



Posta Stamps
Faroe Islands

No. **28**
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New Stamp Issues:

- Fishskin stamps
- National costumes
- Jesus from Nazareth
- Franking labels 2016



Svanbjørg Manai

40th Career Anniversary

It has hardly escaped anyone's attention that Posta is celebrating its 40th anniversary. On April 1st 1976 the Faroese Department of Post Denmark was separated from the Danish organization and became the Faroe Islands' own independent postal service under the name Postverk Føroya, later Posta.

There is a parallel narrative to this anniversary, the story of Posta Stamps charismatic director, Mrs. Svanbjørg Manai, who is also celebrating her 40th career anniversary on April 1 this year. She has been with the company from the very beginning and over the years she has become more or less synonymous with the company's philatelic enterprise.

When the philatelic department of the new Faroese postal administration was established the young Svanbjørg Manai of Tórshavn was headhunted due to her language skills. Linguists were needed for the customer service - and Svanbjørg was hired along with two others. At first she worked as a temporary employee - her future plans did not include staying in the job. When paying the wages at the end of each month, Faroe Post's former personnel manager, A. G. Nielsen used to ask Svanbjørg if she would be willing to stay on a

permanent basis. Svanbjørg declined the offer. The reason for Svanbjørg's restraint was that she was not planning to stay home for long. She had lived in Germany, France and Norway, and wanted to go back out into the world, before settling in a permanent position. It sounds quite amusing for those of us who have followed Svanbjørg's career over the years. She is undoubtedly one of the most travelled Faroese of all times, precisely because of her job. It was a standing joke that when you called Svanbjørg on the phone you never knew beforehand what country she would reply from.

The Philatelic Department was from the outset a modern company, using the most up-to-date techniques and ideas. Its first manager, Jørgen Gunnarson, introduced electronic data processing to the customer service. This development was continued during the management of Knud Wachter. Customer care was given priority and the Department made active sales efforts by participating in exhibitions and philatelic events around the world. It was Svanbjørg's main responsibility, along with others, to represent the Philatelic Department to the outside world. She who did not want a permanent job because of her travel plans, was almost constantly on the



The 40 years Svanbjørg Manai has worked at the post office, she has been on many stamp exhibitions around the world.

move on international assignments on behalf of Faroese philately.

The Philatelic Sales Department was established in 1986 with Svanbjørg as manager. Along with the head of the Philatelic Department, the equally charismatic Knud Wacher, and the director of the Faroese Post, Esbern Midjord, they formed a highly professional team. They took all major decisions concerning publishing policy and stamp motifs until the retirement of Esbern Midjord in 1998. Wacher was the modern bureaucrat and manager who took care of business management and administration, but did not care much for travel and representation. Svanbjørg therefore became the face of the Philatelic Department and its international representative.

The collaboration with Knud Wacher continued and the guidelines that had been established early on are still in force for Faroese stamp issues. Each stamp is supposed to tell a story and serve the function of a small window into Faroese culture, history and society. The sales strategy is outgoing and Faroese philately makes a virtue of being represented in the wider world.

When Wacher retired in 2006, Svanbjørg Manai replaced him as the manager of the Philatelic Department. At the same time extensive structural changes were made. The organization Postverk Føroya was reorganized into public limited company under the name of Posta. It was a turbulent time with great change. The company's restructuring and rationalization was necessitated by the changed role of postal activities. The new organization now functions as a modern logistics company and publisher of philatelic products.

This year Svanbjørg Manai will be able to celebrate her 40th career anniversary along with Posta. These years have been eventful for the girl who did not want to settle down because of her wanderlust. Over the years, she has travelled around the world several times, while also becoming a pioneer among Faroese women in her capacity as a manager outside of traditional women's professions. But if we know her right, she does not give this a great deal of thought, her eyes being focussed on the prospects ahead.

Congratulations on these 40 years, Svanbjørg! May many interesting travels await you!



FO 834

Test proof

Fish Stamps – Literally Speaking

Once in a while assignments end on my desk that prove to be a real eye-opener. These are creative works of art so unusual and yet so obvious that you smile, scratch your head in amazement and exclaim: “Of course! Why did not I think of that before? ”

I had such an experience the other day when Posta turned to me and asked if I could write a small article about their new stamp, which - and here my eyes opened wide - is made from cod skin.

“Cod skins,” I thought, “how on earth does such a work of art look like?”

My faint scepticism was quickly put to shame when I saw the stamps. They were in principle designed as ordinary stamp with texts, values and a small shaded drawing by master engraver Martin Mörch. But the similarity stopped right there. Onto each stamp a square piece of tanned cod skin had been glued. It was not at all grey and dullish, which I to my embarrassment must admit was my initial fear - but incredibly beautiful and patterned with almost metallic colour tones, which change depending on the angle it is viewed from. By looking at several examples I was able to ascertain that they

are all different - something the Philatelic Department makes every effort to avoid.

Whatever the case, in September Posta will issue beautiful stamps with skin of cod caught in Faroese waters, supplied by fish exporter Nevið in Toftir, tanned by Atlantic Leather in Iceland and printed by Cartor in France.

The Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*) is usually about one meter in length, but can grow to 2 meters and weigh up to 96 kilos. It can reach an age of 25 years and is found on both sides of the Atlantic, from Novaya Zemlya in the Barent Sea, Spitsbergen and Jan Mayen down to the Bay of Biscay, in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea to the east. It is commonly found in the waters around the Faroe Islands and Iceland, as well as Greenland - and from Labrador in the north to North Carolina in the south.

Cod is generally sandy brown, its back and sides are yellowish-green, with grey or brown spots and a white lateral stripe running along its sides. The belly is white or greyish-white. However, it can have other colour variations depending on habitat, f. ex. dark brown or maroon if it lives among kelp.

Cod is popular for its delicate flesh. This is



Cod
Photo: Maria Olsen

especially true of Faroese cod, which is fatter and not as mealy or dry as cod in other places.

Tanning of fish skin is an ancient art although it has not been common in the post-war period. The quality of fish leather will of course vary from species to species, but properly treated skin of cod, salmon and lumpfish is often stronger than ordinary cowhide.

The size of fish skins have made them especially well-suited for producing smaller items, such as shoes, bags, purses and watchbands. Sewn together, they can also be used in the garment industry and to upholster furniture. Today's designers are getting more and more aware of fish skins' practicality and beauty - and use them, in addition to the items mentioned above, for a number of few articles, e.g. jewellery, belts, book binding and photo collages.

There is a growing tendency to make the fullest use of fish being caught which means that in the coming decades we will no doubt see an increased use of fish skin for various purposes. It will not be limited to tanning of fish skin, but will occur over a broader spectrum - in the industrial production of fish gelatine, which can be used both in

the food industry, as well as in advanced technology such as electronics and optics. In addition, fish skin protein can be used in the nutrition industry and as health food.

The uses of the Faroe most abundant material, fish, can only be limited by our imagination. And right now Posta strikes a blow for the forgotten treasure found in the versatile uses of fish products by issuing unique stamps with the most fascinating cod skin patterns.

Anker Eli Petersen



The Faroese National Costume I

Visitors to the Faroe Islands have hardly failed to notice that many Faroese wear national costumes at parties and town festivals. They will see men wearing breeches and the distinct Faroese hats and women in full-length skirts with beautifully embroidered aprons and shawls, with elegantly made silver jewellery.

In actuality, the Faroese national costume tradition is not very old. The costumes are based on the way everyday clothing looked up until the mid-19th century, and it was only during the national revival in the late 18th century that they started becoming different from the commoner's clothing. The term "føroysk klæði" (Faroese attire) should be compared to the concept "donsk klæði" (Danish attire), which designated clothes bought in shops - and does not necessarily denote formal wear. Gradually, as it became more customary to dress in "shop's clothing" as most Europeans did, the traditional attire came to occupy a class by itself. In my childhood we still could see men, especially of the older generation, using breeches, knitted sweaters and hats in everyday life.

Over time, and especially during the national romantic revival in the late 18th century, the Faroese attire began assuming its current status for festive occasions. There have been a number of changes made from the original attire and a certain standardization of both female and male dresses has taken place, so that one can now talk about a

genuine national costume. After World War II the use of the national costume gradually increased, but in the last two or three decades it has come back with a vengeance, partly because of nationalism flourishing due to the severe financial crisis in the Faroe Islands in the nineties.

In three annual stamp issues we will illustrate aspects of both the female and male costumes.

Torso - the female costume

The knitted blouse that goes with the female costume is short and tight. It is open in front and has a wide neckline. Traditionally the blouse is red with tiny black patterns or, more rarely, blue with dark blue patterns. Recently, designers have started experimenting with colours - violet, green or yellow, to name just a few.

A detachable bosom is worn underneath the open front of the blouse. The bosom originates in the old festive apparel called "stakkur" and was not commonly used for this costume in the past. In days of old the bosom was woven or knitted in wool, then fulled or felted, while nowadays being made of lined velvet or similar fabric. The bosom serves two functions - the first as a compensation, let's say if the woman gets a little bigger, enabling her to use the same blouse. Its second function is to serve as an underlay, enhancing the costume's silver ornament.

In order to tighten the blouse against the



P/F Marjun Heimá
Photo: amyedna.com

body, use is made of a silver chain, a so-called "stimi". The stimi is pulled through the eyelets, "malja" in Faroese, on both sides of the blouse opening. A silver needle called "sproti" is at the end of the stimi which is fastened to the blouse after insertion. A source reports that formerly the stimi went up under the bust in order to accentuate it - but now it goes up on the bust of the dress.

Around the waist women wear a wide black belt with ornamented silver buckles. In rare cases, the entire belt is composed of ornamented silver pieces.

A large ornamented silver brooch is on top of the detachable bosom, used to hold the shawl in place. The brooch and belt buckles should preferably match with each other.

On the whole, silver ornamentation plays an important role in the national costume. There are women who, while their daughters are still young, start collecting the single silver pieces which at some point in the future will become a complete set. The silver ornamentation is also often passed on from mother to daughter. The design of the brooch and the silver buckles varies. In recent years Faroese decorative motifs have become more frequent.

Torso - the male costume

Men dressing in the national costume generally

wear a white shirt next to the body. Over the shirt they wear a waistcoat with six silver buttons, two small pockets and intricate floral embroideries. The waistcoat is either red or black in front. There is also a white waistcoat variant used by bridegrooms at weddings.

Over the waistcoat men wear a buttoned knitted sweater, open in front with silver buttons on both sides. The sweater is mostly worn open in front, held together at the top by a short silver chain with silver buttons at each end. The buttoned sweater is either uni-coloured dark blue and made of knitted and felted wool - or, as shown on the stamp, light blue with a dark blue pattern.

Anker Eli Petersen



FO 837-846

Test proof

Jesus from Nazareth: The Message of the Wood

On Edward Fuglò's Decoration in The Christian's Church

In the Spring of 2013, Edward Fuglò created ten, mixed-media wood and acrylic ornamental reliefs for Christianskirkjan, Christian's Church, in Klaksvík, Faroe Islands. The reliefs depict scenes from the life of Jesus. The medium wood is quite appropriate when we think of the Saviour as the foster son of Joseph, the carpenter.

Another reason for the use of wood as the medium is its frequent use in the Church, where the mighty wooden structure of the nave is reminiscent of the great halls of the Viking Era. The round shields mounted alongside Viking ships have also influenced Edward Fuglò's choice of a circular shape for his reliefs.

Unlike painted pictures, the reliefs surge forward in space, creating deep shadows. They serve as decoration of a wide meeting room with a low ceiling situated below the sanctuary of the Church. Thus, the powerful effect of the reliefs as a collective whole can also be seen as a response to this demanding environment.

The circular form is an old symbol of the eternal, which makes it particularly appropriate in a religious narrative. However, it also poses an artistic challenge: The images must adapt to the circular form, while resisting it at the same time. Edward Fuglò has resolved this dilemma in a masterly fashion. Some of his figures bow humbly beneath the curved frame, whereas others rise against it, as if it did not exist.

The storytelling is brief and dramatic, revolving around the calm and dignified persona of Christ Jesus. Like the eye of a hurricane, He is surrounded by a violent cascade of movement and the expectant and lively faces of His disciples and the crowds of His followers, which are a masterwork of expressionism.

In the spirit of Pop Art, Edward Fuglò does not shy away from banalities. The style is "biblical": simple, clear and direct. This particular Biblical treatment has had a long and checkered history, but at one time it was revolutionary and powerful, especially in the Italian Renaissance art of Giotto and his followers. Their art also inspired Joakim Frederik Skovgaard's altarpiece in Christianskirkjan, a fresco of The Great Feast



Inside the Christian's Church in Klaksvík

(1901), to which Fuglø's reliefs therefore connect.

The reliefs are not only retro. They are reminiscent of three-dimensional maps with contour lines. The displacements are so extensive that the whole assumes a dissolved, cubist look when the work is seen at close quarters or from the side. Simplicity and complexity go hand-in-hand, and the story is enriched by the decoration of the abstract pieces, often in robust rhythms.

Amidst the wood and acrylic reliefs, strange foreign elements appear, such as a light switch, a fish hook, a lock, a rivet, all of which endow the reliefs with a touch of collage. These are items that people have given the artist. As objects with special meaning for the donors, Edward Fuglø has incorporated them into his work as a local commentary on a sacred history. Thus, the life and passion of Jesus becomes uniquely present and personal.

The order of the narrative is also interesting. For example, the relief of Jesus Calms the Storm appears later than it should and so provides additional drama to the Passion of Christ. Likewise, The Ascension also reflects His Return on Judgement Day.

A wealth of thought-provoking details meets the eye. In Jesus Enters Jerusalem, Jesus rides alone without the traditional jubilant crowd; he meets his fate alone. In The Baptism of Christ, a tiny deer appears in the background, an allusion to the words of David, Psalm 42: "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God". As Christian art of old, the reliefs offer both good storytelling and satisfying nourishment for the mind and soul.

The reliefs were developed in close co-operation with Sjúrdur Sólstein, a cabinetmaker and instructor at Klaksvík Technical School, which provided the workspace for the crafting of the individual reliefs. Sólstein was responsible for the difficult and demanding work of carving the numerous components of the individual reliefs, following Edward Fuglø's detailed, 1:1 ratio designs.

With their magical mix of simplicity and complexity, narrative and decoration, old and new, imagination and handicraft, Edward Fuglø's reliefs constitute a brilliant contribution to Faroese church art. The Carpenter of Nazareth would have nodded in appreciation.



The artist Edward Fuglø is explaining the artwork in the basement of the Christians Church

And to conclude, some facts:

Each relief consists of a 2 cm thick birch plate with a diameter of 135 cm, edged by 2 cm of brass, which originally was the brass baseboards of earlier, now replaced, pews of the Church.

Varnished, painted (acrylic) or unfinished wooden pieces have been glued onto the base plate. The materials are spruce, African bubinga and zebrawood, and, not least, pine, which comes mainly from the former stretcher of the Church's altarpiece. To this is added driftwood, used metal parts, etc.

The motifs - clockwise from left - are as follows:

1. The Annunciation (Luke 1: 26-38)
2. The Adoration of the Shepherds (Luke 2: 8-21)
3. Jesus at the Age of Twelve in the Temple (Luke 2: 41-52)
4. The Baptism of Christ (Matthew 3: 13-17, Mark 1: 9-11, Luke 3: 21-22, John 1: 29-34)
5. Jesus Feeds the Multitude of Five Thousand (Matthew 14: 13-21, Mark 6: 30-44, Luke 9: 10-17, John 6: 1-15)

6. The Healing of the Ten Lepers (Luke 17: 11-19)
7. Jesus Calms the Storm (Matthew 8: 23-27, Mark 4: 35-41, Luke 8: 22-25)
8. Jesus Enters Jerusalem (Matthew 21: 1-11, Mark 11: 1-11, Luke 19: 28-40, John 12: 12-19)
9. Jesus Carries His Cross (Matthew 27: 32, Mark 15: 21, Luke 23: 26-32, John 19: 17)
10. The Ascension (Luke 24: 50-53, Acts 1: 9-12)

Accompanying the ornamentation are also six, small vignettes, which are mounted between the windows of the Church. They consist of carved and painted shapes that function as close-ups of details from the reliefs themselves: a star, a lamb, a column, a fish, a jug and a dove.

Nils Ohrt

Franking labels 2016

Music Festivals in the Faroe Islands

NB! The layout is not ready yet.



G!festival
Photo: Fotostudio

This year's franking labels depict Faroese music festivals.

As far back as Faroese history is recorded, music has played a major part in the nation's culture and tradition of story telling. The music scene in the Faroes today is buzzing with artists and creators across all genres, delivering world class performances and recordings. These artists, along with excellent musical talent from abroad, provide unforgettable music experiences at the various festivals held in the Faroe Islands every year.

G! Festival

"The wild Faroe Islands party that you can't afford to miss." – WIRED magazine

The annual three-day celebration of music is unique. Sure, music festivals are held on islands and beaches around the world. But G! is something else. Taking over the village of Syðrugøta – population 400 – on the island of Eysturoy, the festival's stages are built on the beach and the football pitch, right under the windows of houses. Locals welcome the visitors, a refreshing contrast to the grudging reception which can greet festival goers elsewhere.

For more information: www.gfestival.fo

The Summer Festival

Every year, the Summer Festival attracts the largest crowd compared to any other event in the Faroe Islands. Approximately 10,000 people join in on the three-day music festival held in the centre of Klaksvík.

Popular for its pop-centric style, the Summar Festival caters to a wide audience – from the very young

to those in their later years. Some of the world's most well-known bands, such as Scorpions and Westlife, have performed at this family-friendly festival.

For more information:
www.summarfestival.fo

The Country festival

Country & blues music is enormously popular on the Faroe Islands and it has its own festival in the little village of Sørvágur. In true country style, food is grilled over the open fire as people line-dance in between the bales of hay in their finest cowboy clothes and hats.

For more information: www.country.fo

Voxbotn

Voxbotn is 12 hours non-stop entertainment with pop music to suit every age. It is held in Tórshavn at Vágsoy, the capital's best location. With the concert stage situated downtown between the beautiful old warehouses, cosy cafés and restaurants, it is a foregone conclusion that the 3-4000 people gathered to listen to the popular local and international musicians such as Iron Maiden and Killer Queen, will experience an intense festival atmosphere in the long light summer night.

For more information: www.voxbotn.fo

Sources:
www.visitfaroeislands.com and
www.faroeislands.com

New Stamp Issues - 26 September 2016



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Fish Skin**
Date of issue: 26.09.2016
Value: 25,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 834
Stamp size: 30 x 40 mm
Design: Martin Mörck
Printing method: Offset/intaglio
Printer: Cartor Security printing, France
Postal use: Registered letters



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Faroese National Costume I ***
Date of issue: 26.09.2016
Value: 17 and 20,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 835-836
Stamp size: 26,5 x 40 mm
Engraving: Edward Fuglø
Printing method: Offset
Printer: OeSD, Austria
Postal use: Small and large letters to Europe, 0-51 g

* also available as stamps in a self adhesive booklet of six (3 of each stamp)



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Jesus from Nazareth**
Date of issue: 26.09.2016
Value: 10 x 9,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 837-846
Stamp size: x mm
Sheet size: Fotostudio
Artist: Edward Fuglø
Printing method: Offset
Printer:
Postal use: Small inland letters, 0-50 g

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