



Atlantic Ocean Road/Atlanterhavsvegen, Norway

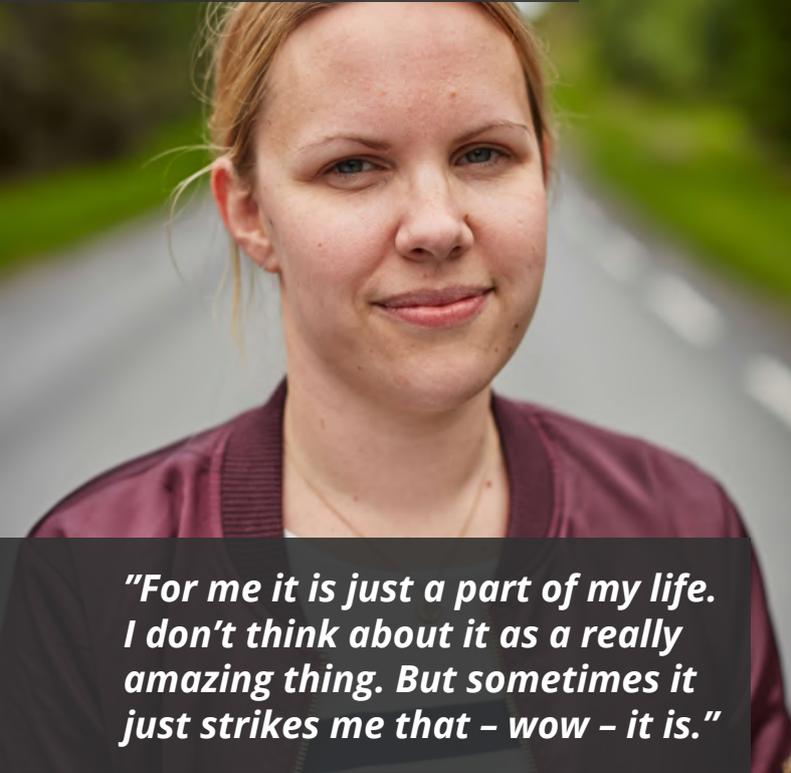
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World's greatest commute
Interview transcript

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Gunnhild Bae Pettersen



Halstein Stene



Gunnhild - "I drive the road each day, back and forth, to work. And sometimes during the weekends as well if we're going on a trip."

"I work close to where I live, and I enjoy travelling on the road very much. It's a very scenic road, and it's never the same. So each day is different, and you always see new things, and the weather is changing, and it's always beautiful."

"Like in the summertime it can be a bright sunny day and the water is very clear - it's like light-green and you can almost see the bottom. But in the wintertime it gets darker and the ocean is almost black, and you can have a lot of waves crashing in over the bridges."

"But it's just beautiful either way, and it's always very special."



Halstein - "My name is Halstein Stene. I'm 72 years old now. And my connection to the road is that I was the chairman of building the road - I worked almost every day during the 10-year period."

"It's extremely beautiful, and it doesn't matter how the weather is. Like today when it's clear, and nice, and not windy, and especially when the gales are blowing in the fall."

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"It's very easy, very relaxed. Just to look out on the water, and sit down, and have a smoke, and drive home again. And then I say, 'I have washed my soul'."



Gunnhild - "In wintertime you can see lights out in the sea from boats passing by. It's kind of cosy – it's almost like when you're just sitting inside, just looking at the fireplace. You can get kind of the same romantic feeling just driving there in the dark during wintertime.

"I lived here before the road was built. And even though I was very young, I can remember that my father took me to see the biggest bridge – the one that is called Storseisundbrua, which is the most spectacular one. It wasn't finished yet – they had started to build the bridge from both sides.

"We were able to come up there and see, and there was a gap between the two sides of the bridge. I remember it because it was very high up, and it was kind of scary looking down in the sea.

"And for a lot of time after the road had opened I always imagined that when driving that bridge, and I was always a bit afraid that the gap had opened again."



Halstein - "There are not very many days when it's as calm as this, actually, no. Usually it's blowing here. And then it's very special, very big waves. At certain parts the waves come over the road.

"On the 1st January 1992, it was a terrible gale. It still scares me. So when it's blowing up today, I'm still actually anxious."



Gunnhild - "Of course every Norwegian knows about the road. But also a lot of people from abroad know about the road, and it's always nice to talk about it when people go, 'Yes, I know that road – I've heard about it before. Oh, I really want to go there'.

"And when you tell that you live there, they are very ecstatic, and they almost just can't believe it – so that is cool.

"For me it is just a part of my life. I don't think about it as a really amazing thing. But sometimes it just strikes me that – wow – it is."