knew person from valley living now in Kent.
64, side 1	323: LANGAUGE DIFFICULTIES Knew a little English, didn't like it in school, knew Latin better.
64, side 1	344: IMPRESSIONS OF TACOMA Very nice, good feeling, different from now.
64, side 1	359/04: SCANDINAVIAN ORGANIZATIONS Member of Nordlandslaget, Sons of Norway (see counter I-627, II-523, and II-576).
64, side 1	388: SETTLING IN TACOMA Employed at St. Paul Lumber Mill. Talks of recently published book dealing with mill. Job descriptions at mill.
64, side 1	459: Kept journal recollections during life.
64, side 1	466: EMPLOYED PAINTER St. Regis. Fit well into occupation. Howard Johnsen as artist worked there too.
64, side 1	522: HAWAII

Container(s)	Description
	Hired as a painter during the war. Largest convalescent hospital.
64, side 1	547/06: CITIZENSHIP Right after he got married (1948).
64, side 1	583: SCANDINAVIAN ORGANIZATIONS TODAY Not real active (see counter I-359, II-523, and II-576). Visits to Norway.
64, side 1	600: EMIGRATION DIFFICULTIES No real difficulties. Best part getting married. Met wife at a dance. Son attended Pacific Lutheran University.
64, side 1	627: SCANDINAVIAN TRADITIONS Wife was young when her mother died so she missed out on learning the traditions.
64, side 2	001/07: WESTERN VIKING Employed in the 1930s. Employed also at St. Regis at the same time. History of the Western Viking (see counter II-253) Andrew Bjerkeseth (?) was the editor. Hans Lavik bought the Western Viking later. It was first located in Tacoma and then in Seattle where it was purchased...
64, side 2	/08: by Washington Posten, but retained the Western Viking name. Decorah Posten was the largest paper in the U.S. and Norway in 1920.
64, side 2	72: Paper served the Norwegian community. Wrote an editorial against Weyerhaeuser.
64, side 2	125: POETRY Published in Riksmal - Bokmaal. Goes into detail regarding the Norwegian languages including Nynorsk.
64, side 2	253/09: WESTERN VIKING One of the three Norwegian newspaper today. Most have merged (see counter I-011). Scandinavian papers are The Western Viking of Seattle; Nordisk Tidende of Brooklyn, New York; Vinland of Chicago, and Nyverd which was started by Norman Black in New York.
64, side 2	286: PURPOSE OF ETHNIC NEWSPAPERS Kept up ethnic culture. Losing cause since people from the "Old Country" are dying out.
64, side 2	345/10: ETHNIC INTEREST

Container(s)	Description
	Fine, beautiful, always take pride. Language unifies a nation.
64, side 2	359: PUBLISHED WRITER IN NORWAY Four poetry books, one novel. Receives good reviews.
64, side 2	402/11: PHILOSOPHY OF WRITING Aimed at social developments.
64, side 2	438: RETURN VISITS TO NORWAY Lots of changes. Industrial country (lots of pollution).
64, side 2	455: KEEPING CORRESPONDENCE At least every Christmas.
64, side 2	479: RELATIVES VISIT Cousins, not immediate family.
64, side 2	482: IMPORTANCE OF NORWEGIAN HERITAGE Very important, good influence.
64, side 2	496/12: CHURCH LIFE Member of First Presbyterian Church (19 years).
64, side 2	523: Active in Nordlandslaget, Northlight - unique light of Northern Norway (see counter I-359).
64, side 2	576: SONS OF NORWAY Not as active today, busy writing (see counter I-359).
64, side 2	590/13: WRITING CONTACTS U.S. and Norway. Member of Tacoma Writers Club.
64, side 2	605/01: DESCRIBES HIS POETRY BOOKS 1969 - "Juni-baaten", 1970 - "Det Storkna Havet", 1973 - "Praeriekveld", 1975 - "Dei Kom til Amerika", 1980 - "Inn I Amerika".
64, side 2	645: Recites Norwegian poem from "Dei Kom til Amerika." Reads a second poem called "Bygdefolket."
65, side 1	005/02: TRANSLATES FROM TAPE 65 Whoever was able to cope made it. Dreams in their hearts.
65, side 1	040/03:

Container(s)	Description
	Recites a poem on the social scene regarding smog and pollution.
65, side 1	073: FAVORITE NORWEGIAN AUTHORS Current and past. Fire and Flame by Kjartan Floegtas who won the Nordic prize in literature. Tarjei Vesaas, Halldis Moren Vesaas.
65, side 1	109: PUBLISHING HOUSE Third largest in Norway. Had to be persistent. Name is Norge Samlaget.
65, side 1	125: 125 His work describes what it means to be an immigrant. People in Norway read his work and that gives him a good feeling. Another successful American-Norwegian author is Ole Roelvagg who wrote "Giants of the Earth."
65, side 1	143/04: No further trips to Norway, would like to travel in the USA.
65, side 1	157: CLOSING STATEMENT Immigration - beautiful experience, no regrets. The "Old Country" is fine too. New country has given him a lot. Many have given some and gotten some.

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Norwegian language
 Norwegian-Americans--Ethnic identity
 Education--Norway
 Emigration and immigration
 Family--Norway
 Marriage
 Norwegian-Americans--Northwest, Pacific--Interviews
 Norwegian-Americans--Social life and customs
 Ocean travel

Personal Names :

Brufbot, Norris
 Brufbot, Arnfinn--Interviews
 (creator)
 Grolid, Ingrid

Brufbot, Lars Henrik
 Gjengedal, Anna Maria

Corporate Names :

Nordlandslaget Nordlyset (Tacoma, Wash.)
 Sons of Norway (U.S.) Norden Lodge No. 2 (Tacoma, Wash.)
 St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company (Tacoma, Wash.)
 Western Viking (Tacoma, Wash.)

Family Names :

Brufbot family
Gjengedal family
Grolid family

Geographical Names :

Naustdal, Sunnfjord (Norway)
Tacoma (Wash.)

Form or Genre Terms :

Oral histories

Occupations :

Authors
Farmers
Newspaper editors

Finding aid prepared by Kerstin Ringdahl and Amity Smetzler
2004