

# Posta Stamps

Faroe Islands No. 56

October 2023



**Posta**   
FAROE ISLANDS

Franking labels  
2024

Filming location:  
Tindhólmur

The coalmine in  
Hvalba

# Franking labels 2024: Coastal fishing vessels



From the time of the earliest settlements in the Faroe Islands, coastal fishing has been integral to the survival of its population.

## Coastal Fishing Vessels of the Faroe Islands

The island's agriculture couldn't solely sustain its inhabitants, which prompted them to diversify their sustenance through seabird and whale hunting, and notably, domestic sea fishing.

Historically, the backbone of this fishing effort was the Faroese úróðrabátur, a rowing boat, a miniature version of the Viking boat equipped with both oars and sails. Depending on its size, the boat could accommodate two to twelve oars, manned by one person each. Particularly prevalent were the "áttamannafar" (8-oar boat) and the "tíggjumannafar" (10-oar boat). These boats often emerged from collective efforts within settlements or larger farms.

The shift towards major sea fishing efforts with fishing ships emerged in the latter half of the 19th century, changing the Faroe Islands from a primarily mediaeval agricultural and hunting society to a fishing community. However, coastal

Coastal fishing vessels  
Artist: Janus D. Guttesen



fishing remained an ancillary source of food and income.

By the early 20th century, engines started to replace oars in these traditional boats, reducing the need for large crews to just one or two men. This evolved vessel was termed "*installeringur*", laying the foundation for the contemporary Faroese boat. An example is the "*Greipan*" TN 188, depicted on the first franking label. Crafted by boatbuilder Jóan Petur Clementsen in 2018, this 7-meter boat hails from Hoyvík.

The 20th century also saw the introduction of the "*deksbátur*" (deck boat – cutter), constructed from wood. These vessels, with their spacious cargo holds, could accommodate larger hauls than their predecessors. An exemplar, "*Torvanes*" FD 52, showcased on the second franking label, has its origins in Eiði. It spans 18.7 meters, 49,16 gross tonnage – 19,54 net tonnage, and was crafted at

Ærøskøbing Ship and Boat Building in Denmark in 1968.

Subsequently, wooden cutters paved the way for steel ones, like "*Jóannes*" SA 6 from Sandur. Spanning 10.79 meters, 14,91 gross tonnage – 3,76 net tonnage, it was constructed in 1977 by Svenor Industry & Ship Service in Norway and is featured on the third franking label.

The latest in this lineage are the fiberglass boats, versatile for both professional and recreational coastal fishing. A prime example, "*Lilja*" VA 72, hailing from Sandavágur and spanning 12 meters, 6,3 gross tonnage and 1,8 net tonnage. Lilja VA 72 is depicted on the fourth franking label. Lilja was crafted at Provincial Boat Marine in Canada in 1993.

Anker Eli Petersen



The boat Olevina  
Photo: Ingi Sørensen

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# Queen Alexandrine's Hospital 100th Anniversary



Originally the term hospital referred to medieval hostels, where unfortunate people affected by contagious leprosy were kept in isolation from the rest of society.

## The First Hospital – Argir

And this was precisely the function of the first hospital in the Faroe Islands. In medieval times leprosy spread all over Europe and the Faroe Islands did not escape the plague. This happened back in Catholic times when Kirkjubøur on South Streymoy was the Faroe Islands' episcopal seat and greatest power centre. A leper colony, created on the initiative of the Catholic Church, was established on its secluded landholding in Argir, south of Thorshavn.

Isolating the ill was effective – the number of cases consistently dropped, and the devastating smallpox outbreak in the Faroe Islands in 1709 nearly eradicated the colony's patients. Only three remained in the period from 1723 to 1736 – and the last leper patient in the islands died in 1752.

Queen Alexandrine's  
Hospital 100th Anniversary

Artist: J. Waagstein 1943

Design: Posta



## The Surgeon General

Leprosy was not the only disease that plagued the Faroe Islands through the centuries.

As a consequence of common illnesses, injuries and the isolated society's exposure to epidemic diseases, necessary steps were taken to provide the Faroese population with salaried surgeons to be stationed in the islands, even before they were sent to other parts of the Danish Kingdom. Documents confirm that already in 1584 the first "barber" (surgeon) had arrived in the Faroes. For centuries only one medical doctor served the entire Faroese population. If someone needed medical help on one of the islands, he had to be transported to Thorshavn and if this was not possible a boat had to be manned to pick up the surgeon, or the patient simply had to wait for the doctor's next visit to his island.

It goes without saying that, apart from actual consultations or operations, no professional care was given to patients during the course of their illness.

## Faroe Islands County Hospital

Finally, in 1829 a much-needed initiative was taken to build the Faroe Islands' County Hospital on the outskirts of Tórshavn. It was a small hospital which reportedly only had seven beds – but a step in the right direction. "The old hospital", as it was popularly called, was used for almost a century. In the 1870s, a smaller additional building was constructed, bearing the telling nickname of "the Cell". It was intended for psychiatric patients. Despite some improvements made over time, the conditions were deplorable. Lack of space despite sporadic expansions, understaffing and underfunding plagued the old hospital throughout its active period.

In 1842, the number of doctors in the Faroes doubled to two when the first professionally trained Faroese doctor, Napoleon Nolsøe, was employed alongside the Surgeon General. He then became a district doctor in



Queen Alexandrine's Hospital, 1924,  
seen from the sea

Photo: Faroe Islands National Museum

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Tvøroyri in 1852 and gradually two more district doctors were added, one in Klaksvík and one in Vestmanna. But it was not until 1897 that the first nurses, Danish deaconesses, started working at the hospital while additionally attending to home care services. The deaconesses were also tasked with persuading Faroese girls to devote their lives to nursing. After 1910, the first young Faroese women travelled to Denmark to be trained as nurses. Ten years later, in 1920, and four years before the Faroe Islands County Hospital was closed, an actual training and education program for nurses was launched in the Faroe Islands, overseen by the deaconesses and the hospital's chief medical officer.

## Two Local Private Hospitals and a Tuberculosis Sanatorium

In 1898 a small hospital with 8 beds was founded in Klaksvík on private initiatives. Six years later, Tvøroyri on Suðuroy, got a similar hospital with 12 beds. Both hospitals have since been expanded and function today as regional units in the Faroese health care system.

During this period, the Faroe Islands experienced a violent escalation of the tuberculosis epidemic, which ravaged the world, and as a result, a tuberculosis sanatorium with 32 beds was established in 1908 in Hoydalar, north of Tórshavn.

## Queen Alexandrine's Hospital – Landssjúkrahúsið

In 1924, the old Faroe County Hospital was finally closed, and the hospital was moved to the newly established Dronning Alexandrines

Hospital, with 65 beds. Incidentally, this coincided with the first Faroese-educated nurses finishing their education.

Although the new hospital represented a major evolution in capacity, it was clear from the beginning that space was still lacking. The tuberculosis epidemic still ravaged the islands, so in 1927, a TB ward with 20 beds was built adjacent to the hospital. In 1952, one of the TB buildings (depicted to the left on the stamp) was converted into a care unit for chronically ill patients.

In 1962, the sanatorium in Hoydalar was closed and a new building was constructed instead on the hospital premises for TB and a Care Department.

In 1967, the hospital facilities were expanded with a tall building and the capacity increased further.

In the years that followed, the facilities were extended but these renovations are neither shown on the stamp nor the miniature sheet. This included a psychiatric ward, increased bed capacity, administration and staff accommodation. Since this development falls outside the scope of this stamp issue we will not discuss it further – only state that we have come a long way since J. Waagstein sat on the hillside opposite the hospital in 1943 and painted “the new and charming hospital in Tórshavn.”

*Anker Eli Petersen*



Faroese central hospital  
Photo: Katrin Joensen

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Undersea connection to Sandoy

# The Sandoy Tunnel



*Skopunarfjørður*, the waterway dividing Streymoy from Sandoy and Hestur, is notorious for its challenging tidal currents and sporadic violent gusts.

The strait, at its narrowest, stretches about 5.5 km between the islands. Though “fjørður” typically translates to fjord in Faroese, it can also denote a channel or strait, particularly when referring to a slimmer stretch of water open at both ends.

The strait gets its name from Skopun, a town located in the north of Sandoy. It acts as a geographic demarcation between the northern and southern islands. When locals discuss the northern vs. southern fjords, they’re essentially highlighting the islands on either side of this line, emphasizing the distinct dialects and, to a degree, cultural nuances of the two regions.

Historically, navigating around Skopunarfjørður wasn’t an option. Voyages between the northern and southern islands necessitated traversing this challenging waterway, either from Tórshavn or Kirkjubøur/Velbastaður on the Streymoy side to Skopun or other eastern towns on Sandoy. The ferry service, previously originating from Tórshavn, transitioned over the years to depart from Gamlarætt, located between Velbastaður and Kirkjubøur, making its way to Skopun. But the journey, particularly during winter, was often unpredictable due to the strait’s difficult conditions.



## The Sandoy Tunnel

Art: Edward Fuglø

Photos: Ólavur Frederiksen

## The Sandoy Tunnel: An Ambitious Undertaking

The challenges of Skopunarfjørður made the decision to build an undersea tunnel to Sandoy a welcome one. Work on the tunnel kicked off in 2016, with the ambitious plan to link the

former ferry point, Gamlarætt on Streymoy, to Traðardalur on Sandoy. By 3 February 2022, the two ends of the tunnel converged, and since then, focus has shifted to road construction. On December 21, 2023, the Sandoy tunnel, stretching 10.8 km in length and descending up to 147 meters below sea level, opened to the public.

## A Vision for the Future

The completion of the Sandoy tunnel will mark a monumental advancement in Faroese infrastructure, alleviating travel concerns for Sandoy's inhabitants and eliminating the need to contend with the unpredictable Skopunarfjørður. But it's more than just a solution - it's a stepping-stone. The grand vision is to extend this connectivity, building another tunnel linking Sandoy and Suðuroy, achieving seamless road links across the major Faroese islands.

While the final green light for the Suðuroy tunnel is still pending, the aspiration

remains, and many are optimistic about its eventual realization.

## Tunnel Art

Faroese artist, Edward Fuglò has created the artwork "*Diðrikur Doves and other hidden treasures*" which are cave-paintings found on the walls — though these are not ochre on limestone but luminous red, white and blue lines dancing over black basalt. Light pictures shining in dark caves.

The motifs are the stories of the two places connected by the tunnel, the historical village of Kirkjubøur and Sandoy. The artwork is Fuglò's homage to Diðrikur of Skarvanes, the humble farmhand who became the pioneer of Faroese visual arts. The 33KR stamp pictures King Sverri (1151-1202) who grew up in Kirkjubøur.

Anker Eli Petersen

The Sandoy Tunnel, Gamlarætt  
Photo: Ólavur Frederiksen



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# Filming location: Peter Pan at Tindhólmur



**Filming location: Peter Pan  
at Tindhólmur**

Photo: Andrija Ilic

Even though these tales are ancient, we see ourselves mirrored in them. Should we overlook these narratives, they will undoubtedly recall us. Not only through inked book pages but also in digital cinema and music.

While contemporary media often gains a reputation for being superficial, they too can carry age-old tales. This is invaluable, as these stories often possess a depth that modern distractions seldom reach. They offer a respite, if only briefly, to lend clarity and perspective to our lives. Take, for instance, the tale of Peter Pan, the boy who resisted growing up. In the realm of music, Michael Jackson stands out, naming his residence after the island's fable: Neverland.

The roots trace back to the fictional character, Peter Pan, penned by the Scottish Sir James Matthew Barrie (1860-1937) in 1902. He later adapted this into the play, "The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up" in 1904. By 1911, Barrie crafted the novel "Peter and Wendy." In Disney's most recent adaptation, Neverland is depicted as Tindhólmur in the Faroe Islands, where viewers can witness Peter and Wendy soaring in flight.

Under the theme "Filming Locations," Tindhólmur graces the latest Faroese stamp issued by Posta.

A similar foundational narrative can be seen in the German Günter Grass's "Die Blechtrommel" from 1959, echoing the Scottish Barrie's theme. In Grass's story, the boy Oskar refuses to age. This poignant tale of clinging to youth has also been adapted into a movie.

Disney's 1953 full-length animated rendition of Peter Pan's adventurous tale became a global icon. While there had been previous film adaptations and even musicals centered on the

same narrative, none matched Disney's unparalleled influence.

Today, this legacy continues with Disney's fantasy adventure, "Peter Pan & Wendy," directed by David Lowery. Featuring Ever Gabo Anderson and Alexander Molony as Wendy and Peter respectively, the film captures them soaring above the Faroe Islands.

While adults and especially teenagers may find nostalgia in this coming-of-age tale, reflecting on their past childhood years, there are critics who argue that the story promotes escapism, providing an avenue to flee from challenging realities and daily struggles.

Marianna Debes Dahl, when translating the story into Faroese in 1999, localized the characters and settings with Faroese names. She remarked, "Most are familiar with the story of Peter Pan, Vónbjørt, and

*the other children. For many today, this familiarity might come from Disney animations, comics, and other adaptations. Here, however, is the original tale of Peter Pan, the boy reluctant to age. The moment his fairy friend, Klombru-Glint, flutters through Vónbjørt's bedroom window, enchantment fills the air. The children are whisked away to Gyklaland, witnessing mermaids frolicking along the shoreline and battling the pirate captain Húk and his band."*

Following the earlier James Bond film narrative set in Kallurin in the Northern Islands, the tale of Peter Pan and Wendy Darling unfolds in western Vágur, showcasing Tindhólmur on the big screen.

*Birgir Kruse,  
film critic*

Tindhólmur in sunset  
Photo: Thomas Víkre

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# Faroe Islands

## Coal mining



### Coal mining in Hvalba

Old photo: Photographer unknown.

Photo, coal: Trygvi B. Árting

The photo is from the 1960s and it pictures two brothers from Hvalba, Erhardt and Simon Næs.

Visitors to the Faroe Islands in the summertime are often struck by the vibrant greenery that covers the land. This lush landscape is even more impressive given the close proximity of the islands to one another, whether seen from the sky or the sea.

Below this verdant cover, one finds a foundation of basalt from long-extinct volcanoes. The southernmost island, Suðuroy, offers a geological journey, revealing the era during which the Faroe Islands were formed.

Unique to Suðuroy is its rich coal deposit history. It is the only island where significant coal mining was feasible. Nowadays, Suðuroy's coal mining past serves as a cultural touchstone, with remnants of its coal-rich history scattered around. Yet, a small mining operation remains active in Hvalba, albeit on a minimal scale.

The earliest record of coal mining attempts in the Faroe Islands traces back to 1733. However, it wasn't until 1778 that substantial mining began in Hvalba. The Faroe Islands had a modest population then, with the 1801 census recording just 5,000 inhabitants. While the locals predominantly used peat for fuel, foreign investors, including Danish and Swedish capitalists, saw potential in Faroese coal, not only for energy but for other minerals like zinc, copper, and iron.

The ambitions ran so high that in 1875, Christina von Post, a Swedish artist based in Paris, alongside French investors, founded a company and acquired rights to mine coal in Suðuroy. Dubbed "Kolafrúan" or "The Coal Lady" by the

islanders due to her significant investments, Christina and her co-investors hoped for a rich mineral yield from the coal mines. Their hopes were dashed, however, upon discovering no such ores, leading to Christina's eventual financial downfall. She passed away penniless in 1917.

Over the years, the dynamics of coal mining in Suðuroy shifted. Global economic downturns, like the 1929 Wall Street crash, hit the Faroes, but coal mining persisted. Remarkably, light clay from the mines was shipped to Denmark to treat hard water. This clay, sourced primarily from the Rangabotn mines, was even blended with red ochre soil from Nólsoy to produce paint.

However, the coal industry faced its most significant challenge in the 1960s when the Faroese transitioned from coal-based to oil and electric heating. The once-thriving coal industry dwindled, turning almost obsolete. Today, the Hvalba mine, though operational, serves more as a nod to tradition than a bustling enterprise.

Legacy echoes in the surnames of Suðuroy residents: names like Wiberg, Åkeson, and Ahlén, which hint at Swedish involvement in the coal business of yesteryears.

Interestingly, though coal mining is nearly a memory, the only active mine, Prestfjall mountain in Hvalba,

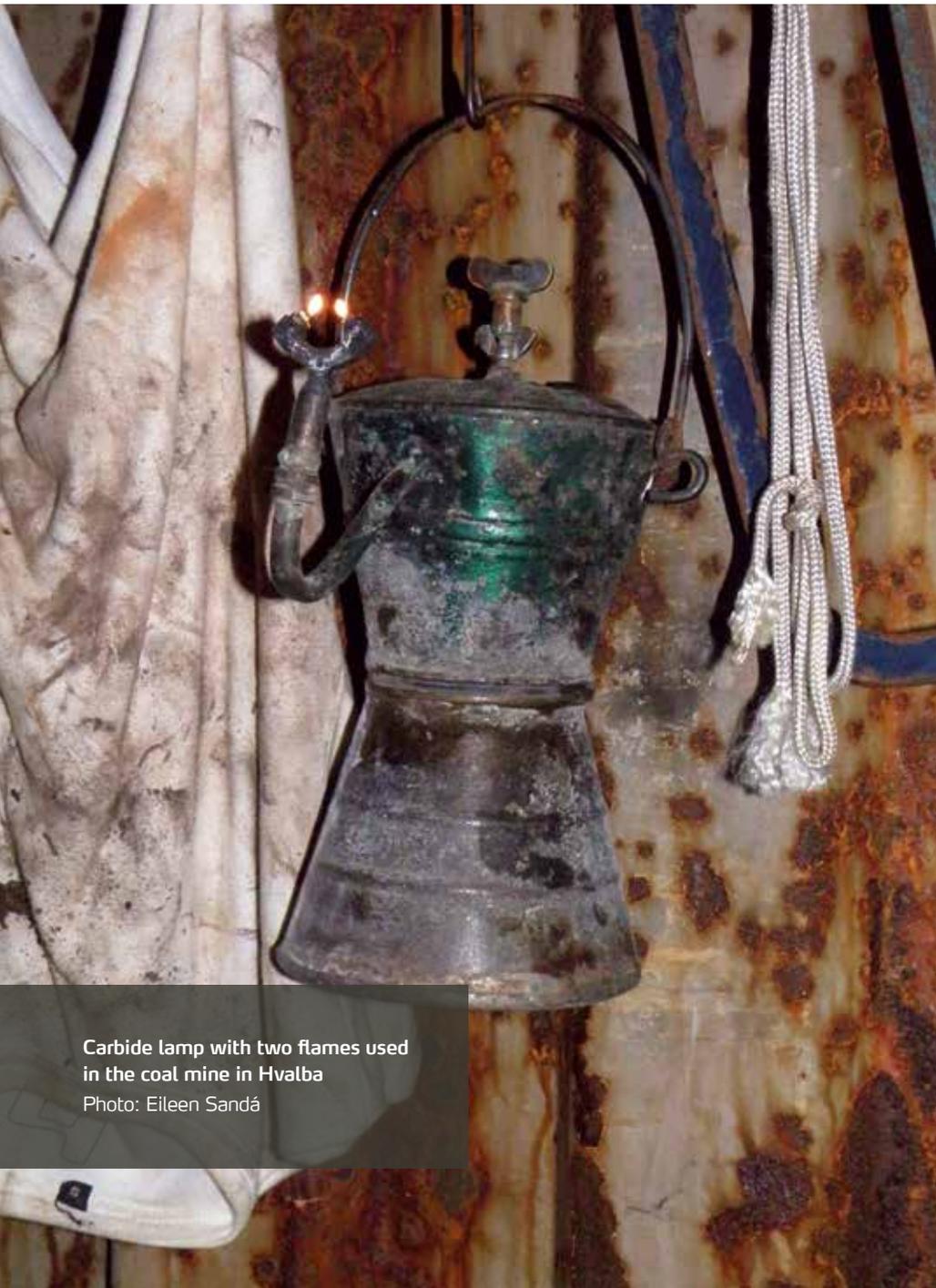


Coal miners in Hvalba 1918

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could reveal one of the world's most breathtaking vistas if excavated completely. Offering panoramic views of the sea, dramatic cliffs, and the historical traces of coal deposits, it would be a homage to a bygone industry and the unmatched beauty of Suðuroy's western side.

*Ólavur Rasmussen*



Carbide lamp with two flames used  
in the coal mine in Hvalba  
Photo: Eileen Sandá

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# Svanbjørg Manai retires after 47 years in philately

On Friday, September 15th, a reception was held at Posta headquarters to mark the retirement of Svanbjørg Manai after an impressive 47-year career that included the creation of 1000 Faroese stamps.

The event was attended by colleagues, family members, friends, stamp collectors, and others, all gathering to wish Svanbjørg a happy retirement.

Faroese stamps have played a significant role in sharing the story of the Faroe Islands with the world. Svanbjørg Manai has been a part of this journey since its inception in 1976 when the Faroese Postal Service and the Philatelic Department were established. Over the years, she has become a well-known figure representing Posta Stamps and Faroese culture abroad, earning recognition as a respected figure in the world of stamp collectors.

Throughout her career, Svanbjørg has made connections worldwide through her participation in stamp exhibitions and conferences. This summer, Posta could celebrate the issue of stamp no. 1,000, each of these stamps are bearing Svanbjørg's unique contribution. Svanbjørg takes pride in this milestone, both personally and professionally.

Each stamp serves as a window into Faroese culture, as per the guidelines set by Svanbjørg and others. Each stamp aims to tell a story and offer a glimpse into the Faroe Islands' culture, history, life, and manners.

An engraving of Svanbjørg's portrait, created by renowned engraver Martin Mörck, was presented to her during the reception. This engraving has been reproduced in a limited edition mini-sheet, symbolizing our appreciation for her contributions.



Svanebjørg and Ingun, manager of  
Posta Stamps.

Photo: Posta

# Christmas seals 2023

## Angel of Christmas

Year after year, the Angel of Christmas Peace, comes with a reminder that even in the coldest of times, the warmth of love and compassion and everlasting peace is in our beating hearts.

She comes with a radiant light that touches every home and every heart. In an instant we feel a sense of overwhelming peace wash over us, worries melt away and our hearts are filled with newfound compassion. Surrounding her is a flock of white doves, a symbol of purity, hope and goodwill. She comes with love and harmony on this Christmas Eve.

*Jonna Ljósá, artist*

*This year's Christmas Seals are designed by the young Faroese artist, Jonna Ljósá. Jonna Ljósá, is an artist from the Faroe Islands, lives and works in Denmark. In her childhood Jonna was surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, which has led to many reflections, experiences, and emotions through her upbringing on the Faroe Islands. Growing up with the ocean, changing weather, nature, and the environment around her has formed her artistic language to a great extent.*

*In recent years, motherhood and childhood has also played a big part after becoming a mother herself. She explores themes and motifs from those worlds and where they combine and collide.*

*Jonna works with mixed media, often using recycled materials and chalk pastels and eco-paint.*



Christmas seals 2023  
- also available as postcards  
Artist: Jonna Ljósá





**New issue:** **Queen Alexandrines Hospital 100 Years**

**Issue date:** 26.02.2024

**Value:** 67,00 DKK

**Number:** FO 1009

**Size, stamp:** 40 x 30 mm

**Size, mini-sheet:** 72 x 50 mm

**Photos / artist:** J. Waagstein

**Printing method:** Offset

**Printer:** Cartor Security Printers,

**Postal use:** Inland letter, 101-250 g

**Other products:**

**The Sandy subsea tunnel**  
26.02.2024  
23,00 and 33,00 DKK  
FO 1010-1011  
40 x 30 mm

Ólavur Frederiksen /  
Edward Fuglø

Offset  
Bpost, Belgium  
Inland letter and letter  
abroad, 0-100 g.

Selfadhesive booklet with  
6 stamps

**Filming location II:  
Peter Pan in Tindhólmur**  
26.02.2024  
33,00 DKK  
FO 1012  
30 x 40 mm

Andrija Ilic

Offset  
Cartor Security Printers, France  
Letter abroad, 0-100 g.

1 postcard

The stamps are only proofs and not necessarily the final version



**New issue:** **Coal mining**

**Issue date:** 26.02.2024

**Value:** 48,00 DKK

**Number:** FO 1013

**Size, stamp:** 30,00 x 31,66 mm

**Photos / artist:** Unknown / Trygvi B. Ártung

**Printing method:** Offset

**Printer:** Bpost, Belgium

**Postal use:** Inland maxi-letter,  
0-100 g

**Franking labels 2024**

02.01.2024

4 x 23,00 DKK

55,0 x 22,5 mm

Janus Dam Guttesen  
Flexoprint

All4Labels, Danmark

**NB! New products will be available in our webshop one week before the issue date**

**Layout:** Posta Stamps

**Cover:** Tindhólmur

**Photo:** Andrija Ilic

**Printer:** Føroyaprent

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