

# 1<sup>st</sup> Jóannes Rasmussen Conference

## Evolution of basaltic provinces

29 - 30 august 2007 - Faroe Islands



### CONFERENCE THEMES

Weathering, sedimentation and pyroclastic activity  
Tectonic development  
Lava morphologies  
Timing of events  
Geochemical evolution  
Exploration potential of basaltic provinces

#### CRITICAL DATES:

1<sup>st</sup> January 2007  
27<sup>th</sup> April 2007  
29<sup>th</sup> June 2007

Circular and call for abstracts  
Early bird registration and abstract deadline  
Late registration

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JÓANNES RASMUSSEN (1912–1992) may be considered as the father of geological science in the Faroe Islands. He was the first Faroese person with a university degree in geology, and his merits



as a geoscientist are numerous. Together with his former tutor from the university, Prof. Arne Noe-Nygaard, he carried out the detailed mapping of the onshore geology of the islands, at a time when no detailed mapping of plateau basaltic terrains was performed elsewhere. The map and associated memoir were published

in 1969. He was the driving force in the foundation of the Faroese Geological Department (1952) and the Museum of Natural History (1955), both of which he subsequently directed for several decades, while he was simultaneously heading the Faroese Department of the Geological Survey of Denmark, DGU.

One fundamental principle of Jóannes was that knowledge on its own is worthless. It is only by using the knowledge actively and by sharing it with others that it becomes valuable. He was constantly busy with the distribution of his own knowledge and with making knowledge and skills accessible for others. During his student years in Copenhagen, he wrote a number of geological articles, and his overall portfolio of scientific literature is overwhelming. He chaired the Faroese Student Association in Copenhagen (1937–1944), was vice chairman of the Faroese association Føroyin-gafelag (1938–1941), and was the first editor of *Búgvín* – a periodical for Faroese people in exile during the second world war.

After returning to the Faroe Islands in 1951 Jóannes chaired the association Føroya Náttúra – Føroya Skúli (The Faroese Nature – The Faroese School) 1952 to 1978. In 1952, he co-founded the Scientific Society of the Faroe Islands, Føroya Fróðskaparfelag, which he directed and co-directed for 25 years, during which he also acted as editor of the Faroese scientific periodical, *Fróðskaparrit* (Annales Societatis Scientiarum Færoensis). He was also one of the driving forces in the establishment of the University of the Faroe Islands in 1965, where he taught geology and other natural sciences for many years while also teaching at several other institutions of education.

Jóannes Rasmussen was appointed Doctor of Honour at the University of Copenhagen in 1979. After his official retirement from his position at the Museum and at DGU in 1980 he continued writing and teaching and was actively involved in several scientific projects. In 1981 he was honoured with the M. A. Jacobsen literature award for his geological/natural science book *Øldir og Upphav*.

This 1<sup>st</sup> Jóannes Rasmussen Conference is intended to be a forum for the distribution, use and sharing of knowledge and skills between people interested in geosciences, especially volcanology or those interested in the Northeast Atlantic Region.



The archipelago of the Faroe Islands consists of 18 main islands and covers an area of ca. 1400 km<sup>2</sup>. The terrain is mountainous and Slættaratindur, at a height of 882 m, is the highest mountain on the islands. Nowhere are you more than 5 km away from the North Atlantic Ocean and the influence of the ocean on the landscape and the way of life is evident throughout the islands. The conference will be held in the capital, Tórshavn, literally Thors Harbour, located at the southern end of Streymoy. The accommodation and conference venue shall be within easy walking distance of Tinganes, the historical peninsula with its grass-roofed buildings.



The Faroe Islands are an exposed remnant of the predominantly, subaerial, Palaeogene Faroe Islands Basalt Group (FIBG) of the North Atlantic Igneous Province. The FIBG has a aerial extent of at least 120,000 km<sup>2</sup> and has a gross stratigraphic thickness, around the islands, of ca. 6.5 km. The geology is dominated by basalt lava flows of differing morphologies intercalated with volcanoclastic lithologies of both pyroclastic and epiclastic origin. Hydrocarbon exploration is increasingly moving into basalt affected basins and the Faroe-Shetland Basin is no exception. This has resulted in heightened research efforts in such areas and this conference shall hopefully facilitate the exchange of ideas between disparate basaltic provinces around the world.



## 1st Jóannes Rasmussen Conference: Evolution of Basaltic Provinces

In the heart of Tórshavn, surrounded by some of the youngest lava flows of the Faroe Islands Basalt Group, new observations and ideas shall be presented covering aspects of how basaltic provinces evolve during their lifetimes. During two days, oral presentations shall be given in a relaxed and informal atmosphere with ample opportunity for discussion. In addition, technical posters shall be on display throughout the conference.

The two days will be separated into four sessions, each with an invited keynote speaker. The following topics have been suggested for presentations, but this is not a definitive list and we welcome other suggestions:

- Weathering, sedimentation and pyroclastic activity
- Tectonic development
- Lava morphologies
- Timing of events
- Geochemical evolution
- Exploration potential of basaltic provinces

Research students are particularly encouraged to attend and present their research in progress.



## Fieldtrips

### Pre-Conference Fieldtrip

The day before the conference begins there will be an opportunity, for a limited number, to visit a number of key geological localities on the central and northern islands. Making use of the 6 km long Norðoyar subsea tunnel, the trip shall slowly make its way from Tórshavn to the most northerly village of Viðareiši on Viðoy, the wood island. The trip shall look at the differing lava flow morphologies, the various volcaniclastic rocks and the stunning Streymoy and Eysturoy sills. There will also be numerous opportunities to take in the beautiful Faroese scenery whilst looking out for comical puffins.



### Post-Conference Fieldtrip

If there is enough interest, a 2–3 day fieldtrip to the southern island of Suðuroy shall immediately follow the conference. The 2 hour ferry journey on the Symril, from Tórshavn to Tvøroyri, offers scenic and geologically interesting views of the eastern coastlines of Streymoy, Sandoy, Stóra Dímun and Lítla Dímun before navigating Trongisvágsfjørður. Suðuroy is composed of the oldest exposed lava flows of the Faroe Islands Basalt Group and the steep western cliffs, over 400 m high, provide exceptional views of these tabular basalts. An hours walk to the secluded Hvannahagi valley affords the opportunity to study the small Stapin vent, tuffs and mass flow deposits and the irregular intrusions with their large xenoliths. If we are lucky, we may also get views of passing porpoises and seals.



