



Brúin Chapter, Selkirk

Icelandic National League



Newsletter

Editor: Heather Schreiner

116th Sumardagurinn Fyrsti

Spring 2009

Design/Layout: Kathy Dahlin

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Selkirk Brúin Chapter has had another eventful year since our last Sumardagurinn Fyrsti.

The Icelandic National League of North America held a wonderful Convention in Calgary last year, which Heather Schreiner and I attended.

In June 2008, Brúin Chapter awarded two scholarships in memory of Esther Erickson and Mac Dryden to high school students of Icelandic origin. The recipients were Amanda Hallson and Kol Johnson.

We had a spring wind-up at Jane and Walter's Restaurant in Winnipeg Beach and everyone had a very good time.

At our October meeting, we held our election of officers. Also in October, the Brúin Chapter hosts the monthly Betel Birthday Party for residents. It is always a pleasure to host this event.

In December we had a club Christmas Party at the home of Lorraine Hirst. Throughout the long, cold winter, everyone was so good about coming out to meetings.

Our club suffered great loss with the death of two previous members in January, Edith Johnson and Dale Johnson. We miss them a lot.

I am very proud to say we have two new members this year: Gordon Kanne and Lisa Weremy. Welcome to our club! We are always looking for new members and would love to add you to our list. We have a lot of fun.

It has been a busy time and now here we are gathering again at our annual concert. I hope everyone enjoys it.

Maria Bear
President, Selkirk Brúin Chapter

TRAVEL TALK

On May 28, 2008, my sister Maxine and I made a trip to Iceland. I had never been there and had not been on a plane for close to thirty-five years. Let's say that I was a little apprehensive. We arrived in Iceland the morning of the 29th, but my luggage was enjoying the plane trip so much it decided to journey a little further, arriving in Iceland on the 30th. The feeling of finally being in Iceland was something I had never experienced, like I had arrived home after being away forever. I am not an overly emotional person but I had a hard time holding back the tears.

Our cousin Dora and her husband Kristjan welcomed us to Iceland and into their home. That afternoon, Iceland experienced two earthquakes. They hit around Sellfoss but we felt them quite strongly where we were in Kopavogur. It was a scary but exhilarating feeling. Later that week we got to see some of the damage it caused. It is amazing that no one was seriously hurt.

As humans, we are quick to blame Mother Nature for the rotten weather we sometimes get, and we forget about the amazing beauty she gives us. In Iceland I got to see that beauty. My best description was "one moment I thought I was in Heaven and the next in Hell." As you travel through Iceland, the scenery is so captivating that your camera is constantly in use. From the most majestic mountains to the barren lava fields, the waterfalls and the clear blue rivers, you want to capture it all. We traveled the Golden Circle, going to Þingvellir, Geysir, Gullfoss, Skalholt and many other places, each as spectacular as the last. Anyone that knows me knows that I love to talk, but when we arrived at Þingvellir I was speechless. I just wanted to walk the path and feel like I was with our ancestors at Althing.

The people we met, and especially our family, made us feel right at home. They are so generous and have a wonderful sense of humour. The most special part of the trip, though, was being able to do this with my sister. At times we were like two little girls, laughing hard or longing for our parents to have been on the trip with us. This first trip to Iceland was just the start and I hope to go many more times with my husband and my children. Iceland is a very addicting place.

Lorraine Hirst

CLUB EXECUTIVE ARE CURRENTLY:

President - Maria Bear
Vice-President - Heather Schreiner
Secretary - Lorraine Hirst
Treasurer - Laura Bear
Past-President - Brad Hirst

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The annual membership fee is \$20 and new members are always welcome. We will happily accept new members at Sumardagurinn Fyrsti, just ask the ticket sales ladies to direct you to Laura Bear.

ICELANDIC LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CAMP

As many of us sit at the window wondering where our spring has sprung off to, it is time for us to also think about summer. This year the Icelandic Language and Cultural Camp will run from July 26th-July 31st at Camp Veselka just north of Gimli. This year it is our hope to have 30 or more campers. Having said that, I have issued a challenge to the Icelandic community. I would like to see the Icelandic National League clubs throughout North America sponsor at least one child from their respective area. I believe that this camp helps develop and encourage these children to embrace their Icelandic heritage. We will be having Icelandic Language lessons, Icelandic Arts and Crafts, Viking stories and many more activities! For a camper to attend this year, it will cost \$300. This covers the cost for our staff, the facility and for the food. Camp details will be finalized within the next month. If you would like more information about the camp, please call Brad Hirst at 485-5455 or email: bradhirst@hotmail.com.

COMING EVENTS

- The 90th Annual Icelandic National League of North America Convention will be held April 30-May 3rd, 2009 at the Lakeview Resort in Gimli. Members from Brúin Chapter plan to attend. We will enjoy a bus tour of New Iceland, a visit to the New Iceland Heritage Museum, a Gala Banquet and the General Meeting. The theme for this year's conference is 'Komma Heim til Nya Islands' or 'Come Home to New Iceland'. The registration deadline was April 1st, but anyone wanting more information can call 1-877-355-3500, e-mail gimli-ics@yahoo.com or visit the INL website at www.inlofna.org.

- The Laurence S. G. Johnson Lifetime Achievement Award will again be presented at the Convention. The Award, designed to honour the memory of our late Past-President and longtime Icelandic National League member Larry Johnson, is given to a person who has made a significant contribution to society over a long period, as Larry did. Larry's daughters, Patsy Zdrill and Kathy Dahlin, will be on hand this year to help present the award. This year's recipient has not yet been officially announced.

CLUB OBJECTIVES

Club objectives are to foster and promote good citizenship among people of Icelandic descent; to support Icelandic culture and heritage in various ways; to maintain associations with individuals and organizations which have similar purposes and objectives and to work as a Chapter of the Icelandic National League.

WITH SYMPATHY

Sigurður 'Dale' Johnson was born in 1949 to Mundi and Laverne Johnson and lived his early years at Hecla Island. The family later moved to Selkirk, where Dale completed his education. Although he traveled and worked outside the province for a time, he returned to Selkirk where he married Edna Johnson and raised his family. Dale spent many hours at his cottage at Hecla, enjoying the outdoors, fishing, snowmobiling and riding his quad. Dale was a member of the Brúin chapter for one year and he livened up our meetings as only Dale could. He loved spending time with his children and grandchildren and was always ready to play his violin and share stories. Dale lived his life to the fullest until his untimely passing on January 8, 2009. He leaves behind his wife Edna, their children and grandchildren, and his mother Laverne.

Edith Johnson passed away on January 9th, 2009, after a hard-fought year of ill health. Edith and her late husband Larry were long-time members of Brúin Chapter, often hosting meetings in their home, actively participating in Chapter events and supporting Icelandic National League causes. Edith was "Icelandic by marriage" and could make ponnukokur and vinarterta better than many Icelandic-Canadians! In fact, Edith would make a vinarterta to raffle at the Sumardagurinn Fyrsti each year and it always made for a very successful raffle. Edith quietly and steadfastly supported Larry's dedicated involvement to the INL, and made the trip to Iceland with him 4 times. Edith's dedication to the INL continued after Larry's passing in 2001, as she attended Chapter meetings in Selkirk and later in Gimli, and continued to attend language classes in Gimli. In 2004, Edith was a proud recipient of a lifetime membership in the Icelandic National League of North America at Hecla. Edith is survived by her children Larry (Noreen), Patsy (David) and Kathy (Dan), and 6 grandchildren. Góða Nótt, Elskan.

SNORRI PROGRAM

The Snorri Program is an excellent opportunity for young people ages 18-26 to participate in a 6-week program that includes an immersion course in the Icelandic language, lessons on the history and culture of Iceland, work experience and an adventure tour.

The Snorri Plus Program is for adults who don't qualify due to the age requirements for the Snorri Program, or for those who may be travelling as a couple. It has the same components of the Snorri program, although it is usually for a shorter period of time.

For more information, please see the main INL website at: www.inlofna.org
