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According to an old legend Olav Tryggvason, King of Norway years 995-1000 build a gigantic Viking ship in Kungsviken. The ship was named Ormen Lange. True or not, it is difficult to know for sure. True is though that in the 1200-century, a great ship was build on Orust to another Norwegian King, Håkon Håkonsson. In other words, a long history of boat building at Orust and in Kungsviken. Even in modern times the mythical place has a given position.

- We are celebrating 70-year anniversary this year. The house we are in now belonged to my grandmother and grandfather. They moved here in 1939, in the month of March. In those days of course we built only wooden boats, there was nothing else. It was the same year that the war broke out so it was certainly a tough time in many ways, "says Lars Olsson, CEO at Malö Yachts and boat builder in the forth generation.

If you come by car to Kungsviken, it is whether you come from Henån or Ellös, its easy to forget that Orust actually is an island. Road winds up by fertile and hilly agricultural landscapes. During a period from the end 1800s and the mid-1930s they broke the feldspar and quartz nearby Kungsviken in Kvarnevik. The Quartz from the mines were shipped further to Norway and the porcelain industry.

- There were many men who worked in the mines at that time. They had it as part-time job while they were farmers. It was a combined way to survive simply, "says Lars Olsson. Building boats by side was also a way to try get a little cash, while agriculture was a way to put food on the table. That was probably never really in any abundance, but it was never any direct need, what I can understand.

Malö Yachts are not the only shipyard on the Orust. At Kungsviken and its immediate surroundings there were and are several boatyards.

- My grandfather had five or six employees, and here at the shipyard they produced in the beginning all from lottery boats for Lions during the war to "Bohusjullar" at 16-17 feet, "says Lars Olsson.

1943, four years after Malö Yachts had established themselves, a boat builder called Harry Hallberg also established his yard in another small building in Kungsviken. In the mid-1960s Hallsbergs had grown out of their premises and built a new yard in Ellös. The same happened to Christoph Rassy who also started his yard at Kungsviken later on. After a few years, he came to take over Hallberg's in Ellös, which became the starting point for the HR. Also Najad, today located in Henån, started their activities in Kungsviken in 1967 during name "Kungsvikens Marin".

It was Lars father and uncle - Bo and Orvar Olsson - who laid the foundations to today's Malö Yachts. 1958-1959 the brothers started boat building in-house and worked alongside their father. The first ten years Olson Boatbuilding AB was essentially engaged in subcontracting & subcontracted to other builders. But then in 1969 it was time for their first own model, Malö 50, named after the nearby island of the same name - which also Evert Taube made immortal in his songs. The boat was 37 feet and the first in the new material glassfiber. She became the start of Malö Yachts as builders in their own name. The following ten years they produced a total of 140 Malö 50's. Friend of the scheme are thinking perhaps of what

figure 50 in the name means, when she was 37 foot. The explanation is simple, and for the period common. - It was 50 square meter sail in the check stand. Vindö (also from Orust) had similar designations on Vindö 50 and Vindö 32.

1974 was Malö 40 baptized in the same way. Then went on to name the boats in feet instead, and then came the model group called Malö 106, Malö 116 and Malö 96 and so on.

During the second half of the 1980s they renamed the 9.60 long-Malö 96 to Malö 34 to appease the growing customer crowd in the British Isles. The avalanche-like demand, not least in England, testifies sales Malö 40. From its launch in 1974 and the following twelve years produced no less than 350 boats.

Although the past hull material, wood, went to the grave with Malö 50: Lars Olsson's father and uncle continued to build their plastic boats in the same way that they previously built their wooden boats. With a great deal of feeling combined with a solid craftsmanship.

Their method of building boats, with equal parts common sense, routine and sense, were in use in further over 20 years, until 1990. That was when the planning of Malö 42 began according to Lars Olsson history, and they came to a crossroads.

The constructor Leif Ängemark were contacted, which in turn led to that Hasse Leander - who was employed at Ängemarks companies - came to visit Kungsviken and the Malö yard. A momentous visit to all involved parties, it would prove. - Hasse came to us, and he thought that Kungsviken seemed very nice. So much that he also moved out here and lived here until until he died last summer, says Lars Olsson.

He was employed here on yard. And it was obviously a huge access for us to have him here. Lars Olsson rank Hasse Leander, which with time became a good friend, as one of the country's best yacht designers. Apart from an inexhaustible source of knowledge in boatbuilding craftsmanship he also was into streamline operations.

Hasse Leander devoted his life to construct boats, "says Lars Olsson. - Hasse was an incredible asset. He had eye on everything. But it was also his life. He had no family and he cared not about anything else than boats. He had an eye on all pieces - the design, rules, what had been done and not made and if it did or did not agree and so on.

According to Lars Olsson Hasse Leander aquired knowledge running through literature, second, by reading everything he came over relating to marine business. In this way he was updated on the latest trends and knowledge. And whenever any customer wanted to try to flip him on the nose, he was ready to take the discussion. Regardless their argument, Lars Olsson think that not anyone ever succeeded to gain from a discussion with Hasse Leander.

Hasse Leander was 66 years old when he passed away. He was well qualified for retirement. I sat with Hasse, I think it was at this table, "says Lars Olsson and nodding towards the coffee room pine table, and we were just talking about the pension, then when he approached to 65 years. And he said to me: "Lars, I don't want to hear that word again. So long as you do not say that I should not be here any longer, I will be here. "And so he said something to with a twinkle in the eye "It ends when you carry me out of here with my legs before". "And he died at his post".

It was certainly not obvious to Lars Olsson to keep the family tradition and go in his father's and grandfather's footsteps. But over time both he grew up and in the company.

- The old man was very, very good at the way that he never prevented us from something. We had to try everything, in all we got to work how much we wanted, and it was very much work, too. And it was never so that: "No, you are too small to do" and so further. Lars says that they were given great freedom to do what they wanted, both in the workshop and port. Self Lars is a little doubtful whether he would let their own children ravage freely in the same way he did with the machinery in yard joinery.

- I do not know how old I may have benn when I drove down the boat to the port; hanging them in the crane, bottom painted and launched, but it was barely two-digit actually. We were perhaps ten or twelve years and reached nearly down to the pedals on the truck or over the steering wheel. "Just take it easy", Daddy said, "and remember what you do." Similarly, it was with the band saw, but I have all fingers left, "he says with a crooked smile.

To have been brought up on the Malö yard and early to have taken part in the boat building Lars Olsson knowledge about the whole process has given him a tremendous advantage of today's role as CEO.

Indeed, when you know what you are talking about. "It has been very important, extremely important," says Lars Olsson. As fourth generation boat builders in Kungsviken some would probably like to nominate Lars Olsson to a contemporary culture medium. He protest, but says that he does not feel any obligation to bring Orust's boat building tradition on.

The rules of the game has changed too much compared with previous generations. So, running a boat building today, it is a rather broad activity. It is an enormous apparatus today compared to before, as I said initially, when the customer came to the boat builders and asked: "Can you build me a 35-foot sailboat?" dad or grandfather could answer: "Sure."

Today Malö manufactures four different models from 37 to 46 feet. And during the last 30 years there is no doubt about the origin of the boats that leave the yard. It's classic, sweeping lines of the hull and the deck superstructure is identical. The patented targa arch and detail finish is typical Malö class.

What is going on in terms of design for Malö upcoming models Lars Olsson do not want to reveal. The only thing that escape him is that the era Leif Ängermark and Hasse Leander indeed come to an end. - In the future there will be another designer, is all he says.

It is remarkable that Orust, with nearly 15 000 inhabitants, is home to a handful of yards all based on recreational craft world-class. At the same time Lars Olsson believe that the main explanation to the island's shipbuilding captured so much of the market, is just the diversity.

Malö Yachts had not been what it is without Najad and HR around the corner.

- I do not think that any of us had been here still, if we do not had had an early competitive position. It has always existed to be better and better. And it comes from competition of staff to the competition for customers. But at the same time they are very good colleagues. For it is together which we have helped to bring Orust on the map. "Open yards" is a proof of that.

Initially, it was Najad which held an open house in their yard. After hand it got to the other yards under pressure from their customers to follow Najad example. And today Open yards has grown into a huge event. The event annually attracts hundreds of exhibitors and over 20 000 visitors to Orust and the ports of Kungsviken, Ellös and Henån.

- Sometimes we certainly lose a customer to any of the other and sometimes they lose to us and so on. It is give and take all the time. But the overall effect is of course that there is a big attraction to Orust. And that's important, says Lars Olsson.

- The typical Malö owner is probably in 40 +-age, has a very low profile, is quality-conscious and has rock-hard requirements on both sail and after product as such. They know what they want to have. It is also a "low-key person".

- I also believe that they are people who do not want to throw away their money. It is much money for you to invest, but one day they might to switch, or even retire from the sea life. And then they want to know that they have a product that is well positioned.

The superior craftsmanship tradition represents a price. It is costly. But it is also the exclusive as a whole that Malö represents to date, that has given the yard its reputation and position as a producer of stable long distance boats. The day that Malö begins to jeopardizing its specificity the yards lasting days can be counted, think Lars Olsson.

- We must distinguish us in any way from the mass-produced, cheaper products. The day we can not do it anymore, then we are gone. We do not produce the world's cheapest boats (the price for a Malö begins at SEK 2.9 million), but it is amazing good products.

In the current situation the Malö yard produce approximately 24-25 boats per year. For our smallest boat we are working somewhere around 2 000 hours, and up to nearly 5 000 hours for the largest. We do a lot of customer adjustments and so on, so it is clear that the time can fluctuate a little.

The hull of all Malö yachts are hand structured. And instead of PVC foam distance material in the sandwich Malö use balsa. This is because it feels that it gives the hulls a superior strength and stiffness. It is a method which is quite unusual in 2009.

- There are some who still do so. It's us and the Nautor's Swan that are doing it. I think we were the first with the sandwich construction. We have very, very good experience of balsa. Balsa is a good distance material. It is superior to all other, I would say, says Lars Olsson.

But the individual detail that make a Malö a Malö, is the targa arch over cockpit. Today the arc is as integral part of the yard's identity that can not be abandon.

- A Malö should have a targa arch, "says Lars Olsson determined. It is, it must be, a very strong design. It provides a lot of benefits. Despite the targa archs many advantages, it is no other manufacturer who has copied the idea. Maybe it's because it would be so obvious who has copied whom.

In the current situation Malö has a family of four members of the order 37, 40, 43 and 46 feet. There are new models around the corner. When they are ready for the light of day remains to be seen. There will be a larger boat that is 54 foot.

The environment is also an issue that is becoming increasingly important for all and of course also for Malö Yachts. Right now the yard is involved in a project where a Malö 46: should be equipped with the latest cutting-edge technology. The project, recently awarded and named "Hymar", got an EU support of two million Euros.

- It is an American, Nigel Calder, whose boat will be a marine hybrid, and I think it will be great. People now days are more aware of the environmental impact. So I think that sailing boats has a good future, "says Lars Olsson.