

= Hallingskeid Station =

Hallingskeid Station (Norwegian : Hallingskeid stasjon) is a train station on the Bergensbanen line in the municipality of Ulvik in Hordaland county , Norway . Located at an elevation of 1 110 meters (3 640 ft) above mean sea level , the station is situated inside a snow tunnel . It opened along with the central section of the line on 10 June 1908 and remained as a staffed station until 1982 . It is located on the Hardangervidda plateau in an area without population or road access . The station therefore serves trekkers and mountaineers . Only some of the Norwegian State Railways (NSB) trains stop at the station .

The original station building was designed by Paul Due , who used the same architectural plan for four other mountain stations on the line . The snow tunnel has caught fire five times . The fires in 1948 , 1953 and 2008 only caused minor damage to the tunnel itself . The 1960 fire burned down the tunnel , the station building and most of the station area . The last fire , in 2011 , had a Class 73 train caught in the tunnel ; both it and the tunnel were damaged beyond repair .

= = History = =

The station was opened on 10 June 1908 , along with the rest of the central portion of the Bergen Line . The station building was of the Mountain Station Variant 1 type , designed by Paul Due . This made it identical to Mjølfjell Station , and with only slight variations to Haugastøl Station , Finse Station and Myrdal Station . During construction , NSB built several buildings for their staff . Two of the houses and an assembly building have been preserved . They were built in 1900 and represent an example of buildings from the construction time . One is partially built in stone , partially in wood , while the other two are entirely in wood . All are now used as cabins . The sick ward for the navvys was bought by Kari Maristuen in 1909 converted to a hotel , named Fjellstova .

Because of the harsh winter conditions , the station area was gradually built with snow tunnels to keep the snow off the tracks . This included the platforms and most of the passing loop at the station . In 1914 ? 15 , the station serviced 398 passengers , and in 1919 ? 20 , it serviced 684 passengers , both times making it the least used station on the line . In 1948 , the western part of the snow tunnel caught fire , and although it spread to the station building , it was quickly put out by the staff . In 1953 , there was again a fire in the tunnel .

= = = 1960 fire = = =

In 1960 , there was a major fire which burned down most of the station area . On 22 October , two boys were playing with matches and had lit some wood shavings in the tunnel , about 100 meters (330 ft) from the station building . The tunnel quickly caught on fire , which spread towards the other buildings . The fire was discovered by Station Master Mons Almenningen , who immediately notified Bergen Station , Myrdal Station , and Finse Station . The morning expresses in both directions were en route to Hallingskeid , with the east bound train about half an hour away . It was forced to turn around at Myrdal , and the passengers were bused from Voss Station across the mountain . A train with a fire engine containing 20 000 litres (4 400 imp gal ; 5 300 US gal) of water was sent from Myrdal and a fire engine was dispatched from Finse , but the fire spread quickly and within an hour the station building , the guard house and 500 meters (1 600 ft) of tunnel had burnt down . The incident occurred around noon . By 12 : 30 the next day , when the morning express passed the station , 500 meters (1 600 ft) of track had been replaced . Work had been done by 100 men in two shifts around the clock . Four families with a total of fourteen people lost their houses in the fire . The fire caused the hotel to burn down , and it was never rebuilt . A new station building opened in 1970 was built on the same foundation as the old .

The section past the station took electric traction into use on 7 December 1964 . The station received automatic train control from 23 September 1982 , and starting on 1 October 1982 , the station became unmanned . On 2 October 2008 , there was a fire in a 100 meter (330 ft) long snow tunnel 2 kilometers (1 2 mi) west of Hallingskeid . Traffic was stopped and a

combination of a fire train and helicopter put out the fire . However , the track and overhead lines past the station were destroyed . The line re @-@ opened on 4 October .

= = = 2011 fire = = =

A fire started in the snow tunnel at Hallingskeid on 16 June 2011 . It was caused by sparks from welding , which had been completed at 07 : 45 . A freight train passed through the station at 09 : 16 and the welders left the station at 09 : 30 . The passenger trains which caught on fire , pass through the station at 10 : 06 . As the station is unmanned , there was no prior warning of the fire until the driver saw it from the cab just as the train entered the tunnel . At nearly the same instance , he reached the point of the line where the fire had caused the power to cut . He immediately applied the emergency brake , which allowed the train to stop 5 to 10 meters (16 to 33 ft) from the fire . Because the train had no power , it was not possible to reverse out . The 257 passengers were then immediately evacuated , which took 15 to 20 minutes , and included two people in a wheelchair . Passengers were told to not bring any possessions with them , and many passengers lost valuables , such as laptop computers . All personnel acted according to regulations and no @-@ one was injured in the accident . According to the motorman , had he not lost the power , he would have continued through the tunnel , as the fire was just beginning .

The Norwegian Civil Defence , who did the main bulk of the rescue work , stated that they had been planning on an exercise which would have been identical to the accident , with a train stuck in exactly the same tunnel while it was on fire . The rescue work was difficult , as there is no road connection to the area and all materials have to be transported to the area by air . In addition , the mobile telephone and radio network was out . Representatives stated that it would have been easier if they could have used the GSM @-@ R network operated by the railway , which was functioning . The train , which consisted of a twin Class 73 electric multiple unit , burnt up and was destroyed in the fire . These cost NOK 100 million each . The fire forced the temporary closure of the Bergen Line , which was reopened in the evening on 23 June . The cost of the accident was NOK 250 million , of which most was for the unit which was written off .

According to the Accident Investigation Board Norway , the rescue work was hampered by , among other things : lack of fire crew at Voss to drive the fire engine , a defective helicopter bucket , and a three @-@ hour delay from the fire to a rail carriage with water was sent from Ål . Also , the fire carriage from Voss arrived six hours after the accident was reported . Concerns were raised regarding the fire hazards of wooden snow tunnels , and the National Rail Administration admitted that they should be made of a more fire @-@ proof material , such as concrete or steel . Following the accident , the National Rail Administration decided that all welding would have to be monitored for several hours after completion of the work .

= = Facilities and service = =

The station is located 322 @. @ 80 kilometers (200 @. @ 58 mi) from Oslo and at 1 @, @ 110 @. @ 1 meters (3 @, @ 642 ft) above mean sea level . The station is not staffed and serves no local population . The area around the station has no road access , and the station serves only for trekking in the Hardangervidda plateau . There is a self @-@ serve cabin run by the Norwegian Trekking Association nearby . The station building itself is owned by Rom Eiendom , a subsidiary of the Norwegian State Railways . The station has a waiting room and washrooms . Up to three daily services in each direction of the Oslo ? Bergen service , operated by the state railways , call at Hallingskeid , with up to two bypassing the station each day .