



Posta Stamps
Faroe Islands

No. **18**
November 2013

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Three new Stamp Issues
New Postal Rates
Choose Stamp of the Year 2013
End Sale of the Year





FO 776-778

Test proof

The Lady of Húsavík

Photo: Marita Gulklett | Text: Eyðun Andreassen

The legend of the wealthy Lady of Húsavík in the Faroe Islands tells the well-known story of the poor servant girl of Skúvoy, who mysteriously discovered where the Viking chief, Sigmundur Brestisson, had buried his golden horn. The horn was made of immaculate gold, purer than any other treasure in the king's possession. The girl was living in misery, dressed in rags and spending her nights under a millstone in the outhouse. After selling her treasure to the king, she was able to buy all the land in the village of Húsavík, and even more land elsewhere on the island. According to the legend she soon became the wealthiest woman ever to have lived in the Faroe Islands.

The story sounds like a poor people's daydream but in reality one, or even two, very rich ladies resided in Húsavík in the 14th century. We know this because a number of documents dated 1403 and a few years onward contain records of estate inventory and legacies. The identities of these women are not entirely clear but they were most

likely mother and daughter. They left a very substantial inheritance, among them large landed property in the Faroe Islands, an impressive number of buildings – outhouses and residential property – in Húsavík, lots of equipment and other personal belongings besides landed possessions in Bergen and neighbouring areas, as well as in the Shetland Islands.

The mother was probably of Norwegian descent, the daughter of a wealthy Bergen merchant with connections to the Shetland Islands. Her husband may also have been a Norwegian. How and why these people settled in the Faroe Islands remains a mystery. Accounts of their lives and lifestyles went from mouth to mouth in Húsavík and elsewhere and gradually became a captivating legend about a single personage bearing the distinguished title of the Lady of Húsavík, suggesting that this was no ordinary person.

It is not surprising that such vast fortunes aroused people's interest, especially since



their possessors were women. Nor is it surprising that the legend contains elements of popular superstition, which is often the case in folklore. The poor maid's discovery of the treasure is no coincidence - she was told in a dream where to find it. It has long been said that some can foresee future events in their dreams, a gift given to but a few. Legend also has it that the Lady of Húsavík possessed magical powers. The arable inner fields in Húsavík are flat and grassy and lend themselves easily to cultivation. Outside the inner field boundaries the landscape rises in steep slopes with uneven, loose and stony soil. Attempts have been made to explain how it was possible to keep the inner fields free of stones and clay from the steep slopes, and so the legend introduces an element of the supernatural, attributing the good condition of the land to the Lady's magic powers. This was the only acceptable explanation for her even, smooth and beautiful fields.

Folklore has attempted to explain the large stone buildings in a similar way. The Lady summoned her magical prowess to have "nykur", a mythical being in the shape of a horse, haul boulders for her buildings down from the mountain and the outlying fields. The nykur lived in lakes and was considered a dangerous being because it tempted children to go horseback riding, taking them to the lake where they drowned. Once when the nykur was hauling an unusually large boulder from the outlying field the weight proved too heavy and the nykur's tail was ripped off. This meant that the magic spell was broken, the nykur was free and disappeared into *Litlavatn*, a nearby lake. The stories of the great and prosperous Lady of Húsavík are among the oldest historical legends in the Faroe Islands, containing a grain of historical truth and allowing us to determine with certainty the actual dates of events and the people involved.



FO 759



Test proof

Jellyfish

Photos: Ingi Sørensen | Text: Anker Eli Petersen

They look like something that came from foreign galaxies. Strange looking creatures, shaped like an old fashioned parachute as they move in jerks through the water. It is a bit spooky to see them move under the surface - sometimes in such large numbers that it seems like the sea water coagulates with another liquid. But the grandiose appearance disappears when we find them washed up on the shore. Then they remind most of all of a lump of jelly.

The ghostly appearance is no less when looking at the evolutionary history of jellyfish. They occur as fossils dating back to the Cambrian era (between 542-488 million years ago), with tentacles and bodies that are practically identical with today's jellyfish.

During his diving expeditions in the waters around the Faroe Islands, the Faroese underwater photographer Ingi Sørensen has taken some fascinating pictures of these living fossils.

Common Jellyfish - *Aurelia aurita*

Common jellyfish, also called Moon jellyfish or Saucer jelly, is the most common jellyfish

in Faroese waters. It belongs to the order *Schyhzoza*, also referred to as "True jellyfish".

The size of the Common jellyfish is usually about 25 cm in diameter, but can reach 40 cm. It moves mainly by ocean currents and by pulling the saucer together in spurts. Jellyfish are very primitive animals without most of the organs, which otherwise exist in more evolved animal groups. They don't have brains, lungs, gills or heart. The Common jellyfish absorbs oxygen through a thin membrane, which covers the entire body.

Common jellyfish occurs in the deep of the ocean as well as just below the surface. It absorbs food with the entire body - algae, fish larvae, small crustaceans and amoebas - which are transported to a feeding furrow at the edge of the saucer. If necessary, it may paralyze prey with its burning tentacles, which, however, do not have any notable effect on humans or larger animals.

The most notable about the jellyfish is its reproductive cycle. The four crescent-shaped marks on its saucer are the genitals. There

Cyanea capillata



Aurelia aurita



the females carry their eggs, which eventually become small larvae. When the larvae leave the mother and have lived independently in the sea for some time, it settles on firm ground and develops into a cup-shaped polyp. Eventually constrictions form on the polyp, which then break off and become small jellyfish, the final mature medusa-stage. The larvae and polyp-stage of jellyfish can last for years and in those stages they are asexual, while the final result, the new generation of common jellyfish, are divided into male and female individuals that live for approximately 6 months.

Lion's mane jellyfish - *Cyanea capillata*

Lion's mane jellyfish is the largest of the true jellyfish. It varies significantly in size, but can become 2.5 m in diameter and have tentacles that are 30 meters long.

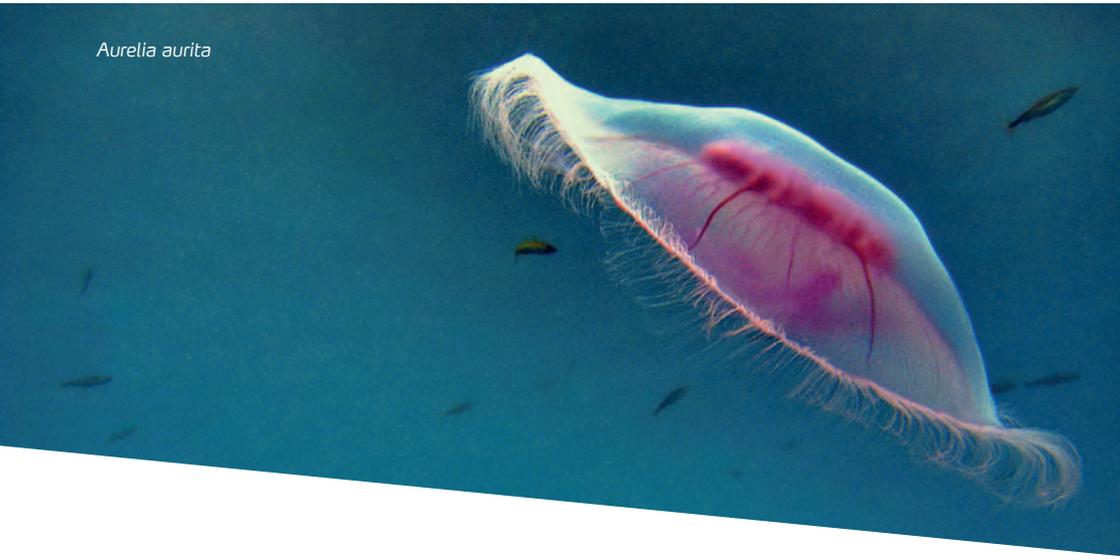
Lion's mane jellyfish lives mainly in northern seas and rarely below a depth of 20 meters. It feeds on plankton, small crustaceans and

fish, which it stuns with its tentacles. The poison launched from sticky nettles is pretty powerful, and even people can get severe burns on contact with a Lion's mane tentacles. In his final medusa-stage it is assumed that the Lion's mane jellyfish lives approximately one year. But it is possible that the largest specimens, primarily found in arctic regions, are even older.

Reproduction and life cycle of the Lion's mane jellyfish is essentially the same as that of the Common jellyfish.

Mauve stinger - *Pelagia noctiluca*

The third true jellyfish captured by Ingi Sørensen's lens, is beautiful, but not exactly a welcome guest in Faroese waters. *Pelagia noctiluca* usually lives in warmer waters like the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea and Central Atlantic as well as in the Pacific Ocean. But it has started to occur in more northerly waters, possibly due to climate changes. In 2007, a salmon farm off the



coast of Northern Ireland was hit by a 26 square kilometre swarm of young Mauve stingers, and over 100,000 salmon were killed.

Pelagia noctiluca has an almost bell-shaped saucer, usually about 10 cm in diameter, but can become up to 30 cm. From the saucer hang 8 tentacles with a quite potent toxin, which can cause searing burns on humans and trigger allergic reactions. From the combined mouth and anus organ in the centre of the saucer, hang four tentacles which are used for holding prey and carry it to the mouth. They reproduce sexually, but the offspring do not have the same polyp stage as Common jellyfish. Instead they develop from larvae to medusa while still swimming in the sea. *Pelagia noctiluca* means something like “sea - night light” and the name refers to the fact, that the jellyfish produces a fluorescent light when disturbed, for example by ships or waves.

Melon jellyfish - *Beroe cucumis*

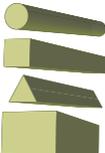
Melon jellyfish belong to the order comb jellies (*Ctenophora*), which are more evolved than true jellyfish. They can be recognized

by their eight ribs or combs, running from the front to the rear. The comb jellies' ribs can glow in the dark, but the function of the light is unknown. Most ctenophores are hermaphrodites and can fertilize themselves and others. Some species can even multiply already in the larval stage, and these characteristics can, under the right conditions, cause an explosive increase in numbers. Unlike the true jellyfish, the larvae of the comb jelly do not have a polyp stage – instead they slowly develop into adulthood.

The Melon jellyfish is shaped like a bag and becomes 10-15 cm long. It has neither tentacles, like other ctenophores, or poisonous nettles like true jellyfish. It swims using cilia on the ribs and has quite good control over its movements, which makes it a phenomenal hunter. It hunts and eats mainly other comb jellies, which are swallowed whole through the mouth at the top of the head.

New Postal Rates 01.01.2014

All rates are in Danish Kroner (DKK)

Letter size		
Small letters	Medium letters	Large letters
23 x 17 x 0,5 cm	33 x 23 x 2 cm	Lenght + width + height = not over 90 cm
		
0,5 cm height	2 cm height	l+w+h 90 cm

Inland letters			
Weight	Small letters	Medium letters	Large letters
0 - 50 g	8	10	11
51 - 100 g		13.50	16
101 - 250 g		22	25
251 - 500 g		35	35
501 - 1000 g		46	46
1001 - 2000 g			58

Europe and Nordic countries 			
A-letters			
Weight	Small letters	Medium letters	Large letters
0 - 50 g	14,50	15,50	17
51 - 100 g	18,50	19,50	22
101 - 250 g		35,50	40
251 - 500 g		61	61
501 - 1000 g		97	97
1001 - 2000 g			146

Other countries 			
A-letters			
Weight	Small letters	Medium letters	Large letters
0 - 50 g	16	19,50	23
51 - 100 g	19,50	31	34
101 - 250 g		59	59
251 - 500 g		110	110
501 - 1000 g		183	183
1001 - 2000 g			283

Europe, Nordic countries and A-letters to Iceland 			
B-letters			
Weight	Small letters	Medium letters	Large letters
0 - 50 g	10	11,50	13
51 - 100 g		15	17
101 - 250 g		30	34
251 - 500 g		49	52
501 - 1000 g		79	80
1001 - 2000 g			105

Other countries 			
B-letters			
Weight	Small letters	Medium letters	Large letters
0 - 50 g	12	16	19
51 - 100 g		26	30
101 - 250 g		49	53
251 - 500 g		80	82
501 - 1000 g		121	133
1001 - 2000 g			210



Sepac 2014: Soft Downy Rose *Rosa Mollis*

Text and photos: Marita Gulckett

The Faroese botanist R. Rasmussen writes of the Soft Downy Rose in 1952: “A small shrub, ½ to 1 ½ metre high, with arching glossy red-brown branches. Leave stems, downy with petiolate glandules and fine thorns, reaching the leaves. Stipules, glandular hair on the underside and especially at the edges. 5-7 leaflets, slightly two-toothed with glandular hair on the teeth, greyish or blue greyish, fine hair on the topside, more downy on the underside, rarely hairless on both sides. Sepals, glandular hair on the outside, slightly or not at all lacinate, of the same length as the petals. Petals, bright pink. The hip, almost spherical, shorthaired with stalked glands. Only found in a few places: Vestmanna, Eiði (Brimnes) and Haldórvík (flowered in 1944), now extinct in some places but reintroduced in gardens in Tórshavn, Haldórvík and Miðvágur. Flowers in July.”

Later, when Kjeld Hansen registered plants in 1960-61, published in “*Distribution of Vascular Plants in the Faroes*,” the rose shrub was not found. This suggests it has become extinct in the wild during the last 50 years. *Skógrøkt*

Landsins (The Faroese Environment Agency), which operates a plant nursery, took seeds from the shrub found in Haldórvík. Thanks to them, we can still enjoy the sight of the only Faroese rose shrub. Since it does not flower every year, it is a delightful sight to see it bloom.

In ages past small trees and shrubs grew in the Faroes and traces of these can be detected in peat bogs. Today there are hardly any shrubs left but juniper and 4 different willows still grow in the Faroes, the only remnant of the trees that once grew on the islands.

In the Viking era, about 1000 years ago, it was warmer in the Faroes, and it is not unlikely that the Vikings brought the rose to the Faroes with them as a nutritional supplement, as the hip is bursting with vitamin c.

Sheep-keeping over 1500 years has left its traces. The hare, introduced from Norway in 1855, has also left its mark. The fields and heath are heavily used for grazing and this influences the islands’ flora and the environmental balance. A process accentuated

Blue Bell



Heath Spotted Orchid



Early Purple Orchid



in places where artificial fertiliser is used.

The high salt content in the air also influences plant distribution, e.g. the rose does not thrive in salty air. Climate change has a significant influence on Faroese flora. Some flowers that grow at the edge of the sea thrive as never before, while others diminish and might become extinct. The arctic flowers, growing the high hills, tend to crawl further and further down the mountainsides to avoid the heat.

Some of our most rare plants, e.g. the Blue Bell (*Campanula rotundifolia* L.), are only found on a few lonely tufts, and the Early Purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula* (L.)), which once grew in Nólsoy, Streymoy and Suðuroy, is today only found in one place on Streymoy, where about 25 plants survive. So plant life in the Faroes is sensitive, a slight turn of events can tilt them into extinction, never to return.

Only a few people have seen the Early Purple Orchid but most recognise the white, red and

purple Heath Spotted Orchid (*Dactylorchiza maculata*), found across the islands during the summer. The Heath Spotted Orchid is a protected species in Denmark, and summer guests in the Faroes are often speechless at the wonder of seeing such a rare plant in the wild.

It would be good if all Faroese flowers would be preserved. Therefore, it is a great shame that there is no official Faroese policy on the preservation of the natural environment.

Such a policy has no impact on climate change, but it might have preserved the Faroese Soft Downy Rose, so it could be seen elsewhere than in the plant nursery of *Skógrøkt Føroya* and a few gardens, such as the Faroese trees and shrubs garden in Nólsoy.

Sources: R. Rasmussen. FØROYA FLORA. 2nd edition. TÓRSHAVN, 1952. Mjúk rósa (*Rosa mollis* Sm). Kjeld Hansen. Vascular Plants in the Faeroes, Horizontal and Vertical Distribution. In DANSK BOTANISK ARKIV. DANSK BOTANISK FORENING. Volume 24. Nr. 3. 1966.

Stamp Programme 2014

26 February

The Lady of Húsavík

- Mini-sheet with three stamps telling the legend of the wealthy Lady of Húsavík who lived in the 14th century. Design: Edward Fuglø. Value: 3 x 10.00 DKK. FO 776-778.



Jellyfish

- four stamps representing photos of different species of jellyfish living in the waters around the Faroe Islands: Common Jellyfish, Lion's mane jellyfish, Mauve stinger and Melon jellyfish. Photos: Ingi Sørensen. Value: 8.00, 15.50, 18.50 and 26.00 DKK. FO 779-782.



Sepac 2014: Soft Downy Rose

- one single stamp representing a photo of the only Faroese rose, the Soft Downy Rose (*Rosa mollis*). Photo: Jens-Kjeld Jensen. Value: 14.50 DKK. FO 783.



17 March

Nordic Issue 2014

- mini-sheet with two stamps. Photo of M/S Norröna, the Faroese passengers and freight ferry sailing between Faroe Islands, Iceland and Denmark. Photo: Finnur Justinussen. Layout: Kári við Rættará. Value: 2 x 14.50 DKK. FO 784-785.



28 April

Europa 2014: Music instruments

- two stamps. Design is not ready yet. Value: 14.50 and 19.50 DKK. FO 786-787.

Faroese lighthouses

- three stamps displaying photos of Faroese lighthouses. Three post cards and a self-adhesive booklet will also be issued. Value: 14.50, 15.50 and 17.00 DKK. FO 788-790.

11 June

Prince Henrik of Denmark, 80th Birthday

- one single stamp. In June, HRH Prince Henrik of Denmark will be celebrating his 80th birthday. Joint issue with Denmark and Greenland. Value: 14,50 DKK. FO 791.

24 September

The Clayton Atkinson expedition in 1833

- mini-sheet with four stamps. The English George Clayton Atkinson (1808-1877) travelled in the North from 1831-1833 and he went to the Faroe Islands in 1833. Design: Kim Simonsen. Value: 4 x 8.00 DKK. FO 792-795.

Dollin

- two stamps. Daniel Jacob Danielsen (1871-1916) - also named Dollin - was the first Faroese evangelist but he is known as the Faroese who changed the history of the Congo. He started the Congo reform campaign, which in 1908 forced King Leopold 2 of Belgium to give up the Congo as personal property. Design: Anker Eli Petersen. Value: 25.00 and 26.00 DKK. FO 796-797.

The Christmas Gospel 2

- two stamps. This is the second of three issues in this series. A booklet with eight stamps and two post cards will also be issued. Design: Edward Fuglø. Value: 8.00 and 14.50 DKK. FO 798-799.

1 October

Franking labels 2014

Four franking labels. In January 2015 it has been 40 years since the first Faroese stamps were issued. In this connection we have decided to re-issue some of these stamps as franking labels. Values: 4 x 8.00 DKK

7 November

Yearbook, year pack and Christmas Seals.

NB! Please note that the Stamp Programme may change!

Vote for Stamp of the Year 2013

- 1st prize is a trip to the Faroe Islands!



FO 750-758



FO 764



FO 760



FO 761



FO 767



FO 768



FO 762



FO 763



FO 759



FO 772



FO 773



FO 769-771



FO 765



FO 766



FO 774



FO 775

This year's Grand Prize is a trip to the Faroe Islands. The trip is for one person only and the winner can travel to the Faroe Islands by ship or plane in the summer 2014. Four night at a hotel by further agreement with full board are included.

The winner of the 2nd prize will receive a copy of our new exclusive yearbook 2013.

Last, but not least, 5 lucky winners will be drawn for a yearbook 2012.

Cut out the coupon and send it to us or you can vote on www.stamps.fo
The deadline for voting is **15 March 2014!**

Yes, I would like to register for the e-newsletter from
Posta Stamps sent by e-mail.
E-Mail: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code/Town: _____

Country: _____

E-mail: _____

Client No.: _____

Stamp of the year
2013 is:



End sale of the year

Please note that 31st December 2013 is the last date of sale for the stamps and articles presented on these pages.

The articles can be ordered by completing the enclosed coupon or by visiting our web-shop at www.stamps fo.

It is therefore your last opportunity to purchase the stamps at the nominal value.



FR 295-296



FR 348-353



FO 673-674



FO 681-684



FO 692-695



FO 690-692



FO 696-697



FO 698-699



FO 686-687



Gymnastics, self adhesive booklet
PPN000509



Altarpieces, booklet
PPN000909

Booklet Folder 2009



Christmas Carols 1, booklet
PPN000910



PHM00209

Yearbook 2009

Year Pack 2009



PPY002009



Faroese/Danish: PPZDKV109
English/German: PPZENVI09

FDC Folder 2009



FDM002009

New Stamp Issues 26 February 2014



Test proof

New stamp issue: **The Lady of Húsavík**
Date of issue: 26.02.2014
Value: 3 x 10,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 776-778
Stamp size: 34 x 45 mm
Sheet size: 112 x 62 mm
Artist: Edward Fuglø
Printing method: Offset
Printer: LM Group, Canada
Postal use: Medium letters inland, 0-50 g



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Jellyfish**
Date of issue: 26.02.2014
Value: 8,00, 15,50, 18,50 and 26,00 DKK
Numbers: FO 779-782
Stamp size: 25 x 42 mm
Photo: Ingi Sørensen
Printing method: Offset Lithography + varnish
Printer: LM Group, Canada
Postal use: Small inland letters and medium letters to Europe, 0-50 g. Small letters to Europe and medium B-letters to other countries, 51-100 g



Test proof

New stamp issue: **Sepac 2014: Soft Downy Rose**
Date of issue: 26.02.2014
Value: 14,50 DKK
Numbers: FO 783
Stamp size: 64 x 23 mm
Photo: Jens-Kjeld Jensen
Printing method: Offset
Printer: LM Group, Canada
Postal use: Small letters to Europe, 0-50g

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