



Anyone identified this warship?



## North by the Sea – Nordic Issue

The last of the three ‘North by the Sea’ stamp sheets were recently issued by the eight Nordic countries, and again, several of them depict working ships along their long coasts. First one out is the sheet from Faroes Islands.

In 1982 a new chapter started in Faroese passenger and freighter history, when Smyril Line was founded. This new Faroese shipping company bought the Swedish ferry **GUSTAV WASA**, built in 1973 in Rendsburg. After a refit in Flensburg to adapt to Atlantic conditions, the ferry, under the name **NORRÖNA**, in June 1983 started to sail the route: Hanstholm (Denmark), Bergen (Norway), Tórshavn, (Faroe Islands) and Seyðisfjørður in Iceland. The Atlantic ferry had a capacity for 1050 passengers, 300 cars and a certain amount of goods.

The first years **NORRÖNA** only sailed during the summer season in the North Atlantic and was used for other purposes during the winter season. Among other things, **NORRÖNA** was used as transport vessel at NATO exercises in the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the Irish Sea - and three times, in the 80s and 90s, she was leased by Danish authorities as refugee ship in Copenhagen during the winter season.

In 1998 **NORRÖNA** started to sail the Atlantic the whole year round - the first year only between Tórshavn and Hanstholm. The ship had gradually become obsolete

though and the capacity too small for the increasing pressure of passengers, cars and freight.

In 1999, Smyril Line signed a contract with Flender Werft in Lübeck to build an even bigger ferry, this time specifically designed for sailing in the North Atlantic. The new **NORRÖNA** was delivered on 7th April 2003 and three days later, on April the 10th she started to sail her Atlantic route.

The new **NORRÖNA** is three times bigger than the old one. The ship is 164 meters long and 30 meters wide, 36,000 GRT and has a maximum speed of 21 knots. It can accommodate 1,482 passengers and has room for 800 cars. In addition to car transport it is also used for goods and trailer transport.

In 2012 Smyril Line moved its Danish departure from Hanstholm to Hirtshals where **NORRÖNA** has sailed from ever since.

Passenger comfort on **NORRÖNA** is luxurious and outstanding. The ship was in 2012 named one of the top three passenger carriers by the Danish Travel Award. Now, almost 50 years after the old "Queen" ploughed through our rough waters on coal and steam, our own **NORRÖNA** goes into her second



decade as the undisputed queen of the North Atlantic. Anker Eli Petersen, Faroe Island Post web-site. (*North by the Sea, continued on page 66*)