

English

The sluices that tamed the tidal currents

The story of navigation at Skjoldestrømmen

The narrow sound at Skjoldastraumen takes its name from a small estuary that flows out to the sea. History records that the strong tidal currents here made passage difficult for seafarers wishing to navigate in and out of Skjoldafjorden Fjord, situated a little further north.

The earliest known plans for sluices at Skjoldestrømmen were unveiled in the 1850s. November 14th 1908 was the date when the dream of several generations was realised with the official opening of the sluices and navigation through Skjoldastraumen became a reality. Steamships began to transport passengers and goods between Skjoldafjorden Fjord and Stavanger and Haugesund.

The 1920s heralded the arrival of the motor car making the journey to Haugesund much shorter. To accommodate ever increasing road traffic, a bridge over the sound was built in 1932 and swing bridges were completed over the sluices. The sea route to Stavanger was maintained while the road became the main form of transport to Haugesund.

In 1987 a new generation of bridges over both sluices and sound was inaugurated. The former swing bridges were restored and are normally kept open, apart from the annual Sluice Day Festival, which takes place in the month of June. The new tilting bridge allows for the accommodation of small freight vessels and large pleasure boats.

In this way, sailing into Skjoldafjorden Fjord affords the sailor the unique experience of navigating the only saltwater sluice in Norway that is still in active use.

