



BRÚIN CHAPTER, SELKIRK

ICELANDIC NATIONAL LEAGUE OF NORTH AMERICA



Newsletter

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122nd Sumardagurinn Fyrsti

Spring 2015

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is unbelievable how time has flown by and here it is April again. This past winter was much more pleasant than last years and it is so nice to see an early spring. As it is such a lovely spring, it is all the more appropriate to be celebrating Sumardagurinn Fyrsti (The First Day of Summer), our 122nd annual concert event. It is an honour to be able to carry on this amazing tradition that was started so long ago. The fact that it has continued definitely shows interest in the Icelandic language, culture and heritage, which we need to encourage. This would make the people who came before us, those who carried these wonderful traditions from Iceland to North America, very proud. This is also an excellent opportunity to visit with old friends.

Our last Sumardagurinn Fyrsti was very successful. Thank you to everyone for the ongoing support. We were pleased to be able to have Ambassador Hjálmar Hannesson, Consul General of Iceland in Winnipeg, and his wife Anna Birgis with us. He delivered greetings from Iceland. It's always so great to see everyone coming to share in our language, culture and heritage. This celebration is a time to look forward to our upcoming summer. Sumardagurinn Fyrsti is a very special time for us.

Our Brúin Chapter presents bursaries to students of Icelandic descent graduating from the Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive High School. Emily Kolada and Alexis Sutherland were last years' recipients. Congratulations and all the best to the girls in all their future endeavours.

In April, we were invited to Betel Home Foundation's Volunteer Tea. We are very proud to be a part of one of their programmes. It is our pleasure to sponsor the residents celebrating October birthdays.

May 15-18, 2014 took us to the Icelandic National League of North America Convention held in Winnipeg. Patsy Zdrill, Kathy Dahlin, Brad Hirst, Heather and Johann Schreiner, Marie and Gord Kanne, Gary Oddleifson and I attended from Brúin. The convention was hosted by the Frón Chapter of Winnipeg, and they did an amazing job. Everything was so well done with such interesting sessions. The Interlake Clubs contributed Icelandic baking for the coffee breaks.

At the conference, I was presented with a Lifetime Membership Award of the Icelandic National League of North America. It was a great honour to be presented with this award. It is such a privilege to be a part of our Brúin Family. Thank you very much!

Celebration of Iceland's Independence Day is held every June 17th at the Jon Sigurdson Statue on the northeast corner of the Legislative Building grounds. It is an excellent way of celebrating our history. Heather and Johann Schreiner, Brad Hirst and I attended. The ceremony was followed by speakers and entertainment at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

In June we held our windup picnic at the home of one of our members. It is so much fun to get together and share our plans for the summer. We always have a great time. Our Brúin Family is a very close-knit group and we enjoy spending time together.

We were invited to make an Icelandic presentation at the Gordon Howard Seniors Centre in June. They were holding a cultural day, and this one featured Iceland. We set up a display table and served some Icelandic foods. Our Kaffi Tima Choir, dressed in our Icelandic apparel, sang some Icelandic songs.

The Icelandic Camp is held just north of Gimli during the last week of July. Brúin Chapter sponsored two campers last year,

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Tanner Skrypnyk and Cody Whall. Brad Hirst is the camp's Executive Director. Once again Guðmundur Hafliðason came from Iceland to be at the camp. He has been doing this for over five years. He is so proud of what we are doing for our young people. He is spreading the word about our camp and its successes in Iceland and even got corporate sponsors in Iceland to donate Skyr and Icelandic Chocolate for all the campers and staff. Everyone really appreciated this and it was a good chance for the campers to taste these foods. Maria Bear and Valdine Bush were the camp cooks. Heather Schreiner, her mom Blanche Bjarnason and Patsy Zdrill helped out in the kitchen for a day. A number of members of the Gimli Icelandic Canadian Society volunteered to help by driving campers to their events and outings. What a wonderful example of how our Clubs always try to support each other. The kids get so much out of camp and they have a great time.

In October we hosted the Betel Home Foundation's birthday party. Our Kaffi Tíma choir sang and Debbie Hygaard's mom Maeola Whitlam helped us with a polka party for the residents. We then presented cards and gifts to the residents celebrating October birthdays and helped serve coffee and cake.

Also in October, I attended The Gimli Icelandic Canadian Society's Tombola at the Minerva Hall. The children have a lot of fun, with everybody dancing.

In December, our Christmas potluck party was held at the home of one of our members. We had a great time eating, visiting, doing crafts and playing Christmas themed games.

Our club elections are held in February. This year our secretary and treasurer were up for election. Helene Davis accepted the position of secretary-treasurer. We are very thankful to have such a capable individual doing these duties for us.

Heather and Johann Schreiner and I attended Þorrablót in Arborg, hosted by the Esjan Chapter in March. The evening's theme

was 'honouring those of Icelandic descent who were involved in World War I'. We enjoyed a slide show presentation and poems written by David Gislason and Judy Richardson on that subject.

I feel so strongly that it is important for our members to support other clubs in their endeavours. This strengthens the ties between the clubs and makes the INLofNA more united than ever. We learn so much from each other. We must embrace our culture, heritage and language.

Here we are at Sumardagurinn Fyrsti again. I hope you all have a good time. Anyone wanting to join our club please see one of our members. We would love to have you.

Maria Bear
President

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The annual membership fee is \$20. We will happily accept new members at Sumardagurinn Fyrsti, just ask the ticket sales ladies to direct you to Helene Davis.

IN MEMORIAM

Our dear friend and long time Brúin Chapter member, Leanne Kupchik passed away on November 6th. Her funeral was held on November 13th. As per Leanne's wishes, the Brúin Chapter Kaffi Tíma choir sang "Amazing Grace" at the funeral. We sang half of the verses in English and the other half in Icelandic. Later at the reception many complimented us for doing so well at singing in such difficult circumstances. Leanne was only 47. She definitely was our ponnukokur queen. Lots of ponnukokur aficionados agree that hers were the best. We miss her.

CLUB EXECUTIVE ARE CURRENTLY:

President - Maria Bear
Vice-President - Lorraine Hirst
Secretary /Treasurer -Helene Davis
Past President - Brad Hirst

INLOfNA CONVENTION 2014

I was privileged to be the Brúin Chapter delegate at the INLOfNA Convention held in Winnipeg in 2014. I enjoyed the opportunity to experience the Annual General Meeting as well as the many other activities, displays and of course Kaffitími with other attendees at the convention. The INLOfNA and Winnipeg Frón Chapter did a superb job planning and implementing this event. Manitoba Clubs volunteered to provide some cultural treats for coffee times. Some of our members gathered at Debbie Hygaard's and had a lot of fun making up our quota of kleinur.

I am also a member of the Icelandic Online Club and was able to meet some of those members in person. The INLOfNA Convention has attendees from several parts of Canada, the USA and Iceland.

The Convention began with Registration and a Meet and Greet Reception sponsored by the Consul General of Iceland in Winnipeg, Hjálmar Hannesson. There were vendor tables and displays all weekend. On Friday there were presentations by Lögberg Heimskringla, the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, Snorri/Snorri Plus/ Snorri West, and Svavar Gestsson, a former Minister and Ambassador.

Dr. Ron Goodman received the Laurence Johnson Lifetime Achievement Award presented by Kathy Dahlin, myself (Laurence's daughters) and Gwen Mann. Our family is so honoured that the INLOfNA includes us in presenting this award.

On Saturday there were more great informative presentations on varied topics. As the delegate for Brúin I participated in the INLOfNA AGM. This was one of the highlights for me! The Gala Banquet was held on Saturday evening.

A bus tour around Winnipeg on Sunday was capably led by Vi Hilton-Bjarnason. There was a stop at the University of Manitoba with a tour of the Icelandic Collection section of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library. The bus took passengers to areas of Icelandic significance which included the area of early settlement, the home of Lögberg Heimskringla and the Scandinavian

Centre where a wonderful lunch was served before all passengers went their separate ways.

I am really looking forward to attending the upcoming 2015 INLOfNA Convention in Minneapolis in May!

Patsy Zdrill

KAFFI TÍMA CHOIR

The Brúin Chapter choir, "Kaffi Tíma", started out when some of us found that singing was an easier way to learn some of the Icelandic words. Over the years we have learned a number of new songs and sing a lot of the old traditional songs. We have lost members over the years but we always seem to gain new ones. We are far from professional; we make mistakes and can laugh at ourselves. This year our choir has been asked to sing four Icelandic songs for the Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive School Spring Concert. This is quite an honour for us. This is a band concert led by music teachers Michael Brandon and Kenley Kristofferson. Kenley is the son of Ken and June Kristofferson from Gimli. Icelandic Camp had the pleasure of having Kenley run the music programme for two years and he did a fantastic job. The school band will be performing "The Icelandic Folk Song Suite", a piece of music composed by Kenley. The concert will be held on May 27th, 2015 at 7:00pm at the Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive School.

Lorraine Hirst

LAURENCE JOHNSON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The recipient of the 2014 Laurence Johnson Lifetime Achievement Award was Dr. Ron Goodman. The award is designed to honour the memory of our late Past-President and longtime Icelandic National League of North America member Larry Johnson. This acknowledgement is given to a person who has made a significant contribution to society over a long period of time, as Larry did.

The award will again be bestowed upon a deserving recipient at the INLOfNA Convention in Minneapolis next month.

ICELANDIC CAMP

Spring is here and summer is just around the corner! The weather has finally decided to behave and our Jets made it to the playoffs!

Another exciting event besides the playoffs is the Icelandic Camp. Starting on Friday, July 24th, 2015 and running for an extra two days until Friday, July 31st, this year's camp is shaping up to be one of the best yet! Two extra days will allow campers more time to be immersed in the Icelandic culture and be with old and new friends. We are saddened that Gummi will not be joining us this year but his soccer team will be enjoying the sights and sounds of Los Angeles during this week. We wish him all the best!

We have acquired two great free agents from the draft, Kjartan Almar Kárason (grandson of our beloved Almar Grímsson) and his girlfriend Hafdís María Martinsdóttir. They will be joining us for the duration of camp, taking time out from their cross Canada tour. We are excited to have them both.

We are also welcoming back all but one of last year's staff. Kenley Kristofferson has moved on to become quite an accomplished musician and composer. The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and many other organizations have highlighted him. We hope he will remember us little people when he hits the BIG TIME.

We have been doing featurettes both on social media and in the Lögberg Heimskringla introducing our staff members. We are very proud of all the people we have involved in our camp and encourage you all to visit our website www.icelandiccamp.com, or on Facebook or Twitter @icelandiccamp to read all about the people behind the camp!

Now for the most exciting part... what the kids get to do while at camp. This year we will be emphasizing more Icelandic language. With Iceland being more popular than ever, we are finding that the kids are more excited to learn the language. We will be introducing our 1st annual Icelandic Camp Concert Series.

This will be held on the evening of Wednesday, July 29th and will include drama productions, poem readings and much more. I highly encourage you to come and check this out and cheer on our campers.

We will be visiting local sites of Icelandic historical significance, going to see the Icelandic ponies, having our famous movie night, being visited by local vikings and touring New Iceland! There is so much for a camper to do this year that we HAD to add two more days.

If you would like more information please visit www.icelandiccamp.com or email Brad Hirst at icelandiccamp@gmail.com. Be sure to LIKE us on Facebook, plus follow us on Twitter @icelandiccamp.

Brad Hirst

2015 INLOfNA CONVENTION

Our Brúin Chapter will again be represented at the INLOfNA convention in Bloomington, Minnesota. This year's programme has five themes: Research and Education, The Sagas Continue, Coming to America, The Lively Arts and Literary Scene, and the Generations – Past, Present and Future. Our own Brad Hirst will be making a presentation on the Icelandic Camp. Honoured Guests will include Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, former President of Iceland and current UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador of Languages, Geir Harde, Iceland's ambassador to the USA and former Prime Minister, and Sturla Sigurjonsson, Iceland's ambassador to Canada.

A SINCERE THANK YOU

The Brúin Chapter would like to sincerely thank Bill Cholosky for his very generous financial gift to our group in the memory of his departed wife Olive. Olive was a long standing member of our group. She was fiercely proud of her Icelandic heritage and contributed so much to the Brúin Chapter. She also played the organ and piano for us during our practices and performances. We are sure many of you remember her. Olive passed away January 18th, 2012. We still miss her.