



**Posta Stamps**  
Faroe Islands

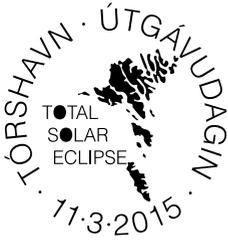
No. **23**  
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**New Stamp Issues:**

- Total Solar Eclipse
- EUROPA 2015: Old Toys
- 75th Anniversary of The Faroese Flag
- My Second Tour in the Faroe Islands





FO 808



FO 809

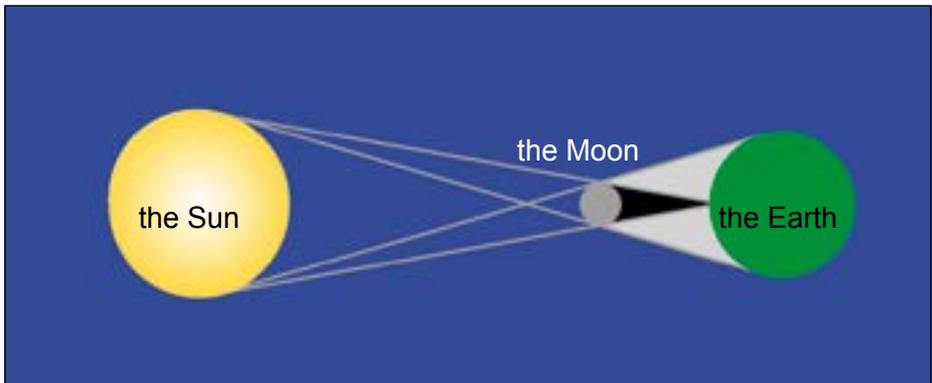
Test proof

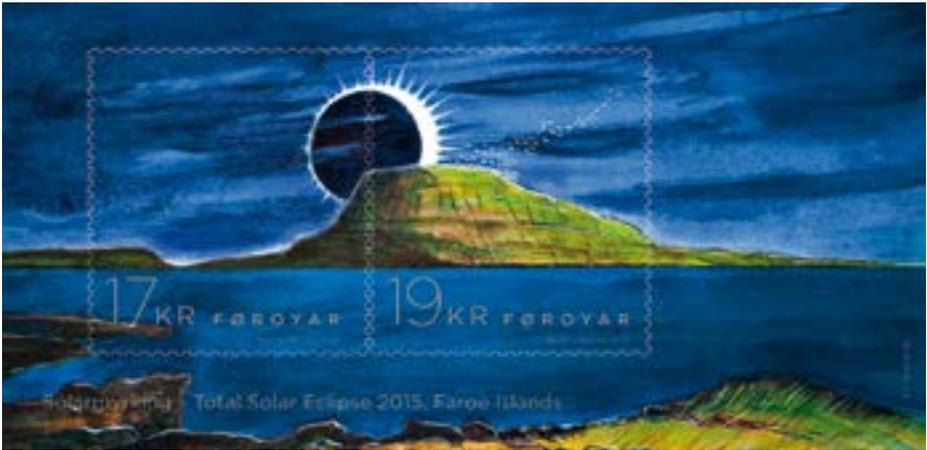
## Total Solar Eclipse on March 20, 2015

The Moon orbits Earth and Earth revolves around the Sun. The moon completes its orbit around Earth in just under a month, thus passing between Earth and the Sun 12-13 times a year. This phase is called the new moon. If the Moon is right in front of the Sun in this phase, we have a total solar eclipse. Generally, however, the Moon passes either above the Sun or below the Sun, because the Moon's orbit around Earth is not in the ecliptic, which is Earth's orbit around the Sun.

The first new moon in 2015 occurs on January 20, the second on February 19, the third

on March 20 etc. The twelfth and last new moon in 2015 is on the 11th of December. On March 20 the Moon will in fact pass right in front of the Sun in a shadow zone, which is rapidly moving up The North Atlantic Ocean west of the Faroe Islands. Therefore, the solar eclipse on March 20, 2015 will be total in the Faroe Islands. The shadow zone is only a few hundred kilometres wide, which means that you must be in that zone if you want to experience the total eclipse. Outside the total shadow zone, you can experience a partial eclipse in a much larger area thousands of kilometres wide.





FO 808-809

The situation is different with lunar eclipses. They can only be experienced at full moon. Then Earth will pass between the Moon and the Sun, i.e. lunar eclipses occur about 14 days before or 14 days after the new moon. Lunar eclipses can be observed from very large areas on Earth's night side, because the shadow of the Earth is about four times as wide as the diameter of the Moon.

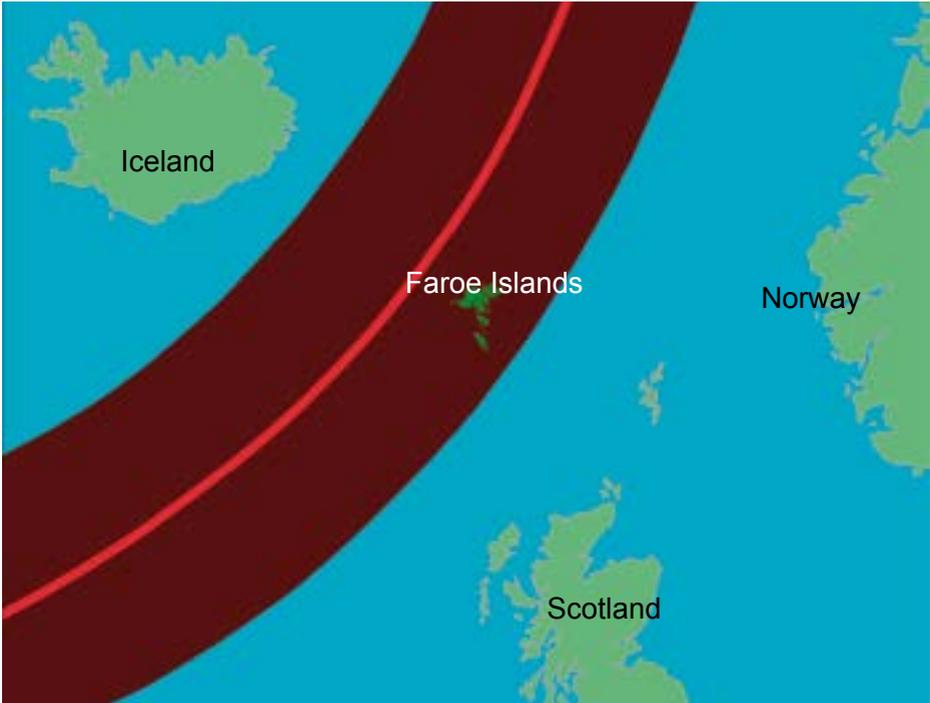
In Tórshavn the solar eclipse on March 20, 2015 starts when the lunar disc makes contact with the solar disc at about 8:38:50 depending on the observer's location. At 9:40:52 the Moon covers the disc of the Sun. The total eclipse lasts for about 2 minutes, and at 9:42:53 the Sun reappears. At 10:47:38 the Moon moves out of the solar disc and the eclipse is over.

If it is a clear day, you will see the Sun in a southeasterly position about 20 degrees above the horizon. To the east of the Sun, the planets Venus and Mars will be seen, and Mercury will be visible to the west of the

Sun. If it is a clear day, you will also be able to observe the atmosphere of the Sun, the corona. Whatever the weather forecast it will be dark or nearly dark.

The last total solar eclipse that could be seen in the Faroe Islands was on June 30, 1954, and after the eclipse on March 20, 2015, the next total solar eclipse to be visible in the Faroe Islands will be in northernmost part of the Faroes in 2245.

An old Faroese legend refers to what we believe is a total solar eclipse. The legend "Hargarbrøður" is about four brothers, who lived in the village of Sumba, the southernmost village in the Faroe Islands. The brothers disagreed on everything and quarrelled a lot. We know that the brothers must have lived around the year 1600. The legend says, "In two groups they went and herded their sheep and had come to a place called Fløur. Then suddenly darkness descended upon them. They were very afraid and promised that if the good Lord would let them live,



they would become better people. Then light reappeared, and they embraced each other and promised that this would mark the end of all quarreling. After this they agreed on everything and tried to help each other in every way.”

The brothers have undoubtedly experienced a total solar eclipse. This probably refers to the total solar eclipse that occurred in The Faroe Islands on May 30, 1612. If it was a clear day, the brothers in Sumba would have been able to see the planets Jupiter, Venus, Mercury, Mars and Saturn, and the Sun would have been in a southeasterly position not far from the star Aldebaran.

It is imperative that you protect your eyes during a solar eclipse! Always observe the phe-

nomenon through approved safety glasses. Do not stare at the Sun without protection and never observe the Sun directly through a telescope, because you can become blind in a split second. Only while the eclipse is total, you can safely observe the phenomenon without eye protection.

On the Faroese stamps, which commemorate the total solar eclipse, the artist uses his artistic freedom to draw the sun east of Nólsoy as seen from Tórshavn. This island is located to the east just outside the Faroese capital. Like a giant breakwater, it protects the city against the big ocean waves. In reality however, the Sun will be visible farther south during the eclipse.

*Pól Jespersen*

**“INFINITIES AND INDIVISIBLES TRANSCEND OUR FINITE UNDERSTANDING, THE FORMER ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR MAGNITUDE, THE LATTER BECAUSE OF THEIR SMALLNESS; IMAGINE WHAT THEY ARE WHEN COMBINED.”**

*Galileo Galilei*



**JÓANIS SØRENSEN** frames Galileo’s grand dream through his lens, he anchors the mystery of the universe in the humble beauty of Faroese villages, isles, hills and shorelines. As you turn the pages of this **stunning** book, you are drawn into Sørensen’s world. In image after image, you will gaze into the marvels of the universe with your feet solidly planted on Faroese soil.

# Solar Eclipse 2015 products

As the solar eclipse is a very rare phenomenon Posta Stamps has chosen to make this a special stamp issue.

You can see some of the products which will be issued in connection with this issue on these pages.

## Post Cards

Four large post cards whereof one illustrates the original drawing to the stamps. The photographer Jóanis Sørensen has taken the other three photos of the night sky. These beautiful photos can also be seen in the book "Vault" which can be ordered from us.

## Maxi-Cards

Two post cards with stamp and First Day Cancellation.



## Booklets

Two selfadhesive booklets with respectively 4 x 17 DKK and 4 x 19 DKK.



## First Day Covers

First Day Covers are available with mini-sheets, set of stamps, single stamps and blocks of four.

## Special envelopes

All post cards and letters posted from the Faroe Islands on 20th-27th March 2015 and franked with the Solar Eclipse stamps will be cancelled with a special cancellation dated 20.03.2015.

Special envelopes with this cancellation are available with respectively 17,00 and 19,00 DKK.

## Complete sheet

10 stamps are in each sheet.





FO 810-811

Test proof

## Europa 2015: Old Children's Toys

The theme of the 2015 EUROPA stamp issue is Old Toys. Edward Fuglø has designed the stamps which feature a rag doll and a horn-hoop, both of which served as children's toys in the olden days. In order to describe toys that children used to play with we are excerpting a few paragraphs from the book "Faroese Children's Toys" by Marius Johannesen, published in 1979:

### Old Faroese Children's Toys

"Those of us born around the turn of the 20th century, or a little later, often marvel when the talk turns to youth and children.

The public sector is required to make arrangements for children because they need a place to stay. At the same time the public sector keeps busy providing youth with places where, as the saying goes, they can kill time. We find this surprising because when we look back at our own youth, wanting to write a few words about the toys we had, we realize that there were virtually no limits to the toys and playgrounds at our disposal. However, no one arranged these playgrounds for us except the good Lord himself. We found them in between the houses, in fields and

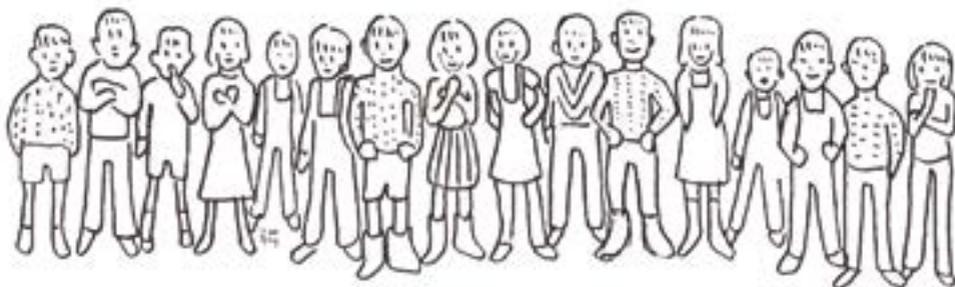
rivers, at the seashore, everywhere the feet of small children were allowed to roam.

### The Rag Doll

In her book "Gamlar gøtur II" (Old Paths) 1967 Maria Skylv writes the following about the rag doll:

"More than eighty years ago little girls playing with dolls were a rare sight. This was not because only few of them owned dolls which their fathers or brothers had brought from other countries. However, a fancy doll like that was not meant for a little girl to play with, oh no! The lid was taken off the cardboard box containing the doll and if there was a shelf in the living room the box was placed there or carefully kept in the family chest. There it could stay for years and only occasionally when the mother had to get something from the chest the little girl was allowed to look at the doll – and even hold her for a while.

Still, it was not necessary to travel abroad to get things to play with because every mother was able to make rag dolls from scratch for her children. Today, few people are able to



imagine what the rag doll meant both for the children and their mother. Nowadays stores have an abundance of things bringing joy to the eyes and minds of children - and what mother would not have wanted to make her little ones happy? The problem is that the impeccable toys children get nowadays go a long way to stifle their imagination.

Both boys and girls (as long as they wore gowns and were too small to frolic like boys) played with the rag doll. The body was made of an old woollen garment which was wrapped together. After the doll's head had been formed the neck was firmly tightened. The piece of garment used for arms was rolled up, placed in the arm pit and tied around the waist.

A white cloth covered the head before the neck was tightened, and sometimes the eyebrows and eyes were painted with a sooty spindle pin. Red chicory paper came in handy for cheeks and lips. The gown was made from an old apron and then the doll was finished, for rag dolls had no legs."

### **Horn-hoops**

Changing the subject to horns it was common to play with so-called horn-hoops which were circular hoops made of rams' horns. The bone core was removed from the horn and a few horns were put together to make hoops of four, five, six or even more horns. We then went to the hillside to roll horn-hoops. There was no competition - the important thing was to be the possessor of the horn-hoop that could roll as far and as straight as possible before it fell sideways on the ground.

Sometimes we marked man-to-man along the course of the fast-rolling horn-hoop with sticks in our hands trying to strike it down with heavy blows. But when a big horn-hoop came rolling at great speed down a steep hillside you had to be careful not to get in its way because you might get hurt. This was also a more popular game for big boys - the smaller ones kept away from the dangerous horn-hoops and rolled their own ram horn instead. If it was a coiled well-formed horn it could roll as far as any horn-hoop before falling sidelong."

*(Marius Johannesen: "Føroysk barnaspøl", Bókaførlagið Grønalið, 1979)*



FO 812-813



Test proof

## 75th Anniversary of The Faroese Flag

*"Blue as the sky, red as blood, white as waterfall, surf and winter's sounds".*

Rarely has the poetic description of the Faroese flag colours been more appropriate than on May 25, 2014, when the Faroese mountaineer Arne Vatnhamar unfurled the Faroese flag on Mount Everest's snow-capped peak, in the dizzying blue altitude of 8,848 meters above sea level.

After years of preparation, the 41 year old Vatnhamar had fulfilled his dream: to plant the Faroese flag on the top of the world's highest mountain.

But the feat did not come without costs. At the final stage, in an altitude of approximately 8,600 meters, Arne became affected by altitude sickness (HAPE) - water in the lungs caused by lack of oxygen. Despite the danger and severe pain Arne continued towards the top - and at 8.15, local time, he became the first Faroese ever to conquer the world's highest peak.

But Arne was in danger because of the water in the lungs. It became urgent to get down from the peak:

*"When I was back down again and safe, it was easier to appreciate and rejoice over this achievement,"* says Arne, who is proud to celebrate "Merki's" 75th anniversary with this picture.

And it was not without reason that the Faroese mountaineer brought "Merkið" with him to the top of the world. We, the Faroese, are generally very happy with our national symbol, which is an essential expression of our national feelings. Perhaps the flag's turbulent history also contributed to its place in the collective Faroese consciousness. For although we celebrate "Merki's" 75th anniversary this year, the flag is older than that.

### **Merkið – The Student Flag**

In the era of national awakening in the Faroe Islands, which started at the famous Christ-mas meeting in 1888, the need for a unifying



symbol arose. At people's assemblies and national meetings different flags were used, for example the so-called "Tjaldursmerkið", portraying the Faroese national bird, the oyster catcher – or "Veðramerkið", depicting a ram, which from the Middle Ages had been the regional symbol of the Faroe Islands.

But in 1919, three Faroese students in Copenhagen, Jens Oliver Lisberg, Janus Øssurson and Thomas Pauli Dahl, decided to create a flag similar to the other Nordic Cross flags. The models for their suggestion were the Norwegian and Icelandic flags, since these countries were considered to be the ones closest related to the Faroes. These flags contain the colors white, red and blue - and since the Norwegian flag has a red background while the Icelandic has blue, the Faroese had to be white in order to stand out from the others. According to Dahl, it was Jens Oliver Lisberg who decided that the cross should be red with blue borders.

For a party held in "Føroyingafelag" in Copenhagen 2 March 1919, the students got a girl by the name of Ninna Jacobsen to sew a table model of the flag. They brought this flag to a flag factory in Copenhagen and made a table model for each one of them. The flag was well received among the Faroese in Copenhagen - and later Lisberg went back to the flag factory and got them to sew a full size banner. He brought it to the dormitory "Regensen", the home of Emil Joensen, the fourth student mentioned in connection with the flag. They hung the flag out of the window in Joensen's room, cheered on by Icelandic students who also lived at the dorm. Thus, "Regensen" became the place where the Faroese flag was flying for the first time.

In the summer of 1919 Jens Oliver Lisberg travelled to the Faroe Islands bringing with him the Student Flag, as it was called back then. His plan was to ask Parliament to recognize it as a national flag but he did not succeed for various reasons. But back in his



hometown, Fámjin, the flag was hoisted that very summer - for the first time on Faroese soil. Lisberg left the flag back home when he returned to Denmark - and this, the first Faroese flag, is now on display in Fámjin's church. On August 31 1920, Jens Oliver Lisberg died in Copenhagen of the Spanish flu and did not live to see how the flag was gradually accepted by his fellow countrymen.

Throughout the twenties, the Faroese began to accept the "Student Flag" as a national banner. It was named "Merkið" (banner/symbol) and was especially popular among sailors. More and more ships and boats started sailing under "Merkið" and it also became more common ashore on special occasions. This inevitably led to controversy. People wanted "Merkið" recognized as a national flag, while the Danish authorities resisted. In 1938 the Danish representative, prefect Hilbert, suggested in vain that Denmark should recognize the flag.

The final recognition came in April 1940 when communications between the Faroes

and Denmark were interrupted due to Germany's occupation of Denmark. A few days later, the Faroe Islands were formally occupied by Great Britain. Faroese ships sailing under Danish flag with the name DENMARK painted on the sides gave rise to problems. The British Admiralty demanded that Faroese vessels use another flag, either "Merkið" or "Union Jack" - and have the name "Faroese" painted on the sides.

In the days that followed, confusion and controversy arose in the Faroes concerning the matter, ending with Mason, the British consul, deciding on April 25 1940 that all Faroese fishing- and cargo ships were to sail under the Faroese flag and have FAROES - FØROYAR painted on their sides.

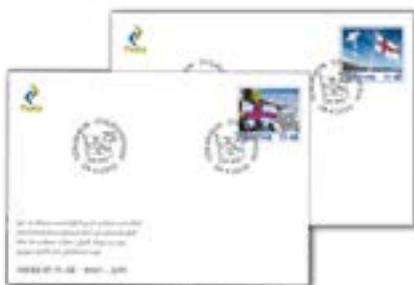
As the war progressed the Faroese flag became the standard of the Faroese fleet. In 1947, April 25 was proclaimed the Faroese Flag Day - and at the introduction of the Home Rule in 1948, "Merkið" was officially declared the national flag of the Faroes.

*Anker Eli Petersen*

# First Day Covers - April 2015

First Day Covers are available with mini-sheets, set of stamps, single stamps and blocks of four.

Below are images of the First day covers from the stamp issues 'Europa 2015' and 'The 75th Anniversary of the Faroese Flag'.





## My Second Tour in the Faroe Islands

When I was leaving Faroe Islands two years ago, I promised myself to return soon to these Islands of Heaven. I kept this promise when I, in the company of my newly wedded wife, visited the islands again in late winter 2014.

An important part of our honeymoon was renting a car and driving to the towns and villages of Gásadalur, Gjógv and Klaksvík. We took the ferry to the island of Kalsoy and hiked all up to the lighthouse on top of the mountain Kallurin. It was an utterly amazing trip on a very brisk and windy day! Along we had to work out in our minds how to keep the sheep away while at the same time looking forward to a friendly encounter with them.

Being an avowed philatelic collector I submitted hundreds of postcards to my friends from Posta - the postal headquarters in Tórshavn. This time, I had the opportunity of visiting more Faroese villages, stopping by and saying hello to all the solitary blue mailboxes

which truly lightened up our journey in the crisp and chilly weather. Or, in the words of my wife "This also became our trip seeking out mailboxes along the rugged coast and from one hillside to another."

Last but not least, I had a chance to meet my old friends at the Posta offices during the last two days of our trip. Again they welcomed us with generous hospitality. I much enjoyed lingering in the offices, chatting with them about the latest trends in philately and the various tastes and preferences of philatelic collectors. Much to our regret we were not able to visit the islands of Nólsoy and Mykines on this trip, but, as the saying goes, there is always a next time. Heavy snow welcomed us when we arrived and it bid us adieu when we were getting ready for departure. Lo and behold, it was summoning us back for the third time!

*Wang Jiayi - Mike  
Shanghai, China*

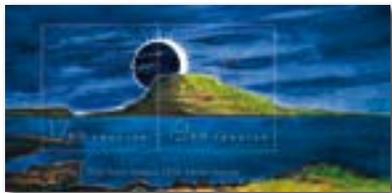


# New Stamp Issues 11 March and 24 April 2015



Test proof

\* also available as stamps in two booklets of four (4 x 17 KR and 4 x 19 KR)



Test proof



Test proof



Test proof

## New stamp issue:

Date of issue:

Value:

Numbers:

Stamp size:

Mini-sheet size:

Design:

Printing method:

Printer:

Postal use:

## Total Solar Eclipse 2015

11.03.2015

17,00 and 19,00 DKK

FO 808-809

40 x 50 mm

135 x 65 mm

Martin Mörck

Offset

bpost, Belgium

Small letters to Europe and other countries, 51-100 g.

## New stamp issue:

Date of issue:

Value:

Numbers:

Stamp size:

Design:

Printing method:

Printer:

Postal use:

## Europa 2015: Old Toys

24.04.2015

17,00 and 22,00 DKK

FO 810-811

30 x 34 mm

Edward Fuglø

Offset

Cartor Security Printing, France

Small letters to Europe, 0-50 gr. and 51-100 gr.

## New stamp issue:

Date of issue:

Value:

Numbers:

Stamp size:

Photos:

Printing method:

Printer:

Postal use:

## 75th Anniversary of The Faroese Flag

24.04.2015

11,00 and 12,00 DKK

FO 812-813

30 x 40 mm

A. Vatnhamar / Andrea Ricordi

Offset

Cartor Security Printing, France

Large and medium letters inland, 0-50 gr.

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