

Iceland Adds to Town Festivals Series

On May 8 Iceland issued a set of stamps featuring five more of its Town Festivals. The series started last year with five summer festivals (Sc. 1304-08).

The number of town festivals held in Iceland in the summer has been increasing in recent years. They have become a valued part in the cultural life of many towns and communities in the country.

In order, left to right, top row first, we have:

The Lobster Festival in Höfn in Hornafjörður. This festival can be traced to the initiative of individuals and companies who wanted to sponsor an annual town festival. The celebrations date back to 1993 and have been held with the active participation of local companies. Hornafjörður is known for lobster fishing, and the lobster boats can be seen in the stamp's background.

The Herring Adventure is the town festival of Siglufjörður, one of the oldest of its kind in Iceland. The great herring adventure in Iceland lasted for 100 years. The festival was first held in 1991 and has since become an annual local event. It has its roots in the town's colorful history as one of the most energetic fishing towns in the past.

The "Night of Lights" celebration is a culture and family festival held annually in Reykjanesbær. It dates back to September



2, 2000 when it constituted a tribute to Reykjavík which held the prestigious title of the European City of Culture in the year 2000. A number of musicians, performers and local artists stage performances and art exhibitions all over town during the three days of the Night of Lights.

Danish Days is a family festival that is held annually in the town of Stykkis-hólmur. Stykkishólmur in the west of Iceland has sometimes been referred to as a Danish town. Danish Days were first celebrated on February 21, 1994 with the involvement of local organizations. On this occasion the town is mostly decorated in the colors of the Danish flag.

Culture Night is the annual event of Reykjavík, the Icelandic capital. It was initiated in 1996 and has over time become one of the largest and best-known festivals of the country, with rich and diverse cultural events taking place all over the city. Usually over 100,000 visitors will attend the Cultural Night celebrations

and its approximately 600 events.

The stamps were designed by Linda Ólafsdóttir and offset printed by Joh. Enschedé Security Print. The stamps of Iceland, as well as the issues of 20 other postal administrations sold at face value may be accessed at the World Online Philatelic Agency, <http://www.wopa-stamps.com/>.