

Posta Stamps
Faroe Islands

No. **19**
February 2014

ISSN 1603-0036

Three new stamp issues:

- Nordic Issue 2014
- Europa 2014: Musical Instruments
- Lighthouses



FO 784-785

Test proof

Nordic Issue 2014

Ships: Freight and passenger transportation

It goes without saying that an archipelago in the middle of the North Atlantic has a certain maritime history to look back on, when it comes to transporting people and goods. From the reliable knarrs of the Viking Age, to today's containerships and ocean-going car ferries.

Over the centuries it was the sailing ships that kept the connection to and from the mainland. It goes without saying that the connection was not always very reliable - weather, war and epidemics could lead to a shortage of the most basic necessities. The situation became even more complicated by the fact that there for centuries was an authorized monopoly for navigation and commerce to and from the Faroe Islands.

It was only after the abolition of the monopoly and the introduction of steam-powered vessels that the supply lines became reliable. Throughout the 20th century, different passenger and freight lines appeared on the Faroese route and the names of many of the ships can still evoke a nostalgic spark in Faroese eyes. DFDS steamer *Dronning Alex-*

andrine, commonly known as "*Drotningin*" (The Queen) - the more modern passenger ship *Crown Prince Frederik*, passenger- and car ferries *Winston Churchill* and *England*, from the same company, are all ships we remember with warm feelings.

A special status, however, have the four Faroese passenger ships called *Tjaldur* - run by the Faroese shipping company *Skipafelagið Føroyar* - which from 1925 to 1969 sailed on the route Copenhagen - Faroe Islands. The story of these iconic ships is a chapter of its own in Faroese maritime history - but that must wait for another time.

MS Norröna

In 1982 a new chapter started in Faroese passenger and freighter history, when Smyril Line was founded. This new Faroese shipping company bought the Swedish ferry *Gustav Wasa*, built in 1973 in Rendsburg. After a refit in Flensburg to adapt to Atlantic conditions, the ferry, under the name *Norröna*, in June 1983 started to sail the route: Hanstholm (Denmark), Bergen (Norway), Tórshavn, (Faroe Islands) and Seyðisfjørður in Iceland. The



Tórshavn
Photo: Ingi Sørensen

Atlantic ferry had a capacity for 1050 passengers, 300 cars and a certain amount of goods. The first years MS *Norröna* only sailed during the summer season in the North Atlantic and was used for other purposes during the winter season. Among other things, *Norröna* was used as transport vessel at NATO exercises in the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the Irish Sea - and three times, in the 80s and 90s, she was leased by Danish authorities as refugee ship in Copenhagen during the winter season.

In 1998 MS *Norröna* started to sail the Atlantic the whole year round - the first year only between Tórshavn and Hanstholm. The ship had gradually become obsolete though and the capacity too small for the increasing pressure of passengers, cars and freight.

In 1999, Smyril Line signed a contract with Flender Werft in Lübeck to build an even bigger ferry, this time specifically designed for sailing in the North Atlantic. The new *Norröna* was delivered on 7th April 2003

and three days later, on April the 10th she started to sail her Atlantic route.

The new *Norröna* is three times bigger than the old one. The ship is 164 meters long and 30 meters wide, 36,000 GRT and has a maximum speed of 21 knots. It can accommodate 1,482 passengers and has room for 800 cars. In addition to car transport it is also used for goods and trailer transport.

In 2012 Smyril Line moved its Danish departure from Hanstholm to Hirtshals where *Norröna* has sailed from ever since.

Passenger comfort on *Norröna* is luxurious and outstanding. The ship was in 2012 named one of the top three passenger carriers by the Danish Travel Award. Now, almost 50 years after the old "Queen" ploughed through our rough waters on coal and steam, our own *Norröna* goes into her second decade as the undisputed queen of the North Atlantic.

Download the **FREE SEPAC STAMPS** app and scan the stamp with your device!

Available on the **App Store** 



From stamp to film about the Faroe Islands

The Nordic mini-sheet 2014 has the same special feature that was used for the Nordafar mini-sheet in September 2014.

Concealed on the mini-sheet is a so-called AR-code. AR stands for *Augmented Reality*. If you scan the stamp with your smartphone or tablet, the AR-code will be activated and you'll see a beautiful film about the Faroe Islands on the device.

This is a short film describing glimpses of the Faroe Islands, landscape, activities, traditions, etc. accompanied by music by the Faroese Eivør.

You need to download a free app from App Store or Google Play in order to see the film. Read more in the box to the right.

The computer generated layer is loaded onto your smartphone or tablet by an app, a small support program. Supported by the app the image of the stamp comes to "life" on the screen of your device.

Specifically by downloading the app to your smartphone or tablet and scanning the stamp, you can see a beautiful film from the Faroe Islands.

The "Sepac Stamps" app can be downloaded free of charge from:

- **App Store**
- **Google Play**

Procedure: When the app is downloaded, you activate it. Then click the "Load" button on the screen. Point the smartphone or tablet camera towards one of the "Nordafar" stamps and follow the directions on the screen. Then the video clip of Nordafar will play on your screen – with sound.

Order the stamp by completing the enclosed order form or on our website www.stamps.fo



Test proof

Europa 2014: Musical Instruments

"If these musicians, about whom the following story is told, had concentrated on their daily work, instead of constantly reaching out for the sky, they would probably have done much better in this the tiniest of all known worlds. But that was not the case. They were, each in their own way, possessed, like all real musicians are by nature."

Every time I hear a string quartet, I come to think of this paragraph from William Heinesen's "The Lost Musicians". The small group of cheerful anarchists, who lose themselves in short musical glimpses of beauty and structure in a grim and chaotic world. The reason the musicians are "lost" is because they do not fit in the brutal reality, where religious fundamentalism, greed, poverty and emerging political interests set the agenda. Dreamers in the Klondike which, right after the turn of the 20th century, constituted the Faroese capital Tórshavn. Despite their differences and tough destiny, they find together in music and spread music and beauty through narrow streets and alleys - like songbirds in a hysterical gull colony.

Historically, there is no great tradition of musical instruments on the Faroe Islands. Even though there always have been people who owned and played various instruments, the ballads and folksongs of the traditional chain-dance, which were performed a capella, were the predominant type of music for centuries.

There are a few stories of people in Tórshavn and in the villages, who played instruments. Among others, the renowned cultural figure, Jens Christian Svabo is said to have been an excellent violin player. He learned to play the violin while he was studying in Copenhagen and was frequently used as a fiddler at parties and weddings in Tórshavn in the late 18th century. Around 1890 there was a brass quartet in Tórshavn consisting of Anton Degn (cornet), Martin Restorff (alto horn), Christian M. Christiansen (tenor horn) and JP Joensen (bass).

It was not until a little later, when the renowned Dane, Georg Hansen, commonly referred to as "Baker Hansen" (1844 - 1924), began to teach brass-music, that the interest for instrumental music really started to



grow. William Heinesen said about Baker Hansen that he could play all existing instruments – and even some which did not exist yet. In 1903 Baker Hansen founded Tórshavn Music Society, which eventually became *Havnar Hornorkestur* (Tórshavn Brass Band), which still is active. In 1922 some of his students started yet another brass band in his honour, which was called GHM (Georg Hansen's Memorial). At the same time, the equally renowned ferryman, Poul Andreas Jacobsen, called "Dia við Stein" and his gifted sons were active on the musical stage in Torshavn.

It is on these musical pioneers that the characters in "The Lost Musicians" are based. Quite ordinary citizens whose passion for music formed the interest for instrumental music on the Faroe Islands.

The School of Music

Throughout the twentieth century it was possible to get private music lessons all over the Faroe Islands. Generations of children and young people were taught by teachers, whose dedication was based on voluntary and most often poorly paid work.

The first semi-public attempt at music education started in 1942 with Tórshavnar Musikkskúli, which purpose was to educate talented young people in music and musical collaboration at a higher level - and this school has since 1985 been a municipal school . This initiative resulted in a series of chamber concertos over time and an increased interest for classical music.

But in 1981, an educational pilot project was started, which in 1984 resulted in the foundation of a real public school of music in the Faroe Islands. Today there are about 50 full-time teachers at the school all over the country.

There is no doubt that music schools are the cause of the blooming Faroese musical scene in all genres, which in recent years has even begun to spread across national borders. Even though conditions are cramped and savings plagues the cultural life as a whole, Baker Hansen's legacy is still honoured with enthusiasm and idealistic spirit.

The Faroese Symphony Orchestra

The jewel of the efforts - to lift the music



to an international level - is undoubtedly the Faroese Symphony Orchestra. It was founded by music teachers back in 1983 and held the first concert shortly after the opening of the Nordic House in Tórshavn. Conductors at this first concert were Bogi Lützen and Magne Synnevåg. Since 2004, Bernharður Wilkinson has been the orchestra's permanent conductor.

The Symphony Orchestra has over the years benefited from the talent, cultivated by the music schools, and is now manned with professional Faroese musicians from home and abroad, pupils of the music schools, music students from conservatories and talented amateur musicians.

Faroese symphony orchestra holds regular concerts with works of historical foreign, as well as contemporary Faroese, composers. Especially the recurring New Year's concerts in the Nordic House in Tórshavn are popular and draw many spectators. The orchestra

also makes a great effort order to arouse children's interest in music by their well-conducted children's concerts.

In addition to playing in the Faroe Islands, the Faroese Symphony Orchestra also has played concerts in the Shetland Islands, Denmark and Iceland.

Yes, despite tight economic conditions, the Faroese music scene keeps the flag high. Idealism is rarely rewarded with earthly goods. But somewhere out in the beautiful musical universe, the five Lost Musicians, Moritz, Sirius and Cornelius, music teacher Boman and master Mortensen, sit with tears in their eyes and ecstatic smiles, listening to the tonal beauty that flows from their spiritual descendants.

Anker Eli Petersen



FO 788-790



Test proof

Faroese Lighthouses

*A magnificent work is done today
A pride for the realm and the brave
Lighthouses turn the night into day
Where darkness before hid the wave
Lights shine bright on the sea.*

This is the first stanza of a poem in the newspaper "Føringatiðindi" which brought a short article about the lighthouses that were lit for the first time on October the 1st 1893. In addition to the large lighthouse on the southern tip of Nólsoy, several smaller beacons were placed on headlands and at fiords of the Faroe Islands.

Two lights were placed at the entrance to Trongisvágsfjørður on Suðuroy - two more further into the fjord, at Tvørábakki. On Nólsoy, lights were placed at Kápilsund and on Borðan. At the entrance to Skálafjørður (Eysturoy) a light was placed at Toftir. On Kunoy a light was placed on Kunoyarnes, a little south of the village Syðradalur.

Along with the large lighthouse on Skansin, Torshavn, which was built already in 1888, these large and smaller beacons were a great improvement of safety of navigation in the inland waters.

Toftir Lighthouse

State owned beacon No. 6670 - International No. L4406

Position: 62° 05.10330 N - 6° 44.35934 W

As already mentioned, a lighthouse was placed near the village of Toftir by the entrance of Skálafjørður on Eysturoy. The article in Føringatiðindi describes light as follows:

"By the outskirts of Toftir, 1 fixed light which shines white from Eystnes (Eysturoy) west to Flesjarnar (a treacherous skerry between Eysturoy and Streymoy) and towards the area south of Glyvursnes (Streymoy). Then red to the center of Flesjarnar, green north of Flesjarnar and then white towards Saltnes."



Akraberg lighthouse
Photo: Erik Christensen

Toftir Lighthouse is a cylindrical beacon of cast iron, 7 meters high and with the lantern located 12.7 meters above sea level. The lighthouse is white with a red horizontal band painted just below the lantern. The lighthouse is a so-called sector-light which glows white, red or green, depending on the position in relation to the lighthouse. The lantern flashes every 5th second. The white light can be seen 12 nautical miles away, while the red and green lights are visible at 9 mile distance. The lighthouse is on from 15 July to 1 June. Fully automatic.

Akraberg Lighthouse

State owned beacon No. 6500 - International No. L4342

Position: 61° 23.64125 N - 6° 40.75310 V

In 1909 the Lighthouse Service built the iconic Akraberg lighthouse on the southern tip of Suðuroy. The waters south of Sumba are notorious for their unpredictability. Here lies a series of rocky skerries below

and above sea level, and the meeting of currents, together with wind and weather, create dangerous conditions for boats and ships. The situation became more hazardous in 1884 when the high cliff "Munkurin" on the southernmost rock, Sumbiarsteinur, crashed into the sea and the seafarers lost the fixed landmark of the rocks.

Akraberg Lighthouse is a cylindrical cast iron beacon bolted on concrete foundation. The lighthouse is painted white with red top. The tower is 14 meters high and the focal plane 94 metres above sea level. Due to the sometimes extreme winds in the area, the tower is further secured with heavy guy wires.

Akraberg Lighthouse is both "hazard avoidance" light and sector light with white, red and green lights, depending on the sailor's position. The lantern flashes 2 times 2 sec. every 20th second. The white light is visible at a distance of 20 nautical mile,



while the red and green light can be seen 14 miles away. Akraberg Lighthouse is now fully automatic.

Besides the lighthouse itself, Akraberg station also includes a foghorn and radio-beacon.

During World War II all lighthouses in the Faroe Islands were turned off - and only occasionally lid, when necessary for allied shipping or warfare. The British military built a radar station on Akraberg for surveillance of the waters south of the Faroe Islands.

In 1957, an independent power-station was installed on Akraberg to supply the lighthouse and radio-beacon with power.

There is also a lighthouse keeper's house on Akraberg. Here lived the shifting lighthouse keepers and their families until 1988, when the current lighthouse keeper moved after a violent hurricane. The house have since been used occasionally by maintenance-crews, but are right now about to be sold.

Dímun Lighthouse

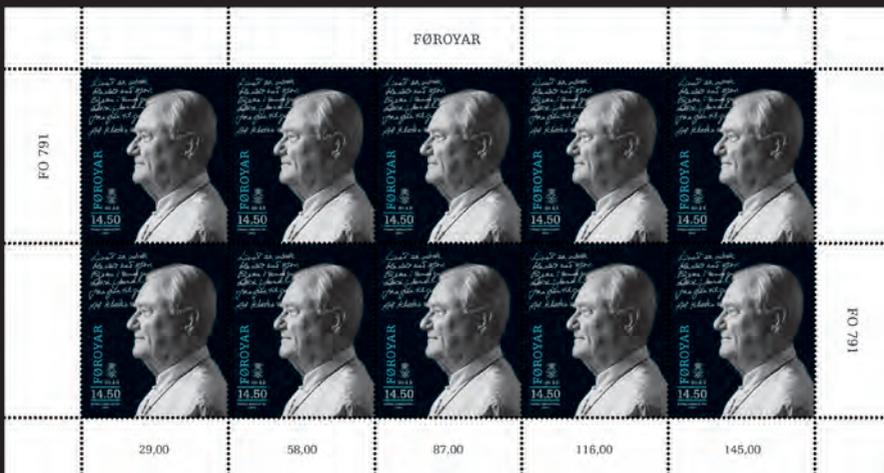
State- beacon No. 6580 - International No. L4368

Position: 61° 40.96228 N - 6° 45.71721 V

In 1927, some lesser beacons were erected around the Faroe Islands - and among them was the lighthouse on the small island Stóra Dímun. The original lighthouse was a square tower, 2.5 meters high. The lighthouse was fueled with gas and was maintained by the only farmer on the island. After the World War II, the lighthouse was in a poor condition and in danger of falling into the sea, due to a landslide.

The current beacon is a cylindrical tower, 5 meters high. The tower is white with a red ribbon right below the lantern. The focal plane is 116 meters above sea level. The lighthouse is a coastal beacon with white light that flashes every 5 seconds and can be seen at a distance of 6 nautical miles. The lighthouse is on from 15 July to 1 June. Fully automatic.

Anker Eli Petersen



New stamp issue in 2014

Prince Henrik of Denmark, 80th Birthday

A new stamp issue has been added to our stamp programme for 2014 in connection with the 80th birthday of HRH Prince Henrik of Denmark on 11 June 2014.

This is a joint stamp issue between Posta Faroe Islands, Post Danmark and POST Greenland.

The issue contains one single gummed stamp as well as a 4-stamp self-adhesive booklet. The complete gummed sheets for this issue contain 10 stamps.

In connection with this joint issue, a special souvenir folder will be produced. Even if the layout of the folder is not ready, you can already order the folder by using the order

form in the middle of the bulletin.

The date of issue is 11th June 2014.

Value: 14,50 DKK.

FØ 791.

*Livet er alvor
blandet med sjov
Egen i den gode
deltid i færd
Ja grøn til gre
H klakke er*

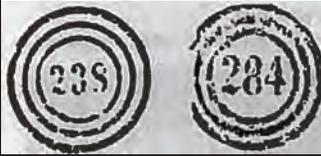


Fig 6. The numeral postmarks.



Fig. 7a + b.

Two letter pieces, one with star postmark KOLLEFJORD, the other with carved star postmark FUGLEFJORD.

Fig. 8.
British "occupation forces" exercising on the islands and playing with children in the street



The First Post Offices

by Henk Burgman AIJP, Amsterdam

Føroyar as the locals call their country in their own language became self governing to a certain extent in 1854. This did not mean that poor fishermen and peasants instantly became prosperous. Far from it. The islands were governed as a Danish colony. Virtually all trade (fish and sheep) was in Danish hands with Danish authorities determining most aspects of official life in the Faroes, arranging both the private and the overall civilian structure of the country. Thus, postal affairs were controlled by the Danish. The first post office was opened in Tórshavn followed by the towns Trangisvæg and Klaksvig (resp. 1877 and 1888). In this period typical Danish numeral postmarks (238 and 284) were in use. (Fig. 6)

As of 1888 there were postmarks in use with town names in grotesque writing, some showing the year and others not. From 1903 several small branch offices were opened

on some of the islands. The branches were given a two-ring postmark with the name of the town and a star in the middle segment. In 1929 the star was removed. These stamps were called star postmarks. (Fig. 7a + b)

All place names were in Danish which is not surprising considering the social and cultural development of the general population. Most upper class citizens were Danish and many prominent Faroese were so set on the Danish way of life that one could actually speak of a dichotomy in the population. Mostly poor and unschooled the lower class had to adapt to Danish.

After World War II, when the Faroe Islands were occupied by the British (12 April 1940-16 May 1945), a lot of things started changing.



Fig. 9.
The flag of the Faroe Islands.



Fig. 10a + b.
From the Danish (EJDE) to Faroese (EIBI).



Fig. 11.
Stamps issued to commemorate 100 years of adult education in the Faroe Islands.

War

During the war there was no connection between Denmark and the Faroe Islands. There was no Danish government and therefore no Danish interference. The islanders had to improvise many things. This worked remarkably well and gave a slight taste of independence. The fishing fleet began to use its flag which until then had been forbidden and Faroese banknotes were printed with English help. The first airport was built on the island of Vágar.

Throughout the war the stamps were Danish and valid for franking. Also in this period, Danish stamps were overprinted to meet certain common rates. These rates also followed Danish rates in this period.

The Faroese had seen Iceland declare its independence in 1944 and many were thrilled at the idea of independence and

autonomy, which was one of the motives of the Vikings seeking new life. One should not forget that many residents feel more connected with Iceland or Norway rather than Denmark. (Fig. 8)

The Faroese held a referendum on full independence in 1948 which produced a majority in favour. This was not recognized by the Danish Government which instead offered a high degree of self-governance in 1948 with the passing of the Act of Faroese Home Rule. The Faroese language (which is more related to Icelandic and old Norwegian than Danish) was officially recognized and the Faroese got their own flag. (Fig. 9) There were, however, many administrative problems and in 1955 they again attempted to achieve greater independence, still without success.

In 1962, the Danish postmarks were replaced by postmarks with Faroese place names. So



Fig. 12.
An airmail letter from Toftir 24-03-1995 to Belgium. The stamp has the motif 'Macro Teles alpinus' - a common grasshopper-like insect on the islands.



Fig. 13.
A letter with 20 øre stamp (ship mail), issued on 25-10-1940 in Denmark under the German occupation and used in the Faroes 20-01-1943 under British occupation.

Strænder changed in Strendur and Kvalbo became Hvalba. (Fig. 10a + b)

Two languages

The Danish language is officially still one of the two languages in the islands but plays almost no role in ordinary life.

Danish stamps were used on the islands up until 30-01-1975 but then things changed drastically. The first true Faroese stamps were issued on 30 January 1975. However, issue policy and postal rates were under Danish control. As of April 1, 1976, the Faroese became fully responsible for their own postal administration and were able to set their own rates. From that date, the postal administration was completely into their own hands and stamp issues started reflecting events and episodes that had taken place on the islands themselves. (Fig. 11)

The flora and fauna (Fig. 12) of the islands as well as art, history and culture, legends and folklore were now introduced as stamp and postmark motifs. These beautiful stamps are a good incentive to start collecting stamps of this young stamp-issuing country. For collectors who want to delve more into its postal history there is plenty to enjoy.

Postal History

A few things can be mentioned in this connection: more than eighty years of Danish stamps with postmarks, first in Danish and later in Faroese. The wide variety of star postmarks (Fig. 13) with stars or where stars have been deleted. The emergency overprints (Fig. 14) just after the first World War and in the beginning of the Second World War, when scarcity of stamps demanded quick and efficient solutions. Due to the isolation of the islands all mail had to be transported by ship, offering many nice examples of ship mail.



Fig. 14.
An overprinted local letter with a stamp of 5 and 2 øre. This postmark was used in the period from 13-24 January, 1919.



Fig. 15.
Souvenir Sheet depicting the boat Skopun which transported the mail between islands in the 19th century, the post office which was opened in 1906 and the striking figure of Tórshavn landpostman Símun Pauli Poulsen.

And then of course we have not mentioned the various postal rates that can be collected. Did you know that, during the Second World War, British troops occupied the islands and used stamps that were printed in Denmark which was occupied by the Germans? These stamps were sent to the islands by the UPU in Berne with German approval.

On April 1st 2001, a stamp sheet was issued to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the first Faroese stamp issues. (Fig. 15)

Nowadays, the Faroe Islands are a fairly prosperous group of islands with an autonomous status within the Danish kingdom. The domestic economy is still highly dependent on that of Denmark. In my opinion, a real independence is therefore to be expected in the very near future. Although serious discussions have taken place concerning the question of independence I think that the economy is a major stumbling block in that political process.

Although Faroe Islands are a part of Denmark, they have not joined the European Union. And most residents find that actually quite all right.

Published originally in Dutch in Monthly 'Filatelie', 9/2013. Courtesy 'Maandblad Filatelie', Editor in Chief: René Hillesum. www.defilatatie.nl

- Some interesting links related to the Faroe Islands:
 - <http://www.faroeislandssc.org/> The website of the Faroe Islands Study Circle in England.
 - www.stamps.fo/ website POSTA STAMPS,
 - <http://www.framtak.com/> Where you may come across a lot of information about the islands.
 - <http://www.faroeislands.com/> Contains a lot of interesting information.
 - <http://www.noer.com/faroe/> Geoffrey Noer's homepage. A collector of Faroese postal history.
 - <http://www.prostamps.de/> An overview of the stamps used in the Danish period.
 - http://redhost.it/Filatelia/Faroe_Home/Home.html The homepage of an Italian Faroe Islands collector.

And of course there is a lot to find on Wikipedia about the Faroe Islands.

New Stamp Issues 17 March and 28 April 2014



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Nordic issue 2014**
Date of issue: 17.03.2014
Value: 2 x 14,50 DKK
Numbers: FO 784-785
Sheet size: 105 x 70 mm
Stamp size: 3,4 x 4,5 mm
Photo: Finnur Justinussen
Design: Kári við Rættará
Printing method: Offset
Printer: LM Group, Canada
Postal use: Small letters to Europe, 0-50 g



Test proof



New stamp issue: **Europa 2014: Musical Instruments**
Date of issue: 28.04.2014
Value: 14,50 and 19,50 DKK
Numbers: FO 786-787
Stamp size: 30 x 40 mm
Photo: Fotostudio, Finnur Justinussen
Printing method: Offset
Printer: LM Group, Canada
Postal use: Small letters inland and medium letters to other countries, 0-50 g



Test proof



New stamp issue: **Lighthouses**
Date of issue: 28.04.2014
Value: 14,50, 15,50 and 17,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 788-790
Stamp size: 30 x 40 mm
Photo: Erik Christensen, Ólavur Frederiksen and Finleif Mortensen
Printing method: Offset
Printer: OeSD, Austria
Postal use: Small, medium and large letters to Europe, 0-50 g

* also available as selfadhesives stamps in booklet of six



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