

## ORALA AND VARALDSKOGEN

On Friday 22 July, we took a trip to Orala, which is located in Finnskogen.



On the E16 on the way to Finnskogen.



Here we are at Masterud, which is located by the lake [Møkeren](#).



Pine trees.



Signs for Varaldskogen, [Lebiko](#), Sikåa and [Dragonmoen](#).

When we had the motorhome we wanted to spend the night there, but they had stopped normal camping. They now only have permanent year-round places, so we just had to travel on.



Here we are at the road that leads to Orala. There is a toll road here and those who want to drive here have to pay tolls. We paid by SMS and we received a receipt that we had paid for the whole day.



Translation: ...but the GRASS is green for everyone.



We only stopped here at first, because I thought that we had too little fuel left to drive this far into the forest.



We drove back to Masterud and on to [Austmarka](#). We see [Austmarka church](#) in the middle of the picture.



[Austmarka school](#).



Cow in the green meadow.



[Holmen mill](#) was built in the 18th century, but there has been a mill here for more than 500 years. The mill operation ended in 1985. More about the mill on pages 16 - 21 in this [member's magazine](#) of the Austmarka Historielag.



[Joker Austmarka.](#)



On the other side of the street we could fill up with gas.



Here we are back on the toll road and have reached the side road that leads to Orjala.



Here it says Orjala.

[Orjala](#) is located in Varaldskogen and is an intact farm complex that the Skogfinsk museum bought in 2011. The small farm was cleared by the forester Samuel Orainen in 1692, and was in operation until the 1980s. The museum runs the farm in collaboration with Austmarka Historielag and Orjala's Friends. The garden was protected as a Forest Finnish cultural monument in October 2019. There are 15 buildings on the farm.



This is the first house we see at Orjala. It is a sawmill.



The next is the old barn. The house that we see the roof of is the cook's house.



Here we are below the barn and granary. Here grows [Persian hogweed](#).



The barn to the right.



On the upper side of the barn. We see the main house at the back.



We met a guy from Orala's friends who was working as a handyman at the barn. His name is Øyvind Strandseter. We chatted with him for a while.



A food store.



Then we went up to the main house.

Orala is the original Finnish name for the farm, while it is the later Norwegianized name, Åranstorpet or Aronstorpet, that appears on the map. The name Orala comes from the Finnish family name Orainen, who cleared the farm. Ever since the takeover in 2011, the museum has been cutting off the areas of the infield with the greatest biological diversity of plants.



From the main house we look up towards the old barn.  
We see a bit of the calf's shed behind the trees.



This is the forge on the left, the sauna in the middle and  
the firewood shed on the right.



View down towards the barn.



The entrance to the main house.



The notice board.



We went into the kitchen.

Then follow various pictures from the kitchen.











Here we see the forge again.

Signs showing the way to different places in the forest.



Skis as decoration on the wall at the forge.

Sign to the outhouse.



Fuglekasse.



The firewood shed.



The sauna.



The food store.



A vine.



A poster that tells about the cultural landscape at Orala.



More flowers.



Here, Øyvind has joined us. Here he has opened the notice board.



He has made the notice board and he has used old craft techniques.



The door into the living room.







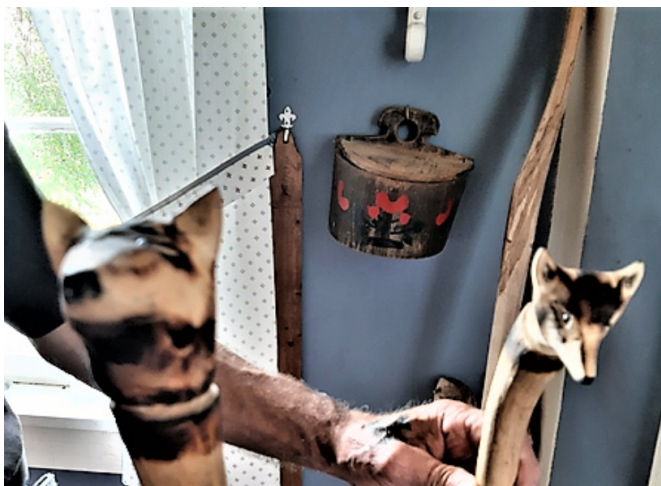
The bedroom.



In the kitchen again.



Øyvind also showed two sticks that he had made.





Bear and goats on the lamp.



Finally, we took a trip up to the sauna.



The entrance.





Special chair.





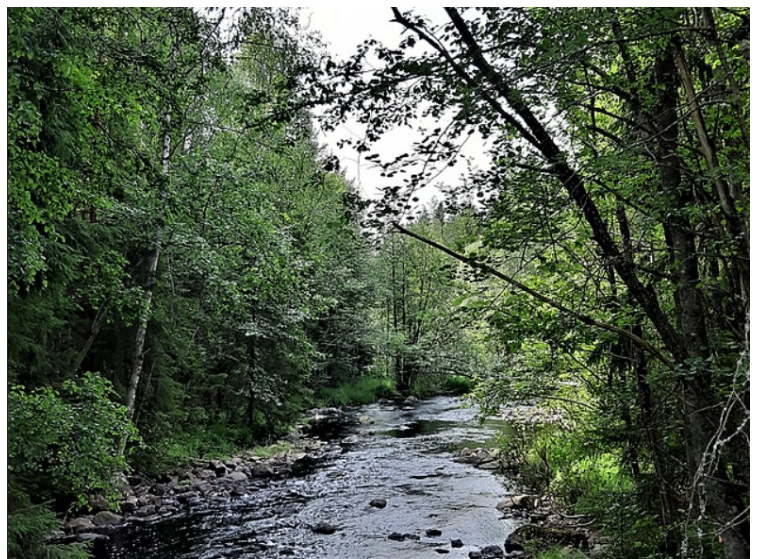
View downwards from the sauna.



The potato field at Orala.



Here we have driven further south and have arrived at Vikeråa, which flows from Søndre Øyersjøen to Varaldsjøen.



Vikeråa.

[Varaldskogen](#) is located in the southern part of Finnskogen and it was particularly here that the immigrants from the Värmland Finnish settlement moved to. The first known settler is mentioned in the Finnish census for 1686; a forester stated that he settled there about forty years earlier. In 1932, a Swedish company bought Varaldskogen and operated forestry here. The state took over the forest in 1968.





This is a small farm in Varaldskogen that was for sale.



Here it was possible to buy petrol once upon a time.



This was probably the last sale that was made. NOK 2.50 per litres.



View to Varaldsjøen.



The road continues down to the sea.



The weather was fine that day and there were many people who went on a trip to the lake. Here there is a bathing area in Osvika.



From Osvika a road lead to [Fjørsjøen](#).



Here we have come a few hundred meters further along the sea to Varalddammen. Varalddsjøen is regulated here with a dam.



This is on the lower side of the dam. The river that flows further down is called Sikåa. It flows down to Møkeren.

Where the Sikåa flows into Møkeren, there was an industrial community, [Bedafors](#), of which we can still see remains. Dam construction in the river started in the 1690s and the first saw mills were ready in 1703. The planks were floated and rowed to Masterud. The nail factory was built in 1849. A worker's residence was built in 1854. At that time, more people lived there than in Kongsvinger town. School was also held here for a maximum of 32 children.

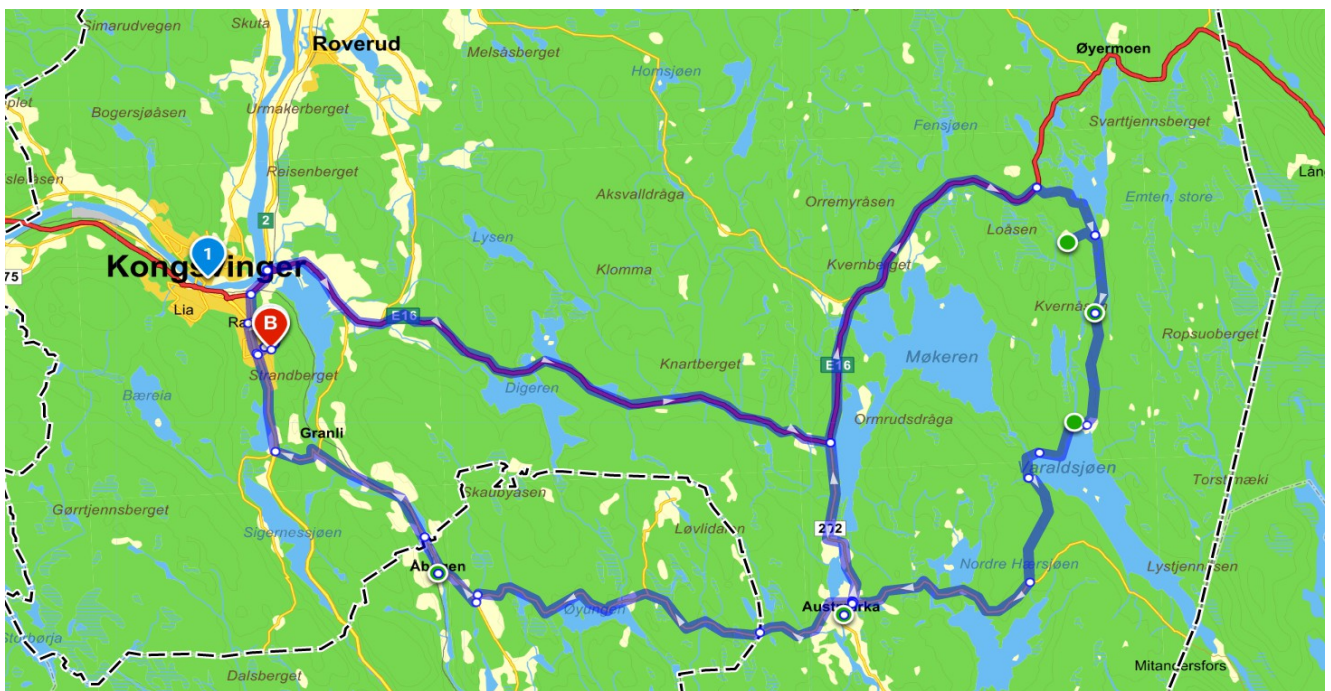


Before returning to Austmarka, we drove past this memorial. It is a memorial stone for resistance fighter Rolf Sannes who was shot by the Germans in a confrontation in 1944.

[Lokalhistoriewiki](#) [Østlandsposten](#)



At the middle of the roundabout in Austmarka, we find this Sikåa nail in memory of the industrial community at Sikåa.



This was the round we drove.