



# BRÚIN CHAPTER, SELKIRK

ICELANDIC NATIONAL LEAGUE  
OF NORTH AMERICA



**Newsletter**

Editor: Heather Schreiner

**123<sup>rd</sup> Sumardagurinn Fyrsti**

**Spring 2016**

Design/Layout: Kathy Dahlin

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

It is so hard to believe that April is already here. Time just flies by. Spring is approaching and we are all looking forward to the rebirth it brings. Our relatives in Iceland are feeling the same way. After the darkness that comes from the absence of the midnight sun they are ready to celebrate that glorious sunshine, so Sumardagurinn Fyrsti is a very important time for them. This is the 123<sup>rd</sup> year Sumardagurinn Fyrsti has been celebrated in Selkirk. We are truly honoured to continue this tradition started by our predecessors. This celebration makes us especially proud of our culture and heritage. We are so proud of being Icelandic, and being able to share our heritage in this way.

Last year's event was very successful. Everyone seemed to really enjoy him/herself. Ambassador Hjalmar Hannesson, our Consul General of Iceland in Winnipeg, and his wife Anna Birgis joined us. Hjalmar brought greetings from Iceland. He went on to note that it was going to be 100 years since women were granted the right vote in Manitoba. He especially noted that one of the suffragettes was Margret Benediktson who was from Iceland and had settled in the Selkirk area. It was so informative to learn about this pioneer. Everyone seemed to enjoy the concert and the visiting afterwards. It is always great to have a chance to visit with relatives and friends, old and new.

Brúin Chapter presents bursaries each year to two students of Icelandic descent who are completing grade twelve at Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive Secondary School and who are continuing on to post-secondary studies. Last year's recipients were Zack Dahlin and Matthew Stevenson. We wish all the very best to these boys in their future endeavors.

In April we were invited to the Betel Home Foundation's Volunteer Appreciation Tea. Each year, Brúin Chapter honours the

residents of Betel who are celebrating October birthdays. We provide entertainment for all the residents and gifts for the ones celebrating birthdays that month. We help serve coffee afterwards. We are thrilled to be hosting this party for these seniors.

Last year's convention of the Icelandic National League of North America was held in Bloomington, Minnesota. Brad Hirst, Heather and Johann Schreiner, Patsy Zdrill and Kathy Dahlin attended from our club.

In June our Kaffi Tima Choir was asked by the band directors of the High School in Selkirk to sing four songs in Icelandic. These pieces were showcasing a suite composed by Kenley Kristofferson. After we sang the four songs, the school's Senior Symphonic band played the suite. It was just amazing to hear those same tunes played by the students. We felt very honoured to be asked to be a part of that very special event.

Brúin Chapter members try to attend as many events as possible held by other INL chapters or by other Icelandic Organizations. Some occasions include Iceland's Independence Day held in Winnipeg, the Fjallkonna Announcement held in Gimli, volunteering in the kitchen at the summer Icelandic Camp just north of Gimli, and the Islendingadagurinn and Tombola also in Gimli. We also try to partake in presentations and movies from Iceland being showcased. Attending all these special events strengthens the ties between the chapters of our INL and enhances the importance of preserving and embracing our culture, heritage and language.

Now it is Sumardagurinn Fyrsti again. I hope you all have a great time. Anyone wanting to join our club please see one of our members and they will help you out. We always have a wonderful time and are a very close group, so come and join us.

Maria Bear

## ICELANDIC CAMP

It's hard to believe that the first day of spring is here after Mother Nature has teased us with spring and winter weather. But we are now getting ready to welcome 30, perhaps more, young people to Icelandic Camp this summer from Friday July 22<sup>nd</sup> to Friday July 29<sup>th</sup> 2016 and it is exciting to know that we will be in full camp mode in less than four months.

The mission of the Icelandic Camp is to provide a place for all children and youth of Icelandic descent (non-Icelanders welcome) to gather and ignite the passion for all things Icelandic. We strive to have our campers learn and speak the Icelandic language, not just during camp, but all year round. We promote active involvement in their local Icelandic community and strive to make each youth an advocate for Icelandic Camp!

For over 30 years Icelandic Camp has been bringing youth of Icelandic descent together to celebrate their shared heritage. Over eight days the campers are immersed in all things Icelandic. From language lessons, to Viking crafts, to writing their own saga, the campers start to develop a love of their Icelandic ancestry. This year we will be changing the format of our camp to keep things fresh for the returning campers and set the bar high for the new ones, so that every camper can have the best experience possible. We will continue to teach the Icelandic language and culture to the kids and, of course, we will be showcasing our campers' musical talents. This year on Wednesday July 27<sup>th</sup> our campers will be performing at the Gimli Park Pavilion to a live audience. All members of the public are welcome to come and enjoy the hard work of these talented kids.

There are many ways to help the Icelandic Camp. You can donate your time, experience, knowledge or money. For more ways to be a part of the camp please email Camp CEO Brad Hirst at [icelandiccamp@gmail.com](mailto:icelandiccamp@gmail.com).

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

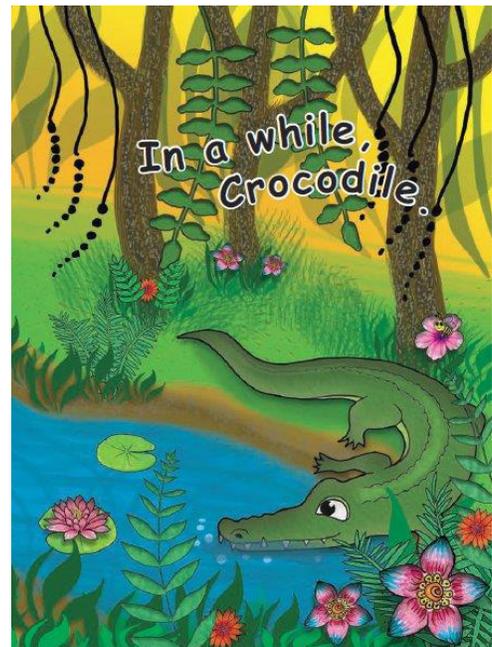
The annual membership fee is \$20. We will happily accept new members at Sumardagurinn Fyrsti, just ask the ticket sales ladies to direct you to Helene Davis.

## MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to Gord Kanne who participated in the Prairie Canada Carving Championship held at the Canadinn's at Polo Park this past weekend. Gord placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the miscellaneous category with a pair of beaded wooden carved moccasins. This item also placed 1<sup>st</sup> in it's division.



Congratulations to proud parents Wanda and Michael Bruenig on their daughter Mikkela's publishing of her first book. Written by Mikkela and illustrated by Kisa Maclsaac, this lovely children's book is called "In a While, Crocodile". It can be purchased through [friesenpress.com](http://friesenpress.com), [www.mikkelabrueing.com](http://www.mikkelabrueing.com), and will soon be available at Chapters bookstore.



## **MEMBER NEWS (CONTINUED)**

Debbie and Matt Hygaard are proud their daughter Amanda has been awarded the 2015 Margaret Breckman Mack Scholarship. Administered by the Canada Iceland Foundation, this scholarship is given annually to a student of good scholastic ability who is enrolled in a Manitoba Bachelor of Nursing Program. Amanda is in her third year and has one more year to finish her Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing (BScPN). Amanda attends school at the University of Winnipeg, which is a satellite campus for the University of Brandon. While working on her degree, Amanda also works at the Selkirk Mental Health Hospital. Part of her schooling is volunteer work. She has helped with Sumardagurinn Fyrstis in years past, as well as with Islendingadagurinn.

## **LAURENCE JOHNSON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

The recipient of the 2015 Laurence Johnson Lifetime Achievement Award was Gunnvör Danielsdóttir Ásmundsson. Larry's daughters, Patsy Zdrill and Kathy Dahlin, were in attendance to help make the presentation at the INLofNA Convention in Minneapolis.

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 Vancouver later this month. Larry's granddaughter, Dr. Lorelei Johnson, will represent the family at that event.

## **IN MEMORIAM**

Our deepest condolences to Maxine and John Ingalls on the passing of John's parents. His father passed away peacefully at age 100, followed one day later by his mother at age 99. Maxine is a Past-President of Brúin chapter.

## **A WORTHWHILE CAUSE**

The Brúin Chapter of the Icelandic National League of North America has a long and storied history. This tradition is evident as we host our 123<sup>rd</sup> annual Sumardagurinn Fyrsti. Over the years our membership numbers have varied widely, whereas for the past several years it has remained fairly constant at or near twenty members.

The main goal of the Brúin Chapter is to promote Icelandic language and culture in our community. Along with this, Brúin Chapter strives to provide small scholarships to deserving students of Icelandic descent, as well as providing fee subsidies to qualifying youngsters for attendance at Icelandic Camp.

On occasion, Brúin Chapter also donates to worthy causes. One such occasion arose last fall – the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Betel Home Foundation. Support for this initiative was solicited in many forms. Then a 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner was held in Gimli on September 26<sup>th</sup> 2015.

At our monthly Brúin Chapter meeting in early September, following a passionate discussion concerning this matter, it was decided to contribute a Silver Sponsorship for this initiative. The unanimous conclusion was that "this is exactly what we are all about!" The silver sponsorship would provide enough funds to buy a new fully functional bed for the home.

It was quite a stretch for a small group such as ours to come up with \$2500 for the Silver Sponsorship! However, it is with great pride that we report that we broke the piggy bank to come up with the funds for this most worthy cause.

Therefore, rest assured that the proceeds of your support for our events are indeed going to good causes in support of the community.

Johann Schreiner

## **CURRENT CLUB EXECUTIVE**

President - Maria Bear

Vice-President - Lorraine Hirst

Secretary /Treasurer -Helene Davis

Past President - Brad Hirst

## **INLofNA CONVENTION 2015 RECAP**

The 96<sup>th</sup> INLofNA Convention was held from May 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> 2015 in Minneapolis, Minnesota and was attended by five members of our Brúin Chapter. It began with the ever popular “meet and greet” on the Thursday evening. Friday began with the Opening Ceremony followed by very enjoyable and informative sessions. As there were three topics to choose from in each of the three sessions, our members split up to take in everything. Speakers presenting on Saturday and Sunday were consecutive so we didn't have to miss anything.

The theme of the convention was “The Sagas Continue” and we were treated to information on the connections being promoted between North America and Iceland. We learned about traditions in cuisine carried from Iceland to North America, and co-operative initiatives in the areas of education and medicine. The Icelandic Roots genealogists were on hand to help attendees discover family connections. The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday afternoon. We got caught up on the news and business of the League at large. Madame Vigdis Finnbogadóttir, former President of Iceland, was the keynote speaker at the Saturday evening banquet. The banquet was hosted by the Icelandic Hekla Club, which was celebrating their 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary. On Sunday afternoon a Twin City bus tour was available to anyone interested. Those who took part found it very enjoyable.

The 97<sup>th</sup> convention will be held from April 28<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup> and will be hosted by the Icelandic Canadian Club of BC. The theme is “Strandarsaga: A Coast Story.” This will be held in Richmond, BC and our Brúin chapter will again be well represented. We thank Marie Kanne for agreeing to be our delegate.

## **MOVIE NIGHT**

Our Brúin members have been meeting periodically over the winter for a casual “movie night.” We have been watching the DVDs of the TV documentary series on the Icelandic emigration to Canada and the USA entitled “Vesturfara – Westward Bound.” We have so far enjoyed the first of the three DVDs. If you'd like to join us when we get together this fall to continue this viewing, let one of our members know. We'd love to have you join us.

## **FAREWELL TO HJALMAR AND ANNA**

As Hjalmar and Anna attend their last Manitoba event here in Selkirk, we as a club would like to express our appreciation for the three years of help and support that we have received from them. They have been available to us if we ever needed assistance or information, and when we hosted events such as Sumardagurinn Frysti. They have always made time to meet with us for discussions regarding Icelandic Camp, Icelandic National League and all things Icelandic. After opening the first Icelandic embassy in Ottawa in 2001, they have had a stellar career of promoting Icelandic-Canadian relations. We as Manitobans are honoured that they specifically requested to serve here during their last years before retirement. Those attending the INLofNA Convention in Vancouver will get a “last chance” to meet with them before their return to Iceland. Their participation, attendance and support enhanced the events for our culture and heritage. We appreciate having them at our Selkirk Brúin Sumardagurinn Fyrsti, as well as seeing them at many other events the chapters of our INLofNA host. Hjalmar is the truest definition of ambassador, Anna is the truest definition of classy and they both are true definitions of friends. We thank them for their contributions and wish them much success in their next initiatives.