

= Havørn Accident =

The Havørn Accident (Norwegian : Havørn @-@ ulykken) was a controlled flight into terrain of a Junkers Ju 52 aircraft into the mountain Lihesten in Hyllestad , Norway on 16 June 1936 at 07 : 00 . The aircraft , operated by Norwegian Air Lines , was en route from Bergen to Tromsø . The pilots were unaware that they were flying a parallel to the planned course , 15 to 20 kilometers (9 @.@ 3 to 12 @.@ 4 mi) further east . The crew of four and three passengers were all killed in what was the first fatal aviation accident in Norway . The aircraft landed on a shelf on the mountain face . A first expedition found four bodies , but attempts to reach the shelf with the main part of the aircraft and three more bodies failed . A second party was sent out two days later , coordinated by Bernt Balchen and led by Boye Schlytter and Henning Tønsberg , saw the successful salvage of the remaining bodies .

= = Accident = =

The air service between Bergen and Tromsø was started by Norwegian Air Lines on 7 June 1936 . It was operated with Havørn , a Junkers Ju 52 , registration LN @-@ DAE , which had been bought from Deutsche Lufthansa . On 16 June 1936 at 06 : 30 Central European Time , the flight departed from the water aerodrome in Sandviken , Bergen . On board was a crew of four and three passengers , and a load of 13 bags of 50 kilograms (110 lb) of post .

The aircraft 's captain was Ditlev Pentz Smith . Aged 27 , he had started flying for the Norwegian Army Air Service in 1930 , and later become a civilian pilot for Widerøe . He was considered one of the country 's most renowned pilots and was active with competition flights . He was assisted by First Officer Erik Storm , aged 32 , who had a background from the Royal Norwegian Navy Air Service . The reserve pilot was Peter Ruth Paasche , aged 21 , and the radio operator was Per Erling Hegle , aged 28 and a trained mechanic . All four had been chosen to regularly fly the Bergen ? Tromsø route . The three passengers were Inspector Sven Svensen Løgit , Consul Wilhelm Andreas Mejdell Dall and journalist Harald Wigum of Bergens Tidende .

The weather report , which had been delivered orally by meteorologist @-@ on @-@ duty of the Forecasting Division of Western Norway at the airport , stated wind from southeast at 5 to 15 kilometers per hour (3 to 9 mph) , overcast and clouds down to 200 meters (700 ft) , although it could be even lower certain places . The visibility was 4 kilometers (2 @.@ 5 mi) . The last radio contact between the aircraft and the airport in Bergen was at 06 : 54 , when Hegle reported clouds at 1 @,@ 000 to 1 @,@ 500 meters (3 @,@ 000 to 5 @,@ 000 ft) elevation and between 4 and 10 kilometers (2 and 6 mi) visibility . He reported that the aircraft held a course towards Krakhellesundet , which was procedure during such weather conditions , and that the aircraft was south of Sognesjøen .

However , the aircraft was not where the pilots thought it was ? instead it was 15 to 20 kilometers (9 @.@ 3 to 12 @.@ 4 mi) further east . Eyewitnesses reported that after it had crossed Sognefjorden , it had changed course westward and started to ascend . At 07 : 00 , a loud crash was heard , although there were no eyewitnesses to the crash itself . The aircraft had followed a parallel , but more eastern , course and had hit Lihesten , a mountain rising up from Lifjorden , at 600 meters (2 @,@ 000 ft) above mean sea level . The aircraft caught fire and was highly visible from the surrounding area . Parts of the aircraft fell to the foot of the mountain , and the wreckage was scattered across the base of the mountain . The controlled flight into terrain was the first fatal aviation accident in Norway .

= = Salvage and investigation = =

Several locals rushed to the foot of the mountain , and at 08 : 30 , Sheriff Kaare Bredvik arrived at the scene . Two corpses were found immediately , but were so scorched that they could not be identified until at hospital . There were rumors of survivors as movement had been spotted on the mountain side . Bredvik had difficulty communicating with his superiors in Sogn Police District , and

had to contact them via Bergen . From there , the press was also alerted , and several locals became ad hoc correspondents . The home of Deputy Mayor Hans A. Risnes was used as a base of operations . However , searching was made difficult by the lack of any radio connection at the foot of the hill . Eventually a " shouting relay " was created , allowing messages to be sent effectively . A party of experienced mountaineers , who had many times succeeded at getting sheep down from shelves , attempted to reach the wreck , which was located on a shelf 100 meters (300 ft) above the foot . Despite three attempts the first day , they did not succeed at reaching the aircraft .

Chief of Police Alf Reksten arrived in the afternoon and took over responsibility . Later , the ship Mira , belonging to Bergen Steamship Company (BSD) , arrived with two doctors , two nurses , material from the Red Cross , specialist police officers , fire fighters , representatives from the airline and Norway Post , and journalists . The sister aircraft Najaden arrived later in the afternoon with relatives of the deceased and journalists ; its main objective was to search for survivors , but there was no possibility for it to land on the mountain and so could not help with the salvaging . Later a Widerøe aircraft arrived as well , which transported DNL 's technical director Bernt Balchen , Captain Eckhoff , who worked for the aviation authorities , and Gjermundson from the insurance company . The three , along with Reksten and Bredvik , became the investigation commission .

After Balchen had investigated the accident site from the plane , a party of five climbers started at 18 : 00 to climb the mountain side . When they reached the shelf , they found two bodies , a large amount of post and parts from the plane , including a wing . The bodies were sent down the mountain side . They then attempted to climb further up to the main wreck where the last three bodies were presumed to be , but this was deemed too dangerous by Balchen , and the operation terminated . Mira returned to Bergen at 02 : 00 . The following day , four people attempted to climb down the mountain face to reach the wreck . Magnus Nipen was lowered 50 meters (160 ft) , but it was impossible to descend the remaining 70 to 80 meters (230 to 260 ft) . Balchen concluded that it was impossible to reach the aircraft , and returned to Oslo the same afternoon .

However , the locals were determined to reach the aircraft : Magnus Kolgrov , along with Robert and Bernt Porten , who along with two others descended a further 30 meters (100 ft) . Although they were able to salvage two post bags , they were not able to reach the wreck . The operation took ten hours . From then , the police stationed an officer at the top of the mountain , both to hinder theft and to enforce a climbing ban .

In a letter to the editor in Aftenposten on 17 June , submitted by Robert M. Steen , it was suggested that reaching the ledge would be a suitable challenge for the mountaineering association Norsk Tindeklub . The newspaper contacted the club , and offered to cover all expenses . The club sent Boye Schlytter and Henning Tønsberg to Bergen , where they joined forces with police officer Hermann Heggnes and photographer and firefighter Alf Adriansen . The expedition was led by Balchen , arriving with the BSD vessel Vulcanus . Arne Næss , Jr. had just used bolts to climb the Dolomites , and these had been lent to Tønsberg . As such , it was the first time bolts were used for climbing in Norway .

They started the ascent at 19 : 00 and reached the first shelf about two hours later . Here , a field radio was stationed . Later the same evening , they reached the main shelf where the aircraft body lay . Although finding the remaining bodies , the team only salvaged some post , concluding that it would be too difficult for them to take down the bodies . They were down again at 01 : 30 . At 10 : 00 on 20 June , the team again ascended the mountain . Bernt Porten climbed halfway up at least a dozen times , taking water up and bringing down bodies wrapped in tarpaulin . All three bodies and the climbers were down again at 21 : 00 .

= = Aftermath = =

The airline offered compensation to the locals , but this was rejected in a letter date 27 June , in which the locals collectively stated that they were just happy to help . In a Council of State on 21 August , Schlytter , Tønsberg , Robert Porten and Heggnes were awarded the Medal for Heroic Deeds . The medals were presented in a ceremony at Hotel Continental , Oslo some days later .

In early 1937 , news surfaced that the widow and father of Erik Storm filed a lawsuit against the

Norwegian Air Lines . The father , Major B. Storm , stated that his goal was " rehabilitation of my son as well as compensation " . The family had received NOK 45 @,@ 000 of insurance money , but reportedly wanted more , and also desired to have the airline take the responsibility for the accident . The family sent a formal petition to the Parliament of Norway asking for further accident investigation , but after acquiring statements from the Chief of Police of Sogn and the Riksadvokaten and cycling the case through Ministry of Defence , the Parliament declared that no action should be taken . In addition , the lawsuit was dropped , after the airline reached an " agreement " with Storm 's family , and had a letter publicly printed in which Storm was cleared of all responsibility for the accident .

On 23 May 1937 , a group of four climbers descended the face on a different route and were able to find a golden ring and a golden watch , which they sent to the airline . They found some body parts which they offered to recover for 500 Norwegian krone , but this was rejected . Heggnes stated that these were parts which had been buried by the previous expedition .

To replace the aircraft , DNL bought another Ju @-@ 52 , named Falken , used from Lufthansa . Parts from the wreck are on display at Flyhistorisk Museum , Sola . On 14 June 2008 , a memorial was erected halfway up the mountain , with 200 people attending the ceremony .