

**Posta Stamps**  
Faroe Islands

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**Posta**   
FAROE ISLANDS



FO 881-882

Test proof



# Tórshavn's Actors' Association 100 Years

## Theatre in Tórshavn

Tórshavn has a long theatre tradition. In J. C. Svabo's travel reports from 1781 and 1782, we read that young Faroese students from Copenhagen staged the Holberg comedies "*June the 11th*" and "*The Political Tinker*" in Tórshavn with excellent results. It is not really surprising that plays by Holberg were being performed in the Faroes in the 1700s – dramatic works in the Faroese language were non-existent. Up until that time only Holberg had written original Danish plays for the theatre.

Even if there is no doubt that dramatic works were being performed in the interim, no written sources exist until Christopher Olsen, an employee of the Monopoly Trade, wrote in his diary in 1846 that permission had been sought to sell tickets to a certain play. He further writes that "*until now the audience has only been invited, not paying anything.*" This suggests previous theatre performances in Tórshavn. The play that Olsen refers to in his diary was a very contemporary piece of theatre, "*Pak*" by Th. Overskou, which shortly before had drawn full houses at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen. In the following years, a number of theatrical pieces were

performed in Tórshavn. This was mainly true of popular Holberg comedies, but other dramatists were featured as well, including the German playwright von Kotzebue.

## The first theatre association

In 1855, Christopher Olsen along with other enthusiasts founded the first theatre association: "*Thorshavn's Theatre Company.*" Now dramatic works were being produced for the stage almost every year and according to C. Holm Isaksen's article on theatre history in the journal *Varðin* in 1925, producers were starting to look beyond the comedies of Ludvig Holberg. Theatre pieces by contemporary Danish dramatists were being staged. Among them were Johan Ludvig Heiberg, Johanne Louise Heiberg, Thomas Overskou, Erik Bøgh and Jens Christian Hostrup.

This flowering of the theatre as an art form was mainly driven by the higher bourgeoisie in Tórshavn, Danish and Faroese officials and their spouses, along with a growing class of craftsmen and business people who emerged in the wake of the so-called Rybergian era in the early 1800s and the introduction of free trade in 1856. It may be mentioned that the renowned magistrate and



Photograph from 1889 of the group of actors in "Weather-bound." In the bottom left corner, you can see Súsanna Helena Patursson, who wrote and performed in the play.

politician HC Müller, who was featured on a Faroese stamp earlier this year, was also an avid amateur actor.

### The First Faroese Theatre Pieces

During the 1870s a budding nationalist movement emerged among Faroese students in Copenhagen. The movement was marked by a distinct cultural and linguistic orientation - and when the students in due course returned to the Faroe Islands, it started taking root there as well. As might be expected this growing national feeling was followed by a desire to protect distinctive Faroese cultural identity and, in particular, the language. The simmering kettle was brought to a boil at the legendary *Christmas meeting* in 1888, where *Føringafelag* (The Faroese Association) was founded, having as its foremost aim the promotion and advancement of Faroese language and culture.

This also resulted in a desire for having literature, news, teaching materials, liturgy, hymns and songs in Faroese - and, obviously, dramatic works as well, rooted in Faroese social conditions and culture.

These endeavours bore result already the following year. Two theatre pieces were performed during the same evening in the House of Parliament in Tórshavn. The first one was "*Veðurføst*" (Weather-bound), written by the first women's rights champion and feminist in the Faroes, Súsanna Helena Patursson (1864-1916). Unfortunately, the piece has not been preserved in its entirety, but it dealt mainly with the role of women in the national movement. The other performance was "*Gunnar Havreki*", a romantic heroic drama, written by a leading figure in *Føringafelag*, the agronomist, author and poet Rasmus Effersøe (1857-1916).

This was the starting point in the renewal of the theatre tradition. Danish plays continued to be performed, but increasingly Faroese plays were coming to the forefront. In 1890, two new plays were produced, "*Jákup á Møn*", written by Sigrid Niclasen, and "*Hjá dalabóndum*" by Rasmus Effersøe. That same year, the first native translation of a Holberg comedy was staged in the Faroes, translated by the ubiquitous Rasmus Effersøe.



The Theatre in Tórshavn built in 1926.

### **The Other Theatre Association**

In the thriving theatre scene of the 1890s, a need for an actual theatre building arose. Up until that time, different premises had been used for performances, preferably the House of Parliament, but in the long run arranging stage settings and dismantling them between performances became too difficult and demanding. The solution came when "Klubbin", the old gentleman's club in Tórshavn, offered to build an extension to the existing clubhouse to be used as a theatre hall. Thus, "*The Dramatic Society in Thorshavn*" came into existence, committing itself to paying instalments and interest for five years, thus gaining full control over the premises.

The inauguration of the new theatre wing in 1893 included the premieres of a romantic drama, "*Magnus*" by Effersøe, and the Danish play "*Fastelavnsgildet*" (The Shrovetide Feast) by Erik Bøgh. Now theatre performances abounded, but Faroese plays were still lacking. Almost all the performances were in Danish. The shrovetide of 1895 saw a premiere of one more theatre piece by Effersøe: "*Best man vera sum er*", drawing on Faroese folk life in the late 18th century.

The next couple of decades offered a fair amount of on-stage activities. Excellent Danish plays undoubtedly helped to consolidate theatre training for aspiring actors and form audience habits. In 1908, on the 100th anniversary of the death of the national hero Nólsoyar Páll, a new Faroese drama had its premiere. This was the play "*Ófriðarligar tíðir*" (Restive Times) by the editor, poet and actor, Christen Holm Isaksen (1877-1935).

### **The Actors' Association - the Third Theatre Association**

In January 1918, some of Tórshavn's leading cultural personalities initiated the formation of a new theatre association. Its purpose was to promote performances of more Faroese and Danish dramas, as well as to improve the theatre's external framework. The theatre hall in Havnar Klubbi had proven somewhat impractical and there was dire need for a distinctive theatre building.

On 10 February 1918, the Association held its first event, dedicated to the Norwegian poet Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, featuring lectures, reading and singing. This date is now considered the founding date of *Havnar*

*Sjónleikarfelag* (The Actors' Association of Tórshavn).

The events continued each month with changing themes. In July that same year, the Association performed Holberg's *"The Political Tinker"* in a Faroese translation by Richard Long.

In 1920, Havnar Klubbi decided to transform its theatre wing into a cinema – and once again the Tórshavn theatre found itself without a home. Fundraising activities for a new building were initiated and in 1926 the new Theatre building was finished – designed by one of the founders of the Actors' Association, architect H. C. W. Tórgarð.

The Theatre provided the Actors' Association with a stable framework for its activities. It became a cultural centre where leading authors, such as Hans A. Djurhuus and William Heinesen, went about their daily routines. H. A. Djurhuus was also chairman of the Association from 1930 to 1951. Up through the thirties, the amateur stage saw much activity, and there was a steady increase of plays performed in Faroese.

During World War II, theatre life in the Faroes went into hibernation. British occupying forces seized the Theatre and used it as residential quarters for soldiers. This is also the reason why we have such scant knowledge about the theatre's internal activities in the pre-war period. The Association's protocols, journals and some manuscripts were locked in a desk drawer in the premises – and when the Association got the building back after the war, the desk had disappeared. All attempts to find the lost documents have proven fruitless, so our information is based solely on oral reports and contemporary newspaper articles.

After the war, theatre life bloomed once again with the Theatre as its natural cen-

tre. Its stable framework made it possible to take on more challenging projects than before. The fifties saw the performing arts progressing. The heydays of the Association and the Theatre began in the early sixties with the arrival of Eyðun Johannessen, an educated actor and director. Drama education was provided for amateur actors – and Faroese writers wrote and translated plays for the stage. Scenography also underwent development during this period, designs being created by various artists who were hired for the purpose. In the wake of this golden age, we also began to see the first professional Faroese actors.

The financing of the company was to a large extent achieved by the House itself. Dance evenings were organized, movies were shown and concerts etc., arranged when the premises were not being used for performances. All these activities served to provide the necessary resources for the operation. Today, the institution also receives some public funding, but the main drive still comes from enthusiasts working on volunteer basis.

The Actors' Association and the Theatre provided, and still provide, the framework for the amateur theatre in Tórshavn. The standard is high and the activities manifold – including drama education for children and young people in collaboration with the Evening School of Tórshavn and a varied range of performances. What started out as a homeless recreational activity for idealistic theatre enthusiasts is today an honoured and independent institution whose cultural-historical significance cannot be exaggerated.

Congratulations on the Centenary. May the next 100 years bring as much success, development and cultural values as the previous centenary.

*Anker Eli Petersen*



### Stamp Sheet Facts

The background image on the stamp sheet is a photograph from 1889 of the group of actors in *"Weather-bound."* In the orange pane on the left, you can see the face of Súsanna Helena Patursson, who wrote and performed in the play.

When the first two Faroese plays, *"Weather-bound"* and *"Gunnar Havreki,"* were performed in the House of Parliament in Tórshavn in 1889, a banner hung over the scene with the phrase *"Til gaman og álvara"* (In Fun and Earnest). This motto became part of the decoration in the Theatre building from 1926 - and still hangs above the stage. The motto is divided by a portrait of the theatre enthusiast Rasmus Effersøe, who wrote several of the first Faroese plays. It is designed on the basis of the original and inserted at the lower edge of the stamp sheet. However, the portrait of Effersøe has been replaced by the current logo of the Actors' Association.

Traditionally, the theatre offer colourful sceneries, which is why I chose to use the

easily recognizable chequered costume of the Harlequin in the *Comedia dell'arte* tradition as a background - the defining characteristics of satire and parody.

Another well-known theatre motif is the two-piece masks symbolizing comedy and tragedy respectively. The masks have their root in religious rituals around the Greek god Dionysus, representing Thalia, the muse of comedy, and Melpomene, the muse of tragedy and song.

The motifs on the upper stamp derive from the plays *"Kálvur lítli"* by Ólavur Michelsen, the season of 1963/64, and *"Still the Sun shines"* by Valdemar Poulsen - season 1965/66.

Both motifs on the lower stamp derive from the drama *"Sangur i mjørka"* (A Song in the Fog) by Elin á Rógvi - theatre season 2013/14.

Anker Eli Petersen

# Stamp Programme 2018

- 26 February Flies** - four-stamp mini-sheet. Common flies in the Faroes: Blue-bottle fly, Red-thighed St. Mark's fly, Golden Dung fly and housefly. Artist: Astrid Andreasen. Values: 4 x 12,00 DKK. FO 872-875.
- H.C Müller 200th Anniversary** - one stamp. 200 years since the first Faroese postmaster was born. Design: Anker Eli Petersen. Value: 18,00 DKK. FO 876.
- Lakes in the Faroes II: Sandsvatn and Toftavatn** - two stamps and one self adhesive booklet. The third and fourth biggest lake in the Faroe Islands. Photos: Jógvan Horn & Durita Jacobsen. Values: 10,00 and 20,00 DKK. FO 877-878.
- Seabird Fowling** - two stamps. The stamps show two different ways of seabird fowling. Drawings and engraving: Martin Mörck. Values: 10,00 and 44,00 DKK. FO 879-880.
- 23 April Tórshavn's Actors' Association - 100th Anniversary** - two-stamp mini-sheet. Design: Anker Eli Petersen. Values: 2 x 19,00 DKK. FO 881-882.
- SEPAC 2018: Spectacular Views** - one stamp and one postcard. Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen. Value: 20,00 DKK. FO 883.
- NORDEN 2018: Mackerel** - one stamp. Artist: Astrid Andreasen. Value: 18,00 DKK. FO 884.
- EUROPA 2018: Bridges** - two stamps and a self adhesive booklet (6). Photos: Ólavur Frederiksen. Values: 10,00 and 18,00 DKK. FO 885-886.
- 100th Anniversary of Fuglafjørður Municipality** - two stamps. Design: Suffía Nón. Values: 14,00 and 22,00 DKK. FO 887-888.
- 21 September Franking labels for International Exhibition in Macau** - four motifs: dogs. Values: 4 x 10,00 DKK.
- 24 September The end of World War I** - four-stamp mini-sheet. Design: Anker Eli Petersen. Values: 4 x 10,00 DKK.
- 100th Anniversary of Regin Dahl** - one stamp. Regin Dahl (1918-2007) was a Faroese author and composer. Design: Kim Simonsen. Value: 28,00 DKK.
- Faroese National Costumes III** - two stamps, self adhesive booklet (6) and 2 postcards. The third and last issue depicting national costumes. Artist: Edward Fuglø. Values: 18,00 and 20,00 DKK.
- Christmas Stamps** - two stamps. Religious Icons - one icon designed by Faroese artist, Astrid Andreasen and an ancient Russian icon. Values: 10,00 and 18,00 DKK.
- 1 October Franking labels 2018** - four different motifs: Lighthouses. Artist: Miriam Hinz. Values: 4 x 10,00 DKK
- 5 November Yearbook, Year Pack and Christmas Seals**
- NB! Reservations are subject to changes in the annual program and layout.*



FO 883

Test proof



## SEPAC 2018: Spectacular Views

They got a bit of a fright, the happy campers at Tórshavn's campground, when tremendous waves came crashing against the rocks just outside the place where they parked. It is not unusual to see heavy surf and high seas raising havoc along the Faroese coastline. There was no danger involved – but the scene was violent and dramatic.

Thousands of tourists visit the islands every year to see, feel and experience the mild North Atlantic summer season. Culture, dramatic nature and the tranquillity of the Faroese summer night, which never becomes completely dark and where a sense of deep serenity equals the diverse sounds of nature.

This is also excellent. We, the Faroese, also love the summer season in all its nuances, festivities, activities and calmness.

### **Stormy Seasons and Strange Weather Expressions**

However, if you want to experience genuine Nature dramas, you should travel to the Faroe Islands in the off-season when tourism

is slack. This means autumn or winter - when Nature offers hair-raising impressions and experiences. This is the season when low pressures queue up, storms and gales rip between mountains, over hills and through fjords, tearing at roofs and houses.

It is the season when the Faroese use non-translatable expressions, such as "*glæðustrok*", a tremendous gale whipping the sea into small cyclonic whirls. Not to mention "*áarfari*", when heavy rain excites calm and quiet lakes, turning them into raging rivers flooding embankments and often changing their courses. Or the humorous expression "*áirnar fletta upp um seg*" (lit. rivers blowing up the skirt) about the peculiar phenomenon when tempestuous storms cause mountain streams and waterfalls to soar upwards - like Marilyn Monroe's skirt – running backwards up slopes and mountains.

### **Skæðaðn - the Destructive Gale**

The meteorological expression that causes most apprehension is "*skæðaðn*". It denotes



"Áirnar fletta upp um seg" (waterfalls soaring upwards).  
Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen.

gales so powerful that buildings are torn apart, steel constructions bend and grassy soil is uprooted.

In the last three decades, the Faroe Islands have been hit by ever more hurricanes, especially in the months of November and December. One example is the notorious Christmas Gale (*Jólaódnin*) that struck the Faroes in 1988 and caused extensive damage, especially in Tórshavn. A large number of houses were damaged in the severe weather, rooftops flew long distances and large parts of groves and plantations in the Faroes were levelled to the ground. Ships and boats were torn from the moorings and cars were destroyed. I remember that the next morning I found the upper part of a chimney in my yard, which seemed strange since none of the neighbouring houses lacked their chimneys. There is some uncertainty about the strength of the hurricane. Anemometers broke down at wind speeds of 62 m/s (220 km/h), to the best of my memory, so gusts may actually have been more violent.

In 2013, the Faroese television station KVF showed a documentary about the 1988 Christmas hurricane. While it can only be viewed in Faroese, it contains many significant film clips documenting the hurricane and its consequences: <http://kvf.fo/dokumentarurin?page=13&sid=20647>

This trend has continued and hurricanes of varying strength are hitting the Faroe Islands on a regular basis. They can be violent but very few of them reach the intensity of the 1988 hurricane. However, on November 24, 2011, a terrific hurricane hit the islands inflicting major material damages - and two years later, on December 14, 2013, things blew up once again. Both of these hurricanes did indeed match the one in 1988.

The highest wind speed ever measured in the Faroe Islands was during another Christmas hurricane. On December 26, 2016, at 06.08 in the morning, anemometers at *Norðradalsskarð* registered wind speeds of 78.7 m/s. This corresponds to 283 km/h. For long periods, average wind speed reached



Stormy weather in Viðareiði 2012. Photo: Jóannis Sørensen.

52 m/sec. This was the hurricane Urd, which also ravaged Norway, Britain and Denmark. By comparison, Urd's strongest gusts in Denmark measured 37.8 m/s - while the highest average wind speeds reached 29 m/sec.

### **Brim – High-surf**

Stormy weather's iconic companion is "brim" (high-surf). The Faroese surf makes for a pretty impressive sight crashing against rocky shores or breaking on islets and skerries. In more extreme cases, it can spray foam over inhabited areas in high altitudes and even throw rocks and wreckage quite some distances from the shore. But even in relatively moderate wind, the surf will create distinctive moods that can only be experienced by watching it in person.

### **Kavi - Snow**

Due to the warm Gulf Stream, the Faroe Islands enjoy a relatively mild climate. But you only have to be 200 meters above sea level to experience polar climate. This means that you often see white mountains

already late in the autumn, although there is no snow at the coast. However, a lot of snow can fall in inhabited areas, typically in December, January and February - but it rarely stays for any length of time.

The Faroe Islands white with snow offer quite an experience in itself, especially up among the mountains, where sceneries can become quite impressive.

Therefore, if you want to experience the true playground of the sky and weather gods, you need only travel to the Faroes in the winter season. Hopefully you will not experience skaðaðn – a little less might just as well do the trick – how about a fresh little gale, just to mention an example?

At least, we can almost guarantee that you will experience bad weather.

*Anker Eli Petersen*

# Take a trip to the island of Jersey and discover...

## Nature

Links with China: Butterflies



Links with China: Waterfowl



Designed by  
Martin Mörck  
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100 years of Jersey Beekeepers Association



## Beautiful Scenery

Castles & Forts



Jersey Seasons - Spring



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infused with  
the scent of  
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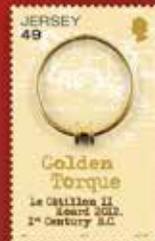
## And learn about our history



Victory & Liberation



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FO 884

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## Nordic Issue 2018: Mackerel

The Faroe Islands are known all over the world for their excellent fish products. One reason for this is that we have a fishing fleet, which is in a class of its own. The ships have been built and developed for the very purpose of processing fish with speed and efficiency.

When the ships bring the fish ashore, it is transported to processing factories which are also in a class of their own. The crews aboard the ships and the factory workers are highly skilled with expert knowledge and experience, all of these things combining to improve and integrate the production.

Faroese waters are among the cleanest marine ecosystems on earth. With excellent ships, high-quality factories and skilled workers we are able to offer world-class fish products.

Mackerel, one of the great marine resources in the Faroe, is of considerable importance for the country and its people.

Mackerel has now earned its place as a motif on an exquisite stamp issue, designed by our accomplished artist Astrid Andreasen.

Over the years, Astrid has designed, painted, cut and sewn a great deal, creating a wealth of various artistic compositions. Three of her works will be highlighted here. These are the illustrations in the book "*Fiskar í Føroyum*" (Fish in the Faroe Islands), the needle patchwork which decorates the arrivals lounge at the Faroe Marine Research Institute (*Havstovan*) and, last but not least, the altarpiece in the church of Vestmanna, her childhood home. Astrid, together with her children, has created this graceful piece of art, one of the most beautiful altarpieces in the Faroe Islands, and admirably well suited to the church interior.

### A Few Notes on Mackerel

Latin: *Scomber scombrus*, Faroese: *makrelur*, Danish: *makrel*, English: *mackerel*.

Mackerel is a pelagic fish belonging to the tuna family. It always migrates in large schools, some reaching up to 100 meters in depth and 200 meters in width, totalling several hundred thousand fish in a single school.



Fishing vessels at the quay in Klaksvik.  
Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen.

The mackerel lacks swim bladder, which means that it can dive quickly and rise again swiftly to the surface adjusting its weight to the water pressure, thus avoiding decompression sickness.

The mackerel has a solid firm-muscled body and a torpedo-like shape with two widely spaced dorsal fins and 5-6 small finlets on the back and the sides. The finlets and the forked shape of the caudal fin, all contribute to making the mackerel an adept swimmer. The finlets and the shape of the caudal fin also reduce water resistance.

The mackerel is light green on the dorsal side, with dark green irregular transverse bands. The belly glitters in silvery white and pink. The meat is dark. It can grow up to 65 cm and weigh up to 3.5 kg. Mackerel over 2 kg is rarely found.

The general range of the mackerel is in the Atlantic Ocean from Gibraltar up to East Greenland, and northwards to Spitsbergen. Mackerel fisheries have been maintained in Iceland for

some years now, and in recent years mackerel has also been fished in East Greenland. Mackerel is also being exploited in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

In winter, mackerel is found in deep waters in the northern part of the North Sea around the Shetland Islands and west of the British Isles. During its winter rest period, the mackerel does not feed.

Mackerel attains sexual maturity at the age of three years. In spring from March-April to July, it starts spawning. It is a prolific fish - the individual female deposits 500,000 to 1 million eggs which float and mix with the milk-like semen from the males. About six days later, the eggs hatch with the larvae emerging about 4 mm long. In the first few months, the fry grows quickly, reaching about 20 cm in length at the age of one.

In the last few years, mackerel has also spawned in Faroese waters.



Mackerel. Photo: Hans Eli Sivertsen.

Early in summer, mackerel feeds mostly on animal plankton, but later in the summer, it eats sea snails and krill. With animal plankton level decreasing early in autumn, it feeds on krill, sand eel, sprat et al.

Mackerel is well known to the Faroese. They have fished mackerel for many years, even if it has not been used for culinary purposes in the Faroes, most of the catch being exported. In the Faroes, some of the mackerel is used as baitfish, especially in longline fishing.

In recent years, much more of mackerel has been found in Faroese waters, and fishing has grown 20 times since 2010.

Mackerel is a very popular eating fish, but it does not keep well because its muscle fat quickly oxygenates and the fish becomes rancid. The fatty muscles are very tasty and nutritious. Mackerel is a healthy fish, containing a lot of B12 and Omega 3 fatty acids (twice as much as salmon), while the mercury content is low.

Let's use Google to play with some numbers. Googling in Faroese: "*kóka ein makrel*" will yield 3,320 different pages. If we then enter the Danish words: "*kog en makrel*" the result is 33,000 hits. And entering the English words "*eating mackerel*" we pull up no less than 2,280,000 pages. Of course, these are just interesting numbers which cannot be used as statistics.

Children always show interest in everything that moves, fish being no exception, so they ask a lot about the subject: How does fish live, does it breathe, what it eats, how many eggs do they spawn, and so on. When I asked if they like mackerel salad they answer all at once: "*Yeeees!!!! We like that.*" But, they did not know that mackerel salad was canned fish in tomato, which is probably also favoured by grown-up children.

*Mourits Mohr Joensen*



FO 885-886



Test proof



## Europa 2018: Bridges

Considering the size of the Faroe Islands, it may seem quite strange that infrastructure, transport and logistics, have always constituted some of the islands' biggest problems. Steep mountain terrain presented great difficulties to wayfarers, straits with violent currents and treacherous waters could only be crossed by strong and able-bodied mariners. There are many stories of perilous travels between the islands and accidents resulting in fatal outcomes during these voyages were not unusual. Travels between the islands presented such physical challenges that they were mostly reserved for men with strong constitution. The resulting isolation meant that even dialects were formed in one of the world's smallest language areas. These difficulties lasted until recent times. I personally remember meeting old people, especially women, who had never been outside of their islands of birth.

Around the turn of the 20th century, things started improving. There were scattered ferry connections between islands and settlements, and when the first automobiles arrived in the

Faroe Islands in 1922 the need for expanding road infrastructure became apparent. In the late thirties, roads connecting towns and villages had come a long way, but it was still not possible to drive between the islands.

Connections between the two largest islands, Streymoy and Eysturoy, were particularly problematic. Although these islands lie very close to each other, car ferries were needed between Tórshavn and the populated areas of Eysturoy and the northernmost islands. A car ferry sailed regular routes between Tórshavn and Toftir on the eastern side of Skálafjørður, while a smaller ferry transported cars between Hósvík on Streymoy and Selatrað on Eysturoy. As the number of cars increased and waiting lines at the ferries grew longer – along with routes becoming unnecessarily long for the drivers - it was decided to build a bridge between the two major islands.

### **Streymin Bridge – The Bridge over the Atlantic**

In March 1971, the construction and civil engineering company E. Phil & Søn began



The bridge "við Streymir" over the channel Sundalagið.  
Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen.

constructing a bridge between Eysturoy and Streymoy. The location chosen for the bridge was one of the narrowest stretches over "Sundalagið", the channel separating the islands which had been dammed in the previous year. On the Streymoy side the bridge is located slightly south of the small settlement of Langasandur, while on the Eysturoy side the bridge lies between the towns of *Norðskáli* and *Oyrarbakki*. The place is called "Við Streymir" due to the narrowing of the strait which gives rise to violent ocean currents between the islands.

Building the bridge took a year and a half. It was 220 meters long and 9.5 meters wide, with a height of 17 meters. On October 30, 1973, it was officially opened for traffic. At first it only connected traffic northwards along the north-western side of Eysturoy, but three years later a large tunnel was opened connecting the bridge with the central part of the island along *Skálafjarður* with connections between Leirvík and the northern islands. 2006 saw the opening of a large sub-sea tunnel between Leirvík and Klaksvík, resulting in direct road

connections between Kunoy, Borðoy, Viðoy and Eysturoy, Streymoy and Vágur.

The bridge "við Streymir" was the first step in a vast project intended to connect large parts of the Faroe Islands by roads. Every five years the bridge is inspected for wear and tear, and 2011 saw the completion of a comprehensive renovation and expansion of the bridge by foot- and bicycle paths.

The bridge, with its connected network of roads and tunnels, has had a major impact on the development of Faroese infrastructure and overall community development.

### **The Bridge over Sandá**

While the bridge "við Streymir" connects islands, the bridge over "Sandá" is an entirely different story. The Sandá river, which runs from *Havnardalur* down to the sandy beach of *Sandágerði*, has since ancient times marked the border between Argir and Tórshavn, the capital of the Faroes. Argir was once a village, but the massive expansion of residential neighborhoods

in the metropolitan area has resulted in the merging of these areas – so today Argir is one of Tórshavn's largest suburbs.

But this was not always so. Argir - the name is derived from the Faroese word "ærgi", summer pastures, - was uninhabited for a long time. In the 16th century, "Argja Hospital" became a leper colony - but when a smallpox epidemic in 1709 killed 12 of its 15 patients, the hospital was not used to any great extent. In 1826 it was decided to build a hospital in Tórshavn and two years later the Argir hospital with its appurtenant land was sold at an auction. The buyer was Andrass Mortensen, carpenter, iron-smith and stonemason - and in February 1829 he and his family took residence in Argir.

### **The First Bridges**

Andrass Mortensen was a popular craftsman who travelled extensively for work in the Faroes. But he was confronted by a major obstacle - the river Sandá, which was difficult to cross via stepping stones, especially after periods of heavy rain. Sailing to Tórshavn was too much of a struggle for Andrass so he decided to build a bridge over Sandá. The authorities did not want to support the project financially, so in 1831 Andrass started building the bridge on his own. At first he received help from pastor Gad in the adjacent priesthood in Sandágerði, but Andrass worked mostly alone with his young sons who struggled with the massive boulders used for the foundation of the wooden bridge.

Andrass Mortensen's bridge was completed in 1835 to the great relief of the residents in Argir - and also those living in the villages of Kirkjubøur and Velbastaður. For almost a century, the bridge provided the only passage over

the river between Argir and Tórshavn - but the introduction of automobiles in the Faroe Islands called for a larger bridge. By the end of the twenties, a stone bridge was constructed a little further down to the sea, and in the sixties, a concrete bridge was built close by.

### **The New Bridge**

Following the extensive expansion of residential areas in Argir, the pressure on the bridge constructed in the sixties became too much. The city council of Tórshavn therefore resolved to build a new modern bridge over Sandá - this time further up the valley. The project was conditioned upon the bridge not affecting the scenic environment along the banks of Sandá which meant that the bridge was raised high above the river with the bridge anchors far away from the banks.

In 2014, the construction company J & K Petersen started building the bridge and it was officially taken into use on 28 May 2016.

The bridge over Sandá is built of steel and concrete. It is 140 meters long and 14.5 meters wide with two lanes and a sidewalk / bicycle path. Its highest point is approx. 16 meters above the river. It is a substantial part of the landscape, but the elegant architecture and modern lighting enhance the visual impression, especially with the U-shaped columns, reminiscent of raised arms supporting the bridge.

There is a world of difference and almost two centuries between Andrass Mortensen's bridge and the new Sandá bridge - but the spirit is the same: cohesion, initiative and expansion.

*Anker Eli Petersen*



FO 887-888



Test proof



# Fuglafjørður 1918-2018

## Municipality for 100 years – creative community for 1000 years

In the north-eastern part of the island of Eysturoy, there is a small, yet lively town called Fuglafjørður. Nestled snugly at the bottom of a sheltered fjord and shielded by the seven mountains surrounding it, its inhabitants are ensured a relatively mild climate. This location was well suited for a thriving settlement with its good conditions for progress: a natural harbour close to good fishing grounds next to a river and fertile soil. Despite the tall mountains, the sun reaches the town throughout the year.

## Archaeological excavations

Historical records telling us about the early history of the village are sparse. However, in 1958 Sverri Dahl, archaeologist, supervised an excavation near the river, Gjógvárá, which revealed that people have lived in Fuglafjørður since the Viking Age. The excavation uncovered the remains of different houses over several periods from the Viking Age and throughout the Middle Ages, as well as many interesting artefacts. The oldest settlement and the objects found at the site date back to the Viking Age, probably from around AD 900 – 1000. This was a longhouse akin to the remains found in the villages of Leirvík and Kvívik. These longhouses were usually between 15 and 20m long, but centuries of erosion along the coast have washed away one end of the house. Among the

relics found in the dig were fragments of several wooden and soapstone vessels, whetstones, wooden toys and glass beads of various colours. A line-sinker of stone was also found – engraved with the Saint John's Arms (or the Saint Hannes Cross). This looped square is the symbol we know today from signs and maps, indicating a place of interest.

## The Celtic Quaternary Knot

A unique find among the oldest remains was a wooden board which has probably been the lid of a small chest. A carved relief of a double plait weaves a regular interlace pattern across the lid. The board itself is broken so only a part of the vague pattern remains, but it is distinct enough to recreate the original design (cf. the stamp). This embellishment is one of many examples of Celtic or Celtic-inspired designs that become part of the blended Celtic-Norse culture of the Viking Age. The pattern is known today as the Celtic Quaternary Knot.

This is the only piece of wood from the Viking Age with a carved Celtic design found in the Faroe Islands so far. However, there have been other finds with Celtic or Celtic-inspired decorations, e.g. bronze needles and a bronze clasp.

The double plait pattern on the wooden board from Fuglafjørður is a beautiful and mythical pattern testifying to a daily life a thousand



The work "The Gate to the World." Photo: Brynhild Næs Petersen.

years ago which also had room for artistic pursuits despite harsh living conditions. Many settlers came from Celtic areas in Scotland and Ireland, and they may have brought the chest with them, but the design may also have been carved into the lid on long winter nights by the fire in the longhouse by the beach near Gjógvárá river.

Many questions may arise when we contemplate such finds. What has an ordinary day looked like for the settlers? Who were they? Was the chest used to store the beads? Did the owners abandon the site, or what happened to them? Did the design hold some symbolic or religious meaning, or was it just a part of the Celtic-Norse fashion? In any case, the design still fascinates us today as a reminder of the past and an inspiration for the future.

### **The Gate to the World**

The desire to create something anew still exists here. Fuglafjørður is known as a town of creative people and interesting events. Here you will find capable choirs, a swinging brass band, an active Arts & Crafts Centre with an old shop and Gallery, Ribarhús, a culture house hosting a variety of events, artists, and various sports clubs. In addition, there are several festivals, e.g. the summer town fair called the Hot Spring Festival, the Knitting Festival, the Accordion Festival and the Culture Days.

In 2004, the town fair, whose main attraction is usually the rowing competition, was turned into an Art Festival called Man and Myth. Both local and visiting creative artists were involved in the Art Festival where they collaborated on creating both momentary and permanent experiences. A cantata was made for the festival, there was a modern dance show in the marina, and several art exhibitions around town were among the many events. On the jetty between the fjord and the marina, a series of sculptures was erected, which still attracts attention in our town. It was created by the Danish art group 7-9-13 with Anette & Michael Arleth and Em Hess. This work is called *the Gate to the World* and consists of five large iron sculptures depicting a boulder gate, suggestive of the entrance to old Faroese houses. One of the gates can be seen on the stamp. This family of sculptures is inspired by the poetical paper cuttings of renowned Faroese author and artist William Heinesen and his universe of sea people, with fish and birds weaving in and out of the gates. The artwork plays on the contrasts between the frail paper cuttings and the more permanent, if rusty, iron material, between myth and industry, art and boulders, situated as it is on the edge of sea and town, between untamed nature and the civilized community, a gate out to the world and into our hometown.

*Fuglafjørður Municipality*

# New Stamp Issues - 23 April 2018



FO 881-882 Test proof



FO 883 Test proof



FO 884 Test proof



FO 885-886 Test proof



Self-adhesive booklet



FO 887-888



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Torshavn's Actors' Association 100th Anniversary**  
 Date of issue: 23.04.2018  
 Value: 2 x 19,00 DKK  
 Numbers: FO 881-882  
 Stamp, size: 43,0 x 25,5 mm  
 Sheet, size: 100 x 70 mm  
 Artist: Anker Eli Petersen  
 Printing technique: Offset  
 Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France  
 Postal use: Large inland letters, 51-100 g.

New stamp issue: **SEPAC 2018: Spectacular Views**  
 Date of issue: 23.04.2018  
 Value: 20,00 DKK  
 Numbers: FO 883  
 Stamp, size: 28 x 42 mm  
 Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen  
 Printing technique: Offset  
 Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France  
 Postal use: Small letters to other countries, 0-50 g.

New stamp issue: **Nordic Issue 2018: Mackerel**  
 Date of issue: 23.04.2018  
 Value: 18,00 DKK  
 Numbers: FO 884  
 Stamp, size: 25,5 x 44,0 mm  
 Artist: Astrid Andreassen  
 Printing technique: Offset + silver metallic and gloss varnish  
 Printer: The Lowe Martin Group, Canada  
 Postal use: Small letters to Europe, 0-50 g.

New stamp issue: **EUROPA 2018: Bridges**  
 Date of issue: 23.04.2018  
 Value: 10,00 and 18,00 DKK  
 Numbers: FO 885-886  
 Stamp, size: 30 x 40 mm  
 Photos: Ólavur Frederiksen  
 Printing technique: Offset  
 Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France  
 Postal use: Small inland letters, and small letters to Europe, 0-50 g.

New stamp issue: **Fuglafjarður Municipality 100 Years**  
 Date of issue: 23.04.2018  
 Value: 14,00 and 22,00 DKK  
 Numbers: FO 887-888  
 Stamp, size: 30 x 40 mm  
 Design: Suffia Nón  
 Printing technique: Offset  
 Printer: Cartor Security Printing, France  
 Postal use: Large inland letters and large letters to Europe, 0-50 g.

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