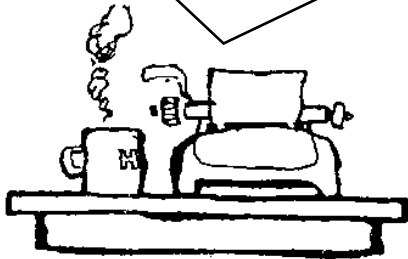


FAROE ISLANDS STUDY CIRCLE

Newsletter

No.46

AUGUST 2018



HELLO AND WELCOME...

Welcome to the August edition of the Study Circle's *Newsletter*. I hope you will find sufficient items of interest about the Study Circle and about the Faroe Islands more generally to keep you busy for a while. One thing is for certain, you will read it in a fraction of the time it takes me to type the contents, add the illustrations and proof-check each page. Then, if you receive a printed copy by post, arranging the printing, filling the envelopes, buying and sticking the stamps and carrying a couple of heavy bags of envelopes to the post office all occupy much time and energy. On the other hand, if you receive an electronic copy it's rather speedier, when everything is finally ready, simply to prepare an e-mail and press "Send".

Of course, I don't mind doing all these things which occupy so much time. It's part of the job, and always has been. When I no longer want to do such tasks, that's the time to tell you that we need to find someone else prepared to do them.

This edition of the *Newsletter* has given me greater challenges than usual. For a start, the weather here has been unnaturally hot and dry for an unnaturally long time. We're not used to such weather in the UK! Sitting here working at the computer on hot, airless days is difficult when, ideally, you want to be somewhere else and, if you had a choice, doing precisely nothing!

And it's also a challenge because the timing of this *Newsletter* isn't great. The deadline for the August edition is always 15 July. And, over the years of preparing both the newsletter and journal, I've tried hard to make sure that I meet each deadline. On the 15th, though, I'll be travelling to Edinburgh in advance of flying to the Faroe Islands the following day. I'm

due to be in the Faroes for a week and don't want to delay the preparation of the *Newsletter* until I return otherwise it will be well into August before I can finish it, and August already threatens to be a busy month. So, this year I brought forward the deadline to 10th July. My intention is to finish the *Newsletter* and send it to the printing company (and to David, our Webmaster) before I go to the Faroes, in the hope that both the printed and electronic copies will then be ready to despatch shortly after I return home. You'll know the saying "The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry", an expression adapted from Robert Burns' "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft a-gley" (*To A Mouse*, 1785). I hope my best laid plans don't go awry (or indeed a-gley!) and that you receive this edition when you should.

In a way, it would have been good to delay the *Newsletter* in the hope of including a report about what our group (Roger Tozer (Chairman), John Smith (Treasurer), Sheila Denholm (founder member) and I managed to see and do during our week in the Faroes but I strongly suspect that, if I did that, this edition would be seriously delayed. If all goes well and we see and do what we hope to see and do, I'll be able to include a report in the November 2018 edition of "238", our journal. If it doesn't go well, I may not want to talk about it!

The four of us were part of the Study Circle group that visited the Faroes in 1993 (where we all met for the first time) and again in 1996, but none of us have visited since. We want to see and do so many things that it will be impossible to do everything in just seven days. But we'll give it our best shot.

"This edition of the *Newsletter* has given me greater challenges than usual".



Norman

* * * * *

SECRETARY: Norman Hudson, 40 Queen's Road, Vicar's Cross, Chester, CH3 5HB, (Great Britain)
(E-mail: jntropics@hotmail.com)



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

NEW MEMBER

Since the last edition of "238" (May 2018) we have welcomed one new member to the Study Circle. He lives in Virginia, USA.

NON-RENEWALS

Three members have not yet paid their 2018 membership subscription. One final attempt is being made to contact each of them. If we don't hear from them, their membership details will be deleted from our records at the end of July.

As usual, all membership changes will be recorded in the next edition of "238".

CURRENT TOTAL

At the present time, the Study Circle has 108 members but this will reduce to 105 if the records of the three members mentioned above are removed.

BILL DEWAR (1940-2018)

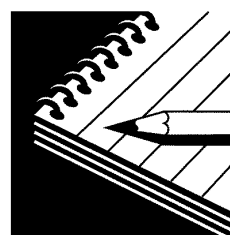
Just as the May 2018 edition of "238", our journal, was being despatched, I received the very sad news of the death, on 27 March, of Study Circle member BILL DEWAR. Bill was one of the Study Circle's founder members back in 1991 and was proud to be the holder of membership no.10. He was always a keen and enthusiastic supporter of the Study Circle, writing to me after almost every issue of the journal and newsletter to say how much he had enjoyed it. And we could pretty much guarantee meeting Bill and his wife, Maureen, at each *Midpex* event, held every two years.

Bill was born in Dundee, Scotland, but had lived in Bedfordshire for many years. His career path had involved a number of interesting jobs, including working as a Royal Mail postman. Anyone wishing to find out more about Bill is invited to re-read "The '238' Interview", no.32, published in "238" in May 2010 (Vol.5 No.2). You will find out, for instance, that his favourite Faroese stamps were the Lighthouses issue (FO115-8) of 1985, reflecting a wider collecting interest in that theme.

On receiving the sad news, a card and letter were sent to Maureen and family on behalf of the Study

Circle. I wrote, "I say quite regularly, and to anyone who will listen, that the Study Circle has always been first and foremost a society of friends. It has been an enormous pleasure to have counted Bill as one of our friends and, as he will always be our No.10, he will always continue to be one of our friends - sadly now an absent friend".

Maureen kindly replied, "I wish the Study Circle's 'society of friends' continued success for the future".



FAROES TALKS & DISPLAYS

Study Circle members will be giving talks and displays about the Faroe Islands to the following philatelic societies:

- **JOHN PERRY**
 - NEWPORT & GWENT PHILATELIC SOCIETY
"A Tour of Scandinavia" (including the Faroes)
 - Wednesday, 25 July 2018
- STROUD & DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY (Gloucs)
"A Tour of Scandinavia" (including the Faroes)
- Wednesday, 21 November 2018
- **ARTHUR JENNION**
 - CITY OF PRESTON PHILATELIC SOCIETY
(Thurlby Club, Egerton Road, Preston, PR2 1AL)
 - Wednesday, 19 September 2018

If you're able to attend any talks/displays given by Study Circle members, why not pop along?

* If YOU know of any Faroes talks/displays being given - and especially if you are due to give one yourself - please inform Norman Hudson. If chance permits, we'll share the date(s) in either "238" or the *Newsletter* so that other members might attend if they're able to do so.





ABPS AWARD OF MERIT FOR JOHN SMITH

The deadline for this edition of the *Newsletter* is 10 July. This is the same date on which JOHN SMITH (Treasurer and Auctioneer) is due to be presented with the AWARD OF MERIT awarded to John by the Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS) for his “outstanding voluntary service for British philately”.

The ABPS Award of Merit, in the form of a framed certificate, is to be presented to John by ROGER TOZER (Study Circle Chairman) at the AGM of the Wirral Philatelic Society, John’s local society, in Heswall on the evening of Tuesday, 10 July.



THE FRAMED CERTIFICATE (A4-SIZE) TO BE PRESENTED TO JOHN SMITH ON 10 JULY

Although the nomination for the award was made on behalf of the Study Circle, it also reflected John’s longstanding contributions to the West Africa Study Circle and to several local philatelic societies on the Wirral.

A report on the presentation, hopefully accompanied by a photograph taken at the event, will be included in the next edition of “238”, the Study Circle’s journal, in November 2018.

In the meantime, we offer our warmest CONGRATULATIONS to John, as well as our sincerest thanks, for his outstanding contributions to the Study Circle over many years.

● **JOHN SMITH**
CHAIRMAN, 1996-2000; TREASURER, since 1998;
AUCTION SECRETARY, since 2012

☆ **CHAIRMAN**

John served for two consecutive two-year terms as the Study Circle’s Chairman, from 1996 to 1998 and 1998 to 2000. His second terms of office coincided with his first two years as Treasurer.

☆ **TREASURER**

John became the Study Circle’s Treasurer on 1 June 1998. He has overseen the society’s finances for 20 years, monitoring our income and expenditure, advising the Committee when action is needed and giving detailed end-of-year financial information, for the benefit of all members, in his yearly reports published in the society’s Annual Report.

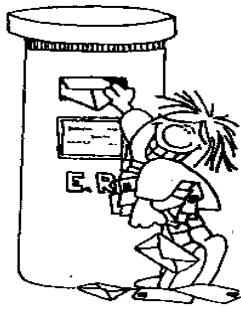
☆ **AUCTIONEER**

When a new Auctioneer was needed, in 2012, John volunteered to fill the vacancy, using the wealth of knowledge and know-how he had acquired in doing the same task for the West Africa Study Circle (a job he has done continuously since 1996). He has now organised 12 postal auctions for the Faroe Islands Study Circle (auctions 28 to 39). Many members have either sold surplus material or acquired new and interesting material for their collections thanks to John’s efforts.



JOHN SMITH POSTS A POSTCARD AT GJÓGV POST OFFICE
 Photo: Norman Hudson, July 1993





POSTAL AUCTIONS

POSTAL AUCTION No.39

ENCLOSED SEPARATELY with this edition of the *Newsletter* is a copy of the catalogue for the Study Circle's next postal auction (No.39).

The auction list has been compiled by the Study Circle's Auctioneer, JOHN SMITH. It has 140 lots of Faroe-related material, with a total reserve value in excess of £2,750. This is John's 12th auction. Once again, he is to be both thanked and congratulated on putting together a catalogue containing a wide and interesting range of lots.

Comparing the previous auction (no.38) with the current one, John writes -

"Most of the material is once again new for this auction. The new material is wide-ranging in value and in scope. The number of lots is slightly lower than last time, and the reserve value down a little. As in several recent auctions, additional information is provided with several of the most interesting items".

He points out that lots valued at £50.00 or more are highlighted in bold text in the catalogue.

John says, "There are again some very choice items listed!" and wishes you "Happy hunting!" So, start studying and bid early!

Of the present auction John also added words of caution that we all need to note. He writes, "Only one member submitted new material, which is worrying for me as Auctioneer".

So, start sorting out that surplus Faroes' material and earn money to buy further items!

GENERAL NOTES:

○ Importantly, PLEASE read John's introductory notes, in the catalogue, with care, and PLEASE follow them.

○ Please note that your bids must reach John (by post or preferably by e-mail) by not later than SATURDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2018.

○ Early bids are advisable. If equal bids are received, the earliest bid will be successful.

○ Bids can be made EITHER by post OR by e-mail but John prefers e-mail bids. There are several advantages to e-mail bids. It's not only faster and easier but also everyone e-mailing their bids will receive an e-mailed confirmation. E-mail bids will also avoid potential handwriting problems for the Auctioneer.

○ John has kindly offered to send scans of suitable lots, at no cost, either by e-mail (to those with e-mail access) or by post (to those without such a facility).

POSTAL AUCTION No.40

In addition to your bids for lots in auction no.38, John now urgently needs your surplus Faroe-related material for inclusion in the next postal auction, no.40. Please send your material to John as soon as possible, and by not later than 8 DECEMBER 2018.

○ Having regularly pointed out his reliance on just a small number of vendors (sellers) to provide items for recent auctions, John is keen to attract new vendors. So, if you have surplus Faroe-related material, please seek it out and send it to John for the auction.

○ Please try to help the Auctioneer by packaging your intended lots separately, and by providing a brief description (for the catalogue) and a note of the amount at which you want the reserve sale-price to be set.



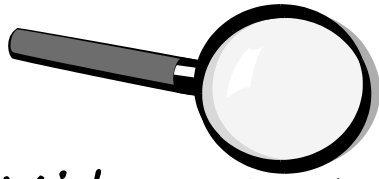
CONTACT DETAILS:

To contact the Auctioneer, please write to -

- John Smith
- 52 Eastway, Greasby, WIRRAL, CH49 2NT (GB)
- ☎ 0151-678 6201
- ✉ E-mail: stamps.johnsmith@gmail.com



STUDY CIRCLE MEETINGS AND EVENTS



Midpex 2019

MIDPEX 2019 - SATURDAY, 6 JULY 2019

A NOTE FOR YOUR DIARY: The next *Midpex* stamp fair and exhibition will be held on SATURDAY, 6 JULY 2019. For the fifth time, the venue will be the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre (CV31 1XN), at Radford Semele, a few miles east of Leamington Spa.

The Study Circle hopes to have a society stand at *Midpex* 2019


Midpex was first held in 1995 and has grown into a prestigious biennial exhibition attended by collectors from across the UK. It brings together specialist societies with local, national and international dealers covering all aspect of philately. At *Midpex* 2017, 71 dealers attended and 40 specialist societies had stands.

The Study Circle has had a stand at each event from 1999 onwards. *Midpex* 2019 will be the 13th event and the Study Circle's 11th attendance. It has always been a great pleasure to meet Study Circle members – old and new – at our stand.

Watch out for further details in future editions of the newsletter and journal.

● WEBSITES

○ MIDPEX:  www.stampcircuit.com/content/midpex

○ VENUE:  www.warwickshireexhibitioncentre.co.uk



COMPLETE PRIVATISATION OF POSTA?

The Minister of Trade and Industry in the Faroes, Poul Michelsen, has been preparing a proposal to be put to the Faroese Parliament (*Løgting*) which, if approved, would lead to the complete privatisation of the Faroese postal service.

Postal services in the Faroes were run by the Danish Post and Telegraph Office (*Post- og Telegrafvæsenet*) until the creation of Postverk Føroya, the Faroes'

independent postal service, on 1 April 1976. On 16 December 2005 Postverk Føroya became a public joint stock company trading under the name P/F Postverk Føroya. On 6 August 2009, Postverk Føroya was rebranded as Posta (often seen as "Posta Faroe Islands"). The new company was expected to trade as a stand-alone commercial enterprise and to make a profit (rather than a financial loss) on its operations. This led to the closure of many post offices and a reduction in the number of postal employees.

Now, if the Minister's proposal is approved, the postal service faces complete privatisation.

The trade union representing many of the postal employees is opposed to the proposal and has expressed concern for the future. Many other voices have also been raised against the proposal, particularly from the Faroes' remoter communities including the smaller, off-lying islands. They predict a worse and more expensive postal service if the privatisation is approved.

A Study Circle member resident in the islands has also expressed concern about items of historic interest currently in the care of the postal service. During a public consultation exercise, he pointed out that many old datestamps previously in use in the Faroes (both pre-1962, with Danish spellings, and post-1962, with Faroese spellings) were given to Postverk Føroya by the Danish postal service in 1976. They – together with other items such as historic post-boxes and postal uniforms – were supposed to be part of a Faroese postal museum that has not yet been created.

"All these items belong to the Faroese people", said the Study Circle member in representations made to the Faroese government. "They should not be given to a privatised company", he argues, "where their future will be unclear. They might be sold or even destroyed without the Faroese people expressing an opinion about it".

Another important question is what can be expected of a privatised company running the Faroese postal service. Will it greatly increase the number and cost of stamp issues – and will it opt for popular stamp subjects rather than designs that relate to the Faroe Islands – in the quest for profits?

○ With thanks to ÁLVUR DANIELSEN for this background information.

○ FOOTNOTE: Svanbjørg Manai, Director of Posta Stamps, recently informed the Study Circle that there is now a small postal museum in Posta's main Post Office at Óðinshædd 2, Tórshavn.



**STAMP OF THE YEAR, 2017
PHILATELIC BUREAU'S POLL**

The results of Posta Stamps' "Stamp of the Year" poll for 2017 were given in edition No.36 of the Philatelic Bureau's *Posta Stamps* bulletin (April 2018). The poll was conducted amongst Posta's customers.

In **FIRST PLACE** was the Skorá River stamp. This single, 9.50KR stamp (FO857) showed a small, isolated summer-house at the foot of impressive waterfalls on the Skorá River in central Streymoy. The photograph on the stamp was by Saviour Mifsud.

The Bureau's customers and Study Circle members have not always agreed on the choice of "Stamp of the Year", and this was once again the case in 2017. In the Study Circle's poll to find members' favourite stamp, the Skorá River stamp was joint runner-up (equal-2nd), being the favourite stamp of 25% of the members who voted.



SKORÁ RIVER (FO857)
"STAMP OF THE YEAR"
FOR 2017

In **SECOND PLACE** in Posta's poll was the 17KR stamp from the two-stamp "Lakes" issue. This stamp (FO855) showed Sørvágsvatn/Leitisvatn (two names for the same lake on the island of Vágar). The photograph on the stamp was by Eirik Sørstrømmen. The stamp was Study Circle members' favourite stamp of 2017. The second stamp in this stamp issue (19KR, FO856) was the other joint runner-up in the Study Circle's poll but did not feature in the top-three in Posta's vote.

In **THIRD PLACE** was the two-stamp miniature sheet showing the legend of the Seven Swans (FO865 & 866). The stamps were designed by the Chinese artist Li Yunzhong and engraved by Martin Mörck. In the Study Circle's poll, the 9.50KR stamp was equal-15th (out of the 24 stamps issued in 2017) and the 19KR stamp was equal 10th. Generally speaking, Study Circle members have seldom favoured miniature sheets over the many years that our "Favourite stamp" votes have been held.

As usual, the Posta and the Study Circle polls had been conducted differently. The Philatelic Bureau counts each miniature sheet as one stamp for voting purposes, even though there may be two or more

stamps in a sheet, whereas the Study Circle asks members to vote on each stamp separately.

A curiosity in Posta's poll may well have produced an unexpected result. The "Faroese Knife" stamp issue was issued both as a single 19KR stamp, with the word "SEPAC" (FO867), and a single-stamp miniature sheet, without the word "SEPAC" (FO868). Bureau customers could vote separately on these two stamps, so any votes given would have been split between the two. As a result, the stamp did not feature in the top-three in Posta's poll. In the Study Circle's poll the stamp and the miniature sheet were considered as one stamp for voting purposes, and the result showed that it was the no.1 stamp of 30% of Study Circle members who voted (though overall in 4th place in our poll).

Yet again, none of the three prize-winners in the Bureau's poll were Study Circle members. The first, second and third prizes went to collectors in the Netherlands, Italy and Germany, respectively.

The full results of the Study Circle's poll were published in "238" (Vol.6 No.8) in May 2018.



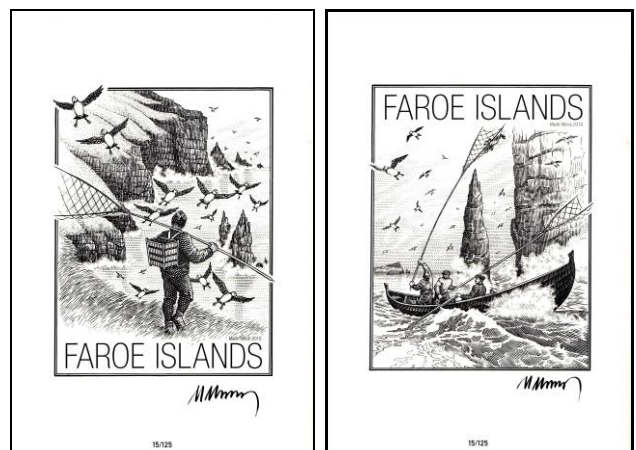
NEW STAMP ISSUES: LATE NEWS

**SEPAC – Spectacular Views
23 April 2018**

○ "238" (May 2018) omitted to report that one postcard was also issued with this stamp issue

**Seabird Fowling
26 February 2018**

Posta issued a limited edition of a special "relief printing" of the two stamp images. Just 125 copies of each were issued, numbered and signed by the artist and engraver Martin Mörck. 2450g paper, actual size 24 x 30cm, price 95KR each.



(illustrations reduced – actual size 24 x 30cm)





NEWS FROM THE FAROES



FAROESE PARLIAMENT PASSES FISHERIES REFORM

In January 2018 the Faroese Parliament passed a bill that aims to reform national fishery policies. The bill - The Act on Management of Marine Resources - states that all living marine resources in Faroese waters are the property of the people of the Faroe Islands and, as such, fishing licences may never become private property, neither by law nor by practice. Furthermore, fishing licences cannot be traded directly between private buyers. To change hands, licences must be sold via public auctions.

The fisheries reform has been one of the Government's main objectives since taking office in 2015. Høgni Hoydal, Minister of Fisheries, was delighted that the bill had been passed, saying: "The reform is an historic milestone, marking a new era in the Faroese fishing industry".

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands fo/



SALMON WASTE CAN FUEL FAROESE ECONOMY

The largest salmon producer in the Faroe Islands, Bakkafrost, has announced plans to invest in a new biogas plant in collaboration with other Faroese fish farmers and local dairy farmers, using waste products

from fish and dairy farming to produce energy and fertiliser.

This is one of many new commitments outlined in Bakkafrost's new sustainability report called Healthy Living Plan, published in March 2018. Other significant strategic priorities announced in the report include managing and minimising water use by harvesting rainwater and increasing the focus on reducing the company's environmental footprint.

Regin Jacobsen, Bakkafrost's Chief Executive Officer, said, "We believe that by investing in the health of our business, our people, our salmon, the environment and the communities in which we operate, we will create long-term value for society, meeting the growing global demand for protein, responsibly".

The company, established in 1968 and based in the village of Glyvrrar on the island of Eysturoy, produced an average of almost 700,000 meals a day in 2017. 44% of its salmon sales were to the EU, 18% to the USA, 21% to Eastern Europe and 17% to Asia.

With 1,104 (960 full-time-equivalent) employees from 24 of the 29 municipalities in the Faroe Islands, Bakkafrost is the country's largest private employer. It is the eighth-largest fish-farming company in the world and has been registered on the Oslo Stock Exchange since 2010.

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands fo/



REBUILT FISH FACTORY BRINGS NEW OPTIMISM TO TVØROYRI

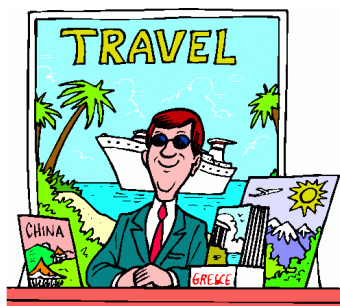
As reported in the previous edition of the *Newsletter* (February 2018, page 13), on 9 June 2017 a disastrous fire at the Varðin Pelagic freezing plant hit the town of Tvøroyri hard. It left 150 people temporarily out of work and dramatically reduced ship traffic at the port. Eight months later, the foundations of the new building had been built.

Ólavur Bjarkhamar, production manager at Varðin Pelagic, was delighted to see the development of the new building. In January 2018, he said, "It's been over 200 days since the old factory went up in flames. The plan is to test the new factory this spring. Everyone who worked at the factory before can expect to return to their job".

Varðin Pelagic includes a fleet of five fishing vessels and a state-of-the-art pelagic fish factory. Prior to Varðin Pelagic opening in 2012, Tvøroyri - the main town on the island of Suðuroy - had long seen an increase in unemployment and in the number of

people moving away from the town. Since 2012, the company has played an essential role in revitalising the town, becoming one of its main employers and a vital generator of revenue for local businesses and authorities.

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands fo/



FAROE ISLANDS ONE OF TOP TRAVEL DESTINATIONS IN 2018

The Faroe Islands have been named as a top travel destination in 2018 by CBS' Travel Editor, Peter Greenberg, and is included on Forbes' list of the "15 coolest places to go in 2018", alongside Egypt, Cambodia and northern Brazil.

The reasons to visit according to Peter Greenberg include "22 hours of daylight in the summer months, great food, great fishing and great history". Forbes cites the islands' "fabulous restaurants... landscape of surreal mountains and cliffs, countless waterfalls, grass-roofed houses and dynamic oceans" as incentives to visit.

Tourism in the Faroe Islands is on the increase. Statistics show an increase of approximately 35% in the number of bed-nights in the last four years. According to Súsanna Sørensen, PR and Leisure Manager at Visit Faroe Islands, the country's tourism board, being included in articles and TV programmes by international media has had a great effect on the number of visitors.



"In many cases, people around the world don't know that the Faroe Islands exist", said Súsanna. "The islands aren't even on many world maps! Being included in articles, blogs, radio and TV programmes by respected

international media increases people's awareness of our islands and can open their eyes to the possibility of travelling to the Faroe Islands. Hopefully being mentioned by publications like CBS and Forbes will have a similarly positive effect on tourism numbers as we have seen in the past".

Súsanna thinks people's desire to find new travel destinations means the tourism industry in the Faroe Islands has great potential.

She added, "People are constantly looking for new and unique places to travel, and the Faroe Islands are still relatively unknown. The Faroe Islands offers visitors something completely different - unique landscapes, unique food experiences and a unique culture. All of these are ingredients for a perfect holiday".

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands fo/



ATLANTIC AIRWAYS' 30th BIRTHDAY

Atlantic Airways celebrated its 30th birthday in March 2018.

The first Atlantic Airways' flight, a British Aerospace BAe 146, took off from Vágur Airport in Sørvágur to fly to Kastrup Airport, Copenhagen, on 28 March 1988. At that time, Danish carrier Maersk Air was the only airline to carry passengers between the Faroe Islands and the outside world. Calls for a Faroese airline company had started in the early 1980s, and the Faroese government established Atlantic Airways in 1987.

Today, Atlantic Airways has 180 full-time employees and will fly to 12 different destinations in 2018. The airline company also provides charter flights, operates a scheduled helicopter route connecting the islands and is on hand to provide emergency assistance by helicopter when called upon.

Atlantic Airways owns two passenger airplanes and two helicopters and currently leases one additional passenger airplane. All these aircraft have been purchased or leased in recent years, making Atlantic Airways' fleet one of the youngest in the world. All aircrafts are equipped with RNP AR 0.1, one of the most precise satellite-assisted Performances-Based Navigation approaches. This equipment enables the aircraft to achieve greater operational reliability in low clouds and turbulence, which in turn means that Atlantic Airways can provide 99.8% regularity on all flights.

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands fo/





FLIGHTS TO CONTINUE UNTIL CHRISTMAS

Atlantic Airways – the national carrier of the Faroe Islands – will be running its twice-weekly 2018 service from Edinburgh right up to the Christmas break.

The service operates from Edinburgh on Fridays and Mondays, with return flights on the same days. Between June 21 and August 16, you can have an even longer weekend visit to the Faroes, with outbound flights on Thursdays instead of Fridays. Return fares to the islands start at £180 including taxes, charges and fees when booked online.

Flights are on modern Airbus A319 and A320 aircraft, with convenient middle-of-the-day departure times. The airline also offers onward services to Reykjavík, Iceland, for two-centre visits.

Jóhanna á Bergi - who became the first female chief executive officer of a Nordic airline when she took over the reins at Atlantic Airways in 2015 - said, “Edinburgh is the nearest overseas capital to the Faroe Islands and we look forward to continuing to build ever closer ties between our two countries as it becomes even easier for both tourists and business people to make the short journey or to plan a two-centre holiday in the Faroe Islands and Iceland”.

The distance from Edinburgh to Vágur Airport on the Faroes is a little over 400 miles.

The Edinburgh service runs until January 3, before resuming in March 2019.

□ SOURCE: Atlantic Airways



HOTEL VÁGAR “ONE OF WORLD’S 10 BEST AIRPORT HOTELS”

You only have to open your hotel window to experience panoramic views of rugged mountains and the islands’ largest freshwater lake. This view, in addition to the short walk to Vágur Airport, was enough to put Hotel Vágur on *The Independent’s* top-10 list of best airport hotels in the world.

The article, published in March 2018, states: “With the wild Atlantic on its doorstep and small rocky

islands jutting out of the sea, this is one of the most beautiful places to wake up – and the Gásadalur waterfall is only a 15-minute car ride away”.

Hotel Vágur has prestigious companions on the top-10 list, including the Hilton in Amsterdam and Hotel Verde in Cape Town.

The 3-star Hotel Vágur, opposite Vágur Airport, opened in 1978. It has 22 double rooms, two suites, three meeting rooms, one restaurant and one bar. It also has the Faroes’ only mini golf course!

□ SOURCE: www.faroeislands fo/



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

An International Women’s Day was first proposed by Clara Zetkin at an international conference of working women in Copenhagen in 1910. Today, International Women’s Day has become a date to celebrate how far women have come in society, in politics and in economics. This is also true for women in the Faroe Islands and, as elsewhere, International Women’s Day was celebrated in the Faroes on 8 March.

One of the biggest societal and political changes to have taken place in the Faroe Islands over the last hundred years is the increase in the number of women in Faroese politics. At the last general election, in 2015, ten women were elected to sit in the Faroese parliament (out of 33 elected members).

Women in the Faroe Islands have had the right to vote for 103 years, but it took 62 years for the Faroese to elect a woman to parliament. In 1978 Jona Henriksen from the Social Democratic Party and Karin Kjølbro from Republican Party were the first women to be elected. However, the first woman to sit in the Faroese parliament, the *Løgting*, was Malene Sofie Samuelsen, known as Malla Samuelsen (1909-97), from the Self-Government Party. Born in the village of Kirkja on the island of Fugloy, she had replaced Marius Johannesen in parliament for a short period in 1964. Malla was also the first women to serve on Tórshavn City Council when she was elected in 1956.

In 1993, the Faroese elected their first (and, so far, only) female Prime Minister. Marita Petersen (Social Democrats) held this office from January 1993 to September 1994.

□ SOURCE: www.faroeislands fo/



GOOGLE STREETVIEW IN THE FAROES

Google has finally put the Faroe Islands on the map! Since the beginning of 2018 the Faroes can be seen and explored on Google Streetview.

In 2017 a well-publicised “Sheep View” campaign was mounted to encourage Google to include the Faroes in its online viewing of many parts of the world. Previously, from 2016, Google had loaned cameras to residents in the Faroes to capture the roads and even trekking routes. Now, this informal arrangement has put on a more formal basis.

Study Circle member Dirk Peter Toonstra (Netherlands) writes, “It’s really worth having a look. I think all the roads are covered and there are many bonus items. There are several routes up mountains from where you have a great view, without even going to the Faroes yourself”.

☐ SOURCE: www.forbes.com
With thanks to Dirk Peter Toonstra



FAROESE ART AT SEATTLE’S NORDIC MISEUM

Twenty-five glass birds by Faroese painter, sculptor and glass artist, Tróndur Patursson, were on display as the new Nordic Museum opened in Seattle, USA, in early May.

The installation of glass birds, given the title ‘Migration’, is suspended on cables from the ceiling, decorating the main hallway of the 5,300 square metre, \$45million facility in downtown Seattle. The museum is the largest in the United States to honour the legacy of immigrants from five Nordic countries.

Executive director of the Nordic Museum, Eric Nelson, had travelled to the Faroe Islands in 2016. He said, “I had heard about Tróndur’s work in 2013, when he was part of the Nordic Cool exhibit at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., but I had not seen the art in person until this visit”.

He added, “I was so impressed by Tróndur and his studio. The metaphors he was talking about – migration and journeys and the sea – match the themes of the new Nordic Museum. And of the many things Seattle has in common with the Nordic countries is a strong glass-making tradition, so it fit perfectly”.



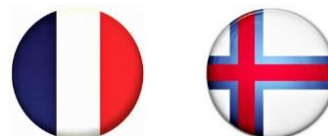
Tróndur, who was born in Kirkjubøur in 1944, said, “The response from people has been wonderful, and the great thing

about this exhibit is that it is not temporary but permanent”.

○ FOOTNOTE

Two postage stamps showing glass-work by Tróndur Patursson were issued by Postverk Føroya in April 2002 as its “Contemporary Nordic Art” issue (FO413 & 414).

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands.fo/



Îles Féroé / Føroyar

NEW FRENCH-FAROESE DICTIONARY

Sprotin, a Faroese publishing house that also has an online dictionary service, has added a French-Faroese dictionary to its repertoire. The new dictionary, primarily the work of high school teacher Rólant í Skorini, contains over 10,000 words.

The French-Faroese dictionary is the seventeenth dictionary published by Sprotin. Other languages include Faroese, English, Danish, German, Italian and Russian. The online dictionaries are widely used and are particularly popular among students and teachers who deem the service an indispensable tool. The website, www.sprotin.fo, has become so popular that students have morphed the name of the company into a verb: *sprotta*. To search Sprotin’s online dictionary is simply called *to sprotta*.

That the Faroese even have a language of their own to translate is remarkable in itself. Up until 1938, schools and churches in the Faroe Islands were generally only permitted to use Danish. A decade later, in 1948, the Faroese language became the main language of the Faroe Islands.

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands.fo/



KOKS RESTAURANT RETAINS MICHELIN STAR

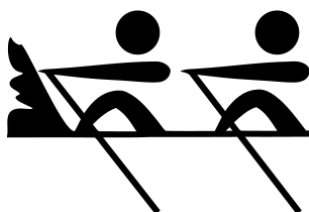
KOKS, the first ever Faroese restaurant to receive a star from the Nordic Michelin Guide, has retained the accolade, first awarded in 2017.

“We’ve absolutely delighted to have retained our Michelin star”, said chef Poul Andrias Ziska. 2018 will mark an exciting time for the restaurant, as it moves to a new location. Previously located in Kirkjubøur, KOKS opened on 10 April in its new location, an eighteenth-century farmhouse in the remote Leynavatn valley, a short distance north east of Kvívík and a 20-minute drive from Tórshavn. Built in 1740 and sitting by the lake, the building is traditionally Faroese in design, with basalt stone walls and a grass roof.

KOKS is characterised by its unique Faroese identity and its commitment to the use of sustainable local products. Poul Andrias, born and raised in the Faroe Islands, aims to ensure that the restaurant continues to be at the forefront of the evolving and world-renowned Nordic food movement.

Being awarded a Michelin star resulted in heightened interest and more reservations in 2017 than previous years. KOKS hopes the retention can have a similar effect on the restaurant this year.

□ SOURCE: www.faroeislands.fo/



CREW ROW NEARLY 8,000 KILOMETRES ACROSS THE ATLANTIC TO SET NEW WORLD RECORD

Three men from the Faroe Islands and one from New Zealand recently travelled 7,800 kilometres in a row-boat across the Atlantic from Portugal to Cuba. They are thought to be the first ever to have completed such a feat.

The crew - Jákup Jacobsen, Jógvan Clementsen, Niclas Olsen and Isaac Giesen - took 74 days to complete the journey in their 40-foot rowing boat. They left Portugal on 10 February and arrived in Cuba

on 12 May. Each crew-member took approximately 800,000 strokes of the oars.

The crew’s captain, Jákup Jacobsen, 54, who works as a building designer in Copenhagen, has previously rowed with friends from Scotland to the Faroe Islands. The driving force for that trip was a thirst for adventure, and the same applied to the recent trip across the Atlantic.

The rowers brought with them a greeting from 12 members of the Danish Parliament, including Foreign Affairs Minister, Anders Samuelsen, of “friendship and understanding between people”. Additionally, the crew hoped to raise money for charity, including the funding of well-drilling for clean water in Somalia.

Originally, the adventurers planned to finish in Havana, but wind and current conditions forced them to change their route. They ended up in Baracoa, in the province of Guantanamo in eastern Cuba, where large crowds of enthusiastic locals greeted their arrival.

□ SOURCE: www.faroeislands.fo/



FAROE ISLANDS SEEK OLYMPIC RECOGNITION

When Faroe Islanders have competed in the Olympic Games, they have done so under the Danish flag. Now, though, the Faroe Islands have reignited a 40-year-old campaign to compete as an independent country at the Olympics.

The Faroese Olympic Committee believes it has a strong case for Olympic recognition and has launched a campaign which aims to achieve recognition within the next five years.

“The Danish National Olympic Committee is fully behind us, as are other Nordic NOCs, but at the moment, we find ourselves in an Olympic no-man’s land”, said Jon Hestoy, vice-president of the Faroese Olympic Committee.

The Faroese Confederation of Sports was established in 1939, with an Olympic Committee introduced in 1982. The Faroe Islands is a founding member of the International Paralympic Committee and has competed in every Paralympic Summer Games since 1984.

The islands are recognised by eight international federations and compete internationally, as the Faroe Islands, in archery, badminton, football, handball, judo, swimming, table tennis and volleyball.

“All we want is the same opportunity to compete in the Olympic Games under our own flag”, Hestoy added.

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands.fo/



SPORTS HIGH SCHOOL TO EXPAND

The popular Sports High School in Vágur, Suðuroy, receives so many applicants that it now plans to expand student accommodation, allowing it to increase its intake. It currently accommodates 40 students but intends to increase this to 72.

The Sports High School opened in 2016 and is considered a great success story for the Faroes providing lessons not only in sports, but also art, language and culture. Students from all over the world, including Denmark, England, Germany and New Zealand, have attended the school which offers half- or full-year options, starting in either January (20 weeks) or August (15 weeks).

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands.fo/



FAROESE FOOTBALL PITCHES AMONG “WORLD’S MOST UNIQUE”

The 2018 World Cup in Russia kicked off in June in the Luzhniki Stadium – Russia’s national stadium, in Moscow - which can hold up to 81,000 spectators. But massive structures and vast crowds don’t necessarily translate into the world’s most beautiful and unique stadiums. At least according to Danish TV broadcaster, TV2 Sport.

Their report on the most aesthetic and special stadiums in the world included two football pitches in the Faroes. Svangaskarð Stadium, in Toftir on the island of Eysturoy, was listed as number seven, and

the stadium in the village of Eiði was in fourth place on the list.



The pitch in Eiði, which was completed in 2017, is where local team EB/Streymur train and play their home matches. Their old pitch, located closer to the ocean, is now used as a camping site.

Svangaskarð Stadium, originally built in 1980, is so close to the ocean that a football kicked wide of the goal can easily end up in the sea. B68 Toftir train and play their home matches in this stadium, which has also been used for home matches of the Faroese national team. The national team has achieved some memorable results in Svangaskarð – most notably wins against Luxembourg (2001), Lithuania (2011) and Estonia (2011), and creditable draws against Scotland (1999 and 2002), Bosnia & Herzegovina (1999), Slovenia (2000) and Northern Ireland (2010), among others. The highest attendance recorded at a football match in the Faroes was in Svangaskarð in June 1997 when 6,642 people witnessed the Faroe Islands beat Malta 2-1.



Today, most national team football matches are played at the Tórsvøllur Stadium in Tórshavn. Tórsvøllur is currently being expanded and will be able to take nearly 5,000 spectators when completed, which equates to approximately 10% of the Faroes’ population.

☐ SOURCE: www.faroeislands.fo/

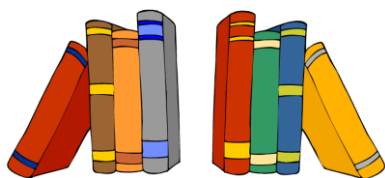


ANOTHER ORNITHOLOGICAL FIRST

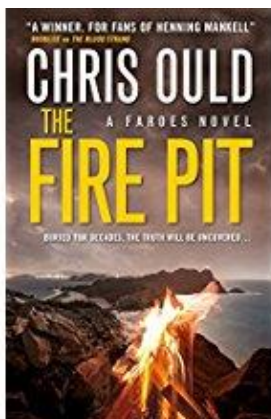
A sighting of a BOOTED WARBLER (*Iduna caligata*), seen at Viðareiði on 6 June 2018, is the Faroe Islands’ first record for this species. This bird breeds from Central Russia eastwards and winters in the Indian sub-continent but has been spreading west in recent years. The species now breeds in Finland, which is the nearest breeding population to the Faroes. Speculation suggests that the strong and persistent east winds in Spring 2018 carried this bird further than it intended.

☐ SOURCE: With thanks to Brian Cox.





BOOK REVIEW



THE FIRE PIT By CHRIS OULD

Reviewed by BRIAN COX

○ Titan Books 2018, paperback, 464pp, £7.99

The Fire Pit is the final volume in Chris Ould's crime thriller trilogy of "Faroes Novels", following *The Blood Strand* and *The Killing Bay*, both of which I have reviewed for the Study Circle. There is good news and bad news to tell about this final book, so let's get the bad out of the way first. This time most of the action takes place in Denmark, not the Faroes, so anyone reading primarily for the Faroes locales and insights may be disappointed. The good news is that *The Fire Pit* is much more tightly constructed and is a tremendous read: I finished its 464 pages less than 24 hours after it arrived from Amazon.

As with *The Killing Bay*, you don't need to have read the earlier volumes - although it obviously helps if you have done - because the author quickly tells you what you need to know about what has gone before. If you *have* read *The Killing Bay*, you'll know that it ends with evidence of a 40-year old crime at Múli, a remote settlement at the very northern end of Borðoy; *The Fire Pit's* first main strand is Hjalti Henze's investigation into what happened there and who was responsible. Its second main strand is Faroes-born British detective Jan Reyna's continuing search for the truth behind his mother's suicide: this took something of a back seat in *The Killing Bay*, but in *The Fire Pit*, as expected, it comes to the fore. I won't be telling you too much by saying that the two strands eventually converge and lead to a climax in which all the loose ends are eventually tied up.

I can also safely quote from *The Fire Pit's* back cover, since you'll see this for yourself if you buy the book:

"In the wake of a dying man's apparent suicide, the skeleton of a young woman is discovered on a windswept hillside. Detective Hjalti Henze suspects it is the body of a Norwegian woman reported missing forty years earlier, while a commune occupied the land, and whose death may be linked to the abduction and rape of a local Faroese girl.

"Meanwhile, British DI Jan Reyna is pursuing his investigation into his mother's suicide. But as he learns more about her final days, links between the two cases start to appear: a conspiracy of murder and abuse spanning four decades. And as Henze puts the same pieces together, he realizes that Reyna is willing to go further than ever before to learn the truth..."

You may think this description sounds pretty much like one of the many Scandinavian crime novels that have proved so popular in Britain since Stieg Larsson burst on to the British scene in 2007 with *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, and you'd be right. Indeed, the Scandi-crime likeness seems to me both the main strength and main weakness of *The Fire Pit*: its great strength is the tight interwoven plot, along with the mobility that its Danish setting more readily allows than if it had been restricted to the Faroes; its weakness is that some of the plot elements, particularly the ending, are rather *too* reminiscent of some Scandinavian crime novels, and seem a bit second-hand or jaded. As a result, *The Fire Pit* lacks that special something brought to its two predecessors by their Faroes settings, although it's a moot point whether those settings would have made much difference for the average reader. So, for me at least, this final volume seems much more commercial than the first two, and while it makes for a more exciting read, it is perhaps less distinctive and ultimately less satisfying.



THE VILLAGE OF MÚLI, AT THE NORTH END OF BORÐOY
image from Postverk Føroya's *NEWS from the Faroes*, 1/2006

Lest this sounds too critical, I should point out that there are many other pleasures in *The Fire Pit*, not least (as in the earlier volumes) the interaction of the

main characters, Hentze and Reyna, and especially in this third book the subsidiary characters who back them up. Annika Mortensen, a local uniformed policewoman who has applied to join the CID in Copenhagen, is seconded to help Hentze, and shows considerable determination and intelligence in doing so. Reyna is helped once more by Danish student Tove Hald, whose single-mindedness – and strangeness – is reminiscent of Saga Norén (played by Sofia Helin) in the TV series *The Bridge*. Tove ultimately plays a key role in *The Fire Pit*. Meanwhile Thomas Friis, a Jutland detective, just as single-minded as Tove, is investigating a historical series of murders he thinks are linked but isn't getting much support from his superiors: his contribution also turns out to be vital. All this activity means there are at least five separate lines of investigation in play throughout the book, which Ould brings together very effectively and help hold the reader's interest as well as moving the story smartly along.

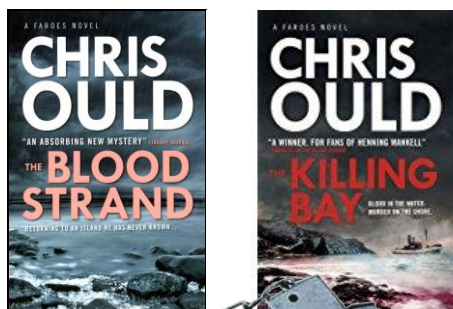


I can certainly recommend all three books, which are much better than I expected when the series was first announced. It would be nice to see more of Hentze and Reyna, but the final scenes of *The Fire Pit* seem to have brought the trilogy to a definite end: we'll have to wait and see.

Brian Cox, 1 March 2018

○ FOOTNOTE:

The Blood Strand was reviewed by Brian in *Newsletter* 42 (August 2016, page 17). His review of *The Killing Bay* was published in *Newsletter* 44 (August 2017, page 16).



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CHESS

European Small Nations Individual Championships

KLAKSVÍK – 13-23 APRIL 2018

The 3rd European Small Nations Individual Chess Championships were held in Klaksvík between 13 and 23 April.

Having won the tournament in 2016, the Faroe Islands' Grandmaster Helgi Dam Ziska started the tournament as favourite and was victorious in the competition. He won eight matches out of nine and drew the ninth match with his opponent from Monaco.

The final standings were as follows:

1	Helgi Dam Ziska	Faroe Islands	8½
2	Igor Efimov	Monaco	7
3	Fred Berend	Luxembourg	6½
4	Aloma Vidal	Andorra	6
5	Paris Kleridis	Cyprus	4½
6	Olaf Berg	Faroe Islands	4
7	Krzysztof Belzo	Jersey	2½
8	Peter Kirby	Guernsey	2
9	Stelios Theocharous	Cyprus	2
10	Renato Frick	Liechtenstein	2

The total prize fund of the event was €4,500, with €2,000 reserved for the winner of the championship.



○ SOURCES: With thanks to ÁLVUR DANIELSEN
 🌐 <https://www.fide.com/> (World Chess Federation)



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SPORTS REPORT

FOOTBALL (soccer)



UEFA Nations League

New for 2018, the UEFA Nations League is an international football competition, to be contested by the senior men’s national teams of the member associations of UEFA, the sport’s European governing body. The first tournament is due to commence in September 2018 and the winner will be decided in June 2019. The competition will largely replace international friendly matches currently played on FIFA’s international match calendar.

The 55 UEFA national teams (including the Faroe Islands) were divided into four divisions (called “Leagues”), 12 teams in League A, 12 in League B, 15 in League C and 16 in League D. Teams in League A will compete to become the UEFA Nations League champions. Teams in Leagues B, C & D will compete for promotion to a higher League, and teams in A, B & C will compete to avoid relegation to a lower League.

The FAROE ISLANDS are with 15 other nations in LEAGUE D.

The 16 teams in League D have been split into four groups of four. Each of the four group winners will be promoted to League C for the 2020 competition.

The FAROE ISLANDS (currently 90 in the FIFA/Coca-Cola world rankings) have been drawn in GROUP 3 of LEAGUE D and will play home and away matches against AZERBAIJAN (world ranking 105), KOSOVO (141) and MALTA (184).



- In GROUP 1 of LEAGUE D are Andorra, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Latvia.
- In GROUP 2 are Belarus, Luxembourg, Moldova and San Marino.
- In GROUP 4 are Armenia, Gibraltar, Liechtenstein and FYR Macedonia.

The Nations League will also be linked with the UEFA European Championship qualifying, giving teams

another opportunity to qualify for the European Championship.

LEAGUE D: GROUP 3 - FIXTURES



- 7 September 2018
Faroe Islands v Malta
- 10 September 2018
Kosovo v Faroe Islands
- 11 October 2018
Faroe Islands v Azerbaijan
- 14 October 2018
Faroe Islands v Kosovo
- 17 November 2018
Azerbaijan v Faroe Islands
- 20 November 2018
Malta v Faroe Islands

○ SOURCE: www.uefa.com/



FIFA Women’s World Cup – France 2019

(Qualifying Rounds)

The finals of the FIFA Women’s World Cup will be held in France from 7 June to 7 July 2019.

● **PRELIMINARY ROUND**

As part of the European countries’ qualification for France 2019, the 16 lowest ranked nations, including the Faroe Islands, competed in a Preliminary Round held in 2017. The 16 countries were divided into four groups of four, with each group of four nations competing in a separate tournament hosted by four of the 16 countries. Matches in GROUP 4 were all held in the Faroes, with the Faroe Islands as hosts.

The FAROE ISLANDS (currently 81 in the FIFA/Coca-Cola world rankings) played matches against LUXEMBOURG (world ranking 104), MONTENEGRO (90) and TURKEY (61), with all matches being played at the Tórsvøllur stadium, Tórshavn, in April 2017.



PRELIMINARY ROUND - GROUP 4 - RESULTS



- 6 April 2017
Faroe Islands 5 - Luxembourg 1
- 8 April 2017
Faroe Islands 2 - Montenegro 1
- 11 April 2017
Faroe Islands 2 - Turkey 1

**PRELIMINARY ROUND
EUROPEAN GROUP 4: FINAL POSITIONS**

	PI	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FAROE IS.	3	3	0	0	9	3	9
Turkey	3	2	0	1	13	3	6
Montenegro	3	1	0	2	8	6	3
Luxembourg	3	0	0	3	3	21	0

● QUALIFYING ROUND

Having qualified for the next stage as winners of Group 4 in the Preliminary Round, the FAROE ISLANDS were then drawn in GROUP 5 in the Qualifying Round. In this Round, the Faroes face home and away matches against the CZECH REPUBLIC (world ranking 32), GERMANY (2), ICELAND (19) and SLOVENIA (54).



**QUALIFYING ROUND - GROUP 5
RESULTS & FIXTURES**



- 14 September 2017
Faroe Islands 0 - Czech Republic 8
- 18 September 2017
Iceland 8 - Faroe Islands 0
- 24 October 2017
Germany 11 - Faroe Islands 0
- 24 November 2017
Slovenia 5 - Faroe Islands 0
- 10 April 2018
Faroe Islands 0 - Iceland 5
- 7 June 2018
Faroe Islands 0 - Slovenia 4
- 12 June 2018
Czech Republic 4 - Faroe Islands 1
- 4 September 2018
Faroe Islands v Germany

**QUALIFYING ROUND
EUROPEAN GROUP 5: CURRENT POSITIONS**

	PI	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iceland	6	5	1	0	21	3	16
Germany	6	5	0	1	28	3	15
Czech Rep.	6	3	1	2	17	7	10
Slovenia	7	2	0	5	9	18	6
FAROE IS.	7	0	0	7	1	45	0



World Rankings

The Faroe Islands' MEN'S national football team currently has a FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking of 90 (of 211 national associations) (*ranking published 7 June 2018*), having risen five places since the ranking reported in the previous newsletter. In the worldwide list, the Faroes are just below Iraq (89) and just above Trinidad & Tobago (91).

The Faroes' WOMEN'S national football team has a World Ranking of 81 (*ranking published 22 June 2018*), 11 places lower than the report in the previous newsletter. Of the 187 national associations* in FIFA's ranking table, the Faroes are just below Bahrain (80) and just above Senegal (82).

(*only 140 associations are ranked; the remainder are shown as "inactive for more than 18 months and therefore not ranked").

○ SOURCE: Information from the FIFA website:

www.fifa.com/worldfootball

○ The Faroe Islands gained membership of FIFA (the international governing body) on 2 July 1988 and joined UEFA (the European governing body) on 18 April 1990.



Reminder !



The regular deadlines for the submission of your letters, articles, news, reviews and adverts for the journal ("238") and Newsletter are as follows:

- February Newsletter ★ 15 January
- May "238" ★ 15 April
- August Newsletter ★ 15 July
- November "238" ★ 15 October

